

Intercultural Dialogue between Western and Muslim Countries:

**An analysis of the role(s) of intercultural dialogue in the foreign
cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other between 1998
and 2013**

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Abstract

Despite the vast amount of research on the issue of intercultural dialogue, little is known about its role in the foreign cultural policy of so-called Muslim and Western countries. This study investigates the role of different discourses of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany from 1998 to 2013. By focusing on discourses of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” of Germany and “interfaith dialogue” and “dialogue among civilizations of Iran”, the study investigates the structure of the foreign cultural policy of both countries. It applies the methodology of grounded theory and consequently analyzes published texts, including annual reports, legal statements and budget bills, as well as the views of some 81 interviewees who have been involved in the implementation of intercultural dialogue activities. The relevant activities of the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, and the Goethe Institute, as well as relevant activities of Iran’s Rayzani in Germany (the branch office of the Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations) and the International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations are explored in detail.

Intercultural dialogue has played a supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of Germany and Iran towards each other, but in different ways. It created an opportunity for German actors to continue implementing cultural activities with Iranian partners, even in difficult times. It likewise created a chance for Iranian actors to assist in Germany’s cultural projects. Intercultural dialogue played a supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany in different ways because of the differences between the structure of the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany, the organizational efficiency of their respective cultural actors, and their political considerations. This finding illustrates that although the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany has been affected by political tensions, it has been influenced by apolitical factors (organizational efficiency and the integrated or dual structure of their foreign cultural policy) too. Five main characteristics of intercultural dialogue are as follows: firstly, German actors have played a more active role in implementing intercultural dialogue than Iranian actors; secondly, Iranian actors have not been as active as German actors but have mostly accompanied German actors; thirdly, besides classic activities like seminars and round tables, there have been new forms of intercultural

dialogue activities such as exchange of interns; fourthly, there has been a high number of intercultural dialogue activities in the academic field; fifthly, the activities were adversely affected by the presidential change in Iran from Khatami to Ahmadinejad.

Key Words

intercultural dialogue, foreign cultural policy, Iran, Germany, Muslim world, Western world

Chapter 1: Introduction

In August 2015, when cultural relations between Iran and Germany were revived after the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, known also as the Iran nuclear deal, news broke of the cancelation of a performance by the *Berlin Staatskapelle* orchestra in Iran. The conductor, Daniel Barenboim, would not be allowed to perform in the country. Barenboim had been invited, among other cultural actors, academics and artists, to accompany Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the German foreign minister at that time, on his visit to Tehran. However, because of his Israeli nationality, Barenboim was treated differently from other members of the entourage. The performance was initially postponed by Iran, but later Hossein Noushabadi, the speaker of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, stated that the objection was not to a performance by the Berlin orchestra in Iran, but to the head of the orchestra:

“He has multiple nationalities and one of them is Israeli. Iran does not recognize the Zionist regime and will not work together with artists of this regime” (Husband 2015).

Not only were the Iranian authorities intent on canceling the performance, the Israeli cultural minister Miri Regev also tried to prevent the German state from allowing Daniel Barenboim to perform in Iran. It was reported in the news that she had posted on Facebook that she would send a letter to the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, requesting her to block the concert:

“In my letter I shall stress that Daniel Barenboim’s appearance in Iran harms Israel’s efforts to prevent the nuclear agreement and gives encouragement to de-legitimization of Israel” (Daily News 2015).

Because Barenboim had shown solidarity with the Palestinian population and founded a youth orchestra, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, of Israeli, Egyptian, Iranian, Jordanian, Lebanese and Palestinian musicians, he was accused by Regev

of “using culture as a platform for his anti-Israel political views” (Daily News 2015). Reactions of Iranian and Israeli authorities to the performance by Barenboim in Iran suggest that the cancelation of the cultural program was entirely political and the result of the political antagonism between Iran and Israel and had little to do with the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany. Clearly, to understand the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany, it is not enough to concentrate on culture; it is also important to study its political dimension.

The Iranian authorities’ cancelation of the performance illustrates that the foreign cultural policy of Iran and of Germany have deep differences. First there is a question as to the Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany: Were the relevant Iranian authorities aware of the multiple nationalities of Daniel Barenboim and his supportive attitude towards Palestinians? If so, then perhaps allowing the performance to take place could have been construed as Iran, together with Germany, siding with the Palestinians. Cancelation of the performance thus indicates that Iranian foreign cultural policy is affected by political issues and conservative rather than progressive in its decisions in critical situations. If not, it shows that Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany is not sufficiently informed. Furthermore, the fact that the orchestra is led by a person who has multiple nationalities shows that German foreign cultural policy, specifically at the time of Steinmeier, supported making music accessible to people beyond national, religious or ethnic boundaries, as the *Berlin Staatskapelle* orchestra also mentioned in a statement (Iran Daily 28.08.2015). Iran’s cancelation of this performance shows that either this aspect of German foreign cultural policy is not recognized by Iranian foreign cultural policy makers, or that its own foreign cultural policy is so mixed with politics that a straightforward decision cannot be made. Cancelation of the music performance thus suggests that Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany is not clear.

The German authorities were apparently under political pressure to cancel the performance, too. The fact that it was not they but the Iranian authorities who canceled it suggests that the German authorities in charge of foreign cultural policy resisted being influenced by pressures from Israel; at least in this very specific case, they did not stop the performance in order to keep the Israeli government happy. In this case, German foreign cultural policy was differentiated

from other elements of German foreign policy, such as its diplomatic and economic policies, and the decision made separately. Moreover, organization of this big celebratory cultural performance with input from the German government, at a time when the international political atmosphere towards Iran had just changed positively, indicates that German foreign cultural policy had continued its cultural connections with Iran from earlier times. If the cultural performance was to take place, it was unlikely to be initiated from *Stunde Null* [zero] and solely because of the open atmosphere after the Iran nuclear deal; it was likely to be initiated because of a distinct foreign cultural policy on Germany's part towards Iran.

One year after cancelation of the music performance, another cultural event, this time scheduled to take place in Berlin, was canceled in December 2016. This was a planned exhibition of Western modern art collected more than three decades earlier by Farah Diba, the wife of Iran's then king Mohammad Reza Shah. Following Frank-Walter Steinmeier's visit to Iran in 2015, the idea of holding this exhibition was suggested jointly by senior officials of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art and the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation. However, it did not take place, because the Iranian authorities failed to provide an export permit, a necessary piece of paperwork to transfer the paintings to Berlin on schedule (The Local 27.12.2016, Zeit Online 27.12.2016). It seems that the resignation of Ali Janati, the minister of Islamic Culture and Guidance, and growing political sensitivities regarding showing an art collection of the pre-revolutionary rulers of Iran, played a role in delaying the export permit. Consequently, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation canceled the contract for the exhibition because of the failure to meet the agreed opening date and the impossibility of planning for an uncertain event.

Two points are relevant in considering these cancelations: Firstly, it seems that a mixture of political and institutional or organizational problems influence the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other and consequently hinder cultural relations between them. Secondly, it is significant that, despite these problems, something exists between Iran and Germany that prevents them from giving up on their cultural relationship. Events such as music performances and art exhibitions are not the only cultural exchanges between Iran and Germany. There are other cultural programs, such as German language courses (like those

held by the Goethe Institute), academic exchanges (like scholarship opportunities offered by the DAAD for Iranian students) and interfaith discussions (like seminars which have been held by Rayzani¹), which, far from the mainstream media's spotlight and therefore the critical attention of opponents, have continued for several years. Parts of those cultural programs have been implemented during the last two decades in the framework of "intercultural dialogue". This indicates that Iran and Germany have showed a specific interest in intercultural dialogue through different discourses. Studying cultural activities between Iran and Germany in the framework of intercultural dialogue is significant because they have survived during the last two decades despite political tensions and institutional inefficiencies.

Intercultural dialogue is a general and abstract concept that has attracted attention at international level in different contexts. The first is its role as an instrument of the Middle East peace process, especially in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. The second is the post-9/11 era, including the Afghan and Iraqi wars and occupations. Intercultural dialogue in this context was introduced as a tool of the *war on terror*. The third context is the Western-Muslim relationship with a domestic or regional aspect, for instance in regard to the integration of Muslim immigrants in European/Western society. Germany is a good example, as it has received labor immigrants from Turkey and the Middle East since the 1950s; another is the attention the Iranian government has paid to intercultural dialogue since the late 20th century, as a way of bringing itself out of international isolation and re-constructing its relationship with the West. Both these examples are explored in subchapter 1.1. However, the point of reviewing these three contexts is to show that intercultural dialogue has played a role beyond international relations. The hypothesis is that it has also done so in the countries' foreign cultural policy. This is an aspect of their intercultural dialogue that has been neglected in recent literature. In analyzing what role it has played in Iranian and German foreign cultural policy towards each other, this study explores its specific discourses in the respective countries, the cultural actors that implemented them, and their aims in doing so.

¹ Rāyzani is the branch office of the Iranian Organization of Islamic Culture and Communication in Germany. It is the official cultural representative of the Iranian government in Germany, but it has some differences from the "cultural attaché". This point will be explained in detail in 6.1.1.

1.1 Discourses Relating to Intercultural Dialogue in Germany and Iran

The term “intercultural dialogue” has often been used by international organizations such as the UN and EU to mean a process of open and respectful exchange between different individuals and groups. However, this definition is very abstract and general. It is no surprise that it has not been perceived and articulated in a common and coherent way in Iranian and German society, as it has emerged through different discourses, historical backgrounds and government initiatives in both countries. The cultural actors and institutions implementing it have therefore had different aims and procedures. The difference between discourses of intercultural dialogue in Iran and Germany makes investigating its role in their respective foreign cultural policy towards each other all the more fascinating.

Intercultural dialogue is articulated in Iran through discourses of “interfaith dialogue” and “dialogue among civilizations”, while in Germany it is found in discourses of the German Islam Conference (although this discourse has a domestic function and aims at Muslim immigrants in Germany, not Muslims all over the world) and “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” (also known as “intercultural dialogue” or “dialogue of cultures”). Discourses of intercultural dialogue in both societies have attracted attention beyond the political rhetoric of their politicians. Within these discourses, some Iranian and German cultural actors and institutions run projects intended for both German and Iranian participants. Surprisingly, it was found during this study that the German and Iranian organizers of those initiatives were rarely informed of their respective counterparts. They operated like single-tasking cultural actors, concentrating on each other’s public (Iranian and German participants), but with little relevant information (or concern) about the organizers of cultural activities in the other country within the intercultural dialogue discourse.

On the German side, however, an integrated approach to implementing cultural activities for the Iranian and German public has been observed (these points will be discussed in detail in chapters 5 and 6). German cultural actors have shown

more interest in the Iranian public than in Iranian cultural partners (any actor who has an interest in cooperating in intercultural dialogue). It was remarkable to talk to a former director of a German institute, for example: When asked why specific attention was not given to Iran in his institute's cultural activities, he replied that Iran had never involved itself in intercultural dialogue (Maaß, personal communication, 2015).

Meanwhile, the Iranian side was not sufficiently informed about German actors in intercultural dialogue. Some Iranian cultural institutions have got to know some German cultural institutions, and several Iranian participants, including academics, pupils, artists and theologians, have participated in intercultural dialogue activities organized by German actors. But still, on the Iranian side there has been very little knowledge of German institutions that specifically implemented intercultural dialogue with Muslim countries. A former member of staff of an Iranian cultural institute was asked why it had never cooperated with a German cultural institute that specifically implemented activities under intercultural dialogue. He responded, very confidently, that there had been no intercultural dialogue institution in the world, including Germany, before the idea of "dialogue among civilizations" was introduced by the Iranian president Mohammad Khatami in 1998.

In the course of developing this study and scrutinizing publications of Iranian and German foreign affairs ministries and cultural institutes, media records and books, as well as interviewing officers of relevant organizations, diplomats and experts on both sides, quite the opposite of what the German and Iranian actors expressed initially emerged: Not only has intercultural dialogue, within different discourses, attracted the attention of the Iranian and German states rhetorically, both states have also initiated official procedures and action plans, commissioned certain institutions and at different times given state and parastatal institutes, civil society, and volunteer groups opportunities to implement intercultural dialogue with other countries. It is significant that implementing these procedures was a step towards practically achieving a dialogue between Muslim and Western countries in both countries. Muslim countries were the target groups of the European-Islamic cultural dialogue on the German side, so it seems logical that Iran is also among them. Meanwhile, Western countries were target groups for interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations on the Iranian side, so there are enough reasons

to imagine that Germany, as a Western country, is also a target group for intercultural dialogue discourses on the Iranian side.

The following account reflects the interest of the Iranian and German governments in developing intercultural dialogue between their countries. In September 1998, the fifth Iranian president, Mohammad Khatami, went onto the stage of the 53rd General Assembly of the UN to present his speech (Khatami 1388 [2009]: 15). Iran before that time had been automatically associated in the international realm with radical behaviors such as the American Embassy hostage crisis in Iran in 1979, which happened after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, and the Mykonos assassination, which, according to a German court verdict, was organized by some Iranian politicians in 1992 (Küntzel 2009: 187-190, Mousavian 2008: 114-120). However, what Iran's representative put to the UN this time had nothing to do with those typical images; the speech communicated a friendly and peace-seeking image of Iran, with a simple and general, but promising, message: a call for dialogue among civilizations. It attracted considerable attention from member states of the UN, including countries such as Israel and the USA, traditionally classed as hostile towards Iran in the international realm. The proposal to name 2001 the year of "dialogue among civilizations" was approved unanimously by all members (Hafeznia 2006: 21). Among the countries encouraging Iran's approach to intercultural dialogue, Germany is significant. It not only celebrated the International Year of Dialogue among Civilizations -with the assistance of its ministries and civil society it implemented 90 projects, more than the contribution of any other country member of the UN (Picco 2001)-, it also strengthened its relationship with Iran after the cold relations following the Mykonos assassinations. Soon enough, after Khatami's speech, *Hermes Kreditversicherungs AG* [German credit insurance company] increased the investment ceiling in Iran.² In 2000, the presidents of the two countries, Johannes Rau and Mohammad Khatami, met and shook hands in Weimar in front of TV and radio journalists, cultural and political activists, while some opponents of the event protested. The presidents inaugurated a memorial on

² Hermes insurance, according to Mousavian, has increased its investment ceiling in Iran in different periods and in different ways since 1992. For instance, there is a record of it agreeing to cover a total of 9.3 billion Deutsche Mark in 1992 (Mousavian 2008: 51) and an individual project in Iran worth 1 billion Dollars following the Paris nuclear agreement in 2004 (Mousavian 2012: 12). It is also important to mention that not only this German agency but also some British and Italian agencies, following the presidency of Mohammad Khatami in 1997, started to restore coverage for risks in Iran after a two- to four-year hiatus between 1994 and 1996 (Kielmas 1998).

Beethovenplatz in the city of Weimar consisting of two simple stone seats and called the Goethe-Hafiz Memorial, symbolic of intercultural dialogue between two national poets of Germany and Iran, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Mohammad Hafiz Shirazi (Einboden 2014: 2).

Despite Iran's efforts, the support of international organizations such as the UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the active role of some Western countries such as Germany to form the skeletal framework of dialogue on the level of international relations, some analyses show that it failed to mobilize countries around the world to contribute to peace (these analyses will be reviewed in chapter 3). Iran "was not in Western eyes the most credible candidate to lead a global movement promoting cultural tolerance" (Puchala et al. 2015: 131), so the effort failed from the diplomatic point of view. At the same time, Iran did not represent the entire Islamic world in the context of dialogue between Western and Muslim civilizations (Tazmini 2009: 82). Even if Iran is considered to represent Shia Islam, it failed to represent the majority of the Islamic world, who are followers of Sunni Islam.

If intercultural dialogue in the framework of dialogue among civilizations is not considered to be significantly successful on an international level, it is important to understand why and how it has attracted the attention of the Iranian and German state. It is also crucial to identify which Iranian and German institutions and individuals have played a role as actors of intercultural dialogue.

Attention to the issue of intercultural dialogue in Germany has its roots in the post-World War II era. Germany has since tried to mediate an image for itself internationally that has the least familiarity with the idealistic and nationalist views of the former Nazi regime. Germany strove to express itself as a *Kulturnation* [cultural nation] and make itself known as a country of education, technology and art.³ More efforts were made in the 1970s, at the time of Willy Brandt, when the idea of "culture as a two way street" was introduced to German foreign policy (Paschalidis 2014: 464). This idea was strengthened by speeches of German politicians such as Roman Herzog and Johannes Rau, former German presidents, and structural changes which led to more opportunities for

³ As will be discussed in 2.1, attempts to mediate Germany as a cultural nation have emerged since the 19th century and sometimes been interrupted for political reasons. In the post-WW II era, this approach aimed to show that race played a lesser role in being German, and democratic values and culture, such as art and music, had more to do with the image of this nation.

*Mittlerorganisationen*⁴ and civil society. There will be an opportunity to return to this point in chapter 2. Hence Khatami's idea of dialogue among civilizations was encouraged by the German politicians, not because it was an entirely new idea, as some officials in Iran seem to believe, but because it fitted the approach that German foreign cultural policy had taken since (at least) the 1970s. Meanwhile, events such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the establishment of the Alliance of Civilizations in the UN in 2005, and the Arab Spring in 2011 amplified the attention of the German state to intercultural dialogue with Muslim countries.

The interest of Iran in intercultural dialogue has a more complex context. In the era after the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian state attempted to create an image for itself that distanced it considerably from the pro-Western policies of its former government under Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. It strove to present Iranian culture as an idealistic Islamic and revolutionary culture. It claimed to unify Muslim countries of the world and act against imperialism, although realizing those ideological aims was interrupted for at least two reasons: Firstly, the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) affected Iranian foreign cultural policy, especially towards its neighbor countries, so its focus in cases like Central Asian countries was on cultural rather than religious and revolutionary aims (Johnston 2007, Wastnidge 2014). Secondly, Iran was unable to pursue an integrated foreign cultural policy because its decision-making system was governed by a religiously and a democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state, which often disagreed over foreign policy issues. Specifically, in the post-Iran-Iraq war era, what the religiously legitimized sector of the Iranian state endeavored to mediate as Iran's culture abroad was not necessarily the same as that of the democratically legitimized sector. More details of this background will be discussed in chapter 2.

With Iranian foreign cultural policy not strongly oriented on its idealistic aims and its decision makers not always in agreement on the details, two discourses have emerged, interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. Interfaith dialogue is a discourse encouraged by the religious sector of the Iranian state, although its roots are originally in the initiatives of some Iranian religious intellectuals that started to open up communication between Iran and the world in the early post-

⁴ A *Mittlerorganisation* is an organization whose financial source is the state but which is directed by non-state actors (Maaß 2005 and 2015). It is also called a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization (QUANGO) or semi-public administrative body. This type of organization will be discussed more in 2.4.1 and 6.2.

Revolution era. Two of those intellectuals today are dissident theologians (Hidalgo et al. 2016: 324), and one lives in exile (Soroush 2009: x). Dialogue among civilizations, meanwhile, emerged in 1997 as a main manifestation of President Khatami, a reformist politician, among other things as a way of establishing a promising relationship with the West (Tazmini 2009). But it did not reflect the view of the entire Iranian state. The religiously legitimated sector, for different reasons which will be discussed in chapter 5, was either against it or not very enthusiastic about it. Khatami's successor introduced other discourses in the fields of nuclear power, foreign threats and political repression (Warnaar 2013), which had nothing to do with intercultural dialogue but were more sympathetic to the foreign policy objectives of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. Contrary to the views of German participants in the study, the existence of the two discourses suggests that an Iranian version of intercultural dialogue does exist. The presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005-2013), his radical anti-Israeli rhetoric, negotiations between the West and Iran over the issue of nuclear power, and finally, in 2013, the presidency of Hassan Rouhani, a centrist and reformist politician, redirected the Iranian state's attention towards the issue of intercultural dialogue with Western countries.

Iranian and German interest in intercultural dialogue raises the question of how and why it fitted into the different foreign cultural policies of these countries. It seems that cultural activities which were implemented as intercultural dialogue had specific characteristics that enabled them to survive and continue, with no or only rare interruption, for nearly two decades. These characteristics seemed to match the expectations of the democratically and the religiously legitimized sectors of the Iranian state. They also seemed to match the expectations of the German state.

To understand these characteristics, it is essential to analyze how intercultural dialogue has been investigated academically, in which fields it has been implemented, and with which type of participants (for instance experts and key political figures, or pupils and students). The type of intercultural dialogue activities implemented in the context of foreign cultural policy is key in reviewing the literature. Questions of intercultural dialogue and interests of political and cultural actors or governments are central to most of the research and investigations. But what is important in this study is how and why intercultural

dialogue has attracted the attention of Iran and Germany, and what its role is in the context of their foreign cultural policy towards each other. The next subchapter considers the main question of the research in closer detail.

1.2 The Research Question in Detail

This study attempts to answer the following research question:

What role has intercultural dialogue played with regard to the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other, and why?

The next step in defining the research question is to explain each concept in its formulation. These concepts are explained in 1.2.1.

1.2.1 Key Definitions

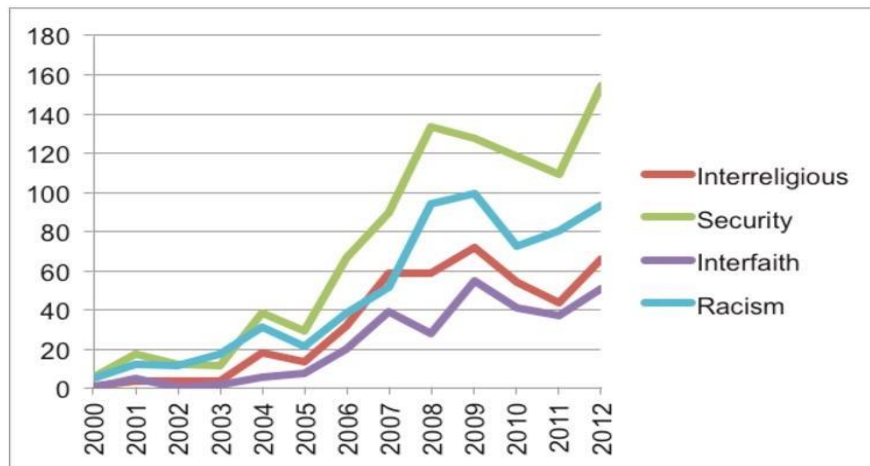
It is possible to understand the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany if key concepts such as “intercultural dialogue” are clearly defined. Here, six key terms will be explained.

1.2.1.1 Intercultural Dialogue in Academic Debates

Before defining intercultural dialogue in this research, it is important to briefly look at how it is reflected in academic debates. Terms such as “dialogue”, “culture”, “interculturality” and “multiculturalism” have a long tradition in academic discussions in disciplines such as philosophy, social science and cultural studies, while *intercultural* dialogue has attracted attention only in limited studies, mostly conducted by international organizations such as the EU and the UN. Perhaps the UN members’ acceptance of naming 2001 the year of dialogue among civilizations was symbolic of a culmination of global attention to the issue of intercultural dialogue at the beginning of the 21st century. In 2005 the UN established the Alliance of Civilizations, and in 2008 the EU declared the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. It is clear that there has been a worldwide effort to revive intercultural dialogue and keep it alive in the international realm. But it should not be forgotten that the initial flame of attention to the issue of dialogue among civilizations was ignited years earlier. In a policy report published by the UN University, references to intercultural dialogue and related terms by Director Generals of UNESCO emerged after the 1980s, peaked in 2001 and fluctuated up to 2015 (Bloom 2013: 4). Another report of the UN

University also illustrated that the number of UN documents containing the terms “racism”, “interfaith”, “security” and “interreligious” in combination with the expression “intercultural dialogue” increased between 2000 and 2012. “Racism” was a key argument associated with the term “intercultural dialogue” in the first half of the last decade (2000-2004); nevertheless, its importance gradually decreased, and “security” became an issue closely connected with the concept of intercultural dialogue (Bello 2013: 4). In figure 1, Bello visualizes how use of the concept of security in association with intercultural dialogue reached its peak in UN documents in 2008 and 2012:

Figure 1. Number of UNESCO documents containing four core phrases associated with the concept of intercultural dialogue



Source: Valeria Bello (2013: 4)

Besides a high number of references to the issue of intercultural dialogue in official documents and by the Director Generals of UNESCO, the efforts of academics such as Hans Köchler, an Austrian philosophy professor who in 1972 suggested that UNESCO should hold a conference on dialogue between different cultures (Köchler 2012: 2), have been considerable. The theory of the “clash of civilizations” of Samuel Huntington, which challenges Islamic civilization as a threat to Western civilization (Huntington 1996: 28), should not be neglected as one of the factors to attract the attention of the UN members to cultural dialogue as a possible solution and accept 2001 being named the year of dialogue among civilizations, as mentioned above. The issue of intercultural dialogue was also taken more seriously by some governments after the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Puchala et al. 2015: 131).

The huge amount of attention to the issue of intercultural dialogue at international level raises some questions. If intercultural dialogue is such a prominent topic in the international realm, why is it mostly visible in studies by international organizations? Does it attract any attention from independent academics? Is there any study providing evidence that intercultural dialogue can realistically contribute to problems such as racism and security? Or is intercultural dialogue still expressed as a hope and a strategy? Why should members of the UN believe in the function of intercultural dialogue in the first place? They not only support it rhetorically; some of them, like Germany and Iran, also take it seriously in foreign cultural policy. What are the actual aims that states pursue in supporting intercultural dialogue on a national level?

Studies that consider intercultural dialogue can be divided into two categories. The first considers it theoretically and conceptually. “Dialogue” is argued to be a Greek notion referring to a process of communication between two sides, although it has been emphasized that it is not limited to practical action and is also a metaphorical and abstract approach that reflects interaction between thoughts and philosophies (Linell 2009: 2-3). Some studies also emphasize the distinction between it and other forms of communication, such as encouragement (Swidler 2007: 6-7) and negotiation (Abu-Nimer et al. 2007: 8, Romano 2013). In the field of hermeneutics, Hans-Georg Gadamer argued that there is no absolute knowledge. Understanding a text is actually a process in which both the text and the interpreter, the two sides of communication, find themselves in a particular “horizon” or historical context. It is called the “fusion of horizons”, which indicates that people exist neither in a closed nor unique horizon (Gadamer 1980, Gadamer 1997). This point is relevant in dialogue between people from different cultures, because it reminds us that each side comes to a dialogue with his or her own self-interpreted story.

The second category of studies considers intercultural dialogue as a practical way of achieving specific aims in social life that have to do with solving problems. Such studies discuss topics including applying intercultural dialogue to contribute to peace (Carpenter 2011), coexistence of people from different faiths (Ayoub 2004, Güzelmansur 2009, Kaulig 2004), conflict resolution in multiethnic societies (Seidova 2011), promoting integration of immigrants, especially in the European context (Foote 2005, Pinheiro 2008, Wilk-Woś 2010), strengthening

regional and global security (Atwan 2010, Bourquin 2003), development of the education system (Yaron 1993) and civil society (Anderson 2010, ITAD/COWI 2012, Kaur-Stubbs 2010), and women's rights (Jaggar 2005). It is important to remember that most of these studies are done or commissioned by international organizations, such as the UN and UNESCO, and by multinational organizations, such as the EU. In most of these studies, the concept and characteristics of intercultural dialogue are not defined; it is therefore hard to decide whether intercultural dialogue has achieved the specific aims, or failed.

Some studies belong to both categories. They consider dialogue between specific groups like Muslim and Western countries, but discuss them in a general way. For instance, Naika Foroutan in her study talks about cultural dialogue as a contribution to resolving cultural conflicts between Muslim and Western countries. But Foroutan's discussions, rather than being connected to a specific case study, argue in an abstract way. For instance, it is not clear exactly which Muslim or Western country she means, or whether she means Muslims in Western countries (Foroutan 2004).

The first shortcoming of these two categories of studies is that they do not include the empirical and theoretical dimensions of intercultural dialogue in their analysis. The studies on intercultural dialogue fail theoretically and conceptually to connect it to political realities and case studies; meanwhile, studies that consider intercultural dialogue in a practical sense mostly do not analyze it in the country-specific, political and conceptual contexts. Secondly, it seems that the first category of studies refers to homogenous societies and metaphorical contexts (thoughts, knowledge), whereas the second sometimes addresses multicultural groups inside one society and sometimes different cultural groups in different societies. Thirdly, the practical aims of intercultural dialogue have hardly been examined or investigated at country/state level. The question why states should rationally have an interest in intercultural dialogue has only been considered vaguely in the context of peace and conflict studies, and the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of different countries has been neglected in studies to date. This study attempts to fill that gap.

Some studies consider the activities of "Arab-European dialogue", "critical dialogue" and "constructive dialogue" in the policies of various countries.

However, these activities were implemented to achieve political and economic aims in the foreign policy of European and Muslim countries. Arab-European dialogue, as a study by Bat Ye'or argues, was intended to reach agreement over the price of oil and some political issues, such as the peace process in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Ye'or 2002). Critical and constructive dialogue, as Seyyed Hossein Mousavian and Matthias Struwe discuss in their studies, was implemented between EU countries and Iran and aimed at specific political and human rights issues (Mousavian 2008, Struwe 1998). Therefore there is a degree of convergence between the gap that this study seeks to fill and the study by Struwe and Mousavian, because both analyze activities which are articulated as “dialogue” and supported by states. This study, however, will analyze dialogue activities that are supported by states under their foreign cultural policy, not in the framework of their economic and political foreign policy.

It is also relevant to consider academic debates which have taken place in the field of the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany and the relationship between them. Several studies analyze the foreign cultural policy of Germany (Andrei/Rittberger 2005, Hoffmann 2005, Maaß 2005b, Schreiner 2011), and a few consider Iran's foreign cultural policy (Johnston 2007, von Maltzahn 2015), although none considers intercultural dialogue as a specific instrument of foreign cultural policy. In some studies, too, cultural activities such as academic exchanges between Iran and Germany (Kochwasser 1961, Martin 1959) have been reviewed and analyzed in the historical relationship between the two countries. However, no study has considered cultural activities implemented as intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany in a historical context.

To fill these gaps, the study analyzes the role that activities under intercultural dialogue plays in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other. The next subchapter will explain in detail what the research question and subquestions of this study are, and which methodology best fits the research question.

1.2.1.2 Defining “intercultural dialogue” in this Research

This study does not treat intercultural dialogue as a general and abstract concept to be implemented between different groups of people, divided by their religion

and ethnicity. It considers it instead to refer to cultural activities which have been implemented or supported by the Iranian and German state for both Iranian and German participants. The notion of “dialogue” in intercultural dialogue describes communication between the Iranian and German sides, and the notion of “cultural” places it in the cultural rather than military, commercial and economic fields. All theoretical views of culture and dialogue are respected in this study, but it does not intend to examine those theories in the field study. Dialogue and culture have their local discourses in Iranian and German society, which were specifically reflected on in 1.1. Those discourses simply lead the researcher to where to look for intercultural dialogue activities in an Iranian and German field study.

It is important to explain which Iranian and German actors and institutes have been active in implementing cultural activities as intercultural dialogue. The case study thus includes Iranian institutions and individuals that have been assisted by the Iranian state to implement cultural activities within the framework of interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations with Western countries generally and with Germany specifically. It similarly includes German institutions and individuals that have been assisted by the German state to implement cultural activities under the discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue with Muslim countries generally and with Iran specifically.

Cultural products that reflect the influence of Iranian and German culture on each other, such as translations of German books in Farsi and vice versa, are not included in the case study, unless they are produced as part of the intercultural dialogue activities of the actors mentioned in this study.

In this study, intercultural dialogue is defined as specific cultural activities, including seminars, conferences, academic and educational exchanges, cultural exhibitions, co-written books, and internship programs implemented by Iranian or German actors for Iranian and German participants. Cultural activities organized by Iranian and German actors exclusively for Iranian participants or exclusively for German participants, or for Iranian participants and non-German participants, or German participants and non-Iranian participants, therefore cannot be counted as “intercultural dialogue” in this study.

This study does not set out to examine whether the content of cultural activities corresponds to the characteristics of dialogue in the view of scholars. It does not intend to define intercultural dialogue in the context of Iranian and German foreign cultural policies; it intends to analyze the projects that have been called intercultural dialogue by Iranian and German actors and to understand what role they played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other.

The role of intercultural dialogue is analyzed in this study precisely and specifically *with regard to* the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany; it considers the role of cultural activities that are implemented under the discourse of intercultural dialogue in the context of foreign cultural policy, not their role in the foreign policy or domestic cultural policy of the two countries.

1.2.1.3 Defining “Foreign Cultural Policy” in this Research

A distinction is made between “foreign cultural policy” and “cultural policy”: cultural policy refers to policies that a government makes regarding art and culture on a domestic level, even though in the era of globalization it is difficult to imagine that a state or a cultural actor can limit the effects of cultural activities to inside its national borders. Foreign cultural policy refers to the policies a government makes to represent itself culturally abroad. Normally, the state actors in charge of cultural policy inside a country are different from those in charge of its foreign cultural policy. This is true for Iran and Germany, though there is some overlap in both cases. In Germany, the federal government, and the foreign ministry specifically, is in charge of foreign cultural policy. For instance, it defines goals and reports annually on activities. According to one of the annual reports, foreign cultural policy “is an indispensable component of German foreign policy” (Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 4). In Iran, meanwhile, foreign cultural policy is decided by a sometimes unfavorable mixture of both the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance and the *Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations*. It is executed under the supervision of the Iranian ambassadors, who are appointed by the Iranian foreign ministry.

The difference between “foreign cultural policy” and “foreign policy” should be noted, too. A country’s foreign policy consists of strategies and activities undertaken by the state (usually head of the government, ministry of foreign

affairs) to realize its national interests and to achieve specific goals in international relations. Cultural relations is one of the components that, together with others such as economic, commercial, energy, technological, educational and diplomatic relations, help a government to achieve its foreign policy objectives. “Foreign cultural policy” in this study specifically addresses that part of the decision-making system that is responsible for the cultural relations of Iran with Germany and vice versa in the context of their foreign policies. It addresses neither the entire foreign policy of Germany and Iran nor other components thereof, such as economic and commercial relations.

As will be explained in chapter 3 at length, there are different expressions of cultural policy between countries, such as cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy and foreign cultural policy. This study focuses on “foreign cultural policy” because it is intended to create an image, culturally, for a country abroad, not to convince the public in other countries of a specific issue that is important to one country, which is the intention of cultural and public diplomacy. One of the scholars to specifically analyze foreign cultural policy is Düwell, who convincingly differentiates between *Kulturelle Ausstrahlung/cultural broadcasting* and *Kulturpropaganda/cultural propaganda* (Düwell 2005). Some theoretical views on foreign cultural policy, like that of Kurt Düwell, are taken into account in this study, but because the study is based on grounded theory (which will be explained in 1.3.3), no theoretical view of foreign cultural policy will be tested here.

The term “foreign cultural policy” in this research refers to basic principles, mechanisms and activities that guide the Iranian and German governments on the implementation of cultural activities in other countries generally and in the respective other country (or for an Iranian and German public) specifically.

1.2.1.4 Defining “playing a role” in this Research

To understand what role intercultural dialogue has played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other, it is necessary to understand the aims and goals of each country’s foreign cultural policy generally and towards the other country specifically. If intercultural dialogue has (or has not, or has only

partly) been able to achieve certain aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany and vice versa, this study analyzes what its role was, and why.

To a large degree, “playing a role” refers to the the study’s findings on the aims of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy. Did intercultural dialogue assist foreign cultural policy in achieving the countries’ respective aims? Did it hinder them? Did intercultural dialogue become a very advanced tool in the hands of the foreign cultural policy actors for achieving their aims? Or was it just an empty phrase and nothing practical was achieved by it? If so, why and how is that the case? At the same time, it is important in this study to know what the characteristics of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany are, because then the role of intercultural dialogue can be discussed more effectively.

The role of intercultural dialogue can potentially be significant to achieving general or specific foreign cultural policy aims of both Iran and Germany. Similarly, it might hinder achievement of those aims. That is why it is essential to investigate what the role of intercultural dialogue in foreign cultural policy actually is.

1.2.2.5 Defining “why” in this Research

The study includes a critical perspective on the following subjects: (1) Iranian and German foreign cultural policy, its aims and main institutions; (2) actors that implement intercultural dialogue in both countries; (3) characteristics such as fields, participants and forms of intercultural dialogue; (4) meaningful discussion to place intercultural dialogue in the context of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy.

Therefore, the study aims not just to understand what role intercultural dialogue played, but also the causes, reasons and consequences – the “why” – of such a role, with the help of these four critical perspectives.

1.2.3 Period of Analysis

This study covers the years between 1998 and 2013. The starting point and the end have been selected according to the cultural and political situation of Iran, not

Germany. In any dialogue, both sides should have an interest in participation. The German government has long paid attention to the issue of cultural dialogue as one of the main principles of its foreign policy. For instance, Roman Herzog, German president between 1994 and 1999, and Johannes Rau, who held office between 1999 and 2004, paid significant attention to the issue of cultural dialogue in Germany's international relations. Both have published books (Herzog 1999, Rau 2002) and given speeches (Herzog 1995, Herzog 1997) on this issue. Furthermore, as will be discussed in chapter 2, *Auswärtiges Amt* [German foreign ministry] has explicitly devoted attention to the issue of dialogue since 2000, for instance through *Konzept 2000* [concept 2000] and the establishment of an office of dialogue among cultures in the cultural department of German foreign ministry in 2002. Up to the last update of this research in 2016, this particular office still had a budget to fund state, para-state and civil society actors to implement cultural activities towards other countries. That being said, some studies conclude that German foreign policy changed between 2007 and 2013 from a predominantly normative orientation to a more utilitarian approach – they specifically refer to the foreign policies of the governments of Chancellors Helmut Kohl, Gerhard Schröder and Angela Merkel (Daehnhardt 2008). These changed objectives in German foreign policy do not mean that Germany discarded cultural dialogue with other countries between 1998 and 2013.

By comparison, discourses of intercultural dialogue on the Iranian side have had ups and downs. Before Khatami proposed the idea of dialogue among civilizations to the UN in 1998, the country was known for its radical and revolutionary policies; 1998 is therefore a clear (re)starting point for dialogue-based foreign cultural policy in Iran. Implementation of and cooperation in intercultural dialogue from 2005 to 2013, under President Ahmadinejad, faced some difficulties. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.4. Again, following the victory in 2013 of a reformist presidential candidate, Hassan Rouhani, there have been indications that Iran intends to resume the intercultural dialogue approach in its foreign relations. Khatami himself in an article in *The Guardian* warns the West not to turn its back on the opportunity of diplomatic relations with Iran. He says: “President Rouhani's platform of prudence and hope is a practical translation of the idea of dialogue among nations into the realm of politics” (Khatami 2013).

The timeframe between 1998 and 2013 was selected because it includes the rule of both an outspoken reformist president, Mohammad Khatami, and a committed conservative, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. As such, it can illustrate how intercultural dialogue played a role in Iran's foreign cultural policy towards Germany in changing circumstances. German foreign cultural policy towards Iran during this period (and before and after) remained relatively stable, so the choice of timeframe for the analysis of German policy is less relevant. The research question points to the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany. So studying the content of intercultural dialogue in this period, 1998-2013, fits methodologically because the policy of one side of the dialogue fluctuated considerably while the other did not.

1.3 Methodological Framework

Most of the theories reviewed for this study are in fields such as philosophy and hermeneutics. Because no theoretical guideline was available to identify the role of intercultural dialogue in the two countries' foreign cultural policy, this study has applied "grounded theory" as the methodological framework. The central point of grounded theory is that the researcher does not enter the field study to test a specific theory, but to analyze different texts (including reports, interviews and observations) from the field study and construct arguments accordingly. The texts are coded in different stages: initial, focused, axial and theoretical. These codes create the final discussions to answer the main question of the study. Grounded theory applied in this study follows leading scholars (Glaser/Strauss 2009, Strauss/Corbin 1990, Thornberg/Charmaz 2014), specifically those with constructivist approaches (Charmaz 2009, Charmaz 2014). Chapter 4 presents details on the use of grounded theory in this study.

1.4 The Position of the Researcher within the Research

This subchapter will explain what the position of the researcher in this study has been.

Being born, growing up, studying journalism and cultural studies in Iran, working as a journalist and being active in different NGOs gave the researcher a valuable

opportunity to understand social, cultural and political conditions of Iranian society and governmental and non-governmental organizations. This native observation informed the selection of the discourse of intercultural dialogue, relevant cultural organizations and interview partners in Iran. The opportunity to do a PhD in Germany, getting to know the German cultural *Mittlerorganisationen* like the DAAD, and participating in its cultural exchanges, including *Hochschuldialog mit der islamischen Welt* [university dialogue with the Islamic world], meanwhile enabled the researcher to identify the possible discourse of intercultural dialogue, case study organizations and interview partners in Germany.

Both of the above points may challenge the researcher's objectivity. Bias in some regards is undeniable, but the researcher applied the method of grounded theory and used encounters in both German and Iranian case studies to become increasingly tied to the subject matter and ask questions comparatively; for instance, if Iranian interviewees have safety concerns about participating in this study, why is that the case? What about German interviewees? Do they also have security concerns? If so, why? If not, why not?

Sometimes, feedback from interviewees on both sides suggested that they did not find the researcher sympathetic to their own activities. For instance, in an informal chat at the end of an interview with a director of division 609 of the cultural department of the German foreign affairs ministry, the researcher was asked about any surprising observations she had made. She mentioned a kind of German *exceptionalism* in the behavior of German participants in her primary observation. The comment angered the interviewee, who wanted to know whether this was a finding of the study, and if so, on what evidence.⁵ Another example is from an interview with an advisor of Mohammad Khatami about working procedures in the NGO for Dialogue among Civilizations. One of the questions was about his view of corruption in the financial affairs of this NGO, as a right-wing Iranian newspaper had written an article about it (Anbarluee 15.10.2015). This interviewee was so annoyed by the question that he wanted to stop the interview.

⁵ Some observations of pride in German values and the German education system among the German interviewees leads to the hypothesis of "German exceptionalism", like that proposed by Seymour Martin Lipset with "American exceptionalism". This study could not test the hypothesis because its aim was not to explore unarticulated beliefs of the participants. It is a fascinating topic for investigation in future studies and will be discussed in 8.4.

He finally advised the researcher to focus on political activities of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state against the dialogue among civilizations, and not on the NGO's financial affairs. Such feedback is perceived as evidence of the researcher's objectivity, or at least critical approach, to the subject of the study. It suggests that the researcher, as an Iranian, was not distracted by promises of dialogue among civilizations in the Iranian field study. Nor was she, as an Iranian student who left Iran for political reasons and to study in Germany, much impressed by the aims that "European-Islamic cultural dialogue" claims to achieve.

1.5 Structure of Chapters

This study is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 has introduced the relevance and significance of the research topic. It has also provided a brief overview of discourses of intercultural dialogue in Iranian and German society. Part of this chapter was devoted to discussing intercultural dialogue in international and academic debate as well as details of the research question.

Chapter 2 will present an overview of the historical and political relationship between Iran and Germany. Although it is not a study on the history of the two countries, it considers academic views on the construction of the Iranian and German nation-states and the multi-dimensional historical relationship between them. This chapter also considers organized cultural and social activities between Iran and Germany in history and provides a short overview of changes in their political structure and the influences these changes had on the respective state's approach to culture in its foreign relations. In particular, changes in the German political structure after World War II and in the Iranian political structure after the Islamic Revolution are discussed.

Chapter 3 reviews the research and publications on the issue of intercultural dialogue. It reflects theoretical and conceptual approaches to components of the notion of intercultural dialogue: dialogue, culture, interculturality. It also presents a review of studies that have focused on different religious, civilizational and political dimensions of intercultural dialogue. Following these reviews, some gaps

and deficits in the relevant research will be discussed. The academic debate in the realm of intercultural dialogue reflects theoretical consideration of the general concept of dialogue. At the same time, academic debates also reflect practical outcomes of intercultural dialogue in real life, especially in the context of religious and civilizational dialogue and in fields such as education and civil society. However, combining these two approaches has been neglected so far. Another research gap exists in exploring how intercultural dialogue is articulated and interpreted in a given society and what its discourses are. It is then significant to analyze its main characteristics and whether it is practically able to achieve the aims of its implementers, and the reasons for success or failure. Based on these gaps, the research question will be developed at the end of chapter 3.

Chapter 4 focuses specifically on the research methodology. Grounded theory is used for two reasons. Firstly, there is no theory that could efficiently guide this study in analyzing the role of intercultural dialogue in German and Iranian foreign cultural policy. Grounded theory is chosen to help construct a new theoretical discussion from the results of the field study. Secondly, intercultural dialogue that has been expressed in different discourses and in two different countries requires a method of analysis that can deal with highly dissimilar data, political and cultural contexts. Chapter 4 gives an overview of grounded theory and explains how the comparative study on the different levels of actors, aims and activities will be conducted. It also presents the methods used to collect data for this study, including text collection, interviews and observation. It describes data analysis including initial, focused, axial, and theoretical coding, and explains the intermediate phase of memo writing, which played an important role in the qualitative method of this study. Finally, some coding and analysis techniques used in this study will be described at the end of chapter 4.

Chapter 5 concentrates on foreign cultural policy in Iran and Germany. A summary of German foreign cultural policy and its institutions is followed by discussion of the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” within it. Iranian foreign cultural policy and its institutions are then discussed. The discourses of “interfaith dialogue” and “dialogue among civilizations” are analyzed thereafter. Chapter 5 thus presents an analysis of the aims of both countries’ foreign cultural policy and their intercultural dialogue discourses.

Chapter 6 focuses on the Iranian and German institutions and individuals that are actors of intercultural dialogue. Two, Rayzani and the International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations (ICDAC), will be discussed as the main actors on the Iranian side. Four, the Cultural Section of the German embassy in Iran, the DAAD, ifa, and the Goethe Institute, their historical background, aims, structure and practices will be investigated in this chapter. Other German and Iranian institutes and individuals that play a role in intercultural dialogue to a lesser degree will also be discussed. The main characteristics of activities implemented for Iranian and German participants under intercultural dialogue by the actors studied are presented at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 7 presents the results of chapter 6. It applies the analysis of the study to answer the research question, to clarify what role intercultural dialogue with its specific characteristics has played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany. Chapter 7 thereafter argues that intercultural dialogue played a *supplemental* role in both Iranian and German foreign cultural policy towards each other from 1998 to 2013. Because the structure of their foreign cultural policy and the organizational efficiency of their cultural actors are dissimilar, their supplemental role helped them to reach their foreign cultural policy aims in different ways. Germany, given its *integrated* foreign cultural policy and high organizational efficiency, played an active role in achieving the aims of its foreign cultural policy towards Iran. Iran, meanwhile, because of its weaknesses in both respects, could not achieve its aims regarding Germany and has mostly played a supporting rather than initiating role, participating in intercultural dialogue with Germany but not driving it. Furthermore, the domestic and international policies of both Iran and Germany influenced their intercultural dialogue activities towards each other in different ways, too.

Chapter 8 provides further analysis of the key findings, considers the contribution of this research in relation to the results of other studies, outlines perspectives for intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany in the future, and finally recommends topics for future research.

Chapter 2: Context of Intercultural Dialogue between Iran and Germany

The topic of this study is the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany. But why Iran and Germany? Why not Iran and another Western country like France or the USA? Why not Germany and another Muslim country like Morocco or Saudi Arabia? This chapter attempts to present an outline of the political and historical relationship between Iran and Germany. The reason for discussing this issue is that the cultural activities implemented under the specific discourses of intercultural dialogue between 1998 and 2013 did not appear suddenly and without background. Iranian and German people perceive their own nations differently depending on their history and political changes. They have had access to different sources for understanding each other's nations. They have had a historical relationship based on many different motivations, and they have managed to implement some cultural, social, economic and political activities with each other, with or without official contracts. The notion of "dialogue" appeared in the foreign cultural policy of both Germany and Iran, even though their foreign cultural policy was oriented towards "culture" in different ways after World War II and the Islamic Revolution respectively. These issues will be discussed in chapter 2.

This chapter consists of five subchapters. It begins with a reflection on different characteristics of the Iranian and German nations. The focus of this study is not on the experience of participants in Iranian and German intercultural dialogue, but it is relevant to understand the main factors that shaped the German and Iranian nations. Subchapter 2.1 considers these factors. Subchapter 2.2 specifically reflects on how diverse and multiple the initiatives were to create the history and

relationship between Iran and Germany. Based on this discussion, subchapter 2.3 goes on to reflect on the cultural and social activities that Iranian and German partners managed to implement through the will or support of the Iranian and German governments. Subchapter 2.4 considers the term “culture” as a concept for both Iranian and German foreign policy. It tries to portray how and through which historical environment the approach of the German state, mainly after the Second World War, and that of the Iranian state, mainly after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, have been shaped. The last subchapter summarizes the main arguments of chapter 2 in six points.

The rationale behind reflecting on and discussing these historical contexts is firstly to highlight the differences and similarities between the two nations. Secondly, it is to highlight the existence of a paradigm of a relationship underpinned not only by people of both nations but also by the German and Iranian states. They have had an interest in contact with other cultures generally and with each other specifically. This paradigm is important to understand the study as a whole.

2.1 Different Characteristics of the Iranian and German Nations

This subchapter does not aim to go into theories of nationality, identity, nation-building or state-building. It attempts to give an overview of diverse and multi-dimensional characteristics of the German and Iranian nations. Germany is a country in Europe, Iran in Asia. Iran is generally known as a Muslim country, Germany a Western one. This incompatible definition, by religion and by geography, also gives a superficial understanding of people who live in these countries. The history of both Germany and Iran shows that their people, besides being European/Western or Muslim, have been part of a wider region and identified themselves according to diverse characteristics, such as poet, musician, philosopher, open-minded, conservative and secular, rather than Western. To understand the intercultural dialogue context of Germany and Iran, it would make sense to disregard the general labels of “Muslim” and “Western” and quest further into the characteristics of their nations. Even when Iran and Germany did not have their current political borders, they already had a relationship with each other. In

previous times, Germany was identified as part of *das Heilige Römische Reich deutscher Nation* [Holy Roman Empire] or *das Alte Reich* – from the late 15th to early 19th century (Stollberg-Rilinger 2014) – and *Abendland* [Occident]; Iran meanwhile has been mentioned historically as part of Persia – since the emergence of the *Achaemenid* federative state in the sixth century BC until the *Sassanid* period between the third and seventh century (Mojtahed Zadeh 2007: 24) –, the Orient and *Morgenland* [Orient].

Figure 2. A visual overview of the location of Iran and Germany



Source: Google Maps (2013)

Different social and political factors such as war, revolution and changes of political system, as well as religion and cultural heritage have influenced the way people of these regions, today Germany and Iran, have perceived their nations.

German-speaking people in Europe have been known for almost a thousand years. They were identified through numerous Germanic tribes such as Saxons, Franks, Bavarians, Swabians, Silesians, and Thuringians rather than a single state, as David P. Conradt discusses. Different political changes in the territory of the German-speaking people constructed their political entity. Until 1871, the territory was divided into some small kingdoms and two major powers, Prussia and Austria. The efforts of Otto von Bismarck, the first imperial chancellor, to make what was then identified as the German Empire into a classical European power were considerable. Some scholars believe that without him on “top of Prussian politics”, the unification of Germany would not have developed “in quite the same way as it did” (Berghahn 1987: viii). However, as the next political

changes during the 19th century illustrate, the German “state” or “political system” could not play a stable role in shaping the German nation, simply because most of the German political systems were not long-lived.⁶ But exceptionally, in 1949, following the sovereignty of two separate states of East and West Germany (1949-1990), a progressive approach was taken to establishing a stable German political state: in 1990, East Germany integrated its political system into the political system of West Germany, the Federal Republic of Germany. Conradt uses this point to argue that Germany has been governed successfully under a stable political system for six decades:

“During the past decades, the Federal Republic has developed into a strong, dynamic democracy. Unlike the Weimar Republic, the Federal Republic has, since its earliest days, been identified with economic prosperity and foreign and domestic policy successes. There is also considerable evidence that a consensus on democratic values and norms has developed during this period. The vast majority of the population supports this system and believes in its fundamental norms: individual freedom, the rule of law, civil liberties, free political competition, and representative intuitions” (Conradt 2011: 197).

Hence it is likely that the contemporary political system has a significant influence on the German people’s perception of themselves as a nation.

Social and political changes are not the only factors to shape the German nation. It is also shaped by different characteristics of the “culture” of German-speaking people. The Napoleonic Wars, which started from 1803, are believed to be one of the main reasons for bringing to the fore the cultural characteristic of the German nation. As Johann Gottlieb Fichte stated, after the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, the German nation no longer identified itself with its state. Thereafter, concepts of culture vs. civilization⁷ and culture-nation vs. state-nation attracted more attention among the German people (Becker 2011: 29, Brenner et al. 2003: 108). As a result, the German nation attempted to characterize itself according to the culture it had in common with its Western neighbors, such as literature, philosophy, art and music, rather than what it inherited from its own empire, civilization, nobles and aristocrats. Establishment of two cultural institutes, which will be discussed in detail in chapter 6, has a strong connection

⁶ The German Empire (1871-1918), the unstable democratic republic of Weimar (1919-1933), a totalitarian dictatorship of the Nazi regime (1933-1945), a military occupation (1945-1949).

⁷ Culture, generally speaking, refers to the way of life of a people, their arts, language, belief and lifestyle, while civilization refers to cultural embodiment, or what Kant believes to be a technical type of culture. Both concepts are defined in more detail in 3.1.2.

with this historical context. The *Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen* (ifa) [Institute for Foreign Relations], for instance, was founded initially from an organization of the *Museum und Institut zur Kunde des Auslanddeutschtums und zur Förderung deutscher Interessen im Ausland* [Museum and institute on German foreign trade and promoting German interests abroad], established in 1917 under the patronage of King Wilhelm II of Württemberg (Metzinger 2013, Metzinger 2007). The Goethe Institute also dates back to 1923, when the *Deutsche Akademie* (DA) was founded to develop and institutionalize the German language at domestic and foreign level (Michels 2005: 102).

Besides cultural aspects such as art and the German language, religion also had a role in bringing together the German nation, but not in a strong and integrated way like in either Israel, as Lily Weissbrod argues (1983), or Iran, as will be discussed later. Most Germans are born into the Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant, or Lutheran, churches. As Conradt explains, historically some rulers and governors in German-speaking areas would identify themselves as protectors of the faith in their territories to make the churches dependent on them. Lutheran and Catholic churches to this day are largely financed by a church tax, a surcharge of about 8 percent on individual income tax, collected by the German state. The relationship between church and state in Germany must be understood in this complex context. It is also important to mention that different political changes or financial circumstances have changed part of the German population's views on identifying themselves with religion. For instance, a very pragmatic way of escaping the church tax is to formally leave the church, which is how most of the population in the west of Germany left the church. The policies of East Germany between 1949 and 1990 also resulted in a decline in the position of religion in the everyday life of its population. As Conradt shows, in 1991 only 21% of East Germans believed in God. This number compares with 61% of West Germans expressing a significant belief in God (Conradt 2011: 202-203).

German-speaking people also identify themselves as a nation that organizes communities and institutions to construct relationships in social, economic and political fields. The *Gesellenunterstützungsvereine* [benefit societies] of the 18th century, which arbitrated between journeymen and masters in the late feudalism period, are one example. Benefit societies were not just an egalitarian-discursive

practice but also a way of enforcing specific interests and political ideas or of encouraging solidarity among journeyman towards masters. The establishment in 1863 of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein* [General German Workers' Association], which is the founding father of a main political party of present-day Germany, to support the rights of workers is also considerable (Borchard/Heyn 2015, Eder 1985: 155-160). Added to these are the continued activity of ifa since 1917 and the Goethe Institute since 1923, as discussed above.

Economic, social and political factors play a role in the way German-speaking people see themselves as a nation. A more specific factor is the constitution of the Weimar Republic (1918-1933), which focused on "Western civilization" (Becker 2011: 95-97). In the Nazi era (1933-1945), a strategic vision of the German race/Aryan race was taken as a state vision; consequently, anything outside of this race was judged inferior and enemy. After Nazism and in the post-World War II era, the German nation made a return to its cosmopolitan "culture-nation" approach. Because the new German state wanted to distance itself culturally from the Nazi regime in particular, it encouraged identification of the German nation with cultural aspects such as its literature and music and with modern features such as its education system and technology.

The historical and political trends through which the people of Iran identify themselves as a nation are different from those of Germany. Perception of the Iranian nation has been formed, to a large degree, from its history before and after conversion to Islam in the seventh century. Following the conversion to Islam, Iran was one of the exceptional nations that did not integrate all elements of Arab culture of its Arab governors. Egypt, for instance, was also occupied by Arab militia and converted to Islam and adopted the Arabic language (Bassiouney 2014: 9-11). Iran adopted the Arabic alphabet but did not change its language from Persian/Farsi to Arabic. That is how characteristics of being Persian - keeping the Farsi language, for instance- and being Islamic -believing in the Islamic rather than Zoroastrian religion- developed together. By identifying themselves according to these characteristics of the Iranian nation, Iranian scholars positioned themselves successfully in the Islamic world, especially during the seventh and 12th century. In the post-Islamic era, many texts, including religious, literary and scientific books in Pahlavi, one of the ancient languages of

Iran, were translated into Arabic, which at that time became the international language of the world, and some books were translated from Arabic and Greek to Farsi (Bahri 2011). Books and articles by scientists and authors who were born in the territory of Iran, such as Mohammad b. Musā al Khwārasmi (ninth century), Mohammad Zakariyā al-Rāzi (10th century), Abu al-Wafā al-Buzjāni (10th century), ibn Abdullāh ibn Sīnā/Avicenna (11th century), Abu al-Rayhān al-Biruni (11th century), Nāsir al Din al Tusi (14th century), were written almost exclusively in Arabic, with few if any in Persian (Saliba 1998: 126).

The pre- and post-Islamic dimensions of the history of Iran in forming the nation have been emphasized by different political systems to achieve their specific interests. In the 18th century, for instance, Shia Islam was declared as the “state religion” in Iran by the Safavid dynasty (Syed et al. 2011: 210) in order to form a specific nationality and provoke an attack on Iran’s Sunni neighbors. The Iranian nation was identified in that period as a Shia nation. In the early 20th century, however, Reza Shah of the Pahlavi dynasty made a clear return to identifying the Iranian nation with its pre-Islamic heritage, for instance by selecting in 1926 the motto “God, King, Nation” (Abrahamian 2008: 66). Following the Islamic Revolution of Iran in the late 20th century, the Iranian government has had a strong tendency to identify Iran as a Muslim (more specifically a Shia) nation rather than by its Persian heritage. The complex of identifying the Iranian nation based on its pre- and/or post-Islamic history appeared as a specific type of nationalism, which Reza Zia-Ebrahimi calls “dislocative nationalism”. In his view, this specific type of nationalism is dislocative, because the Iranian nation, generally speaking, dislodged itself from its empirical reality as a majority Muslim society located in the East and positioned itself in the European context, on account of its Aryan origins, along with Europeans (Zia-Ebrahimi 2016: 5). The dislocative nationalism emerged as a modern ideology in the Qajar period, between the 1860s and 1890s, and then became integrated in the official ideology of the Pahlavi state between 1925 and 1979 (43).

Social activities within the framework of long-standing organizations were not the strongest point of the Iranian nation. As Abrahamian argues, Iranian society up to the 18th century had “few government institutions worthy of the name” (Abrahamian 2008: 9). The lack of durable organizations in Iranian society has

similarly been analyzed by Homa Katouzian as *Sakhteman-e Kolangi* phenomena, which can be translated as “the short-term society” (Katouzian 2004: 1, Katouzian 2013: 20). In his view, Iran, unlike European countries, historically has an “absence of an established and inviolable legal framework which would guarantee long term continuity”. Studying different periods of Iranian history, Katouzian illustrates that most legislation, social class, reformist plans and even laws were short-lived, because the will of somebody at the top of the pyramid of power would always change the norms and rules.

The characteristics of the German nation and the Iranian nation show that both are shaped by their specific historical heritage and have been influenced by their political systems. These characteristics are similar in both nations, but there are differences too. For instance, religion is not the strongest influence on the characteristics of the German nation, whereas Islam, whether identifying or not identifying with it, plays an important role in shaping Iran. The Iranian nation has also been constructed in a more centralized way than the German nation. Comparing these characteristics is relevant to highlight that the intercultural dialogue between Iran as a Muslim country and Germany as a Western country is not merely a matter of the religious and geo-political identity of the Iranian and German participants.

The following subchapter will give an overall view of the historical relationship between these two nations.

2.2 Multi-dimensional Historical Relationship between Iran and Germany

It is not difficult to imagine that the relationship between Iran and Germany was initially not as easy as it is today. Today, with the help of media, publications and advanced transportation systems, people in both countries can get to know each other and travel to different cities in Iran and Germany. In the past, the two nations had to have good reason, motivation and interest to cross borders and long distances to encounter each other’s culture and society. A brief review of those reasons is presented in this subchapter.

Travel has been one of the initial sources of learning about other cultures. As Friedrich Kochwasser argues, people from Germany and Iran have been in commercial contact with each other since the early Middle Ages, but that did not have any great meaning nor introduce the two nations to each other. In olden days, Iran and Germany did not have the political borders they have today, but more abstract and approximate boundaries, and the political rulers had less sovereignty over their people. It is therefore quite possible that a trader of Kurdish ethnicity from the west of present-day Iran had dealings with a trader belonging to the Franks from the west of present-day Germany; they probably learned from each other about their jobs, the weather or specific goods they could offer rather than showing any curiosity about each other's nationality. Kochwasser also explains that goods from Persia were not entering Central Europe directly: the German traders would either take a route through Italy or Russia (Kochwasser 1961: 27), so there was even less possibility that the German and Iranian traders would learn about their respective countries.

A region called Persia was first introduced to the German nation by Johann Schiltberger, a German soldier who traveled to the Hungarian frontier in the late 14th century to fight against the Ottoman Empire and is mentioned as the "first German witness" of the culture and customs of Persia (Gabriel 1952: 45 and 46). The travels of Engelbert Kaempfer, a German physician and researcher who lived in the late 17th and early 18th century, are also significant. According to his travelogue, his journey to different places of the world, including what is today Iran, and cities such as Rasht, Qazvin, Qum, Kashan and Isfahan, influenced his inquiry and developed his understanding of "natural science" and "oriental medicine" (Klocke-Daffa et al. 2003).

Travel consequently led to Iranians and Germans becoming familiar with the German and Persian languages respectively. Learning these languages opened new doors to German and Iranian literature and philosophy. The translation of books is an indication that the historical relationship between the Iranian and German nations had entered a new phase. Iranians were interested in learning about philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle. Although Iranian scholars translated books from Greek to Persian even before the conversion to Islam (Bahri 2011), as remarked in 2.1, in the post-Islamic era there was a tendency among

Iranian scholars to position themselves in the Islamic world. Translation was one of the characteristics of that period. In a travelogue from the second half of the 19th century, one European traveler writes that he was astonished to meet people in Iran who discussed the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (Parsinejad 2003: 26). Another door translation opened to Iranians and Germans was in literature. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a German poet who lived in the late 18th and early 19th century, became acquainted with the poems of Shams-ud-Din Muḥammad Ḥāfez-e Shirāzi after he started to learn Persian, Turkish and Arabic (Özcan 2014: 13). Hafez was an Iranian poet who lived in Iran in the 14th century, and his poems are well-known for a special spiritual approach to love and God. Goethe studied the poems of Hafez and created a collection of poems mostly inspired by him named *West-östlicher Divan* [Western-Eastern Divan]. The *West-östlicher Divan* has been mentioned on several occasions during the last decades by German and Iranian thinkers and literary experts as an example of intercultural dialogue.

Moving towards modernity and reforming the traditional system of Iran was the next source of motivation for a German-Iranian relationship. Travel by Nāser ad-Din Shah, the head of the Qajar dynasty from 1848 to 1896, to the West, and especially Germany, is notable in this context. According to his travelogue, he traveled to Europe on three occasions, in 1873, 1878 and 1882 (Kochwasser 1961: 84), and visited different cities of present-day Germany such as Essen, Berlin, Baden-Baden, Frankfurt, Cologne and Aachen (Naser-od-Din Shah 1874). His support for development of the educational system of Iran according to European experience was significant in the 19th century. The school of *Dar al Fonun*⁸ [polytechnic college] was established in his time, 1851, which can be counted as one of the practical indications of the influence of modernity in Iranian society (Bahman 2004, Ringer 2004). The demand for European textbooks and scientific manuals, mainly translated from French or German, increased after the establishment of *Dar al-Fonun*. At this time, translation and the efforts of educated Iranians returning from Europe created a movement and provoked great

⁸ Dar al Fonun was the first Iranian modern school to train young Iranians for a military career, medicine and engineering. Teaching according to the European science system, the presence of European teachers and use of French, Arabic and German as well as Persian languages were the main characteristics of Dar al Fonun, which differentiated it from the old training system of Iran. The traditional “Madresah” system concentrated mostly on philosophy and “purely religious knowledge” and was run mostly by *ulama* [clergymen] (Ringer, 2004, p. 42).

political and ideological transformations in Iran. Publishing books and newspapers about the Western political system and values led the modernization process, a process that resulted in constitutional revolution in Iran between 1905 and 1907.

Political and economic interests were another motivation in the historical relationship between Iran and Germany. The first phase of the relationship in the economic field, at governmental level, started at the beginning of the 20th century. Iran was also a target country for a “new kind of colonialism” on the part of Germany and was seen as one of the “few markets” (Martin 1959: 9) that was not completely occupied by the big world powers Britain and Russia. At the same time, the Iranian authorities in the Reza Shah era had a tendency to balance the influence of the mentioned world powers through partnership with Germany (Asgharzadeh 2007, Martin 1959). In this context Germany supported the establishment of economic infrastructure in Iran, including railroading, banking and shipping (Kochwasser 1961, Martin 1959).

As Kochwasser explains, the establishment of a shipping line between Iran and Germany in the 1920s led to the export and import of goods. Slowly, an Iranian colony was created in Germany, especially in Hamburg, where most of the Iranian companies established branch offices (Kochwasser 1961: 254-255). No non-oil Iranian product has been as much in demand on the international, and especially German, market as carpets. It is reported that in the late 20th century, Germany imported three times more carpets from Iran than any other country (Kochwasser 1961: 300). As a result, an Iranian colony of traders, students and academics emerged in Germany. It is also reported that in 1960 between 1,500 and 2,000 Iranians were living in Hamburg (Kochwasser 1961: 254). Other economic examples of the German-Iranian relationship include the opening of an air route between Tehran and Frankfurt operated by Iran Air in 1958 and “Deutsche Lufthansa” in 1956 (Kochwasser 1961: 240); various development projects with the help of German experts, for instance the Lar River and modern cotton factory projects in 1957 (Kochwasser 1961: 239); developing the telephone network under a contract between the Iran and German post offices and projects by Siemens and Standard Elektonik in 1955 (Kochwasser 1961: 242); training

programs for Iranian young farmers under the management of an Iranian⁹ who had studied and taught agriculture in Germany (Kochwasser 1961: 243); and finally, founding a university, now Guilan University, according to the German system near to the Caspian Sea in the north of Iran in 1961 (Kochwasser 1961: 254). Because of the presence of German experts, physicians, engineers, technicians, teachers and scholars, a German colony started emerge in Iran from the late 19th century. It is reported that in 1960 more than 2,500 Germans were living in Iran (Kochwasser 1961: 249-250). Following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, many Iranians left Iran and migrated to the USA and European countries, especially Germany, mostly for political reasons (Yazdani 2015: 110-114).

Army training courses conducted by the German army in Iran at the time of World War I can be counted as another source of the German-Iranian relationship (Küntzel 2009: 28). There is also evidence that some German troops and commanders assisted a minority opposition group, *Jangalis*, in the north of Iran in 1918 (Atabaki 2006: 150 and 151).

The next phase of the economic and political relationship appeared in nuclear energy in the late 20th century, when Germany confirmed that it would assist with the installation of nuclear technology in Iran. This was undertaken by the German company *Kraftwerk Union AG* after signing a contract with Iran in 1976 (Samore 2013: 11). Its role stopped after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, along with that of most international companies in the same field. Following the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Germany played a more stable role in the economic relationship with Iran than other Western countries. It did not have increasing economic exchange with Iran, but it remained the biggest European exporter to Iran. Instead of economic sanctions against Iran, especially those intended to limit the nuclear program, some German commercial companies were able to bypass them by registering their names in the United Arab Emirates as international companies and thus continue to trade with Iranian companies (Küntzel 2012: 108 and 126).

Some studies discuss how the tendency of the heads of the Iranian and German governments to play a regionally and internationally superior role at specific times has been a motivation for the relationship between the two countries. Mattias Küntzel argues that Wilhelm II sent his agents to Iran to attract Shia soldiers to

⁹ The name of this graduate student was Nasserali Motazedhi.

fight against Britain (Küntzel 2009: 28). After Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime seized power, Iranian *ulama*, in their speeches in the mosques of small towns and villages of Iran, called Adolf Hitler the "twelfth Shia Imam" (p.52). Küntzel relates these historical facts to the current history of the relationship between Iran and Germany, saying that Germany is Iran's strongest European partner economically and Iranian politicians welcome German diplomats, given the common Aryan race and cooperation in the Second World War (p.17). Relating these facts to each other, Küntzel concludes that the historically stable friendship between Iran and Germany has two possible meanings: Germany wants to use it either as a security network for its actual policies towards Iranian rulers or as an instrument of pressure that can be used to change Iran's politics (Küntzel 2009). In another book Küntzel analyzes that Germany's economic cooperation with Iran could push forward Iran's nuclear program (Küntzel 2012).

The motivations above suggest that the relationship between Iran and Germany has not necessarily been directed according to a specific long-term plan and strategy. Some motivations, such as travel, created room for the next to appear; some appeared simultaneously with the rest. Reviewing these motivations also illustrates that facts like the creation of German and Iranian colonies in Iran and Germany respectively cannot be explained solely by economics but have a combination of reasons, such as cultural and political factors. The historical relationship has developed very diversely and cannot be limited to a specific motivation. Hence analysis of the relationship as an aimful and strategic means for Germany to control Iran is unimproved theory rather than fact-based argument.

The next subchapter considers some organized cultural and social activities between Iran and Germany.

2.3 Cultural and Social Activities between Iran and Germany

Cultural and social activities are activities relating to art, literature, translation, music and education, as well as those in the field of humanitarian affairs. These activities, organized by Iranian and German actors and supported by both

governments, are considered in this subchapter. The aim here is to look more closely at the context of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany, which was also implemented with the support of Iranian and German governments.

The first official cultural contract to play a central, but not determinative, role in the relationship between Iran and Germany is called the “friendship contract”, in German *Freundschaftsvertrag* and in Farsi *Ahdnāme-ye mavadat* or *Tafahomnāme-ye farhangi*. The first friendship contract between the Qajar dynasty of Iran and a delegate from Prussian Germany was signed in Paris in June 1857 (Kochwasser 1961: 53). During Naser-din Shah’s visit to Berlin in 1873, another agreement was signed by the authorities of both countries. The next friendship contract, which contained terminology relating to “guaranteeing cooperation in cultural relationship”, was concluded in 1929 under the Weimar Republic in Germany and the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran. That agreement was re-confirmed after World War II in 1954 (Entezam et al. 1955), two years after the renewed start of diplomatic relations between Iran -under the Pahlavi dynasty- and the Federal Republic of Germany, which at that time was known as West Germany.¹⁰ Without canceling the cultural contract of 1954, the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany decreased after the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979. Because of the anti-Western rhetoric of Ayatollah Khomeini, leader of the new Iranian state in the 1980s, some German politicians took a critical stance against Iran (Alkazaz/Steinbach 1988: 16). Some, however, like the German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, had a flexible position regarding Iran. In such a context, Genscher’s attempt to reinstate the cultural agreement with Iran is significant. He visited Iran in 1988 and a German-Iranian cultural agreement was signed. Nevertheless, “the agreement was declared invalid as a consequence of the fatwa against Salman Rushdie”, to which the German Parliament reacted harshly (Struwe 1998: 15).¹¹ Although the political atmosphere

¹⁰ West Germany in this study is considered as the beginning of the current political system of Germany, which is the Federal Republic of Germany. After unification, the German Democratic Republic, or East Germany, accepted the constitution and the federal political system. Therefore, the cultural relationship between Iran and East Germany, which was not strong, is not reflected here.

¹¹ Salman Rushdie, a British-Indian author who wrote a book on Prophet Mohammad. The book was criticized extensively by Muslim people all over the world. The first country to ban its publication under pressure from “angry Muslims” was India. During the next months, from October 1988 to June 1989, other Muslim countries such as Bangladesh, Sudan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Thailand, Tanzania, Indonesia, Singapore and Venezuela also banned the book. Meanwhile, however, there were two important reactions that turned the response to Rushdie’s book into a clash between Muslims and the West. In November 1988 the book was awarded the literary Whitbread Prize (Netton, 2012, p. 20). The second reaction was from Iran. Although no version of the book entered the Iranian book market during 1988 and

afterwards was not always against Iran, up to 2013- the end of the period of this study- no updated version of the cultural agreement was concluded between Iran and Germany. Nevertheless, cultural activities have been organized through other kinds of treaties, which will be discussed later.

Besides concluding friendship and cultural agreements, establishing Iranian and German consulates and embassies played an important role in stabilizing cultural and social activities between the two countries. Both made attempts to strengthen their diplomatic relationship during the 19th century. The first Iranian embassy was established in Berlin in 1885, the year in which Germany also appointed its first ambassador to Tehran (Martin 1959: 30). In 1897 a German consulate opened in Busher and in 1919 in Tabriz (Mousavian 2008: 12-13). Both consulates are currently closed. In the Pahlavi era Iran also established consulates in the cities of Hamburg, Munich and Frankfurt. All three consulates are still open in Germany.

Some cultural and social activities were implemented with the support of the Iranian and German states in fields such as education and pedagogy. In 1907 Iran and Germany concluded an agreement to train students in vocational and technical education, which led to the establishment of the *Honarestan Sanaty* school in Tehran. According to Khosrow Lotfipur, two thirds of instructors of this school were from Germany. World Wars I and II interrupted German cooperation in the vocational training system of Iran, but these breaks were temporary. German experts and specialists were employed by the Iranian government at various times in different cities including Tehran, Shiraz and Tabriz. In 1950 Germany donated 4 million Mark for new equipment in vocational technical education in Tehran and Tabriz. Also in 1962 and 1971, based on agreements between the Iranian and German governments, some students and experts were exchanged in vocational training (Lotfipour 1977: 11-14).

Meanwhile, some German cultural institutions began to organize activities, including academic exchanges and German language courses, with the support of the German state. The enthusiasm among young Iranian students to learn German was high, particularly after World War II. One of the reasons for this enthusiasm

1989, Ayatollah Khomeini pronounced a fatwa on Rushdie in February 1989. He sentenced Rushdie to death for writing a text which is against Islam, the Prophet of Islam, and the Quran. After issuing the fatwa, it became the symbol of Muslim reactions to Rushdie and consequently a symbol of the violation of freedom of speech in the view of Western countries.

was that Iranian students who had studied in Germany before World War II began to return. By the 1960s, of 10,000 Iranian students abroad, nearly 4,000 were in Germany and just 560 in France and Austria, 300 in Switzerland, and 215 in England. Only the number of Iranian students in America was higher than the number in Germany (Kochwasser 1961: 255). A great number of Iranian students received financial support from academic institutions such as the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)* to study in Germany. More details on this topic will be given in chapter 6.22. To meet the great demand for learning German in Iran, the Goethe Institute of Germany opened a branch office in 1958 in Iran and held language courses. It also opened a library and organized cultural activities such as film shows, literature meetings, theater and music festivals in Iran. The Goethe Institute was one of the most successful German cultural institutions in Iran at that time. It is reported that more than ten thousand Iranian visitors attended its cultural events in Tehran in 1974 (Chehabi 2001). The popularity of the Goethe Institute can probably explain why it suffered under the Iranian politicians' reaction to *Rudis Tagesshow*,¹² a German TV show which made fun of Ayatollah Khoemini in 1987. Following the *Rudis* crisis, Iranian and German diplomatic missions were suspended for a few months, the Goethe Institute and *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut* (another German cultural institute which had been established in Iran since 1956) were closed (IZH 2013).

Iran also started to undertake some cultural activities in Germany with a few institutes and organizations. Among them, a mosque which later became an academic center, the *Islamic Center of Hamburg*, in 1960, is worth mentioning. Along with the economic boom from the exchange of goods through shipping lines between Hamburg and Iranian ports, Iranian colonies started to appear in Hamburg. Some of the Iranian inhabitants, mostly businessmen and carpet shop owners, decided to establish an Iranian Islamic mosque (Kochwasser 1961: 254). Later they requested a clergyman from the Qum Seminary in Iran to lead the mosque in Hamburg. As the official website of the Islamic Center of Hamburg explains, this request was confirmed by *Ayatollah Boroujerdi*, a newly appointed

¹² Rudis Tagesshow was a comedy program which made fun of politicians, German and international. In 1987 a broadcast containing 14 seconds of a comedy about Ayatollah Khomeini, the then leader of Iran, led to a political crisis between Iran and Germany. The German Ambassador was summoned by the Iranian authorities in Tehran, Iranian students demonstrated in front of the German embassy in Tehran, and some clergymen called the comedy a "Zionist Conspiracy" (Kasa 17.06.2010). The Iranian authorities requested an official apology from Germany, which was rejected by German politicians (ARD 1987).

head of Qum seminary, who was interested in developing the international communication of the seminary (IZH 2013). The Islamic Center to this day is one of Iran's main religious centers in Germany. More information about this center will be given in 6.1.3.

Seminars and meetings were also held on the issue of human rights and supported by the Iranian and German states in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At that time, Iran generally did not have a positive relationship with European countries. Events such as the fatwa of Ayatollah Khomeini against Salman Rushdie and Iran's involvement in the Iraq War (1981-1988) put Iran in an isolated position internationally. In this situation, Genscher, the German foreign minister at the time, was the first Western authority to travel to Iran, in 1984 and then in 1987. He blamed the Iraqi government for attacking Iran, which is believed to be "a major step in promoting Iran's acceptance of UN-resolution 598 that brought an end to the Gulf-War" (Struwe 1998: 15). Through the efforts of Genscher, some meetings were organized by the Goethe Institute¹³ and the DAAD in Iran (Küntzel 2009: 171). Consequently, in 1988, the German side was able to convince the Iranian side to participate in a colloquium in Hamburg on human rights and possibilities to "enhance cultural and academic contracts". It is reported that up to 1991, with the help of the *Deutsches Orient-Institut Hamburg* [German Orient Institute], three meetings on human rights were held between Iran and Germany (Küntzel 2009: 171).

Following these human rights meetings, the European Union (EU), with Germany playing an active role, organized a round of meetings with Iran including dialogue on their topic, "critical dialogue". The dialogue sessions were organized from 1992 to 1997 on human rights, although politically they provided an opportunity for the EU and Iran to discuss international issues after Iran's long isolation. At that time the US was criticizing Iran for supporting what was claimed to be "terrorism", "quest for weapons of mass destruction", and "opposition to the Peace Process" and encouraged options such as economic sanctions against Iran. The EU had the same concerns, but because Iran's domestic human rights issues

¹³ The Goethe Institute organized these meetings in the last months of its official activity in Iran, before the Rudis crisis. Involvement of the Goethe Institute in implementing initial meetings on human rights and religion was also mentioned by an Iranian participant in the field study (Soroush, personal communication, 2012), and it is also believed to be the starting point of interfaith dialogue meetings of Iran in the post-Revolution era.

were also important to it, and in that period human rights issues were a priority for the EU (Struwe 1998: 10-13), it preferred to try the option of negotiation with Iran. The aims of the EU in critical dialogue with Iran were as follows:

“Given Iran’s importance in the region, the European Council reaffirms its belief that **a dialogue** should be maintained with the **Iranian Government**. This should be a **critical dialogue** which reflects concern about Iranian **behaviour** and calls for improvement in a number of areas, particularly **human rights**, the death sentence pronounced by a **Fatwa** of Ayatollah Khomeini against the author Salman Rushdie, which is contrary to international law, and **terrorism**. Improvement in these areas will be important in determining the extent to which closer relations and confidence can be developed” (European Union 1992).

It is of particular importance that the critical dialogue clearly aimed to change the Iranian government’s “behaviour” in domestic and foreign affairs. The critical dialogue was applied in three main ways: confidential *démarches*, public declarations, and regular meetings of the EU Troika with Iranian officials (Struwe 1998: 20). The critical dialogue according to Struwe led to some changes in Iranian behavior; nevertheless, some of the tangible results were difficult to identify, because the outcomes of the meetings were not always open to the public. Some of the results appeared years after the critical dialogue. For instance, the fatwa against Rushdie was resolved during Khatami’s presidency. In 1998 the Iranian foreign minister had talks in a margin of the UN General Assembly with the British foreign secretary in which “they agreed an exchange of statements according to which the Iranian government declared they would not take any action to threaten the life of the author of the Satanic Verses nor anyone associated with his work, and would not encourage or assist anybody to do so” (Axworthy 2012: 106). The critical dialogue was suspended in 1997, following a German court verdict against Iran. According to this verdict, some Iranian authorities were recognized as being responsible for an assassination in the Mykonos Restaurant in Berlin in 1992. The assassination was organized against a number of Kurdish leaders who were opponents of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Siegmond 2001).

The next meetings to be held were called “constructive dialogue”, also known as comprehensive or human rights dialogue. The constructive dialogue was again suggested by the EU, with an active role played by Germany, during the presidency of Mohammad Khatami in Iran. The main issues here were human

rights and the judicial system, which were discussed in four meetings. Delegates from the Iranian presidential office and the EU Presidency, non-governmental organizations, academics, journalists and some members of Amnesty International attended these meetings between 2002 and 2004. Main topics such as discrimination, torture, the roles of judges in the trial process, the interdependence of the autonomous judiciary system and fair trial on each other, freedom of expression, and administration of the courts were discussed amongst the delegates in Tehran and Brussels (Kjærum 2007: 13-15). During the constructive dialogue meetings, the Iranian government made some moves towards improving the human rights situation. For instance, Iran officially recommended courts to use alternative punishment to “stoning” (Kjærum, 2007, pp. 16-17). Besides Germany, other European countries such as Denmark and Finland also participated actively in these human rights dialogues. But even this progress could not prevent the termination of the constructive dialogue in 2004. In that year, following the victory of the conservative over the reformist parties in the Iranian parliamentary election, the EU issued a statement claiming that, despite some efforts during the human rights meetings, widespread breaches of human rights continued in Iran. The Iranian authorities consequently lost their desire to continue the dialogues (Mousavian 2008: 216). Germany continued the meetings until early 2005. This point will be discussed more in chapter 6.1.3.

The last type of cultural activities are those organized by cities in Iran and Germany. Isfahan and Freiburg were the first, and Shiraz and Weimar the second Iranian and German partner cities to conclude “twin cities agreements” (signed by the mayors of the cities) in 2000 and 2009 respectively. In the agreement between Isfahan and Freiburg, both actors agreed to strive for cooperation in fields such as renewable energies, safety and firefighting services, and tourism. The agreement even led to activities in more fields, such as student and academic exchanges between the two cities. In late 2005, at the beginning of the presidency of Ahmadinejad in Iran and in a period in which Iran rejected continuing “constructive human rights dialogues” with the EU, a delegation of jurists from Freiburg attended seven days of meetings in Isfahan and Tehran in the framework of “dialogue about human rights” (Kommission für Menschenrechte 2005, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 01.11.2006). The agreement between Shiraz and Weimar was mostly initiated to commemorate two Iranian and German poets, Hafiz and

Goethe. As mentioned in 2.1, Weimar and Shiraz are the birth cities of these two poets. Cultural programs were therefore organized to commemorate the friendship of Hafiz and Goethe in the two cities, especially after conclusion of the twin cities agreement. A memorial to Hafiz and Goethe was inaugurated in Weimar jointly by Mohammad Khatami and Johannes Rau, the then presidents of Iran and Germany, in 2000.

The cities' friendships have faced some negative feedback. According to Küntzel, that of Freiburg and Isfahan was criticized by the media and some Iranian opposition groups based in Germany for two reasons; firstly, because cultural cooperation with Isfahan indirectly indicated that the German authorities tolerate Iran's nuclear activities, since Isfahan is located near a nuclear site; and secondly, because cultural cooperation with Isfahan illustrated the German authorities' agreement with Ahmadinejad's policies, since Ahmadinejad, who expressed radical views against Israel, was a close friend of the mayor of Isfahan when the contract was concluded (Küntzel 2012: 9). The friendship of Weimar and Shiraz was under criticism, as Küntzel mentions, because in 2010 an Iranian delegation from Shiraz to Weimar declined a visit to Buchenwald concentration camp, a Holocaust memorial.¹⁴ Their rejection of visiting Buchenwald was perceived as a denial of the Holocaust (Küntzel 2012: 60).

To sum up the discussions of this subchapter, it is useful to look at the content of table 1, which illustrates the relationship between Iran and Germany in the context of political changes over the years.

Table 1. A historic overview of the relationship between Iran and Germany

Time	German political structure change	Iranian political structure change	Main points of the relationship, and organized cultural activities
Pre-1800	Different states and empire: Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony etc.	Different dynasties: Safavid, Afsharid and beginning of Qajar	-Travel for military, trade, research and curiosity reasons -Developing relations through information of travelers -Translation as a source of getting to know German and Iranian culture
1800	Late Middle Ages	1794–1925: Qajar	-Dedication of <i>West-östlicher</i>

¹⁴ Buchenwald concentration camp was used between 1937-1944/1945 by the Nazis to hold war prisoners and European civilians, including mentally and physically ill people, homosexuals, criminals and Jewish citizens, who were forced to work and were systematically murdered (Stein/Gedenkstätte Buchwald 2004).

	up to 1806: <i>Heiliges Römisches Reich</i>	dynasty	<i>Divan</i> from Goethe to Hafez (1819)
1850	1871-1918: <i>Deutsches Reich</i>	1870–1871: Constitutional Revolution	-Diplomatic visits and facing modern systems, started with the travel of Naser aldin Shah to Germany Economic and political interests as motivation to conduct relationship: -Establishing railway etc. in Iran
1900	1918-1933: Weimar Republic 1933-1945: Nazism 1945-1949: Occupation	1925–1979: Pahlavi dynasty	-Organized educational exchange like vocational school system in 1907 -First cultural agreement in 1929
1950	West and East Germany 1949-1990 1990 to present day: Federal Republic of Germany	1979 to present day: Islamic Republic	-Developing economic relations like establishing nuclear installation in 1961 -Establishing Goethe Institute in Iran in 1958 -Establishing Islamic Center Hamburg in 1960 -Closing Goethe Institute in Iran following the Rudi crisis in 1987 -“Critical dialogue” (1992-1996) -Political problems in relationship following the Mykonos verdict in 1996
2000 - 2013			-“Constructive dialogue” (2000-2004) -Nuclear negotiations between Iran and EU

Source: made by the researcher

As table 1 shows, a variety of cultural activities were organized between Iran and Germany from the early 20th century. Some activities were in educational fields; others, such as “critical” and “constructive” dialogue, were organized with an active role played by the German and Iranian states. These cultural and social activities were influenced by the economic, political, foreign and cultural relationship between the two countries. Although concluding contracts, agreements and memorandums of understanding played an important role in initiating the relationship between Iran and Germany, some cultural and social activities were implemented between them without any formal contract or agreement. The policy and logic behind both the Iranian and German state support

of cultural activities in the international realm is crucial. The next subchapter considers this issue.

2.4 Considering “Culture” in the Foreign Policy of Germany and Iran

So far, the type of cultural and social activities implemented between Iran and Germany has been considered. This subchapter attempts to argue how implementing cultural activities on a foreign level has been decided politically by Iran and Germany. The approach to culture in the foreign cultural policy of Germany changed considerably after WWII. Following the bitter experience of the Nazi regime, the country attempted to mediate an image culturally of Germany worldwide that was fundamentally different from its past image. The approach to culture in Iranian foreign cultural policy was also constructed in a new way after the Islamic Revolution. The Iranian government tried to mediate an image of Iran culturally which carried the ideology of the Islamic Revolution and Shia Islam together. Two sections of this subchapter present these two approaches.

2.4.1 Considering Culture in German Foreign Policy in the post-WWII Era

There are various studies which consider the role of culture in the foreign policy of Germany, its aims and instruments. There is an abundance of literature on German foreign cultural policy in different periods (Andrei/Rittberger 2005, Düwell 2005) and its various instruments, such as the German language (Amman 2005), art exhibitions and music festivals (Amman 2005, Denscheilmann 2013), university and school projects (Gauf 2005, Schütte 2005), and diverse media (Harnischfeger 2005, Rossbach 2005). Some studies discuss Germany’s national actors (Maaß 2005a, Pogarelskaja 2005, Singer 2005) and international cooperators (Merkle/Büttner 2005, Schöfthaler 2005).

The foreign cultural policy of Germany changed significantly in the post-WWII era, although the tendency to differentiate and focus on “culture” as one of the components of German foreign policy goes back to earlier times.

As Kurt Düwell argues, German-speaking territories during the German empire undertook various cultural and academic activities abroad. But since the empire was not a central political system, these activities could not be decided according to a specific policy. The first indication of a specific policy regarding foreign cultural activities appeared in 1920, when the Weimar Republic, after the experience of WWI, established a cultural department in the foreign affairs ministry. The issue of *Kulturpropaganda* [cultural propaganda] was dealt with in this department, initially with some skepticism (Düwell 2005: 71). In 1933, after the Nazis seized power in Germany, the person in charge of the cultural department was called *Reichsminister für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* [Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda]. At this time the German state systematically “abused” foreign cultural policy to create a cultural image of Germany abroad, and especially to legitimize “German expansion” and “political world order” (Düwell 2005: 59). The Nazi leaders implemented cultural policies which tied in with “racial and geographical agendas” to identify the nation as the “pinnacle” of “European heritage” and “civilization” (McGuigan 2004: 37). Cultural policies during the Nazi era were implemented through cultural tools such as theater (Drewniak 1995), film (Welch 1995), visual art (Petropoulos 1995) and literature (Barbian 1995). With these instruments an attempt was made to inform audiences, whether inside or outside Germany, that “the everyday reality of cultural life under Hitler not only was quite diverse and remarkably liberal in some areas, but also often at odds with the values promoted by the National Socialist ideology” (Cuomo 1995: 2). It was with the help of such a propagative and successful cultural policy that the Nazi authorities managed to systematically kill specific groups of people in Germany and some neighboring countries. At the end of the war, a huge number of people were recorded as victims of the Nazi regime. It is difficult to give a total number, but some studies suggest that between 12 and 14 million people, amongst them about six million Jews, lost their life under the Nazis (Pohl 2011: 35-41).

The approach to German foreign cultural policy was reviewed after WWII. The new German state (as clarified in 2.3, West Germany is considered as the beginning of the current political system of Germany in this study) tried to establish a foreign cultural policy to represent an image of Germany abroad that did not call to mind messages of racism and nationalism. The German state also at

this stage became very sensitive to the issue of the Holocaust, the killing of Jews by the Nazi regime. So the reconstructed foreign cultural policy attempted to use tools which represented a “realistic, open, and forward-looking” image of a “new German democracy” (Maaß 2005b: 23). The image of Germany in the post-WWII era was also mediated through other German components of its foreign policy, such as its rejection of militarist and expansionist policies, membership of the European Union, reconciliation policies regarding France, Israel, Poland, the Czech Republic -in the view of some scholars the most successful in the world (Feldman 2014)- and its flourishing economy. In the post-war era, three guidelines informed the relationship of the German state with the world. They were “never again”, which refers to learning from the experience of the Holocaust and relationship with Israel; “never alone”, which implies membership of Germany in NATO; and “politics before force” (Maull 2014: 409-410), which describes the priority of negotiation over military action. In chapter 2.2 it was mentioned that an Iranian delegation had been criticized by some German media and other groups for declining a visit to a Holocaust memorial. This reaction indicates that the German state is expected to respect the “never again” guideline. The consonance between German and EU policies regarding Iran since 2003 can also be understood in the context of “never alone”. The “policy before force” guideline can be explained as one of the reasons why Germany more or less upholds a relationship with Iran, despite all pressures from Israel and the USA, why it initiated “human rights meetings” in 1984 with Iran, and why Germany was involved in the “critical dialogue” and “constructive dialogue” as an active EU member. After unification of West and East Germany in 1990, the German federal government did not change this approach to foreign cultural policy dramatically. Cultural policy on a domestic level is the responsibility of the *Länder* [states] and on a foreign and international level of the German federal government, specifically the foreign affairs ministry. This issue will be discussed in more detail in 5.1.

During the last two decades, German foreign policy has undergone some changes, although not towards stopping the development of cultural instruments in the context of German foreign relations. Patricia Daehnhardt argues that Germany’s foreign policy before 1997 appeared to make Germany a normative power among other international actors, especially the European countries. Nevertheless, this

trend changed significantly between 1997 and 2007. During this period, foreign policy was a way to represent Germany as a utilitarian power. Analyzing four cases, “Germany's new security policy”; “the Europeanization of Germany’s European policy regarding the Common Foreign and Security Policy”; “bilateral relationships with France and the United States”; and “Germany's quest for permanent membership of the UN Security Council”, she argues that, from 1997 to 2007, administrations under four chancellors constructed foreign cultural policy to make Germany a utilitarian power (Daehnhardt 2008).

The changes in German foreign policy did not change the structure of Germany’s foreign cultural policy for two reasons: Firstly, because they had little to do with Germany’s cultural policies abroad; and secondly, because Germany in the post-WWII era reconstructed its cultural instruments in a systematic and stable way. From 1945 to 1949, because West Germany was under the occupation of the US, England and France, its main cultural institutions were closed. In 1949, after the first post-war election in West Germany, Konrad Adenauer’s government could start to reopen those institutions. They are called “*Mittlerorganisationen*”, quasi NGOs or quangos in English. They are old organizations which have a mixed model (Maaß 2005a). They received a budget or part of their budget from the German government to implement cultural activities with other countries, but they are not a subordinate of German embassies like in France, as Maaß argues. In the Nazi era, independency for *Mittlerorganisationen* was almost impossible, because social and cultural activities were limited under the dictatorship and radical behavior of the German state at that time. Under the current federal republic, they are independent. It can therefore be said that the independence of *Mittlerorganisationen* also depends on the democratic statute of the German state. Ifa, the DAAD, the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation and the Goethe Institute are examples of *Mittlerorganisationen*. In chapter 6 more details about them will be presented.

German politicians played a positive role in foreign cultural policy by building contacts with other countries. Among the German presidents, for instance, Roman Herzog played a significant role between 1994 and 1999. He stressed the importance of dialogue with other cultures. His successor Johannes Rau also shared a positive view of promoting dialogue between Germany and other cultures, with Muslim countries and also the Jewish community, between 1999

and 2005. Rau inaugurated the Hafiz-Goethe memorial in Weimar alongside his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Khatami in 2000, as mentioned in chapter 1 and 2.3. Both presidents, Herzog (Herzog 1995, Herzog 1997, Herzog 1999) and Rau (Rau 2002) wrote books and occasionally presented speeches on the issue of intercultural dialogue. The role of some German foreign ministers has been significant as well. The 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, the Willy Brandt era, is called the “watershed of German foreign cultural policy” (Paschalidis 2014: 464). Brandt as foreign minister and then as German chancellor tried to conceptualize culture in the foreign relations of Germany as a “two-way street” and described foreign cultural policy as the “third pillar” of German foreign policy alongside economic and diplomatic relations. Also when he was German chancellor, an important statement on German foreign cultural policy was written. Genscher, as mentioned in 2.2, had an important role to play in building the cultural relationship with Iran by initiating activities such as holding human rights meetings between 1984 and 1988. Some researchers have also mentioned that Klaus Kinkel made a connection between foreign cultural policy and the foreign economic policies of Germany between 1992 and 1998 (Maaß 2005b: 24). The importance of foreign cultural policy was greater for Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who became German president in 2017, than for his predecessor Guido Westerwelle, according to Rolf Mützenich (2011: 124).

2.4.2 Considering Culture in Iranian Foreign Policy in the Post-Islamic Revolution Era

Little has been written about the foreign cultural policy of Iran in investigations and studies. Various books and research have been published on the history, foreign policy, cultural diplomacy and soft power of Iran, but so far there are few studies on foreign cultural policy. There are various reasons why investigation in this field has been neglected; two of them are significant. Firstly, the quest to understand the military, nuclear, regional and international policy of Iran in the last decades has been greater than that to understand how the country represents itself culturally worldwide. Secondly, the main focus of the Iranian state at different times (from Pahlavi to the Islamic Republic era) was on modernization and westernization of Iranian society. Pahlavi concentrated on modernizing and westernizing society at all costs, while the Islamic Republic tended to oppose

them and sought to replace them with Islamic values. This approach did not leave room to concentrate on a cultural policy to represent the country internationally. A few studies consider Iran's foreign cultural institutions, like the organization of Islamic Culture and Relations (Modaresi 28.06.2009, Naghibzadeh 1999, Naghibzadeh 2009). Some studies consider Iranian foreign cultural policy toward its neighbors, such as Syria (von Maltzahn 2015) and Central Asian countries (Johnston 2007), after 1979.

Studying some investigations of the history of Iran suggests that the Iranian state showed a clear interest in cultural policy in the 1920s and 1930s, when Reza Shah pushed for a policy to modernize Iranian society. Although various agents in Iran, such as intellectuals and Iranian educated students who returned from Europe at that time, supported the process of modernizing society, the role of Western agents, institutions and experts was considerable (Devos/Werner 2013). Reza Shah started major projects to modernize university education and physical education (Catanzaro 2013, Chehabi 2013) and Iranian music (Aghamohseni 2013). He also began to initiate some propagative cultural activities which had a domestic, but in the long term also foreign, effect. For instance, by holding the millennium celebration of the birthday of the Iranian poet Ferdowsi in 1934, "the myth of the *Shahnameh* had largely been side-lined from the official rhetoric of the state". That was one of the instruments to propagate the kingdom of Reza Shah (Ansari 2012: 176). The second cultural attempt of Reza Shah that also had a foreign cultural aspect was in the field of archeology and museums. In 1927 Reza Shah abolished the French archeological monopolized license, granted in the Qajar era, but let Western archeologists cooperate in this field in other ways, such as managing some museum offices. Nader Nasiri Moghaddam's analysis is that the Pahlavi modernization program in this specific case connected Iranian cultural policy for the first time with Iranian diplomacy. He argues that reports on the archeological findings presented by Western experts for Reza Shah and some of the Iranian authorities firstly reconstructed the idea of the Iranian pre-Islamic cultural heritage as the root of the Iranian nation, and secondly promoted the idea among Iranian political elites that archeology is so crucially important to national identity, which should not be the monopoly of a specific foreign country (Nasiri-Moghaddam 2013: 138). Identifying a nation and its head with pre-Islamic heritage has been discussed in 2.1 as dislocative nationality (Zia-Ebrahimi 2016),

an attempt to connect the identity of the Iranian nation to a European nation. Also as Ansari suggests, propagating Iranian culture based on its pre-Islamic heritage was effectively re-defined by the Western archeologists; consequently re-exporting it to the West (Ansari 2012: 178).

At the time of Mohammad Reza Shah the cultural activities based on ancient Persian culture and art were used to propagate and legitimate his monarchy. During the 1970s, along with strengthening the position of Iran in OPEC and gaining high revenue from the purchase of oil, Mohammad Reza Shah sought to project an image of himself to Iran and the world by presenting himself as part of a continental chain of Iranian monarchy dating back to the *Achaemenid* Empire and inviting politicians and diplomats from around the world to a celebration of 2,500 years of the monarchy in Persepolis (Axworthy 2013: 76-77, Tabibi 2014: 95). In addition, some cultural initiatives were organized under the supervision of his wife, Farah Diba. As Baharak Tabibi in her PhD dissertation argues, more national museums, such as the Tehran Carpet Museum, Abguineh Museum of Glass and Ceramics, Reza Abbassi Museum, Negarestan Museum and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Arts, were founded by Farah Diba and consequently can be counted as attempts “to propagate Iran’s high artistic culture” in the country and abroad (Tabibi 2014: 9-10). A decade earlier, in the early 1960s, she began to support the establishment of a cultural institute, *Kānun Parvaresh Fekri Kudākn va nojavānān*, the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, known as *Kanun*, which initially established a network of permanent and traveling libraries across Iran to promote culture and literacy (Daryaei 2016: 1). In the view of *Hamid Dabashi*, *Kanun* became a focal point of a major movement in Iranian cinema, giving opportunities to young film makers, poets and authors (Dabashi 2001: 44). Chapter 6.2.5 will discuss *Kanun*’s cooperation with German partners in intercultural dialogue. A center for the “Dialogue among Civilizations” in 1977, which was founded by Iranian National Television, the Iranian university of *Farabi* and the Institute of Cultural Research, was the next cultural initiative to be supported by Farah Diba. The center set out “to resume once again cultural links [of Iran] with great Asian civilizations which were interrupted because of the Western domination in the World”, as *Daryoush Shayegan* mentions (Shayegan 2014: 11-12). The center managed, among other things, to translate nearly 70 texts into Farsi and organize a seminar with the

assistance of the UNESCO “Big Plan” program in 1977 (Naraghi 1377 [1999]: 23). The seminar was held to consider the possibility of dialogue among different cultures (Mirsepassi 2010: 34).

Following the Islamic Revolution of Iran, political change influenced the Iranian state’s cultural approach in its foreign policy. The dominant revolutionary discourse of the new Iranian state and especially its leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, included “neither East, nor West” and “exporting Islamic Republic of Iran to the world”. At the same time, ahead of making any clear cultural policy in the context of Iranian foreign policy, Iran’s image in the world was built by revolutionary actions such as the American Embassy hostage crisis in 1979 and terror among opponents of the Islamic Revolution in some European countries by members of “radical revolutionary groups and guards”, which had power in the early years after the Revolution (Sinkaya 2015: 104-110). The Revolution also changed the political structure of Iran and consequently influenced the policy-making process regarding cultural activities abroad: The Islamic Republic of Iran is a mixture of democratically legitimated and religiously legitimated sectors. On one hand, an elected president, who represents the Iranian state by means of the presidency and foreign ministry, has authority over the cultural activities of Iran abroad. On the other, the president’s ultimate authority is limited by the head of the religiously legitimated sector, who has control over all sections and means of the Iranian state. According to the Iranian Constitution, which was re-written after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the current leader has significant power over key cultural, security, judiciary and military institutions, including the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), which is in charge of Iran’s foreign cultural activities. Therefore, the complex nature of the power structure must be considered as a factor to understand the foreign cultural policy of Iran generally and characteristics of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany specifically. It should also be noted that international reactions to Iran worked as an obstacle to establishing a foreign cultural policy in the post-Revolution era. The Iran-Iraq War (1980- 1988), for instance, was one of the reasons the Iranian state was interrupted in achieving its institutional potential to construct a policy regarding its cultural activities abroad.

After 1994 the Iranian state managed to concentrate and coordinate its foreign cultural activities under the authority of a single organization, ICRO. Before that, a variety of organizations (around 17) initiated cultural activities abroad. Meanwhile, some organizations were founded to make cultural policies in the mixed domestic and foreign area. *Šorā-ye Āli-ye Enqelāb-e Farhangi* [the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution] was an organization founded to regulate cultural activities and re-establish cultural institutions such as universities in Iran. The next important organization was *Sāzemān-e Tabliqāt-e Eslāmi* [the Islamic Propagation Organization], which was established by Ayatollah Khomeini in the early 1980s. The Department of International Affairs of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance,¹⁵ which was under the control of the president, played a role too. Institutions such as *Taqrib* and *Ah al-Bayt* assemblies, as well as *Hekmat* Academy -which was active in regard to philosophy and sociology studies- were the next actors to play a role. Most of the organizations and institutions mentioned, in fact, had religious terminology in their title or a religious background. This suggests that the foreign policy approach in the post-Revolutionary era was religious. Among the organizations mentioned, the Islamic Propagation Organization was the founding father of ICRO. According to Farid Moddaresi, the main audience of the Islamic Propagation Organization was *tode-ye Motasharein* [traditional religious mass], including youth and elders, clergymen and ordinary people, proponents of religious practices in mosques, and fans of music and film. There have been huge cultural and training departments and agencies in the hands of the Islamic Propagation Organization, including news agencies, universities, publications, newspapers, *Maddāh*¹⁶ and film production institutes (Modaresi 28.06.2009). It not only addressed an Iranian audience but also extended its activities to some other Muslim countries. After the end of the Iran-Iraq War and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the next leader Ali Khamenei changed the structure of the Islamic Propagation Organization. He

¹⁵ Following the Islamic Revolution, the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education was in charge of university and cultural affairs, but afterwards it divided into two separate ministries: the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance.

¹⁶ *Maddah* can be roughly translated as “religious singer”. According to Flakerud (2013: 26), *Maddah* is a phenomenon which flourished in the post-Iranian Revolution era. With the content of its lyrics about Shia myths such as Karbala and Imam Hossain, *Maddah* encouraged Iranian soldiers to participate in the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). The role of *Maddah* also became significant after the war to stabilize the position of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state through the songs.

delegated *Shora-ye 'Ali* [higher council] to manage the organization.¹⁷ In 1994 a branch of the organization was separated to deal specifically with the propagation of the Islamic Republic of Iran abroad. This organization is called the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO). According to its constitution, which was authorized by the leader, all Iranian state means, including budget and decision-making authority regarding “foreign cultural propagation”, were transferred to ICRO (Rasmi newspaper 05.02.1996). More details of the structure of ICRO are presented in 5.2.2.

Some studies discuss the role of ICRO in the cultural policy of Iran abroad. Von Maltzahn argues that establishing a specific institute in Iran “dealing with cultural policy” indicates that Iran, like Germany and Britain, cares about the power of culture in foreign relations. But unlike the cultural institutions in Germany and Britain, ICRO is not responsible for the country’s foreign policy. It has a mixed structure, which connects it to the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance but also makes it responsible to the leader. Despite its mixed structure, it follows some guidelines. Von Maltzahn’s analysis is that, although ICRO theoretically aims at all countries of the world, the focus has been more on countries with a majority of Muslim communities and neighboring countries such as Syria (von Maltzahn 2015: 68). In addition, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, ICRO included cultural (not religious) activities in its communication with countries of Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus. In the 1990s Iran had learned some lessons from the early post-Revolution and post-war era. According to William Johnston, the non-religious nature of the cultural policy of the Soviet Union and its traditional influence on the Central Asian countries was the reason that Iran did not attempt to propagate Islam in those countries (Johnston 2007). Using historical cultural weight, such as *Nowruz*¹⁸ regarding countries such as Turkmenistan, and increasing cultural activities in Persian-speaking countries such as Tajikistan and Afghanistan, Iran extended, as Edward Wastnidge states, a pragmatic policy in its cultural activities in Central Asia (Wastnidge 2014).

¹⁷ These religious and cultural figures are as follows: Ahmad Janati, Mohammad Mohammadi Iraqi, Mohammad Ali Zam, Gholam Ali Afrouz, Ahmad Pornejati and Gholamali Haadad Adel. These persons played a key role over the next three decades in different cultural and foreign cultural positions of Iran.

¹⁸ Nowruz is the Persian New Year, which is celebrated worldwide by the people of Iran as well as some other ethno-linguistic groups in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Turkey etc. Nowruz is celebrated at the beginning of spring.

The presidency of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, 1989-1997, brought some changes to the foreign policy of Iran, with a tendency to follow pragmatism and pursue national interests (Darvishi/Fardi Tazeh 2008, Özyurt 2011, Souri 2005) becoming apparent. In his presidency Iran started to become involved in human rights meetings with Germany and “critical dialogue” with the EU, as mentioned in 2.3. From 1998 Mohammad Khatami had a more “open foreign policy” and promised to open up the world to Iran via its policies of “détente” and “dialogue among civilizations”. He tried to strengthen “civil society” and the “rule of law” at domestic level. Through these reformist plans he formed a new image of Iran internationally. The idea of “dialogue among civilizations” was used by the foreign ministry to extend more relationships towards Western and Arab countries. This approach will be discussed in 6.1.3. Despite all the reformist plans and open foreign policy, Khatami faced some obstacles to fulfilling his foreign cultural approach. The “terror of writers”,¹⁹ newspaper bans, journalist arrests and student unrest in 1999, the *18 Tir crisis*, are remarkable points to argue that Khatami as a president, in the mixed power structure, had limited authority to change the foreign cultural policy of Iran in a liberal way. At the same time, American President George W. Bush calling Iran an “axis of Evil” in 2001, increasing pressure from the EU regarding Iran’s nuclear program, the country’s human rights situation, and more economic sanctions against Iran can be counted as extra difficulties at the time of Khatami. These international pressures strengthened the opposition of hardliners in Iran against the liberal foreign policy of Khatami towards the West and his cultural policy, that is, the dialogue among civilizations.

From 2005 to 2013 Iran was introduced to the world through the revolutionary rhetoric of Khatami’s successor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. His radical comments about Israel are just an example of “how not to improve a country’s image”, as Edward Wastnidge argues (2015: 372). According to Wastnidge, during Ahmadinejad’s presidency the idea of “soft power” in the foreign policy of Iran entered into Iranian political discourse. Soft power in this context matched the discourse that hardliners, and especially the leader, had a tendency to use, for

¹⁹ “Terror of writers”, which also is known as “Serial Murders”, refers to murders and disappearances of Iranian dissidents, intellectuals, liberal authors, and some members of the Writers Association of Iran. It happened between 1988 and 1998. There is evidence to indicate that the Iranian government and especially Vezārat-e Etela’āt [the ministry of intelligence] was responsible for organizing some of those murders (Ebadi 2007/ Mokhtari 2016/ Tazmini 2009).

instance planning against “cultural penetration”. Ideas like “engineering of culture” and “soft war” appeared in this period. The second round of Ahmadinejad’s presidency had different aspects. In 2009 Iran faced a mass protest movement, criticizing the result of the presidential election and Ahmadinejad’s return to presidential office. The movement, known as the *Green movement*, could not sustain itself, but it was able to mobilize the sympathy of Western countries like Germany with Iranian people as regards their desire for democracy. At the same time, as Mokhtari says in his analysis, it proved that the Iranian state “is neither Islamic nor Republic” anymore and that there is a gap between the Iranian nation and state (Mokhtari 2016). The election of Hassan Rouhani in 2013 on the recommendation of “the president of reformation” Khatami and “the president of pragmatism” Hashemi²⁰ suggests that, in spite of all disappointments, the majority of Iranian people have not lost their hope in reform. They support, among other things, the creation of a “friendly” and “realistic image” of Iran abroad.

2.5 Summary of Points in Chapter Two

At the beginning of his article on the foreign cultural policy of Germany, Gregory Paschalidis reports the result of a public opinion poll: between 2008 and 2013, people all over the world found Germany to be the most positive of all countries with the exception of Japan, which attracted the most positive feedback in 2012. Using this point, Paschalidis suggests that Germany, in just two generations since the end of WWII, has succeeded in transforming its poor international image into that of a universally appreciated “moral authority” (Paschalidis 2014: 257). A study conducted by the World Economic Forum states that in 2008 in the Middle East, “Iranians are most likely to say the interaction between the West and the Muslim world is important” (the World Economic Forum 2008: 15). According to this survey, about 70% of Iranians expressed themselves positively about this interaction (2008: 15) and believed that a “greater interaction between Muslim and Western worlds is a benefit rather than a threat” (2008: 25). No study or poll shows the view of Iranians specifically towards Germany. The popularity of the

²⁰ In colloquial language in Iran, Hashemi is known as *Sardār-e Sāzandegi* [commander of construction], which indirectly applies to his pragmatic approach after the Iran-Iraq war. Khatami is known as *Raees-e Dulat-e Eslahāt* [head of administration of reformism].

Goethe Institute amongst young Iranians (although the Goethe Institute does not exist officially in Iran, there is a German language institute which is indirectly run by it), and that of the DAAD amongst Iranian academics, suggests that there is a good chance for Germany to be popular in Iran. Meanwhile, especially after the Islamic Revolution, Iran did not have a steadily positive image in the world. A Pew Global survey shows that in 2006 the majority of European countries, including Germany, and the majority of Muslim countries, including Jordan and Egypt, expressed little or no confidence in Ahmadinejad. It is also stated that, in 2003, 51% of German people perceived Iran as a danger for the region and the world, with regard to Iran giving weapons to terrorists instead of using them for defense (Pew-Global-Attitudes-Project 2006: 17-19). Another survey by the Pew Global center shows that the second top concern of 57% of Germans interviewed in 2013 was Iran's nuclear program (Pew Research Center 2013: 3). Factors such as the powerful German economy in global trade, Iran's unfortunate economy, Iranian radical political rhetoric in the early Revolution era and Ahmadinejad's era, are important to form the image of Iran worldwide. But this comparison illustrates that Germany successfully managed its post-WWII difficulties and represented its image positively abroad. Iran did not have such success in its post-Revolution era.

The issues of the international popularity of Germany and the worldwide unpleasant image of Iran can be connected to the historical context of intercultural dialogue, which were discussed in this chapter. Both nations, as mentioned in 2.1, were formed in different ways: the German nation has tended to identify itself with its diverse culture, while the Iranian nation has tended to shift back and forth, identifying itself with its pre-Islamic or post-Islamic characteristics. Overall, they have managed to have a long history of common cultural activities, as mentioned in 2.3. The economic and political policies of Germany and Iran played an important role in forming the direction of this relationship and these cultural activities. As reviewed in 2.4, Germany's foreign cultural policy was constructed within its foreign policy in a more distinct way in the post-WWII era. Iranian cultural policy has been mixed up with its Islamic propagation and domestic cultural policy in the post-Revolution era, with just a short period in which it was based on the liberal policies of Khatami.

The main points reviewed in chapter 2 are as follows:

- (1) **Continuing cultural relations even without contracts:** To organize cultural activities, as mentioned in 2.3, the Iranian and German institutions concluded cultural agreements. The cultural activities continued even when it was not possible for political reasons to continue or re-conclude such agreements. It seems that the presence of educational and pedagogic contracts, memorandums of understanding and twin cities agreements were able to fill the empty place of state agreements.
- (2) **Shaping cultural relations through cooperation and negotiation:** Germany, with the presence of its cultural institutions in Iran, represented and strengthened its cultural cooperative role. Moving closer to contemporary times, Germany's role in the relationship with Iran was shaped by its position in the EU, so a new dimension of negotiation emerged. The "critical dialogue" is a good example here. It took place because of Iran's role in the region/Middle East and its foreign and domestic policy. It was designed to "change" Iran's behavior. Historically it began in a period in which Iran had recently survived the Iran-Iraq war, so Iran had a strong interest in normalizing its relations with the West through this dialogue. As a result Germany used the opportunity of its cultural cooperation to open space for negotiation with Iran from an EU/Western point of view. Some suggest that Germany had economic interests in this negotiation. Some also argue that Germany had learned from its WWII experience and consequently preferred the negotiation option.
- (3) **Strong role of German and weak role of Iranian cultural institutions:** Besides having diplomatic missions such as embassies or consulates in Germany, Iran represents itself through limited institutions like the Islamic Center of Hamburg. Germany, meanwhile, has had cultural institutions in different fields in Iran, such as language and art, academic exchange and archeology.
- (4) **Shaping the cultural approach to foreign policy in Germany and Iran after changes in political system:** Culture seems to be an important issue for Iran and Germany. After the Islamic Revolution, Iran has administered its foreign cultural policy through two sectors of the Iranian state (religiously and democratically legitimated sectors). After WWII, in Germany the federal government has structured its foreign cultural policy through an integrated political system, mainly the foreign ministry.
- (5) **Defining some cultural activities between Iran and Germany as "dialogue":** Some of the cultural and social activities implemented between Germany and Iran since 1992 contain a notion of dialogue, like "critical dialogue".

- (6) **Being Muslim and Western has not exclusively shaped cultural relations:** The common cultural activities were not limited to those of a religious nature (from the Iranian side) and Western or European nature (from the German side). German language courses, support for academic exchanges, cultural activities and city friendships are not formed predominantly by these two characteristics.

These six points illustrate that, despite differences and similarities between the Iranian and German nations, institutions, states and cultural approaches, there is a paradigm which reflects the common interests of the German and Iranian nations and governments in their contact with one another. This paradigm exists in spite of political and economic tensions sometimes being an obstacle to cultural relations. The paradigm is important for understanding how and why specific cultural activities have been implemented under the discourse of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany, which in turn is important for understanding this research as a whole.

Chapter 3: Review of Literature and Posing the Research Question

This chapter reviews various studies on the issue of intercultural dialogue. As an academic discipline, intercultural dialogue is a relatively new and complex area. The complexity of intercultural dialogue research has been used as a basis to develop the structure of this chapter. Studies which concern definitions and different views of dialogue, culture and intercultural dialogue are reviewed in 3.1.; those which consider intercultural dialogue as the objective of study in different fields of civilization, religion, education, conflict resolution and peace are reviewed in 3.2. Some studies also discuss cultural activities and exchanges in the international realm, cultural diplomacy and foreign cultural policy, which are also considered in 3.2. Subchapter 3.3 presents gaps and confusion in the reviewed academic debates. Finally, in 3.4, the question of the present study is posed, this time in relation to filling a specific gap in the academic debates.

3.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Approaches to Dialogue, Culture and Intercultural Dialogue

Intercultural dialogue consists of three components: “inter-”, “culture” and “dialogue”. This combination has been mentioned in various studies, articles and statements, but in most, if not all, it refers to cultural relations, negotiation, debate, discussion, relationship, cultural exchange and similar. Intercultural dialogue thus either has some similarities to those concepts or it is a faddish term that authors and experts have a tendency to use. This subchapter explores what “intercultural dialogue” actually means.

3.1.1 Understanding Dialogue in the Context of Intercultural Dialogue

The term “dialogue” has its root in the Greek word *diologos*. As Per Linell explains, it is derived from the Greek verb *dialegesthai*, which means “to conduct conversation”. Since the word *legein* means “to speak” and “to assemble”, dialogue should be considered as a “process” and “practice” rather than something abstract. Dialogue also means conversation or verbal interaction between two or more participants. The word *dialogos* is sometimes defined as two-sided communication according to a false etymology, namely because “dia” is related to *dya/ duas*, meaning two. In Linell’s view, however, this confusion has been strongly reinforced by the contrast between dialogue and “monologue”, which refers to one-sided communication. It is therefore possible to understand why a definition of dialogue as two-sided communication is tolerated in academic debates. But a more accurate definition is “speech” between a number of participants, as well as “discourse, talk, thought, reason, knowledge and theory” (Linell 2009: 2-3). Some scholars argue that dialogue is a result of a process which involves “listening with empathy, searching for common ground, exploring new ideas and perspectives, and bringing unexamined assumptions into the open” (London 2008). Dialogue is also defined as a “conversation aimed at mutual confrontation and understanding of views, and as cooperation in the search for true protection of general human values and work for justice” (Doron 2002).

Some scholars argue that because dialogue is a type of communication, it should be differentiated from other types of communication. Leonard Swidler believes that some individuals “who are quite convinced that they have all the truth on a subject” use the terminology of dialogue because they feel that, in today’s climate, communicating in a framework of dialogue is less aggressive (Swidler 2007: 7). To define dialogue it is not even enough to refer to it as two-way communication, because fighting, negotiating and debating, for example, fit the same category but are not dialogue. There are some borders between those types of communication and dialogue, as Swidler argues. He clarifies two extremes of the two-way communication spectrum to illustrate these borders. At one extreme, two sides of communication hold the same views on a particular subject; this type of communication is called “encouragement” or “reinforcement”. At the other extreme, there is communication between two sides; one of them, or both,

presumes to have all the truth concerning a subject, meanwhile assuming that the other side needs to be informed of that subject. Neither of these types of communication fits the meaning of dialogue. In a dialogue, no side has a monopoly on the truth of a subject, and both need to seek further. Dialogue may turn out to be a reinforcement in some instances, but if it does, it is the result of “more or less extensive dialogue” that allows two sides to learn from each other and arrive at an agreement (Swidler 2007: 6-7). Swidler’s argument defines dialogue as a communication between two (or more) sides; it aims to express the ideas and thinking of the participants on an equal level and does not aim to reach to an agreement at the end; if agreement is achieved, however, it shows that dialogue has provided a possibility for that to happen. This definition suggests that dialogue aims at an understanding of an issue rather than focusing on convincing one or both sides of it. This is exactly the difference between dialogue and negotiation, as scholars such as Cynthia Romano discuss. She argues that negotiation uses dialogue to resolve differences; nevertheless, the goal of negotiation is to gain “advantage” rather than “understanding” (Romano 2013). Also, because negotiation is a discussion in which the participants try to strike a deal or reach an agreement of some kind, or in other words is the art of “give and take”, it does not fit the meaning of dialogue, as Doron argues (Doron 2002). In a study by Abu-Nimer, Khoury and Welty regarding Jewish-Palestinian dialogue, dialogue is differentiated from “debate” as follows:

Table 2. Difference between dialogue and debate

Dialogue:	Debate:
To inquire and to learn	To tell, sell, persuade
To unfold shared meaning	To gain agreement on one meaning
To integrate multiple perspectives	To evaluate and select the best
To uncover and examine assumptions	To justify/defend assumptions

Source: Abu-Nimer et al. (2007, p. 8)

Dialogue also has a root in philosophy. The Greek philosopher Socrates approached dialogue as a method of teaching and studying. Using dialogue as an instrument, Socrates learned with his students rather than teaching them. He asked “interesting questions” that inspired his students to find their own answers. Through this method, he was practicing “a spirit of equality” and transforming “understanding” (Winchell 2006: 30). There are also debates on “dialogical

logic”, which points to a specific research tradition. Here, dialogical logic is conceived as “the systematic study of dialogues in which two parties exchange arguments over a central claim”, as Laurent Keiff argues (2011). Another relevant discussion of dialogue in the field of philosophy is “philosophy of dialogue”, which is expressed by Martin Buber. In his book, *I and Thou* (1937), Buber argues that human existence is based on relationships, it results from exchanges of thoughts between “man” and “man”. This discussion of Buber is referred to in fields such as qualitative research, for instance phenomenology (Fife 2015), and educational techniques. The latter field will be discussed in more detail in 3.2.3.

Dialogue has been referred to in philosophy as an approach to seeking truth from more than one viewpoint. This approach to dialogue in Hans George Gadamer’s view is a “fusion of horizons”, which rejects the two alternatives of “objectivism” and “absolute knowledge”. It means that no horizon of thinking on a subject is completely irrelevant and no single horizon alone is completely relevant. Consequently, because participants in a dialogue have different backgrounds, histories and cultures, their points of view regarding a subject cannot be removed entirely. Dialogue thus creates a possibility for understanding different dimensions of an issue according to the views of people who have different thought horizons (Gadamer 1980, Gadamer 1997). As a result, Gadamer states that symmetry of interaction in dialogue produces knowledge (Linell 1998: 11). In Gadamer’s view, knowledge is constructed through the fusion of thoughts of two or more parties who share their views; and nobody can claim to own the absolute knowledge. Although Gadamer is criticized for being too “relativistic” (Grondin 2015) and having a “strong focus on the agent’s own self-understanding” (Kögler 1999), still his idea of “fusion of horizons” is referred to as one of the main bases of validity of dialogue as a rational approach to constructing knowledge.

Dialogue has also been discussed in the context of the relationship between American citizens and the American state in the late 19th century. Jeffrey C. Goldfarb is among the scholars who analyze Tocqueville’s study on the consequences of democratic practices in America in 1920. In Tocqueville’s view, there has been a vital relationship between democracy as a political system and democracy as a social order with a distinctive culture. Goldfarb argues that Tocqueville’s analysis has some gaps and is rather a starting point. In Goldfarb’s opinion, democratic culture provides an opportunity to extend the relationship

between the state, that is to say the “culture of power”, and people, that is to say the “power of culture”, to change the relationship from monologue to dialogue: “[I]n the tension between the culture of power and the power of culture, there is a zone for dialogue in democracy, and [...] intellectuals are key dialogic agents” (Goldfarb 2012: 150).

The above review suggests that there are two approaches to understanding dialogue. Firstly, there is a practical concept which puts both parties (participants, individuals, groups) face to face to communicate and discuss an issue and provide an opportunity to talk and listen. Secondly, there is a metaphorical approach: It is no longer limited to face-to-face communication and can be any kind of reciprocal interaction, exchange of thinking, influence of one thought on another thought, constructing knowledge and similar.

3.1.2 Understanding Culture in the Context of Intercultural Dialogue

There is no single, straightforward explanation of “culture”. Different disciplines, such as anthropology, psychology and sociology, have different approaches to culture. Tony Bennett and John Frow in an introduction to the *Sage Handbook of Cultural Studies* briefly compared the amount of space and scope allocated to the word “culture” in two different publications in 1968 and 2001. In 1968, there was a single entry on culture and some limited connected issues such as cultural relativism and culturology. In the 2001 publication, there were 34 entries on anthropological and critical approaches to culture, such as “cultural economy” and “cultural industry” (Bennett/Frow 2008: 1-2). The increase in academic debates on the issue of culture in the last three to four decades illustrates that not only is its importance in international relations rising, but attention to it has also grown considerably in specific fields. This subchapter therefore attempts to review academic debates on culture in the context of intercultural dialogue.

As mentioned earlier (2.1), there was a tendency from the early 19th century to identify the German nation as a *Kulturnation* (rather than emphasizing its civilization) through its language, art and music. The Iranian nation has identified itself with its pre-Islamic (civilization of Persia) and Islamic cultures in different periods. That being the case, which dimension of the human heritage of a nation is culture, and how does it differ from “civilization”?

Culture in David Emil Durkheim's view has its roots in the "collective conscious" (Durkheim 2014) and in the view of T. S. Eliot it must be understood "in relation with religion" (Kohzadi/Azizmohammadi 2011: 2823). According to Clifford Geertz, religion and ideology have been considered as cultural systems (Geertz 1973). Culture is also defined as "learned behaviors" in a society (Pedersen 2001: 21). Emanuel Kant differentiates between culture and civilization by referring to types of "culture of skills" and "culture of training/discipline". In Kant's view, as Arsenij Gulyga explains, the first type is necessary for humanity to achieve goals, but the second type would rule things. Culture thus refers more to the "culture of training", the absolute morality; what refers more to the "technical" dimension of culture, in Kant's view, is "civilization" (Gulyga 2012: 164-165). In the terminology of Edward Burnett Tylor, however, there is no difference between culture and civilization, both referring to elements perceived by a human being as a member of a society: "[C]ulture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor 1871: 1). Tylor also gives two *semantic* and *value* dimensions to the explanation of culture according to development theory:

"Stages of culture, industrial, intellectual, political, moral – Development of culture in great measure corresponds with transition from savage through barbaric to civilized life - Progression-theory – Degeneration-theory – Development-theory includes both, the one as primary, the other as secondary- Historical and traditional evidence not available as to low stages of culture [...]" (Tylor 1871: 23).

Hence Tylor *valuates* different cultures, articulates them in a spectrum from civilized behavior to barbarism, and gives them *semantic* dimension, defines them in a spectrum from low to high civilization. Eric Gabel and Richard Handler criticize Tylor for categorizing civilization based on "degree" rather than "type" (Gabel/Handler 2008: 28). As George W. Stocking argues, civilization in Tylor's terminology is the highest stage of progressive human development which began in savagery and would end on the highest or at least a standard level of the "European civilization" (Stocking 1963: 784). Franz Boas also criticizes Tylor in his discussion that human society is marked by a plurality of different cultures or nations, and there is no specific concept of culture. As Robert C. Ulin explains, Boas believed that there is no inherent relation between race and language and

culture; hence there are no inferior races, languages or cultures (Ulin 1984: 3). Simulating culture and civilization in Tylor's definition of culture is also challenged by Matthew Arnold. In his view, civilization is outward and mechanical, while culture is above all an "inward condition of the mind and spirit" (Stocking 1963: 792). That is why it should be understood as a flexible and changeable dimension of human life rather than a concrete entity.

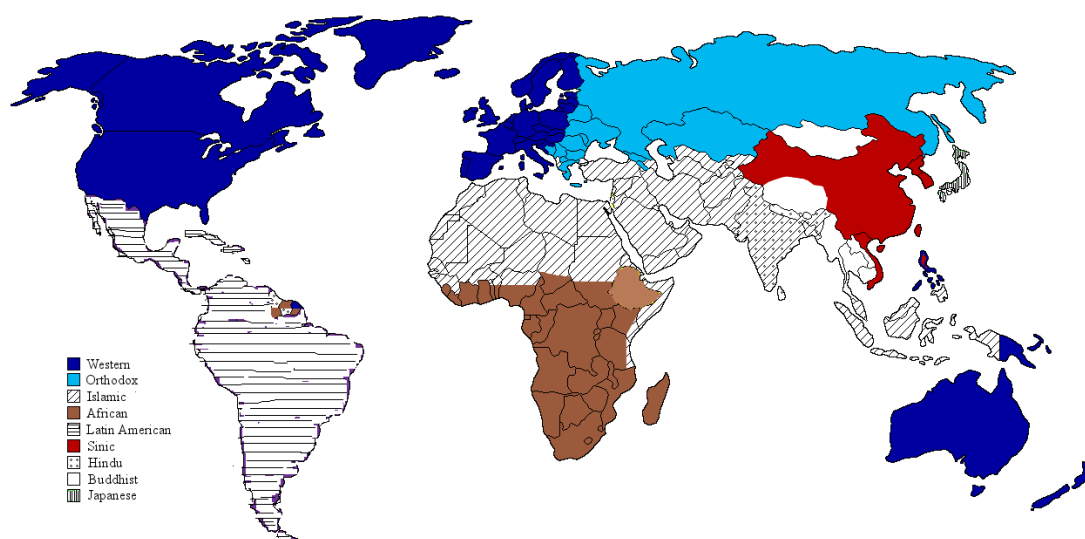
The discussion above can be used as a guideline to the views of thinkers and scholars who discuss the relationship between human societies, including Muslim and Western countries. For instance, Fred Halliday discusses that long-standing tension between Muslim and Western countries has more to do with the political conflict than religion. Halliday divides the stages of this conflict into different periods. The first was the rise of Islam in the late seventh century, when Arab armies went into Sicily and then into France. The second was the medieval wars of the Crusaders. The third period began in the late eighteenth century, when European states subjugated the Muslim world to their political and economic domination, and the fourth took place after the Second World War and especially in the early 1970s (Halliday 1995: 71). Although Halliday's argument highlighted the political context as the source of the conflict, most of the knowledge produced about this historical tension illustrates negative points of Islam. Some scholars tended to combine "Islam" with words such as "threat", such as John L. Esposito in *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (1999), "rage" such as Bernard Lewis in *The roots of Muslim rage* (1990), and "civilizational conflict" such as Bassam Tibi in *Euro-Islam: die Lösung eines Zivilisationskonfliktes* [Euro-Islam: the solution of a civilizational conflict] (2009). Scholars such as Andrea Leug argue that the media have played a significant role in highlighting the issue of conflict between Muslim and Western countries:

"Since the [Persian] Gulf War, the media have discovered the market value of this theme and have been addressing it in television programmes, magazines and books. Meanwhile, the diverse trends and complex social, ethnic or cultural realities in Islamic countries are hardly granted any attention" (Lueg 1995: 7).

The other scholar to use the terminology of "civilization" to explain tensions between Muslim and Western countries is Samuel Huntington. In his book *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*, Huntington placed civilizations after the Cold War era in eight categories: Western, Latin American,

African, Islamic, Sinic, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist and Japanese (Huntington 1996: 32). Without defining civilization clearly, Huntington even draws the borders of the civilizations on a map (see figure 4) to show that the roots of future conflicts lie in the differences between civilizations, specifically Western and Islamic civilizations (Huntington 1996: 209), and no longer in the differences between economic or social classes (Huntington 1996: 25).

Figure 3. The World of Civilizations: Post-1990



Source: Samuel Huntington (2011: 26-27)

One of the main problems of the map is that it simplifies the borders of civilizations, assuming civilization to be a concrete and not changeable phenomenon. The map shows several overlaps. Muslim people living in Western countries and followers of the Sinic religion living in India are simply ignored on the map, as is the fact that people who live in Sinic or Muslim countries may not identify strongly with their religion. The *dislocative nationality* of Iranian people (Zia-Ebrahimi 2016), as discussed in 2.1, can challenge the map in this regard. The sharp edge of the theory positioned the Western civilization as rational and civilized. It presents Islamic civilization as a trouble maker. It simply ignores the fact that Muslim and Western people share some similarities and Westerners could have strong dissimilarities between each other. The so-called *Arab Spring*, which started in 2010 in Tunisia and extended to Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria and resulted in uprisings in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, is a clear indication that the conflict has emerged inside Islamic civilization, and not against the West. The

demonstrators in these countries demanded, among other things, a democratic system, which Huntington has referred to as one of the favorite values of the West. *Brexit* [British exit], which refers to the referendum in 2016 whereby British citizens voted to leave the European Union, is another indication of the conflict inside the territory which Huntington identified as Western civilization. As a result, it seems that the reasoning of Huntington on future conflicts is a political manifestation against so-called Islamic civilization rather than an unbiased analysis in political science. Coming from a professor at Harvard university and director of security planning for the National Security Council in the Carter Administration (Shaw 2007: 254), Huntington's idea has not remained a political prediction but been used as a strategy for US policies regarding Muslim countries.

The rationality of the clash of civilizations as described by Huntington has been challenged by scholars. It has been criticized by Edward Said for building a conceptual framework of "us-vs-them" and defining "our civilization", that is, Western, as "the accepted one" and "others' civilization" as "different and strange" (Said 2005: 71). Fatemeh Mernissi also criticizes the clash of civilizations for ignoring factors such as economic interests that Islam and the West have in common. She reminds readers that Western relations with Saudi Arabia are an indication of interdependence and interpermeation between Islamic and Western countries (Mernissi 2003: 63). Roy Mottahedeh argues that Huntington has a wrong understanding of the clash of different civilizations in the past. He challenges the historical facts Huntington used to prove his theory, for instance that crusaders were to rescue "indigenous Christians of Holy Land" from the tyranny of the Muslim inhabitants. Mottahedeh is skeptical about this fact: "indigenous Christians of the Holy Land found Crusader Christians presence(s) a burden since the Crusaders could be extremely intolerant of the indigenous Christian groups present there" (Mottahedeh 2005: 133). John Trumbour also suggests that the theory is written for the benefit of the US policies, not based on historical facts. The theory was released when communism had just collapsed, so there was a desire in US foreign policy to identify the next enemy. Trumbour also reminds readers of the US policy towards Palestine and Israel, and relates it to that part of the conceptualization of Western civilization. In his view, the political relation between the USA and Israel is the reason to discuss the "Judeo-

Christian” roots of the Western civilization (Trumbour 2005: 98). Amartya Sen criticizes Huntington’s limitation and categorization of civilizations with overlapping categories. In his view, the identity of people who have been involved in conflicts is too diverse and complicated to be categorized as one specific civilization or culture. In his book *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, Sen argues that civilization and religion are not the only factors to shape the nature of violence and conflict between people from different cultures. People who are identified by a specific civilization or religion are influenced at the same time by other factors, such as economics, class or education. He therefore warns that categorizing people based on their religion or their civilization will increase the possibility of violence between them (Sen 2007). Navid Kermani’s argument is similarly relevant in this regard. He discusses that being Arab or Jew has not always been perceived as religious identity. He clarifies this point with the example of the “we” in Arab philosophy and poetry, which often does not mean “we Muslims” or “we Jews”, but rather “we philosophers” (Kermani 2005: 42). He emphasizes that, over the course of the modern age, Jewish philosophy, mysticism and literature developed in the Arab context. The identity of people in the Arab world is by no means shaped exclusively by Islam, but also by Jewish and Christian traditions. Negating or choosing to ignore historic realities aggravates the tensions in the Middle East (Kermani 2005: 43).

Categorizing people according to their civilization and culture is a sensitive issue in understanding intercultural dialogue; firstly, because it can lead to value judgments such as barbaric or civilized or low or high cultures; secondly, because it can ignore diverse characteristics of their identity. Here too it is important to distinguish between “inter-cultural” and “intra-cultural”. The difference depends on the perspective of the researcher who studies a certain subject and compares it with other subjects inside or outside a community and group. Intra-cultural applies to communication/relations between people who are from the “same” culture or have a culturally “similar” background, for example communication between Iranians or communication between Germans. Inter-cultural meanwhile refers to communication between two sides (two persons, groups, partners) from different cultures, for example between Iranians and Germans. This categorization may not be entirely clear-cut or accurate, however. Communication between an Iranian and a German may count as inter-cultural, but cultural similarities, such as their

interest in the poems of Hafiz and Goethe or scholarships from the DAAD, make their communication intra-cultural. This situation can be confusing.

L.E. Sarbough introduces a useful discriminator to differentiate inter-cultural from intra-cultural communication. He suggests considering the heterogeneity and homogeneity of the participants of communication. In Sarbough's view, there are no two persons who are different in every characteristic, and no two persons who are alike in every characteristic. So by establishing a continuum with a pure homogeneous pair at one end and a pure heterogeneous pair at the other end, it is possible to recognize whether there are more similarities or dissimilarities between two persons. If they have more dissimilarities than similarities, studying their communication as inter-cultural is valid. If they share more similarities, they should be studied based on intra-cultural communication (Sarbaugh 1993: 7-8).

To sum up the academic debates reviewed in this subchapter, it is important to recognize how a nation presents itself culturally and is perceived by others and that culture is a combination of different dimensions and aspects. Understanding a nation based on its so-called culture (Islamic in the case of Iran and Western in the case of Germany) neglects some dimensions of the everyday life of that nation. In defining the communication between two nations, similarities and differences in the characteristics of participants in communication must be identified. Intercultural dialogue in this sense refers to dialogue between dissimilar participants.

3.1.3 Overview of Definitions of Intercultural Dialogue

Studies which consider intercultural dialogue have been conducted in different disciplines and rarely define it as a specific concept. For instance, some analyze it in a European cultural and political context (Anderson 2010, Atwan 2010, Bekemans 2012, Bourquin 2003, Cliche 2004, De Petrini 2010, Wilk-Woś 2010, Wimmer 2007), and some in the context of education and globalization (Zajda 2009). Most refer to the necessity of intercultural dialogue to reflect the diversity of cultures and see it as making a positive contribution to problems of social life. They nevertheless assume that intercultural dialogue is an already understood concept and does not need to be defined.

Intercultural dialogue has been defined in some dissertations and studies according to the definition given by international organizations. For instance, Chee Meng Wong, in his dissertation *Intangible Cultural Heritage of Dance as Medium for Intercultural Dialogue: Culture Assimilator Reinterpreted*, picks up on the definition of intercultural dialogue of the European Union and European Council. He shortens this definition to “a means to social cohesion” and “an ideal of liberalism and value pluralism” (Meng Wong 2013: 117-135). In another study on the subject of art and dialogue, definitions of the European Council and UNESCO are used (Cliche/Wiesand 2009: 7-15).

The fact that the definitions of intercultural dialogue used by international organizations such as UNESCO and the European Union are reflected in relevant studies cannot be a coincidence. One reason may be rooted in the history of involvement of these organizations in intercultural issues. From the beginning of the 20th century there has been a great tendency for international organizations to take practical action to prevent conflicts and provide peace and security. As Simon Bromley argues, after World War II the European countries, which had experienced two world wars in less than a generation, showed a great tendency in *European integration* policies to pursue their own interests through cooperation with one another. Organizations such as the UN and European organizations were established in such a context. In 1949, ten European states signed the statute of the *Council of Europe*, and in 1951 the Treaty of Paris was signed, which was the original step towards founding the European Union (EU). The EU was established to pursue not only economic cooperation in energy sectors but also common foreign and security policies and to cooperate on justice and human rights issues (Bromley 2001: 31-35). This context explains why the EU has coordinated “critical” and “constructive” dialogue with Iran on human rights issues as mentioned in 2.3. Establishment of the UN goes back to after World War I and the foundation of the League of Nations. As Rumki Basu explains, it aimed to prevent a repetition of the disaster of war. During World War II, “the idea that a new major organization would be needed to maintain peace and security in the post-war world” became popular among the allied powers. As a result, the UN was established in 1941 and developed its suborganizations in specific missions (Basu 2004: 12-25). This point also explains why Mohammad Khatami’s idea of “Dialogue among Civilizations” attracted attention in the UN in 1998, and 2001

was consequently named after it. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is one of the suborganizations of the UN that has shown more interest in intercultural dialogue. UNESCO was created in 1945. It has two main priorities, Africa and gender equality, although it has a number of overarching objectives such as “fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace”(UNESCO 2010: 4). A study by Hadi Khaniki on speeches of five director-generals of UNESCO in the last three decades of the 20th century suggests that there has been a significant change from one-sided and monological phrases in the speeches, plans and statements of the five UNESCO directors to two-sided phrases (Khaniki 2008). Moreover, as already mentioned in 1.2.1.1, references to intercultural dialogue and related phrases by director-generals of UNESCO were found to have emerged since the 1980s, peaked in 2001 and fluctuated up to 2015 (Bloom 2013: 4). The number of UN documents containing terms of racism, interfaith, security and interreligious concepts in combination with the expression “intercultural dialogue” increased between 2000 and 2012 (Bello 2013: 4).

The increased attention of international organizations to the issue of intercultural dialogue can explain why most studies adopt their definition of intercultural dialogue. According to the UNESCO definition , intercultural dialogue refers to “equitable exchange and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect and the equal dignity of all cultures” (UNESCO 2014). As well as managing cultural diversity, reviewing international strategies related to peace and development is mentioned by UNESCO as a necessity to promote intercultural dialogue in a study titled *Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* (UNESCO 2009).

The European Council also published a book on intercultural dialogue called the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* in 2008, the year the European Union called *European Intercultural Dialogue Year*. Intercultural dialogue in this book is defined as follows:

“[A] process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between *individuals* and *groups* with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect. It requires the freedom and ability to express oneself, as well as the willingness and capacity to listen to the views of others” (Council of Europe 2008: 17).

Based on this definition, intercultural dialogue contributes to “political, social, cultural and economic integration and the cohesion of culturally diverse societies”. It expresses “equality, human dignity and a sense of a common purpose”, sets out to “develop a deeper understanding of diverse world views and practices, to increase co-operation and participation -or the freedom to make choices-, to allow personal growth and transformation, and to promote tolerance and respect for the other” (Council of Europe 2008: 17). According to another definition of the Council of Europe, intercultural dialogue “can also be a tool for the prevention and resolution of conflicts by enhancing the respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law” (Council of Europe 2003). In *Sharing Diversity*, a study launched by the European Commission in 2008, intercultural dialogue was referred to as the “heart of cultural programs” planned for implementation up to 2013. As *Sharing Diversity* states, intercultural dialogue is also a tool for cooperation with intergovernmental organizations such as the Council of Europe, the OECD and UNESCO, as well as NGOs (2008: XIII).

These definitions consider conditions such as equality of opportunity and guaranteed safety of the participants. Discouraging extremism, bringing people together, managing cultural diversity, developing deeper understanding of diverse views, increasing cooperation and participation, promoting tolerance and respect and freedom are among the mentioned aims of intercultural dialogue. Different ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic backgrounds and heritages are referred to in the definitions to emphasize the diversity of participants in intercultural dialogue.

These definitions have some deficiencies. Firstly, they do not consider the characteristics of dialogue as a form of communication. As was mentioned in 3.1.1, dialogue can be understood in two senses, first practical and second metaphorical. It is not clear in these definitions which intercultural dialogue belongs to. Secondly, the range of participants of intercultural dialogue is so wide (individuals, peoples, groups and organizations) that it is difficult to determine whether intercultural dialogue is at individual, organizational or inter-governmental level, or in inter-cultural or intra-cultural communication.

Some scholars criticize the EU for using intercultural dialogue in “integration” and “immigration” policies when it is not clear whether this, as a method, will work. Some also criticize the EU for using it as a “flagship” against “terror”,

“radicalization” and “integration” when “little is known about the origin of the term, its real meaning and its objectives” (Silvestri 2007: 1).

The theoretical and conceptual approaches reviewed in this section share a common challenge in relation to intercultural dialogue. Is dialogue in the context of intercultural dialogue an abstract issue, or is it a form of social communication? Does culture refer to the tradition, language and art of different people, or is it an issue that depends on the social or economic level of a nation? It is worth noting that the boundaries between inter-cultural and intra-cultural communication are narrow.

The challenges to understanding intercultural dialogue are not just a matter of the academic debates. It is also connected to the subject of this study by political and social struggles. It is therefore important to consider the political and social circumstances in which intercultural dialogue has been implemented and which organizations with which political approaches and aims have defined intercultural dialogue.

Subchapter 3.1 contains reviews of academic debates on dialogue and culture. This knowledge helps to analyze the intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany. It is important to understand which other factors inform them besides those mentioned in the academic debates (ethnic diversity of participants of intercultural dialogue or peace objectives).

3.2 Discussing Intercultural Dialogue in Different Academic Debates

Intercultural dialogue has been explored in several disciplines. Categorizing intercultural dialogue based on these disciplines was difficult because, for instance, some studies considered its role in the educational arena and at the same time in immigration programs of European countries. The studies reviewed here are therefore not one-dimensional but multi-dimensional.

This subchapter comprises seven sections. 3.2.1 considers the religious aspect of intercultural dialogue in some studies, while 3.2.2. looks at its civilizational

aspect. Section 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 respectively present intercultural dialogue through a dialectical approach and as a reflection of diversity. An overview of studies in the fields of education, civil society and media is presented in 3.2.5. Studies which consider peace, approaches to conflict resolution and immigration policies in the context of intercultural dialogue are reviewed under the political dimension in 3.2.6, and those which reflect foreign cultural policy and its instruments in 3.2.7.

3.2.1 Religious Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue

In recent decades, the concept of intercultural dialogue has been linked strongly to the fields of religion and faith studies through the terminology of “dialogue among religions”, “interreligious dialogue”, “interfaith dialogue”, and similar. There are some differences between these terms, but because studies with a focus on dialogue matter here, the differences are neglected. They are reviewed together in this subchapter.

Dialogue among religions can be categorized by different types based on goals and participants. Some studies distinguish four types: “dialogue of life”, “*Dialog des Handelns*” [dialogue of actions], “dialogue of theologian exchanges”, and “dialogue of religious experiences” (Güzelmansur 2009: 539-541, Kaulig 2004: 78). The first type, dialogue of life, is a dialogue among people of a specific religion who live in a neighborhood with people of another religion and have open interaction with each other. They face joy, suffering and human problems together. Hence they try to overcome life issues through dialogue. The second type, dialogue of actions, is between Christians and non-Christians. Through dialogue they try to achieve development and progress in the society in which they work and live together. Dialogue of theologian exchanges, the third type, is among experts who want to deepen their understanding of each other’s religious heritage. In this case dialogue is a tool to learn about each other’s religion. The fourth type, dialogue of religious experience, refers to a dialogue in which people from a specific religious tradition share their experiences about their spirituality; they explain, for instance, to people of other religions how they think of and believe in God.

The other typology of dialogue among religions, which has much in common with that above, is developed by Mahmoud Ayoub (Ayoub 2004: 316-318). His first type is “dialogue of life”, which is more or less like that explained above. He defines the second type as “dialogue of beliefs”, which concerns theological doctrines and philosophical ideas. It tends to be restricted to dialogue between academics and mostly covers technical and abstract issues. “Dialogue of witnessing to one’s faith” is the third type, which often refers to an invitation to talk about religious subjects through *dawah*²¹ and missionary work. The fourth type is “dialogue of faith”, which refers to dialogue among Muslims and Christians, according to Ayoub. Dialogue of faith considers a deeper and more personal level of dialogue between religious people who share their personal faith with each other. The ultimate purpose of the dialogue of faith, Ayoub states, is to create “a fellowship of faith among the followers of Islam and Christianity” (Ayoub 2004: 318).

There is another typology of dialogue among religions based on definitions of religion: “sharing religious experiences” and “relationship between man and man”. Khalil Ghanbari in his study argues that two phases, modernism and constructivism, shape the approach of the *Parliament of the World’s Religions* towards interfaith dialogue. As Ghanbari states, this parliament is one of the international platforms of interfaith dialogue, in which the Eastern religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism play a central role. In the parliament, members who have Eastern religions are engaged in a joint effort with members of the Western religions to show that the world’s religions have a common aspect. The parliament’s approach to interreligious dialogue is influenced by two phases of thinking. The first is characterized by an emphasis on religious experience. In this phase, Western theologians attempted to define religion on a basis that could not be explained rationally: revelations resulted from the divine agency, not from rational processes. This approach was useful to them because, if they are challenged on theology, they can claim that there is no relationship between theoretical reason and religion. Therefore, any rational critique of one aspect of religion does not harm the religion as a whole, because religion is beyond reason. In the second phase, universal morality characterizes interfaith dialogue. Here,

²¹ *Dawah* in Islam is similar to missionary work in Christianity and means preaching to invite and convert people to a specific religion.

religionists who disagree with the advent of constructivism argue that the religious experience should not be regarded as a shared aspect of religion, because it is historical and diverse. In this context they talk about the possibility of interfaith dialogue in which religion should be perceived as being concerned with the morality relationship between “man and man” and “man and nature”, and not “man and truth” (Ghanbari 2011: 49). As Ghanbari argues, interfaith dialogue suffered under these two phases and definitions because it is reduced to mythical experiences in the first phase and to morality in the second.

As reviewed above, dialogue of religions is not implemented solely for theological and moral reasons. Social issues also play a role in motivating the participants. As Timo Güzelmansur argues, Christians (Catholic church) and Muslims are motivated to participate in dialogue of religions by a need for a peaceful and friendly relationship and cohabitation in a plural society (Güzelmansur 2009: 539). Some studies argue that certain conditions must be considered in organizing dialogue of religions. Catherine Cornille in different parts of her study argues that “understanding and empathy”, “belief in dynamic nature of truth”, “belief in the common ground or goal of all religions”, and “recognition of the other religion as a source of truth” are the main conditions to make dialogue work (Cornille 2007). In Johannes Kandel’s view dialogue can be conducted successfully if both sides have honesty, credibility, openness, readiness to take risks, firmness in their own convictions, reciprocity, willingness to listen and self-critique, and the inclination to cooperate to answer practical questions (Kandel 2005: 223).²²

There are also other scholars, like Seyyed Houssein Nasr, who believe that dialogue among religions should only take place between trained participants.

Jane I. Smith argues in her study that:

“Nasr is uninterested in dialogue for the sake of mere conversation, and insists that in order for dialogue to have any chance of success the participants must be well trained in their own faith as well as familiar with the other. Himself a man of genuine theological and philosophical curiosity, he wants to engage with others who are serious about the pursuit of truth. That truth is not, [...], encapsulated in the ethical teaching of Islam, but is to be discovered by pursuing an epistemology in which a single reality, most basically the oneness of God, might be seen in several different ways, or from different perspectives” (Smith 2007: 137).

²² The original text is in German. It is translated to English by the researcher.

Some studies also argue that specific preconditions must be met for dialogue of religions. In a PhD dissertation by Nega Chewaka Tucho, it is mentioned that many efforts in dialogue of religions have failed because religious partners have not engaged in “self-criticism”:

“In the past many efforts at dialogue have failed because this prerequisite has not been fulfilled. Groups of well meaning Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists have held polite and gracious gatherings and have returned home without having significantly entered into each other’s thought forms. Although such meetings have produced a pious respect for others as fine religious persons, they have not generated the deep *self-criticism* and spiritual renewal that future dialogue must achieve” (Tucho 2012: 184).

Tucho also argues that dialogue among religions cannot lead to the discovery of “transcendent realities”, namely God, but only to the experience of reality:

“Our finite limitations and our simultaneous need for commitment to a particular experience of transcendent reality, our particular experience, though limited, will function in an absolute sense as the validating for our own personal religious experience” (Tucho 2012: 182).

This “personal religious experience” is reminiscent of the approach that the Parliament of the World’s Religions took to define religion in the first phase of its work, as mentioned above. Using dialogue among religions as a way to enjoy some common values has been mentioned by Abduljavad Falaturi, who defined dialogue among religions based on “love”, or what he calls *rahmah*. According to a part of the Torah, the holy book of Judaism, people should love their neighbor. Falaturi interpreted it to mean a more worldwide view, to love the enemy too, because all humans are the children of the *Father*, according to Christian theology (Falaturi 1996).

Some scholars criticized dialogue of religions for being a tool in the hands of one side to influence the beliefs of the other. Johannes Kandel and Henning Wrongemann, for instance, have argued in their studies that dialogue among religions becomes an opportunity for Muslims to express their ritual self-proclamation or *dawah* (Kandel 2005, Wrogemann 2006). Some scholars, such as Karla Suomala, have also said that dialogue among religions has been used as post-colonial missionary work by Christians (Suomala 2012: 362-363). Mohammad Ayoub too argued that, in spite of the insistence of Christian and Islamic clergymen on tolerance and respect, in most interfaith dialogues these

promises were not fulfilled: “Muslims have generally condemned Christians as polytheists [...] Christians have likewise often condemned Islam as a religion inspired by the devil and Muslims as barbaric people without any moral or spiritual values” (Ayoub 2004: 315). Ayoub believes that the problem is not in the nature of faith:

“The problem lies in our inability to accept each other’s faiths on their own terms. Muslims have acknowledged an Islamized Christianity and Christians have often Christianized Islam. Thus, with all good intentions, both communities have sought to negate, or at least neutralize the individuality and integrity of the faith of the other in order to find room for it in their own tradition and worldview” (Ayoub 2004: 318).

Moreover, scholars such as Michael Dusche discuss that interfaith dialogue is not an opportunity for Muslims and Christians to share their faith but an opportunity for them to express their view of non-believers. He continues that:

“It would be a misunderstanding to conclude from these attempts at interfaith dialogue that Christians and Muslims should have accepted each other as equals. While turning a friendly face to each other, each side turns around to its own followers and makes it very clear that it is their own respective faith exclusively that warrants salvation” (Dusche 2006: 945).

Some studies have analyzed aspects of Christian-Jewish interfaith dialogue that has roots in the post-WW II era. Katharina von Kellenbach argues that, although interfaith dialogue is dominated by men, in Christian-Jewish interfaith dialogue the first efforts to create channels of communication and networks of support for Jewish people across religious communities were led by women. She states that because these women had a lack of theological prestige and institutional power, they failed to mobilize religious leaders against the genocide. They nevertheless played an important role in saving people of other faiths through their professional (for instance as colleagues and neighbors) and personal (for instance through intermarriage) relationships. Here von Kellenbach argues that interfaith dialogue “is more than an academic experience in instruction. It is fundamentally a moral and political endeavor that demands solidarity with those who endure defamation and harassment” (von Kellenbach 2013: 71).

The influence of intellectual theologians on society as a result of extending the issue of interfaith dialogue has also been debated in the academic realm. Sasan Tavassoli in his dissertation *Christian Encounters with Iran: Engaging Muslim*

Thinkers after the Revolution scrutinizes views and approaches of three Iranian liberal religious intellectuals, Abdolkarim Soroush, Mojtaba Shabestari and Mostafa Malekian, and their positive role in bringing the so-called Islam world (Shia) and Christian world (Protestant) together (Tavassoli 2010). As mentioned in chapter 2.3, in the post-Iranian-Revolution era, a group of intellectuals from Hekmat Academy of Iran began interfaith dialogue with Western countries. Soroush and Shabestari were pioneers in coordinating interfaith dialogues in Iran. This point will be analyzed more in 5.2.3. Although Tavassoli wrote optimistically of the effect of the Iranian intellectuals on creating an era of open-mindedness for interfaith dialogue in Iranian society, some scholars analyze it differently. Omid Safi is among those who believe that, although Iranian progressive Muslim thinkers have a positive impact intellectually, even the efforts of somebody like Abdolkarim Soroush, called the “Iranian Luther”, cannot shake the foundation of Islam, as some Western media reporters think, nor can their attempts toward “Islamic reformation” change the whole of society. In Safi’s view, society cannot wait for the religious reformation and then consider economic and social factors (Safi 2003: 16). Safi’s point can also be understood as a pathology of interfaith dialogue: a society needs dialogue in all fields, not solely on religions. Karla Suomala also argues that interfaith dialogue is an attempt to remind people, specifically those who have a complex religious identity, that their identity is multidimensional and that “religion” is just one of those dimensions. She believes that bringing these people together in interfaith dialogue is difficult but will be fruitful in the end because it gives them an opportunity to learn that their own religion does not have superiority over other religions (Suomala 2012: 367).

To summarize, types, approaches, conditions and worries regarding dialogue among religions have been the main points of the studies reviewed in this section. Interreligious dialogue does not refer only to a dialogue among theologians on issues such as faith; it also refers to dialogue between people from different faiths who want to understand each other on practical life issues. Not only is knowledge on a specific religion important for an ideal participant to enter interreligious dialogue, some of the studies reviewed also state that the participant should be honest, open and self-critical in dialogue. Some have reflected concerns of theologians about misusing the opportunity of interfaith dialogue for *dawah* or

missionary work. The gender issue has been highlighted in some studies, with the argument that interfaith dialogue is mostly an arena dominated by men. Some studies have emphasized that interfaith dialogue must be understood in the participants' political and social context. And some researchers have criticized the role of intellectuals in interfaith dialogue to develop an open and progressive society. Finally, the issue of the identity of participants in interfaith dialogue has also been raised. Religion is just one of many dimensions of an identity, and a society needs dialogue in all fields, not just the religious one.

3.2.2 Civilizational Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue

Intercultural dialogue has been discussed in some studies as “dialogue among civilizations”. This dialogue should be understood firstly as a strategy and suggestion to confirm that civilizations are equal in value and degree (as a counter-response to the Tylorian view of culture/civilization); and secondly as a response to confirm that conflict in human societies does not result from the difference between civilizations (negating Huntington's clash of civilizations theory). Section 3.2.2 deals with the views of four philosophers who focused mainly on the civilizational dimension of intercultural dialogue. Their views are discussed in chronological order.

The first philosopher is Hans Köchler, an Austrian philosopher and the first academic to use the phrase “dialogue among civilizations” in the international realm. In 1972, in the Cold War era, he sent a letter to UNESCO suggesting an international conference on “the dialogue between different civilizations” (Köchler 2012: 3). His idea was later picked up on by his own organization, the *International Progress Organization*. In close cooperation with the philosophy division of UNESCO, it organized different conferences between Muslim and Western countries on multicultural issues such as citizenship and globalization (Köchler 2012: 4-10). In Köchler's view, there are some principles and requirements that are indispensable for genuine dialogue among civilizations. The first is “equality of civilizational/cultural lifeworlds”, which excludes any form of patronizing or supremacist attitudes favorizing one civilization over another. The second requirement is “awareness of the dialectics of cultural self-comprehension and self-realization”. Based on this principle, individuals from a civilization should look at it from an outside perspective to be able to perceive it. It is

reaching this level of understanding, in Köchler's view, that helps to construct dialogue among civilizations. The third principle is "acknowledgment of meta-norms as foundation of dialogue", which is rooted in the first principle. Respecting civilizational equality is the precondition for interaction through certain "meta-norms", such as "tolerance", in dialogue among civilizations. The fourth principle, as Köchler explains, is the "ability to transcend the hermeneutical circle of civilizational self-affirmation", similar to the second principle. "Civilizational self-affirmation" articulates the historical (and external) relationships of a civilization toward other civilizations (Köchler 2014: 3-5). To connect this theoretical discussion to the possibility of dialogue between real civilizations, Köchler reminds readers that achieving values common to all civilizations, such as "tolerance" and "mutual respect", is not enough to make dialogue between them possible. In this regard Köchler suggests that "an analogy of civilizations can be drawn between (a) the normative equality of civilizations on the socio-cultural level and (b) the concept of the sovereign equality of states on the political level" (Köchler 2002: 2). His practical suggestion is to foster opportunities for dialogue between civilizations via global sporting events like the Olympics, because the nations of the world are treated equally at those events (Köchler 2002: 14).

The second philosopher to be considered here is Johan Galtung, better known for his analysis of political violence and peace. In 1978 he said in a symposium²³ that the concept of peace in the contemporary world must be understood in a richer, more diverse context. Peace should not be understood just as a "lack of war" and confrontation between major powers, but also as a lack of violence in spheres in which people from Hebrew, Christian, Islam, Greek, Roman and other traditions confront each other (Galtung 1978). In this presentation, Galtung refers in a general way to *civilizations* as being an important issue for the peace-building process. In 1981 he deepened this discussion in an article and talks on "an obvious need for dialogue among civilizations" in constructing a richer peace concept (Galtung 1981: 183).

The third philosopher to conceptualize dialogue among civilizations is Daryush Shayegan, who established the *Center of Dialogue Among Civilizations* in 1977 in

²³ The symposium that Johan Galtung participated in was called "Science and Peace", 16th World Congress of Philosophy in Germany.

Iran. He organized a conference on the same topic with the support of UNESCO in the same year. Shayegan, without concentrating on a definition of civilization, expresses his idea on the decline of fertility of Asian civilization centering on Iran, India, China and Japan (Shayegan 1388 [2009]: 183-223, Shayegan 2014).²⁴ In this regard Asian civilizations missed “all dramatic breakthroughs of modern times”. In the case of Iran, Shayegan states that a great synthesis of Islamic thought in Iran took place in the 17th century at the time of Safavid and through the achievements of *Mulla Sadra*.²⁵ Thereafter, Iranian philosophy did not go beyond commentaries on Mulla Sadra’s philosophy. In the case of India also, he explains that nothing was created in Indian civilization from the 17th century beyond commentaries on the *Scholastic* period of Indian philosophy. China also presented some signs of exhaustion in its approach to science and knowledge from the beginning of 17th century (Shayegan 2014: 13-14). The decline of Asian civilizations, in Shayegan’s view, brought their mutual cross-fertilization to an end and they stopped renewing themselves. Based on this historical review, Shayegan concludes that the decline is rooted firstly in the confrontation of East and West, that is, of Eastern civilizations and Modernity. Taking the approach of Michael Foucault to “order” and “power”, Shayegan suggests that Eastern civilizations become inactive in this confrontation because the order and design of knowledge in the Western tradition of thinking and the modern era are completely different from their own (Shayegan 2014: 15-16). It is rooted secondly in the *Tavahom-e Moza’af* or *Do ganeh* [double illusion] of Asian civilizations: on the one hand, Asian civilizations are not aware of the value of their own knowledge and thoughts, and on the other, they do not understand Western civilization completely. In his view, this double illusion is the main reason for the decline. He therefore suggests dialogue between civilizations as a solution (Shayegan 1388 [2009]: 49, Shayegan 1999: 35). Shayegan emphasizes the special role of Iran in dialogue among civilizations due to its special place in the Islamic world and its border with the Western world: “[P]laced between the two worlds, Iran has played the role of privileged intermediary, an inevitable bridge between continents”

²⁴ Some of the texts which are reviewed in this research, like this text, are originally available in Farsi. According to APA referencing, the citation for this kind of text should provide an English translation of the title in square brackets after the foreign-language title, without italics. Besides the title, the date of the text is important. The Iranian calendar (Jalali calendar) is different from the English or German calendar (Gregorian calendar). Therefore, each Farsi text which is available with an Iranian date is kept in the citation. Its German date is calculated and appears in this research after the original date, for example: 1388 [2009].

²⁵ *Mulla Sadra* was an Iranian Shia Islamic philosopher and theologian who lived in the late 16th and early 17th century.

(Shayegan 2014: 11). As a review of the speeches of different philosophers at the UNESCO conference in 1977 shows, Shayegan's analysis had both opponents and supporters. For instance, Roger Garaudy shared a similar view to Shayegan and identifies the West in his speech with discourses such as "Faustian model of Western culture", "Hegelian model of History" and "cultural imperialism". In Garaudy's view, problems of contemporary life, which are mostly rooted in the "long-term and exclusive domination of the West", must be solved through dialogue among civilizations (Garaudy 1379 [2000]: 87). In contrast, Henry Corbin did not agree with putting all the responsibility for the problems on the shoulders of the West. In his view, civilization is an abstract term. As a result, it is wrong to suggest that civilizations can enter into dialogue as "universals": "It is only the messengers, speaking in the name of their civilizations, who can be the real partners in a dialogue" (Corbin 1379 [2000]: 26). In this sense Corbin discusses that dialogue should be considered a "real" dialogue, for instance between mediators of different civilizations. He argues that Western interest in the East (for instance in archeological explorations at ancient sites in the East) should not be understood as an obstacle to dialogue. Real dialogue, in his view, raises the question of "shared responsibilities" because it is an exchange between "persons": "A dialogue takes place between «you» and «me». «You» and «I» both need to have assumed a like responsibility, each for his or her own personal fate" (Corbin 1977, Corbin 1379 [2000]: 26-27).

A fourth philosopher in the context of dialogue among civilizations is the former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami. As already mentioned in 1.1, Khatami requested all UN members at its General Assembly in 1998 to call 2001 the year of dialogue among civilizations. This idea was a promise of Khatami's presidential campaign in 1996. When Khatami became president in 1997, Mohammad Javad Faridzadeh, who had taken his PhD in Philosophy in Germany, helped him to promote the idea practically by managing the International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations and intellectually by writing his speeches. It can therefore be said that dialogue among civilizations had both a political and a philosophical dimension. There are many publications on the issue of dialogue among civilizations under Khatami and relevant topics in Farsi. A study by Mohammad Gharagozlu shows that 597 articles, commentaries, translations, speeches and interviews were printed on dialogue among civilizations from 1997

to 2002 (1382 [2003]: 86), while that of Hasan Namni puts the number of published books, articles and translations on the same issue between 1998 and 2004 at 271 (1383 [2004]).

Khatami's view of dialogue among civilizations produced a large number of meetings, conferences and texts on the issue of intercultural dialogue at national and international level. Because Khatami's view is one of the discourses of intercultural dialogue that will be studied in this research (more specifically in 5.2.4), some views for and against it are reviewed here.

Among the opponents of Khatami's dialogue among civilizations, Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi, one of the top clergymen of Iran, is significant. He criticizes its vague definition and suggests that it can have four different meanings. Firstly, dialogue among civilizations can refer to the influence of cultures on each other. He believes this is irrelevant, because if one culture already influences another, it makes no sense to construct a dialogue between them. Secondly, it can mean an approach to peace by connecting two sides of a dialogue that disagree over an issue. In this definition, as Mesbah Yazdi argues, two sides waive a part of their demands and requests to come to an agreement. Thirdly, it can mean a way to express the domination of American culture via dialogue over other cultures. In the fourth definition, dialogue among civilizations is an instrument to be implemented among experts in the quest for truth. Giving these four definitions, Mesbah concludes that it is precisely the lack of clear definition of dialogue among civilizations that makes entering into it risky. It is also necessary to ask "who" the actor of dialogue is. In his view, if the actor of dialogue is not sufficiently informed about Islam, he/she may fail to answer questions about Islam in the dialogue. That means that the enemy could defeat us (probably he means whole Muslims or Iranians) in the dialogue (Mesbah Yazdi 1379 [2000]).²⁶

Inside Iranian society, dialogue among civilizations has also been criticized by other political analysts. Houssain Daheshyar argues that participating in dialogue among civilizations means accepting the basis of the Western approach towards civilizations, and consequently such a dialogue cannot bring victory for the Iranian side (Daheshyar 1377 [1998]). Some scholars argue that Khatami's dialogue among civilizations helped to change the image of Iran in the

²⁶ The Text is in Farsi. It is translated into English by the researcher.

international realm. Khatami's frequent visits to European countries as the first president after the Islamic Revolution confirms this claim (Gheissari 2009: 334). Some scholars also discuss that, although dialogue among civilizations could make an image for Iran outside the country, it had no opportunity to become a subject of discussion in the think-tanks and universities of Iran. Hence it failed and was "forgotten" in a short time (Gharagozlu 1382 [2003]).

Some scholars from Iran have discussed Khatami's dialogue among civilizations as an instrument of Iranian foreign policy. Clément Therme argues that dialogue among civilizations was a change in rhetoric rather than a change in the substance of Iranian foreign policy. In his view it failed because it was challenged by the "confrontational foreign-policy discourse of the highest authorities of the Islamic state, notably the office of the Supreme Leader" (Therme 2013: 223). Ghoncheh Tazmini gives a number of reasons for the failure of dialogue among civilizations in Iranian foreign and domestic policy. Firstly, because Iranian foreign policy was divided over key policy issues such as the relationship with the USA, Arab-Israeli conflict, support of Hizbollah and nuclear power, reaching agreement through dialogue faced many limitations. Secondly, dialogue among civilizations was not supported domestically by the main political actors who played an important role in representing Iran politically. Thirdly, it was not perfectly formed as a principle because of serious limitations such as having vague objectives and not being discussed and criticized in the arena of ideas and philosophy. Therefore, despite preparing an opportunity for NGOs, government and artists to enter into dialogue, it remained on the level of rhetoric. Fourthly, ambiguity and the imprecise nature of the civilizational issue hindered its definition. Moreover, it was expressed imprecisely; it was a political theory but articulated as a philosophical one. And it was ambitious, claiming to connect political Islam to the West, while the challenge for Iran as a Shia Islam actor was to represent the entire Islamic world (civilization), the majority of which is occupied by Sunni Islam (Tazmini 2009: 81-97). Finally, Tazmini remarks that Khatami's dialogue among civilizations was a "political tactic of survival instinct to use foreign policy gains to move up the ladder in the balance of power within the regime" (Tazmini 2009: 96).

To sum up the significant points in the approaches of Küchler, Galtung, Shayegan and Khatami towards dialogue among civilizations, these philosophers firstly

considered conditions and aims of dialogue among civilizations but failed to focus on defining civilization clearly. Secondly, they failed to distinguish between civilization and culture. This can create an amount of confusion as to whether they deliberately take civilization and culture to be one concept or whether they disregard differences between them. Thirdly, there is no focus on defining dialogue itself. Fourthly, most of these approaches have shown a noteworthy connection to philosophy. The question is therefore why they do not use the phrase “dialogue among philosophies” instead of “dialogue among civilizations”. Finally, Khatami’s view of dialogue among civilizations had an exceptional chance to be heard in everyday life compared with other views when it was presented to the world from the high political position of the General Assembly of the UN. The reactions to Khatami’s view suggest, however, that the civilizational dimension of intercultural dialogue, if discussed on a practical level, is understood mostly as a *policy* rather than a *philosophy* or a form of *communication* and has less to do with *culture*.

3.2.3 Intercultural Dialogue and Dialectical Approach in Philosophy and Literature

There is a type of intercultural dialogue that is not implemented by an organization or institution. It is a form of dialectic. It highlights “the processual, relational and contradictory nature of intercultural dialogue” (Martin et al. 1998: 5). It allows a person to consider different kinds of intercultural knowledge on a specific topic. Some research illustrates how, through a dialectic approach, different philosophies, literature and arts have influenced each other.

The impact of Greek philosophy on Islamic philosophy is one example. As Majid Fakhry discusses, the reception of Greek philosophy in the Islamic world was mixed. Initially, Islamic philosophers were suspicious of it, but by the middle of the eighth century philosophers such as *al-Kindi* and *al-Rāzi* were able to develop Islamic philosophy through their dialectic approach to Greek philosophy. They even influenced realist Islamic theologians known as the Mu'tazilites,²⁷ and improved their methods of Islamic theology (Fakhry 2013: 324). Fakhry also argues that, in the ninth century, *al-Fārābi* had a significant role in developing

²⁷ Mu'tazilites are those philosophers who followed the Mu'tazilia school from the eight to the tenth centuries, mostly in Basra and Baghdad in Iraq. They denied the status of the Quran as being created by God with the argument that if that were the case, then logically God must have preceded his own speech.

Aristotelian logic and Plato's cosmology in Islamic philosophy through his dialectic approach (Fakhry 1994). Discussing world views of Islamic and Buddhist civilizations, and emphasizing the emergence of rich mythical traditions such as Sufi philosophy and the poetry of central Asia, Majid Tehranian and Diasaku Ikeda discuss how these traditions borrowed some basic elements from each other's value systems through a dialectical approach (Tehranian/Ikeda 2013).

In poems and literature, the impact of the poems of the 14th century Iranian poet Hafiz on Goethe, the German poet of the late 18th and early 19th century, is significant in terms of dialectical approach, as mentioned in 2.1. Maḥmūd Falakī suggests in his PhD dissertation that Goethe played a key role in reflecting the spirit of an Eastern culture to his people: "He wanted to regenerate the foreign, oriental culture and society, and developed his poetry to a new level. He did not only see his role as a poet but also as trader. However, he directed an ideal trade, he wanted to be Western mediator of a spiritual and cultural exchange"²⁸ (Falakī 2013: 2). Goethe's understanding of and reflection on issues of love and tolerance in Hafiz's poems, as Falakī argues, is dialogue and cultural exchange. Stephen Fennell also points out that, in cultural terms, what Goethe did in his West-Eastern Divan was to present Germany, long before its unification, "as a great civilization on an imaginary par with Persia" (2005: 244). Fennell argues that, through an interpenetrative encounter with Islam, Goethe highlights on Germany's behalf an openness of German culture to other religions. Goethe projects a more cosmopolitan cultural outlook from Germany to its audience.

With regard to dialectical approach in the studies reviewed in this section, intercultural dialogue in some cases functions beyond the will and demands of actors of different cultures. Culture is not concrete. It is flexible, changeable and open. The philosophy and literature of a nation have the potential to develop by confronting the philosophy and literature of other nations. This would not happen just by the will of a specific person or organization. Change and development also depend on the dialectical approach.

²⁸ The dissertation was written in German, so the text extract above has been translated into English by the researcher.

3.2.4 Intercultural Dialogue in Art. A Reflection on Cultural Diversity

There are also some studies which consider the issue of intercultural dialogue in the field of art. In one study, Danielle Cliche and Andreas Wiesand open up a discussion to argue for intercultural dialogue as a new priority for art and cultural policymakers around the world. They conduct a survey to assess the views of individuals, including state/public agencies, cultural policymakers and NGOs, from 51 countries in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, Pacific Islands, Africa and Latin America, on intercultural dialogue in the context of art. The results of the study show that “respect for human rights” is a main prerequisite for intercultural dialogue (Cliche/Wiesand 2009: 13). They also clearly show that intercultural dialogue is dependent on the recognition and promotion of “cultural diversity” in the arts. According to the study, the three main goals of governments and public art agencies in promoting intercultural dialogue through art projects are firstly, to encourage “activities that bring the public into contact with other cultures, their traditions or contemporary expressions which they would not otherwise have access to”; secondly, to balance “cultural exchanges with other countries and cultures around the world”; and thirdly, to direct “artistic projects that mix different cultural traditions and result in new or hybrid forms of cultural expression” (Cliche/Wiesand 2009: 30).

Some studies have also underscored common elements of different cultures in specific cultural heritages as a strategy for conflict resolution in multicultural societies. Chee Meng Wong analyzes in his PhD dissertation the role of *dance* in Singapore as a cultural heritage which has been enriched through dialogue of different subcultures in this country. Referring to theories such as social cohesion, liberalism, democracy and pluralism, Meng Wong attempts to conceptualize the interpretation of “Indian dance heritage” as a transcultural and multicultural model of intercultural dialogue to overcome racism problems in Singapore (Meng Wong 2013).

Music has also been discussed by some researchers as a context for intercultural dialogue. In a book edited by Felicity Laurence and Oliver Urbain, *intermusicality* in countries such as America, Tunisia and Turkey is explored as a sign of solidarity and dialogue. Tunisian music, for example, like jazz is “not only of a multitude of influences from African music, Barber music, Turkish music and Andalusian music, but also of the influence from music originating beyond the

country” (Laurence/Urbain 1999: 62). This openness in a country’s music firstly strengthens the argument that intercultural dialogue exists between people of one culture with people of other cultures through music; in this respect, *intermusicality* recalls the discussion on the dialectical approach in 3.2.3. Secondly, it suggests that music itself is a context to promote diversity and solidarity.

An important point in reviewing the studies in this section is that music and art are not only a context in which to understand multicultural societies but by their nature themselves are diverse and multifaceted. They consist of different elements of other music and arts. This diversity of music and art makes them a suitable channel for and form of intercultural dialogue.

3.2.5 Intercultural Dialogue in Academic Debates on Education, Civil Society and Media

There are some studies which discuss intercultural dialogue in the context of education and empowering civil society, youth and women. It is important to mention that some of these studies regard education as a tool to promote intercultural dialogue in social life, while others consider intercultural dialogue a tool to promote scientific abilities and knowledge of people.

Some scholars analyze the issue of religious education in schools in multicultural societies in a theoretical framework, based on the education theory of Martin Buber. His theory of the philosophy of dialogue was discussed in 3.1.1. In the field of education Buber is referred to for his discussion of pupils and teachers. He says that children must be taught in such a way that they explore their “two autonomous instincts”: the originator and the communion instinct. The originator instinct helps them to learn about themselves and the world, while the communion instinct makes them conscious of mutuality and sharing. Both are, as Kalman Yaron explains, key elements of education in Buber’s view. The originator instinct is on the “I-it” level, meaning that a human being within a monological domain regards “others” as a thing among things and perceives them as *Erfahrung* [experience]; in contrast, the communion instinct is on the “I-thou” level, on which a human being perceives others in a dialogic domain, in a *Beziehung* [relationship] between two human beings (Yaron 1993: 136). In Buber’s view, the

communication instinct in the educational relationship is not easy to achieve, for instance because dialogue needs sovereign individuals. In reality, this contrasts with educational reality, in which pupils are dependent on their teacher (Yaron 1993: 137). The theoretical discussion of Buber has been used in studies which discuss linguistic, ethnic, national and cultural differences in Germany's educational programs (Bogyó-Löffler 2011, Knauth 1996, Rohe et al. 2014).

The issue of an open school system in which all pupils, regardless of their origin and beliefs, can have the same educational chances is also discussed by Peter Graf. In his view, in a society like Germany, which has more than 700,000 Muslim pupils²⁹ in state schools,³⁰ there should firstly be a goal-oriented school program which considers the needs of different pupils, including Muslims and Christians; it should not be a provisional but a long-term school program; secondly, religious education should be seen as more than religious guidance for pupils, and schools should connect it to the demands of real life; thirdly, schools should reflect that the spirituality of all religions is justification of commitment; and finally, interreligious dialogue should be included as a common social task in schools. This suggests that interreligious dialogue between the Muslim minority and Christian majority of pupils in German schools should be considered in the framework of human rights and the *Grundgesetz* [German constitution], and not just as a theological task (Graf 2014: 45).

The issue of religious plurality and its role in primary education has also been analyzed by Carl Sterkens. He argues that in some pedagogic models, pupils are encouraged to participate in interreligious dialogue. The question that should be asked more often is therefore how adequate those models are for coping with religious plurality, especially in the case of Western countries faced with a multicultural and multireligious population. According to Sterkens, the “interreligious model” cannot be applied in the framework of today's pedagogy. He believes that, under the liberal criteria of “neutrality” and “individuality” in a school, it is not a feasible method for pupils at primary schools. However there are better chances for pupils at a later stage with that model (Sterkens 2001: 204).

²⁹ Since the publication date of the article goes back to 2014, this statistic should be understood according to this year.

³⁰ State school here means schools which are free. These schools are mostly provided by the *Länder* [states] of Germany, and the federal government plays a minor role in organizing them.

Abdoljavad Falaturi is a familiar name in the context of interreligious dialogue in German schools because of his analysis as a theologian (his views were considered in 3.1.2) and his efforts to determine a guideline for the issue of Islam in school materials (Falaturi 1986, Schultze/Falaturi 1988). Scholars such as Simon Hecker and Christoph Bochinger adopted key concepts developed by Falaturi regarding interreligious dialogue in their study on religious lessons in German schools. Falaturi developed six points which are necessary for successful interreligious dialogue. They are reflected in Bochinger's research as follows:

- (1) *Überwindung des Absolutheitsanspruches* [overcoming absoluteness], which means that partners of dialogue should avoid pretending to know everything about the absolute truth;
- (2) *Selbstkritische Haltung und Unvollkommenheit* [self-criticism and imperfection], which means that partners should take a critical look at themselves and accept criticism from others;
- (3) *Gleichberechtigung und Respekt* [equal rights and respect], which means that no partner should have priority or privilege in communication over another;
- (4) *Bereitschaft, vom anderen zu lernen* [willingness to learn from the other side], which means that partners should tolerate the characteristics of other religions, making it possible to understand the position of another partner in his/her truth;
- (5) *Gemeinsame Verantwortung für alle Menschen auf der Welt* [common responsibility for all people of the world], which means that the dialogue itself should be considered as an instrument to achieve peace;
- (6) *Schaffung einer neuen Theologie auf beiden Seiten* [building a new theology on both sides], which means that both partners of interreligious dialogue should make a rule based on a new theology to have "understanding for self-understanding of both sides" (Bochinger 2010: 104-105).

Bochinger reflects the same understanding of the view of Falaturi, although he focuses on two obstacles to interfaith dialogue, which are mentioned by Falaturi as follows: Firstly, *Scheindialog* [dialogue on paper³¹], which means that

³¹*Scheindialog* can also be translated as "sham dialogue" or "apparent dialogue". What can be understood from the explanation above, however, is that it refers to a specific type of official and formal dialogue.

sometimes dialogue is not real and is used as an “excuse” or “legitimizing tool” for both sides to declare that they have officially engaged in dialogue. Secondly, *Spannungsfelder* [areas of tension], which means that sometimes dialogue takes place in a situation in which both partners use concepts or contexts that are not clear and therefore misunderstand each other (Hecker 2008: 28).

Werner Haußmann in his PhD dissertation compares school programs in Germany and England, two societies facing large-scale immigration. Haußmann compares the curricula of Indian Muslims in England and Turkish Muslims in Germany in his case study. He argues that, despite the differences between German and British society, both had weaknesses regarding appropriate “religious education concepts” and proper “implementation” regarding religious education. “Dialogue-oriented education” is a perspective that Haußmann suggests to both societies for their future school work (Haußmann 1993).

Some studies also consider conditions of interfaith dialogue at the level of university syllabuses and programs. In Matthias Vött’s view, it is necessary for students of different religions and from diverse cultures to experience a “constructive dialogue” by living together and learning from each other. He also states that, as dialogue partners, students need some basic personal and social skills to make the dialogue situation possible. He develops a profile of “interreligious dialogue competence” and presents a tutorial on how such skills can be acquired (Vött 2002). Some scholars also argue that intercultural dialogue in a higher education context should follow these objectives: “to share visions of the world”; “to understand those who see things differently”; “to identify cultural similarities and differences”; “to combat violence”; “to help manage cultural diversity in a democratic manner”; “to bridge the divide between those who perceive diversity as a threat and those who view it as an enrichment”; and “to share best practices” (Poglia et al. 2007: 18). Intercultural dialogue has also been studied by Stephanie Houghton as a model for foreign language learning. Through this model, teachers attempt to include intercultural competence in their pedagogical aims “to better organize their teaching activities, considering syllabus and materials development, classroom practice and teacher and learner identities” (Houghton 2012: 72). She analyzes some English language teaching in Japan and examines conflicting theoretical perspectives on “value judgment”. Houghton

discovers that at the heart of the issue of teaching a foreign language lies “management of prejudice”, which is conducted through intercultural dialogue (Houghton 2012). The results of a survey conducted in all the EU-member countries in 2007 also show that many people believe developing foreign language courses in schools and increasing exchanges, such as dialogue among religions, for students and teachers could help Europeans to know each other better (Wilk-Woś 2010: 82).

Some scholars additionally argue that there is a considerable paradox to conducting intercultural dialogue in the field of human rights. Tomas Nawrath in his study analyzes the philosophical aspect of this contradiction. Firstly, although discussing human rights would lighten differences between cultures, the differences cannot be ended by dialogue. Secondly, sometimes the problem does not come from the subject of discussion but from intercultural realities. On this point Nawrath presents as an example a situation in which a culture with a more or less universal approach is in a process of dialogue with another culture that is isolated. Nawrath argues that some intercultural realities cannot be changed through dialogue. Thirdly, it is difficult to build a transparent and unique solution to the problem of intercultural realities. It is hard to imagine a theory that could apply to all cultures, as there are no mandatory requirements as to what cultures should be. Fourthly, often propaedeutic elements are needed for intercultural dialogue to solve the problem of intercultural reality, a factor that has been largely neglected. Implementing intercultural dialogue on human rights issues that are directly under state authority can be challenging, because the participants come from different political systems. It is therefore important that partners from non-democratic countries are allowed to participate in these dialogues. Nawrath concludes that human rights are about cultural realities, not cultural dialogue (Nawrath 2010).

There are some studies which discuss how, since human rights values are a vague concept, they should be defined through intercultural and interfaith dialogue between different societies. In a study conducted by Cornelia Roux, this issue is argued in the case of South Africa. Although the constitution and the bill of rights from 1996 expect South African citizens to respect human rights values, there has been no clear guidance to clarify exactly what these values are. In 2001 the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy was published by the South

African state and defines human rights values as democracy, social justice and equity, among others. But, as Roux argues, these definitions were general and abstract and could not help society, especially the education system, to apply them. One indication of the failure to apply these values was that violence in schools was reported as “alarming” in 2004. Thus the Department of Education of South Africa decided to run a project to enlist the help of teachers to define human rights values according to the specific cultural characteristics of South Africa on the one hand, and to promote a culture of human rights on the other, through intercultural dialogue with pupils in schools between 2005 and 2007 (Roux 2006: 79-80).

Some studies suggest that training programs for South African women would strengthen their abilities for peacebuilding. Lisa Schrich conducted a project in South Africa to analyze the gender issue in the field of conflict and violence and explores the skills of women for peacebuilding through dialogue, negotiation and mediation (Schirch 2010). Some studies similarly argue that conducting intercultural dialogue on the issue of human rights in different societies demands special consideration. Alison M. Jaggar argues that dialogues should not be regarded as opportunities to save poor women in poor countries by proselytizing supposedly Western values. She likewise states that feminist scholars should avoid assumptions on intercultural dialogue with women elsewhere when there is no comprehensive understanding of those women’s situation (Jaggar 2005: 56). Jaggar argues that the agenda of intercultural dialogue of poor women in poor countries must be reconsidered because the basic global structure and “the justice of those Western governments” directly and indirectly affect poor women’s lives. In her view, when there is no “fair trade” system, talking about fair social relationships inside poor countries is irrelevant (Jaggar 2005: 71). Another scholar, Zain Kassam, scrutinizes preconditions for building interreligious dialogue between Muslim Afghan women. Kassam argues that there are three myths about Muslim women which must be considered before implementing any intercultural dialogue. They are: “we are at war to eradicate terrorists and liberate Muslim women”, “capitalism is a good thing, and will improve life for them”, and “Islam is a misogynist religion and without secularism, Muslim women will not be able to improve their condition” (Kassam 2013: 127). He believes that the Western countries cannot engage in constructing dialogue among religions to

improve the situation of women in Afghanistan when they still uphold one or more of those myths.

Intercultural dialogue has been discussed also in relation to civil society. Since the governments of developed countries work more closely with their parliaments, local authorities and civil society to prepare and implement national development policies and plans, some studies examine a possibility to develop this mechanism in non-developed countries by improving dialogue activities inside their civil societies. “Dialogue policy” skills among the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) of Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda were discussed in research conducted by the foreign ministry of Denmark with cooperation of partners in Austria and Sweden. The research has also been regarded as a learning process to help the Austrian, Danish and Swedish partners understand the best way to support CSOs of other countries specifically through “policy dialogue”. In this context, policy dialogue has been defined as “open and inclusive dialogue on development policies” (ITAD/COWI 2012: 9)

The issue of intercultural dialogue has also been discussed in the field of the internet or cyberspace. Xiaomeng Lang in his PhD dissertation argues that the internet is a unique opportunity which, despite all the censorship laws in countries such as China, can produce two kinds of *Netzliteratur* [net literature]. In the first, text can be produced by amateur writers. In the second, several media, such as voice, video, music and film, can be used to promote simple traditional texts. In Xiaomeng’s view, both types of net literature are characterized by a new ability to engage in dialogue between writer and reader through the internet and with equal opportunity for all users (Lang 2008). In another PhD dissertation, Luisa Conti considers a special character of cyberspace that creates not only a solid foundation for the concept of intercultural dialogue but also a basic integrated knowledge pool, which can be accessed as part of a dialogic interaction for users (Conti 2012). Interaction between users from different countries in cyberspace is also considered by researchers who analyze the educational potential of the internet. Abbas Sebihi, for instance, in his PhD dissertation studies interactions of Arab-German students on the website of *Farabis.net*. Sebihi evaluates different sections of the website as a form of e-community using the method of critical incidents. Although the argument of the study is expressed in an unorganized way, it is an

academic attempt to show that an e-community also plays a role in improving German-Arab academic dialogue (Sebihi 2007).

3.2.6 Political Dimension of Intercultural Dialogue

Some studies reflect on the political dimension of intercultural dialogue and seek to find out how intercultural dialogue in different fields (including religion and education) can resolve conflicts and construct peace.

Some scholars discuss how interfaith dialogue has been a “basis for peace and understanding” because foundational common principles, such as love of God, are embedded in the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Therefore, dialogue between followers of these religions can be a relevant action to construct peace (Migliore 2008: 313). Christiane Timmerman and Barbara Segman are among scholars who discuss that understanding the viewpoints of different religions regarding dialogue can itself build successful dialogue among followers of different faiths towards peace. Taking this approach, Timmerman and Segman edited a book which includes the perspective of Christianity (Platti 2007), Judaism (Solomon 2007), and Islam (Ramadan 2007) towards interfaith dialogue. Meanwhile, some studies discuss interreligious dialogue as a solution to regional conflicts. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Amal I. Khoury and Emily Welty describe interfaith dialogue as “a powerful method of conflict resolution and peacemaking” (Abu-Nimer et al. 2007: 7). Since the Middle East is home to three Abrahamic traditions and holds the complicated and painful history of the Israel-Palestine conflict, these scholars suggest that dialogue between Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities presents a great opportunity to construct peace among them. They study interfaith dialogue from the perspectives of different parts of the region such as Israel-Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan. These scholars assume that a “comprehensive peace based solely on secular values, actors, and frameworks will not be sustainable; peace must involve the religious believers and resonate with their faith” (2007: 10). They also differentiate dialogue from debate, as mentioned in 3.1.1. They believe that dialogue should encourage both sides to understand each other’s views but not necessarily set out to convince them. In some multi-ethnic societies where religion influences people’s everyday life, some researchers argue that dialogue among religions manages to construct

tolerance and understanding. Research conducted by Goulchokhra N. Seidova on relations between the Shia and Christian communities of Daghestan, and specifically the city of *Derbent*, is significant. Derbent is a town which was constructed after the conversion of the people of Daghestan region to Islam. It used to be a place where many people from different faiths lived together. Seidova explains that there have been numerous cases of authentic religious tolerance in the history of Derbent. For instance in 1806, based on a request of a Christian community, one of the Shia mosques in the town was reconstructed as a church, named after St. George the Victor. In 1852 the mosque was returned to Muslims after a new church was built in its stead. Seidova refers to the name of the mosque, which is still *Kilisya mosque* [Church-Mosque] (2011: 169). Another study on dialogue between the followers of two major belief and practice systems in Ghana, *witchcraft* and *trokosi*,³² shows that specific beliefs and practices which have a harmful aspect for social life can be corrected and mediated through the process of dialogue (Wiafe 2010).

In some studies dialogue in the context of civilizations has been discussed as an instrument to achieve peace. Dieter Senghaas, for instance, refers to the potential of common values of civilizations, such as Chinese philosophy, Islam and Buddhism to regulate conflicts. He believes that intercultural dialogue based on those common values can make a successful contribution to solving conflicts (Senghaas 2005). Some studies conceptualize dialogue among civilizations as a new discourse in international political theory that has been used not only by Mohammad Khatami but also Václav Havel, a dissident philosopher and president of the Czech Republic between 1989 and 1992 (Petito 2007). The idea is also put forward as a “new approach to international relations” (Hafeznia 2006: 351), and Marc Lynch suggests in his study that it is an opportunity for the international public sphere (Lynch 2000).

Some studies reflect on the potential of the program of the Alliance among Civilizations (AoC), which was established in 2005 by the UN.³³ They argue that

³² According to Oduro Wiafe and Eric Kwabena, *trokosi* is a practice whereby a family sends a girl-child to the traditional shrine to serve there for a period of time as reparation for an offence committed by a member of her family.

³³ After the idea of dialogue among civilizations, the UN initiated the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC) in 2005. This project has been led jointly by the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and the President of Spain, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. It aims to act against extremism by encouraging international, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation.

the AoC created some scope for dialogic interaction on an international level (Köse 2009: 77). Other studies are skeptical about it, however, with Ali Balci, for instance, criticizing the AoC for following the same false line as Huntington's clash of civilizations, and for constituting a dichotomy in the international realm which he calls "the clash/ alliance dichotomy" (Balci 2009: 105). The AoC is also criticized for giving an opportunity to Turkey, as one of the main actors of the project, to pursue its own foreign policy (Balci/Miş 2008).

Dialogue programs implemented by international organizations to reach peace are criticized in some studies. It was mentioned in 3.1.3 that organizations such as the UN and EU became active after World War II, launching cultural activities to achieve peace. In a study conducted to explore the relevance and effectiveness of UNESCO's priority initiatives on intercultural dialogue, Julie Carpenter remarks that:

"Intercultural dialogue [...] consists of values such as freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. As such it is intrinsically political by nature. The cultural section of the UN continually faces and addresses political challenges in developing and implementing programs of intercultural dialogue activities" (Carpenter 2011: 10).

Facing the challenges has not been easy for the UN. It has had some political difficulties continuing the dialogue activities of "Plan Arabia" after 9/11. Plan Arabia is a program that intends to increase knowledge of Arab culture around the world and encourage greater mutual understanding between Arab culture and other cultures by promoting dialogue and exchange. Its focus is on the traditional arts and cultural heritage of Arab countries and began in 1993 (Carpenter 2011). In addition, UNESCO renamed some of its old programs, which were originally intended to connect the different poles from South to North and East to West, "intercultural dialogue programs" (Băsescu et al. 2008), which seems to be a political way of gaining distance from the old South-North rhetoric while in reality pursuing the same programs.

Some scholars study the use of intercultural dialogue by European organizations as an instrument to maintain their immigration and integration agendas. Zofia Wilk-Woś argues that the reason the EU Commission puts so much effort into developing intercultural dialogue programs is that "culture can unite people as well as divide them. Cultural differences can cause conflicts in workplaces,

schools, local communities and at a country level. And why is the dialogue needed? Because Europe's cultural face is changing very fast" (Wilk-Woś 2010: 79). She argues that Europe is becoming home to more and more immigrants from different nationalities, religions and cultures. These immigrants make up about 8.9% of the total population. Therefore, "fears that the influx of migrants will disrupt the social system and dilute national identities are more and more frequent" (Wilk-Woś 2010: 80).

Issues related to immigration are indicators of intercultural dialogue in some studies. In a study conducted with the support of the Council of Europe, the general indicators of intercultural dialogue are defined as "national minority groups", "immigration groups", "language groups" and "information and legislation addressing hate, culture and religious motivated crimes" (Foote 2005: 14). These indicators seem to highlight the role of intercultural dialogue in monitoring the social problems resulting from immigration, as well as building an information system for "cultural policy" in Europe, as Danielle Cliche discusses (2005).

There have also been scholars, such as Joel Anderson and Sukhvinder Kaur-Stubbs, who discuss intercultural dialogue as an instrument to promote free, full and equal participation of civil society and European institutions and create an "intercultural Europe" (Anderson 2010, Kaur-Stubbs 2010). Some studies also analyze the cultural programs of different European countries in the *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue* in 2008. Lamers, for instance, analyzes the EU policies relating to intercultural dialogue in the context of integration of minority youth in Dutch education. His case study was based on the cultural programs of the Netherlands in 2008, including "Commune Slotervaart" to organize interreligious meetings and "Mondrian education group" to plan activities to practice the Dutch language and develop active citizenship. These programs were implemented to enable Europeans or people who live in Europe to firstly deal "with a more open and more complex environment" and secondly raise their awareness of "the importance of developing the active European citizenship open to the world, respectful of the cultural diversity and based on common values" (Lamers 2008: 37). Teresa Pinheiro argues in a study that intercultural dialogue had a key role to play in developing Portuguese society, and the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue was therefore celebrated in the Portuguese Emigration

Museum in *Fafe* (Pinheiro 2008: 63). Since intercultural dialogue in the EU's definition has been expected to achieve "sharing values" and "doing together", as mentioned in 3.1.3, some studies argue that by implementing it, a multi-governance and common human rights system can be constructed in Europe (Bekemans 2012). Increasing migration and the redrawing of national boundaries also prompted Patricia Wiater to argue that human rights in European countries can be protected in the context of the European Court of Human Rights by applying intercultural dialogue between immigrants and the host population. In her view, the chances and risks of the cultural diversity of European countries must be considered more carefully. A mechanism should be found to avoid cultural relativism. Wiater argues that there are four conditions for intercultural dialogue in the context of the European Court of Human Rights: 1) democracy; 2) rule of law; 3) equal dignity; and 4) equal enjoyment of rights, which includes general principles like mutual respect, ethnic equality and gender equality (Wiater 2010: 27-49). Kotzur also argues that conducting "intercultural human rights dialogue" among European countries is a "universalization process" that enables them to establish a common law language in Europe (Kotzur 2010: 111).

Economic aims have also been mentioned as the purpose of planning dialogue activities between different cultures. The economy has been discussed as a key factor in relation to the issue of immigration inside European countries. The economic success of Europe has become highly dependent on migration, as some scholars have pointed out. It is therefore not enough to simply improve the language skills of immigrants within the framework of intercultural dialogue projects (Wimmer 2007: 9). Intercultural dialogue should also consider issues such as promoting school education, job training and higher education for immigrants.

Some studies used terminology of intercultural dialogue to support a human rights charter and the notion of Euro-Mediterranean citizenship in the corresponding region through network activities of transnational civil societies such as the Anna Lindh Foundation (De Petrini 2010: 167). Security and stability seem to be another motivation for European and Mediterranean countries to engage in intercultural dialogue, as Sally Khalifa Isaac Atwan believes. She states that the EU needs to take the role of dialogue into account, firstly because Europe

searches “for a zone of political and economic influence” in the Mediterranean, and secondly because Europe has to manage the “upsurge of Islamic extremism” (2010: 3). Some studies also consider the issue of changing “security perceptions” in the Mediterranean and connect it to cultural and civilizational dialogue with European countries (Ferdious 2003). Some scholars have also argued that “violence prevention” in Europe can be reached through intercultural dialogue. Jean-Fred Bourquin states that to prevent violence against groups such as women, children and immigrants on the one hand, and to guarantee individual security in European countries on the other, key concepts such as “democracy”, “citizenship” and “individual and collective responsibility” must be promoted in the framework of intercultural dialogue (Bourquin 2003: 33-40).

Hans Erik Näss refers to the vague conceptualization of intercultural dialogue in projects of European organizations. In his view, they follow the wrong lines. The use of intercultural dialogue in general policies of European organizations lacks precision. For instance, it is said that “sharing diversity” would develop through intercultural dialogue, but “diversity” is not distinguished from “difference”. Näss also applies Fukuyama’s critique to the “old multicultural model” of social programming in the Netherlands and Britain. In his view, the model was not a great success, because it aimed at specific groups such as artists and professionals and neglected society as a whole. Näss reviews some of the EU’s intercultural dialogue projects and shows that a significant portion of them have focused on specific groups like artists (Næss 2010).

Some studies also argue that dialogue even in the economic and political context has contributed to cultural issues and could help to achieve peace. European-Arab Dialogue or “Eurabia” between European and Arab countries, which started in 1973 after the oil embargo, is an example. It was aimed at both political and economic issues, but in the view of scholars such as Bat Ye’or, it also had significant cultural outcomes. It was an action taken by both sides under pressure from the issue of Palestine, which was significant for the Arab world, and the price of oil, which was significant for the Western world. Aside from the economic and political interests, Ye’or argues that European-Arab dialogue was a platform for both sides to represent their own civilizations and discuss their “cultural policies”, such as immigration and integration, and take a step forward on practical programs, such as cultural exchanges including academic cooperation

and art exhibitions (Ye'or 2002). Hans-Dietrich Genscher, then foreign minister of Germany, in one of the sessions of this dialogue in Hamburg in 1982, put clear emphasis on Europe's debt to Islamic civilization and the importance of the dialogue in cementing Euro-Arab solidarity, as Ye'or mentions (2002: 26). In the context of political dialogues, Omid Nouripour's critique of "critical dialogue" is significant. Critical dialogue was conducted between Iran and the EU between 1992 and 1997, as mentioned in 2.3. In Nouripour's view, the critical dialogue was weak not because of the nature of conducting dialogue but because of the nature of German-Iran policy. Nouripour argues that German politicians were never really critical in their dialogue with Iran, therefore to expect a "real" critical dialogue would be irrelevant. In his view besides some good opportunities created by the critical dialogue to promote the relationship between Iran and Germany in the time of Khatami such as the expansion of trade with the prospect of the WTO, the cooperation in areas such as energy, transport, environment, drug control, migration, culture and human rights dialogues (2011: 11), the status of dialogue was unclear. In his view, five elements of German policy regarding Iran influenced critical dialogue and made it unclear and dysfunctional: the first and second are human rights concerns and the nuclear power question from the Iranian side, the third are sanctions that have a negative influence on Iranian people's lives, and the fourth are security and energy questions that are generally important for Germany (2011: 15-17).

Another issue is "dialogue with Islam". The terminology of dialogue with Islam suggests a religious or interreligious dialogue, but it focuses on conducting dialogue with people who are Muslims or residents of Muslim countries. The second partner of dialogue is not identified in this terminology, which implies that the main issue of dialogue is "Islam" or "Muslims". Highlighting Islam in this terminology calls to mind the content of 3.1.2 on the long-standing tensions between the West and Muslim countries.

The first roots of dialogue with Islam, as Michael Dusche argues, go back to "the ecumenical activities and time that Catholic Church expressed its high esteem for Muslims, Second Vatican Council", between 1962 and 1965 (Dusche 2006: 945).

Meanwhile, the roots of dialogue with Islam in Germany are also significant. Discussions regarding dialogue of religions, especially Islam, began as Germany

encountered waves of immigrants from Muslim countries after the 1950s. Important initiatives of this dialogue were initially launched by churches. As Martin Affolderbach argues, the initiatives began after 1973 because of the “regulation of family reunification” in Germany. Another significant year in this history is 1975, when the “Week of foreign citizens” (which is currently called “Intercultural Week”) was launched by churches in Germany (Affolderbach 2015: 33).

Dialogue with Islam received more attention in the post-9/11 era, when it was suggested as a solution for European countries to combat “terrorism”. Sarah Silvestri criticizes the EU’s approach for being unclear and confused about dialogue with Islam, arguing that the “state of play” was sometimes towards countries with a predominantly Muslim population, sometimes towards Islamist political actors and sometimes towards Muslim immigrants inside Europe (Silvestri 2007: 2). Even if dialogue with Islam in the post-9/11 era takes place directly with Islamist actors, scholars such as Thomas Tartsch doubt that terrorism is an instrument that can prevent terrorism. Referring to specific parts of the *Quran*,³⁴ Tartsch argues that there is no common value to construct peace between Muslims and the rest of the world. For instance, two elements form the structure of the power of *Ummah* [community] in Islamic theology; they are *jihad* (protection), and the extension of Islamic territory. In Tartsch’s view, both of these elements go against human rights values and freedom of speech in Europe (Tartsch 2008: 11). Some studies also argue that to prevent terrorism through dialogue with Muslim countries, the Western actors must seriously listen to Muslim views and criticism of the West. In this context, *The West and the Islamic world – A Muslim Position*, a study reflecting the views of Muslim intellectuals from different countries on the relationship between Muslims and the West, is significant (Bakr et al. 2004). This study has been supported by ifa and will be discussed further in 6.2.3.

The *Deutsche Islamkonferenz* [German Islam Conference] is another milestone in dialogue with Islam. In 2006, the German Federal Ministry of the Interior launched the German Islam Conference as an instrument to promote the integration of Muslim immigrants in Germany. The German Islam Conference in

³⁴ *Quran* or *Qur’an* is the holy book of Muslims.

Germany is described by Sarah Dornhof as a chance to change power in the social and political structure of German society. She believes that expanding the scope of interreligious dialogue by emphasizing the views of the Muslim community in Germany has reformulated and rearticulated “political rationalities”: “[T]he relationship might be complementary, parallel or contradictory, but in any case productive and proliferative, shaping a topology of power” (Dornhof 2012: 384). Some scholars have regarded the German Islam Conference as an opportunity to mediate fundamentalist Islamic views. Khadija Katja Wöhler-Khalfallah argues that inviting Islamic communities such as *Der europäische Fatwa-Rat* [European Fatwa council], an Arabic Muslim brotherhood, and *Milli Görüs Bewegung e.V.* [Milli Görüs organization] (2009: 204), which is led by Turkish immigrants (Wöhler-Khalfallah 2009: 245), to the German Islam Conference does not meet Germany’s aims of integrating Muslim immigrants, because these organizations represent fundamentalist Islam. The German Islam Conference thus gives some fundamentalists a chance to represent the Muslim community of Germany without the legitimacy to do so (2009: 17).

Some scholars also share concerns about combining terms such as fundamentalism and Islamism with dialogue with Islam. Such combinations imply a perception of Islam as an ideology, which Kai Hafez warns against, as it can lead to fundamentalists being generalized as the entire Muslim population. He states that for most Muslims, who are not fundamentalists, Islam is still religion and culture. Therefore to perceive their Islam as an anti-Western ideology is wrong and can work as an obstacle to dialogue (1997: 17).

Dialogue with Islam has been discussed as a way to regulate what Naika Foroutan calls *Zivilisationskonflikte* [civilizational conflicts]. In her research on cultural dialogue between the Western and Muslim world, she argues that dialogue is a way to regulate civilizational conflicts. Civilizational conflict in her model has different *Beweggründe* [motivations], such as political power, geographic, economic, social and political incentives. The conflict in her model is divided into two inter-civilizational and intra-civilizational levels. On the inter-civilizational level are discourses concerning national and ethno-political issues, for example, while, in a comparatively smooth transition, there are ethnic and ethno-political discourses on the intra-level. The interaction between these two levels leads to conflict over values, world views, moral and universal world orders (Foroutan

2004: 25). Foroutan argues that because this type of conflict in the context of the Western and Muslim relationship concerns cultural issues, it can be “regulated”, progress to a stage of “transformation” and finally take a step towards “democratization” through cultural dialogue. Such dialogue is possible through the participation of different actors in the *Staatenwelt* [countries of the world], such as states or representatives of states, diplomats and participants of cultural and educational institutions (Foroutan 2004: 41). Foroutan’s study has three main limitations. Firstly, the model of civilizational conflict does not have a direct and clear definition of civilization. On the inter-civilizational level, one factor is described as “civilizational”, while the parallel factor on the intra-civilizational level is described as “inter-religious”. It is not clear whether civilization in her model is defined as religion or according to some other criteria. Secondly, conflict is not specified clearly in this model. It is motivated by political power and geostrategic, economic, social and political reasons. It seems that several conflicts can be attributed to these factors. They are not convincing enough as characteristics of civilizational conflict. Thirdly, because Foroutan’s study is not based on a specific case or society, the final recipe for resolving the conflict between the Muslim and Western world seems to be general, abstract and impractical. Fourthly, from what Foroutan concludes, it is apparent that “democratization” is a key to resolving the conflict, although in some cases even democratic states destroy new-born democracies in Muslim countries. The CIA, for instance, “toppled the democratic and popular government of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh” in 1953 in order to protect its own economic interests and secure the sovereignty of Shah Mohammad Reza (Long 2008: 93). Therefore, it seems that to make a comprehensive model for solving conflicts, whether civilizational or otherwise, between Muslim and Western countries, democracy alone is not sufficient.

Some scholars, however, express a more realistic view of the ability of intercultural dialogue to resolve conflicts. Norbert Ropers believes what dialogue can do to resolve problems and conflicts is limited. In his view, the problem is not rooted just in

“[...] stereotypical perceptions, differences of opinion and varying cultural standards, but rather tangible conflicts of interest, structural factors and the struggle for power and influence. It would seem, then, that dialogues must be put

in the context of the overall dynamics of conflict and conflict transformation” (Ropers 2004: 2).

Hence dialogue projects implemented by NGOs and institutions should not be over-estimated but considered as the grassroots of peacebuilding and combine with individual capacity-building, institution-building, networking and practical projects and pre-negotiation, as Ropers suggests.

Hans Köchler also warns about instrumentalizing the term “intercultural dialogue” in a political sense. In his view, dialogue among civilizations has been used by some political leaders to propagate a peaceful vision of their multicultural societies and as a strategy to reshape the balance of power in favor of a “particular civilization, which is defined by themselves, and themselves alone” (Köchler 2014: 267). Scholars such as Bernd M. Scherer also perceive “south-north” power relations as an important element in forming the structure of intercultural dialogue. Firstly, these relations are intended to help southern countries develop themselves, not the other way round. The idea of sending an Indian expert to Germany in a development cooperation rarely arises, although an exchange of priests may be possible (Scherer 1997: 51). Secondly, discourses of dialogue are already set, as partners in the south and the north are aware. For instance, it is very possible that intercultural dialogue concerns ecology, human rights and art, which are of great interest to the north, and not economic sanctions (Scherer 1997: 52-54).

The studies reviewed in this section reflect different forms of intercultural dialogue that attempted to deal with critical situations, resolve conflicts, and construct peace. Intercultural dialogue also has been referred to in the foreign or international policy of different countries, which is reviewed in the next section.

3.2.7 Intercultural Dialogue in Academic Debates on Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of a country consists of different policies aimed at reaching economic, diplomatic, industrial, technological, educational, military and cultural objectives. Studying cultural policy in the context of foreign policy has not been the main focus and interest of academics compared with other fields such as economic and diplomatic policies. Frode Liland argues that culture is not of major

interest to diplomatic historians for four main reasons: firstly, to include culture in the analysis of foreign policy a scholar should consider non-traditional actors. Depending on the problem posed, the actors can be diverse, from artists and musicians to journalists and religious groups. Investigating them requires a developed methodology. Secondly, the connection with non-traditional actors consequently means searching non-traditional sources such as cartoons, magazines, music and art, which a scholar working in the field of diplomacy or foreign policy is usually unfamiliar with. Thirdly, studying traditional sources may also cause problems if culture is included in the research. To perceive the cultural setting and study it in a specific foreign policy, a scholar requires a quite different approach to the text than in the mere reconstruction of day-to-day affairs (Liland 1993: 5-6). Fourthly, the treatment of culture very often requires an interdisciplinary approach, in which empirical monographs on anthropology, sociology, folklore studies, literary analysis and media studies will certainly be helpful if the scholar can step out of “well-trodden paths” (p. 7).

Despite the limitations mentioned by Liland, some academic disciplines such as public diplomacy and foreign cultural policy have considered culture in the context of foreign policy. The notion of diplomacy was discussed by Harold Nicholson in 1939, who referred to the importance of three issues for states in their international relations: shifting from secret to open diplomacy; taking public opinion in foreign cultural affairs seriously; and caring about communication on a wide scale (Villanueva Rivas 2007: 46). However, the origin of the notion of public diplomacy, in the view of Nicholas Cull, goes back to 1965, when international actors sought “to accomplish the goals of their foreign policy by engaging with foreign publics”, and which “has gained international currency only since the end of the cold war” (2008: 31). Public diplomacy is associated with “soft power”, a term developed by Joseph Nye and used as an alternative to “hard power” in the international realm. In Nye’s view, the hard power of a country can be defined as its military and economic institutions and rests on inducements (“carrots”) or threats (“sticks”). In Nye’s analysis, however, there is a type of power that comes from the popularity of the values or culture of a country among others:

“A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries- admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness- want to follow it. In this sense, it is also important to set

the agenda and attract other in world politics, and not only to force them to change by threatening military force or economic sanctions. This soft power-getting others to want the outcomes that you want- co-opts people rather than coerces them” (Nye 2004: 5).

A range of methods and techniques exists for countries to achieve their objectives. Cull suggests that, by employing methods such as listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange and international broadcasting, states have improved their international relations historically. He remarks that the information age has opened up new virtual spheres, such as YouTube, and multiple functions, such as internet platforms, for public diplomacy. These new spheres can promote broad participation in dialogue and put issues forward for future discussion (2008: 52). Some scholars such as César Villanueva Rivas argue that cultural diplomacy is a main component of public diplomacy; hence studying it is relevant to understanding cultural approaches in foreign policy. Cultural diplomacy is “a long-term perspective” and considers how “people’s identities are constructed and represented in discursive terms”. Public diplomacy, however, is more oriented in the “short-term problem of representation at the level of communication and image-making of society” through the influence of the media, newspapers, academia and unions (2007: 47).

Some studies have considered trends in how states administer diplomacy. Rebecca E. Johnson divides them into 1) fragmentation, 2) concentration and 3) diffusion (2011: 666). In the fragmentation model, diplomacy is administered at the governmental level and involves government departments that are traditionally concerned with purely domestic issues. It is expanded by a range of governmental agencies and a multiplicity of channels that are in contact with foreign ministries. As Johnson argues, a consequence of this trend is that it needs policy coordination at national level. This enables it to coordinate international negotiations, for instance, which consequently reflect various bureaucratic interests of different countries. The concentration model shows policy coordination at national and international level. It applies to diplomacy that is assisted by the fusion of domestic and international politics and has increasing involvement of heads of government in international policy. According to Johnson, “awareness of the potential costs of lack of bureaucratic and political coordination and politicization of international policy” on the one hand, and “a growing international role for

heads of government” (Johnson 2011: 667) on the other, has resulted in a centralization of diplomacy in institutions such as prime ministerial and presidential offices. The third model, of the diffusion trend, can be applied to democracy that is conducted by professional diplomats who are required to engage with a growing range of non-governmental stakeholders in complex policy networks.

Scholars like Geoffrey Cowan and Amelia Arsenault discuss tools of diplomacy, which they generally categorize into “monologue”, “dialogue” and “collaboration”. States use these tools according to a purpose that they follow in their foreign policy; they should “think about the best times and best places to use each, either by itself or in combination” (2008: 12).

Cowan and Arsenault warn that monologue should not be perceived in opposition to dialogue but as a method that can sometimes work more effectively than dialogue. In their view, “when a nation wants the people of the world to understand where it stands”, they do not communicate this message by debate and dialogue, but in a governmental address or document. An example of this monologue is the *American Declaration of Independence* in 1776. The United States Information Agency (USIA)-sponsored Jazz tours with black artists in the 1950s, and products such as *Coca Cola* and *McDonald's*, books, movies, poetry and works of visual art can be assigned to the same category (2008: 13-16). Dialogue as a tool of public diplomacy, Cowan and Arsenault argue, has an advantage over monologue because it reaches the foreign public by actively making contact between its own and other cultures: “It begins with dialogue between individuals, whether they are representatives of governments or private citizens, meeting in a hotel conference room or an online chat room”. Examples of dialogue in this context are summer camps between teenagers of the “enemy” states India and Pakistan, and Israel and Palestine, academic or professional conferences, call-in talk shows, interactive web sites, cross-cultural sports and Deutsche Welle programs like *Dialogue of Cultures*, which features topical discussions by prominent thinkers from Germany and the Arab World (2008: 17-18). One advantage of using dialogue as a method in public diplomacy is that it provides an “opportunity for people to express themselves and to be heard”, and this opportunity, Cowan and Arsenault argue, can be politically useful because

people “consider a political outcome as fair” if they engage in relevant discussion and debate about it (2008: 19).

The next method is collaboration, which is considered a “more effective means of engaging foreign publics” between nations compared with monologue and dialogue. Collaboration is defined as forms of partnership that focus on solving shared problems or conflicts, advancing shared visions, or completing a physical project. These projects may be “short term with a clear endpoint” or “larger scale and long term such as side by side participation in natural disaster reconstruction efforts”, as mentioned by the authors (2008: 21). *Sesame Street* is one of the successful examples of collaboration, which Cowan and Arsenault believe developed a specific form of public diplomacy called “Muppet Diplomacy”. *Sesame Street* is an American TV program which deals with local issues and cultural norms of different countries and came to popularity because it is not monologic, and “local collaborators provide its local themes, characters, authenticity and relevance” (2008: 24).

The increasing role of civil society in the process of public diplomacy is regarded by some scholars as a step towards dialogue-based public diplomacy. Shaun Riordan argues that Western countries should learn that they have lost their monopoly on international relations (Riordan 2004: 11) and should take a new approach to collaborating with non-governmental agents and set a dialogue-based public diplomacy strategy. However, in his view, dialogue-based public diplomacy needs to develop “a capacity for long-term policy thinking and geopolitical analysis”, and “Western foreign ministries are notably weak in both” (Riordan 2004: 13).

“Science diplomacy” is another area in which reference is made to cultural approaches in foreign policy. As Daryl Copeland discusses, science and diplomacy have been understood in relation to each other since Britain’s Royal Society appointed its first foreign secretary in 1723. It took about three centuries for a diplomatic approach to science to be recognized as an academic discipline in the 1990s, when there was an increasing tendency to discuss global issues in the international realm (Copeland 2016: 631). Science diplomacy refers to addressing global issues such as climate change, resource scarcity and environmental crisis through academic activities implemented by governments and international

organizations. According to Copeland, by addressing global issues and challenges, science diplomacy uses neutral and non-ideological language to mitigate “international political differences when regular diplomatic channels are strained, blocked or non-existent” (2016: 629). The example Copeland uses to substantiate this claim is a case in which science diplomacy was employed when political tensions between New Zealand and USA were high. In 1985 the two countries stopped diplomatic relations because of a disagreement over nuclear-armed warships. The bilateral relations were not fully normalized until 2014. Nevertheless, throughout that time, “the US base in Christchurch which provided forward supply and logistical support for American scientific research activities in Antarctica, remained fully operational, and cooperation between US and New Zealand scientists continued without interruption” (2016: 629-630). Science diplomacy was also studied in the context of Germany’s foreign academic policy by Birte Fähnrich in 2013. Fähnrich investigates a specific project of “Research in Germany – Land of Ideas”, which was initiated by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research between 2005 and 2013. She concluded that aims achieved by this project through academic cooperation with different countries were not limited to their original scientific objectives. Beyond those aims, cooperation enabled the German actors to inform themselves economically with regard to other countries’ opportunities, to represent symbolic political elements of Germany, to represent German education abroad, and to create an internal visibility of German actors abroad (Fähnrich 2013: 243-245).

Foreign cultural policy is another area in which culture plays a role in foreign policy. Foreign cultural policy is hard to define because it can be mixed with foreign policy and cultural policy, as mentioned in 1.2.1. In Richard Martinus Emge’s view, it has the same function as cultural diplomacy and must consequently be perceived as a “vehicle of foreign policy” (Emge 1967: 15). Kurt Jürgen Maaß defines foreign cultural policy as an instrument of foreign policy that concerns promoting culture abroad, but also *Kulturarbeit* [cultural work] to support the aims of foreign policy (Maaß 2005b: 23). In a study comparing the foreign cultural policy of Britain, Germany and France, foreign cultural policy is defined as a country’s image of itself and how it presents itself abroad through its cultural values and traditions (Martens n.d.: 2).

Types of foreign cultural policy according to Kurt Düwell (2005: 62-63) are as follows:

- (1) *Kulturelle Ausstrahlung* [cultural broadcasting or diffusion]. Foreign cultural policy here is limited to a cultural element or tradition which is internally important for a country but symbolizes the country worldwide. For instance, the ideal of the “gentleman” illustrated the British Empire through its colonies. *Kulturelle Ausstrahlung* makes no attempt to impress a specific foreign public to reach a specific aim, but it can be helpful for the economic and power interests of nations, Düwell argues;
- (2) *Kulturelle Selbstinterpretation* [cultural self-interpretation]. This policy tends to represent some cultural elements of a nation to other nations. Cultural affairs are respected between two nations on a reciprocal level when countries have *Kulturelle Selbstinterpretation*. The example Düwell gives is of establishing the British Council in 1934 and cultural institutes of other countries being accepted in Britain in return;
- (3) *Kulturelle Expansion* [cultural expansion or spread]. This is a more advanced level than the two above because it enables a nation to plan its cultural advertising abroad, through short and long programs. The British Embassy conducting English language courses abroad is a type of *Kulturelle Expansion* activity, because English lessons are an opportunity to inform language learners about British culture and values;
- (4) *Kulturpropaganda* [cultural propaganda]. This is a type of foreign cultural policy which enables a nation to plan its cultural advertising abroad in order to extend its national power over other nations;
- (5) *Kulturimperialismus* [cultural imperialism]. This type of foreign cultural policy enables a nation to promote national or racist power expansion abroad via its aggressive cultural advertising programs directed towards other nations. The policy of the German Empire and Nazi regime were a mixture of cultural propaganda and imperialism, as Düwell argues. He points out that both notions, of propaganda and foreign cultural policy, reflect the meaning of “advertisement” in a similar way but to different degrees (Düwell 1981: 69). The actor of propaganda advertises a specific culture in a very obvious and direct way, while the actor of foreign cultural policy tries to determine the best possible policy to mediate its own culture in an invisible and indirect way.

It is important to also consider how actors that implement foreign cultural activities (including intercultural dialogue) abroad are reflected in the academic debates. Very few studies and academic debates look at the actors of Iranian

foreign cultural policy. There are studies which directly or indirectly emphasize the role of Islamic organizations in Iran in this field, especially ICRO (Johnston 2007, Tavassoli 2010, von Maltzahn 2015, Wastnidge 2014). ICRO works with the support of the Iranian state; nevertheless, it is more dependent on the religious sector of the Iranian state than on its democratic sector. This point will be discussed in more detail in the field study of this research in chapters five and six.

The role of actors of German foreign cultural policy has been discussed by Maaß as a crucial one. Among the actions he mentions are agencies which have branch offices abroad, like the DAAD and Goethe Institute, individuals who coordinate conferences and workshops, information sources such as books, films and websites which give information about education and internships in a host country to other countries, schools and universities which prepare academic material for their counterparts abroad, and finally institutes and universities which assist their counterparts abroad with regard to language facilities (2005b: 28-30). The role of a specific type of organization, *Mittlerorganisationen*, as an actor of foreign cultural policy has been emphasized by Werner Link. He argues that foreign cultural relations are “a wide field”, which contains actors including independent individuals, artists, authors, members of foundations, private groups, organizations, churches and labor unions, as well as representatives from state organizations; however, the role of *Mittlerorganisationen*, like the *Dante Alighieri* community in Italy, *Pro Helvetia* in Switzerland, the *British Council* of Britain and the *Goethe Institute* of Germany (Link 1981: 262), is noteworthy. In Link’s view, it is important to guarantee a pluralistic and non-totalitarian order which does not let a state monopolize foreign cultural activities (1981: 262-263). A *Mittlerorganisation* is a type of organization which is directed by a combination of individual actors and some members of the state; it is managed independently but funded mainly with state support and the budget of provinces and regional offices (in Germany the *Länder*). According to Link, Germany compared with other Western democracies has a large and diverse number of *Mittlerorganisationen* (Link 1981: 267). *Mittlerorganisationen*, as Volkhard Laitenberger argues, became important for Germany in the context of academic

exchange in the 1920s.³⁵ Since then, the German state has given increasing assistance to construct German foreign schools and establish institutions such as the DAAD and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Laitenberger 1981: 73-75). The dependency of *Mittlerorganisationen* on the German state is a complicated issue and cannot be judged generally. Link argues that the Goethe Institute is “so far legally independent”, and specific tasks and responsibilities were set out according to a contract between it and the German Democratic government in 1976 (Link 1981: 271-272), which indicates how carefully officials of the Goethe Institute try to reduce the interference of the German state in their affairs. A review of the guidelines, statements and concepts of the foreign affairs ministry and German Parliament between 1970 and 2011 shows that “dialogue” was considered in a more stable and planned way. This shift, as Düwell argues, resulted from the attention of the German government to connecting “cultural relations” to “development strategies” in its foreign relations. His example for this claim is *Ten theses on encounter and collaboration with so-called third world countries*, which was released in 1982 by the new administration of Chancellor Helmut Kohl (Düwell 2005: 79), and Concept 2000, which aimed to strengthen dialogue with the Islamic world (Düwell 2005: 83). This will be discussed more in 5.1.1.

Four points can be drawn from reviewing the academic debates in 3.2.7. **Firstly**, studying culture in the context of foreign policy must analyze non-traditional actors such as artists and journalists, which is why there is little interest in it among academics in the foreign policy field. The **second** point is from the study of Cowan and Arsenault, who categorize cultural activities of countries abroad according to monologue, dialogue and collaboration. They suggest that countries use one of the specific types mentioned based on their needs. **Thirdly**, some studies consider the issue of culture in the foreign policy of countries in the fields of public, cultural and science diplomacy, and soft power. Some also discuss types of administration of diplomacy and connect the issue of diplomacy with governmental organizations and their national and international bureaucratic

³⁵ The issue of cultural exchange in the field of education was important for Germany even before the 1920s, as Kurt Düwell explains with reference to *Propagandaschulen* [propaganda schools] of Germany abroad, which date back to 1914 (1981: 71).

capabilities. There are also studies which discuss differences between foreign cultural policy and diplomacy. The **fourth point** derives from studies which analyze foreign cultural policy as the third pillar of foreign policy beside economics and politics. A typology of foreign cultural policy by Düwell is reviewed in this section and ranges from cultural broadcasting to cultural imperialism.

The next subchapter illustrates the confusions, gaps and limitations in the academic debates regarding intercultural dialogue and which can be dealt with in this study.

3.3 Confusions, Gaps and Limitations in Academic Debates

The content of the reviewed studies suggests with regard to the confusions, gaps and limitations of the academic debates that:

- There is a tendency to replace one-way dominating communications with two-way interactive communications;
- There is an emphasis on providing an opportunity for “listening” and not just “talking” for both sides of communications;
- There are theoretical approaches which consider dialogue as a step towards legitimizing human interactions and understanding different dimensions of truth;
- There is an increasing opportunity for thinkers, theologians and philosophers to share their views on specific issues;
- There is a trend of using dialogue as a technique for learning, teaching and cooperating;
- There is a new approach towards relationships between groups which are politically unequal, for instance South and East, Western countries and Muslim countries.

There is major confusion in the reviewed studies regarding the definition of intercultural dialogue. Most of them mention intercultural dialogue as a key and

vital instrument, approach and process as a contribution to conflict resolution and peace, among other things. However, they have not defined clearly what intercultural dialogue means in each field study. Leaving intercultural dialogue without a clear definition is confusing for two reasons: firstly because there are different points of view and theoretical approaches to “dialogue” and “culture”; a clear definition of intercultural dialogue could enable a reader to understand the position of an implementer or organizer of intercultural dialogue. Secondly, an ambiguous definition of intercultural dialogue can make assessing its achievements difficult. A solution to reduce this confusion is to study characteristics of intercultural dialogue in each discipline.

Gaps have been identified in the reviewed studies:

1) intercultural dialogue has been implemented over issues which are largely concerned with social problems such as conflict resolution and educational and theological issues. Every year, conferences and meetings are held on issues such as natural disasters, water resources and climate change. There seems to be a lack of studies on these issues from an intercultural dialogue point of view.

2) if intercultural dialogue can be understood generally as communication between two participants who want to understand each other on a specific issue, then a logical possible result is the reduction of an original clash between them; almost no study has mentioned that this may create another clash. For instance, two neighbors may have a conflict over using a shared swimming pool. Neighbor A thinks that neighbor B does not let his daughter swim in the pool for religious reasons. However, the dialogue between them could convince neighbor A that neighbor B is not at all religious. At the same time, he learns that neighbor B is accusing him of standing at the corner of the swimming pool and ogling the women swimming there. The first problem is solved, but the second problem may even intensify the conflict between them. This illustrates the need to study the consequences or failures of intercultural dialogue.

3) as the study of Tomas Nawrath showed (in 3.2.3), intercultural dialogue in some fields, such as human rights, is challenging because it concerns “intercultural realities”. If that is the case, then why do some governments and international organizations like the EU still set human rights as an issue for intercultural dialogue with other countries? No Study has focused this issue.

4) there are two series of studies dealing with the issue of intercultural dialogue. The first considers it theoretically and the second practically; very few studies combine the two and present a theoretical discussion in a field study or practical context. Such a gap sends out an additional message: There is no theoretical framework which can help a researcher to investigate a specific intercultural dialogue activity in a certain case study.

5) the issue of foreign cultural policy, its instruments and actors has been analyzed in the context of countries, especially Germany, as reviewed in this chapter. However, there is no study which looks through the actors of intercultural dialogue on a country level and discusses how the political orientation of these actors towards their political system, and how their type of diplomacy or (foreign cultural policy institution), has shaped the characteristics of their intercultural dialogue. Furthermore, there is no study that focuses on the specific foreign cultural policy of two countries towards each other.

6) no study has analyzed intercultural dialogue as a common instrument of foreign cultural policy of two specific countries towards each other.

7) as Norbert Ropers (in 3.2.3) argues, intercultural dialogue should not be over-estimated but perceived as the grassroots of peacebuilding. There is a major lack of analysis that deeply scrutinizes the realistic expectations of intercultural dialogue and not just dreams and unproven potential.

8) there are several publications which reflect views, commentaries and critiques regarding discourses of intercultural dialogue in Farsi and German. However, sources (in Farsi and German) are hardly reflected in international academic debates.

9) the issue of public diplomacy and foreign cultural policy in the case of Iran has seldom attracted attention from scholars comparing issues such as Iran's nuclear power. There are few studies which consider the cultural policy or public diplomacy of Iran towards Central Asia (Johnston 2007, Wastnidge 2014) or Arabic countries (von Maltzahn 2015), and no study of Iranian foreign cultural policy regarding Western countries. This issue is discussed in few studies in Farsi.

3.4 Posing the Question of the Study according to Gaps in the Research

The question of the present study can be posed to fill specific gaps and limitations in the literature, although it undoubtedly cannot deal with them all. To fill gaps in the study of intercultural dialogue on the country level and explore intercultural dialogue as a common instrument of foreign cultural policy of two countries, this study analyzes intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany. It considers the political orientation of their actors toward their political system and their type of foreign cultural policy institutions. The study deals furthermore with Farsi and German publications on the one hand, and considers the foreign cultural policy of Iran (an issue rarely addressed by academics) on the other.

The principal aim of this research is to analyze the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other. To explore this issue, grounded theory has been applied as the main methodology of this research. The main and subquestions of this study have therefore been constructed gradually. However, not only the new data in the field study of Iran and Germany but also what has been learned from the academic debates, and their gaps and limitations, were very helpful in considering the main and subquestions.

This investigation firstly includes an analysis of the aims and objectives of foreign cultural policy within the field study in Iran and Germany, as well as the institutions and actors involved in it. It is vital to answer the main question of what Iran and Germany expect to achieve through their foreign cultural policy. Furthermore, each institution and actor reflects the political structure and cultural priorities of the respective country. While studying institutions and actors is important to understand the distinction between each of them in their own country, it also makes the differences and similarities between Iranian and German institutions clear.

This research is not a study on general discourse of intercultural dialogue, as has been observed in the reviewed studies, but investigates specific cases in Iran and Germany. The **second question** explores which Iranian actors have implemented activities under “interfaith dialogue” and “dialogue among civilizations”, and which German actors have implemented European-Islamic cultural dialogue activities. Investigation of their aims, activities and target groups were central to

this question. The study also looks deeper into the reasons for the institutions to choose these activities or target groups in the context of intercultural dialogue.

The intercultural dialogue activities investigated in this study take place in different fields, for instance theater, music, academic exchange. The third subquestion of the study is therefore: Why have intercultural dialogue activities appeared at particular times and in specific fields and by specific actors? Unlike some of the research reviewed in this chapter, this study does not simply describe these activities but also explores the fascinating political dimensions and institutional demands that form them, and why. Therefore, the third subquestion of the study is on characteristics of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany and analyzing the context and reasons behind them.

Another key issue in this research is to relate analysis from the study to the main question. Every piece of new information and data collected for this study should aid understanding of the role of intercultural dialogue in the context of the foreign cultural policy of the two countries towards each other. The **fourth subquestion** thus focuses on understanding the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany and analysis of the characteristics of their intercultural dialogue and the relationship between them.

Chapter 4 discusses in detail the methodology applied to the main research and

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology used in this research in five subchapters. It describes the journey from the original research plan through different stages of data gathering and analysis. 4.1 is an outline of the research perspective, showing why grounded theory has been selected as a methodological framework for this study to take limitations and challenges in the field study and turn them into an

opportunity for qualitative analysis. 4.2 presents the levels of comparative analysis (actors, aims and activities). Subchapter 4.3 describes data collection methods and the sampling strategy types used in this study. Different stages of data analysis will be presented in 4.4. It explains how the first phase of analysis, “initial coding”, is conducted and how initial codes are used to construct “focused”, “axial” and “theoretical codes”. An intermediate phase of “memo writing”, which has a key role in constructing the analysis in grounded theory research, is also explained in 4.4. This subchapter closes with a discussion on techniques used during data analysis in this research.

4.1 Grounded Theory as a Methodological Approach

Grounded theory was applied in this research because there was no theoretical framework to fit the problem of the study. There are different methodological frameworks. In a traditional or classical approach, a researcher can take a theory like Durkheim’s theory of suicide or anomie as “a guide theory” and analyze the rate of suicide in a specific society. By testing the collected data according to the guide theory, the researcher can confirm or reject it or pose a critical question to its validity. In this research exploring the problem of intercultural dialogue in the context of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy, no theory was found that could explain its dimensions and play the role of a guide theory. Thinkers and scholars such as Kant, Taylor and Boas, Sen and Halliday provided a context for understanding, firstly, where key gaps exist in relevant research on intercultural dialogue, and secondly, for identifying which points are of interest and which questions have to be asked to add a new dimension to the academic debate. At the heart of qualitative analysis in grounded theory is transferring the available data to “codes”. These codes suggest new hypotheses and questions. Analyzing them leads finally to a theoretical discussion. Coding in grounded theory should not be limited by a specific theory. The researcher should be as open as possible to consider different dimensions of the research objectives and ultimately construct his/her own theory. The final discussion of the research does not include the codes³⁶ and new hypotheses but the outcomes and analysis resulting from the codes. Analysis of the codes in this research is presented in chapter seven.

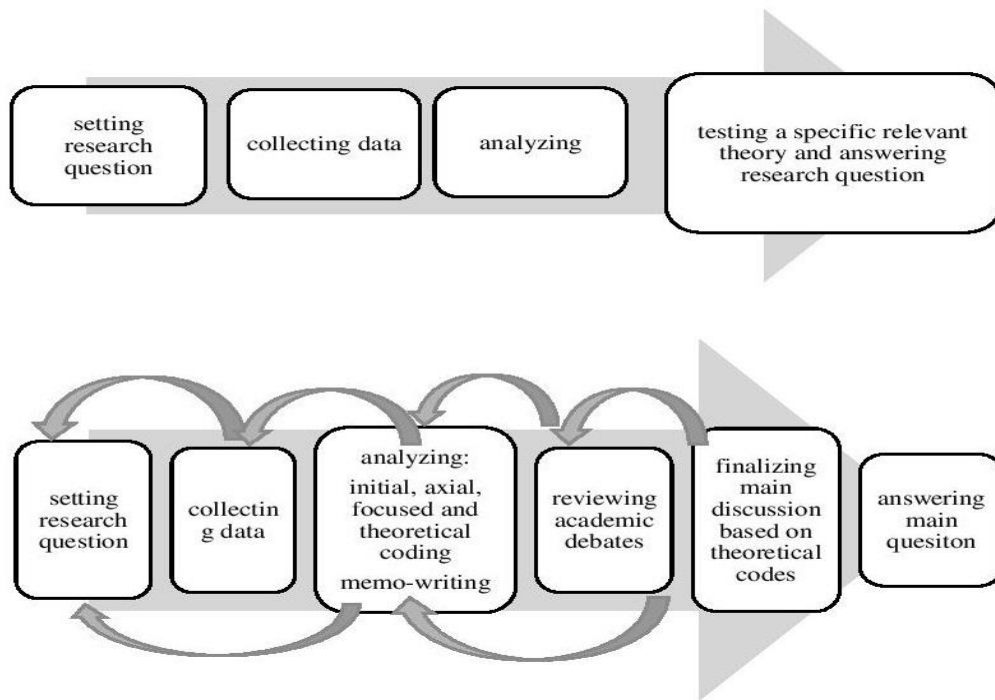
³⁶ More than 4,000 codes were created with the Maxqda software in this study.

Grounded theory was developed in the 1960s as a “popular choice of methodology for nurse researchers”, and at that time “more than 3,650 journal articles” were published based on this methodology (Mills et al. 2008: 2). Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss have played an important role in defining it and provoking discussions regarding its approaches and structures since 1967 (Thornberg/Charmaz 2014: 153). To a large extent, grounded theory has been developed as constructivist grounded theory by Strauss himself and researchers such as Juliet Corbin and Kathy Charmaz, as Mills, Bonner and Francis discuss (Mills et al. 2008: 2). As Charmaz suggests, Glaser and Strauss have contributed different critiques which challenge the validity of grounded theory. In several articles and new versions of their books, they propose grounded theory as a qualitative method which can generate theory based on the following seven rules (Charmaz 2014: 7-8):

- Simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis,
- Constructing analytic codes and categorizing from data, not from preconceived logically deduced hypothesis,
- Using the constant comparison method, which involves making comparison during each stage of the analysis,
- Advancing theory development during each step of data collection and analysis,
- Memo-writing to elaborate categories, specially their properties, define relationships between categories, and identify gaps,
- Sampling aimed towards theory construction -theoretical sampling-, not for population representativeness,
- Conducting the literature review after developing an independent analysis.

Grounded theory, unlike a traditional/classic methodological framework, is therefore developed at each stage in relation to other stages, evaluating the research question and subquestions during the research. The theoretical construction of the main discussion of the research is developed during the simultaneous data collection and data analysis process. Figure 5 illustrates differences between grounded theory and a traditional methodological framework:

Figure 4 Traditional methodological framework vs. grounded theory



Source: made by the researcher (2015)

Charmaz, Gibson and Hartman argue that because the researcher plays an important role in forming the research in grounded theory, the methodology is a constructive grounded theory (Charmaz 2014: 12-13, Gibson/Hartman 2013: 58). The researcher does not have a right to impose any idea or theory on the field study at the data gathering stage, but he/she enters the field study with his/her own story and assumptions. Moreover, issues that participants in the field study share with the researcher have a crucial role in forming the nature of the analysis. The researcher further observes several points in contact with text, participants and their verbal and non-verbal communication. All these factors can influence the formation of his/her final analysis.

The international journal *Grounded Theory Review* shows that several researchers whose field is not limited to nursing and medicine have reflected their own solutions in the challenges of using this method (Jones 2009, Pergert 2009). Charmaz argues as follows that:

“Diverse researchers can use basic grounded theory strategies such as coding, memo-writing, and sampling for theory development with comparative methods because these strategies are, in many ways, transportable across epistemological and ontological gulfs, although *which* assumptions researchers bring to these

strategies and *how* they use them presuppose epistemological and ontological stances. Constructive grounded theory adopts the inductive, comparative, emergent, and open-ended approach of Glaser and Strauss's 1967 original statement" (Charmaz 2014: 12).

In this research, grounded theory has been applied in different stages. The research question and subquestions have been evaluated during the years of the study in relation to data collection, sampling and data analysis in a field study of Iran and Germany. The collected data are analyzed mainly with the valuable assistance of Kathy Charmaz's book, *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2009 and 2014 versions). It contains examples from a variety of research work to help the reader understand and solve research challenges, and it has guided this research like a bible. Memo-writing was another key stage of the research. Some initial questions were expressed through memo-writing. It improves abstract thinking to write about categories and connects codes to categories in more advanced stages of the study. These stages will be explained in the next subchapters.

4.2 Comparative Study on Different Levels

Scholars such as Todd Landman believe that comparative study of countries is a specific type of study. It employs different methods to understand the effect of a variable such as economic development in the context of different countries. Landman argues four main reasons for comparing countries in political science: 1) contextual description about issues and cases which are unknown; 2) classification of issues to make understanding of complicated problems easier; 3) hypothesis-testing; and 4) prediction (Landman 2003: 4-10). An example of a comparative study of countries is that of Huntington in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the New World Order*, which was reviewed in chapter 3. This study compares 120 countries using qualitative and quantitative methods. However, Landman believes that Huntington's study had "weak predictive arguments" and became relevant and attracted attention after 9/11, but not because of its strong argument (Landman 2003: 10). A point which can be drawn from Landman's study is that the conclusion of comparative research should be based on logic and rational sense; events relating to the same issue but occurring after it cannot construct a rationality or validity for it.

In grounded theory, the initial codes are compared with each other and used to develop the concentrated and axial codes. Grounded theory is thus based on comparing data and codes with each other. The result of scrutinizing and comparing codes of the collected data in this study illustrates that comparison of three specific issues would make sense to answer the main question of the study. They are: cultural actors, aims and intercultural dialogue activities.

4.2.1 Comparing Actors

Germany and Iran have different types of actors to undertake cultural activities directed at the public of the respective country. One factor by which to compare them is their location. Germany used to implement cultural activities in Iran along with work of different institutes and organizations which had a branch office in both Germany and Iran, such as the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* (DAAD), which is headquartered in Bonn and has its branch office, the Information Center, in Tehran. Some of these organizations, like ifa, had no branch office in Iran. It has its head office in Stuttgart and has worked together with the cultural section and press section of the German embassy in Iran to implement specific intercultural dialogue activities for Iranian applicants. Iran also has a limited number of institutions in Germany in this regard. For instance, the Islamic Center of Hamburg has been established in Germany since 1953 and concentrates on religious activities. There have been a few organizations which have a base just in Iran but implement some intercultural dialogue activities (or cooperate with other German organizations to do so). The International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations is one of those organizations.

Besides the location factor, background, profession, funding and status of relationship to the Iranian and German states (whether they are state, para-state or privately based) play a role in comparing the actors with each other.

4.2.2 Comparing Aims

The cultural actors of every country logically pursue specific aims in their cultural activities abroad. Iran and Germany are no exception. Aims of cultural actors that are less dependent on the state seem to differ somewhat from the aims of governmental cultural actors. Cultural actors that are known for arts exchange

should have slightly different aims than cultural actors that concentrate on academic exchange. It is vital to analyze the relationship between firstly these types of aims, secondly the aims that Iranian and German governments pursue in their foreign cultural policy, thirdly different aims that discourses of intercultural dialogue in Iran and Germany are supposed to reach. Comparing aims in these three levels can help to understand the role or function of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany.

4.2.3 Comparing Intercultural Dialogue Activities

German and Iranian actors have organized a variety of projects and activities, including intercultural dialogue, in cultural fields. But what do these activities look like? They can take the classical or traditional form of inviting experts and professionals to participate in a seminar, or the more advanced form of a co-written book by German and Iranian authors. Which cultural fields have the activities been implemented in? Some are academic, some interreligious dialogue. The form and type of intercultural dialogue is an important point for analysis in this study.

4.3 Data Collection

Collecting data and conducting analysis in grounded theory are supposed to be done together, not successively. No specific method is recommended for collecting the data. The rule is that a method fits a specific subquestion. If the question is: What intercultural activities has a specific institute implemented? then the publications and reports of the institute can be relevant data. If the question is: Why is there no report on the cultural activities of a specific institute? talking to high-ranking members of the institute can be the relevant data. In this study, different methods such as **document analysis, conversation, interviews** and **observation** have been used.

Published texts were useful in the initial stage of the research but insufficient on their own, firstly because they were partly damaged or not completely available, and secondly because they could not answer all the questions of this study. For instance, analysis is needed on why regular annual reports are available on the foreign cultural policy of Germany but not on the foreign cultural policy of Iran. To answer questions like this, it was necessary to interview relevant individuals. Since not all individuals agreed to participate in interviews, some informal conversations were conducted with them. Besides documents, conversations and interviews, different situations, locations and confrontations of different interviewees with questions of the study are observed. This observation is carefully used as the third source of information for this study.

To understand text, the study has benefited from Roland Barthes's view on "text" (Barthes 1971), who believes it to be different from the material that carries the content of the data, which is called "work", not text. Text refers to the language of a book discussing the subject of an investigation; the book itself is the work. Text does not stop at its literature; it goes further than words, signs and facts. Text is thus paradoxical because it can challenge the structure of the work and the view of the people who produced it. In Barthes's view, text is also plural "because it has several meanings" (p. 238). The work has to be understood in the process of filiation because "the author is reputed as father and owner of his own text" (p. 239). Text thus reflects realities more than the physical or imaginary reality that can be seen in the work. This approach to text defines a methodological approach to perceiving data in all its forms, including documents, interviews and observation, and differentiating their texts from work. For instance, not just the work of an interview has been analyzed, but also the way an interviewee neglects to answer a specific question or pauses in responding to a question.

What kinds of data have been collected in this research? In Charmaz's view, data generally is divided into two categories. All kinds of data that are shaped by participants in a field study via communication and questions of the researcher, including surveys, open questions, interviews, conversations, informal talks, emails and even verbal reactions to the researcher, are called *elicited texts*. The kinds of data which have already been published and are available to the researcher in the field study and which the researcher has no control over, including books, bills, published surveys and records, are called *extant texts*

(Charmaz 2014: 47-48). In this research, a mix of both *extant* and *elicited* texts has been used. Texts like bills, annual reports and parliament regulations which are collected for analysis in this study are in the category of *extant* text. Interviews, conversations and even observations with the direct involvement of the researcher are *elicited* texts in this study.

Data in this study is collected according to theoretical sampling, which will be explained in the next subchapter.

4.3.1 Sampling

In principle, deciding about samples in quantitative and qualitative research follows the same rationality: The data should be collected systematically so as to represent the whole target society. For example, if a study measures the quality of the mathematics teaching in a city, sampling should cover schools which are located in different neighborhoods with south/north, rich/poor, and host/immigrant populations. Such sampling can still contain some errors, but it is rational to follow a strategy which covers all the levels of society. Rationality is respected similarly in both quantitative and qualitative research. There is, however, a very significant difference between qualitative and quantitative research: Quantitative research, as Martin Marshall states, deals with large amounts of data, while qualitative research understands the usefulness of studying small samples. Marshall suggests three approaches to selecting a sample for a qualitative study: convenience sample, judgment sample and theoretical sample. Based on factors such as time and availability of sources, a researcher can decide to choose one or a mixture thereof. Convenience sampling fits selection of the most accessible data, while in judgment sampling the researcher actively selects the most productive sample, according to her/his own knowledge on relevant theories, books and research, to answer the research question. In theoretical sampling, as also recommended in grounded theory, an interpretative theory will result from the emerging data (Marshall 1996: 523).

Grounded theory suited to theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling has been defined by Glaser and Strauss as a method which can be conducted based on the initial decisions of the researcher regarding data collection. Therefore, theoretical sampling is rooted in extant and elicited texts that are available in the field study:

“The initial decisions [...] are based only on a general sociological perspective and on a general subject or problem” (Glaser/Strauss 2009: 45). The initial decisions in grounded theory research, as Charmaz explains, come from the data; it constructs tentative ideas about the data, and then examines these ideas via further empirical inquiry. It involves a particular form of reasoning called “abduction”, which is a mode of imaginative reasoning. When a researcher cannot account for a puzzling finding, he/she makes an inferential leap to consider all possible theoretical explanations for the observed data and then forms and tests hypotheses for each explanation (Charmaz 2014: 199-200).

Charmaz explains theoretical sampling with a study of Jennifer Lois on the topic of homeschooling mothers (Charmaz 2014: 193-196). Knowing that homeschooling took up an inordinate amount of time for mothers in the United States, Lois investigates which strategies homeschooling mothers use to overcome emotional burnout and manage their housework, relationship with their husbands, and their duties as mother and teacher. The initial round of interviews suggests to Lois that something else was grounded in the field that deserves more attention academically: a concept of “time for the homeschooling mothers”. Therefore, the main codes were reviewed and a new round of interviews conducted to identify what “time” means for those mothers.

The next example is from research by Tim Rapley. He uses purposive sampling. He writes an article about stages of a study on *delay in diagnosis for children with juvenile idiopathic arthritis*. Through access to four forms of data, Rapley was able to make sense of his data. He reviewed sources such as patients’ case notes on the same illness, a limited number of academic papers on delayed diagnosis, and he stayed in contact with relevant members of a hospital team (Rapley 2014: 51-52). At this stage he collects information that assists him to understand the potential of variation in the phenomena of delayed diagnosis. Through initial interviews he became curious as to why the time to diagnosis in some cases is shorter than others. With this question he narrowed down his sample groups and specified his questions. He finally constructs his main discussion, arguing that “luck” and “knowledge” (of parents of ill children) could explain the phenomenon of delayed diagnosis (Rapley 2014: 58-59).

The common point of the two reviewed research studies is that the researchers developed richer and deeper questions from their initial round of data collection and used theoretical sampling. From the point of departure in the initial round of data collection, they developed a theory and accordingly set sampling strategies.

This study also gradually narrowed the topic down to those cultural activities conducted under specific discourses in Iran and Germany. Different stages of the process of making sense of intercultural dialogue, the interviews and observation will be discussed in the next subchapters.

4.3.2 Making Sense of Intercultural Dialogue in the Field Study

To make sense of intercultural dialogue in Iran and Germany, the following two subquestions are initially asked in the field study:

Subquestion one: What are the main aims and objectives of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy, and what are the main institutions and actors that play a role in it?

Subquestion two: Which Iranian and German institutes, organizations, centers and individuals can be counted as actors of intercultural dialogue? What were their aims? Which activities did they implement? In which fields? For which target groups? Why?

An attempt has been made to focus questions like these on the collected texts of Iran and Germany:

- Which discourses refer to cultural dialogue with other countries, cultures, and nations, and receive support from the Iranian and German states?
- Which sections or institutions of the Iranian and German states deal with foreign cultural policies generally and consider intercultural dialogue specifically? What are their background and aims?
- Which actors are in charge of implementing foreign cultural activities abroad generally and are helping to implement intercultural dialogue activities specifically? What is their profession? What is the status of their relationship with the state? Why?

It is important to consider which type of data has been available to meet the demands of this study and what the *elicited* texts are. Three forms of data have been collected as follows: informal conversations, relevant publications, and contact with organizations. These forms are explained in the next sections.

4.3.2.1 Informal Conversations

Firstly to save the time and secondly to deal with the lack of exact information available to answer the initial questions of the study, some individuals who were informed about foreign cultural policy and cultural dialogue were contacted. The necessity of talking to those individuals in Iran was greater than in Germany, because in Germany the relevant information was often available via *extant* texts. The individuals were selected by convenience sampling, whereby the most accessible individuals who could be contacted are selected. In Iran it was possible to talk to some political figures and in Germany to some experts and members of staff who organized dialogue projects. **Informal** conversation with these individuals was chosen because it was the most effective way, in the early stage of the study, for the researcher to develop an understanding of intercultural dialogue in the context of both countries in open discussions and without specific questions. Informal conversation was also very helpful in uncovering new topics of interest which might initially have been overlooked by the researcher. Individuals would point out various dimensions of the topic of intercultural dialogue, which opened up many interesting points and questions. Moreover, the informal conversation played a key role in deciding on the next sampling in the study (theoretical sampling). Seven individuals were contacted at this stage. Data relating to these informal conversations appears in appendix 1.

4.3.2.2 Relevant Publications

Two pieces of advice were significant in the initial informal conversations. The Iranian participants suggested visiting the library of *Farhangestān-e Honar* [Academy of Art], *Ketābkhāne-ye Melli-ye Iran* [National library of Iran], and library of the foreign ministry. All these libraries are located in Tehran. The sources were useful; they had intranet and index e-systems which give access to the published Iranian press media, reports, books, journals and bulletins on the

topic of intercultural dialogue. The second piece of advice was to contact specific organizations, institutions and individuals and avoid some others which may perceive the topic or result of the study as a security threat for Iran's cultural image internationally. Informal conversation in the German field study also resulted in advice to look for annual reports and publications of the foreign affairs ministry, specific institutions and organizations via their homepage. Other advice was to visit the library of ifa in Stuttgart, and *Das Politische Archiv*³⁷ [political archive] in Berlin.

More than 250 reports and statements of Iranian (about 100) and German institutions (about 150) were investigated in total. Access was gained to 50 publications of the Iranian foreign ministry, including internal bulletins, inquiries and occasional reports, as well as 20 publications of the International Center of Dialogue among Civilizations (ICDAC), including its monthly inquiries and some of its annual reports. In addition, 20 publications of the Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations, including the inquiries of its Center for Interfaith Dialogue and two reports on annual forums of all its Rayzani branch offices, were reviewed. Similarly, 150 documents were reviewed in the case of Germany. 25 publications of the German Auswärtiges Amt [foreign affairs ministry] were studied, including its annual reports on foreign cultural and educational policy, action plans, and statements on key concepts, as well as reports on relevant conferences. Meanwhile, it was possible to access publications of German institutes which received a budget for organized intercultural dialogue. Approximately 80 publications, including annual reports, action plans and bulletins of the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen e.V., Goethe Institut, Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung, and Pädagogischer Austauschdienst, as well as some reports on the activities of Deutsche Welle, were reviewed in this context.

4.3.2.3 Contact with some Organizations/Members of Staff

Beyond talking to some informed individuals and studying relevant published texts, institutions involved in implementing intercultural dialogue activities were

³⁷ After obtaining information about this archive center, it became clear that data from the last 30 years are not available to the public and researchers. The time period of this study is 1998 to 2013, which is the last 20 years in terms of research. This archive therefore did not fit data collection.

identified. Contacts with members of staff of some institutions like ifa and the DAAD as well as the Iranian Rayzani were therefore established. These institutions cooperated with the researcher and communication with them was a valuable source of information during the years of the research. Contact with the institutions was also used to conduct more informal conversations and interviews for the study and provided access to other extant texts.

4.3.2.4 Initial Lessons from the Field Study

The first lesson from studying the collected data was identifying the main discourses of intercultural dialogue in Iran and Germany. The discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” arose more than any other discourse in informal conversations of Germany. Some reference was naturally made to the “dialogue of cultures” of Roman Herzog (German president from 1994 to 1999) and “dialogue with Muslim world” of Johannes Rau (German president from 1999 to 2004). But what has been done systematically by the German parliament and the German foreign ministry (according to informal conversations, relevant publications which were mentioned above, and contact with institutions) has related to “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”. This discourse was strengthened after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in America. More information on this issue will follow in 5.1.3.

“Dialogue among civilizations” was the main discourse mentioned in initial informal conversations with the Iranian side. It was notable here that they emphasized the cosmopolitan approach of dialogue among civilizations on the one hand, and on the other saw it as a way to emphasize Islamic civilization. To focus more on the content of the conversations, it became clear that there was a discourse behind the dialogue among civilizations that these informed individuals referred to indirectly, and that discourse was “interfaith dialogue”, which had been ongoing since the 1980s. Studying the relevant available documents, it became clear that the Iranian state had regularly organized interfaith dialogue after the Islamic Revolution. Interfaith dialogue has clearly been a discourse of intercultural dialogue on the Iranian side, because not only the religious sector of the Iranian state but also the reformist sector was proud of what was identified as

“dialogue among civilizations”. In 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 both of these discourses will be discussed in detail.

The second lesson was that information on cultural actors and intercultural dialogue were not available from the same sources in Iran and Germany. Access to relevant data in the case of Iran was problematic and time-consuming. The homepages and e-portals of Iranian institutes and organizations present incomplete information and are out of date. It was therefore necessary to visit the institutions and their libraries, but the libraries likewise had incomplete and damaged archives. Even the words “annual report” or “report on foreign cultural policy” were unfamiliar to the ear of the main staff of those libraries. Some relevant bulletins which were available in hard print were damaged; in some cases it became clear that all publications of libraries are not registered in their electronic indexes. Hence trusting to the available mechanism of those libraries was almost impossible. In contrast, access to data in Germany was relatively unproblematic, because the internet portals of organizations and institutions have a systematic arrangement to make it possible to present and download annual reports and relevant information. Their information is updated and available mostly in both German and English. Contact with the ifa library was a fruitful experience, because annual reports were completed for the years between 1998 and 2013.

The third lesson was to recognize the “alive” field study of Germany and “dead” or “mute” field study of Iran at the stage of making sense of the data. A relevant institution on the Iranian side closed in 2005. The list of interfaith dialogue meetings of ICRO shows that Germany is not a partner. On the German side, although the golden time of discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue was around 2005-2008, there have still been projects implemented under its title and with the assistance of its specific budget.

The fourth lesson relates to the political perception of intercultural dialogue in Iran. It was a very common comment in the informal conversations with Iranians that dialogue with Germany or the West was difficult because intercultural dialogue was misused politically. On the German side also, dialogue with Iran (and not generally with the Muslim world) has been a political issue. Further analysis of this issue follows in 7.1.3.

These lessons firstly helped with deciding on the period of analysis in this study, which is between 1998 and 2013. Because this time period shows variation in the approach to intercultural dialogue in one of the case study countries, it seems to be a proper time period to specifically answer the question of this study. This point has been explained in 1.2.3. Secondly, they helped to focus on specific institutions which have a more important role in setting the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany. The Iranian foreign ministry and Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations are relevant on the Iranian side, while the German foreign affairs ministry is significant on the German side. Thirdly, they helped to focus on specific actors of intercultural dialogue in the Iranian and German context. Activities of other institutes and individuals which play a role in between are considered in a subchapter on “other German actors” and “other Iranian actors” in chapter 5. The names of the actors are shown in table 3:

Table 3. Iranian and German actors of intercultural dialogue which are studied specifically in this research

Iranian actors	German actors
Rayzani	The cultural section of the German Embassy in Iran
International Center of Dialogue among Civilizations	Goethe Institute
Others	DAAD
	ifa
	Others

Fourthly, these lessons helped to decide on interviews conducted in the study, which are considered in the next subchapter.

4.3.3 Interviews

Based on information collected at the stage of “making sense of intercultural dialogue”, some parts of the body of the research are formed, and some subquestions are answered, but some new questions also emerge which need to be answered in interviews. Individuals who informally participated in conversations suggested some interviewees with the potential to answer different questions of the study. The relevant publications which were studied initially gave some additional ideas of others to approach with some obscure points surrounding the problem of the study. Moreover, as explained in the last subchapter, some

individuals were suggested to be interviewed in the first round through contacts with institutions and members of staff.

The individuals who were interviewed in the first round are generally categorized in four groups, as follows:

1. **Politicians:** Politicians who are informed on or have experience in decision-making in the relationship between Iran and Germany, foreign policy and foreign cultural policy of both countries are in this category. Figures who are familiar with the discourses of intercultural dialogue and diplomats who have held relevant posts were the next target individuals.
2. **High-ranking officials:** People who occupy high-ranking positions in the cultural organizations are a valid source of information. They are simultaneously in contact with politicians and have to consider the political sensibilities of implementing intercultural dialogue activities with a specific country and also with teams and colleagues that have experience of cultural activities with different countries. They are aware of the goals their organization follows and the kind of activities it can organize. Therefore the heads, directors and chiefs of relevant institutions and organizations were the next group of interviewees of this study.
3. **Members of staff:** The views and information of members of staff of the cultural and other organizations were also important. The rationality of interviewing these people was to be able to understand dimensions of intercultural dialogue activities from different points of view, not just those of high-ranking individuals but also of those who dealt with implementing the activities. Employees of relevant institutions which are involved, directly or indirectly, with intercultural dialogue projects, and some members of staff of organizations which have been involved in the foreign cultural policy of both countries were therefore interviewed.
4. **Informed individuals:** There are people who have a connection with the topic of intercultural dialogue or foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany through their expertise, contacts and former jobs. Therefore, individuals who are politically informed about discourses of intercultural dialogue, the relationship between Iran and Germany, and the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany, including experts, authors and journalists, were also interviewed in the first round of interviews.

Because not all interviewees agreed to participate in face-to-face interviews, or it was not possible to visit them because of their time schedule, some of the

interviews were conducted as informal conversations, communication via email, telephone and skype. Some of the face-to-face interviews were in groups of two or three people, simply because the interviewees were colleagues and wanted to save time or answer the questions more confidently.

How are the questions for the interviews formed? As Charmaz recommends, conducting an intensive interview needs an interview guide. It helps a researcher to observe more confidently and experience different potentials of the communication with the interviewee:

“When you grapple with creating, revising, and fine-tuning your interview questions, you gain a better grasp of how and when to ask them in conversation. You will keep in mind how to form well-constructed questions although you might not follow your original questions or glance while conducting the interview” (Charmaz 2014: 63).

The interview questions contain the main objectives of the two first subquestions of the study. A sample of questions in the first round of interviews is shown in appendix 4. Altogether, 49 interviews were conducted in the first round, among them 25 interviews with Iranian participants and 24 interviews with German participants. The data from these interviews, including the groups, name of participants, time and form of the interviews, are presented in appendix 2.

Information from the first round of interviews contained some interesting points. Besides answering some subquestions, it also raised new questions. These new questions and interesting points were noted in memos and used to develop hypotheses and new questions. One of these questions was regarding the ICDAC. What exactly happened to it? Why was it closed down? Was it closed down, or did it merge into another organization? If so, why? Moreover, it was interesting to learn that, despite not many political tensions in the relationship between Iran and Germany during Khatami’s presidency, the number of intercultural dialogue activities did not increase considerably. To discover why that was the case, the interviews were continued in the second round with participants of the same groups as the first round but with more focused questions. Most of the interviewees in the second round were approached on the suggestion or with the help of the interviewees from the first round of interviews.

There were also some interesting points relating to specific activities implemented by German actors. For instance, it was interesting to learn about academic

cooperation and job-internship opportunities which the DAAD and ifa, German cultural actors, made possible for Iranian and German participants. Both activities were funded under the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”. These types of activities arose more than others. To discover why, another group was added to the four groups of interviewees in the second round of interviews:

5. **Participants of intercultural dialogue:** Individuals who have participated in intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany, including students, professors and researchers who participate in DAAD exchange programs and ifa’s cross-cultural “Praktika” program are the target individuals in this group.

Guide questions in the second round are more focused on problems of and obstacles to intercultural dialogue, as well as on the interest of the participants in intercultural dialogue projects. A sample of these guide questions is presented in appendix 4. Thirty one interviewees participated in the second round of interviews. Appendix 3 reflects data relating to these interviews.

A total number of 81 individuals participated in all interviews of the study. Some interviewees were contacted more than once with more questions, but the date of their interview (as appendix 2 and 3 show) is based on the first date of the interview, and their name is mentioned once in both appendices. Furthermore, some interviewees belonged to more than one category, for instance an informed individual was also a participant of the DAAD projects. To avoid mentioning an interviewee’s name twice, a single interview is presented in the list.

Some problems also arose when conducting the interviews for this study:

- The start point of the research was 1998. Some institutes were closed and some relevant intercultural dialogue projects had already ended at the time of conducting this research. Finding relevant participants was therefore difficult.
- Interviewing some Iranian participants was difficult. Some of them had no interest in participating in the interview because of political considerations. This later became an analytical point to explain the political problem of intercultural dialogue.

4.3.4 Observation

Part of the main reasoning in grounded theory is to “let your research problem shape the methods you choose” (Charmaz 2014: 27). One of the examples Charmaz gives in her book is a study conducted by Wasserman and Clair in 2011 on homeless people and social services for them. Data from this study is gathered based on in-depth interviews; nevertheless, both researchers took observation and participation in the data gathering into account. Observation was a type of data in their research that illustrates new dimensions of the research problem (Charmaz 2014: 24-25).

The issue of intercultural dialogue in the context of Iran and Germany could not be studied without being part of it. In most cases the researcher therefore had to participate actively and observe different situations personally. Observation was key to deciding on the next samples and data gathering, as the theoretical sampling of grounded theory advises. The data collected from documents and interviews was not enough to answer different questions of the study. In each stage it was important to take into account and observe carefully not only the content of the information but also the situation, and even the lack of information. Observation in both document and interview analysis of the study was used as a source of information.

Document analysis was not a sufficient method. The absence of annual reports on Iranian foreign cultural policy and the lack of precise regulations or bills from the Iranian parliament regarding intercultural dialogue activities are significant, but they are only descriptive points. Some individuals were therefore approached to find out why this is the case. The interviews were able to clarify some dimensions of these points, but some interviewees dodged the issue. Observing their behavior and combining it with the results of the document and interview analysis suggest that Iranian foreign cultural policy itself is influenced negatively by the dual political system of Iranian government. The interviewees mostly reflected two different values. The first is creating an Islamic and revolutionary image for Iran, and the second is creating a peace-seeking and cosmopolitan cultural image for Iran. It seems that the struggle reflected in the interviewees who believe in two different values is one of the reasons that no clear regulation on foreign cultural policy had been concluded in Iran up to that time (end of 2016). This observation

suggests that there is not only a problem of achieving and concluding a clear regulation for foreign cultural policy but also a structural problem of forming the foreign cultural policy of Iran. This point will be discussed in 7.1.1.

In the German field study, document analysis was similarly not a sufficient method, although it was helpful to a large degree. A high level of harmony and team work was observed in the field study of Germany. What was revealed in the interviews often confirms what was reflected in the reports, for instance. The interviewees from the German “politicians” and “high-ranking officials” groups, for instance, did not dodge questions on the foreign cultural policy of Germany. Finally, their behavior and the way they dealt with questions suggested that they believe in an integrated system of values in German foreign cultural policy. A general value was to create a good image for Germany in Iran and to consider the sensibilities of the relationship between the two countries. This point will be discussed in 7.1.1.

The instruments used in this observation included field notes and memos, which were very important for making new questions and developing analytical points of the observation.

The researcher also had some specific privileges which made the process of observation easier. Firstly, close contact with some cultural organizations, as mentioned in 4.3.2, helped her to build communication with members of their staff. Through these contacts it became easier to understand, for example, which issues an organization is open to answering questions about and which it tries to avoid, and why. Close contact also made it possible to understand which issues an organization has agreements or disagreements with other organizations over, and why. A connection with some close friends of Iran’s former president Mohammad Khatami is another privilege. Since Khatami’s “dialogue among civilizations” is a focused discourse of this study, the opportunity for open and deep communication with people who were involved in promoting this discourse made in-depth observations possible. The participation of the researcher in an academic exchange of the DAAD, under the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”, from 2012 to 2015, was the third privilege for active observation in the field study. This participation enabled the researcher to closely observe the

communication, fields of discussion, problems and advantages of intercultural dialogue between Iranian and German participants.

4.4 Data Analysis

The first analytical stage of this study, as mentioned above, began during the collecting and sampling of data. The data are then transformed into codes. Coding is a way to synthesize hundreds of pages of interviews, field notes, documents and other texts to develop a theoretical discussion. It is a process of defining what the data are about. As Charmaz explains, coding means “naming segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorizes, summarizes and accounts for each part of data. Coding is the first step in moving beyond concrete statements in the data to making analytic interpretations” (Charmaz 2009: 111). Grounded theory coding can be divided into four phases, which are explained in the next sections.

4.4.1 First Phase: Initial Coding

Initial coding is the first step to transform the data to smaller segments. It breaks the concrete data into shorter words which can be categorized and analyzed later. It is basically a matter of asking some main questions of the data to name and sort them. Charmaz summarizes questions which Glaser and Strauss think are important to ask about the data at this stage as follows:

- “What is this data a study of?
- What do the data suggest? Pronounce? Leave unsaid?
- From whose point of view?
- What theoretical category does this specific datum indicate?” (Charmaz 2014: 116).

One of Charmaz’s tips to the researcher is to “remain open” to explore all theoretical possibilities of the data. There are concepts which can define the gathered data theoretically, such as Max Weber’s “reutilization”. But Charmaz advises that researchers, instead of limiting the data to one or two theoretical concepts, should be open to see different potentials of the text. The second tip Charmaz gives is to “stay close to the data”. Sometimes, based on the earlier concepts in the researcher’s mind, he/she would code a part of the text in a very abstract way. If the code cannot easily represent the text, it will be problematic to

categorize it or relate it to other codes at a later stage. The third tip is to “keep codes simple and precise”, as well as “constructing short codes”. To make a code simple and short, Glaser and Strauss suggest using gerund verbs: for instance bridging, saying, separating and so on. The fourth tip is “preserving action during coding”. It means that coding a specific part of the text should not neglect one element and only highlight another. The fifth tip is “comparing data with data”, which plays a very important role in grounded theory coding. It helps the researcher to be sure that the codes were formed in the best way and communicate with the original text as much as possible. “Moving quickly through data” is the final tip Charmaz gives, which means that working quickly on the data would spark a researcher’s thinking. Moving from data to data will enable the researcher to compare, articulate and revise the codes in a way which can represent their original text as much as possible (Charmaz 2014: 120-121).

Some of these tips were useful for coding of this study; nevertheless, there were still some challenges. For instance, data collected in this study were in three languages. Most of the data were in Farsi and German, and partly in English (almost all interviews with German interviewees were conducted in English). The study is written in English; therefore the tip from the grounded theory researchers above, to use gerund verbs in coding, was relevant. But there was a problem with coding part of the data in Farsi, because in Farsi a gerund verb also functions as an infinitive. For instance, *didan* means both “seeing” and “to see”. The gerund likewise does not exist in German. The capitalized form of an infinitive verb functions as a gerund but is then a noun. *Das Sehen* means “seeing” as a noun, and *sehen* means “to see”. This problem has been dealt with by using both forms of infinitive and gerund verbs in coding.

There were several times that a certain piece of data could be coded in more than one way; a piece of information which categorizes German foreign policy according to the three pillars of political, economic and cultural policies, for instance. The first way of coding can be “classifying German foreign policy”. The second way of coding can be “maintaining culture as a pillar of foreign policy”. This problem has been dealt with through two possible solutions. Firstly, by writing a code that maintains points of both codes. In the case above, a code like this could be imagined: “maintaining culture in classification of German foreign policy”. The second solution is to keep the first code in coding and write the

second code separately as a memo. Therefore, if such information repeated itself in the next data, the code and memo could be found easily. Finding them can help to make a relationship between previous and new data. There is also a third solution: writing both codes on one piece of information, although the experience of coding in this study has shown that double coding makes the process of analysis complicated. This solution is therefore not to be recommended.

Word-by-word coding, line-by-line coding and incident-to-incident coding are methods that can be used for initial coding. Word-by-word coding attempts to code the text word for word and is suitable for research that works with large volumes of data such as Internet data. Line-by-line coding considers text sentence by sentence. It fits well with research that deals with fundamental empirical problems such as interviews, observation and documents. Incident-to-incident coding is a very close cousin of line-by-line coding, as Charmaz suggests.

In this study, line-by-line coding was used in the initial stages, and in later stages incident-to-incident coding via gerund verbs. Maxqda software was used to record coding on initial, focused and axial levels. This software presents other possibilities, such as preserving memos on codes and free memos. It also makes it possible to compare codes with each other in the same text or in different texts, search specific codes among other codes and give examples of codes by clicking on codes. A total of 4,463 codes were created for this research with the help of Maxqda.

4.4.2 Second Phase: Focused Coding

Initial coding is followed by focused coding, which deals with establishing a relationship between codes and categorizing them. This is the second major phase in coding. According to Charmaz, focused coding means using “the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data. One goal is to determine the adequacy of those codes. Focused coding requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize your data incisively and completely” (Charmaz 2009: 59-60).

Focused coding was conducted during and after the initial round of interviews. It is an important stage of this study, because it enables the researcher to focus on a few specific codes and to add new guide questions and an extra group of

participants for the second round of interviews. The collected data is full of important codes, but only some of them can be focused. Some of the codes could suggest different dimensions of a common issue, and some could represent a distinctive character in the case studies of Iran and Germany. These types of codes are chosen as the focused codes. The rest are disregarded or stored for later use. Some of the stored codes could later explain different dimensions of the final categories. Different functions of the Maxqda software make finding and changing codes, and categorizing and de-categorizing them extremely easy. Table 4 shows how focused coding has been constructed from the initial coding, in an example of an interview with a German diplomat.

Table 4. An example of initial and focused coding of the study

Example of interview text	Initial codes	Focused codes
<p>Question: what have been the benefits of intercultural dialogue for Germany and Iran...</p> <p>Answer: stop, I am not in a position to give you ANY COMMENT about dialogue between Germany and Iran, what I can do, I can give a general outlook on dialogue between civilizations, but with Iran honestly, very very little, if you want to know about bilateral relationship between Iran and Germany, this you should understand, this is not my profession. I would prefer to call my colleagues to the political desk. They can answer these kind of questions.</p> <p>Question: well, ok, this is not that much surprising for me, because I know that Iran has not been so active in dialogue since 2005 and also you have this position since 2011, that means you probably don't know what was going on in the period time before 2005.</p> <p>Interviewee: no see, it is not like, Iran is not among the countries that we approach. Iran is among the countries which we are focusing, because Iran is a Muslim country.</p> <p>Question: so lets start with this question: which Muslim countries you approach more than the other countries?</p> <p>Interviewee: I can talk just about the period time that I am in office, seriously. Since 2011. In these three years definitely Arab countries which we had seen political development. Which we call Arab Spring. These countries have been priority. Because, in our projects we...</p>	<p>-Giving no comment about Iran-Germany dialogue</p> <p>-Knowing little about Iran</p> <p>-Giving outlook on dialogue</p> <p>-Not being profession to comment</p> <p>-Calling political desk to answer</p> <p>-Counting Iran as focus country</p> <p>-Counting Iran as Muslim</p> <p>-Talking about things which happen after 2011</p> <p>-Focusing on Arab Spring</p>	<p>Excluding Iran from discussion</p> <p>Starting the work in time that Arab Spring is the main topic</p>

This focused coding is based on the researcher's knowledge of the total initial codes of this study up to the time of this coding. A key point to understand the first focused code of table 4 is the special time of the interview. The interview was conducted a few months after conclusion of the "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action" between Iran and Western countries regarding the nuclear technology of Iran in July 2015. It was a time that made many officials of the German foreign ministry reluctant to talk about any relationship with Iran. Many requests to interview high-ranking officials and members of staff of the foreign ministry for this study were rejected in that period. After the interview with this diplomat, a member of staff of a political department of the German foreign ministry was finally approached. He also emphasized in the interview that she would not talk about Iran, but about "European-Islamic cultural dialogue" generally. This code is therefore based on information from comparison of the data and observation by the researcher. A code which fits that piece of information is thus: "Excluding Iran from discussion". The hypothesis in that stage of the research was that Iran is classed as a Muslim country and part of cultural dialogue. But German politicians who were interviewed in this study avoided talking about it at the specific time of the interview for political reasons. Nevertheless, because the code should reflect the information and not the hypothesis, articulating it with the word "politically" or similar is avoided. The code "excluding Iran from discussion" has also been used in the stage of focused coding for some other pieces of data in different interviews because it became clear that, in the same period of time, some interviewees refused to discuss Iran. Some of them even told the researcher that they did not want to talk about it before the result of the nuclear negotiation was clear.

4.4.3 Third Phase: Axial Coding

The data which has been broken down into smaller pieces in the initial coding is brought together again in the third phase of coding. This stage is called "axial coding". Axial coding relates categories to subcategories, as Strauss and Corbin present it. The properties and dimensions of a category are specified in this stage. Questions such as "what, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences" have to be asked in this phase, based on the available codes. Strauss and Corbin

believe that linking the relationship between the categories in the axial coding should be conceptual rather than descriptive (Strauss/Corbin 1990: 107).

Table 5 shows an example of initial and focused coding in this research and can be helpful to understand the axial coding used here. In axial coding, the codes of the study are scrutinized more critically: Why and how did Iran attract little attention from this specific diplomat? Does the code of “counting Iran out of European-Islamic cultural dialogue” suggest a political approach towards Iran in the foreign cultural policy of Germany? Or should it be taken as a feature of the diplomat being poorly informed about Iran? Or is he not allowed to talk about Iran for political reasons? Through these questions, the axial coding provides more facts and positions to strengthen a focused code and turn it into an analytic point. If there are not enough facts to strengthen a focused code, then it cannot be proved and should be deleted or articulated again. “excluding Iran from European-Islamic cultural dialogue”, for instance, has been changed to “not having priority on Iran in European-Islamic cultural dialogue”, because more facts and codes from the interviews have been scrutinized and compared with each other to reach this conclusion. The main axial codes of the study strengthen three main arguments which explain characteristics of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany: different structural foreign cultural policy, different institutional efficiency, and political considerations of Iran and Germany.

4.4.4 Fourth Phase: Theoretical Coding

Theoretical coding is the final phase of coding in grounded theory. After selection of specific initial codes and gathering of more information to form focused codes, categories are constructed through axial coding; theoretical coding is a stage which relates different categories to theorize a specific analysis regarding the research problem. Charmaz uses the view of Glaser and explains which questions can be asked from the codes at this stage to relate them to each other as a hypothesis and then to integrate them in a theory. These questions are known as the “six Cs” and consider the data according to: Causes, Contexts, Contingencies, Consequences, Covariances, and Conditions (Charmaz 2014: 151). Theoretical coding depends on components of axial coding. It should conceptualize categories and relationships between them to answer the main question of a study.

In this research, the final axial codes have been discussed in a way to answer the research question. The main theoretical discussion therefore uses the three arguments, of different structural foreign cultural policy, different institutional efficiency, and political considerations of Iran and Germany, to analyze which role intercultural dialogue has played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other.

4.4.5 Intermediate Phase: Memo Writing

During collecting, coding and analyzing data, a researcher who is applying grounded theory may face new questions or come up with new ideas and thoughts regarding codes and observations. It is possible that by comparing codes and constructing categories, he/she encounters some contrasts. These points are recorded, analyzed and later can be used as part of the analytical subchapters of the study by writing “memos”. Writing down questions, points and ideas in an analytical and conceptual way is called “memo writing”. As Charmaz explains, memo writing charts, records and details a major analytical phase of the study. It is not necessary to write memos formally, they can be produced spontaneously, especially in initial stages of the research. In Charmaz’s view, memo writing can be divided into two kinds: early memos, which reflect what is going on in the data; and advanced memos, which contain the description and analytical points (Charmaz 2014: 169). In this study, memos were written frequently and flexibly, firstly because comparing details of the field study of Iran and Germany simply opened up many ideas and questions which had to be considered carefully; and secondly because the Maxqda software made memo writing possible in different ways, on each code, between sentences, and on each document individually. It also facilitates writing free memos. Here are two examples of memos from this study:

Table 5. Two examples of memos in the research

<p>Early memo</p>	<p>Turning interview to a political manifest regarding Germany The interviewee, Mr. K, an Iranian diplomat who direct the department of Europe and American in foreign affairs ministry, instead of answering questions and discussing based on facts, was answering what he thought would be a good thing to do. Sometimes also his talks were reactionary like criticizing the West in General and Germany in particular because of not supporting Iran’s nuclear energy. It was tried several times to attract his attention to answer questions and turn the interview to a political manifestation, thinking about cultural approaches of foreign affairs ministry,</p>
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	<p>but after listening to each question he was continuing his manifestation and giving his views politically about Germany: Interviewee: still I feel Germany is quite occupied country, because it is defeated! Question: still? Interviewee: yes, still. Just few months ago it was discovered that the USA is spying Merkel's cellphone. Also British did the same in German Parliament. it never happen in France, or Italy.</p>
Advance memo	<p>Difference of Iranian and German diplomats Analysis of the collected data suggests that there has been little information about German cultural institute and its foreign cultural policy regarding Iran among Iranian diplomats and high organizational positions. Germany, though, has been mentioned as a 'good', 'fiend' 'not-bad' country, no specific comment about German actors, and activities in context of intercultural dialogue was mentioned by diplomats. Even talking to heads and former heads of Rayzani, and reading published interviews from them, it was illustrated that cultural abilities and activities of Germany towards Iranian public is underestimated.</p> <p>In contrast, German diplomats which happen to be interviewed in this research have had more information about cultural organizations of Iran, Iran's political obstacle to coordinate cultural activities. Two of diplomats, for instance mentioned difference between Rayzani and Iranian embassy in their view. One of them expressed his hope in time of Khatami, because Khatami was a former director of Islamic Center of Hamburg formerly. One of the diplomats mentioned that according to his experience of service in Iran he can differentiate Iranian people's religious character from other Muslim countries and can distinguish their views from the Iranian official state view.</p>

4.4.6 Techniques

There are some techniques which are used to make more sense of codes and consider them in a more critical way. They are explained in the following two sections:

4.4.6.1 Flip-flop Technique

Flip-flop technique is one of the comparative techniques developed by Strauss and Corbin. They discuss that a concept is turned "inside out" or "upside down" to obtain a different perspective on the event, object, or action/interaction. In other words, the research considers opposites or extremes to identify significant properties. Strauss and Corbin illustrate the flip-flop technique by reviewing research on the concept of teenage "access" to drugs. Since access to drugs has been characterized in their field study as "easy", they tried to understand what would happen to teenagers if access to drugs were "difficult". One of the

questions formed in that research turned out to be: “Would difficult access make a difference in amount or type of teen drug use?” (Strauss/Corbin 1990: 94-95).

In the field study of Germany, it became clear that the names of actors, including institutes and private organizations, and their projects relating to intercultural dialogue appear in an annual report on foreign cultural policy published annually by the German federal government for the parliament. This evidence motivated the researcher to ask whether such reporting exists on the Iranian side. The answer was negative. To obtain information about Iranian actors and their projects on intercultural dialogue, as mentioned above, a huge amount of extant and elicited texts must be collected from different sources. No systematic reporting on Iranian foreign cultural policy is available. It indicates a weak institutional efficiency of Iranian institutions and organizations. This question has therefore been asked in axial coding using the flip-flop technique: “What role does intercultural dialogue play in foreign cultural policy if the institutional efficiency of the actors of that foreign cultural policy is under question?”

4.4.6.2 “*in vivo*” Coding

Coding is a difficult stage in grounded theory. Sometimes there is no word which can explain an event or action in the text better than the special terms used by participants in the field study. Coding specific parts of the data according to terms that participants have mentioned is called “*in vivo*” coding. Four kinds of *in vivo* codes prove useful, according to Charmaz: terms everybody knows that flag condensed but significant meanings; a participant’s innovative term that captures meanings or experience; insider shorthand terms reflecting a particular group’s perspective; and statements that crystallize participants’ actions or concerns (Charmaz 2014: 134).

In this research, some data are also coded using the *in vivo* technique. For instance, “dialogue is a hostage of politics”. This phrase was used by one of the German interviewees to explain the negative influence of political issues on intercultural dialogue of Germany with Iran. This phrase could also explain the political perception of intercultural dialogue on the Iranian side, particularly regarding dialogue among civilizations, which for political reasons lost attention

in the cultural activities of Iran abroad after the presidency of Mohammad Khatami.

4.5 Summary of Chapter 4

Chapter 4 presents an overall image of the rationality behind the grounded theory methodology of this study and outlines how different sections of the study follow its rules. It explains comparative study on the different levels of actors, aims and activities, gives information regarding the data collection process, sampling strategies and groups of research participants (politicians, high-ranking individuals, members of staff, and program participants). Furthermore, it explains how the data is coded (initial, focused, axial and theoretical coding) to establish a thematic structure which shapes the analysis and finally the main discussion of the study.

This qualitative research is not an easy process. Tips and guidelines from grounded theory researchers like Kathy Charmaz have helped the researcher to avoid confusion in different stages of data collection and analysis (which happen mostly simultaneously). However, writing the research also has its own challenges. The reader should not be confused or bored by a chronological report of what happened in the study. The text of research is more than a mere report.

Writing this research started from three points: structural differences between Iranian and German foreign cultural policy; different organizational efficiencies; and political tensions. These are the three axial codes of this study, which originated from advanced memos written after coding. The three points were the starting point for writing the analysis. It was necessary to know what a reader needs to enjoy reading these points: a logical reason why the three points are important, what their relevance is to the main question of the study, what their background is, how they can be positioned in academic debates, and so on. The table of contents for the study was therefore re-written after the three points had been written down. The order for presenting the results of the study was then decided.

The first chapter is intended to give an overview of the topic of the study. It was written at the end because the researcher then had complete knowledge of all

insights of the study. It became apparent during the study that historical points in the relationship between Iran and Germany are important. Some of the intercultural activities were in fields that historically attracted attention from both nations. The second chapter is therefore intended to give an overview of the history and background of the relationship between the two countries. This chapter was also written after writing the first draft of the main analysis of the study. Reading research and investigation on the topic of intercultural dialogue began at the beginning of this study, but review came after completion of the research. Grounded theory recommends writing the literature review after finalizing the analysis, because then the actual question and topic of the study can be positioned better among the academic debates. The third chapter therefore contains the review of literature. The methodology of the research is planned as the fourth chapter because it clearly shows how the research is conducted.

Analytical points on the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany and on intercultural dialogue of Iran and Germany are explained and analyzed in chapter five. Chapter six is allocated to analysis of institutions, organizations and individuals that implemented cultural activities under intercultural dialogue. The characteristics of intercultural dialogue are discussed at the end of chapter six. Chapter seven illustrates the most important analytical points of the study, that is, the theoretical codes. Chapter seven illustrates analysis on characteristics of the intercultural dialogue, with the three points written at the beginning of the writing process central to this chapter. These analytical points are also used to explore the role of intercultural dialogue in foreign cultural policy. Chapter eight presents points to answer the main question of the study and reflect on what this study adds to academic debates on the topic of intercultural dialogue.

Chapter five gives a detailed overview of the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany and the organizations in both states that decide on those policies. Certain discourses of intercultural dialogue which are selected as the case study are also considered in detail here.

Chapter 5: Intercultural Dialogue and Foreign Cultural Policy of Iran and Germany

This chapter presents the first analytical points of the study. Intercultural dialogue in Iran and Germany are supported by specific state organizations and institutions of the respective countries. Some of these institutions are responsible for deciding on the foreign policy of Iran and Germany. Analysis of the data illustrated that there is a major difference between the Iranian and German organizations. The structure of the political state and the approaches of Iran and Germany after the Islamic Revolution and World War II respectively have had a determinative role in setting their cultural policies towards the world. This chapter presents answers to the first subquestion of the study. It explores the following questions in different forms: Which organizations in the Iranian and German state are responsible for deciding on foreign cultural policy? What are the similarities? What are the differences? Why? Which goals do they follow? Do they have a clear plan for their foreign cultural policy? Why? Answers to these questions could clarify new dimensions of Iranian foreign cultural policy and specific discourses of intercultural dialogue.

Subchapters 5.1 and 5.2 deal with the foreign cultural policy and intercultural dialogue discourses of Iran and Germany respectively. 5.1.1 presents an overview of the political system of Iran. 5.1.2 shows the structure of Iranian foreign cultural policy according to the analysis of acts, regulations and statements of the Iranian parliament and Iranian constitution after the Islamic Revolution. Organizations which have a key role in forming the foreign cultural policy of Iran are discussed in 5.1.3. Details of “interfaith dialogue” and “dialogue among civilizations”, as Iranian intercultural dialogue discourses are provided in 5.1.4 and 5.1.5 respectively.

Subchapter 5.2 firstly provides an overview of the political system of Germany in 5.2.1, and 5.2.2 details the structure of German foreign cultural policy according to analysis of the main acts, regulations and statements of the German parliament and foreign ministry after World War II. Information on organizations which have a key role in setting or influencing the foreign cultural policy of Germany are presented in 5.2.3, while 5.2.4 deals with the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” as an intercultural dialogue discourse.

The last subchapter, 5.3, summarizes the discussions of subchapters 5.1 and 5.2.

5.1 Iranian Foreign Cultural Policy, Acts, Organizations and Intercultural Dialogue Discourses

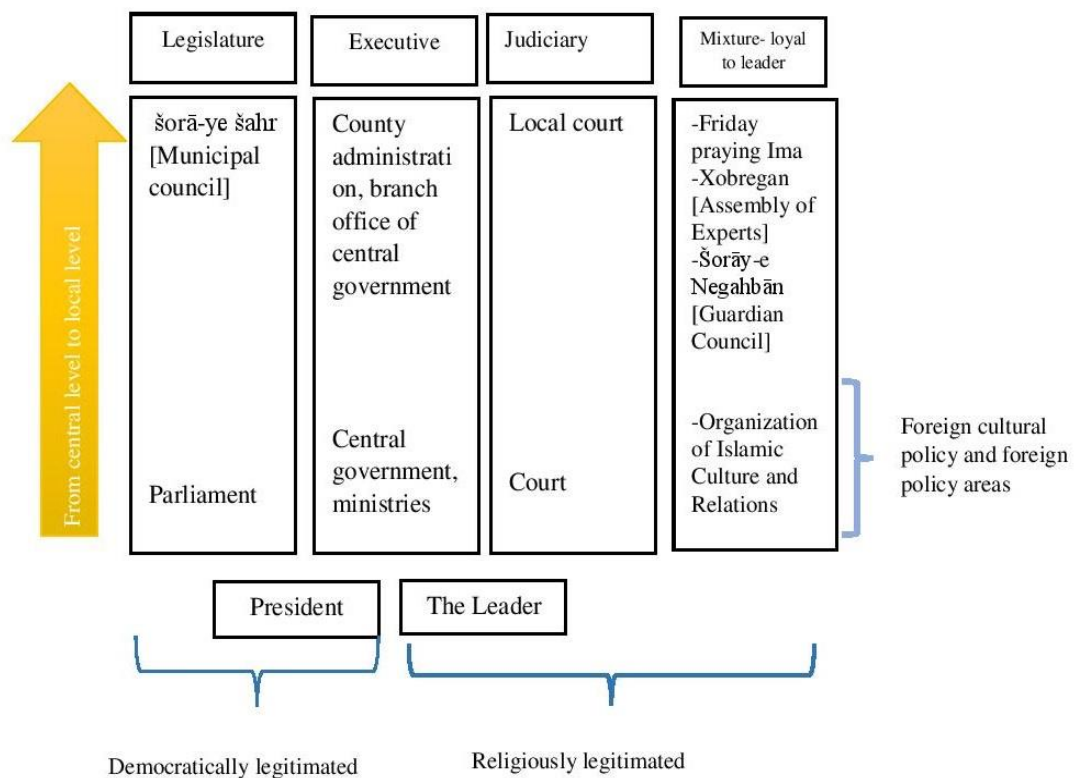
Although there is very little about the intercultural dialogue activities of Iran in academic debates, Iran has been involved in different interfaith and intercultural dialogue activities for the two last decades. After the Iranian Revolution, political elites and religious organizations decided to create a different image for Iran internationally from that created by the Pahlavi dynasty. One of the aims of cultural activities at that time was to show how Iranian culture is against Western values. Over the last decades, Iranian cultural institutions have engaged in intercultural dialogue activities to reach their aims, yet these aims have not been pursued through a precise plan. This subchapter explains why.

5.1.1 An Overview of the Political System of Iran

After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the political system of Iran officially changed to an Islamic Republic. However, the term “Islamic” does not mean that it is an absolutely religious totalitarian government. Its legal system is based on Sharia law, but in many respects civil law applies. Similarly, the term “Republic” does not mean that it has a full democratic system. The Islamic Republic of Iran also does not resemble the system of the Islamic republics of Pakistan or Afghanistan, Mauritania or the Gambia.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is indeed a mixed system, in which authoritarian, religious, democratic and nationalist elements are mixed together, and sometimes cooperate and sometimes block each other. The president and the parliament are directly elected by the people, but these institutions to some degree and the judiciary to an extended degree are affected by the religious leader. Some specific institutions are also a mixture of democratic and loyal to the leader. These institutions are religiously legitimated. It can therefore be said that the Iranian state has two sectors: democratically legitimated and religiously legitimated. Their relationship is regulated in the constitution. In addition, there are power relations and influential networks which work beyond the constitution. It is therefore difficult to measure which sector has more power to make political decisions. These sectors are illustrated in the figure below:

Figure 5. Structure of Iranian political system



Source: made by the researcher (2016)

The political system in Iran is centrally governed by three branches: the legislature, executive and judiciary. The branches have local offices, such as local courts, *Farmāndāri* [city government] and *Ostāndāri* [provincial government].

The branch referred to in figure 6 as “mixture- loyal to the leader”, has both democratically and religiously legitimated elements. It extends its influence on a local level through local institutions such as the Friday Prayer Imam, who is appointed by the leader. Meanwhile, city government or provincial governments are appointed by the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state. In the Iranian political system, the issue of domestic culture is treated differently compared to Germany. The religious dimension of culture is managed mostly by the religiously legitimated sector. Policies regarding other aspects of culture, such as art, music and theater, are generally decided by the democratically legitimated sector. However, the work of this sector faces limitations because of the interference of the religiously legitimated sector and, beyond that, informal networks of the leader. The duality of the political system therefore often creates a distorted domestic cultural policy. The policy regarding foreign cultural activities faces more or less the same problem: Religiously and democratically legitimated sectors of the Iranian political system struggle over authority to decide on foreign cultural policy. This point is clarified in more detail in 5.1.3. The duality of the system is not the only problem, however, as the following section illustrates.

5.1.2 Iranian Foreign Cultural Policy: Between Islamic Propagation and Iranian Foreign Policy

The issue of culture is mentioned in a vague and abstract way in the Iranian constitution. As Ahmad Naghibzadeh discusses, article 152 of the constitution obligates the foreign policy of Iran to reject all forms of domination and to be in “mutual peaceful relationship with all non-belligerent States”. Article 153 stresses that “any form of agreement” which results in “foreign control” over the different resources of Iran, including cultural resources, is forbidden. According to Naghibzadeh, these articles of the constitution express “a protective foreign policy” in an “extremely abstract way”. In his view, these articles do not help the cultural and political actors to act in international affairs (Naghibzadeh 2009: 38-39).

Statements and legislation released by the Iranian state after the Revolution do not share a specific plan or action paper on foreign cultural policy, but discuss it in a general way and mixed with Islamic propagation and domestic cultural issues. The first statement was released in 1992 by the Cultural Council of Islamic

Republic of Iran. This statement is titled *Osul-e syāsat-e Farhnagi-e Jomhuri-ye Eslāmi-ye Iran* [the principles of the cultural policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran], in short *Principle 1992*. *Principle 1992* is a five–page document and considers the issue of culture mostly on a domestic level, but it also remarks on culture on a foreign level in some points. The priority of Iran’s cultural relations, according to this statement, is “Muslim countries”. It emphasizes the role of cultural centers of Iran abroad and expects them to represent Iran actively in the cultural arena, such as religious places and Haj.³⁸ It emphasizes that the ministries of “Islamic Culture and Guidance” and “Foreign Affairs”, “Higher Education”, “Health”, as well as the Iranian national TV and sports organizations, are responsible for implementing cultural policy abroad. The president is supposed to supervise their activities. The statement also requires all the mentioned organizations to report on their cultural activities abroad every six months (Šorā Ā’li Enqelāb Farhangi 1992).³⁹

The next document which considers foreign cultural policy is *Barnāme-ye panj sāle-ye Tose’eh* [five-year development plan]. The plan is proposed and set every five years by the president’s administration. It must be legislated by the Iranian parliament and finally approved by the leader. The plan is supposed to guide the state organizations in regard to economic, social and cultural affairs. The time of the first and second plan covered approximately the period of President Rafsanjani, in the post-Iran-Iraq war era. The main focus of the two plans, periods 1989-1993 and 1995-1999, was the economy. As Gheissari and Nasr argue, Rafsanjani planned to construct some economic bases through trade, investment, privatization, industry infrastructure and creation of job opportunities in the two plans (Gheissari et al. 2009: 120-125). Both plans mention rules regarding foreign cultural policy. The 25th amendment of the first five-year plan commissioned the relevant cultural organizations (the same organizations that are mentioned in *Principle 1992*) to establish a “unified and coordinated system in cultural and propagation affairs and merging relevant and parallel centers in one” (Plan and Budget Organization 1368 [1989]: 11). The 46th amendment gives permission to some ministries to use the assistance of foreign experts, preferably from Muslim countries. In the second five-year plan, the necessity of cultural relations with

³⁸ Haj is a religious practice that Muslims are supposed to do in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

³⁹ The copy of the legislation that is available has no page number, but information regarding cultural activities abroad was reflected on the last page, in the section on “foreign relations” and “organizations”.

“friend Muslim countries” and “ECO countries”⁴⁰ is mentioned (Plan and Budget Organization 1373 [1994]: 97). Amendment 56 underlines the necessity of planning against “cultural penetration”. It obligates ICRO, the Propagation Organization, the Imam Khomeini Publication Center, and Iranian TV to undertake such planning (Plan and Budget Organization 1373 [1994]: 50). Amendment 57 requires the state to be active in the world cultural and media sphere by promoting the Farsi language and literature. It calls for the promotion of dialogue between religious experts and thinkers, as well as the translation of the Quran into foreign languages at international level (Plan and Budget Organization 1373 [1994]: 51).

The third and fourth five-year plans refer to the periods 2000-2004 and 2004-2008. These plans cover approximately the two presidential periods of Khatami as well as the early years of Ahmadinejad. Both have much in common with the economic plans of the first and second plans. As is mentioned in some studies, however, they made a compromise between the “political realities” and the “political and spiritual needs” of Iranian society (Daniel 2012: 243). The third plan has a remark on “cultural penetration”, but it requires the state to promote “cultural infrastructures”, such as cultural heritage organizations, cinema, theater and civil society. With regard to foreign cultural policy, it tasked the foreign ministry with building “foreign relations”, while specifically making ICRO the responsible state organization for “cultural and propagative policies” abroad, under the supervision of the leader (Plan and Budget Organization 1379 [1998]).⁴¹ The fourth plan contains some remarks on culture and dialogue, but again the boundary between the domestic and foreign sphere is not clear. Article 108 requires cooperation between state organizations to keep the “memory and policy of Ayatollah Khomeini” alive. In the fifth section of article 108, the plan requires ICRO and the foreign ministry to cooperate with the Imam Khomeini Publication Center to achieve these aims (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-a: 187). Article 109 makes the state responsible for paying attention to protecting and recognizing the “Iranian historic identity” via instruments such as promotion of the Farsi language. Nevertheless, in no part of article 109 is any cultural institute commissioned to do so (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-a: 189). In

⁴⁰ Countries which are members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) are called ECO countries.

⁴¹ The version of the program which is available for the researcher does not have a page number; the specific information which is mentioned above is located in Article 183 of the program.

article 110, the state is charged with extending the “culture of peace” and the idea of “dialogue among civilizations” on an international level, although none of its six sections lays out a plan or tasks any specific organization (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-a: 189-190).

The fourth plan to be prepared by Khatami’s administration was rejected by Ahmadinejad. Ahmadinejad also closed the organization which was in charge of writing the plan and instructed his own team to write a new plan covering 2010-2015 (Amuzegar 2014: 12). The first chapter of this plan is on “Islamic-Iranian culture”. The terminology of cultural dialogue, as was included in the previous plan, does not appear in the fifth. According to the fifth plan, the state is supposed to promote the “Islamic-Iranian development model” and complete the “cultural engineering map” (Plan and Budget Organization 1389 [2010]: 23). Article 5 of the plan requests specific institutes and organizations to write a “*Sanade Melli-ye tose’e-ye ravābet-e farhangi-e Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran*” [national act of development of cultural relations of the Islamic Republic of Iran at international level], in short *national act*. The *national act* is expected to explain “pure Mohammad’s Islamic principles” and “religious and political thoughts” of Imam Khomeini and the current leader, Khamenei. It must find a way to introduce “Islamic-Iranian civilization” and culture to the world with the aid of “dialogue”. The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, together with ICRO, and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as *Howze-ye Elmi-ye* [Higher Council of Seminary of Qum] and *Al-Mostafa Alamiye* assembly are instructed to write the *national act* (Plan and Budget Organization 1389 [2010]: 25). The plan stresses that the *national act* needs to be submitted to the council of ministers. It is significant to mention that the name of ICRO in this article is written inside a parenthesis. This type of mention suggests that it is not yet respected as the single authority in charge of foreign cultural policy in Iranian state legislation. This point will be discussed later. An unofficial version of the *national act*, in 2012, shows that it requires the Iranian cultural organizations to extend “cultural values” of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to introduce “achievements and successful models” of the country to the world, to globalize “the discourse of pure Mohammad’s Islam”, to promote “religious tourism” of Iran, especially for Shia population tourists, to give “scholarship to foreign students” and to establish “headquarters of Iranian universities abroad” (Šorā Āli

Enqelāb Farhangi 2012). Up to the end of 2013, the *national act* had not been finalized or submitted to the Iranian parliament.

The next statement is *Naqše-ye Mohandesi-ye Farhangi* [the Map of Cultural Engineering], which was promoted by the Higher Council of Cultural Revolution. The idea of “cultural engineering” was initially suggested by the leader in public speeches between 2004 and 2010 (Šorā Āli Enqelāb Farhangi 2012: V). Up to the time of the analysis of this research being finalized (early 2017), the statement had still not been submitted to the Iranian parliament.

There are two reasons for the delay in submitting both the national act and the map of cultural engineering: Firstly, the foreign cultural policy of Iran is not decided by a specific state actor. There is always a council or group of different actors who make the statements. Because these actors have different interests and priorities, reaching an agreement takes time. Secondly, because concluding a statement takes a long time practically, the statement is subject to different administrations. Work on the *national act*, for instance, began in 2010 at the time of President Ahmadinejad, but the act had not been submitted by the end of his presidency. A newly appointed team of President Rouhani criticized the content of the act for using unprofessional terms and not taking a practical approach to international issues (Abbasi, personal communication, 2016). Submission of the *national act* thus took even more time to be corrected according to the criticisms of the new president’s team.

The appointment of different actors to decide details of acts and statements on foreign cultural policy is a key problem. It not only slows down the process of legislation of the acts but also prevents an integrated policy being created to promote Iran culturally abroad. Cultural actors that are dependent on the religiously legitimated sector usually have an interest in Islamic self-interpretation or propagation abroad, while those that are dependent on the democratically legitimated sector are interested in promoting foreign policy. They therefore support cultural activities as the instrument of foreign policy, whether of a religious or artistic nature. They pursue opportunistic foreign cultural policy, as a result of which, Iranian foreign cultural policy swings between Islamic propagation and foreign policy objectives.

The next section looks at the Iranian organizations that are in charge of foreign cultural policy.

5.1.3 Iranian Guiding Political Organizations in the Realm of Foreign Cultural Policy

Institutes and organizations which are involved in political decisions for Iran's cultural activities abroad are listed in a study by Mohammadreza Dehshiri (Dehshiri 1393 [2014]: 208-210). To understand them in the context of the political system of Iran, they are presented in this section based on their dependency on the democratically or religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state. Table 6 illustrates them as follows:

Table 6. Organizations which play a role in Iranian foreign cultural policy, categorized by their dependency on religiously or democratically legitimated sectors of the state

Under authority of religiously legitimated sector		Under authority of democratically legitimated sector	
1	<i>Šorā-ye Āli-ye Enqelāb-e Farhangi</i> [Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution]- its statute legislated by the leader	1	Iranian Parliament- mandated by the constitution- its statute legislated by the constitution
2	<i>Šorā-ye Maslahat-e Nezām</i> [Expediency Discernment Council]- mandated by the leader but legislated later by the constitution	2	Iran Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization- its statute legislated by the Parliament
3	<i>Komite-ye Emdād-e Imam Khomeini</i> [Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation]- mandated by the leader	3	Office of Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs- its statute legislated by the Parliament
4	<i>Šora-ye Hamāhangī-ye Tabliqat-e Eslāmi</i> [Coordinating Council of Islamic Propagation]- its statute legislated by the leader	4	<i>Šorā-ye Āli-ye Iranian-e Xarej az Kešvar</i> [The Supreme Council of Iranians abroad]- its statute legislated by the Parliament
5	<i>Edāre-ye Tabliqat-e Eslami-ye Qum</i> [Office of Islamic Propagation of Qum]- its statute legislated by the leader	5	Center for International Scientific Cooperation/ CISC, in Ministry of Science, Research and Technology- its statute legislated by the Parliament
6	<i>Al Mustafa</i> International University- mandated by the leader	6	Organization of Sport- its statute legislated by the Parliament
7	<i>Majma'e Omumi-ye Taqrib-e Mazāheb</i> [The World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought]- its statute legislated by the leader	7	Azad Islamic University- its statute legislated by the Parliament
8	<i>Sazmān-e Tabliqāt-e Eslami</i> [Islamic Propagation Organization]- its statute legislated by the leader	8	International University of Imam Khomeini- its statute legislated by the Parliament
9	<i>Majma'e Jahāni-ye Ahl-e Bayt</i> [World	9	Cultural Institute of Economic Cooperation

	Forum of Ahl-e Bayt]- its statute legislated by the leader		Organization /ECO- its statute legislated by the Parliament
10	<i>Hozeh Honari</i> [art department] of Islamic Propagation Organization- its statute legislated by the leader	10	<i>Helāl-e Ahmar</i> [Red Crescent]- its statute legislated by the Parliament
11	Islamic Culture and Relations Organization- its statute legislated by the leader	11	Foundation of Iran Studies- its statute submitted by Council of Higher Education, which is under authority of the Parliament
12	International Communication department of office of the leader- its head selected by the leader		
13	<i>Āstān Quds Razavi</i> [Imam Reza Shrine]- its director selected by the leader		
14	<i>Frahangestān-e Olum</i> [Academy of Science]- its statute legislated by Cultural Council, which is under the authority of the leader		
15	<i>Farhangestān-e Honar</i> [Academy of Art]- its statute legislated by Cultural Council which is under the authority of the leader		
16	Department of International Affairs of Iranian TV and Radio/IRIB- its statute legislated by the Parliament but its director selected by the leader		
17	Organization of Haj and Pilgrim- its director selected by the leader		
18	<i>Sāzmān-e Oqāf</i> [Organization of Endowment and Charity Affairs]- its statute legislated by the Parliament but its director selected by the leader		

Source: Dehshiri (1393 [2014]: 208-210), reshaped and developed by the researcher

More than half of the organizations on the list are under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector. Two points regarding the list are worth considering. Firstly, the list does not reflect all state organizations which play a guiding political role in the foreign cultural policy of Iran. For instance, the foreign ministry and the Islamic culture and guidance ministry are simply ignored in the list, even though both ministers are members of the higher council of ICRO, an organization which receives a budget and authority to plan Iran's cultural activities abroad. Furthermore, as mentioned in the introduction to the study, two cultural events between Iran and Germany were canceled on the decision of the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance. Secondly, there is very little information or discussion on the detail of the role that these organizations play in foreign cultural policy. This study therefore uses information based on talking to relevant participants in the field study and some publications to present more detail.

It is uncertain what role organizations such as *Āstān Quds Razavi* [Imam Reza Shrine], which is under the authority of the religious sector, play in the foreign cultural policy of Iran. There is no annual report or clear information on the website of the Imam Reza Shrine that can give relevant information on its foreign cultural activities. It is possible that it plays a role in foreign cultural policy, because it allocates some financial sources to relevant organizations. In 2004, the total sum of the endowment of the Imam Reza Shrine, which has 17 million pilgrims and visitors per year, is reported to be an estimated \$15 billion (Karami 2016).

Of the organizations categorized as being under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, and of those under the democratically legitimated sector the Iranian parliament play a role in setting rules, policies and guidelines relating to foreign cultural policy. ICRO and the foreign ministry have executive and practical duties. According to Dehshiri, however, ICRO, besides its executive duties, is also in charge of decision making, setting rules, planning, supervising, leading and directing programs (Dehshiri 1393 [2014]: 213).

The foreign ministry is under the authority of the democratically legitimated sector. The minister is appointed by the president, after which his/her position should be affirmed by the Iranian parliament and the leader. The structure of the foreign ministry after the Revolution changed under different ministers. According to published texts, the issue of culture has not been considered significantly in those changes. Different continents and countries of the world were considered in different departments of the foreign ministry between 1998 and 2013, although economic, judicial, research, training, publication and translation issues also attracted attention in the structure of the ministry between 1997 and 2005 (Iranian foreign ministry 1384 [2005]: 186-187). In the period from 2010-2013, the department of economic affairs was eliminated (Aftab News 25.04.2011). The issue of culture was mentioned in the structure of the foreign ministry in 2001 (Dehshiri 1393 [2014]: 209), when the office of cultural affairs was established. This office was in charge of coordinating affairs between the foreign affairs ministry and ICRO. According to information from the field study, the office had just a single key person (Akrami, personal communication, 2015; Masjedjamei, personal communication, 2013). It was closed in late 2005

(Khatibzadeh, personal communication, 2014). Although the issue of culture is not visible in the structure of the foreign affairs ministry, some participants of the study argue that participation in and implementation of conferences on philosophy and literature, attention to investigation and research, and finally, support for interfaith dialogue, critical dialogue and constructive dialogue all in all indicate the importance of the issue of culture to this ministry (Sajadpour, personal communication, 2013; Khatibzadeh, personal communication, 2014). Furthermore, the foreign ministry and, consequently, its diplomatic missions abroad are the highest state institutions which are recognized by the other political systems. Any practice of any Iranian cultural institute, organization or center abroad is thus under the authority of the foreign ministry. That is why the role of the foreign ministry in foreign cultural policy is undeniable.

The Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations (ICRO) is the next important organization which sets the foreign cultural policy and practices in this field, with the assistance of its branch offices around the world and its various publications and religious and cultural centers. As already discussed in 2.4.2, the organization was established because, in the post-Iran-Iraq war era, politicians and religious figures felt the need for Iranian foreign cultural policy to be entrusted to a single state organization. The international office was therefore separated from the Islamic propagation organization to construct the new organization of Islamic culture and relations. Some institutes under the authority of the leader, as well as some institutions of Qum⁴² together with *markaz-e gostaresh-e zabān va adabyāt-e Farsi* [the Council for the Dissemination of the Persian Language and Literature], merged into it to form a single body of the ICRO structure. ICRO has a *shoua-ye 'ali* [higher council] which consists of 15 members, six of whom are appointed by the leader.⁴³ The official positions of six other members of the higher council also suggest that they are under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector. These positions are: the head of the foreign affairs office of the leader, the head of Iranian national TV, the head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, the secretary general of *Taqrib*, the head of *Ahlol Bayt* institute, the head of *Jama-tal Mostafa* institute. There are just two members under the

⁴² Such as the Secretariat of the World AhI al-Bayt Assembly [dabirkhane-ye majma-e jahani-ye ahl-e beit], in short Ahl al-Bayt Assembly, the Secretariat of the World Forum for the Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought/Taqrib [dabirkhane-ye majma-e jahni-ye taghrib-e mazaheb], in short Taqrib Assembly

⁴³ One of the members is a life-member: Dr. Haddad Adel. Adel was speaker of the parliament and his daughter is the wife of the leader. Five other members can be renewed by the leader.

authority of the democratically legitimated sectors: the Islamic guidance and culture minister and the foreign minister. The head of the higher council is the Islamic guidance and culture minister. This point can be linked to the analysis at the beginning of 5.2.1 that two sectors which govern the country sometimes block each other regarding political decision making. The function of a higher council that mostly consists of members who are dependent on the religiously legitimated sector and is directed by a member who is under the authority of the democratically legitimated sector is criticized by a former head of Rayzani, as described in 6.1.1. The ICRO higher council is supposed to decide on the general policies to determine long-term and short-term projects and to approve the annual budget of ICRO.

The original mission of ICRO was to present the Islamic Revolution and ideas of Imam Khomeini abroad. According to the ICRO constitution, its aims and objectives are as follows:

- Revival and dissemination of tenets of Islam and Islamic thought with a view to spreading the true message of Islam to the people of the world.
- Creating awareness among the people of the world as regards the principles, the objectives, and the stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as the role it plays in the international arena.
- Expansion of cultural relations with various nations and communities in general, and Muslims and the oppressed in particular.
- Strengthening and regulating the existing cultural relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and other countries of the world as well as global cultural organizations.
- Appropriate presentation of Iranian culture and civilization as well as its cultural, geographical and historical characteristics.
- Preparation of the necessary ground for unity among Muslims and the establishment of a unified front among world Muslims on the basis of the indisputable principles of Islam.
- Scholarly debates and confrontations with anti-religious, anti-Islamic, and anti-Revolutionary cultures with a view to awakening the Muslims of the world regarding the divisive conspiracies of the enemies as well as protecting the rights of Muslims.

- Growth, development, and the improvement of the cultural, political, economic, and social conditions of Muslims (Rasmi newspaper 05.02.1996, Tavassoli 2010: 89-90)

These objectives show a clear focus on “Islam” and the “Muslims of the world”. The secondary focus in the objectives is on approaching “other countries” and promoting the “Farsi language” in the foreign cultural policy of Iran.

ICRO has more than 1,000 employees (Safavi 2013). There has been no publication to clarify whether its structure has changed over time, and how. According to a participant in the field study, the organization started to expand from early 2000, since a large organization with more departments and offices can devote more budget from the parliament to itself (Abbasi, personal communication, 2016).

According to the observation in the field study and information from the official website of ICRO, which is written in Farsi (ICRO n.d.), this organization has four *Moā'venat* [departments]: Cultural, Research and Education, International Affairs, and Financial Administrative. The cultural department is in charge of two publications centers. The first is the *Alhoda* International Publishing Group, which has published more than 1,200 books in 25 foreign languages. The second center is the *Bonyad-e Andishe-ye Islami* [Foundation of Islamic Thought]. It has published over 16 journals in English, Arabic, French, Russian, Spanish and Urdu. According to von Maltzahn, one of the few researchers who has worked on ICRO specifically, this organization published over 30 journals with the assistance of its cultural centers abroad (von Maltzahn 2015: 67). The research and education department includes suboffices such as the Farsi Language Center as well as the Center for Interfaith Dialogue. The latter office is in charge of holding interreligious dialogue meetings with foreign groups and delegations. This issue will be discussed in 5.2.3 in detail. The international affairs department deals with branch offices of ICRO abroad. Branch offices are called *Rāyzani Farhangi*, which in Farsi means “cultural consultation”. In this research they are simply called “Rayzani”. It is important to mention that Rayzani is different from the cultural attaché that is part of Iranian embassies abroad. There will be a chance to return to this point in 6.1.1. ICRO has Rayzani and other types of cultural centers

in 61 countries, including 16 European and North American countries, 18 African and Arabic countries and 16 Asian and Pacific countries. In some countries, such as Turkey, China, Pakistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan and India, ICRO has more than one cultural center. In Pakistan it has at least eight cultural centers.

There is no official report or document on the total budget of ICRO. Part of the budget comes from the parliament. Review of the annual budget law of the Iranian parliament suggests that between 1998 and 2013, this organization assigned itself a budget of between 79,500,000,000 Rial and 1,115,700,000,000 Rial. As appendix 5 at the end of this dissertation shows, the approximate amount of budget in euros in this period is between 34,289,660.94 € and 70,339,046.39 €. Nevertheless, the parliament's budget is not ICRO's only financial source. Because the organization is under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector, some participants of the field study suggest that it enjoys a fruitful connection between the leader and organizations such as the Imam Reza Shrine, which was mentioned above, in its funding (Tabatabaei, personal communication, 2013).

From the discussion above it can be concluded that Iranian foreign cultural policy is set mostly under the authority of ICRO and the foreign ministry, which are respectively under the authority of religiously and democratically legitimated sectors of the Iranian state. However, some participants in the field study believe that the decisions of ICRO and the foreign ministry do not influence the foreign cultural policy of Iran dramatically, because "the Iranian system" itself is clear about its relationship with the West (Zahrani, personal communication, 2014). The term "Iranian system" in the field study refers to the ideal system which was in the minds of the founding fathers of the Islamic Revolution. By contrast, some participants argue that it does not matter which organization or institution is deciding on Iranian foreign cultural policy, because Iranian politicians historically have a pragmatic and rational approach regarding foreign issues. One diplomat mentioned that the resolution of the Salman Rushdi fatwa crisis⁴⁴ and the diplomatic position of Iran regarding the Azerbaijan-Qarabag conflict⁴⁵ prove that

⁴⁴ This point is discussed in 2.3.

⁴⁵ An ethnic and territorial conflict which took place from the late 1980s to May 1994 between residents of the borders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Iran took a diplomatic position in this conflict in 1992 and attempted to make peace between both sides, although Iranian diplomats were more on the side of Armenia. Because Azerbaijan is a Muslim country, this position by Sajadipur is called a logical or pragmatic decision rather than an ideological decision.

Iran is rational rather than ideological in its foreign policy decision making (Sajadipour, personal communication, 2013).

These facts suggest that Iranian foreign cultural policy is fragmented rather than integrated. It has a dualist structure. But some Iranian diplomats who were interviewed in this study strongly reject this analysis. A former diplomat emphasized that the existence of different actors in Iranian foreign cultural policy indicates a “decentralization of power” in the political system of Iran:

“This is one of the characteristics of Iranian system. Some people out of Iran think that Iranian system is a “one man show”. Like one is on top of pyramid and order; and all would obey. Although it is not at all like this [...]. This is an indication of decentralization of power [...] because of this reason understanding interactions is difficult. This is difficult for foreigner to understand. You should be inside Iranian society to understand” (Kharazi. Personal communication, 2014).

Kharazi uses the point of diversity of actors of Iranian foreign policy to justify the chaos in decision making. However, the existence of different actors in a foreign cultural policy by itself is not a problem. The question is whether the variety of actors can coordinate with each other or not. The foreign cultural policy of Germany also has different actors, but they work within an integrated political system. This point will be discussed in detail in 5.2. A main argument which has emerged during the qualitative analysis and comparing codes from the Iranian and German field study is that the problem of Iranian foreign cultural policy is not its variety of actors, but the lack of an integrated and unified structure. Its dual structure does not commit the actors to coordinate with each other. These points will be focused on more in chapter 7.

5.1.4 Interfaith Dialogue in the Context of Iranian Foreign Cultural Policy

The interfaith dialogue approach was initiated by the *Hekmat* Academy with the help of religious intellectuals such as Mojtabeh Shabestari and Abdolkarim Soroush in the early 1980s. Not only have both of these intellectuals been highly influential thinkers in Shia Islamic theology, they were also highly trusted by the Iranian state in the early post-revolutionary era. They had a lasting connection with the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. They gradually moved away from government jobs, but they kept their connections with the theological

realm. Tavassoli in his study argues that in spite of the conservative atmosphere of the seminaries of Qum and some political difficulties of Iran, these intellectuals took a pluralistic approach towards religion. They had extensive knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Buddhism, and their views positively influenced the academic theology of Iran (Tavassoli 2010: 149). At the time of this research, between 2012 and 2016, neither of them had an official and free platform for their activities. Shabestari has developed his ideas and studies via some private meetings and internet websites. He was invited in 2013 to Germany to participate in university interfaith dialogue, supported by the DAAD. This point will be discussed in 6.2.2 in detail. Soroush lives in exile and continues to write and work as a guest scholar in academic institutes in Germany and the USA.⁴⁶ Soroush specifically explains that the reason for Iran's tendency towards interfaith dialogue was that, rationally, it was a channel to communicate with Western countries in situations in which international relations between Iran and the rest of the world were difficult:

“I was telling to people who were politicians or non-politicians at that time that if you even have a political aim still dialogue with the Western churches is the efficient way. Means that if you can come to an agreement with a Western church and its members see your honest and godly intentions, then you will find a common language with them. That is like finding a friend in castle of an enemy” (Soroush, personal communication, 2012).

It was therefore with the efforts of Soroush, Shabestari and some other theologians that an initial meeting in the framework of interfaith dialogue was held with the assistance of the Goethe Institute in Tehran and *Hekmat*. Some German religious delegates,⁴⁷ together with Abdoldjavad Falaturi, came to Iran to discuss issues such as religion and judicial context. The first official interreligious dialogue was held between Iranian delegates and religious delegates from the Greek Orthodox Church in 1982 in Athens. Interreligious dialogue continued with the efforts of *Hekmat* until 1990, when the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance, or more precisely its international department, took responsibility for it in 1990. Interreligious dialogue continued under the authority of the ministry up

⁴⁶ This information is from an interview with Soroush and contact with him in 2013. In this year he was a guest scholar of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg/Centre for Global Cooperation Research in Duisburg.

⁴⁷ Since the interview with this participant was held in Farsi, the transcribed names of German delegates probably contain mistakes. The names Pandan Rat, as the head of the Goethe Institute of Tehran in the early years after the Revolution, Stefan Hans and Hans Kuns as the German participants of interreligious dialogue were mentioned in this interview.

to 1995, when it became the responsibility of the department of investigation and training of ICRO. Shortly after that, the Center for Interreligious Dialogue (CID) was established within ICRO. It specifically concentrated on holding interreligious dialogues (CID 2010: 1, CID 2011a). Reviewing the aims of the center for interfaith dialogue also shows that it tried to represent Iran as an Islamic actor with an interest in dialogue. The official website of ICRO presents eight aims of interfaith dialogue. They mostly relate to introducing Islamic thoughts, correcting stereotypes and wrong assumptions about Islam, and creating a forum for dialogue between religious scholars of the world (ICRO n.d.). On an Iranian news website, however, the aims are associated with eleven factors. The main focus of the aims in this source is on introducing Islam in three fields: Islamic thought and specifically Shia Islam in the world; religious traditions of Muslims; and Islamic sources and achievements of Islamic scholars (Bashgah Andishe n.d.). Nevertheless, what is reflected academically on the aims of interreligious dialogue is as follows: “creating a forum for mutual understanding between different religions, cooperating with thinkers and leaders of other religions around the world, doing research on the common views between religions; introducing the principles of Islamic thought, and removing misunderstanding” (Tavassoli 2010: 90).

As table 7 shows, interreligious dialogues were held between Iranian religious delegates and international partners from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Vatican; Saint Gabriel Institute, Austria; the Secretariat of the Switzerland Episcopal Council; the World Council of Churches (WCC), Geneva, Switzerland; the Russian Orthodox Church; the Anglican Church/University of Birmingham, England; and the Armenian Orthodox Church of the Silisi of Beirut, Lebanon. The content of table 7 is from studies (Kamali Chirani 2013: 46, Tavassoli 2010: 89-93) and also the official website of the Center for Interfaith Dialogue (CID) of ICRO (CID 2010, CID 2014a).

Table 7. Interreligious round tables between Iranian delegates and religious institutes and churches of the world

Partners of interfaith dialogue	Dialogue	Date	Place	Theme
Greek Orthodox Church	First	1982	Athens	Man, Faith and Environment
	Second	1984	Athens	Faithful Man in the Changing World of Today
	Third	1987	Tehran	This World and the Next World in Islam and Christianity
	Fourth	1998	Athens	Family and Its Value in Islam and Christianity
	Fifth	2000	Tehran	Peaceful Co-existence in Islam and Christianity
Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Vatican,	First	1995	Tehran	Modernity from the Viewpoint of Muslim and Roman Catholic Scholars
	Second	1998	Rome	Islam and Christianity Facing Pluralism
	Third	2001	Tehran	Youth, identity and Religious Education
	Fourth	2003	Rome	Pillars of Peace: Justice, Truth, Love and Freedom
	Fifth	2005	Tehran	Morality from the viewpoint of Islam and Catholicism
	Sixth	2008	Rome	Faith and Reason (Vatican 2008)
	Seventh	2010	Tehran	Religion and Society (CID 2014b)
	Eighth	2012	Rome	Justice in Islam and Christianity (CID 2012)
	Ninth	2014	Tehran	Constructive dialogue between Muslims and Christians for the good of society (ICRO 2014)
	Tenth	2016	Rome	Extremism and violence in the name of religion, which approach to religion? (ICRO 2016a)
Saint Gabriel Institute, Austria	Preliminary	1995	Tehran	Peace and Justice in Islam and Christianity
	First	1996	Tehran	Justice in International Relations and between Religions from the Viewpoint of Muslim and Christian Scholars
	Second	1999	Vienna	Fundamental Values, Rights and Duties in a Just System of Co-existence from the Viewpoint of Muslim and Christian Thinkers
	Third	2003	Tehran	Peace, Justice, and their Menaces in Today's World
	Fourth	2008	Vienna	Hermeneutic (Bsteh/Mirdamadi 2011: 5)
	Fifth	2013	Tehran	Religion, Ethics and Law (Tasnim news 04.10.2015)
	sixth	2015	Vienna	Cooperation between Islam and Christianity to promote human values, freedom and justice (IRIP 2015)
The Secretariat of the Switzerland Episcopal Council	First	2005	Zurich	Interreligious Dialogue: Requirements and Challenges
	Second	2006	Tehran	The Rights of Religious Minorities
World Council of Churches (WCC), Geneva,	Preliminary	1995	Geneva	Peace and Justice in Islam and Christianity
	First	1996	Tehran	Religion and the Contemporary World
	Second	1999	Geneva	The Role of Religion in the Future

Switzerland	Third	2002	Tehran	Religions and Globalization
	Fourth	2006	Geneva	Morality & Politics
	Fifth	2008	Tehran	Religion & Peaceful Coexistence (WCC 2008)
	Annual Assembly	2011	Geneva	Transforming Communities, Christians and Muslims Building a Common Future (CID 2011c)
	Sixth	2012	Geneva	Inter-religious Dialogue and Society: Ways, Means and Goals (Insights 2012, WCC 2012)
	Seventh	2014	Tehran	Spirituality and Modernity (WCC 2014)
	Eighth	2015	Geneva	Religion, Peace and Violence (WCC 2015)
	Russian Orthodox Church	First	1997	Moscow
Second		1999	Moscow	Peace and Justice from the Viewpoint of Muslim and Orthodox Scholars
Third		2000	Tehran	The Role of Interreligious Dialogue in International Relations
Fourth		2004	Tehran	Islam and Globalization
Fifth		2005	Moscow	Religion and Globalization
Sixth		2006	Tehran	Impact of the Resurrection in Today's Existence
Seventh		2010	Moscow	God and Man in Islam and Christianity/The Role of Religion in the Life of the Individual and Society (The Russian Orthodox Church 2010)
Eighth		2012	Moscow	Religion and Human Rights (Taghrib News 01.06.2012)
Ninth		2014	Tehran	Importance and Strengthening of Cooperation and Mutual Understanding between Islam and Orthodoxy (The Russian Orthodox Church 2014)
Tenth		2016	Moscow	Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation as Instruments for Achieving Lasting and Just Peace (The Russian Orthodox Church 2016)
Anglican Church/ University of Birmingham, England	First	1990	Birmingham	Interpretation of the Scriptures
	Second	1997	Tehran	Interpretation of the Scriptures on Social Justice and Poverty
	Third	2002	Tehran	The Analysis of the Concept of Dialogue, Religion and Globalization, Religion, Civilization and Religious Diversity
	Fourth	2003	Birmingham	Religion in Political Arena
	Fifth	2005	Tehran	Religion, Violence and Peace
Armenian Orthodox Church of the Silisi of Beirut, Lebanon	First	2000	Tehran	Peaceful Co-existence from the Viewpoint of Muslim and Armenian Scholars
	Second	2004	Beirut	The Role of Religion in Society
	Third	2008	Tehran	Family in Islam and Christianity
	Fourth	2011	Beirut	Religion and Youth (CID 2011b)

Source: Various sources, each is cited in the table by the researcher

Interfaith meetings also took place with other religious institutes and churches of the world. For instance, according to Tavassoli, there was a meeting between the Iranian delegation and Giovanni Agnelli Foundation in 1999 in Turin, Italy, on the issue of “Religion, Society and State in Iran and Italy” (Tavassoli 2010: 91). A meeting was also held with the Jewish Community of the USA in 2008 in Tehran

focusing on the issue of “one God and the common religious beliefs of Islam and Judaism” (CID 2010: 6-7). Some interreligious dialogues were implemented by the CID in relation to Buddhism with the Buddhist University of Thailand between 2000 and 2008, and the Buddhist University of Sri Lanka in 2008 (CID 2010: 7-8). The CID also implemented a few interfaith dialogues on a domestic level. For instance, in 2008 there was an interreligious dialogue between some Zoroastrians and some delegates selected by the CID. The dialogue concentrated on the issue of “Examining the General Religious Thought of Islam and Zoroastrianism” (CID 2010: 8).

Reviewing the interfaith dialogue meetings reveals some notable points. Firstly, interfaith dialogue in the post-Revolution era gradually fell under the control of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. Initially (approximately from 1982 to 1990), it was implemented by Hekamt Academy, which can be seen as a civil society actor. Interreligious dialogues were then taken over by the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state, the international office of the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance. Since 1994, they have been implemented by ICRO, an organization which is mostly under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state.

Nevertheless, religious institutes and seminaries of Qum have had a dynamic of participating in interreligious dialogues with religious groups and churches of the world, even though they are mostly led by Iranian hardliners who have a close relationship with the religiously legitimated sector. Among them, Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi is significant. His criticism of dialogue among civilizations was mentioned in 3.2.2. Unfortunately, he did not respond to a request for an interview in this study, but a study by Sasan Tavassoli contains some interesting information about him. He is introduced by Tavassoli as one of the “most well-known radical, arch-conservative and high ranking Shia intellectual and cleric in Iran today”. According to Tavassoli, however, he has still often engaged in interfaith dialogues with groups from different churches of the world and shared a “reconciliatory approach towards Christianity” (Tavassoli 2010: 36-37).⁴⁸

⁴⁸Neither the research of Sasan Tavassoli nor the official website of Mesbah provided more specific information. Nevertheless, there are two relevant points that can confirm that Mesbah had an interest in engaging in interfaith dialogues. Firstly, according to his website in English, he had travels to countries of Spain and Latin America, Lebanon, Syria, India, Malaysia and Indonesia (website of Mesbah Yazdi n.d -a). Studying his Farsi official website illustrates more detail on his travel to Spain. He traveled to Madrid in

Furthermore, some NGOs, for instance the Institute for Interreligious Dialogue (IID), have to a limited degree been active in the realm of interfaith dialogue since the presidency of Khatami in Iran. Some of these actors will be discussed in 6.1.3. Generally, however, the role that these non-state and NGOs played in interreligious dialogue was not directed towards the objectives of Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany in an integrated way.

The second point is the affirmative role that the democratically legitimated sector, especially the minister of Islamic culture and guidance, played to support civil society in promoting interfaith dialogue in the early post-Revolution years. Khatami was the minister at that time (between 1982 and 1992). According to a participant of the study, the responsibility for interfaith dialogue was given to *Hekmat* because of the trust and support of Khatami. At the end of his ministry, the responsibility for interfaith dialogue transferred from *Hekmat* to the international office of this ministry. At first there were few restrictions and interference from this office in the workings of *Hekmat*; but gradually the limitations grew to such an extent that some pioneer delegates became disillusioned and did not continue their cooperation in the interreligious dialogues::

“It was a time that cultural ministry was in hand of **Khatami**, then **Larijani**, and then **Mirsalim** took the office... later people came who had to be 100 percent acknowledged by the intelligence service, 100 percent acknowledged by leader, and they follow 100 percent a Hizbollahi policy. Slowly the people in charge (of interfaith dialogue) were changed. We had a time Mr. **Shabestari**, who was indeed cosmopolitan and know foreign languages and had experience and knowledge about religion. He knew the world. But slowly other people came to field. One of them is **Hasan Rahim pour Azghadi**. He has a major tribune in TV of Iran. He...even does not have a school-graduation. But he is now the speaker for every subject including the religion. One of the professors who had participated in meeting with the Orthodox group, **Ebrahim Dinani**, told me that... Azghadi that day told many things, suddenly the director of the orthodox group banged on the table and stood up and told that if this guy continue just more five minutes like this, we all will leave the meeting. Such a nonsense he was telling. Hence, the dialogue among religions turned to be something else. To

August 1997 and was hosted by the Rayzani of ICRO there. During his trip he visited different mosques and held speeches for Muslims in Spain It is therefore not unlikely that he also engaged in interfaith dialogue with Christian groups during his visits. Secondly, according to information from the field study, he had visited the University of Birmingham or invited some professors from this university to Iran (Tavassoli, personal communication, 2015). Thirdly, the Iranian foreign ministry helped him to travel to some foreign countries to participate in interfaith dialogue (Sajadpour, personal communication, 2013).

something to teach Christians what real Christianity is” (Soroush, personal communication, 2012).

The third point concerns the lack of concentration on a specific issue in the interfaith dialogues. It is obvious that the discourse of interfaith dialogue fits the image which the Iranian state intends to mediate for itself culturally abroad. But interfaith dialogue on which specific issue? A simple content analysis of the topics illustrated in table 7 shows that the issue of “peace” (12) and “justice” (9) as well as the role of religion in society, the future and the world (9) attracted more attention in the interreligious dialogues compared with issues such as “globalization” (4), “family” and “youth” (4), “right” and “law” (4), “faith” (3), “coexistence” of people from different religions (4), politics and international relations (3), “modernity” (3), and finally, theological discussions such as life in the next world (4). It therefore seems that being involved in dialogue itself was more important for the Iranian delegates than discussing a specific issue or solving a conflict or problem.

The fourth point is the absence of Germany in the list of the planned interfaith dialogues held by the various Iranian actors, *Hekmat* Academy, ministry of culture and CID. Between 1998 and 2013, some German religious delegates and academic groups met with directors of ICRO and CID, but these meetings and contacts did not lead to implementation of interreligious dialogue between Iran and Germany in a planned way or as a series of round tables. This point was discussed in the field study with some Iranian participants. A former director of CID replied that the budget for implementing interreligious dialogue was limited, and there were so many requests from religious institutes and churches of the world that CID was only able to confirm just a few of them (Helmi, personal communication, 2013). Responding to this point, another former head of CID presented some reasons which did not fit the context. For instance, he talked frequently about dialogue with *Almanhā* [Germans]; however, he mixed the context of interreligious dialogue with Germany partly with the “Vatican II approach” in 1962 (which was discussed in 3.2.1), partly with “critical dialogue” between 1992 and 1996 (which was discussed in 2.3), and partly with interreligious dialogue with Austria:

“Dialogues with **Germans** in Iran has started since 1369 [1990]. The reason was that Mr. Khatami (the former president who was at that time minister of Islamic Culture and Guidance), has heard about **Vatican II** and tendency of the Catholic Church to direct inter-religious dialogue with the other world’s nations [...]. Dialogue with **Germans** has started before the religious dialogues...yes, yes, Dr. Ra`bani, Dr. Soroush, Dr. Mohaghegh Damad, they had started the dialogue with Germans...but it was not really religious dialogue... Dr. Shabestari had started the dialogue with Germans, for he was many years over there and had very good relations with them [...]. Our dialogue with **Germans** was not really religious [...] for instance Dr. **Steinbach** was with his institute active to implement those dialogues. He was inviting and consequently Iranians would go. But his discussions were on **human rights**, for instance one question from Dr. Mohaghegh Damad was whether there is **freedom in courts** of Iran [...]. We have a lot of dialogues, at least I have myself 20 books on this issue, for instance Hermeneutic, with Austria [...]. Yes, it is not Germany but the language is German” (Mirdamadi, personal communication, 2013).

Another participant and former Imam of the Islamic Center of Hamburg believed that the difficult political situation during the presidency of Ahmadinejad (2005-2013) was a reason for the lack of a planned interfaith dialogue with Germany (Nourbakhsh, personal communication, 2016). Views which were shared by another former head of CID explained some dimensions of this point in a different way, however. In the view of a former director of CID, the following are key reasons for the lack of planned interreligious dialogue with Germany: 1) absence of a clear policy at a top organizational level; 2) lack of “expertise” among the personnel of ICRO and CID; 3) appointment of relatives, friends and persons with close personal or external expertise relationship; 4) employment of personnel and directors with a poor knowledge of foreign languages, especially in the section of Rayzani (Akrami, personal communication, 2015). He went on to say that, since some current partners of the interfaith dialogue like the Vatican and the WCC, had been in place for a long time, the members of staff of CID simply followed the old guidelines. In his view, because a German participant “randomly” did not have the opportunity to make good contacts with influential Iranian figures in international interreligious meetings, Iran and Germany did not match each other for the planned interfaith dialogue:

“You can raise the same question of not having interfaith dialogue with Germany regarding to France, why did not we have dialogue with France? [...] for instance we had a lot of programs with St. Gabriel institute of Austria. Very frequently programs, the reason was that, as far as I know, Professor Beste, who was the head of St. Gabriel, who had serious and deep interest in these relationship, had a close relationship with Mr. Khatami. You should suppose that the idea of the

dialogue started over there. That means you can see ‘personal presence’ as a main reason in between. That actually part of the reason, there are other reasons too. But in any case I would say whether plan or coincidence, they visited each other, get close to each other and then it turn to be a process of interfaith dialogue meetings, and the process continued... if you look it from this point, it can be said that randomly there was not such a chance to connect with Germany. If you say why there was not such a random, then it returns to my first point, there was no system and organization [to take interfaith dialogue serious]” (Akrami, personal communication, 2015).

The discourse of interfaith dialogue articulated itself later as part of “dialogue among civilizations” in the context of Iranian foreign cultural policy. This happened for a variety of reasons which will be explained partly in the next subchapter and partly in 6.1.2.

5.1.5 Dialogue among Civilizations in the Context of Iranian Foreign Cultural Policy

The idea of “dialogue among civilizations” presented by Mohammad Khatami to the 53rd general assembly of the UN in 1998 had some global consequences. Indications of its international significance are 2001 being named the year of dialogue among civilizations (Nejad Hosseinian 1999), the member states of the Organization of Islamic Conference issuing the Tehran declaration of dialogue among civilizations in 1999 (Nejad Hosseinian 1999), and the UN general assembly adopting the resolution of “global agenda for dialogue among civilizations” in 2001 (UN 2001). The idea also had some effects on domestic and foreign cultural policy in Iran. Reflections on and criticism of Khatami’s idea were discussed in 3.2.2. This subchapter presents how this idea was reflected in acts and legislation, its influence on the Iranian state’s policies and society, and the view experts and diplomats took of it.

To consider the idea of dialogue among civilizations practically, Khatami helped to establish an international center to deal specifically with the issue from the financial resources of the presidency. More information about this center and its activities will be discussed in 6.1.2.

Khatami used the discourse of dialogue in combination with issues such as promoting peace-building in the world and elevating the relationship between the

West and Muslim countries in his international and domestic speeches. However, he never clearly defined exactly the role of this idea in the context of Iranian foreign policy. For instance, in a speech to UNESCO he explained that dialogue among civilizations did not approach a *Rome or Italian type* of peace, which is based on the balance of power, but a peace based on *rošd-e aqli* [intellectual or rational development] of humanity (Khatami 1388 [2009]: 35). But his speech does not clarify the type of peace. Moreover, in some speeches Khatami emphasized that dialogue among civilizations was not about the language of diplomacy and the political realm (Khatami 1388 [2009]: 37), and intellectuals, writers and artists, not politicians, were the main actors (pp. 49-50, 121 and 130). At the same time, in some speeches he also underscored the role of dialogue and diplomacy together as a tool of foreign policy (p. 107). Even on the eve of the first speech of Hassan Rouhani in the UN, Khatami published an article and warned the West “this time” not to miss the opportunity for diplomacy with Iran that had been missed in his time and through the idea of dialogue among civilizations (Khatami 2013).

In Khatami’s view, the reason for expressing the idea of dialogue among civilizations was the emergence of Islamophobia and Huntington’s theory on one hand, and reviving civil society and the rule of law inside Iranian society on the other. To resolve problems on an international and domestic level, he suggested changing the dominant paradigm:

“So I suggested that this paradigm, paradigm of war and conflict, should change and be replaced by paradigm of *hamdeli* [sympathy]. I started to discuss that the human has an advantage over animals which is the ability to talk and using words. This is not just about word but it is about brain and rationality. The human can be appeared through his/her word. So consequently we suggest dialogue between humans. And this dialogue is different from debate and negotiation which aims at convincing a side of communication. It is dialogue in a sense to open worlds of people towards each other through words” (Khatami, personal communication, 2014).

The idea produced some national and international events attended by Iranian actors. An Iranian journal reported numbers and topics of domestic and international conferences and seminars held under the discourse of “dialogue among civilizations”. According to this journal, from 1997 to 2000, three domestic conferences were held with participation by Iranian delegates, in 2000

six domestic and six international conferences, in 2001 around 19 domestic and 36 international conferences, in 2002 three domestic and five international conferences, in 2003 three domestic and two international conferences, and in 2004 two domestic and three international conferences. These numbers indicate that the idea attracted most attention in 2001, but attention had gradually diminished by 2004 (Andishe Jurnal 1383 [2004]).

A main weak point of dialogue among civilizations in the context of foreign cultural policy was its legal terms. It was not a discourse of the religiously legitimated sector, so it did not have the absolute support of the Iranian government. Also, it did not position itself institutionally in the body of the state rules and statements. It was reflected only vaguely and not in practical terms in a few statements. In the ninth chapter of the fourth development plan, article 110 specifically considers the issue of dialogue among civilizations. The Iranian state, according to this article, is obligated to promote culture of peace, understanding, counter-violence and coexistence among different nations in international relationships and realize the dialogue among civilizations and cultures in a practical sense. The main plans to achieve this are as follows:

- a. planning to participate and be an active part of regional and international trends, as well as in foundations and assemblies relating to the issue of dialogue among civilizations,
- b. preparing necessary conditions for exchange of ideas of authors, scientists and artists and scientific, cultural and civil foundations,
- c. attempting to introduce Iranian culture, art and literary dimensions to the rest of the world, and preparing an opportunity for (Iranian) intellectuals and scientific and cultural centers and Iranian society to get to know about new cultural achievements in the world,
- d. concluding cultural contracts at regional, continental and international level and preparing conditions to implement these contracts in the plans of executive bodies,
- e. improving executive structures and supporting establishment of NGOs to practically realize dialogue among cultures and civilizations. This aim should be reached by decreasing the involvement of the state and increasing the role of the non-governmental section in the dialogue among civilizations activities,

- f. affirming the executive power of this article based on the suggestion of the organization of management and planning and under the authority of the council of ministers up to the end of the first year of the development plan (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-a).⁴⁹

The objectives of article 110 were achieved to a small degree. Two of the reasons are as follows: Firstly, the article was released at the end of Khatami's presidency, which meant that two of the main state actors appointed to consider the idea executively changed within a few months. The next president, President Ahmadinejad, and his administration had no interest in continuing the policies of Khatami. Secondly, article 110 did not determine an executive enforcement for specific state or NGO actors to implement the idea, so the executive conditions for implementing the discourse were still too abstract and general.

Dialogue among civilizations in the context of Iranian foreign cultural policy in the short-term was a cultural tool in the hands of Khatami's administration to decrease international tensions involving Iran, though in the long-term it was unable to sustain itself and evolve. It was articulated partly as a continuation of interfaith dialogue, which means that the whole discussion of dialogue among civilizations began to give way to dialogue among religions, as the merger of the specific institute for dialogue among civilizations with ICRO will show in 6.1.2. Moreover, because Khatami continued to talk about Iran as a representative of Islamic civilization (Khatami 1388 [2009]: 47 and 104), it is rational to fit the discourse of dialogue among civilizations to dialogue among religions. That may be one reason why the discourse of "dialogue" was not entirely eliminated in the long term.

Some participants of the study also argued that the Iranian nation historically had an interest in dialogue in philosophy (Mosleh, personal communication, 2013) and theology (Masjedjamei, personal communication, 2013; Mohaghegh Damad, personal communication, 2013). Therefore, regardless of the type of political system, the foreign cultural policy of Iran has a tendency to orient itself on dialogical communication. That is why dialogue among civilizations has grown up gradually over the years together with the discourse of interfaith dialogue.

⁴⁹ The original text is in Farsi. What is reflected here has been translated into English by the researcher.

Even some participants of the study who belonged to the group of opponents of the idea of dialogue among civilizations articulated some radical practices of Ahmadinejad as dialogue:

“In time of Ahmadinejad the dialogue was pursued even more frankly. [...] in time of Ahmadinejad the first issue of dialogue was the **Holocaust**. The issue of Holocaust was a huge hit to them [West]. Though Ahmadinejad did not deny it, he just put it under the question [...] also the **speech** of Ahmadinejad at the Colombia University was a part of this dialogue. Thereat some Jews interrupted him with their noises but he did continue his speech. Also his **letters to Americans** are the next layers of dialogue in time of Ahmadinejad...see, dialogue in time of Ahmadinejad was much more than dialogue in time of Khatami. You look at his plan of travels to the USA. He met a lot of groups and media. He had dialogues with Iranians abroad. You compare these dialogues with time of Khatami. It is just incomparable. Khatami did not have that much dialogue” (Anbarluee, personal communication, 2013).

Therefore it can be argued that dialogue among civilizations was opposed by Iran’s hardliners because of a problem they had with Khatami rather a problem with dialogue, particularly when Khatami appointed a specific institute to deal with it and tried to decrease the power of the state to control it. The opposition towards Khatami’s dialogue among civilizations from hardliners such as Mesbah nevertheless became sharper and clearer after the presidency of Khatami was over.

Some participants from ICRO also argue that the discourse of dialogue among civilizations was not supported after Khatami, because of the emergence of bureaucratic problems (Abbasi, personal communication, 2014; Dehshiri, personal communication, 2013; Maleki, personal communication, 2015). This issue will be discussed in detail in 6.1.2.

There are two points relating to the approach of the Iranian foreign affairs ministry and ICRO towards Germany. Firstly, Iranian diplomats are observed to have little access to and be poorly informed about Germany. The knowledge of diplomats who were interviewed or contacted by the researcher regarding the political structure and cultural activities between Iran and Germany, with the exception of Seyed Hossein Mousavian,⁵⁰ was poor. Their answers to the

⁵⁰ Mousavian served as Iranian ambassador in Germany between 1990 and 1997. He also worked as a member of the nuclear negotiation team between 2005 and 2007. In 2005 and 2010 he was accused of engaging in espionage in the Iranian nuclear team, but both times the accusation was rejected by the courts. At the time this research was conducted, Mousavian had no diplomatic position and worked as a visiting

questions of the study were not focused. They replied in some cases with a lack of evidence. Nearly all diplomats who were contacted in this study had never served continuously in diplomatic positions of Germany or other European countries.

Secondly, it was not possible to contact a member of staff or directors of ICRO who are fully informed about Germany, its political structure or its strategy for foreign cultural policy towards it. Attempts to meet with relevant experts of the department of European studies of ICRO were also unsuccessful.⁵¹

Although the relevant organizations in charge of Iranian foreign cultural policy had no in-depth knowledge of Germany, most of the Iranian diplomats and experts still share a positive view of the relationship between Iran and Germany (Kharazi, personal communication, 2014; Dehshiri, personal communication, 2013; Sajadpour, personal communication, 2013; Maleki, personal communication, 2014; Zahrani, personal communication, 2014). There was one exception, a diplomat who believes that the reason for the weak cultural relationship between Iran and Germany is that the latter is “still occupied” (Karami, personal communication, 2014). Being occupied, in his words, refers to the occupation of Germany by America, France and England between 1945 and 1949. He used this terminology to argue that Germany shaped its policy towards Iran under the influence of Western countries, which also explained why Germany did not have a steady cultural relationship with Iran.

5.2 German Foreign Cultural Policy, Acts, Organizations and Intercultural Dialogue Discourses

Before discussing details of intercultural dialogue activities implemented by Germany for Iranian and German participants from 1998 to 2013, it is necessary to understand how Germany has structured its foreign cultural policy, which acts have regulated such policy, and which organizations have been involved.

researcher at Princeton University. However, he participated in this study and attempted to connect the researcher with some Iranian diplomats.

⁵¹ The head of section for Germany in the European studies department of ICRO had no pertinent information about Germany and the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany. However, he did use the opportunity of the contact to ask the researcher how he could study in Germany without physically being present there or learning German.

After World War II, German political elites and parties tried to create an image for Germany internationally that was different from the image created by the previous German political system. To do this, over the years they created regulations which obligate the German state to financially support cultural actors to create such an image but decrease its control over them, and introduced general cultural plans, cultural actors to implement those plans, and target countries to be partners to them.

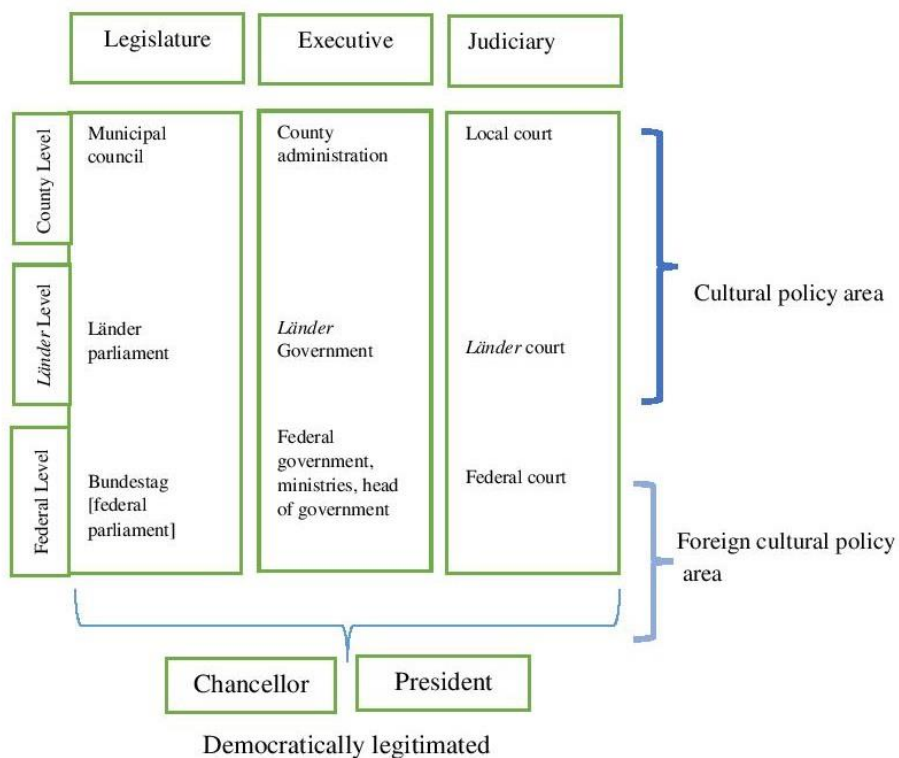
This subchapter presents an overview of the political system of Germany, the structure of German foreign cultural policy, organizations which play a guiding role in decisions on foreign cultural policy, and the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”.

5.2.1 An Overview of the Political System of Germany

Germany is a federal republic. Its political system is divided into three branches, the legislature, executive and judiciary. Two roles are defined at the top of the political system. One is the chancellor, who is head of the government with policy-making power. The chancellor is directly appointed by the German Federal Parliament and then proposed by the president. The second role belongs to the president, who is the head of state and represents the nation internationally. His or her position is not associated with policy making, unless in emergency situations. The president is appointed by a council composed to one half of members of the federal diet and to the other half of members of the *Länder* [states]⁵² diet. Therefore it can be argued that the system as a whole is democratically legitimated. Policy making on the cultural activities of Germany at domestic level is chiefly under the authority of the *Länder* and county level of the government, while policy making related to cultural activities at foreign level is under the authority of the federal government. This point will be discussed in detail. Figure 7 illustrates this structure.

Figure 6. Political structure of Germany in the context of its cultural and foreign cultural policy

⁵² *Länder* refers to the 16 states of Germany. In this study, “state” is frequently used to refer to the government and administration of Iran and Germany. Therefore *Länder* is used in the text to avoid confusing the reader.



Source: made by the researcher

The political system of Germany, which is democratically legitimated at both chancellor and president level, creates an integrated foreign cultural policy. It is integrated because institutions at *Länder* and federal level have an agreement to cooperate in foreign cultural activities, although the *Auswärtiges Amt* [foreign office] is foremost in decision making. To understand the role of different sections of the German political system in foreign cultural policy, it is important to look at how it is set out in the constitution.

5.2.2 German Foreign Cultural Policy: A Distinct Element of German Foreign Policy

The characteristics of German foreign cultural policy relating to the country's constitution, relevant acts and regulations are discussed here. According to the constitution, the issue of culture in Germany is defined at three administrative levels: federal government, *Länder*, and county. Article 30 of the *Grundgesetz* [Basic Law] differentiates the division of tasks between the *Länder* and the

government as follows: “The exercise of governmental powers and the discharge of governmental fulfillment is the task of the *Länder*, except where otherwise provided for in this Basic Law”,⁵³ though as Wilfred Van der Will and Rob Burns argue, the *Länder* in practice consider all matters of cultural policy under their own sovereignty rather than that of the federal government (Van der Will/Burns 2014: 201). The establishment of the *Staatsministerium für Kultur und Medien* [Federal Ministry of Culture and Media] in 1998, for instance, faced some obstacles and led to the resignation of Michael Naumann, the first commissioner for this post, two years later. Naumann was appointed by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and intended to play a more active role in regard to cultural policy at federal governmental level but met with opposition from the *Länder*, all political parties, and some media. Such a reaction, in the view of Van der Will and Burns, is rooted in a legal issue and the post-German unification era. Firstly, individual *Länder* constitutions make it clear that sovereignty in the context of cultural policy comes from the region’s citizens rather than from above. Secondly, the attempt to balance federal and regional powers over cultural policy was already interrupted by the unification of West and East Germany in 1990, because five new *Länder* were added to Germany, which required special consideration of the cultural affairs issue, among others. Accordingly, the federal government and old *Länder* temporarily had a duty to support the financially weaker new *Länder*. This temporary nature was maintained until 2000, when a new act ordered that the same agreement would run until 2019. From this historic context Van der Will and Burns conclude that the expanded role of the federal government in cultural policy is more “enduring” than anticipated by the *Länder* (Van der Will/Burns 2014: 201-202). However, the case of the establishment of the Ministry of Culture and Media seemed to cross a line with the *Länder* to such an extent that they could not tolerate it and took a stand against it. The ministry still exists today, but according to the researcher’s observation, it does not play a significant role in German cultural policy.

Although Van der Will and Burns believe that the constitution is unambiguous about the division of tasks between *Länder* and federal government, it seems that the German constitution is still not strict and direct enough to differentiate borders

⁵³ The original text: „Die Ausübung der staatlichen Befugnisse und die Erfüllung der staatlichen Aufgaben ist Sache der Länder, soweit dieses Grundgesetz keine andere Regelung trifft oder zuläßt“.

of cultural policy and foreign cultural policy. But looking at some statements and acts of the federal government shows that the issue of foreign cultural policy is more distinct in the context of foreign policy. Constructive cooperation between the foreign ministry and the ministers of culture of the *Länder*, in the framework of *Kultusministerkonferenz* [the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany] activities, is a considerable step towards specifying the scope of their tasks and responsibilities. For instance, in the *Lindauer Absprache* [*Lindau Agreement*], which was concluded on 14 November 1957 between the federal government and the state chancelleries of the *Länder*, their participation in international treaties and their different legal positions are discussed (Sekretariat der Kultusministerkonferenz 1998).

Guidelines and statements which specifically consider the issue of foreign cultural policy are also important. In 1970, in the time of Willy Brandt, the first guideline was formulated by Ralf Dahrendorf, a parliamentary secretary of the foreign ministry; it is called *Leitsätze für die auswärtige Kulturpolitik* [guidelines for German foreign cultural policy], in short the *1970 Guideline* (Auswärtiges Amt 1970). The *1970 Guideline* must be seen as a first step towards a systematic foreign cultural policy of Germany. In 14 pages it contains recommendations to simplify coordination between the German federal government and the *Länder* on cultural affairs abroad. Five years later, in 1975, an inquiry commission consisting of different members of the German parties, some academics and university professors, who were appointed by the German government, prepared a 140-page report on foreign cultural policy, which in Maaß's view has counted as a "bible of foreign cultural policy" for many years (Maaß 2005b: 24). The report, which in short is called the *1975 Report*, shared the same aims and principles as the *1970 Guideline*, including counting foreign cultural policy as a supporting pillar for foreign policy, expecting it to aim at a different and wide audience abroad, considering multi-relationships with the world, including East Germany, and offering exchange and cooperation with partner countries. But the *1975 Report* was especially significant for its plans and solutions for cooperating with different *Länder* and organizations, developing cooperation in cultural, academic and technical fields, giving details to plan German language facilities abroad, and to work with *Mittlerorganisationen*, schools abroad, universities, and media, all in

the context of foreign cultural policy. The *1975 Report* issued recommendations to take care of international students and interns who come to Germany and then return to their own countries, as well as containing a chapter on supporting the plans financially. In addition, it expected the German cultural actors to be open towards cultural activities abroad and legitimize Germany as a *Kulturstaat* [cultural state] (Bundestag 1975: 9). In 1977, the German federal government released a detailed 26-page statement as a response to the *1975 Report*. It was called *Stellungnahme der Bundesregierung zu dem Bericht der Enquete-Kommission* [statement of the federal government on the report of the inquiry commission], in short the *1977 Statement* (Bundesregierung 1977). The *1977 Statement* also had a lot in common with previously mentioned documents, although it had a specific emphasis on foreign cultural policy. It considered foreign cultural policy as an equal part of foreign policy alongside diplomacy and economic policies. It assigns an important role to foreign cultural policy in creating European integration and détente, as well as in building Germany's reputation abroad. The plans of the *1977 Statement* were similar to the *1975 Report*, although they were more precise and simplified.

In the following years, other measurements were adopted by the German state to regulate foreign cultural policy. For instance, since 15 June 1994 the German federal parliament has asked the federal government to submit an annual report on foreign cultural policy (Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 5). This report is prepared by the foreign affairs ministry and delivered annually to the parliament.

In 2000, when Joschka Fischer was foreign minister, a new statement on foreign cultural policy titled *2000 Konzeption* [2000 Concept] (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b), was released. It emphasized some aims and principles of the previous statements but formulated the aims and interests of foreign cultural policy in a clearer way. These aims will be explained later. The *2000 Concept* has some differences in comparison with other foreign cultural policy statements. For instance, it contained a specific part to explain strategies for German foreign cultural policy. Issues such as budget and structure, cultural programs, foreign media policy, European cultural policy, promotion of German language, science and universities, foreign schools, education and youth exchange, sport, and finally cultural agreements are considered specifically as realms of action for achieving the objectives of German foreign cultural policy. It is significant that the *2000*

Concept contains guidelines to fulfill the tasks. *Mittlerorganisationen* such as the Goethe Institute (which is mentioned several times), the DAAD, ifa and Alexander von Humboldt on one hand and of parastatal organizations such as PAD and the ZfA on the other are mentioned in the concept, to deal with specific tasks in the context of foreign cultural policy. The term “dialogue”, is mentioned thirteen times in the *2000 Concept*.

Just a year after issuing *2000 Concept*, the 11 September terrorist attacks in the US put more emphasis on the terminology of dialogue in foreign cultural policy statements and guidelines. The attack opened a new episode in the US and European international relationship, as a coalition of the *war on terrorism* was formed and led to military attacks on Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. Germany joined the Northern Alliance, constituted to attack Afghanistan, in response to the terrorist attack of 9/11, although it refused to join the coalition to attack Iraq in 2003. From the time of the early reactions to 9/11, the German foreign ministry and German parliament started to initiate some cultural activities with Muslim countries as a form of non-military conflict resolution. Referring to strategies of *2000 Concept*, the foreign ministry from 2002 initiated a special program of European-Islamic Cultural Dialogue and established a new office inside its department of culture and media with the same title. Meanwhile, the German parliament took the issue of preventing terrorism so seriously that it established a new 5.1-million-Euro budget to support intercultural dialogue programs with Muslim countries (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 4-5). More details of European-Islamic cultural dialogue will be presented in 5.1.2.

Extending cultural dialogue with Muslim countries was mentioned again in an action plan to deal with world conflicts called *Zivile Krisenprävention, Konfliktlösung und Friedenskonsolidierung* [Civilian crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding], in short *Crisis action plan*, in 2004. The plan suggested some strategic approaches to prevent crisis in the Middle Eastern and third world countries. In the realm of culture and education, cultural dialogue is mentioned as a relevant but challenging tool to alleviate crises which have a cultural dimension and to promote transformation to democracy (Bundesregierung 2004: 48).

The issue of dialogue with Muslims was raised in Germany again in 2006. This time it had a domestic emphasis. The interior ministry decided to establish a conference to initiate dialogue between Muslim migrants and the German state, *Deutsche Islam Konferenz* [German Islam Conference]. Academic debates on this issue are reviewed in 3.2.4. Dialogue with Muslims in this context has also had a foreign cultural policy emphasis, because the international benefit of the integration of Muslim immigrants in German society in this period was a crucial issue for Germany. One year before the inauguration of the German Islam Conference, some European countries experienced a harsh reaction from some Muslims to a caricature of Prophet Mohammad.⁵⁴ The German state, in addition to its foreign cultural policy towards Muslim countries, therefore also systematically paid specific attention to Islam as a domestic issue. More detail regarding the German Islam Conference will be presented in 6.2.5.

In 2011, another concept of foreign cultural policy was released under *Auswärtige Kultur- und Bildungspolitik in Zeiten der Globalisierung - Partner gewinnen, Werte vermitteln, Interessen vertreten* [Cultural relations and education policy in the age of globalization – winning partners, mediating values, representing interests], in short *Concept 2011*. In *Concept 2011*, the term *Bildung* [education] is added to foreign cultural policy: foreign cultural and educational policy. Four aims are formulated for the policy: strengthening Europe, securing peace, maintaining old friendships, and finding new partnerships. In addition it was mentioned that the foreign cultural and educational policy could be used as cultural diplomacy more than ever through instruments including education, exchange, dialogue, and the partnership approach (Auswärtiges Amt 2011b).

According to annual reports on German foreign cultural policy and statements and concepts such as the *2000 Concept*, the aims of foreign cultural policy can be summarized as follows:

1. Updating the concept of foreign cultural policy: The concept of foreign cultural policy must be formed in a fertile dialogue with the federal government (Auswärtiges Amt 1999: 4). Foreign cultural policy should be

⁵⁴ In 2005, some of the world Muslim population reacted to a caricature published in the Danish press and then re-printed by other European countries like Germany. The reaction to the caricature led to some demonstrations in Muslim countries and a major boycott on products from Denmark and some European countries, including Germany.

a concept which fits the meaning of the work of all German actors (Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 3).

2. Considering federal, regional and local priorities: The culture of Germany must be mediated as part of European culture. To do that, the assistance of federal government, *Länder* and cities as well as private organizations must be taken into account (Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 3, Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2).
3. Specifying tasks of federal and local levels: Federal and *Länder* organizations work together to reach the aims of foreign cultural policy, but their tasks and responsibility are distinguished based on the *Lindauer Absprache* (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2).
4. Using the potential and networks of *Mittlerorganisationen*: the assistance and networks of institutions such as the Goethe Institute (Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 3), as well as various actors including private and *Mittlerorganisationen* with different aims and priorities (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2) is necessary.
5. Promoting cooperation between state and non-state sections: Cultural activities must be implemented by promoting coordination between the German state, especially the foreign ministry, and other institutes abroad (Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 3). Cooperation in cultural work is also needed on both levels, at home and abroad (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2).
6. Considering the political aims of foreign policy: The *2000 Concept* emphasizes that foreign cultural policy is an integral part of foreign policy (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2). This aim has been emphasized since 2001 with a focus on achieving political aims, such as peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and recognition of human rights, as well as making a contribution to new security challenges in the post-9/11 era (Auswärtiges Amt 2002: 4). Emphasis was also placed between 2008 and 2013 on supporting general aims of German foreign policy through cultural activities (Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 6, Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 9, Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 12, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 10, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 7, Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 15).
7. Promoting cultural dialogue: In the *2000 Concept* there is a specific focus on cultural dialogue as part of cultural exchanges between people and

cultures (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2). Reference to dialogue especially with so-called Islamic countries intensified in the 9/11 era (Auswärtiges Amt 2002: 4). Annual reports published between 2002 and 2008 mention, alongside the value of dialogue, that aims such as preventing worldwide conflict must be reached (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2).

8. Promoting the perception of German culture: The image of Germany must be mediated internationally by implementing cultural and art activities (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2) and creating *Sympathiewerbung* [sympathy advertisement] for the image of Germany (Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 6, Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 9, Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 12, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 10, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 7, Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 15).
9. Considering media and communication: Communication is considered a main tool to create a contemporary image for Germany (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2) (Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 6, Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 9, Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 12, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 10, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 7, Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 15).
10. Paying attention to educational policy interests (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2).
11. Promoting the European integration process (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2).
12. Promoting the German language (Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 6, Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 9, Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 12, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 10, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 7, Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 15).
13. Highlighting German values: According to the *2000 Concept*, foreign cultural policy is not neutral but based on values such as democratization (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2).

14. Highlighting the role of the foreign ministry in guiding policy actors: The *2000 Concept* states that specifically political guidelines and foreign cultural policy are formulated and coordinated by the foreign ministry (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2)
15. Underlining diverse dimensions of activities: Foreign cultural policy is not solely about cultural policies but also cooperation in economic, scientific, research, theology, education, and vocational training, among other things (Auswärtiges Amt 2000b: 1-2).

Different annual reports have also mentioned specific strategies to reach the set objectives. They include establishing dialogue, informing target groups of people abroad through cultural and educational projects, forming networks among people and institutes, initiating and supporting open partnerships with cultural actors of other countries and encouraging relationships with private partners (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 6-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 6-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5-6, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 8-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2-4, Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 8-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 9-10, Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 12, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 10-11, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 8).

The acts and statements regarding German foreign cultural policy have not considered Iran specifically as a partner or target country, although Iran is represented in them as part of general groups such as developing countries and Muslim countries.

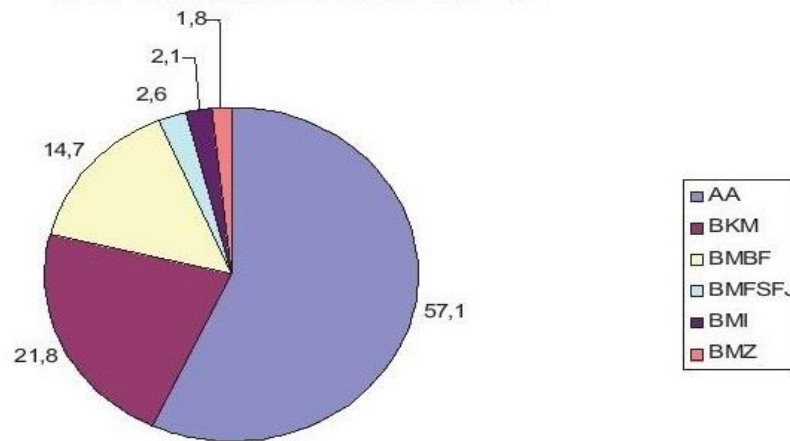
From the above details it can be concluded that firstly, German foreign cultural policy is built as a distinct element of the country's foreign policy; secondly, its tasks and scope of activities are clarified separately from German domestic cultural policy; thirdly, it is mostly under the authority of the German foreign ministry; fourthly, not just dialogue and educational activity have attracted significant attention in foreign cultural policy recently.

5.2.3 German Guiding Political Organizations in the Realm of Foreign Cultural Policy

As was mentioned above, the German foreign ministry is key to decision making on foreign cultural policy. Figure 8 shows other organizations and their portion of

financial assistance in foreign cultural policy (Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 11). The figure is from a 2008 annual report, but the same organization played a role from 1998 to 2013.

Figure 7. Foreign cultural and education policy budget by sources in percent- source: AKBP annual report 2008-2009



Source: Auswärtiges Amt (2009: 11)

As figure 8 shows, the budget for foreign cultural activities is supplied from the following sources:

1. Foreign affairs ministry, referred to as AA, assigns most of the budget of the foreign cultural policy to itself;
2. Federal Government for Culture and Media, BKM/ *Beauftragten der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien*, which is the second important organization;
3. Federal Ministry of Education and Research, BMBF/*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*;
4. Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, BMFSFJ/*Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend*;
5. Federal Ministry of the Interior, BMI/*Bundesministerium des Innern*;
6. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ/*Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung*.

The annual reports on the foreign cultural policy presented tables and charts to illustrate the budget that was spent each year by the individual political guiding

organizations. They simultaneously included information on the budget spent by organizations, institutes and actors that implement foreign cultural policy, and some details of cultural projects, their aims and results. The aim here is not to analyze the financial details of German foreign cultural policy but to show the transparency of information in the annual reports. Some parts of the annual report of 2013/2014 that reflect this transparency are given below:

“The expenditures for the federal government's foreign cultural and educational policy amounted to a total of € 1.571 billion in 2013 and a total of € 1.591 billion in 2014. € 738.8 million of the budget of 2013 and € 761.9 million of the budget of 2014 was devoted to the federal foreign office” (Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 26).⁵⁵

“As you see in the next diagram, the foreign affairs ministry devoted its €738.8 Million budget for these activities: €257.9 million for program work, € 213.7 million for school funds, € 31.7 million for building fund in cultural section, € 235.5 million for directing institutes” (Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 30).⁵⁶

“Overall the budget of foreign cultural policy in 2013 which is devoted to Mittlerorganisationen are as follows: 28,5 % for Goethe Institute, 28,9 % for school educational activities abroad, 23,2 for DAAD, 14,4 % for other costs, and 5 % for foundation of Alexander von Humboldt (AvH)” (Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 32).⁵⁷

As these show, details of financial sources in the annual report on German foreign cultural policy do not just clarify the total yearly budget but also give information on which German cultural actors receive how much of the budget. This type of transparency of information has not been found in studying the collected data from the Iranian field study.

The German foreign ministry has 10 *Abteilungen* [departments]. As figure 9 shows, the central department is responsible for personnel matters. There are two types of political departments which deal with different regions, continents and countries. A specific department considers the issue of disbarment. The E department focuses on European affairs, and UN considers UN affairs and global questions. Department 4 sets some policies regarding economic and sustainable development, while department 5 concentrates on rights and judicial affairs in the international realm. Department 6 considers culture and communication in foreign

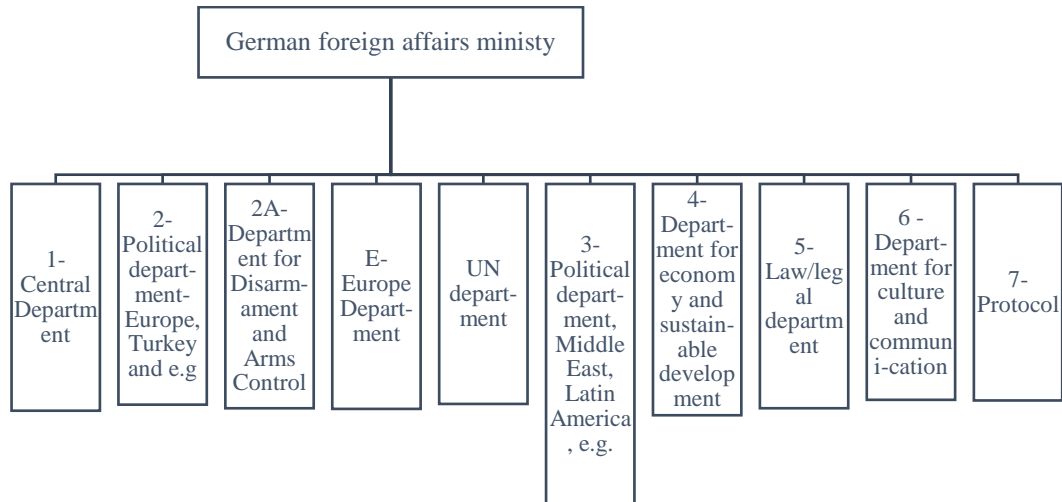
⁵⁵ The original text is in German. It is translated into English by the researcher.

⁵⁶ The original text is in German. It is translated into English by the researcher.

⁵⁷ The original text is in German. It is translated into English by the researcher.

affairs. Finally, department 7 is called the protocol department, which deals with issues such as travel and visiting programs.

Figure 8. Departments of the German foreign ministry



Source: made by the researcher from information of (Auswärtiges Amt 2012b, Auswärtiges Amt 2015)

Foreign cultural policy is specifically set in department 6, “Culture and Communication”. Besides the head of the department, key experts, heads of different departments, ministers of state in the foreign ministry, personal advisors of the foreign minister and the foreign minister are involved in making decisions on foreign cultural policy (Kreft, personal communication, 2014).

Department 6 has a head and three commissioners. One commissioner deals with the issue of culture and German as a foreign language. The second commissioner is in charge of foreign science policy. The third commissioner is in charge of communication of Germany and dialogue between cultures. The titles and number of commissioners changed slightly between 1998 and 2013 (and even afterwards). For instance, in 2015 there was a single commissioner in charge of two issues, “foreign science policy and communication of Germany” and “dialogue between cultures”.

Each commissioner has a chance to work closely with different *Referate* [divisions], from 600 to 610, of department 6. The titles of the divisions and their cooperation with specific commissioners have changed slightly over time. Each division deals with specific issues:

- Division 600 is in charge of strategy and planning of foreign culture and education policy and program of *Deutschlandbild im Ausland/DA* [Germany's image abroad].
- Division 601 deals with cultural media activities in Europe, USA etc.
- Division 602 deals with cultural and media activities in Asia, Africa etc.
- Division 603 concentrates on cultural and media activities, as well as art, literature, film and UNESCO activities.
- Division 604 considers projects of scientific institutes and universities, for instance work with the *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut* [German archeological institute].
- Division 605 focuses on foreign schools and sport.
- Division 606 deals with institutes such as *Mittlerorganisationen*, the Goethe Institute and ifa.
- Division 607 is in charge of domestic public relations and citizen dialogue.
- Division 608 is in charge of internet, website and audio communication abroad and media such as DW.
- Division 609 deals with communication and media affairs with Middle Eastern countries and specifically dialogue with the Islamic World.
- Division 610 deals with school partnership projects such as PASCH (Auswärtiges Amt 2012b, Auswärtiges Amt 2015).⁵⁸

The discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue is the responsibility of department 6 and specifically the third commissioner, who is in charge of communication of Germany and dialogue between cultures. Division 609 is one of the divisions dealing with this discourse. More details follow in the next subchapter.

5.2.4 European-Islamic Cultural Dialogue in the Context of German Foreign Cultural Policy

European-Islamic cultural dialogue emerged after 9/11. Although it is articulated for the first time in the 2002 annual report, its foundation was laid in the 2000

⁵⁸ Tasks and title of the divisions usually change yearly, though generally these ten divisions work on the same issues.

Concept, as mentioned in 5.1.1. According to information from the field study, the German government wanted to react after 9/11 for three reasons:

“Because of 9/11, yes, it was. We wanted to aim at Muslim world, not religiously, but socially [...] There were quite half of them, or most of them (terrorist) were Saudis, **first** of all. **Secondly** they were all Sunnis. And then **thirdly** there was a group of them, studying in Hamburg harbor” (Mulack, personal communication, 2015).

As stated in the annual report of 2002, the foreign ministry implemented the special program of European-Islamic cultural dialogue in cooperation with the *Mittlerorganisationen* and the federal government press and information office. The report specifically mentioned the budget for the dialogue in 2002, which was € 5.1 million. According to information from the field study, the initial budget was supplied from “a new tax on cigarettes” (Maaß, personal communication, 2015). It is also known as the “anti-Terror package” (Erbel, personal communication, 2015). Approximately the same amount of budget was allocated to European-Islamic cultural dialogue in the following years (Auswärtiges Amt 2002: 34-35, Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 4-5). It existed as a special program up to the end of 2013, but German foreign cultural policy found new objectives after 2011. Because of changes in some Arab countries during the so-called Arab Spring, programs such as “Transformation” have attracted more attention in German foreign cultural policy recently.

The purpose of European-Islamic cultural dialogue mentioned in the 2002 annual report is:

1. to improve mutual understanding between the Western and the Islamic world through specific projects,
2. to contribute to our (German) values,
3. to use scholarship programs, foreign schools and further education measures for Muslim teachers of the Islamic world countries,
4. to intensify media cooperation (Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5).

European-Islamic cultural dialogue in its initial stages was planned to enable the cultural actors, through the financial resources, to take action. It expected them to carry out freshly developed dialogue projects, which complemented the regular programs, in cooperation with partners in Islamic societies. According to the 2002 annual report, approximately two dozen *Referenten/Referentinnen* [male and

female advisors] started to assist the foreign ministry through their analysis and promotion of dialogue with Islamic societies. According to information from the field study, these advisors were not initially expected to play a major advisory role on this issue. The idea of the foreign ministry was to employ some experts and officers who are familiar with the context of Muslim countries or Islam studies. Such advisors, who could develop their career in the cultural sections of the German embassies in Muslim countries and relevant offices of the foreign ministry, would have a chance to become the permanent employees of the German foreign ministry (Erbel, personal communication, 2015).

The “Commissioner for the Dialogue of Cultures” was established in 2002 in the department of communication and culture to specifically deal with European-Islamic cultural dialogue. Consequently, a working platform was set up for “dialogue with the Islamic world” (division 609). This division networked with other divisions (for instance with divisions 604 and 608), cultural institutes and private groups, as an initiator and catalyst to initiate cultural projects with Muslim countries. All the commissioners for dialogue of cultures up to the end of 2013 were diplomats. The first commissioner was Dr. Gunter Mulack, appointed by Joschka Fischer in 2002. Mulack had experience of working as an ambassador or permanent representative in Muslim countries such as Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain and Syria before taking this position. He also worked for three years in the German Embassy of Iran and can speak and understand Farsi. He held this position up to 2005. In Mulack’s view, European-Islamic cultural dialogue was a tool to broaden the access of German society to Muslim society and decrease stereotypes about Muslims, as well as to create a more realistic understanding of Muslims, and vice versa (Mulack, personal communication, 2015).

The second commissioner was Hans-Günter Gnodtke, who also had experience of diplomatic missions in Muslim countries such as Egypt and Sudan. He can speak and understand Arabic. He held his position up to 2007. In his view, European-Islamic cultural dialogue was a tool of public diplomacy towards the Muslim world, and values such as democratization were therefore a measure for him to decide which Muslim countries could partner this project. Some Islamic parties and fundamental organizations were, in his view, outside of the partnership:

“I think what I made clear [...] I was working for a government agency and being an official agent, there is some limitation what I can do. This is different from

what a journalist can do, or an academic institute; and I had to make sure that we will not legitimize people who would be outsider, who would be propagating for Israel, who would be ventilating the old standard and the semitic prejudices of the European history. So that was limitation. Since many of the Islamic parties were criticizing structure of Israel, they were out of my scope of potential of dialogue partners” (Gnodtke, personal communication, 2016).

The third commissioner was Dr. Heinrich Kreft, who held advisory and organizational positions inside the foreign ministry and had some diplomatic experience in Western countries such as the US. He was commissioner up to the middle of 2014.⁵⁹ Kreft believed that all cultures and civilizations should be considered in intercultural dialogue, not just specifically Muslim countries. Therefore, in his view, the name of the commission at that time, dialogue with Islam, did not fit the aims of the foreign ministry. As a result, it was changed after the innovation of Alliance of Civilizations in the UN in 2005:

“At the beginning, the name of the program for dialogue was “dialogue with Islam”, which I personally did not like. Because it seems that it takes analysis of Huntington. So the title changed to dialogue among civilizations, intercultural dialogue or *interkultureller Dialog* after the Spanish prime-minister, Zapatero, with the prime minister of Turkey Tayyip Erdoğan, call for “alliance of civilizations” in 2005. The term obviously was coming from the speech of former-president Khatami in the UN. So, when the alliance of civilizations was founded, we change the name of this office from the dialogue with Islam to dialogue with civilizations. In the year 2005... Erdoğan for two years was general secretary of the OIC, Organization of Islamic Conference, so he made sure that the Muslim countries joined the Alliance of Civilizations Institute. Also this organization is bringing other countries, for example China, US and Latin American countries” (Kreft, personal communication, 2014).

The title of the commission thus changed from “dialogue with Islam” to “dialogue among civilizations or cultures”. This change emerged from interactive discussions among members of staff of the department of culture and communication and members of cultural sections of German embassies in Muslim countries, as two participants in the field study mentioned (Tutakhel, personal communication, 2015; Drexler, personal communication, 2015).

The role of the federal parliament relating to European-Islamic cultural dialogue is also significant. It established the budget in 2001 to prevent future terrorist

⁵⁹ The next commissioner was a woman, Beate Grzeski, who had a diplomatic mission in China.

attacks. The parliament had means of observing the details of this project, for instance by requesting annual reports on foreign cultural policy. A member of the German parliament who played a role in establishing the budget for the program, however, mentioned in interview that the foreign ministry was not brave enough to handle intercultural dialogue with countries which are politically sensitive, specifically Iran. The activities are therefore implemented at “a low level”. He describes intercultural dialogue as being held “hostage” to political tensions between Iran and Germany, and such a situation is not improved even through European-Islamic cultural dialogue:

“There is a mood (on the German side), if there is a trouble with nuclear power of Iran, there should be more boycotts. And there are more sanctions. And there is a general mood to take **intercultural dialogue as hostage** of the sanction too [...]. I would not say this is a formula for any conflict in the world, but with Iran I don't see the necessity of interrupting any intercultural relations” (Nouripour, personal communication, 2014).

But European-Islamic cultural dialogue has had strong points too. The work of the foreign ministry, state and parastatal organizations, *Mittlerorganisationen* and private groups in this regard was a successful model of cooperation. This cooperation was integrated and fruitful, not because it had a plan and inerrant mechanisms but because the foreign ministry from the beginning strived to operate dialogue with the assistance of available German actors. It encouraged networking between them. Chapter 6 shows how the German actors implemented European-Islamic cultural dialogue.

There are two points relating to the approach of the German foreign ministry and diplomats with regard to Iran. Firstly, the general guideline that the diplomats follow is “keeping contact with Iran”. An attempt has been made to uphold a minimum of contact with Iranian society via whatever possible cooperation (Erbel, personal communication, 2015). The foreign ministry also supported educational and academic cooperation with Iran, because it seemed to be a less sensitive field (Kreft, personal communication, 2014) and because of the existence of the highly qualified and motivated academic actors of Iran (Mulack, personal communication, 2015).

Secondly, diplomats who were interviewed in this study were mostly well informed about Muslim countries, the program of European-Islamic cultural

dialogue, and the political structure of Iran specifically. They were not all fully aware of the cultural activities between Iran and Germany in the last two decades, while most of them agreed that educational cooperation was the high point of cooperation between the two countries. It was also significant that, in the context of counting Iran as a Muslim country, persons with knowledge of Arabic (like Bernd Erbel, Gunter Mulack, Hans-Günterand Gnodtke) and Farsi (like Bernd Erbel and Gunter Mulack), held the position of diplomat.

In summing up it is important to explain why this discourse has been a focus of the present study. The reason is that **firstly**, this discourse attracted the attention of the German organization responsible for German foreign cultural policy, the foreign ministry. **Secondly**, a regular budget was allocated to it, and the cultural activities under this discourse have been implemented for a long time (up to concluding the results of this research in 2016). **Thirdly**, the discourse claims to develop an opportunity for dialogue between Germany and participants from other countries (Muslim countries). It is therefore an intercultural dialogue.

5.3 Summary of Chapter 5

Chapter presented information and analysis on the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany and the main organizations associated with it. It has been discussed that in the post-1949 era the German democratically legitimated political system attempted to differentiate cultural policy on the domestic level from its foreign level. Statements and acts of the German federal government are analyzed in this chapter. These acts specified foreign cultural policy as a distinct component of German foreign policy. Analysis of the action plans and statements of the federal government also suggests that certain cultural actors have been expected to deal with specific issues which are culturally important for German foreign policy. European-Islamic cultural dialogue in this context can be seen as a catalyst to implement foreign cultural activities towards Muslim countries since 2002. This discourse was positioned from the beginning as one of the practical programs of the department of culture and communication of the foreign ministry. A specific commission was appointed to deal with it. Iran was not considered a specific target country of German foreign cultural policy, although talking to relevant

experts and diplomats has shown that there is a common agreement to attempt to maintain contact with Iran culturally, even when political tensions with the country are running high.

There are three main factors forming Iran's foreign cultural policy. Firstly, it is heavily influenced by the dual political system after the Revolution in 1979. The democratically and religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state have divided the task of setting foreign cultural policy between at least two sections, the foreign ministry and ICRO. Analysis of the statements and acts generally reflects this duality. Foreign cultural policy is a mixture of domestic cultural and Islamic propagation policy rather than being a distinct component of Iranian foreign policy. Secondly, the cultural organizations are not led by experts. For instance, some appointed directors of Rayzani are not able to communicate effectively in the language of the mission country or even in English. The other employees are not experts in cultural activities but may have expertise in religious studies or are trusted by organizations close to the religiously legitimated sector. In this context, interfaith dialogue could not be operated efficiently to promote cultural relations with Germany. Interfaith dialogue emerged in the early years after the Iranian Revolution, from 1982. It was gradually taken out of the hands of Iranian civil society by ICRO, where it continues to reside to this day.

Thirdly, the democratically legitimated sector has not been fully aware of the significance of the role of cultural activity as a pillar of foreign policy. For instance, the opportunity of dialogue among civilizations during Khatami's presidency was not used operationally by the foreign ministry or the embassy in Germany.

These three factors created a fragmented foreign cultural policy. Interviews with relevant Iranian experts and diplomats have illustrated that they have little information and knowledge about the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany. The foreign cultural policy as a specific policy has been unfamiliar for them, as well. Nearly all participants of the study agreed that there is no political sensitivity concerning the cultural relationship with Germany. On the Iranian side there has therefore been a lack of clear and integrated policy, not a lack of interest.

The next chapter presents information on cultural actors that implemented cultural activities in the discourse of interfaith dialogue, dialogue among civilizations and European-Islamic cultural dialogue, and contains details of the activities.

Chapter 6: Iranian and German Implementing Actors of Intercultural Dialogue

This study now moves on to present data and analysis regarding Iranian and German institutes and organizations which play a role in implementing cultural activities within the framework of intercultural dialogue through the specific discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue (on the German side) and interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations (on the Iranian side). Here, these institutes and organizations are called intercultural dialogue actors. They have received financial assistance from the German or Iranian states. The first subchapter, 6.1, considers two main Iranian actors, as well as the other institutes, organizations and private groups which play a role in intercultural dialogue. The next subchapter, 6.2, reflects on information about four main German actors of intercultural dialogue. Institutes and private groups which play a role in intercultural dialogue to a lesser degree will be discussed in this subchapter as well. Both subsections consider information on the history and organizational aims, organizational structure and budget, and the practices of the specific institutes, general cultural activities and specific activities in the framework of intercultural dialogue, and conclude with a summary. The third subchapter, 6.3, is a summary of chapter 6. It contains a key analysis regarding the characteristics of the intercultural dialogue activities which were implemented between Iran and Germany from 1998 to 2013.

6.1 Iranian Implementing Actors

There are some Iranian institutes and actors which play a role in implementing cultural and intercultural dialogue activities for an international public, including

Germans. Some of them are located in Germany, some in Iran. The Iranian embassy in Berlin and three Iranian consulates in Munich, Frankfurt and Hamburg have offices to deal with cultural affairs. There are also institutes which concentrate on religious Islamic activities, for instance the Islamic Center of Hamburg, *Ahl al-Bayt* Mosque in Cologne, Islamic Culture Center in Frankfurt, *Abouzar* Mosque in Aachen, and the Islamic and Cultural Center of Iranians in Berlin. Iranian TV and radio and the news agency IRNA also have a branch office in Berlin. Some cultural institutes are located in Iran. Because there is no report by the Iranian foreign ministry or Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations (ICRO) to reflect foreign cultural activities or names of cultural actors, some Iranian libraries were searched to gather the relevant data. As mentioned in chapter 4, media records such as newspapers, magazines and electronic indexes were studied. According to that search, more than 20 Iranian institutes have played a role in organizing cultural activities, specifically interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. Details are presented in Appendix 6, at the end of this research. The Iranian actors are as follows:

1. ICRO
2. Different Iranian cultural attachés which are subsections of ICRO
3. The Academy of Art
4. The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance
5. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
6. The Ministry of Cooperation
7. The Ministry of Higher Education of Iran
8. The Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS)
9. The Organization of Cultural Documentation of Islamic Revolution of Iran
10. The President's Office
11. The International Center of Dialogue among Civilizations (ICDAC)
12. Center for Women's Participation, President's Office
13. Different universities of Iran
14. The National Commission of UNESCO
15. The Organization of Tourism of Iran
16. The Organization of Youth of Iran
17. The Organization of Sport
18. The Office for Public Relations and International Affairs of the Kish Free Zone Organization
19. Municipalities of different cities of Iran, e.g. Tehran and Mashhad

Studying the institutes in the list reveals that just three of them (1-3) are under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector, while numbers 4-17 are under the authority of the democratically legitimated sector. The religiously legitimated sector is thus either less interested in the implementation of the cultural activities, or the media paid less attention to activities of its relevant actors.

Studying the extant texts and informal conversations showed that two Iranian organizations implemented intercultural dialogue activities more than others. The first is the branch office of ICRO, Rayzani, which is located in Germany. It is selected as a focus of this study because it has strong ties with the religiously legitimated sector. Hence investigating it provides interesting analysis on “interfaith dialogue” activities towards the German public and on the cultural activities which are authorized by the religious sector. Analysis on Rayzani is presented in 6.1.1. The second focus here is on the ICDAC. This actor is selected because it was supported by the Iranian presidency. Analyzing its activities can clarify what has been done by the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state towards the German public. Analysis on the ICDAC is presented in 6.1.2.

Why are other organizations in the above list not the main focus of this study? Some of them are relevant, but they did not participate actively in this research. For instance, the cultural section of the Iranian embassy in Germany did not cooperate with the researcher despite being contacted several times.⁶⁰ Some of the actors were not especially active, so it did not make sense to spend time and face difficulties to gather more data about their activities. But the data which has already been gathered about these organizations is used to briefly analyze their activities in 6.1.3 and 6.1.4.

⁶⁰ The section has not presented any information on its activity on the official website of the Iranian embassy in Berlin. The researcher tried to contact the office several times but was only able to meet the person in charge of the office a single time. In that short meeting she could not record the talk and was requested to leave the office as soon as possible because of a demonstration of some Iranian opposition groups in front of the embassy. Given the lack of detailed information and contact with the office, the cultural section of the Iranian embassy was dropped from the list of focused intercultural dialogue actors.

6.1.1 Rayzani or Branch Office of the Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations in Germany

To gather information about Rayzani, different sources of information were accessed and its website was checked. Because the website did not give updated and clear information about Rayzani, the head office of ICRO in Tehran and the Rayzani office in Berlin were visited at least twice for information. Their publications, such as weekly or monthly journals in Farsi, were the main sources of information. During these visits some individuals were also interviewed. The result of analysis of the data is presented here in three parts: Part 6.1.1.1 presents information on the history and organizational aims of Rayzani; information about the organizational structure of Rayzani follows in 6.1.1.2; and finally, practices and activities which Rayzani generally and specifically implemented regarding intercultural dialogue are presented in 6.1.1.3.

6.1.1.1 History and Organizational Aims

As discussed earlier in 2.4.2, the history of Iranian cultural affairs in Germany goes back to when the first Iranian embassy was established in Berlin in 1885 (Martin 1959: 30). The cultural section of the embassy for a while, even before the Islamic Revolution and some years thereafter, used to be called Rayzani, which in Farsi means “cultural consultation”. During those years, Rayzani worked under the supervision of the Iranian cultural ministry and after the Revolution under the supervision of the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance. As discussed in 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, after the establishment of ICRO in 1994, Rayzani fell under its supervision. According to information from the field study even during the years Rayzani was working under the supervision of the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance, the Iranian embassy⁶¹ started to deal with some cultural affairs itself, without requesting help from Rayzani. This point illustrates a dualism in the cultural policy of Iran abroad, a trend which continues to this day. Officially, two offices work in Berlin today. They both call themselves “cultural attaché” or *Kulturabteilung*. Nevertheless, since Rayzani is supervised by ICRO, and the cultural office of the embassy is supervised by the ambassador, and consequently by the Iranian foreign ministry, they are different.

⁶¹ In those years the embassy was in Bonn. After World War II, Iran, like many other countries, moved its diplomatic mission from Berlin to Bonn. After the unification of Germany in 1990, it was nearly a decade before the embassy was moved back to Berlin (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016).

ICRO has branch offices and cultural centers in 61 countries worldwide. In some countries Rayzani are located inside embassies, but in others, such as Germany, they are located separately outside the embassy. Officially, the Rayzani of Berlin is in charge of cultural activities, but according to an unwritten agreement between the embassy and Rayzani, it deals with specific and not all cultural issues. The cultural section of the embassy deals with cultural affairs, such as academic exchanges, museum cooperation and sporting competitions and events, film and theater festivals. Rayzani, meanwhile, deals with the remaining cultural affairs such as promotion of Farsi language programs, religious activities and ceremonies (Abbasi, personal communication, 2016; Movahedifar, personal communication, 2015). However, both actors are unhappy with this arrangement. In the view of a former director of Rayzani, there is no point in having a cultural section in the embassy at all when Rayzani works in Germany on behalf of the Iranian state:

“At the beginning it was supposed to close down all the cultural sections (of embassies). The foreign affairs ministry asked us [ICRO] to add cultural sections to embassies, in the countries that had no Rayzani. That was our agreement... the agreement is even available in writing...but then they kept cultural sections even in mission countries which already have Rayzani” (Imanipour, personal communication, 2014).

Also in the view of another former director of Rayzani, the existence of two offices contradicts the initial agreement and wastes the budget. He previously criticized Kamal Kharazi, the foreign minister at the time of President Khatami, on this issue, attempting to convince him to eliminate the office from the Iranian embassy in Berlin:

“I told him: ‘Please clarify our duties and responsibilities. If in some countries you don’t have Rayzani, then it is good idea to let cultural sections of the embassies to work. But if in a country you already have Rayzani, what does cultural section want to do? You are wasting your money. Consequently you are creating a clash between Rayzani and Cultural section’. He answered: ‘Yes, your comment is correct. We should go to the higher council and talk about it. Yes, we should take this point serious’. But I got no relevant news after that (regarding closing down the cultural section). And that was a problem!” (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016)

Another director of Rayzani who held office under Ahmadinejad continued to criticize this situation to Manouchehr Mottaki, a foreign minister at that time. His

criticism led to the cultural budget of the Iranian embassy being cut, but still not to the elimination of its cultural section:

“In the time of Mr. Mottaki, the budget of cultural sections of the embassies was cut, to take away motivation from them [embassy], to not create a cultural office and to prevent parallel working... if the idea has been operated, that would be great; because then the budget could transfer to ICRO which has faced a budget deficit to direct cultural affairs. But the foreign affairs ministry saved the budget which was officially devoted to its cultural section and in fact decreased its cultural activities... some embassies tried to keep their cultural sections and fund them with other sources of budget that the Ambassador holds” (Imanipour, personal communication, 2014)

Working under the authority of the embassy has not been popular with directors and members of staff of Rayzani. Rayzani works according to the policies and aims of ICRO, but it is also under the authority of the Iranian embassy. According to an international accepted norm, the embassy is the only representative of or responsible authority for the diplomatic missions of a country. The head of the mission is usually the ambassador or a high commissioner. Therefore, different economic, media and cultural centers of any country can work abroad, but, strictly speaking, they do so under the supervision of the diplomatic mission. Being managed or authorized by two state organizations is not a happy situation for Rayzani's members. The process of decision making in ICRO was also mentioned as a problem by some interviewees. The higher council of ICRO is headed by the minister of Islamic culture and guidance, which means that a minister who is in charge of domestic cultural affairs also leads a council that decides on foreign cultural affairs. A former head of Rayzani uses this point to mention a structural problem with decision making. In his view, the expertise of a foreign minister who has to do with diplomatic relations and the international realm is better suited to foreign cultural policy than a culture minister whose expertise is mostly concentrated on domestic cultural issues (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016)

Rayzani, like many other branches of ICRO around the world, is supposed to follow aims such as promoting the Islamic Republic's ideas, Islamic values, and building relationships with religious organizations and groups. This point was used by some participants of the study, from the embassy, to challenge the expertise of Rayzani. In their view, Rayzani's expertise is supposed to be in religious issues, not cultural issues in their general sense. That is why it is necessary to have a cultural section with special expertise to fill the gaps

(Movahedifar, personal communication, 2015; Khatibzadeh, personal communication, 2014). There are a few researchers, such as Ahmad Naghibzadeh, who indirectly reflected the same view (Naghibzadeh 1999, Naghibzadeh 2009). It is worth considering why the issue is not deeply and directly discussed in the academic or expert sphere in Iranian society. In an interview with Naghibzadeh it became clear that the reason for neglecting this issue is a lack of interest in both sectors of the Iranian state to come to an agreement over the power clash:

“[Nobody] criticizes [it] because the state does not want to hear. See, there is a conflict between foreign ministry and ICRO. This [one side] wants to define its own cultural components and that [other side] wants to express [the cultural components] itself. All of the clash is to cover their own political activities. Then what do you want to say in such a situation?” (Naghibzadeh, personal communication, 2015).

An informal talk with another expert who implemented some of Iran’s initial interfaith dialogue meetings in the 1980s gives another reason. In his view, criticizing ICRO can be a challenging issue for experts and academics, because the top senior officers and heads of ICRO have had a strong relationship with the leader (Soroush, personal communication, 2012). Criticizing ICRO can therefore be perceived as criticizing the leader himself. That is why this organization is rarely criticized in public. One of those rare criticisms came from Salman Safavi. He is the brother of Rehman Safavi, a military advisor to the leader, and personally played a key role in some of Iran’s informal security lobbies abroad, such as negotiating to release an Israeli soldier in 2006 (the Independent 2011). With such a background, it is understandable that his criticism would not cost him heavily, because he himself is part of the religiously legitimated sector. He criticized the activities of Rayzani of ICRO abroad for having unrealistic short and long-term programs. He mentioned that these branch offices omitted to promote the art and cultural image of Iran internationally abroad, and in most cases they reported in a way that magnified their achievements (Safavi 2013).

Meanwhile, there are facts which indicate that Rayzani has not been perceived fully by some German actors. Since Rayzani is located apart from the Iranian embassy in Berlin, its presence is not apparent to all diplomatic and cultural visitors to the Iranian ambassador at the embassy. For instance, one of the staff of the German foreign ministry who worked for a long time in the intercultural dialogue section of the department of culture and media roughly knew the name

of Rayzani or of “an Iranian cultural center apart from the Iranian embassy”. She knew the name of the director of Rayzani at that time, but she remarked that she had never understood the function and relationship between “that center” and “the cultural section” inside the Iranian embassy (Tutakhel, personal communication, 2015). A German volunteer group, the Grüter family⁶², which implemented some intercultural dialogue activities for Iranian and German participants, also did not mention Rayzani. They were therefore asked specifically about Rayzani, but still did not remember it: “No – we can’t remember that organization. May be that they were somewhere involved but we don’t know”. With more information about the type of organization Rayzani is, they recognized it:

“[...] OK, so you mean with Rayzani *Farhangi*, the *Kulturabteilung* der I.R. Iran in Berlin, Drakestraße. Indeed, we had a very good and intensive contact to them till today” (Manfred and Gisela Grüter, personal communication, 2016).

Furthermore, Rayzani has been understood by some German diplomats as a representative of the “Iranian regime” and not as a state deputation like the Iranian embassy:

“But you know the embassy here (in Berlin) has an ambassador ... but then they have special cultural counselor. And this special cultural counselor I don’t know to whom he reports. Sometimes the ambassador is more open than him in dialogue. I don’t know some of these guys seem to be a member of the **regime**, you know? And therefore it is very difficult to [...] I see it as a problem. Because the cultural attaché is more linked to the regime, and spreading regime propaganda. Maybe the embassy wants to... wants good relationship and increase the cooperation in economic interaction and this cultural attaché I think [...] I don’t know” (Mulack, personal communication, 2015).

According to this diplomat, Rayzani is under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. He expresses the point using the word “regime”. A German diplomat calling the Iranian state or part of the Iranian state “regime” gives a paradoxical message. It is paradoxical because it challenges the frank view of the German actor in dialogue. Dialogue, as it was discussed in chapter 3, is a communication between two (or more) sides that respect each other on an equal level. When this diplomat considers the Iranian side as a regime, it means either he or she does not consider Iran to be equal with Germany as a democratic state, or considers the German state also to be a regime.

⁶² Manfred and Gisela Grüter are a family who implemented many cultural activities under the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”. More information about their activities follows in 6.1.3.

Another diplomat, who was previously German ambassador in Iran, thinks differently. He understands Rayzani to be like the Goethe Institute, which to a limited degree is under the authority of the German foreign ministry:

“Yes, I have participated in their events, so I know that they are independent, the personnel are independent. Most people here say ok, maybe they are like **Goethe Institute**, which is officially also independent, but in the case of political conflict, then the government intervenes. I mean if GI was doing something that is absolutely against the political mainstream, then they would have problems. But they do not get permission to plan things and to do things, only in the case of the conflict which is exceptional, then they can do intervention. And **I think this is rather similar to the Iranian cultural institute**. It is not an institute which just follows the plan of the government; it has also its own planning and implementation. But as soon as there is an indication that it is going very contrary to the basic principles of politics, then there will also be a sort of intervention” (Erbel, personal communication, 2015).

That the German diplomats perceive Rayzani to be a regime-appointed office or an institute like the Goethe Institute indicates that its aims and function are still not fully understood by the German authorities.

6.1.1.2 Organizational Structure

The director of Rayzani in Germany is called the *Rayzan* [cultural counselor], who works with a team of officials including a deputy and financial and administrative officers. There is a library and a seminar room inside the Rayzani building. There are some employees who take care of cultural affairs, such as German-Farsi translation, public relations, website, publication, research, audio and photography. These employees are employed from the local population in Germany as well as Iranian students who are studying in Germany.

The director of Rayzani in Germany is neither necessarily appointed from employees of ICRO nor from diplomats of the foreign ministry. In some cases, individuals were suggested by Presidents Khatami and Ahmadinejad to the head of the higher council of ICRO. The head of the council is actually the minister of Islamic culture and guidance, who is appointed by the president himself. The recommended persons could therefore be chosen as director of Rayzani (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016). Two people were appointed to the position during Khatami’s presidency, and two during Ahmadinejad’s.

The annual budget of the Iranian parliament shows that ICRO received an average annual budget of 50 million Euro from the Iranian parliament between 1998 and 2013. Appendix 5 gives more details of the ICRO budget. It is not clear what amount of this budget is allocated to Rayzani centers in 61 countries. Moreover, some members of staff of Rayzani argued that ICRO received different amounts of financial assistance from organizations dependent on the leader (Tarighat, personal communication, 2014).

6.1.1.3 Practices: Generally and Specifically for Intercultural Dialogue

Rayzani organized and coordinated different activities between 1998 and 2013, including participating in book, tourism, photographic and handicraft exhibitions and cultural weeks in different German cities. It also held conferences, seminars and weekly or monthly meetings on Islamic theology issues and sent delegates to participate in conferences and seminars of religious institutes such as *Evangelische Akademie Loccum* (referred to here as Loccum Academy), which belongs to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Hannover. Organizing events and ceremonies for Iranian residents abroad, such as *Nowruz* [Iranian New Year], and the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad and Shia Imams, are also mentioned as activities of Rayzani. In terms of interreligious dialogue, there have been no round table meetings implemented by the Center for Interreligious Dialogue (CID) of ICRO. Nonetheless, Rayzani has used the potential of the network of ICRO and religious centers of Qum to participate in relevant meetings and seminars organized in Germany, as the information of some participants suggests (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016).

Further activities include the publication of books, studies and journals. The journal *Aus dem Iran/Kulturmeldungen aus Iran*, which in Farsi is called *didar-e Ashena*, the journals *az digaran* [from others], *Spektrum Iran* and *sobh-e Omid* [morning of hope] are considerable in this regard. There are also some books, brochures and pamphlets on Iran, Islam and the West that received publishing support from Rayzani, for instance *Janeb-e Qarbi* [the West's Side].⁶³ The

⁶³ *Janeb-e Qarbi* was published during the time that Dr. Faridzadeh was the director of Rayzani. He held this position before 1998 and then in 1998 became the first head of the ICDAC as well as an advisor to Khatami. He has been very active regarding introducing and reading different books in the field of philosophy, Islam, and relations between Iran and the West. In *Janeb-e Qarbi* he analyzed the content of 75 magazines, focusing

periodical *Pažuheš hā-ye farhangi* [Cultural investigations] is also significant; it features research in fields such as Iran studies, religion in Germany, Islam in the West and cultural educational policies in Germany. Research on foreign and educational policies of Germany (Rayzani in Germany n.d.) and research on the relationship between the West and the Islamic world (Rayzani in Germany 1392 [2013]) are notable from this publication. The last research contains a translation of a co-written book which is published by ifa and will be discussed in 6.2.3.3.⁶⁴

The publications of Rayzani have not had a large audience in German and Iranian society (Aghae, personal communication, 2016 and Tarighat, personal communication, 2014). *Spektrum Iran*, which has been published in German since 1987, covers broad issues in the field of Iran studies, orientalism, Islam studies, Sufism, fundamentalism and philosophy. From 2014 it was acknowledged by the ministry of science and research of Iran as a scientific journal. Almost all interviewees from Rayzani proudly emphasized the journal of *Spektrum Iran* as a main activity of Rayzani. They argued that it represented Iran's name in German academic society. Rayzani was scheduled to distribute 500 copies of each volume among German universities and academic institutions free of charge. However, some of the universities declined because of "having no enough space" (Tarighat, personal communication, 2014). The articles of the *Spektrum Iran* are not written by native German speakers. Therefore the translation is an important and expensive part of producing this journal. According to a member of staff of Rayzani, publishing one volume of *Spektrum Iran* costs approximately four thousand Euro (Tarighat, personal communication, 2014). According to an Iranian student who participated in a translation project for Rayzani, journals and books are published mostly for their bureaucratic function. The publication is to give an impression to ICRO that Rayzani is active. Directors of Rayzani or senior officers of ICRO give these publications as gifts to their international or Iranian guests to

on the answer to this question: How has the West perceived Muslims? (Faridzadeh, personal communication, 2013) (a)

⁶⁴ The research clearly violates the ethical aspects of the translation. It is published in the format of research or a report, not a translation. It mentions the name of the original authors at the end of the text with an explanation that the "view of these authors have been used in this research". But the text in parts, such as chapters six and seven, is actually the direct translation of the ifa book, chapters 11 and 12 *Bakr, Salwa/Ezbidi, Basem/Kassab-Hassan, Hanan /Karcic, Fikret/Zaidi, Mazhar/Jawhar Hassan, Dato'* 2004: *Der Westen Und Die Islamische Welt – Eine Muslimische Position* [the West and the Islamic World - a Muslim Position]. Translated by Magdi Cherifa/Gaines, Jeremy. Stuttgart: Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa).

illustrate that they take cultural activity in Germany seriously (Aghaee, personal communication, 2016).

Promoting Farsi language and literature is another activity of Rayzani in Germany, although it does not have a specific center for teaching Farsi in Germany. It often provides Farsi language courses in some German schools and universities. The Center of Dissemination of Farsi Language of ICRO assists Rayzani to do this, but cooperation between them is limited. Since 2012, there has been an organizational change in the structure of ICRO. Through this change, all ICRO Farsi language centers around the world and the Dissemination of Farsi Language Center are merged into one organization: the *Saadi* foundation.⁶⁵ The idea has been to coordinate all Farsi language teaching activities abroad, overseen by one unified policy, as well as to create “concentration, synergy and coherence” among them, according to the constitution of the Saadi Foundation (Šorā Āli Enqelāb Farhangi 1389 [2010]). According to a member of the staff of Rayzani, such coordination has never happened. The request to establish the Saadi Foundation was rejected three times by the Iranian parliament. Finally, on the insistence of Dr. Ghلامali Haddad Adel,⁶⁶ who at that time was the head of the Academy of Farsi Language, the parliament agreed to its establishment. In the view of this member of staff, it was a wrong decision to establish the Saadi Foundation and did not lead to more coordinated activities to promote the Farsi language abroad, because ICRO itself, after two decades, still faced difficulties coordinating cultural activities with the foreign ministry (Abbasi, personal communication, 2016).

Besides the aims and bureaucratic guidelines of ICRO, the personality and character of the different directors also informed the type of activities Rayzani undertook, which were not limited to religious activities, as was expected by ICRO. It also engaged in fields like music and art. For instance, Mohammad Ali Rajabi, a director of Rayzani at the time of Khatami, besides organizing religious practices, also organized a seminar to commemorate Annemarie Schimmel, a female German Islam and Orient scholar. Furthermore, Rajabi’s intention was to

⁶⁵ Abū-Muhammad Muslih al-Dīn bin Abdallāh Shīrāzī, famous by his pen-name Saadi, was one of the well-known poets of Iran who was born in the early 13th century. Besides Farsi-speaking countries, Saadi also attracted the attention of western literary scholars.

⁶⁶ The name of Haddad Adel was mentioned as the permanent member of the higher council of ICRO, appointed by the leader. His daughter is also married to the son of the leader.

support traditional Iranian music concerts in Germany. He was on good terms with the then-director of *Hause der Kulturen der Welt* (HKW), Hans-Georg Knopp. Knopp later became the general secretary of the Goethe Institute. Through this friendly relationship Knopp organized an exhibition on Iranian art and society in the HKW for around three months in 2002. He visited Iran a year later and consequently initiated more cultural activities (Knopp, personal communication 2016 and Rajabi, personal communication, 2016), as will be discussed further in 6.2.4 and 6.2.5. Rajabi's attention to the issue of music is significant. He explained that, in his view, music is a cultural favorite of German audiences. That is why he wanted to use this instrument to introduce Iranian culture in Germany, but he mentioned how the idea was welcomed by the top junior officers of ICRO:

“Well, we were organizing to bring traditional music from Iran to Germany [...] then Teheran was responding that ‘would it not be better if you instead of taking traditional Maghami Music over there, organizing a lecture?’ [...] a religious lecture would not be better? [...] they were not aware what audience here [Germany] are expecting” (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016).

Moreover, a German volunteer group received strong support from Rayzani during Rajabi's time. The group mentioned his name as “opening many doors” in Iranian society (Manfred and Gisela Grüter, personal communication, 2016). This point will be explained later in 6.2.5.

The impact of the next director of Rayzani, who came to office at the time of Ahmadinejad, on the form of its activities was slightly different. He studied philosophy, religion and mysticism and showed a specific interest in debate and talking to Islamic thinkers and intellectuals in the period in which he held his position in Rayzani. For example, his visit to a famous Muslim professor, Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid,⁶⁷ at a conference on Koran studies in Frankfurt is mentioned on the Rayzani website (Rayzani in Berlin 2008b). In his time, Rayzani supported publication of the book *Denn Dein ist das Reich; Gebete aus dem Islam* [For thine is the kingdom; prayers from Islam], which was written by Annemarie Schimmel (Rayzani in Berlin 2008a). He also emphasized in a public interview that activities, such as “sending cultural and academic groups from Germany to Iran and sending clergymen from Iran to Germany”, “inviting cultural attaché of

⁶⁷ Professor Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid is an Egyptian Islam and Quran studies scholar. He lives and teaches in the Netherlands.

Muslim countries in Germany in Ramadhan month, and discussing problems of Muslim countries”, and holding meetings to introduce “Shia Islam” and “achievements of Islamic Revolution” and “nuclear energy successes” to strengthen the “unification between Muslims of the world”, as “the leader’s wishes” (Hemati 16.03.2008) are amongst the main duties and approaches of the Rayzani.

A few years later, another director came to Rayzani towards the end of Ahmadinejad’s presidency. During his time, two NGOs started to work closely with Rayzani. The first is *Stiftung für Islamische Studien* (SIS) [Islamic Studies Foundation], which is headed by Mahdi Esfahani. It concentrates on Islam studies and dialogue between the world’s religions, as its website says (SIS 2015). The second NGO is the Hafiz Institute, which worked formerly under the name of *Amirkabir cultural association* (Hafis-Institut 2013). Based on information and observation in the field study, both institutes receive their main financial support from Rayzani. The main reason to work with these two NGOs has been mentioned by a former director as follows:

“It is usual in developed countries to create a foundation, with format of NGO; then this foundation is going and working on cultural activities, abroad. Of course inside their own country they are sticking to their own foreign affairs ministry. That means inside their own country, they are practically an obedience of their foreign affairs ministries, but outside they get distance from their embassy. They tried to show themselves non-state, like Goethe Institute and so on...what we do is in contrary [of what they do]... for that reason we have resulted that our activities should not necessarily be done in an official/state format. [That is why] I founded two NGOs in Germany” (Imanipour, personal communication, 2014).

The director of Rayzani clearly understood the point of the incompatibility of Iranian and German structures relating to foreign cultural activities. Then he tried to use a short-cut to fill the gap through the NGO’s work. Using this solution he could successfully conclude a contract with the Centre for Islamic Theology, University of Münster. Through this contract a three-year Junior Professorship in Shia studies was established. Without SIS, Rayzani would not have been able to convince the University to cooperate on establishing this junior professorship, some participants in the field study said (Abbasi, personal communication, 2016 and Imanipour, personal communication, 2014). On the University of Münster homepage, conclusion of the contract is reported, but the name of the then-

director of Rayzani is mentioned in the report without reference to his position (director of Rayzani).

Informal conversations with members of the staff and former directors of Rayzani revealed that generally all cultural and religious activities are articulated as intercultural dialogue with Germany. Based on the collected data, however, it is clear that Rayzani does not implement specific activities regarding interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. As was discussed in 5.2.3.1, the center for interreligious dialogue (CID) of ICRO implemented many interreligious dialogues with different religious institutes and churches in Western countries such as Greece, Russia, Italy, Britain, Switzerland and Austria. But Germany is not on the list. Some of the volumes of *Spektrum Iran* (Spektrum 2002, Wenzel 2003), however, deal with the issue of interreligious dialogue and dialogue among civilizations.

Four reasons are given in the field study for the weak role of Rayzani to implement cultural activities in the framework of intercultural dialogue. Firstly, the low budget is mentioned by some participants. However, because there is no record of the total budget devoted to this organization, it is difficult to examine this reason. Secondly, the priority for cultural activities was religious issues, as some participants of the study pointed out. This reason may be partly relevant to the discourse of dialogue among civilizations, too, but not to the discourse of interfaith dialogue. Thirdly, the fact that different directors has different priorities at different times on the one hand, and the lack of a specific plan for Rayzani in Germany (whether determined by ICRO or Rayzani itself) on the other, have been mentioned by some participants as reasons for the weak role of Rayzani to implement specific projects regarding intercultural dialogue (Tarighat, personal communication 2014). Fourthly, the lack of a new “governmental cultural agreement” between Iran and Germany is mentioned as an obstacle by one participant in the study (Abbasi, personal communication, 2014), although as already mentioned in 2.3, cultural agreements between the Iranian and German states has played a symbolic and not exclusive role in implementation of cultural activities. Conclusion of the twin-cities agreement between Weimar and Shiraz in 2009, and between Isfahan and Freiburg in 2000, as well as the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Iranian ministry of science, research and technology and the DAAD in 2012 are indications that it was

possible to implement some organized cultural activities between the two countries even without re-concluding a governmental agreement.

There was also no clear cooperation between Rayzani and the ICDAC. Coordination of an international conference through cooperation between ICRO (headquarters in Tehran) and the ICDAC in 2002 showed that the issue of dialogue among civilizations could also be undertaken practically in the Rayzani in Germany. Rayzani around the world received articles from prospective participants in this conference from 102 countries, including Germany (Kermani 2002: 9 and 10). Rayzani thus played an important role in connecting the international audience with the ICDAC's coordinators. Also, the Saadi Foundation of Tirana in Albania in 2000 (Saadi Shirazi Foundation 2008) and Rayzani of Sarajevo in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2001 (Cultural Center of ICRO Sarajevo n.d.) commemorated the year of dialogue among civilizations by holding conferences. The question is therefore why the issue of "dialogue among civilizations" did not attract the attention of Rayzani of Germany in those years. A former director of Rayzani answered that the reason was the absence of a clear plan regarding the idea of "dialogue among civilizations" from Khatami himself, his cultural advising team and the ICDAC:

"When I was appointed as Rayzani director, I thought this issue [Dialogue among civilizations] is in responsibility of Rayzani centers. There was a guy [---], who was the cultural deputy of Mr. Khatami. He came to talk to us on behalf Mr. Khatami and the ICDAC. I asked him some questions, hummm, we have been some new appointed directors [of Rayzani centers], I asked him: 'Which duty do you expect us to hold [regarding to dialogue among civilizations]?' He respond: 'Nothhhhhhhing! I asked: you mean we have no role over there [abroad]?' He answered: 'Yes. This is in responsibility of our institute, itself'. So that shows that there were absolutely no plan (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016).

Rayzani also did not network effectively with other Iranian institutes and organizations which were located in Germany. The Islamic Center of Hamburg had contact with Rayzani in cases such as participating in religious seminars, but when Rayzani needed a non-governmental organization to establish a Shia studies Junior Professorship at the University of Münster, the gap was not filled by the Islamic Center of Hamburg. Furthermore, when an administrative officer of Rayzani was asked for contact information of key people who work in Germany's branch office of the Iranian TV or news agency IRNA, he replied that the

relationship between Rayzani and these branch offices was not that strong (Tarighat, personal communication, 2014).

6.1.1.4 A Summary of Analysis of Rayzani

To conclude this section, it is important to recall the question as to the characteristics of the cultural activities of Rayzani in the framework of intercultural dialogue. There have been some clashes between Rayzani and the cultural section of the embassy. They illustrate the fragmented foreign cultural policy of Iran. Rayzani in Germany has followed a routine or traditional form of activities, especially religious activities, as the general guideline of ICRO, which is set for all Rayzani worldwide (and not specifically for Rayzani in a Western country like Germany), expects it to. The role of the director is significant in shaping the activities, which mostly took the form of seminars, participation in exhibitions and publications. They rarely took a new or advanced form. Furthermore, no specific cultural activity project (long-term or short-term) regarding specific discourses of interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations has been implemented. Moreover, despite the non-diplomatic background of its directors, Rayzani illustrated a high degree of cooperation with some German cultural actors in implementing cultural activities for both Iranian and German participants. More focused points about the cultural activities of Rayzani will be summarized in 6.3.

6.1.2 International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations (ICDAC)

The International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations (ICDAC) existed for around six years. The original plan of its founders was to make it center of thinking in the Islamic World, a center at which the Muslim philosophers of the world would teach. However, the internal clashes between the members of Khatami's team, the end of Khatami's presidency and, consequently, the center's official budget being cut led to its closure. After closure of the ICDAC, so little care was taken with official records, publications and books in the center's library that finding relevant information to write this subchapter became a major challenge in the study. The relevant data was finally collected by searching

different Iranian libraries and finding some former members of staff and high ranking officials. The analysis of these sections is in four segments. It looks at its history in 6.1.2.1, organizational structure in 6.1.2.2, practices in 6.1.2.3 and includes a summary of the main points in 6.1.2.4.

6.1.2.1 History and Organizational Aims

The International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations, in Farsi *Markaz-e beinolmelali-ye goftogu-ye tamadon hā*, was established in response to a proposal for “dialogue among civilizations” by Mohammad Khatami, fifth president of Iran, in September 1998, at the 53rd General Assembly of the United Nations. According to this proposal, 2001 was planned to be called a year of dialogue among civilizations, as mentioned in chapters 2 and 3. Consequently, representatives of all countries and a specific commission of the UN, headed by Giandomenico Picco, were requested to promote different national and international programs to celebrate 2001. The presidential office of Khatami accordingly founded a new institute, the International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations (ICDAC), in December 1998, to develop practical methods and promote the idea. The ICDAC worked for approximately seven years, from late 1998 to late 2005, and under the supervision of three different presidents. At the end of Khatami’s presidency, the ICDAC was merged into some state organizations and finally closed. The center had two main buildings in Tehran: one of which was in the north of Tehran in a neighborhood called *Farmānyeh*, which explains why in the field study the entire building is referred to as *Farmānyeh*. It was also mentioned in the field study that the center had a branch office in London (Farahmand, personal communication, 2014). The aims of the ICDAC are described in academic writing as follows:

“To promote dialogue among civilizations and cultures on an international scale as a means of advancing the interpretation of the UN Charter and of improving human well-being; to promote and expand the culture of dialogue at the national level; to promote the culture of peace in order to foster peaceful coexistence and prevent human rights violations; to help establish and broaden the international civil society through cultural interaction among nations; to strengthen spiritual, moral and religious culture; to conduct research on the significance and possible interpretations of Dialogue Among Civilizations and to release the findings nationally and internationally” (Tavassoli 2010: 94-95) .

Nevertheless, there are some publications which show that one of the key aims of the ICDAC was to coordinate the activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations to extend the idea of dialogue among civilizations (ICDAC 2005b) in “different fields such as philosophy, *kalām* [theology], science, literature and art” (Geographical Researches 1377 [1999]: 143). As Hadi Nejad-Hosseinian, a then-Ambassador Permanent Representative of Iran in the UN, reported to the fifty-fourth session of the UN General Assembly in September 1999, the main mandate and activities of the center were in the framework of both foreign and domestic cultural policy making. On one hand, the ICDAC was supposed to take “theoretical consideration of dialogue among civilizations and cultures with a view to apply it at national and international levels”, and on the other, it should coordinate “activities of domestic agencies in respect of Dialogue among civilizations, taking into account the ideas expressed by the President” (Nejad Hosseinian 1999: 2). Another objective of the center in this report was to conceptualize issues such as “Dialogue among civilizations”, “culture of dialogue”, “culture of peace”, “global civil society”, and “spiritual, moral and religious culture”. Regarding the operational objectives of the center, there were some more or less abstract points such as “developing capacities for dialogue in the society, especially among the youth and women and engaging them in dialogue among civilizations and cultures relying on Islamic, cultural and historic heritage of Iran”. Among the operational purposes listed in the report, “holding international gatherings on cultural issues with a view to preparing the ground for and strengthening dialogue among cultures and civilizations” was also significant (Nejad Hosseinian 1999: 2-4).

A considerable point of Nejad Hosseinian’s report is that the ICDAC not only had executive duties but also some policy-making responsibility. The position of the center was also taken seriously by the council of ministers in 2002, when it assigned to the center some duties in coordination with other state institutions. It appointed the president of the ICDAC as head of a commission consisted of ministers of “foreign affairs”, “science, research and technology”, “education and training”, and “Islamic culture and guidance”. This commission was expected to conceptualize the idea of dialogue among civilizations, develop practical strategies to apply it, and to report the results regularly to the council (ICDAC 2002i: 57).

Despite the idea of dialogue among civilizations playing a key role in the domestic and foreign policies of Khatami, there was no targeted supervision of the activities of the center by the president or his ministers. As mentioned above, the center was ordered in 2002 to report to the council of ministers regularly on its activities. A former member of staff who was in charge of the international office of the center mentioned that the regular meetings to report the achievements of the center were held annually for the council and headed by Mohammad Khatami. But the meetings were ceremonial, not critical: nobody asked about or challenged the activities; even the main speech by Khatami in this meeting would be written by some experts of the ICDAC (Farahmand, personal communication, 2014).

6.1.2.2 Organizational Structure

The ICDAC had three different structures under three different presidents. The presidents had a key role to play in forming the structure and activities of the center (Shafiei, personal communication, 2015; Farahmand, personal communication, 2014). During the term of the first president, Mohammad-Javad Faridzadeh,⁶⁸ the center had, in addition to library, publication and magazine sections, some *mo'avenat* [departments]. One of them was the “research and investigation department”, which included eight groups – “philosophy and theology”, “philosophy of law and ethics”, “geography”, “social science”, “international relations and political science”, “culture, history and archeology”, “literature and art”, and “environment” (Geographical Researches 1377 [1999]: 144). The next departments were entitled “international relations” and “education, studies and training”. The latter department had different training groups to deal with “small towns”, “youth”, “children” (which was known as *Bacehā-ye Zamin salām!* [Children of the earth, hello!]), and “women”. This department also had sections for sport, music and theater. There were some committees to coordinate cultural activities with/for pupils, students, researchers, thinkers, and a focus on “urban culture”, “house wife affairs” and “field study research” (ICDAC 2005b: 73-74). As one of the participants mentioned, during the time of the first president, the center mostly approached parts of Iranian society that were

⁶⁸ The name Faridzadeh is mentioned previously in this research. He was formerly a director of Rayzani in Germany, before 1998. He did his PhD in Germany in Philosophy and was an advisor and is a close friend of Mohammad Khatami. He wrote Khatami's main speeches regarding dialogue among civilizations.

optimistic about the open political sphere under Khatami (Shafiei, personal communication, 2015).

The organizational structure of the center changed in the time of the second president, Ataollah Mohajerani,⁶⁹ who came to office in early 2001. During his presidency, sections such as publications, library, and magazines remained more or less the same. But sections such as “group of advisors”, “office for student centers and NGOs” and “scientific council” were added to the structure. The scientific council, which consisted of the groups “religions and mysticism”, “philosophy”, “political science”, “social science”, “literature and art” and “history of civilization”, had the capacity to make decisions on proposed projects from applicants. The president of the center would then confirm or reject those projects. During the time of the second president, some of the suboffices dealing with women, children and youth, as well as theater and music, were also rejected. Changing the structure of the center in the second’s president’s view was to save more budget and to help other organizations, which could concentrate professionally on issues such as music and theater:

“I believed that we should not do that kind of activities, we should give them to Deputy of Art of the ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance. They should do this kind of activities. Actually I meant that we as the ICDAC, should play role of **brain and nerve system**, not role of muscle cellules. We are not hand and leg to do these activities. We should plan and design, others should operate it...for example not producing music ourselves, because we have already Symphony Music Orchestra of Teheran. We should help them [...]” (Mohajerani, personal communication, 2014)

In early 2003, Mahmoud Boroujerdi was appointed as the third president.⁷⁰ Because of his family background⁷¹ and because he had been in charge as the vice president of the ICDAC from the beginning, it was expected that he could keep the structure and existence of the center even after Khatami’s presidency. However, this did not work. At the end of the Khatami presidency in June 2005, the *Šura-ye Āli-ye Edāri* [administrative council] decided to merge the library of the center into the *Farhangestān-e Honar* [Art Academy] (Aref 1384 [2005]-b). It was also decided to merge the ICDAC into the foreign ministry. A few months

⁶⁹ Mohajerani was a governor who worked as a parliament member and adviser of former-president Hashemi Rafsanjani. His last governmental position before the ICDAC was as minister of Islamic Culture and Guidance.

⁷⁰ In the news coverage of the Report on Dialogue, the name of Dr. Boroujerdi has always been mentioned as *sarparast* [supervisor] of the ICDAC.

⁷¹ Dr. Boroujerdi was the son-in-law of Ayatollah Khomeini.

later, the administrative council decided to merge the ICDAC from the foreign affairs ministry into the center. In early 2006, ICRO combined the ICDAC into its Center for Interreligious Dialogue (CID). The new institute is called “the Center for Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations”. Consequently, members of staff of the former CID from the main building of ICRO moved to *Fārmānyeh*. The new center started to work under the supervision of two former heads, Boroujerdi and Mirdamadi (Iranian Diplomacy 1389 [2010], Miras news agency 1384 [2006], Pudforush 1384 [2006]). Meanwhile, there was a serious clash over financing the personnel and projects of the former ICDAC. This clash even led to a strike by members of staff of the former ICDAC. According to one of its staff, the limitations of working in the newly merged center became so problematic that after some time ICRO declared it would be closed down. But Broujerdi resisted this decision and tried to keep the light of *Fārmānyeh* on:

“Mister Doctor [Broujerdi] used his key to open the door, but they [ICRO’s staff] changed the lock. I remember that we told him, to Mister Doctor –God bless him– ‘leave them alone, why you are still there’? After that he [worked for] a program in Channel 4 of the TV, he was working there as an advisor. He had an office there. I went there. He told me they [ICRO] behaved him in a bad way, they offense him a lot” (Maleki, personal communication, 2013).

On December 31, 2007, the administrative council headed by Ahmadinejad decided to merge the ICDAC from ICRO into *Markaz-e Irani-ye Motāle’āt-e Jahāni šodan* [Iranian national center for globalization studies], in short: Globalization center. This center belongs to the presidential office. The former ICDAC at that time obviously had no staff or activities. The only transformation that could take place was in regard to the building of *Farmānyeh*. But even this transformation did not happen until the end of the presidency of Ahmadinejad.

The initial budget of the ICDAC came from an overall budget of the presidential office of Khatami (Mohajerani, personal communication, 2014; Faridzadeh, personal communication, 2013; Farahmand, personal communication, personal communication). As Iran’s budget law shows, from 2002 to 2004 the ICDAC received a specific budget under the title of “helping to center of dialogue among civilizations”, still within the framework of the presidential office. The budget from 2002 to 2004 was between 1.5 and 2 billion toman (Plan and Budget Organization 1381 [2002], Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-b); its

equivalent in Euro was approximately between 10 and 2 million Euro.⁷² Appendix 1 contains a list showing the budget and toman and Euro rates. In the short time that some members of the staff of the former ICDAC were still working under the newly merged institute, part of the costs were paid from the budget of ICRO and the presidential office of Ahmadinejad (Pudforush 1384 [2006]).

The question raised here is why the administrative council decided to merge the ICDAC into state organizations. There are various arguments. Firstly, the merger of the ICDAC has been described as an unavoidable process, because the center was funded by the presidential office of Khatami but his presidency then came to an end. Secondly, guessing that the ICDAC would not have any future under the next president, Khatami tried to protect the activities and projects of the ICDAC as much as possible. He therefore wanted to select an organization that would continue to pursue the aims of the center. One year before his presidency came to an end he mentioned that he wanted to apply a model that foreign countries applied for dialogue among civilizations, and since they used the NGO model and not the governmental model, he would follow their experience (ICDAC 2004a). He therefore made administrative arrangements for the merger on the one hand, and on the other hand established an NGO to pursue the idea of dialogue among civilizations as he intended (Khaniki, personal communication, 2013; Kharazi, personal communication, 2014; Khatami, personal communication, 2014). The third argument is that Khatami decided to merge the ICDAC into ICRO because it was the most relevant organization in terms of the idea of cultural dialogue on an international level (Mohajerani, personal communication; Khatami, personal communication, 2014). Nevertheless, some think that if that was so, it was too late (Abbasi, personal communication, 2014; Maleki, personal communication, 2014). The fourth argument on the question of merging the ICDAC is that Khatami was going to corrupt the state sources to the benefit of his own NGO. This is the argument from some hardliners who were sceptical about Khatami's dialogue among civilizations from the beginning. For instance, one of the editors of *Resalat* newspaper⁷³ states that Khatami closed down the ICDAC in order to coordinate dialogue projects after his presidency through his own NGO and with a state

⁷² The budget in toman had increased during the years but declined in Euro because of the falling currency rate in Iran at that time.

⁷³ *Resalat* is a conservative daily newspaper in Iran which has been published since 1985.

budget. In his view, the dialogue projects of the NGO were funded by a budget for dialogue among civilizations that was in the hands of ICRO (Anbarluee, personal communication, 2013). But this argument does not fit with the observed facts. During the presidency of Ahmadinejad, neither Ahmadinejad's office nor ICRO requested a budget for dialogue among civilizations. Consequently they received no budget from the Iranian parliament. The only available relevant legislation to give assistance to Khatami's NGO was a scheduled purchase of 49% of state-owned shares of a publication by the NGO (Aref 1384 [2005]-a), though the legislation was immediately withdrawn after Ahmadinejad became president. More details of the budget of Khatami's NGO are provided in 6.3.1.

The next question about merging the ICDAC concerns why dialogue activities were not pursued in the host organizations: the foreign ministry and ICRO. The foreign ministry was unable to continue cultural activities of the center because of its organizational structure, as one of the participants mentioned (Khatibzadeh, personal communication, 2014). The *edare-ye farhangi* [cultural office] of the Iranian foreign ministry "disappeared" at the end of Khatami's presidency. Such a change can be explained in the context of a division of labor between ICRO and the foreign ministry, as discussed in 5.2.2. Hence there was no specific budget or relevant office that the foreign ministry could merge the ICDAC into. But still the question remains, that if the foreign ministry had no organizational capacity to merge the ICDAC, why did it agree to do so? The foreign minister who was in charge of the ministry at that time could not remember the details to answer this question (Kharazi, personal communication, 2014). Nevertheless, Khatami himself believed that the foreign minister did not care about the center; hence merging it into ICRO was the only remaining option:

"Unfortunately [...] my foreign affairs minister, who was expected to understand the issue more than everybody, he ABSOLUTELY did not understand the situation and was not convinced. And I was obligated to give the center to ICRO. That time ICRO was not very bad. There were people who were cooperating with us [...]. I don't mean Mr. Iraqi specifically, but I mean some people who were working in ICRO, whom I don't want to name, were not bad guys" (Khatami, personal communication, 2014).

Despite all Khatami's hopes and confidence in ICRO, it refused to focus on the issue of dialogue among civilizations after one year for various reasons. Firstly, ICRO had a priority to focus on religious activities, not to work on other aspects

of culture (Abbasi, personal communication, 2014). Apart from that, it was mentioned that there was no interest in continuing the work of a center previously headed by a “former minister very bureaucratically and in detail” (Dehshiri, personal communication, 2013). Secondly, budget limitations and inflexibility were mentioned as an obstacle, suggesting that ICRO had no room for extra activity (Abbasi, personal communication, 2014, Dehshiri, personal communication, 2013). Nevertheless, looking at different volumes of the Iranian budget law shows that ICRO changed its budget columns at least five times between 1998 and 2015.

After the official declaration that it would not pursue the activities of the ICDAC, ICRO used *Farmānyeh* for some of its relevant offices or institutes as well as some institutes under the authority of the leader. Some parts of the building were changed, and one of its floors was turned into a guesthouse for specific purposes of ICRO, as some participants of the study mentioned (Habibi, personal communication, 2013 and Maleki, personal communication, 2013). The library of the ICDAC was merged into the Academy of Art and the books and documents transferred to its library, although most were “lost” and “looted” after some time, according to a member of the academy library staff who was formerly the head of the library at the ICDAC (Zarrabi, personal communication, 2011).

An attempt to merge the ICDAC into the third state organization, the National Center for Globalization Studies (NCGS), in late 2007 led to a clash between this center and ICRO. The reason for the clash was *Farmānyeh*, not dialogue among civilizations. A former head of the international department of the center of globalization mentioned that it was officially declared in late 2007 that “dialogue among civilizations” would be one of the issues of the center. But there was no meaningful change in the activities and aims of the center besides a few related meetings which were organized from 2011 (Teimouri, personal communication, 2013), such as a seminar on interfaith dialogue and globalization (NCGS 1390 [2011]). However, the center of globalization was going to use any issue, including “dialogue among civilizations and cultures”, to express the idea of a “Common Management of the World”, which was an international discourse of Ahmadinejad (Teimouri, personal communication, 2013). To resolve the clash with ICRO over *Farmānyeh*, the head of the administrative department of the globalization center wrote letters to the *Divān-e edālat-e edāri* [council of

administrative justice], but they failed to achieve any result (Habibi, personal communication, 2013). *Farmānyeh* was handed over to the presidential office at the time of President Rouhani.

6.1.2.3 Practices: Generally and Specifically for Intercultural Dialogue

Between 1997 and 2005, diverse activities were undertaken by the ICDAC. Coordinating and organizing internal and international conferences and seminars, funding academic projects and supporting publication were among the main general activities of the center. Although the center did not have its own publication, it supported at least 25 Iranian publishers to print more than 100 books and translations in fields such as history, civilization, religion, mythology, poetry, art, music, legends of different countries, plus different topics relating to philosophy, Islam and modernity. Some of these supported books attracted international attention. For instance, the *Encyclopedia of the Musical Instruments of Iran* won the “Klaus P. Wachsmann Prize” for the best publication in the field of musical instrument research and organology in 2001 (ICDAC 2002j: 128, Williams 2003: 7). The *Encyclopedia of Dialogue among Civilizations* was another project which started at the time of the third president of the ICDAC (ICDAC 2004e: 216-217), although the project was never finished.

The center’s library was one of the richest in Iran, taking into account its size and age. This point was mentioned by the former presidents (Mohajerani, personal communication, 2014; Faridzadeh, personal communication, 2013), the members of staff (Maleki, personal communication, 2013; Zrarabi, personal communication, 2011) of the ICDAC and informed individuals (Khaniki, personal communication, 2014). The library contained 12,100 books in Farsi and more than 34,595 books in Arabic, English, German and French (ICDAC 2005b: 77). Some valuable art collections and documentaries (films) were also held in the library (Maleki, personal communication, 2013).

The ICDAC also had its own magazine. At the beginning of the center’s activities, two, “Children of the earth” and “Culture of dialogue”, were published, but they were replaced during the time of the second president by *Gozāreš-e Goftegu* [“Report on dialogue”]. No information about the circulation of the report on dialogue is available. However, it was mentioned in the field study that the

magazine was welcomed by Iranian students, professors and an educated audience. It was regularly sent to different libraries, academic institutes and universities of Iran (Malkei, personal communication, 2013; Zarabi, personal communication, 2011 and Farahmand, personal communication, 2014). Some magazines were also published with the support of the ICDAC, albeit on condition that some of their volumes would be devoted to the issue of dialogue among civilizations. For example, the magazine *Pol-e Firouze* devoted 11 issues (ICDAC 2005b) and *Bokhara* magazine one of its volumes to dialogue among civilizations. Both magazines were aimed at an educated audience with an interest in art and culture. The magazines would be sold in press kiosks of different cities in Iran.

With regard to research and inquiry, the scientific council of the center supported 53 MA and PhD dissertations and 17 projects (ICDAC 2005b: 79). It also funded activities such as film and music festivals, among them some works of Iranian directors such as Bahman Gobadi for the film *Songs of My Motherland* and Yasmin Malek-Nasr for the film *Afghanistan* (ICDAC 2003: 178). Also with the support of the center, an Iranian sculptor, Hossein Fakhimi, made a statue of *Hakim Omar Khayyam*,⁷⁴ which was scheduled to be installed in Florence, Italy (ICDAC 2002k: 31).

As far as training programs were concerned, the center cooperated on some projects with *Āmuzeš va Parvareš* [the education ministry]. One of the projects was compiling a pedagogic book which was published to guide teachers of schools at *motavassete*⁷⁵-level education to teach a specific course called “dialogue among civilizations” (Ghezelsofla et al. 1382 [2003]). Although the center held a seminar and invited a number of teachers from most of the cities and towns of Iran to prepare them for teaching the book, the project did not work out. According to one of the NGO activists who worked on the project, it had failed because of “some disagreements” between the center and the ministry of education and training, even before the end of Khatami’s presidency (Sadr, personal communication, 2014).

⁷⁴ Hakim Omar Khayyam was an Iranian polymath, scholar, mathematician and poet who lived in the 12th century.

⁷⁵ In the Iranian school system, the *motavassette* consists of three educational bases: seventh, eighth and ninth classes.

It was also planned to establish a specific type of philosophy training system, as the first president of the ICDAC called it a *Collège de France*, to make the ICDAC a “thinking center” of the Islamic world:

“I liked to establish a Collège de France [...]. It is a big thinking center in France... the center of natural science and philosophy in France. It has some characteristics. [Firstly] everybody in every age and without showing any certification can participate in and use the courses [...]. [Secondly] it was not giving any certification. Thirdly, that was the point that the biggest thinkers of the world would teach there, in. Many people have a dream to just teach two semesters in Collège de France. After being able to teach in Collège de France, Michel Foucault was recognized as a famous philosopher... And if somebody had studied these courses, it would be worth like ten PhDs of the France system. I wanted to make something like Collège de France, that everybody from the Islamic world comes to and teaches over there. I planned to make its main language English and German. If it would be necessary we could develop it to French, Arabic and Farsi. Who was coming to teach? The biggest figures of the world ... yes that was the plan of the ICDAC” (Faridzadeh, personal communication, 2013).

However, the idea of turning the ICDAC into a Collège de France was not realized. It remained just an idea.

Another activity of the center was inviting well-known world figures to Iran, for example the Brazilian author Paulo Coelho⁷⁶ (FarsNews 1392 [2013]); Dr. Jürgen Habermas,⁷⁷ the German philosopher (Hoffmann 2002); and Alvin Plantinga, an American religious philosopher (ICDAC 2002l: 128) were invited to Iran and gave lectures for Iranian audiences. The center furthermore coordinated major events to commemorate the work of some German scholars, such as Annemarie Schimmel⁷⁸ in the field of Orientalism and Islam studies, (ICDAC 2002k: 33) and Dr. Eckart Ehlers in the field of geography studies (ICDAC 2001: 14). The ICDAC had contact with some foreign academic institutes and was able to conclude agreements with the *Technische Universität Berlin* [Technical University of Berlin] (ICDAC 2002k: 33), which led to some joint workshops (ICDAC 2003: 181). An agreement between the center and the Classic Foundation of Weimar⁷⁹ (ICDAC 2002m: 117) also resulted in it organizing a conference on

⁷⁶ In 2000 by mutual invitation of the Ministry of Culture and the Iranian publication *Karun*

⁷⁷ Was invited to Iran in 2000. He held a lecture at the University of Tehran on secularism and its effects on Western society.

⁷⁸ Cooperating with the Institute of “Extension of Knowledge and Investigation of Iran” –*moassese tose- eye danesh va pajooheesh-*, University of Tehran, and University of Al-Zahra

⁷⁹ The ICDAC and Hellmut Th. Seemann, president of foundation of Weimar in 2001, agreed to hold regular conferences in Iran and Germany on “dialogue among civilizations”, 13.10.2002, --

“Nietzsche, a transnational philosopher”, in Tehran in February 2003 (ICDAC 2003: 176). In addition to this, the ICDAC became acquainted with representatives of some other German institutes, such as Wolfgang Frühwald, the then-president of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation⁸⁰ (ICDAC 2002a: 117), and Gunter Mulack, the commissioner of intercultural dialogue in the German foreign ministry (ICDAC 2002b: 118-119). The center moreover cooperated with foreign embassies to show their own culture in Iran. For instance, a cultural week of Greece in Kashan in 2004 (ICDAC 2004b: 174), which was organized by the Greek embassy, and a conference on the “Influence of Karl Raimund Popper on thinking of 20th Century” (ICDAC 2003: 176), which was held by the Austrian embassy, both received support from the ICDAC.

The issue of interfaith dialogue was another axis of the ICDAC’s activities, although it did not coordinate any long-term round table meetings over the issue as the CID of ICRO had been planning. It focused on the issue of religion as a subject of inquiry. It also prepared some meetings and visits with international religious delegates. Among the visitors were a delegation from the Association of Protestant Churches in Germany (EKD) and a delegation from the Loccum Academy (ICDAC 2002c: 112-113).

The ICDAC mostly concentrated on activities such as conferences, funding studies and publications. It did not develop its activities into other forms such as student and pupil exchange. A reason mentioned for this limitation was its limited budget. In the view of a former president of the ICDAC, funding travel of “100 pupil, for example, from Morocco, Iran and Germany” called for a big budget, which was not within “the capability of the ICDAC” (Mohajerani, personal communication, 2014). Domestic political problems were mentioned as another reason for the limited activities of the center. According to him even gossip about an international activity of the ICDAC could be enough for a call from the ministry of *Etela’āt* [Intelligence Service]. The domestic political pressures were not limited to the intelligence service, but came from different conservative media and religious groups, too. The newspapers *Keyhan* and *Resalat*, for instance, covered relevant news regarding the center negatively (Farahmand, personal

⁸⁰ 1999-2007

communication, 2014). Furthermore, Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi,⁸¹ a top clergymen of Qum, criticized the political aims of the center, especially after Khatami's presidency ended. He frequently condemned the activities of the ICDAC for being to the benefit of "foreign enemies and some specific domestic parties" and having nothing to do with the "national interest" of Iranians (Tabnak News 1386 [2007]). Moreover, he challenged the budget of the center with the argument that "spending millions of dollars" to hold dialogue "behind the closed doors" between "certain people" who are accepted by *dolat* [the administration of Khatami] was not acceptable (Fars News 1386 [2007]). Unfortunately, attempts to contact Mesbah Yazdi to discuss the issue failed. Nevertheless, a clergymen who has participated in some interfaith dialogue of ICRO advised the researcher not to insist on visiting Mesbah Yazdi, because it may threaten her security and research process (Mohaghegh Damad, personal communication, 2013).

The activities and policies of the center were not only formed by its aims, age and obstacles but also by the personality of its presidents. As mentioned above, the first president of the center wrote Khatami's lecture in the UN on dialogue among civilizations. He started running a center that did not fit, organizationally speaking, with other state organizations such as the foreign ministry and ICRO. Thus it was his ambitious spirit to develop dialogue among civilizations as a global idea and to form the structure of the center. It was also his background of studying philosophy in Germany and his familiarity with Western philosophical academies that motivated him to attempt to plan projects such as the *Collège de France*. He aimed to turn the center into a center of thinking in the Islamic World. Some of his colleagues were even convinced that, if the ICDAC had been able to continue its activities under his supervision, it would "definitely" have prevented the 9/11 attacks (Shafiei, personal communication, 2015). Some believed, however, that devoting budget to projects of his trusted people caused a major mess when it came to managing the center's financial crisis, because it received only limited funds from the general budget of the presidential office (Farahmand, personal communication, 2014). Consequently, a clash between the first president of the center and the administration of Khatami over the budget, among some other reasons, led to his resignation (Faridzadeh, personal communication, 2013).

⁸¹ The name of Mesbah Yazdi is mentioned in 3.2.2 for his critical view on the vague concept of dialogue among civilizations, as well as in 5.2.4 for his supportive approach to discourse of interfaith dialogue.

The second president, who was formerly a vice president and then a minister of culture, changed the structure of the center and made it more systematized and rationalized. He was referred to in the field study as “a real bureaucrat” because of his rich experience in state organizations (Shafiei, personal communication, 2015; Farahmand, personal communication, 2014), so it can be argued that it was his personal influence that turned the ICDAC into both a diplomatic center and a small cultural ministry. He started to receive high-ranking foreign diplomatic delegates from Arab countries, such as the ambassador of Morocco (ICDAC 2002h: 84), the deputy president of Algeria (ICDAC 2002d: 85), the adviser to the King of Oman, (ICDAC 2002e: 116), the ambassador of Bahrein (ICDAC 2002f: 106), as well as diplomatic guests from Western countries such as the Australian ambassador and German consul. These diplomatic visits were not just to build bridges between cultures; they were organized to pursue political aims, too. For instance, visiting the German consul, Mohajerani mentioned the case of fingerprinting of Iranian people at German airports (which seemed to happen in some cases in 2002) as a factor that hurt cultural relations between the two countries. The consul responded that, because Germany had faced a problem with rejecting 4,000 Iranian refugee applications and had seen no response from Iran with regard to their return, controls had been tightened at German airports (ICDAC 2002c: 112-113). Through these diplomatic visits he tried to subtilize a foreign image of Iran. On visiting Giandomenico Picco, the UN representative involved in dialogue among civilizations affairs, Mohajerani mentioned that the problem of a negative image of Iran could be solved “completely” with visits of famous figures like Jürgen Habermas to Iran (ICDAC 2002g: 106).

With regard to turning the ICDAC into a small cultural ministry in Mohajerani’s time, the fields of research, art and publishing received extensive attention from him. It seems that he was continuing his domestic cultural activities, this time with the means of the center. In some cases, however, he was working beyond the bureaucracy and without regard for the views of the scientific groups which were assessing the project applications. For instance, an application to direct a film about Afghanistan was rejected by experts of the center, but Mohajerani ordered the film to be funded anyway (Farahmand, personal communication, 2014). Also,

according to a member of the ICDAC staff, who later wrote her PhD⁸² on the organizational sociology of the center, it was challenging to work under his supervision, because he cared about increasing quantity, not improving quality:

“Under his [Mohajerani] management *Tolid* [production] was sacrificed. There was nothing else, too much tankard and hip, too little lunch and dinner.⁸³ He believed that it was so bad that we did not have computer in the ICDAC, you know that in time period of 2000 computer did not have its today’s role for bureaucratic work in Iranian offices? Right? So he ordered computer. We had then computer but to do what? [...] By the way, when you were looking at the production of his time, you could see that it is not even one fifth of the production of the former president. Again I remind that it was the period time of domination of bureaucracy. Therefore everybody tries to show that everything officially has a good order. But there was no excitement and love and energy like the time of first management” (Shafiei, personal communication, 2015).

The third president’s main role was to protect the ICDAC, though this attempt was finally nullified when the center was merged a short time after Khatami’s presidency. In fact, his approach to the issue of merging the center was to ignore the reality of the newly merged institute: Firstly, the last few issues of the “Report on dialogue” (the journal of the ICDAC) covered no news regarding the new structure of the center. Secondly, the budget problem of the center was one of his concerns. This concern was reflected in the media (Miras news agency 1384 [2006], Pudforush 1384 [2006]), but it is significant that talking about the budget of the former ICDAC when there was a new, merged institute did not make sense. Thirdly, appointing him officially as advisor to the head of ICRO indicates a clear signal to him from ICRO about a new organizational order (Iranian Diplomacy 1389 [2010]). However, the fact that two presidents, of the CID and the ICDAC, in keeping their positions were working under the roof of the newly merged institute illustrates that ICRO for some reason, perhaps respecting Boroujerdi as a family member of Ayatollah Khomeini, avoided dismissing one of the directors. That is why Boroujerdi continued to ignore the reality of the new, merged institute. Finally, members of staff of the ICDAC who suffered in the process of the merger were not informed completely about details of the merger by Dr. Boroujerdi. According to a former employee of the ICDAC, the members of staff

⁸² Sahfiei’s dissertation is later published as a book in 2011. Because the book is in French, it could not be used in this research. The title of the book is “Etude politico-sociologique d’une nouvelle institution en Iran”.

« Le Centre du Dialogue des Civilisations » 1999- 2006

⁸³ A Persian metaphor which is used when some marginal and unimportant issues become more important than a key issue.

did not realize exactly what was going on until they wrote a letter to the council of administrative justice:

“I was informed about things because we wrote a letter of complaint to the council of administrative justice [...]. There I recognized that the institute of dialogue among civilization has been closed down. That means officially there was a discussion over CLOSING IT. Just the issue of dialogue among civilizations did matter. It meant that there was no ICDAC anymore to be merged inside ICRO. It was agreed that ICRO pursue the issue of dialogue among civilizations. But it [ICRO] had [officially] no responsibility regarding its staff and its building. The building was donated because it was originally owned by the municipality [of Tehran]. It was given [firstly] to the ICDAC and then to ICRO (Maleki, personal communication, 2013).

6.1.2.4 A Summary on Analysis of the ICDAC

To complete this section, it is important to again ask the question: What are the characteristics of the ICDAC’s cultural activities within the framework of intercultural dialogue? The ICDAC was affected by Iran’s fragmented foreign cultural policy. A new center was established to focus on the idea of dialogue among civilizations, because neither the foreign ministry nor ICRO were able to do so. After 1994 and ICRO’s authorization as the responsible organization for Iranian foreign cultural policy, the foreign ministry was not a proper fit to focus on the idea. Equally, ICRO’s priority was to focus on religious aims and therefore also not a good fit. It can be concluded that the foreign cultural policy of Iran was too fragmented to be able to deal with the dialogue among civilizations. At that time, establishing the ICDAC therefore made more sense or at least was a solution. The cultural activities were influenced by the personality and expertise of the center’s three presidents. The main target of the cultural activities was a domestic (Iranian) audience. The priority was to inform the Iranian audience about other cultures and show the world that Iranians are interested in dialogue. The cultural activities generally appeared to follow a routine or traditional form, such as seminars, participation in exhibitions, publications and support for studies and cultural projects. Nevertheless, the center had contact with international cultural institutions and actors, including Germany, and cooperated with them on some cultural activities. The main focus of activities was on dialogue among civilizations. Most of the project titles were articulated with this discourse, for example “Environment and dialogue among civilizations” and “Art and dialogue

among civilizations”. The presidents of the center were not diplomats, but they were key political figures.

6.1.3 Other Iranian Actors

As mentioned at the beginning of 6.1, besides Rayzani and the ICDAC there are some other Iranian institutes, organizations, private groups and individual volunteers that play a role in implementing (or supporting implementation of) cultural activities. Their activities are categorized in this section, because compared with Rayzani and the ICDAC, they play a lesser role in dealing with intercultural dialogue. Some of them will be discussed briefly in this section.

6.1.3.1 Political Institutions

Parties and think tanks in Iran have influenced intercultural dialogue only slightly. A reason is that they are not strong, and they face limitations in Iran. Among the Iranian parties which were legally allowed to work in the Iranian presidential election in 2013, there were three conservative parties *Etelāf-e Ābādgārān-e Iran-e Eslāmi* [Alliance of Builders of Islamic Iran], *Hezb-e Etelāf-e Eslāmi* [Islamic Coalition Party], and *Jāme’-e-ye Eslāmi Mohandesin* [Islamic Society of Engineers]. One right-wing party, *Kārgozārān-e Sāzandegi* [Executives of Construction Party], and one reformist party, *Hezb-e Etehd-e Mellat-e Iran* [Union of Islamic Iranian People Party], were also legally active. Many parties were also banned after the Islamic Revolution. Most of these parties did not share the same views as the conservative ones, or they had reformist ideas. Generally speaking, reformist parties attempt to open up international relations with Western countries, including Germany. Hence from this point of view they positively but indirectly influenced intercultural dialogue with Germany. Because they are under political pressure and their members are often sentenced by the Iranian judicial system (Radio Free Europe 2017),⁸⁴ they cannot be that successful in their

⁸⁴ It was reported in October 2017 that seven leaders of the reformist party Mošārekāt [participation front], which had already been banned since 2010, had been sentenced to prison. It is therefore clear, if members of reformist parties cannot act freely in the country and express themselves freely, they cannot open up relationships with the West or work towards dialogue with the West.

attempts. Efforts to find members of these parties who are also members of the Iranian parliament to participate in this study failed.

There are some, although not very many, political research institutes in Iran which play a role as think tanks. Among them are the Center for Strategic Research (CSR) and the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS). The CSR was established in 1989 to focus on strategic studies in various fields, including political and cultural issues, and to advise the Iranian presidential office, as its website states. At the end of the presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani in 1997, the CSR was annexed to the Expediency Council, an organization which was under the authority of Hashemi Rafsanjani until his death. Seyed Hossein Mousavian, who was the Iranian ambassador in Germany from 1990 to 1997, was a vice president of the CSR from 2005 to 2008, which shows that diplomats with experience of working with European countries had close contact with this think tank. The CSR was also one of the partners in an intercultural dialogue project of the DAAD in 2013. This point will be explained more in 6.2.2.

The next think tank, IPIS, is actually part of the Iranian foreign ministry. Its main office is in the ministry's center for international education and research. The fact that it is part of the ministry may challenge the accuracy of IPIS being described as a think tank, but at the same time this fact increases its international partners, which are actually from the contact list of the ministry. According to its official website, IPIS was established in 1983 in order to provide decision making on Iranian policy. The Iranian embassies abroad are in close contact with IPIS. It periodically appoints researchers to undertake academic activities in those embassies. Though IPIS is a political actor, its academic activities are considered by the interviewees to be cultural because it represents Iranian views in different international meetings and conferences on political issues (Khatibzadeh, personal communication, 2014).

IPIS at the time of Khatami had many exchanges with think tanks, academic and political institutes and governmental delegations from Western countries. In chapter 2 it was mentioned that Iran at the time of Khatami participated in "constructive dialogue". IPIS was one of the main Iranian actors in charge of those meetings. The bulletin of IPIS shows the different Western countries that participated in meetings with IPIS as follows: the Stockholm International Peace

Research Institute (IPIS 1377 [1998]-b); the Swedish Institute of International Relations (Asadzadeh 1378 [1999]-a); the American Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University (IPIS 1377 [1998]-a); the Canadian Parliament (Mirfakhraee 1377 [1999]); the Canadian University of Ottawa (Dokhanchi 1381 [2002]); the French Parliament (Asadzadeh 1378 [1999]-b); *Le Centre de Recherches Internationales* [center for international studies] (Seif Afjeii 1383 [2004]); Leiden University from the Netherlands (Asadzadeh 1378 [1999]-c); the Intercollege University of Cyprus (Khatibzadeh 1379 [2000]); the Institute for Political International Studies (Motaghinejad 1379[2000]); the Institute for Asian and African Studies from Italy (Mohammadi 1379 [2000]); the Institute for Cooperation and International Security (Farsaee 1379 [2000]) together with the International Affairs and Foreign Policy Institute from Spain (Hajijafari 1383 [2004]-b, Moradi 1384 [2005]); Chatham House. The Royal institute of International Affairs (Amirbeik 1380 [2001], Sajadpour 1383 [2004]) together with the Foreign Policy Center from Britain (Yadegari 1384 [2005]); the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies from the Australian National University (Al Habib 1381 [2002], Khatibzadeh 1380 [2001]); the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) (Farsaee 1381 [2002]); the Royal Institute for International Relations and the University of Liège and the foreign affairs ministry of Belgium (Hajijafari 1381 [2002]). Furthermore, some diplomatic delegates from the foreign ministries of Serbia and Montenegro (Qods 1383 [2004]), Hungary, (Moradi 1383 [2004]), Finland (Musavi 1378 [1999], Sharifian 1381 [2002]), and Poland (Qods 1380 [2001], Qods 1381 [2002]) were in exchange with IPIS in that period. In almost all the meetings, “dialogue among civilizations” was mentioned by IPIS as a main foreign policy approach of Iran towards Western countries.

IPIS also had contacts with different German political actors such as *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* (SWP) (Araghchi 1378 [1999], Dabiri 1381 [2002], Shirgholami 1382 [2003]), the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Qods 1382 [2003]), *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung* (Musavi 1383 [2004]), *Leibniz-Institut Hessische Stiftung Friedens- und Konfliktforschung* [the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt] (Hajijafari 1383 [2004]-a) and some delegations from the German federal parliament, for instance from the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party (Qods 1382 [2003]). It is also notable that IPIS participated in a conference, “Europe and Islamic World: Role of Dialogue”, which was held in Islamabad in 2004 with the

support of the *Hanns Seidel Stiftung* (Khodagholidpour 1383 [2004]). Meetings between the German side and IPIS were on different issues, such as the Caspian Sea, energy, the situation of Iraq after the 2003 war, and the nuclear technology of Iran. The latter issue in 2004 resulted in some tensions between the Iranian and German participants. The atmosphere of a meeting which took place after a report of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Iran's secret attempts to enrich uranium was not especially positive. The report of the meeting illustrates that members of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt and IPIS could not trust each other and had security concerns⁸⁵ (Hajijafari 1383 [2004]-a). In a meeting between the *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* and IPIS in 2004, Udo Steinbach, a German participant who had a key role in "critical dialogue" between the EU and Iran, also criticized a "dichotomy" in Iran's decision-making process regarding nuclear power and the EU. He argued that the domestic policy of Iran and the clash between conservatives and reformists had prevented European countries from understanding Iran's clear approach. Steinbach's comment was met with opposition from two Iranian diplomats in the meeting. Mostafa Tork Zahrani stated that decision making on Iranian foreign policy was always according to the Iranian constitution. Abbas Araghchi also responded that the Islamic Republic of Iran was a successful model of combining religion and policy. He complained that Steinbach had an incomplete understanding of the Iranian political system (Nili 1383 [2004]).

In round tables, a combination of German actors rather than a delegation from a single German institute often participated, while on the Iranian side such a diversity of delegates was rarely apparent. The presence of Boroujerdi, the last president of the ICDAC, in a meeting with the *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* was one of those rare cases (Qods 1382 [2003]).

⁸⁵ In 2002, one of the Iranian exile groups publicly disclosed some locations of Iran's illegal nuclear activity. Afterwards, there was skepticism at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and internationally about Iran's honesty and its responsibility to respect its promises. Based on the Paris agreement between Iran and the European Union 3 -France, Germany and United Kingdom-, Iran made a deal to suspend its enrichment process. By early 2004, however, based on some reports, the IAEA argued that Iran had unraveled the deal. In the meeting between IPIS and the Peace Institute of Frankfurt, the German and Iranian sides both gave their views of this issue. Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, who at that time was advisor to the foreign affairs minister, mentioned three points to clarify the Iranian side: 1. Iran purchased enriched uranium from Germany, England and France for more than 20 years, although the good was never delivered to Iran, therefore there is no way for Iran to simply attempt to release it from its own resources. 2. Iran voluntarily accepted to suspend enrichment of uranium, therefore Iran did not break any rule when it resumed enrichment, judicially speaking. 3. There is a lesson for Iran never to trust international agreements and Western countries.

From 1997 to 2005, IPIS also attempted to support the ICDAC by putting it in contact with some Western embassies and international institutes (Shafiei, personal communication, 2015). At the commemoration of Annemarie Schimmel (ICDAC 2005a: 189), the conference of Immanuel Kant (Sajadpour, personal communication, 2013), invitation to the inter-parliamentary conference between Iran, Italy, Egypt and Greece under the title of “Millennium of understanding, the relationship between Eastern and Western civilizations”⁸⁶ (Amirbeik 1379 [1999]) and the conference of “Human rights and dialogue among civilizations” (Sharifian/Hadivash 1380 [2001]),⁸⁷ IPIS assisted the ICDAC or other institutes which were active in the field of intercultural dialogue. Moreover, IPIS had sent some of its experts to intercultural dialogue conferences in India (IPIS 1379 [2001]) and Japan (Sonboli 1380 [2001]). It also invited Chandra Mozaffar, the first director of the Center for Civilizational Dialogue at the University of Malaysia (Alavikia 1377 [1999]), and Simon Frederick Peter Halliday, a scholar in international relations and Middle East studies (Amirbeik 1379 [1999]), for an individual meeting. The head of the ministry’s center of education at that time was Sadegh Kharazi. He supported IPIS to undertake more cultural activities and was a key person who accompanied Khatami in the dialogue among civilizations activities of his NGO in Geneva from 2005 (Kharazi, personal communication, 2013). This point will be discussed more in 6.1.3.4.

Although IPIS had an engaged role regarding the issue of dialogue among civilizations, it did not merge the ICDAC into the foreign ministry in 2005. Support for IPIS was intended to reach two aims in the view of Ali Mousavi: firstly, to institutionalize the idea of dialogue among civilizations; and secondly, to form a theoretical basis for the foreign policy of Iran. But the lack of a practical program for the idea was a major weak point and turned it into “a beautiful empty moto” (Musavi 1380 [2001]). However, it is significant that Khatami did believe that IPIS, which belonged to the foreign ministry, was the best option for the ICDAC could merge into:

“I liked to merge this center [ICDAC] to research institute of the foreign affairs ministry, which has worked in this field [intercultural dialogue] a lot. Yes, there was a research institute there. The ICDAC also could work over there, but

⁸⁶ Original title in Farsi: *Hezāre-ye tafāhom, ravābet-e mian-e tamadonhā-ye šarq v qarab*

⁸⁷ Cooperating with the university of Mofid of Qum, the information office of the UN, National Commission of UNESCO, Commission of Islamic Human Rights

unfortunately it did not [...] That time Mr. Moayyeri was its head, it was very good” (Khatami, personal communication, 2014).

During the presidency of Ahmadinejad from 2005 to 2013, many Western institutes and partners did not continue their contact with IPIS, as information from Iranian participants and the internal bulletins of IPIS show. A few Western countries, such as Romania (As'ad 1388 [2009], Shahmohammadi 1386 [2007]-b), Poland (Karami 1387 [2008]), Sweden (Seif Afjeii 1388 [2009], Shahmohammadi 1391 [2013]), Norway (Javidnia 1389 [2010]), and Italy (Karami 1392 [2013]) remained in contact with IPIS. Some institutes, such as the Danish Institute for International Studies (Bazubandi 1391 [2012]), were added to the list of Western partners of IPIS. Some researchers from IPIS and the Freie Universität Berlin participated in an international conference, “Salzburg Energy”, which took place in Austria in 2010. The news of this conference was titled in the bulletin as “roundtable with Frei university of Berlin” (Binyaz 1389 [2010]). But the content informs readers that representatives from Freie Universität and IPIS participated in an international conference, not a special session.

According to a researcher of the SWP, there was no longer any interest among the German political institutes to maintain their contact with IPIS, because the head of the Iranian state in that period clearly denied the Holocaust (Zamirirad, personal communication, 2015). IPIS itself was not happy with the lack of meetings with Western partners. The titles of some meetings of IPIS at that time show that its members were looking for a way to re-connect with their European partners. For instance, the topic of a meeting in 2007 was to discuss Germany as a proper alternative partner for Iran (Shahmohammadi 1386 [2007]-a: 18-21). In 2011 there was another meeting, held by IPIS, to discuss solutions and strategies to make connections with European countries (Seif Afjeii 1390 [2011]).

Besides IPIS, the Office for Documents and Diplomatic History of the Iranian foreign ministry prepared a two-day conference in Tehran in early 2001 on the issue of *Turan*, which refers to an ethnic group of the same name that lived in Central Asia.⁸⁸ The conference was held to discuss different dimensions of this ethnicity, such as language, identity and literature, with academics and diplomats

⁸⁸ Stories of Turan are mentioned in Iranian literature and ancient books such as Avesta and Shahnameh. According to these stories, the people of Turan chose to settle in different geographical locations in Central Asia.

from Tajikistan, Russia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Kazakhstan, as well as experts from Western countries including Hungary, Greece and the USA. The participation of Mohajerani, the second president of the ICDAC, in this conference was significant. Initially, the Turkish foreign ministry intended to reject the invitation, perceiving the conference as a tool to convince the world that Iran had the major portion in the *Turan* heritage, as a member of the conference organizing team stated. But the misunderstanding was solved through pre-talks. A Turkish delegation finally participated in the conference, as the aim of the conference was peace, as this member of the team mentioned:

“We wanted to say, we are not different. We are all children of *Fereydun*, who the last centuries have been separated. Let’s talk about our common origin in peace” (Moujani, personal communication, 2016).

To sum up the points regarding Iranian political institutions, it can be said that the active political institutions are dependent on the Iranian state. The political parties have limitations on how they can act and work; they are under pressure from the judicial system. The variety of parties is limited; members of reformist parties are often imprisoned for a time or at least sentenced to prison. At the time of Khatami, when the parties had representatives in the parliament, they were able to support the relationship and dialogue with the West, but after Khatami their activities were restricted. Among the active think tanks, IPIS is fully dependent on the Iranian foreign ministry. Consequently, at the time of the reformist president Khatami, it conducted more meetings (and used the discourse of dialogue among civilizations in its communications) with Western and German partners than at that of hardliner president Ahmadinejad.

6.1.3.3 Religious Institutions

There are some Iranian institutes and centers which are active in the religious realm and conduct interfaith dialogues. Most of them have a base in Qom. Their financial sources are not mentioned on their official websites; but, based on information from the field study, they get their financial support from the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state, Qum seminaries and the top

clergymen of Qum (Khaniki, 2013, personal communication, 2014; Tabatabaei, personal communication, 2013). Since some of these institutes train and educate students in the field of theology, they also have a budget from the Iranian parliament as academic institutes. The other Iranian religious centers and institutes are located in Germany and, according to the information from the field study, mostly receive financial support from the Iranian Islamic Center of Hamburg, and consequently from the religiously legitimated sector (Tarighat, personal communication, 2014). From the huge number of Iranian religious institutes, some which are mentioned significantly by participants in the field study are described briefly in the following.

Majma'e Taqrib-e Mazāheb [Assembly for approximating the Islamic denominations] is an institute which was merged into the new organizational structure of ICRO in 1995, as discussed in 2.4.2 and 5.2.2. *Taqrib* has close contact with other religious institutes and universities of Qum. It represents the official views of the Iranian state, and specifically those of the leader, at international events and conferences.

Moassese-ye āmuzeši va pazuheši-ye Adyān va Mazāheb-e Hoze-ye Elmyeh Qum [Center for religious studies of the Qum seminary] has been established since 1996. It began its activities as a library. Afterwards it was extended to become a research institute and held meetings and seminars on different religions of the world (Tavassoli 2010: 98).

Moassese-ye āmuzeši va pazuheši-ye Emam Khomeini [Imam Khomeini education and research institute] initially received financial support from Ayatollah Khomeini. Since his death, it has been financed by the leader at the time. In 1995, according to its official website, its name was changed to Imam Khomeini Institute (IKIRI 2015). It is headed by Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi, a clergyman whose name has been mentioned previously in this research for his critical views on dialogue among civilizations, his political support of Ahmadinejad and also his active role in some interfaith dialogues.

Dānešgāh-e Adyān va Mazāheb [University of Religions and Denominations] was established in 1994. According to information on its official website, the institute was founded by some scholars of the Qum seminary to focus on the three fields of Abrahamian, Eastern and Islamic religions (including theological schools, sects,

mysticism and Sufism). Ten years later, in 2004, the institute was recognized as an academic center by the ministry of science and could receive students. The university is in cooperation with 48 international and national institutes, including Paderborn University in Germany and the Iranian Al-Mustafa University. It also engaged in intercultural dialogue cooperation within the framework of the DAAD activities by both Paderborn and Al-Mustafa University. This will be explained later, in 6.2.2.

Jamā'atal Mustafā al-Ālamiyah [Al-Mustafa International University] has 50,000 students from 122 countries in the field of religious studies (Al-Mustafa University 2015). It was established in 2007 from the merger of two state organizations, the Organization of Schools and Seminaries Abroad and the Global Center of Islamic Science (A'erafi 1394 [2016]). The university has a parliamentary budget. Its director is appointed by the leader (A'erafi 1394 [2016]). Al-Mustafa University and the University of Religions and Denominations were both partners of Paderborn University in the field of interreligious dialogue, as mentioned above.

The religious institutes of Qum represent official state views. Nevertheless a participant of the study, who did his PhD on the topic of Iran's interfaith dialogue, argues that even such an engagement in interfaith dialogue has positive aspects for two reasons. His first is that one cannot argue that, because these religious institutes are funded by the Iranian state or the leader, there is no dissident person within them. Even among very radical and official delegates there is sometimes an opportunity for a liberal thinker to participate:

“[...] I have seen many people who seem to be from the [Iranian] state, like from gang of Khamenei, perhaps they officially are on top. But see, amongst themselves they have different views which could be even against the government and Khamenei. That is the reason that [I say] I have seen a kind of freedom there. Perhaps one officer is very formal but his talks and views were according to Soroush ideas and religious pluralism... for instance Dr. Malekian three times a week was going to Qum. In one of the organizations which he was teaching, one of the organizations that was strongly governmental and had support from Khamenei. Talks of Malekian had milliards miles distance from [talks] of Mullas such as Khamenei [...] and then you see somebody like Dr. Akrami an incredibly open-minded man as the head of interfaith dialogue [CID of the ICRO] (Tavassoli, personal communication, 2015).

His second reason is that, even if the views of a radical religious clergy represent Iranian official views on an issue, this must still be perceived as a progressive step, because it indicates that even the hardliner section of the Iranian state has a dialogue approach towards communication with the world:

“See, the referee of my dissertation was the one who had more than anybody else interfaith dialogue with Mesbah Yazdi and his gang [...] Mesbah himself went frequently over there and became guest of him [...] Hence I know what the position of Mesbah in our country is, but at least in front of foreigners he got gesture like this [...]. See, for me that is enough to tell the West that even an extremist wild person like him still involves in dialogue. Just expressing such a point was my first aim” (Tavassoli, personal communication, 2015)

Although most of the institutes which are involved in interfaith dialogue are located in Qum, some of them have been active in Tehran. *Moasese-ye Goftoguy-e Adyān* [Institute for Interreligious Dialogue] (IID) is one of those institutes. It was established in 2001 and its director is Mohammad Ali Abtahi (Tavassoli 2010: 96). It is located in Tehran and focuses on interfaith dialogue by holding seminars, courses, and programs for pupils, as well as religious tours for participants of different religions. It works as a non-governmental institute, that is to say, without the support of clergymen of Qum, or the leader (Abtahi, personal communication, 2013).

Abtahi was the head of Mohammad Khatami’s office during his presidency. After Abtahi’s arrest following the presidential election in 2009, the institute reduced its activities. Abtahi mentioned in an interview that when the IID was active, he tried to represent an Islamic partner, contrary to some institutes of Qum, which does not insist on the truth of its own view. He wanted to show the Christian side that he believes in common ground between Islam and other religions:

“You should take a common ground between religions and start from that point for example believe in God [...] the approach of institutes in Qum, like Mr. Mesbah’s institute, is that “we are the total truth”. And because we are the total truth, we have to have dialogue to express it” (Abtahi, personal communication, 2013).

At the time that the IID was active, Abtahi used (at least) two opportunities to extend its relations with other religious actors. Firstly, as the head of the president’s office for Khatami, he had close contact with religious delegates who came to Iran and were guests of the president. Through one of these visits, Abtahi,

in cooperation with Martin Affolderbach from *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* (EKD), managed to hold a triangle interfaith dialogue between Iran, Germany and Britain. The second opportunity, which was mentioned by participants in the field study, was using the internet (Abtahi, personal communication, 2013; Akrami, personal communication, 2015; Sadr, personal communication, 2014). At that time (from 2001 to 2005), internet use among Iranians was increasing. Hence the IID started to set up its website and its electronic magazine. It established contacts with several institutes and individual users internationally through its internet facilities.

Some of the Iranian religious institutions which have engaged in interfaith dialogue are located in Germany, for instance *Markaz-e Eslāmi-ye Hamburg* [Islamic Center of Hamburg]. Its name has been mentioned several times in this research. A history of its establishment in the 1950s is provided in 2.3. Key figures such as Ayatollah Beheshti, who was a founding father of the Islamic Revolution of Iran; Dr. Shabestari, a dissident religious intellectual; Mohammad Khatami, the former Iranian president; and Mohammad Moghaddam, the head of the publication of Imam Khomieni in Iran were Imam/directors of the center at various times. They were appointed by clergymen of Qum, as the center's website suggests (IZH 2013). It is not clear from the text who appointed the succeeding directors of the center; but because it is mentioned in the field study that the main financial source of the center is the leader's international office (Moghaddam, personal communication, 2012, Tarighat, personal communication, 2014), it can be surmised that the directors are appointed by the leader. The center is an Iranian foreign cultural instrument for expressing "true Islam" and the "Islamic Revolution's values" in Europe (Ansari 1391 [2012]). It also sometimes receives parliamentary financial assistance for specific needs, such as construction or repairs (Habibi 1376 [1997]).

The Islamic Center of Hamburg holds religious seminars and events. It supports translation and publication of books regarding Islamic issues in Farsi, Arabic and German. It has connections with some German religious institutes. Some German participants identify the name of the center with its former directors, Shabestari and Khatami (Mulack, personal communication, 2015; Kreft, personal communication, 2014; Steinbach, personal communication, 2014). Abbas Hosseini Ghaemmaghani, who was the head of the center from 2004 to 2008, was

also mentioned as an open-minded clergyman in the field study (Steinbach, personal communication, 2014). Ghaemmaghmi published an article in German which argues that there is no sentence in the Quran that confirms the death penalty by stoning for adulterers (Ghaemmaghmi 2010), as well as a book on Islam in Europe (Hosseini Ghaemmaghmi 2010). According to an interviewee in the field study, the directors and members of staff of the center have shown great tolerance toward ideas which are not necessarily compatible with their own. In an anniversary meeting he spoke about the key role of Shabestari, Khatami and Ghaemmaghmi in intercultural dialogue. This comment met with a reluctant response in the meeting, but still he was surprised to be tolerated by those who did not agree with his view:

“When I was talking in the seminar, part of them looking at somewhere else [...]. They did not like it at all. [...] But nevertheless I appreciated that. Although they knew that I am very close to Ghaemmaghmi- or all the time that Khatami was coming to Hamburg, we meet each other. So they knew that. Despite this fact, they invited me. That again shows that people [in the Islamic Center of Hamburg] are large brain and perception” (Steinbach, personal communication, 2014).

Among the latest activities of the Islamic Center of Hamburg, its cooperation with the Academy for World Religions of the University of Hamburg to hold seminars on “unity of religious groups” and “anti-extremism” is notable. The presence of Katayoun Amirpour as a deputy director of the academy at those events is significant, because she is a follower of religious intellectuals such as Shabestari; and she does not wear the hijab,⁸⁹ which is obligatory in Iran.

Interreligious dialogue has not been seen at the heart of activities of the institutions discussed above. Reviewing the content of their websites and their publications that were available for this study suggests that they focus on educational programs, training young Iranian and international *Tollab* and *Moballeg*, rather than implementation of interreligious dialogue with the Western countries. Most of them are nevertheless dependent on the funds of high clergymen (like Mesbah Yazdi, the leader himself) to administer their seminary and various interfaith dialogue programs (Moghadam, personal communication,

⁸⁹ The word hijab refers to a typical Islamic garment. Women wear hijab in the presence of adult males outside of their immediate family, to cover their head and chest. Wearing hijab in Iran is obligatory even for foreign and non-Muslim women.

2012). Those which have been active without dependency on those financial sources and support (like IID) had no opportunity to work for a long time.

6.1.3.4 Dialogue Institutions

As mentioned in 2.4.2, civil society was able to operate in the open political landscape at the time of Khatami from 1997 to 2005. Many NGOs were established during that period. The scope for their work was general, but they were able to initiate diverse activities on themes such as dissent theology and women's rights. But the balance of this situation shifted back into the hands of conservatives in early 2006, when Ahmadinejad came to office. Thus the civil society actors gradually disappeared or became inactive like the IID, which was discussed in 6.1.3.3. Among those NGOs, some were working within the framework of intercultural dialogue. According to one of the former officers of the ICDAC in charge of cooperating with NGOs and university centers, up to the end of 2005 there were nearly 100 NGOs in different Iranian cities that were working on the topic of dialogue among civilizations. Nearly every university has a dialogue among civilizations center (Shadorvan, personal communication, 2013). Two significant NGOs in this field are described below.

The *Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures* Institute, in short dialogue NGO of Khatami, which was established in 2005 by Khatami and some of his friends, such as Hadi Khaniki. The first director of the NGO was Ahmad Masjidjamee, a former culture minister, after which Khatami himself was the director for a short period, followed by Hadi Khaniki. The NGO had two offices: one in Tehran and one in Geneva (Khaniki, personal communication, 2013; Khatami, personal communication, 2014; Kharazi, personal communication, 2013). The Geneva office, the Foundation for Dialogue among Civilizations, is mostly managed by Sadegh Kharazi. The foundation received financial support from some former world leaders and international institutes such as the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights (Khatami, personal communication, 2014; Kharazi, personal communication, 2013).

The dialogue NGO of Khatami organized activities such as the “religion in the new world” conference in Tehran in 2008. This conference attracted public

attention for inviting famous international figures like Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary General. The NGO also managed to hold different seminars and events, for instance in recognition of William C. Chittick, an American Islamic philosopher in 2008 (Sadeghi 1387 [2008]), who was invited to take part. The Egyptian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs also invited Khatami, as the head of the NGO, to participate in its annual conference at Al-Azhar University in 2007. The event attracted the attention of Arab intellectuals and journalists. For instance, Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, one the most popular journalists of the Arab world, invited Khatami and his group to his private farm (Khaniki, personal communication, 2013; Khatami, personal communication, 2014). The NGO at that time was optimistic about strengthening the relationship between the main actors of the Islamic world through common cultural activities between Egypt and Iran. However, this trend was interrupted by the post-presidential election of 2009.

The main source of funding for the NGO were two international speeches that Khatami conducted before the presidential election of 2009. Although its financial sources have been questioned by some conservative media, specifically *Resalat* newspaper (Anbarluee, personal communication, 2013), it was significant that the budget was constructed from legal incomes of Khatami as a former president. Earning money from speeches is an international norm for former presidents. Khatami stated that he mostly resisted accepting payment for his speeches at international conferences, because he was aware that Iranian conservatives would easily label him as an agent supported by the Western countries:

“I got no financial assistance. Although [some people] claim that I was getting money from this and that place. But I did not demand any money. I even did not use my legitimate right. You know that when Mr. Clinton, Mr. Gorbatschow and all other former presidents were going to give a speech to any place, a huge amount of money would be invoice to their bank account. Not to their personal bank account, of course [but their institute]. I also could do the same. I could say that when you invite me to a university, then invoice 100,000 \$ to a specific bank account... there would be no problem. But I was not doing that. Just two institutes [...] without my demand, they transfer money to the bank account of NGO of dialogue among civilizations” (Khatami, personal communication, 2014).

The speaking fee that the former president Bill Clinton earned is an average of \$ 110,000 per speech (Bové 2003: 94). The fees Khatami earned from his

speeches, which were \$ 25,000 \$ and \$40,000, were thus between 22% and 36% of the fee that Clinton charged for his speeches.

The activities of both offices of the dialogue NGO of Khatami decreased after the presidential election of 2009 for two reasons. Firstly, the political atmosphere in society did not allow the staff of the NGO to undertake activities easily; and secondly, the passports of key figures of the NGO such as Mohammad Khatami and Hadi Khaniki were confiscated. Consequently, there were limitations on their ability to participate in international events.⁹⁰ It also meant that Khatami could not make speeches abroad to support the NGO financially. The illness of Sadegh Kharazi also led to the activities of the Geneva office being paralyzed.⁹¹

Kānun-e Goftogu [dialogue center] is the next organization which has been active in implementing dialogue activities. It belongs to the cultural and research institute of Imam Musa Sadr in Iran. The Imam Musa Sadr Institute has an office in Lebanon and one in Iran. Its Iran office was established in 1382 [2002] to pursue the destiny of the kidnapping of Imam Musa Sadr.⁹² The institute engaged in dialogue among civilizations by organizing a seminar in 2001 in Beirut. The opening messages of the seminar were from Mohammad Khatami and Pope John Paul II (ICDAC, 1380 [2001]-b, p. 28). The dialogue center was established a few years later to hold workshops and training courses to teach dialogue skills. The institute and the center are managed mostly by Imam Musa's nephews, grandchildren and cousins.

The dialogue center was established with the efforts of Fatemeh Sadr, a volunteer activist who had contact with the ICDAC, Khatami's dialogue NGO. She is also a distant relative and friend of Mohammad Khatami. Fatemeh Sadr has been living in Germany since the 1960s, although she has maintained close contact with Iranian society. She translated a book by Johannes Hartkemeyer on dialogue skills and consequently invited Johannes and Martina Hartkemeyer to Iran, with the support of the *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*, in 1384 [2005]. The invitation to the

⁹⁰ Observation: From talking to both Khatami and Khaniki at the end of 2014 and updating the information at the end of 2016, it became apparent that they still do not have their passports. Both of them made fun of it in our conversations.

⁹¹ Observation: Sadegh Kharazi has suffered from, and survived, a bout of cancer. It was obvious from visiting him at Frankfurt am Main airport in March 2013 for the research interview that he had become very weak and cannot often travel internationally. In conversation, it was clear that he nevertheless has great passion for diplomatic activities.

⁹² Imam Musa Sadr was an Iranian-Lebanese clergyman, philosopher and leader of a Shī'ah minority in Lebanon. He went missing while traveling to Libya in 1978. All searches and efforts to clarify his disappearance have produced no result to this day.

Hartkemeyer family at that time was also welcomed by the ICDAC. Through this invitation, Fatemeh Sadr was also able to convince the main team of the Imam Musa Sadr Institute to establish a dialogue center. As a result, the newly established center developed some activities, such as training courses relating to the issue of dialogue. Johannes Schopp was the next expert to be invited from Germany to hold training workshops in dialogue methods for parents in 2007 (Wehner/Schopp 2008). Thereafter, the center extended its activities to include training dialogue guides, too. The center focused on conducting dialogue courses for family members, physicians, teachers, pupils, therapists and similar. It avoided engaging in political issues or dialogue between Iran's religious groups, as a member of the institute explains:

“Our work has started but very slow. Because we don't perceive ourselves political. Individually anybody can have [political] approaches, but the center is COMPLETELY apolitical [...] but if you mean working with religious groups, we don't have still such a plan. We believe that they are not our priority. Means that our main problem is not in field of relationship between Jewish, Christian and Muslim people in Iran. We think the main problem is now the problem of little tolerance among ourselves...we don't claim to work on plural political groups” (Daeepour, personal communication, 2013).

Through her contact with both Iranian and German society, her friendship with Khatami and communication with the ICDAC and Khatami's dialogue NGO, Fatameh Sadr played a key role in initiating some future dialogue programs between Iran and Germany. Her role cannot be explained accurately by her personal interest and work as a volunteer or her institutional efforts to promote knowledge of dialogue skills in Iranian society by translating books and articles and inviting German experts. She rather played the role of an informed mediator between the two countries. She recommended Khatami invite Dr. Jochen Hippler, a German Middle East scholar, to Iran in 2008. This invitation led at a later stage to academic exchanges between Iran and Germany and specifically turned into a DAAD exchange project from 2012 to 2015 within the framework of intercultural dialogue. The question is therefore why the ICDAC and Rayzani of Iran in Germany and ICRO have not benefited more from her assistance. Fatemeh Sadr responded to this question as follows:

“Before I start the project of workshop of dialogue in the center of Imam Musa Sadr's institute, I suggested it to the ICDAC. I went to Mr. Mohajerani [the second president]. I told him that one of the bases of dialogue among civilizations

is firstly to learn how to conduct dialogue. If the ICDAC supported us [I and my team], we would hold workshops and would teach dialogue skills over there. Mr. Mohajerani did not understand my point and told me that there are some telephones which one can call them and talk about his/her problem. Perhaps I did not explain my meaning properly. I also told Dr. Boroujerdi about it, but it did not work [...] I have heard from some people that I should go to the ICDAC and size my project with an insistence, but I am not such a person” (Sadr, personal communication, 2014).

When asked about contact with Rayzani, she responded that she had no indication that cooperation with Rayzani would be possible at that time. She or her team had not explored such an option. In conversation with participants of Rayzani, nobody could remember her name. They could not remember details of cooperation which took place a couple of years before the time of the research.

There are not many organizations and groups which implement dialogue activities as discussed above. The dialogue NGO of Khatami faced political restrictions after 2009. The dialogue center of Imam Musa Sadr Institute concentrates on gaining distance from political issues to be able to continue its work. It seems that it has been able to work since its establishment without a break or any ban. It promotes methods and techniques of dialogue among families and young people.

6.1.3.5 Academic Institutions

Academic organizations of the Iranian state such as the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, Ministry of Health and Medical Education as well as ICRO have a role in supporting international academic exchanges, including giving financial assistance to Iranian students to study abroad and supporting foreign students to study in Iran. Some Iranian universities also individually have programs to support foreign students. For instance, Al-Mustafa International University, which was discussed in 6.1.3.3, supports foreign theology students to study in Iran. Alzahra University (a women-only university), Beheshti University, Isfahan University, Amirkabir University, Tehran University of Medical Sciences (which is under the authority of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education), Tehran University, and Azad University (which is run by the private sector in Iran) provide opportunities for foreign students to study in Iran. Financial support for foreign students is allowed in two forms: the first exempts them from

registration fees, paying costs of accommodation and family members; the second covers registration fees (Moin/Farhadi 2000).

Unfortunately, no statistics regarding the number of foreign students, the number of scholarships and the change in numbers between 1998 and 2013 are available. The websites of both ministries and ICRO do not present relevant information. Several attempts to contact experts and members of staff of these organizations, by email and telephone calls, likewise produced no result.⁹³ Nevertheless, news releases suggest that 1,000 foreign students annually are studying at Iranian universities. Of those, 250 students are studying Farsi language (Tasnim news 12.01.2016). In a meeting held between Nili Ahmadabadi, the dean of the University of Tehran, and Ebrahimi Torkaman, the head of ICRO, it was stressed that the University of Tehran and ICRO should conclude an agreement to support foreign students financially to encourage them to study in Iran (Tasnim news 12.01.2016). The head of the Department of Education and Research of ICRO also announced in a press interview that ICRO planned in 2011 to give 400 Indian students scholarships to study Farsi (Mehr news 04.02.2011). ICRO gave some scholarships to students of Central Asian countries, for instance to students of the Eurasian National University of Kazakhstan, to study Iran studies (ICRO 2016b).

6.1.3.6 A Summary on Other Iranian Actors

To sum up this section, one question must be repeated: What are the characteristics of cultural activities implemented or supported by the Iranian actors in the framework of intercultural dialogue? What have they done with regard to intercultural dialogue? Their activities are incoherent and fragmented. Religious institutes which are under the authority or close to the religiously legitimated sector have implemented some interfaith dialogues almost throughout the 1998–2013 period. However, interfaith dialogue has not been the focus of their activities. Organizations which have worked in a non-governmental capacity and closer to reformists have faced obstacles to working continuously in Iran. NGOs which work specifically on dialogue have faced political pressures in a way that has decreased their activities or prompted them to focus on target groups

⁹³ Attempts have been made to contact Dr. Ebrahim Hajizadeh, head of the office of scholarship of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, and Abdulhossein Daneshfar, head of the Germany section in the scholarship office, for more information. Unfortunately, no response has been received by the researcher. Last update of contact with them: 2017.3.23

(such as parents and teachers) on a domestic level. Despite these limitations, these actors still had a positive effect on the relationship between Iran and Germany. For instance, IPIS conducted several meetings with European diplomatic delegations at the time of Khatami and indirectly used the discourse of dialogue among civilizations to strengthen diplomatic relations with them. Moreover, interreligious dialogue and seminars conducted by institutes which are close to or under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector have been discussed as a positive step towards peace: firstly, because liberal and open-minded persons are working in these institutes, and secondly, because it sends out a positive signal internationally to show that even the so-called hardliners of Iran believe in dialogue in their communication. Among the other Iranian actors, the position of an informed mediator with great potential to develop opportunities for Iranian and German participants was significant. Through her volunteer and institutional activities, she attempted to connect actors of the two societies with each other, but her capacities were little used by Iranian actors. The final point concerns academic support for foreign students to study in Iran, which does not follow a certain order and cannot be seen through a unified policy. Two ministries, of education and medical care, as well as ICRO and some universities play a role in this field, but it is difficult to ascertain the number of foreign students during the time under review.

6.1.4 Attention of Iranian Media to Intercultural Dialogue

Media in each society play an important role in creating an initial image of the world and other cultures. TV, newspapers and magazines and movies give people a general impression of how other cultures look. There is a challenge in deciding whether media can be discussed as an “actor” of intercultural dialogue or a “mediator”. In this chapter it is discussed separately from the actors. Analysis in 6.1.4 is divided into two sections: Section 6.1.4.1 presents analysis on Iranian TV and radio and their political atmosphere. Information on Iranian press media follows in 6.1.4.2. Social media are naturally becoming increasingly important in Iran, but this study does not deal with them.

6.1.4.1 Iranian TV and Radio

Iranian TV and radio (IRIB) are governmental and work to a high degree under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. The IRIB receives a parliamentary budget, though its head is appointed by the leader directly. The head of the IRIB is also one of the members of the higher council of ICRO. The IRIB has been criticized often for its biased news coverage to the benefit of conservatives and hardliners in Iran and against the reformists. In 1997 the “neutrality” of the IRIB became the subject of a heated debate when it played a dubious role in covering news in favor of the conservative presidential candidate Ali-Akbar Nategh-Nouri, a rival of Mohammad Khatami. The documentary *Cherāgh* [light], which was produced by the IRIB, was criticized for “accusing supporters of Khatami for being behind the wave of political assassinations” (Khiabany 2009: 178), well known as the “Chain Murders” of Iranian liberal authors, which is mentioned in 5.2.4. In this context, the dialogue activities of the ICDAC were given neither positive nor negative coverage by the IRIB, as according to a conversation with a member of the ICDAC staff (Farahmand, personal communication, 2014).⁹⁴ Nevertheless, there was negative coverage that had a destructive effect on Khatami’s intercultural dialogue approach. It was conducted by the branch offices of the IRIB and the news agency IRNA, which are located in the *Pressehaus* in Berlin. In 2000 the Heinrich Böll Foundation coordinated a conference called “Iran after Election” to reflect views of Iranian reformists, authors, political, religious and human rights activists on the victory of reformists in Iran in the parliamentary election. The IRIB, with the help of its branch offices in Berlin, broadcast a program “made up of 30 minutes of selected and edited coverage of the Berlin conference”. The program presented a negative image of those reformists who attended the conference (Khiabany 2009: 178). Contrastingly, the IRIB reported neutrally on the opening of the *Hafiz-Goethe Memorial* in Weimar by Khatami and Johannes Rau, which happened a few months after the conference, covering it just as a brief news item. The IRIB has also not appeared to be a close partner of the Rayzani in implementing cultural

⁹⁴ The statement of this member of staff of the ICDAC is important because he was in charge of a team that monitored media coverage on the issue of dialogue among civilizations on a daily basis. So in some cases, when something was expressed negatively by the media, the team would record it, and if it did not correspond to reality, the team would notify the media. That is why the statement of this participant concerning the negative or positive coverage of the IRIB on the ICDAC or the issue of dialogue among civilizations was relevant.

activities, as mentioned in 6.1.2.3. Nevertheless, because Iranian TV takes an open approach to broadcasting foreign films and serials,⁹⁵ it can be argued that it indirectly plays a role in opening doors to other cultures for Iranian audiences.

6.1.4.2 Iranian Press Media

Press media in Iran, those which have no dependency to the Iranian religiously legitimated sector of the state, work under the restrictions of the judiciary. The judiciary in Iran, as mentioned in 5.1.1, is broadly under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector. The judicial system is biasedly strict toward reformist newspapers and consequently liberal and reformist journalists. The number of reformist press media increased significantly at the time of the reformist president Khatami. Between 1998 and 2000, up to thirty dailies were published in the city of Tehran alone. A short time later, the reformist media faced severe restrictions from the judiciary, with 120 reformist print media being closed by 2001. The brief period in which there was a high number of reformist print media created a dynamic that had not been seen before: a period of the press behaving like a “revolutionary press” (Farhi 2003: 149). The conservative press media, such as *Keyhan*, *Resalat* and *Yassarat-al-Hossaein*, have been able to operate without any serious obstacle from the judiciary. *Yassarat-al-Hosseini*, for instance, which according to Hossein Shahidi is strongly “critical of the secular thinkers outside” the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state as well as anyone within the state “who could be described as liberal or reformist” (Shahidi 2007: 49), was issued a judicial order in 2016 to stop publishing its weekly, which it nevertheless continued to publish (Young Journalists news 03.08.2016).

Despite limitations and discrimination against reformist and liberal press media, some of them were able, during a certain period of time, to reflect on issues such as Western culture, Islam, the literature and art of other cultures. Some of them are as follows:

- *Madrese* [school] is a monthly that was established in 2005 in the field of philosophy and culture. *Madrese* reflected religious views of scholars such as Abdolkarim Soroush, Mojtabeh-e Shabestari and Mohsen Kadivar.

⁹⁵ According to a report from Mehr news agency in 2007, three times more foreign films than domestic films were broadcast on Iranian TV. From the total number of 954 films, 738 were produced abroad (Mehr news.11.08.2007)

- *Āeen* [manner] was a magazine established after 2003 as the official forum of the political party of *Mošārekāt-e Eslāmi* [Islamic Participation]. *Āeen* mostly expressed the views of Khatami and other reformists. In the first year of *Āeen*'s existence it was not published. The editors were concentrating on meeting each other and discussing the main issues they wanted to publish.
- *Nāfe* [odorous substance] was a magazine published after 2000. It mostly analyzed and commented on works of dissident artists and authors such as Mahmoud Dolatabadi and Simin Behbahani.

There are also journals which echo the voices of dissident authors and thinkers and reflect other cultures in the Iranian public sphere, like *Pol Firoozeh* (published between 2002 and 2010), and *Bokhara* (published since 1998). Both journals are mentioned in 6.1.2.3. Most of the magazines and journals mentioned above operated for a short period of time. Bans on their publication were for reasons such as desecrating the Iranian Revolution or blaspheming Islam or Islamic rules. *Madrese*, for instance, was closed down in late 2007 by the press supervisory board for publishing an interview with Mojtabeh Shabestari on hermeneutic and religious interpretation of the world (Mehr news 10.11.2007). *Āeen-e Goftogu*, which was intending to reflect on the issue of dialogue, was published once only. *Mehrnāme* [letter of kindness] is the only magazine that is still published and since 2009 has been sympathetic to reformists' views. Some editors and authors of magazines mentioned above are in the main editorial team of *Mehrnāme*.

In summary, it can be said that the national TV and radio and the press media represent other cultures and views in a different and fragmented way. They are not treated the same way by the Iranian state. Radio and TV are monopolized by a single organization, which is under the authority of a religiously legitimated actor. Consequently, they cover news in a way that is biased against the cultural activities (including regarding dialogue among civilizations) of the democratically legitimated sector. This fragmentation also showed itself in discrimination against the reformist press. But correspondents of the reformist press used many individual opportunities to write on various dimensions of other cultures. Despite all limitations of working in Iran, they have used their short-lived publications

(because they often face publication bans) as a fortress for dialogue with other views and cultures. But overall, the media in Iran have not managed to play a significant role in continuously implementing aimful programs to reflect a positive dimension of Western and German culture, so they cannot be categorized as actors of intercultural dialogue.

6.2 German Implementing Actors of Intercultural Dialogue

As mentioned in 2.4.1, the German state after World War II changed its foreign cultural policy approach and used *Mittlerorganisationen* and civil society to a large degree to represent Germany culturally abroad. Reviewing the annual reports on German foreign cultural policy (Auswärtiges Amt 1999, 2000 b, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011a, 2012a, 2013a, 2014) confirms that these organizations were significant for the foreign ministry as well. Besides state organizations such as the cultural section of the German embassy abroad, a huge number of parastatal institutes and organizations, *Mittlerorganisationen*, NGOs and individuals undertook cultural activities from 1998 to 2013. Table 8 shows their names and the years in which they implemented cultural activities.

Table 8. German cultural actors which are mentioned in annual reports on German foreign cultural policy from 1998 to 2013

Time s menti oned in annua l report	Institutes																							
	GI	DAA D	Av H	ifa	ZfA	PAD	DUK	DA I	DGI A/M WS	KS B	HKW	DAK G	DMR	I N	Fulbrig ht	BIB B	Villa Aurora.	Villa Vigoni.	Kirch en	DA G	DAF	IJA B	D W	
1998																								
1999																								
2000																								
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2013																								

Source: annual reports on foreign cultural policy of Germany (1998-2013), made by researcher

The abbreviated names of the organizations in table 8 are presented here in full (alphabetical order):

1. AvH (*Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung*) [Alexander von Humboldt Foundation], an academic higher education institution,
2. BIBB (*Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung*) [Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training],
3. DAAD (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*) [German Academic Exchange Service],
4. DAFI (*Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlingsinitiative Albert Einstein des UNHCR*) [German Academic Refugee Initiative Albert Einstein of the UNHCR], a program which focuses on academic programs for refugees and works within the framework of the UN,
5. DAG (*Deutsche Auslandsgesellschaft*) [community of Germans abroad]
6. DAI (*Deutsches Archäologisches Institut*) [German Archology Institute]
7. DAKG (*Deutsch-ausländische Kulturgesellschaften*) [German-international cultural community]
8. *Deutsch-Amerikanische Fulbright-Kommission* [German American Fulbright Commission], which is a program to promote academic relations between America and Germany,
9. DGIA and also MWS (*Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland*) [German Human Science Institute abroad]; the institute was incorporated into the Max Weber Foundation/MWS in 2006,
10. DMR (*Deutscher Musikrat*) [German Music Council]
11. DUK (*Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission*) [German UNESCO Commission]
12. DW (*Deutsche Welle*), a multimedia broadcaster operated mainly by the German state,
13. GI (*Goethe Institut*) [Goethe Institute], a cultural institute which focuses on German language as well as art, music and literature projects abroad,
14. HKW (*Haus der Kulturen der Welt*) [House of Cultures of the World], which is located in Berlin and aims at implementing and cooperating in international cultural activities for people in the German capital
15. Ifa (*Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen*) [Institute for Foreign Relations], which focuses on planning art exhibitions abroad as well as implementing projects to inform German state and society about important foreign issues

16. *IJAB-Fachstelle für Internationale Jugendarbeit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e. V.* [Partner for International Youth Work in Europe and Around the World], a German institute which works on implementing cultural activities at a European level
17. IN (*InterNationes*) which was an institute established in 1952 to spread information and literature on Germany abroad. In 2001, for budget saving reasons it was merged into the Goethe Institute (Paschalidis 2014: 466), 459
18. *Kirchen* [churches]. Although churches and religious institutes have always cooperated in cultural activities abroad, since 2013 churches specifically have been included under foreign cultural activities in the annual report
19. KSB (*Kulturstiftung des Bundes*) [German Federal Cultural Foundation], which promotes art and culture within the scope of federal competence at international level,
20. PAD (*Pädagogischer Austauschdienst*) [Pedagogical Exchange Service], which is a state institute in charge of training projects for teachers and promoting the educational system
21. ZfA (*Bundesverwaltungsamt – Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen*) [Central Office for Foreign Schools, part for the Federal Administration Office]

Clearly there are a lot of organizations which have implemented cultural activities abroad. So how were specific organizations selected to focus on in the study? An initial review of these organizations suggests that some are presented consistently in the reports, although some were only active a few years. For instance, DAFI was active in the recent years of the time period of the study. Some other actors, like the Deutscher Musikrat, were not mentioned after 2000. Furthermore, it has become clear that some of the institutions which are mentioned as *Mittlerorganisationen* in the annual report do not exactly fit this category. For instance, DW or ZfA are rather state or parastatal organizations, which means that they are owned or operated wholly or partly by the German state. Moreover, some institutions have not been active with regard to Muslim countries or specifically toward Iran. For instance, the Villa Aurora organization deals specifically with cultural activities of German-Jewish artists of the USA.

Therefore those organizations which have been mentioned repeatedly by the annual report as active organizations, those mentioned consistently in specific projects of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”, and those which are positively recommended in the initial informal conversations of the study are selected to be analyzed. Consequently, the study focuses on the cultural section of the German embassy, the DAAD, ifa and the Goethe Institute.

This subchapter presents information and analysis on the DAAD (in 6.2.2), ifa (in 6.2.3), and the Goethe Institute (in 6.2.4). The cultural section of the German embassy is a further focus of this study in 6.2.1 for its role in coordinating activities of the *Mittlerorganisationen* and directly implementing some cultural activities as an agent of the state. The remaining organizations, institutes and private groups which implemented and cooperated in intercultural dialogue programs for German and Iranian participants (but whose activities or budget were not as great as those of the four organizations above) have been considered as “other German actors” in 6.2.5. The attention of the German media to the issue of intercultural dialogue will also be discussed in 6.2.6. A summary of the main points of this subchapter follows in 6.2.7.

6.2.1 *Kulturabteilung*/Cultural Section of the German Embassy in Iran

The cultural section of the German embassy in Tehran is the first organization which is discussed here. Its website has been a helpful source in giving an overall image of its own activities as well as the activities of the other German cultural actors in Iran. Members of staff of the cultural section and some of its high-ranking officials participated in interviews in this study. This section presents that information in three segments: history and organizational aims, organizational structure, and practices of the cultural section.

6.2.1.1 History and Organizational Aims

The *Kulturabteilung* [cultural section] is a suboffice of the German embassy and located inside the embassy in *Ferdousi* street in Tehran. It must be considered the successor of the respective cultural office of the first German embassy in Iran. The first German embassy was established in 1885 in Tehran (Martin 1959: 30). It

is still active. It is the only agent of the German state in Iran to deal with cultural affairs.

6.2.1.2 Organizational Structure

The cultural section works with a number of different sections of the embassy. They include the political section; rights and accounting section; visa section; economic section; press section, *Militärattachéstab* [defence attaché]; and administrative section. Employees of the cultural section are mostly appointed by the foreign ministry, and its *Kulturreferenten in der Deutschen Botschaft* [directors] are accomplished diplomats. Unfortunately, information on all the directors that held office between 1998 and 2013 was unavailable. Silke Riecken-Daerr, who was in office between 2005 and 2011,⁹⁶ and Otto Graf, who was in office from 2011 to early 2015, are the most recent officers of this section. Justus Kemper was appointed director of the cultural section from late 2015.

The cultural section works closely with the press section and German *Mittlerorganisationen*, especially the Goethe Institute, ifa, DAI and the DAAD. Institutes such as *Deutsche Botschaftsschule Teheran* [German embassy school], *Das Deutsche Sprachinstitut Teheran* [German language institute], *Evangelische Gemeinde Deutsche Sprache in Iran* [Evangelical community of German language speakers in Iran], commonly known as the “German Church”; *Die Deutsch-Iranische Industrie- und Handelskammer* [German-Iranian Chamber of Commerce], *Freundeskreis Freiburg-Isfahan e. V.* [institute of Freiburg-Isfahan circle of friends] and *Deutsch-Iranische Krebsliga* [German-Iranian Cancer League] are in contact with the cultural section to organize cultural projects for Iranian and German participants.

6.2.1.3 Practices: Generally and Specifically for Intercultural Dialogue

The cultural section has three key activities, according to a participant of the field study: firstly, dealing with German-Iranian cooperation in the higher education and research; secondly, promoting the exchange between German and Iranian artists; and thirdly, sponsoring dissemination and teaching of German language in Iran (Kemper, personal communication, 2016). To perform these activities, the

⁹⁶ The researcher was in contact per email with Mrs. Silke Riecken-Daerr in 2010 to make a student appointment in the German embassy, but it was not possible for the researcher to reach her after that.

cultural section has benefited from the assistance of *Mittlerorganisationen*. As far as academic cooperation with Iran is concerned, there has been strong mutual interaction between the embassy and the DAAD. For instance, in a period under Ahmadienjad, the DAAD had difficulties working in Iran. This point will be explained more in 6.2.2. The cultural department has played a very important role in enabling it to continue with its activities. It provided the assistance of a local employee⁹⁷ to deal with academic affairs of the DAAD, such as advising students and giving them information on current scholarship offers (Erbel, personal communication, 2015; Maleki, personal communication, 2016). In addition, some professors have been supported by the cultural section in implementing cultural projects. For instance, Christoph Werner from Philipps-Universität Marburg, Center for Near and Middle East Studies, organized the *Iran Exkursion* program for German students of the *Centrum für Nah-und Mittelost-Studien/CNMS* in 2010. Ulrik Marzolph from the University of Göttingen and Birgit Hoffmann from the University of Bamberg were active in the field of Iran studies. Ludwig Paul is mentioned too for writing a travel guide on Iran together with Hartmut Niemann. The names of these researchers have often been mentioned in contact with the German participants of the study (Erbel, personal communication, 2015; Thier, personal communication, 2014).

With regard to art activities, there is cooperation between the contact office of the Goethe Institute and the cultural and press sections. As mentioned in 2.4.1, the Goethe Institute has not been active officially in Iran since 1987, but it still has a contact office in the cultural section. This office supports theatre and music activities, more details of which will be given in 6.4.2.

The German language has been promoted in Iran with the help of the Goethe Institute, too. The German language institute Tehran (DSIT) was originally under the management of the Goethe Institute.

The contact office of the Goethe Institute and the press section have together coordinated projects such as study trips. In these study trips, which have taken place almost every year, a team of Iranian and German artists, journalists, students or employees of different Iranian state organizations receive support to travel to Germany and Iran respectively and discuss different topics and issues which are -

⁹⁷ This employee's name is Mostafa Maleki. At that time he was a PhD student in German Studies at the University of Tehran. He played a very positive role in keeping the limited projects and activities of the DAAD going during 2008 and 2012.

important in both Iranian and German society. A director of the press section at that time explained that the study trips have to be explained in the context of intercultural dialogue:

“Yes, this is dialogue because we select 10 Germans, and then need their counterparts from Iran. We select a team we think there are a lot of skills of dialogue between Iranians and Germans, for example we had a team of demographic change and productive medicine, it is slightly loftily titled but what we want to do is bringing together population expert. Because Iran has much younger population at the moment. (It can) face the challenge, it will be aging country in the future. Because the population you know many will be 80 or so in future. So it is also the hit topic between the conservatives and moderators at the moment” (Their, personal communication, 2014).

“Media dialogue” and “Photo competition” (Auswärtiges Amt 2013b) are other programs which have been organized by the press section to create dialogue between Iranian and German journalists and photographers. Moreover, the press section supported *Teamreisen* [team travels], which is travel specific to issues such as disaster management, and *Theatertreffen* [theater meetings]. It also assists Iranian artists and film makers to attend the Berlinale film festival. Furthermore, on a diplomatic level, the press section funds a program called “exchange of diplomats”, through which it sends two or three Iranian diplomats annually to take part in training courses in Germany (Thier, personal communication, 2014). Some of the programs, such as media dialogue, have been stopped since 2005 for being “too risky for Iranian journalists”. A study trip was also canceled because an Iranian state authority did not allow some participants take part in the program after it recognized that the travel group had a mixture of participants, including journalists and NGO representatives (Thier, personal communication, 2014).

Some private groups organized cultural activities with the support of the cultural section of the German embassy, too. “Youth in dialogue” is one of the well-known projects, organized by a volunteer group, which will be discussed more in 6.2.5. Also, German music groups have received support annually from the cultural section to hold concerts in Iran. The *West Östlicher Diwan Festival Weimar GmbH*, for instance, organized a concert trip to Tehran, Isfahan, Yazd and Shiraz (Bauch, personal communication, 2014).

The cultural section has also supported German religious delegates who participated in interfaith dialogue meetings with the Iranian side, and religious representatives who attended events of the German church located in Tehran. It

also helped some Iranian clergymen to participate in relevant religious meetings in Germany by facilitating the visa process for them, as one of the former heads mentioned (Graf, personal communication, 2014).

The cultural section has played a significant role in celebrating the “day of German Unification”⁹⁸ every year in Iran. The celebration is called “German cultural week in Iran”. It starts with the reception party of the ambassador in his garden in *Amjadieh*, north of Tehran. It continues with theater and music programs, and art exhibitions in different galleries in Tehran. Cultural actors such as the DAAD, Goethe Institute and DSIT have an opportunity to present their activities on exhibition stands in the German ambassador’s garden during the reception party. Iranian institutes, news agencies and media representatives are also invited to the party.⁹⁹ It is significant that some volunteer groups which implemented intercultural dialogue activities years before have also attended the reception party.

The cultural section also covered news on intercultural dialogue programs of ifa and the DAAD. It introduced the website of *Qantara*, which is a special forum for intercultural dialogue between Germany and Muslim countries. It published a newsletter about cultural activities in Iran. At a specific time it had a dedicated advisor from the European-Islamic cultural dialogue office of the foreign ministry. After one or two years, however, that advisor was working for another service of the foreign ministry (Erbel, personal communication, 2015; Mulack, personal communication, 2015). Unfortunately, the researcher could not obtain information regarding the exact name of the advisor and details of his/her work. The cultural section also used to apply for the dedicated budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue when Ahmadinejad was president of Iran. However, because some events were canceled for political reasons, the German foreign ministry suspended this particular budget of the cultural section (Thier, personal communication, 2014; Graf, personal communication, 2014). It is nevertheless significant that the cultural section engaged in intercultural dialogue activities even without that specific budget. One reason for this is that the embassy and its different sections can apply for other relevant budgets of the federal government or foreign ministry. For instance, a director of the press section applied for the

⁹⁸ The day of German unification is celebrated on 3rd October. It commemorates the anniversary of unification of West and East Germany in 1990.

⁹⁹ Observation and participation of the researcher in the reception party and some art exhibitions

budget of *Deutschland Bild im Ausland* (DA)¹⁰⁰ as soon as she realized that the political situation under Rouhani made it possible to implement a media dialogue (Thier, personal communication, 2014).

The political situation in Ahmadinejad's time also had an effect on data collection relating to the cultural section. The German embassy moved its important documents including annual reports from Tehran to Berlin in 2011 for safekeeping after an attack organized by some Iranian demonstrators, including members of *Basij*,¹⁰¹ on the British embassy in November 2011 (Sreberny/Torfeh 2014: 163). In this attack, some offices of the British embassy were ransacked and its documents stolen. The British embassy is located near the German embassy in Tehran. Consequently, the German embassy decided to move all important data to Berlin in late 2011 (Erbel, personal communication, 2015; Thier, personal communication, 2014). The security considerations regarding the behaviors of radical groups in Iran generally was so high that the official website of the embassy became extremely careful to advertise the cultural programs offering opportunities for studying, internships and travel to Iranian participants. The cultural section therefore used an unofficial network to present information for Iranian applicants. In the media dialogue implemented in 2013, for instance, the Iranian journalists were informed through a small network of journalists that was in contact with the press section (Thier, personal communication, 2014).

Despite all the difficulties, the Iranian state had an interest in or at least no opposition to maintaining academic and interreligious cooperation. In Graf's view this interest is not enough. For him, providing dialogue opportunities for normal people had priority over implementing dialogue for experts such as professors and theologians:

“For us it is not priority to have an event to bring people together and then have some kind of booklet, but our priority is really that the people who should talk to each other, talk to each other [...] So this is a very open dialogue, and this is going on, all the time. I think it is just a lack that I see. Between theologies we have quite reasonable exchange. But what is a little bit missing is maybe [having] more people, having a broader audience in Germany. I mean the interested people [Germans] they also get to know Iranians' views. I mean we have Ayatollahs in

¹⁰⁰ DA is a specific budget which is allocated for activities intended to represent Germany's image culturally in the world. Division 600 of the media and culture department of the foreign ministry is in charge of this budget.

¹⁰¹ Basij is a militia group consisted of young people, including Iranian pupils, students and staff members of state organizations. Structurally Basij is part of the Sepah Pasdaran [Revolutionary Guardian Militia] *Golkar, Saeid* 2015: *Captive Society: The Basij Militia and Social Control in Iran*: Columbia University Press..

Germany in some universities. [They are] giving lectures, having discussions. So the academic work is rather well connected [...] What is a little bit missing is a little bit of bigger circle, but this is not duty of activities of academics ...but this has a lot to do with general perception of Iran” (Graf, personal communication, 2014).

Graf also emphasized creating a proper dialogue method for making a “better perception about Iran” in Germany. His suggestion was to give more opportunities to German journalists to travel to Iran. In his time, the cultural section had unsuccessfully tried to support travel by some German journalists to Iran. To his mind, refusing German journalists visas and consequently preventing them from visiting Iran would lead to “keeping the positive advertisement away” (Graf, personal communication, 2014). Visa denial or restrictions were common problems of the cultural and other sections of the German embassy under Ahmadinejad. Even some music concerts and exhibitions were canceled because of visa problems, even though the embassy had previously received assurances from the Iranian authorities. Up to the last moment there was no way to be sure that a cultural event would take place in Iran, as a former ambassador explained:

“In the Iranian side there were some plans and projects [to cooperate with us]. And even when the ministry of [Islamic] culture and guidance was completely agree with that, but at the end somebody was refused at the airport, or visa [problem] or whatever it was. So then you also had some forces in the background [...] sure, the problem was not cultural. The problem was the political groups, who wanted to avoid the cultural events which produce positive results” (Erbel, personal communication, 2015).

It is not clear exactly which Iranian political groups were against the cultural activities of the German embassy. The role of *Vežārat-e Eteḡā’āt* [Iranian intelligence service], Basij groups, as well as biased news media coverage, specifically by *Keyhan*, were mentioned in the field study as preventive power sources in Iranian society. The cultural section of the German embassy nevertheless managed to implement some cultural activities through cooperation with state organizations such as *Sāzmān-e mirās-e farhangi v sanāye’e dasti v gardešgari* [Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organization]. The name of Mohammad Javad Adabi, who was director of the *Anjoman Asar v mafakher farhangi* Society of cultural figures and heritage] is mentioned for assisting the embassy to organize a concert of the *German West-East Orchestra* from Halle in Weimar in 2012. The name of the source of the above information must remain anonymous.

Obstacles to the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany have not been created by the Iranian side alone. Some individuals and groups on the German side also did not agree with intercultural dialogue with Iran. For instance, the anti-Israeli discourse of Ahmadinejad caused some disagreements on this issue. As a former German ambassador in Iran explained, especially on the eve of cultural events, even apolitical ones such as a meeting on the issue of Hafiz and Goethe in Germany, opposition groups and individuals would be active and demonstrate against them (Erbel, personal communication, 2015).¹⁰²

6.2.1.4 A Summary on Analysis of the Cultural Section

In summing up this section, one question must be reiterated: What are characteristics of the cultural activities which the cultural section of the German embassy implement or support in the framework of intercultural dialogue? The cultural section has been observed as being a central actor in coordinating cultural activities of German institutes and organizations, including *Mittlerorganisationen*. Through this coordination it specifically works to implement art and music activities, academic exchanges and German language courses. It has maintained its networking with German actors on different occasions. It seems that the participants of the study from the cultural section not only learned how to manage the difficulties of working in Iran under Ahmadinejad, they also took a step forward and could discover the strong points of working in the region. Despite the difficulties, they talked enthusiastically about attempting a variety of cultural activities in the framework of cultural dialogue. Some Iranian authorities and German groups, journalists and authors have been mentioned as opponents of the dialogue projects between the two countries. The cultural section seems to play the role of an actor that knows the difficulties of working in Iran and uses this knowledge to assist German actors to work in the region without interruption.

¹⁰² Attempts have been made to investigate this issue further. Two interviews, with Benjamin Weinthal and Mathias Küntzel, were even conducted. However, they have been omitted from the chapters of this study because firstly, the content of the two interviews is not enough for a full discussion about opposition to dialogue with Iran in Germany; and secondly, because the argument is not relevant to clarify the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Germany.

6.2.2 Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD)

The DAAD is an association of German universities, academic institutes and student bodies. It has a strong (and for outsiders complicated to understand) organizational structure. Its worldwide network is unique among the organizations investigated in this study. Like a ministry, it has a complex organizational structure. The DAAD has been one of the strongest partners of the “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” until today. The information presented in this section is the result of data collected with the help of the DAAD website, DAAD annual reports and AKBP annual reports, as well as interviews with different participants. It is divided into three segments: history and aims, organizational structure, and practices of the DAAD.

6.2.2.1 History and Organizational Aims

The DAAD is a type of association of German universities¹⁰³. It was established in 1925 when a German student, Carl Joachim Friedrich visited the New York Institute of International Education with 13 other German students in 1922. On his return to Germany in 1923 he decided to found a similar institute. Through this institute he wanted to implement student exchange into and from Germany. He initially established the Akademische Austauschdienst e. V. (AAD) in Heidelberg. The idea of the exchange via the AAD’s activities was welcomed by some German universities. It therefore received more assistance and was moved to Berlin. In January 1931, through a structural transformation by the German state, the AAD together with two other academic institutes established a new body called *Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst* (DAAD) [German Academic Exchange Service]. In the last years of World War II, the activities of the DAAD were limited. After the war, the DAAD faced a period of suspension like other German *Mittlerorganisationen*, as explained in 2.4.1. Thanks to the efforts of academic institutions in the USA, Britain and France, and the perseverance of a professor at Bonn University, Theodor Klauser, the DAAD re-opened in 1950 (DAAD 2015).

The DAAD budget comes from different state, non-state and industry organizations. According to information on its official website, the DAAD has

¹⁰³ In the field study there were participants who also used the term “university club” to describe the type of academic service of the DAAD, though it seems that “association of German universities” best explains the type of organization the DAAD is.

supported more than 1.9 million scholars in Germany and abroad since 1925. The academic activities of the DAAD are not limited to scholarships and also include implementing projects to achieve aims such as the internationalization of German universities, promoting German studies and the German language abroad. The DAAD has assisted developing countries to establish universities. It implements advisory programs and academic workshops, and it sends lecturers to those universities, too.

There are five key aims which are mentioned in almost all annual reports of the DAAD (DAAD 2005: 8, DAAD 2006: 10, DAAD 2008: 10, DAAD 2009: 10, DAAD 2010: 12, DAAD 2011a: 15-16, DAAD 2012a: 16-17, DAAD 2013b: 16-17, DAAD 2014c: 16-17). The first aim is to support young foreign elites (in terms of academic achievement) to make them future leaders in the fields of science, culture, economics, politics and media. By promoting their knowledge, the DAAD expects to make them “proper partners and friends” for Germany. The second aim is “supporting young German elites” to make them future leaders in science, culture, economics, politics and the media internationally and to promote their intercultural experiences. Promoting the internationality of German universities so that Germany remains or will be the premier destination for young scientists from all over the world is the third aim. The fourth is to promote German studies and German language, literature and cultural studies at the selected foreign universities. This way, the DAAD intends to strengthen the position of German culture and language and convey interest and sympathy towards Germany worldwide. The fifth aim is to promote and develop universities in the developing and transition countries in Central and Eastern Europe in order to support their economic and democratic reform process.

The DAAD also attempts to increase dialogue between cultures and university-related reconstruction assistance in war situations or natural disasters. Projects such as academic analysis on crisis situations in the Balkans, Afghanistan and in natural crises like tsunamis (DAAD 2005: 14-15, DAAD 2006: 16-17, DAAD 2008: 16-17, DAAD 2009: 16-17, DAAD 2010: 18-19, DAAD 2011a: 18-38, DAAD 2012a: 18-40, DAAD 2013b: 18-38) are among the studies. The DAAD has also defined three specific strategies to optimize its tasks up to 2020: offering scholarships to the best, promoting structures for internationalization, and encouraging expertise for academic collaboration (DAAD 2013a, DAAD 2014c:

18-46). To sum up, the DAAD strives to represent Germany as an academic power in the world.

6.2.2.2 *Organizational Structure and Budget*

The organizational structure of the DAAD is complicated, but each year the annual report contains information and a diagram to illustrate its mechanisms and changes in numbers of its committees and groups. To give a brief and simple explanation of its structure, the DAAD operates under the format of a *Kuratorium* [board of trustees] and *Vorstand* [board of directors or executive committee]. The *Vorstand* and *Kuratorium* cooperatively manage the entire system. The *Kuratorium* consists of different members, including a specific number of representatives of the federal government, federal states, universities, student organizations and members of the general assembly of the DAAD. The head of the *Kuratorium* is the president of the DAAD, who together with the vice president is nominated and elected by the *Kuratorium*. The *Kuratorium* considers the financial statements and approval of the economic plans of the DAAD. The *Vorstand* is in charge of the DAAD's strategic approaches and programs, establishes a selection committee for certain projects and decides on the economic plans of the DAAD. The *Vorstand* also appoints the general secretary after nomination by the president. The general secretary has a main executive role. Among the members of the *Vorstand*, besides the president and vice president, there are also members of universities and student organizations. In addition to the *Kuratorium* and *Vorstand*, there is another section which is called the *Mitgliederversammlung* [general assembly]. The general assembly usually meets once a year in Bonn. It consists of representatives of nearly all universities and academic centers in Germany. The general assembly elects the members of the *Vorstand*. Based on updated information from 2016, there are 239 university and 105 student organization members of the general assembly. To decide on DAAD matters in the meeting, each university member has two votes and each student organization member has one vote.

The DAAD had six departments up to the end of 2013. They were the departments of central services; strategy; northern hemisphere; southern hemisphere; internationalization and communication; and national agency for EU higher education cooperation. Administrative affairs, budget, finance, and human

resources are the task of the central services. The department of strategy considers issues such as policy planning, evaluation and statistics. The northern hemisphere department deals with university projects relating to Western Europe, North America, Central and Eastern Europe, while the southern hemisphere department deals with university and academic matters of countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia-Pacific, and North Africa and the Middle East. The department of internationalization and communication focuses on projects in specific fields and international doctoral programs. It helps to introduce German universities to international partners and mediates information on international universities to German universities. The communication and marketing section is an important part of this department and deals with holding exhibitions and workshops in Germany and abroad, among other things, to introduce the two sides to each other. The department of national agency for EU higher education cooperation deals with specific programs at EU level, such as cooperation and partnership projects in the Erasmus program. The structure of the departments changed in 2015.¹⁰⁴

The DAAD has more than 900 employees, 15 foreign branch offices, and 55 information centers in 60 countries of the world (DAAD 2014c: 15). It has more than 500 *Lektorinnen* and *Lektoren* [lecturers] and language assistants.¹⁰⁵ They are employed by the DAAD in the partner countries all over the world (DAAD 2014c: 38). Lecturers are native German speakers who have academic knowledge relating to German language and German studies. They are divided into four groups, *Hochschullektorat* [university lecturers], *Fachlektorat* [professional lecturers], *IC-Lektorat* [Information Center lecturers] and *zur besonderen Verwendung/zbV Lektorat* [special purpose lecturers]. There is also another form of academic exchange in higher education, which is called *Lang- und Kurzzeitdozenturen* [long and short-term lectureships]. By promoting long and short lectureships, the foreign universities or academic institutes would be able to invite highly qualified scientists from German universities, using their assistance in different courses or scientific cooperation (DAAD 2011c: 11-14).

In some special projects the DAAD cooperates with other German organizations such as the *Hochschulrektorenkonferenz/HRK* [German Rectors' Conference],

¹⁰⁴ For instance, all individual scholarship programs of different northern and southern hemisphere departments are transferred to a new "scholarship" department.

¹⁰⁵ These *Lektorinnen* and *Lektoren* are mostly trained in German/German as a Foreign Language to teach in universities. The word here is translated as lecturer.

among others, on the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES) project. The annual reports of the DAAD reported in detail on its activities and annual budget. The budget is supplied mainly by the federal government, the foreign ministry and other ministries. Table 9 illustrates the financial sponsors and amount of their contribution between 2000 and 2013.

Table 9. DAAD budget and financial sponsors 2000-2013, (in million Euro)

Organizational	Time												
	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
AA	109.4	123.1	120.3	118.3	116.9	125.5	130.7	141.2	171.0	174.5	169.7	178.6	184
BMBF	54.4	76.3	75.5	60.5	64.9	64.1	62.9	64.7	75.3	99.1	91.7	96.8	101
BMZ	19.0	20.4	21.3	21.7	23.6	23.4	24.7	26.4	30.5	32.9	34.8	37.2	40
BMWA/ERP	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	No info	No info	No info	No info
Other federal	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	No info	No info	No info	No info
Other countries	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	No info	No info	No info	No info
EU	12.0	22.2	20.3	25.1	30.0	34.6	43.6	50.6	49.3	49.8	51.8	57.2	60
Others	7.3	11.9	11.5	9.9	10.2	13.8	16.9	19.2	20.1	27.7	35.6	37.6	45
Total	187.3	187.3	256.5	237.5	247.8	263.3	280.6	303.9	347.9	383.9	383.5	407.4	429.8

Source: (DAAD 2005: 31, DAAD 2006: 35, DAAD 2008: 35, DAAD 2009: 37, DAAD 2010: 41, DAAD 2011a: 15-16, DAAD 2011b: 15-16, DAAD 2012a: 14-16, DAAD 2013b: 14-16, DAAD 2014c), updated by the researcher

As Table 9 shows, the main budget comes from the foreign ministry, and then from the federal ministry of education and research (BMBF), the federal ministry of economic cooperation and development (BMZ) and of economics and labor (BMWA/ ERP). The next financial sources are income of the DAAD from other federal organizations. The European Union (EU) and some companies, organizations and foreign governments (international and German) additionally support the DAAD to establish or continue special academic projects.

6.2.2.3 Practices: Generally and Specifically for Intercultural Dialogue

The DAAD supports academic exchange between German and foreign universities. It creates opportunities for German and international universities to cooperate on academic projects in various fields depending on their needs and

requests, as well as on a specific priority of a certain state or private organization. For instance, the BMW carmaker wants to develop expertise in a specific technical field. The role of the DAAD is then to use the BMW's budget to offer specific scholarships or projects to target students of certain countries or Germany in certain engineering fields. Generally, students at BA, MA and PhD level, scholars, researchers, teachers, professors and even staff of universities are the target group of DAAD activities. The DAAD has supported 1.9 million academics in Germany and abroad since 1925. The number of German academics who received support from the DAAD increased from 16,909 in 1990 to nearly 70,000 in 2013, that of international academics from 21,974 in 1990 to nearly 50,000 in 2013. The number of academic projects supported by the DAAD increased from 25.5 in 1990 to 623 in 2013 (DAAD 2014c: 14-16).

The DAAD has supported academics on different continents through diverse programs, as the annual reports show. But the focus here is on its academic activities with Iran. As mentioned in 2.3, from the 1960s the DAAD started to offer scholarships to Iranian students. Around 2000 and 2001, the DAAD had an information center and a lecturer in Tehran and a lecturer in Isfahan. The lectureship program was interrupted between 2008/2009 and 2012, during the presidency of Ahmadinejad. The Iranian authorities, officially the Iranian Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, refused to prolong the contract of Tehran's lecturer in 2008 and Isfahan's lecturer in 2009 (Haridi and Dietrich, personal communication, 2014; Schroeder, personal communication, 2014). The problem was not just about extending the contract but was also mixed with some political considerations and bureaucratic, time-consuming processes. For instance, the visa for the next lecturer candidate was initially refused and then issued too late, as the candidate had already found a new job (Erbel, personal communication, 2015).

The DAAD has nevertheless managed to continue its activities with assistance from the cultural section of the German embassy in Tehran, as explained in 6.2.1.3. In 2012, after signing of the MoU between the DAAD and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, a lecturer from the DAAD was once again appointed to the University of Beheshti, and one year later a further lecturer was appointed to the University of Isfahan. Furthermore, the DAAD was able to open in 2013 (Schroeder, personal communication, 2015).

Although the DAAD is a long-standing academic partner of Iran, it has not been properly understood by Iranian state and academic organizations which have the authority to decide on cooperation. The DAAD is an association of universities, it is managed as a *Mittlerorganisation*, and its organizational structure is complicated, as shown in 6.2.2.2. According to German participants in the study, the DAAD's structure is "like a ministry" and it is "too fishy" (Schroeder, personal communication, 2014) to be perceived easily by an outsider. This is especially true when there is no academic institute or organization in Iran which fits the definition of a "university club" or *Mittlerorganisation*. As discussed in 6.1, the active cultural and academic organizations are mostly dependent on the Iranian state and are fragmented because of the dualism of the Iranian state, which itself is fragmented into religiously and democratically legitimated sectors. In such a context, understanding the structure of the DAAD, which receives most of its budget from the federal state but claims to work independently, is more challenging. A former director of the DAAD information center in Iran talks about this experience as follows:

"In many meetings, in universities, with officials of the ministry of education we have to always explain we are not a development agency, we are not a governmental organization, it is very important that DAAD is a club of universities. And of course after university visits, I would say 80% cases, two or three young men are approaching me, [men] with beards, and asking me: is DAAD a governmental organization? [...] but you know what I mean. I also ask them whether they are also governmental organizations. But after talk and explanation everything was fine so far" (Schroeder, personal communication, 2014).

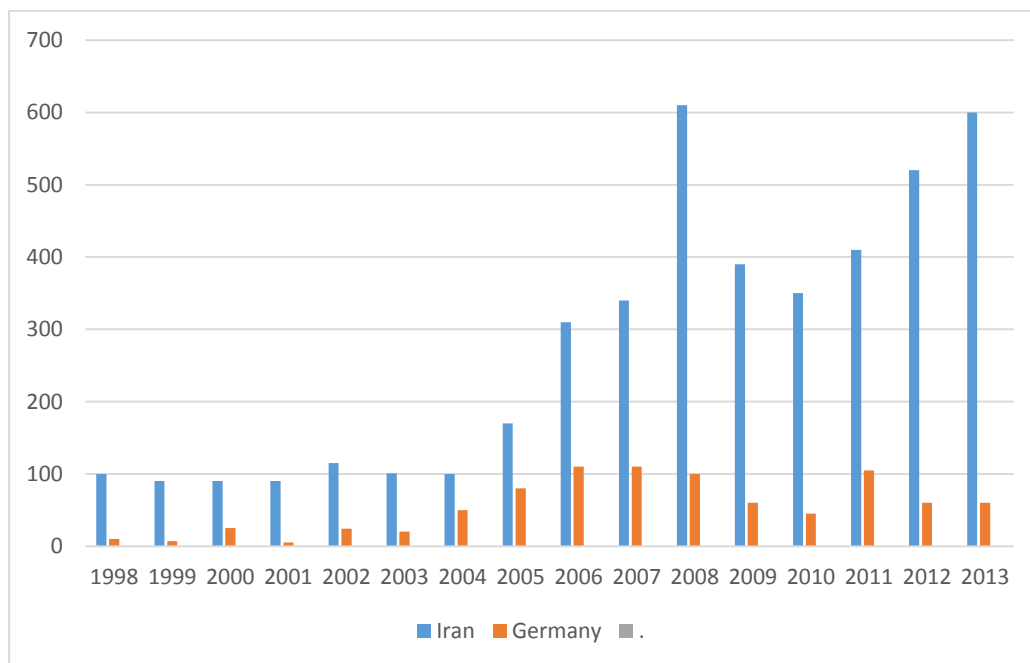
Besides single scholarships for MA courses, the DAAD also ran a project for Iranian PhD students. It was a scholarship called the "Sandwich Modell", which would enable PhD students to spend part of their research time in Germany (DAAD 1999: 57, DAAD 2000: 76, DAAD 2001: 80-81, DAAD 2002: 76-77, DAAD 2004: 157). They could spend the beginning of their doctorate in Iran, then continue their research at a German university for a two-year research period with the support of the DAAD. The last part of their PhD must be done in their Iranian university. They would finalize their PhD with advice from both German and Iranian supervisors (DAAD 2005: 57).

Since 2008 there has been German-language academic cooperation between Potsdam University and the University of Tehran with support from the DAAD.

The period of the project is set at ten years. According to information of the official website of the University of Potsdam, the project gives an opportunity to Iranian PhD students to spend part of their study time in Germany. It also supports guest lectureship and workshops for Iranian PhD students and provides the University of Tehran library with books on German language studies (University Potsdam 2015).

The number of scholarships to Iranian students increased steadily between 1998 and 2013, with a significant increase from 2006, as figure 10 shows:

Figure 9. Change in number of Iranian and German DAAD Scholarship holders, 1998-2013

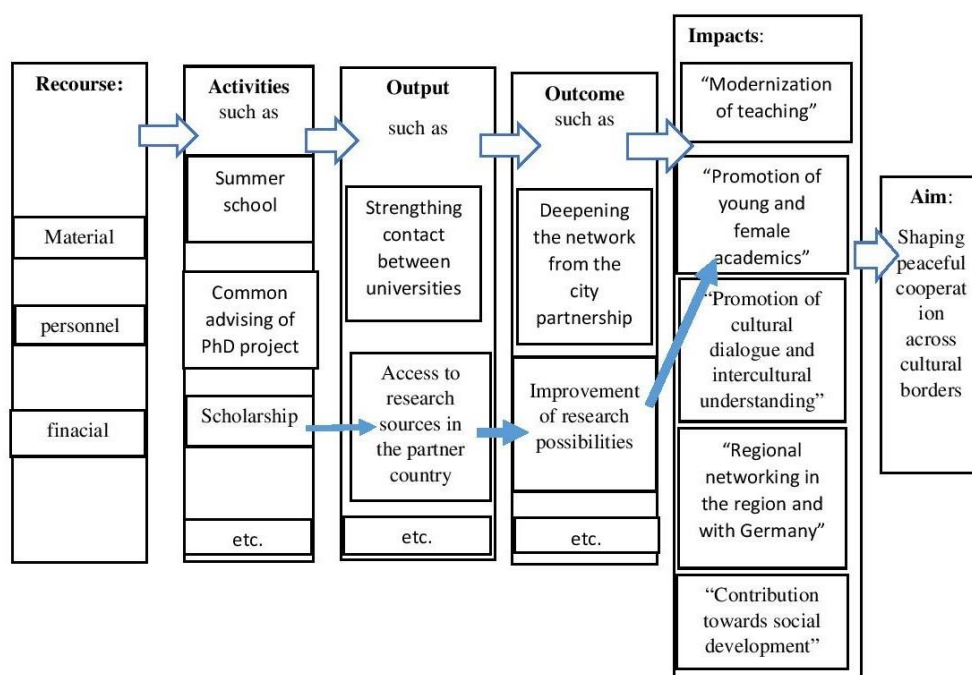


Source: DAAD (2014d: 2), updated by the researcher

The budget spent by the DAAD on academic exchanges with Iran has increased from nearly 626 thousand Euro in 2000 to nearly four million Euro in 2012, as DAAD documents show (DAAD 2014d: 2). The DAAD has also implemented a specific project under the title of the “German/Iranian/Arabic University Dialogue”, which is funded from the special program of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. The DAAD has used this budget since 2002 and implemented some intercultural dialogue projects, and planning of *Deutsch-Arabisch/Iranischer Hochschuldialog* [the German -Arabic/Iranian university dialogue] was initiated from 2006. The project was organized by a section of the Southern Hemisphere Department, *Referat 444*, which was called “German-Arab Transformation

Partnership-Cultural Dialogue”. A working group in *Referat 444* made a detailed map to monitor different activities, outputs, inputs and impacts which the DAAD expects a university undertake or achieve (DAAD 2012b). As the minimized model of this map in figure 11 shows, five general impacts of projects are expected to be “modernization of teaching”, “promotion of young and female academics”, “promotion of cultural dialogue and intercultural understanding”, “regional networking in the region and with Germany” and “contribution towards social development”.

Figure 10. Monitoring levels of “German-Arabic/Iranian Higher Education Dialogue”



Source: DAAD (2012b), summarized by the researcher

Figure 11 shows that a “scholarship” can firstly lead to the output of “access to research sources in a partner country”; secondly to the outcome of “improvement of research possibilities”; and finally it can achieve an impact of “promotion of young and female academics”. Different activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts which are determined in the map are intended to achieve the final aim of “shaping peaceful cooperation across cultural borders”. Besides scholarship, the project suggests a variety of other activities, including conferences, lectures, summer schools, common projects, language courses, coordination meetings, planning and academic workshops, common advising of PhD and MA dissertation, and intercultural forums.

A member of *Referat 444* explained that to start the project the working group sent a *call for applications* to all German universities belonging to the general assembly of the DAAD, letting them know about key points of the project such as “objective”, “subject focus”, “partner regions”, “funding criteria”, “preparatory measures”, “documentation and content of application” and “decision on sponsorship and approval of funds” (DAAD 2014e). The offer met with a positive response from the universities. From 76 applications, 18 applications which best fit the structure of the project were selected by a team of referees of the DAAD (DAAD 2006: 173). The number of applicants in coming years increased as more German academics got to know about the project from their colleagues, as a member of *Referat 444* explained (Löck, personal communication, 2014). Although the DAAD faced some problems in Iran, like closing of the information center, the Iranian and German universities managed to conduct successful cooperation between 2005 and 2013 through the German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue. A list of projects which have taken place between German and Iranian universities under this project, together with the date and a brief explanation of the content of their activities, is provided in Appendix 7. The list is made according to information on the official DAAD website (DAAD 2016), with the help of a former director of the information center in Tehran and a member of *Referat 444* (Schroeder, personal communication, 2014; Löck, personal communication, 2014).¹⁰⁶ The projects cover diverse issues including “computer science and medical care”, “geography and geology”, “theater”, “film”, “forestry management”, “zoology and biodiversity research”, “earthquake-proof housing”, “sustainable habitat development”, “natural disaster risk and management”, “IT and culture and gender issues”, “comparative translation in Farsi and German”, “management and health care”, “linguistic”, “urban and geography”, “urban regeneration of deteriorated areas research”, “comparative theology”, “Arab Spring and peaceful change”, “sustainable water research”, “psychology and health care” and “comparative methods in religious studies”.

There are six points relating to academic cooperation under the German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue project: 1) The projects cover diverse issues, such as health and medical science, engineering, water and earthquakes, political science, theater and film, linguistics and translation, interfaith dialogue, forestry,

¹⁰⁶ The list is written with help of Cornelia Michels-Lampo, a member of a DAAD project on dialogue with Muslim countries, *Referat P24*, in 2015.

environment and urban structure; 2) Iranian and German universities are not the only participants in some of the projects. The DAAD was able to give different Muslim countries a chance to enter into dialogue and exchange their ideas in a single project; 3) almost all of the projects have been structured in a period of three years, which is a relatively good time to construct a network between participants, as the participants of these projects suggested (Mohagheghi, personal communication, 2016; Hippler, personal communication, 2016; Honrath, personal communication, 2016); 4) most of projects enabled travel to both Iran and Germany. Consequently, German and Iranian participants equally were able to experience each other's culture; 5) the diverse form of activities in each project has been significant. Participants were able to go on excursions, participate in group discussions and develop their knowledge on specific academic issues; 6) the planning of the German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue project was detailed. Not only the map of monitoring aims and objective of figure 11 indicate that it takes the aims of intercultural dialogue and the context of the DAAD into account, *Referat 444* also conducted a study to assess each university project to find out the extent to which it reaches its aims and what have been the main positive and negative points. For instance, research to assess the project of Peaceful Change and Violent Conflict shows that 80% of participants rated their stay in the guest country as "very good".¹⁰⁷ Also, 50.41% perceived other cultures as interesting before travel and exchange, while this number increased to 78% thereafter (DAAD 2014b). Such a detailed assessment on participants of the projects illustrates that the organizers of the DAAD do not care just about sophisticated reports and proposals but also measure how well they achieve their objectives.

The DAAD also supported academic cooperation among universities in Iran, Israel and Germany in 2011 and in the framework of the German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue. An official of the DAAD confirmed this, but he said that he cannot be named as a source of information in this study. Because publishing details of that project can endanger the security of the Iranian and Israeli academic participant, this information is classified in the DAAD.

The project of German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue is also practical evidence illustrating that the DAAD tried to define dialogue between Germany

¹⁰⁷ That assessment is based on the contributions of 21 out of 41 participants in the project.

and Muslim countries practically in the context of its activities. For the DAAD, dialogue means to react to the needs of the academic community. It does not want to specifically define it, as the head of the Iran section of the DAAD argues:

“Our strategy is reasonably [to] react to the need of the academic community. And we will tell [them] to give us the money to do it according to [the] need of the universities [...] So DAAD will tell [that] we will use the budget for the academic exchange and we will not focus on cultural fields. But what the culture is, is about what the concept is. It is very vague and does not need to be defined” (Haridi, personal communication, 2014).

To understand how projects of German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue respond to the needs of the German and Iranian academic community, two of the projects are discussed in more detail in the next section.

6.2.2.3.1 Project of Peaceful Change from 2012 to 2015

Some details on the project of “peaceful change and violent conflict – the transformation of the Middle East and Western-Muslim relations” are presented in Appendix 7. The project was initiated and led by Jochen Hippler from the University of Duisburg-Essen in Germany. The project had partners from three other countries, Morocco, Pakistan and Iran and focused on the Arab Spring, which was a topical issue among academics of Western and Muslim countries. An attempt was made to select partners in the fields of social, humanitarian and political sciences to reflect academic views in those Muslim countries on the social change taking place in the Middle East (Hippler, personal communication, 2016). The project was initiated by Jochen Hippler, whose name was mentioned as an invited German expert to Iran in 2008. It was also mentioned in 6.2.1.3 that he was invited thanks to the efforts of Fatemeh Sadr to participate in conferences and seminars of Khatami’s dialogue NGO. The project is the result of a network which Hippler built during his visits to Iran and contact with academic partners in Iran.

The academic format of the project was in “two pillars”. The first was an academic exchange with different scholars and teachers from different universities. The second considers activities such as student exchange, summer school, workshops and seminars which were related to the specific topic of

change in the Middle East. The target group was therefore students (Honrath, personal communication, 2016).

The Arab Spring was not the only focus of the project. Issues such as the role of theological intellectuals in Iran, social movements in Arab countries, and the role of women in Muslim countries were also discussed in different parts of the project. German and Iranian students who participated in the project mentioned that their image of each other's countries altered significantly after the cultural exchange. The results of the assessment by the DAAD (DAAD 2014b) and talking to some participants confirm this point. A German student explained that by gaining more experience of the everyday life of women in Iran she developed a better understanding of women in social life in Iran. For instance, she realized that women in the north of Iran, like in the city of Rasht, wear hijab in a looser way than women in more traditional cities such as Isfahan. She had experience of talking to a female NGO activist and learning about how women, despite the difficulties, participate to assert their rights (Mahla, personal communication, 2016). On the other hand, a male Iranian student who participated in the project stated that he realized after travelling to Germany that he had had a fantasy image in his mind: "In this travel I visited cities of Duisburg, Köln and Bonn. So honestly I realized for the first time that ALL streets in Germany are not necessarily clean. There are also some dirty ones" (Daryoushi, personal communication, 2016). The social participation of students became more active in the second and third exchange of the project. This may be for two reasons, as some participants of the study suggest. Firstly, students got to know each other better, so they could communicate with each other in a more relaxed way. The second reason is that the second and third exchange took place during the presidency of Rouhani in Iran, so Iranian students were more relaxed and confident about expressing their views informally (Hippler, personal communication, 2016; Honrath, personal communication, 2016).

Some German participants in the field study argued that Iranian students were not confident about expressing their views in meetings in front of their professors. Even in informal activities, they, especially female students, appeared silent or taciturn. In the view of some German participants, a reason for this is rooted in the difference between the training system in German and Iranian countries. In Iran, there is a kind of "cathedral teaching". In this educational system, the teacher has

a central role. In Germany, meanwhile, usually a form of “seminar teaching” is apparent (Honrath, personal communication, 2016). Hence it seems that Iranian students, because they have little experience of discussing issues in normal educational life, appeared to be shy about criticizing other students’, and especially their professors’, views. Moreover, the Iranian professor who coordinated the project from the University of Tehran was not satisfied with the political issues that German students brought up in the discussions. He nevertheless mentioned, proudly, that he made “a situation” in which even “the most sensitive issues” could be addressed freely by German students (Nourbakhsh, personal communication, 2016). It seems that the Iranian professor considered certain issues to be wrong for discussion; consequently, the Iranian students followed his unwritten rule.

An attempt was also made to discuss this issue with Iranian students who participated in the project. Most of them did not respond to the question. One student who agreed to participate in the research confirmed that the Iranian students were supposed to respect some behavioral codes, such as wearing hijab (however, in Germany it is not obligatory), not shaking hands with the opposite sex, and not talking about issues which can challenge Iran’s positive image in Germany (Daryoushi, personal communication, 2016). German students were also advised, before traveling to Iran, to respect some specific behavioral codes. For instance, the female students were asked to wear hijab (because it is obligatory in Iran) and to avoid shaking hands with the opposite sex in Iran (Mahla, personal communication, 2016).

Some of the German participants also mentioned that Iranian students felt insecure about expressing their views in case a “spy” was among them. An attempt was also made to explore this issue. The only Iranian student who participated in the research argued that he had a strong feeling that a specific student was spying on all the students. In front of this specific student, he once talked very openly to German students about a political issue. The next day he was called by his professor, who was the Iranian director of the project. He was accused by the professor in this meeting of *syahnāmāei* [blackwashing] the image of Iran in informal talks with foreigners. After that meeting, he studied carefully the behavior of that specific student and became reasonably sure that he was spying on other students. He still believes, however, that the student was not

appointed by a university authority or the professor to spy. In his view, the student was being opportunistic, as he wanted to connect with the main authorities of the university in order to obtain a PhD position or a job in future. So, by spying on other students, this student probably wanted to show the university's authorities that he can take care of Iranian students in international projects, and protect the values and ideology of the Iranian state.

The security and spying issues were not perceived just in the case of students but also in the case of the German director of the project. The German director of the project was labeled as or accused of being a spy by a professor at the University of Tehran in this project.¹⁰⁸ This accusation was without basis in fact and an apology was made by the dean of the Faculty of World Studies at that time. But the German director of project believes that he was not supported properly by his Iranian counterpart. That was one, but not the only, reason that the project changed its Iranian partner from the University of Tehran to the Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies at the end of second year of the project. Nevertheless, the second Iranian partner was also changed after a short time due to inappropriate management practices by the contact person at that Iranian institute, as a German member of the project explained (Honrath, personal communication, 2016). However, in the view of the Iranian contact person, cooperation stopped because the time of the project was over (Miri, personal communication, 2015). The third partner of the project was the Center for Strategic Research (CSR), which was mentioned as an Iranian think tank in 6.1.3.2. The cooperation with CSR has been referred to by the German director of the project as an "impressive exchange of ideas". Some researchers on the project from Morocco, Pakistan and Germany participated in the joint seminar with the experts of the CSR in Tehran in late 2014. Issues relating to change in the Middle East were discussed "frankly", "professionally" and "smartly" in this meeting (Hippler, personal communication, 2016). The project period ended after that meeting.

Both the German director and the Iranian coordinators of the project were satisfied with the results of their cooperation. In the view of the German director, it was worth getting to know three different partners in Iran and giving several Iranian and German students and researchers an opportunity to get to know each

¹⁰⁸ The German director of the project was labeled a spy by a professor who at that time, 2012-2013, was the director of the Department of American Studies in the Faculty of World Studies, University of Tehran.

other's culture in a dialogue activity. For the Iranian directors also, the same issues were important, although one Iranian coordinator specifically highlighted his appreciation of the German director's understanding of cultural sensibilities such as hijab.

6.2.2.3.2 Project of Theological University Dialogue from 2012 to 2014

The director of the project of theological university dialogue was Prof. Dr. Klaus von Stosch from Paderborn University. Appendix 7 provides more information on this project. Academics in the field of Catholic Christian theology from Germany, Lebanon and Iran, with participants from the University of Religions and Denominations of Qum (the local name is *Adyān* University) and Al-Mustafa International Qom took part in the project. It focused on the issue of interfaith dialogue and was designed to encourage scientific discussions among young students and scholars from both faiths, Islam and Christianity. The project managed to organize travel to Germany, Lebanon and Iran. Its main issues were hermeneutical concepts for the dialogue of denominations and religions, the hermeneutical level of the Muslim-Christian dialogue and faith and freedom. Moreover, besides a workshop, summer school, seminar, and small discussion groups, the project also enabled partner universities to run co-teaching seminars on issues such as theology of friendship and love in Islam and Christianity. The project helped to fund one to two months of a research visit to Germany for Iranian professors. In the productive atmosphere of the project, a subproject was initiated for co-writing teaching booklets of Shia Islam and Catholic Christianity (DAAD 2014a). This project continued later, even when financial support from the DAAD ended after three years.

The project began with cooperation between German and Lebanese universities. Nevertheless, thanks to the efforts of a member of the executive team of the project, Hamideh Mohagheghi, a female Iranian researcher (Mohagheghi, personal communication, 2016), and three Iranian PhD students of Paderborn University, the project continued with the participation of two Iranian universities in the field of theology. According to an internal assessment of the DAAD, these students had a perceptible positive effect on the university dialogue, because the border between the German side and the Iranian side became more flexible (DAAD 2014a).

Both Iranian and German students were informed about behavioral codes, more or less similar to what was mentioned in 6.2.2.3.1, during travel to Iran and Germany. Some German students of the project told the director and assistants that they felt they were not allowed to talk about specific issues in the discussions. According to internal assessment by the DAAD, Iranian students expressed themselves more freely in seminars which took place in Germany and in small groups without the presence of their professors (DAAD 2014a: 8).

One of the topics of the project in a seminar held in Germany was the issue of “freedom and faith”. This issue is discussed based on the views of Mohammad Shabestari and his presence in the seminar. Shabestari was mentioned in 5.2.2 as an Iranian dissident theologian who started Iran’s interfaith dialogues after the Revolution from the *Hekmat* academy. The presence of Shabestari as a dissident theologian in the interfaith dialogue between Iran and Germany is significant because it is a reminder that Iranian Islamic theology does not have just a single dimension and there are theologians in Iran who share cosmopolitan and more liberal views in this regard, despite all limitations and difficulties. German participants in the project were impressed that they could discuss issues with Iranian participants who were open-minded and have a liberal approach to understanding the Quran.

A problem of theological discussions among the participants of interfaith dialogues is the clichéd perception of interfaith dialogue as an opportunity to propagate Islam (or Christianity). A participant of the study mentioned that, “fortunately”, not only did *Adyān* University not perceive interfaith dialogue as a propagation opportunity, it also cooperated in the project as a partner that understands comparative theology.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, it was mentioned in the field study that despite the active role of Al-Mustafa University in the field of theology on an international level, some participants on the German side were not completely sure about its purely academic approach in meetings. The university has a strong connection with the Iranian state, the religiously legitimated body. Hence cooperation with Al-Mustafa University has declined.

¹⁰⁹ Because the name of Al-Mustafa University is not mentioned in the comment relating to understanding comparative theology in interfaith dialogue, it seems that the point of the interviewee was indirectly to criticize a propagation approach of this university in the meetings. But she did not go into detail; in her view, the positive dimensions of interfaith dialogue must be deepened, not the negative ones.

The participants in the interfaith dialogue project also had difficulty translating what exactly they had in mind at the time of the discussions. Although all seminars and meetings had translators, some terminology of Islamic and Christian theologies was still difficult to translate. For instance, the word “hereafter” or “other world”, which refers to life after death, has a different context and meaning in Islamic and Christian theology. In Catholic Christianity, according to the German theologians on this project, it is called *Jenseits*. In translation for the Iranian side it was interpreted to *Āxerat*. In the view of Mohagheghi, who knows both the Shia tradition of Islam and the Catholic tradition of Christianity, this translation is not appropriate. Raising this problem, in her view, is a good step toward recognizing that more academic research is needed in the field of comparative theology between different religions and cultures.

Despite the limitations and difficulties of the project, some German and Iranian students developed a friendship and stayed in contact with each other. With the help of the internet and social networks, these connections became stronger. One German student even traveled to Iran a year after the project to experience the tradition of Ashura.¹¹⁰ He received assistance and support from his Iranian friends during his stay in Iran.

6.2.2.4 A Summary on Analysis of DAAD

To conclude 6.2.2, the relevant question will be repeated: What are the main characteristics of the intercultural dialogue activities implemented by the DAAD, and what were the main points that influenced them? The work of the DAAD in the context of European-Islamic cultural dialogue has reflected the integrated foreign cultural policy of Germany. On one hand, it has been a *Mittlerorganisation* which steadily received the relevant budget from the foreign office, and on the other it works closely with the cultural section of the German embassy in Tehran, specifically when it faces political problems in Iran. It used its existing means and activities to promote a specific project in the framework of intercultural dialogue. Hence it defined intercultural dialogue practically in its own context as a reflection of what academic society needs. It planned a specific

¹¹⁰ Ashura is the day of remembrance of martyrdom of Hussain ibn Ali, the second Imam in the Shi'a religion. It happened in the seventh century, according to the Islamic calendar, on tenth of the month of Muharram.

project and then carried out systematic assessment of the achievements of its projects. The transparency of information regarding its organization, budget and variety of projects has been significant. It has increasing academic exchange with Iran, although in the view of some participants of the study it has not been understood completely as a *Mittlerorganisation* in that context. About twenty projects were implemented during 2005 and 2013 between German and Iranian universities under intercultural dialogue and on a variety of issues, from medicine and natural sciences to social and political issues.

6.2.3 Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa)

Compared to the Goethe Institute and the DAAD, ifa is a relatively small *Mittlerorganisation*, but its place in the foreign cultural policy of Germany is still significant. How it used the opportunity of the “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” to develop cultural work in Muslim countries has been one of the interesting points of this study. ifa has not only organized exhibitions of fine art for domestic and foreign countries but also innovatively created some new forms of activities, like exchange internships for German and Muslim participants as a basis of intercultural dialogue. The present section contains information gathered from studying published texts of ifa, such as its annual reports, and interviewing some relevant groups in this regard. The content of this subchapter are divided into four segments: An overview of the history and aims of ifa is presented in 6.2.3.1 and the organizational structure of ifa is explained in 6.2.3.2. Because ifa has implemented different activities in the field of cultural dialogue with other countries, details of its general and specific practices is presented in four smaller segments, in 6.2.3.3. A summary of all the points of the subchapter is provided in 6.2.3.4.

6.2.3.1 History and Organizational Aims

The current *ifa* is rooted originally in an organization called the *Museum und Institut zur Kunde des Auslanddeutschtums zur Förderung detuscher Interessen im Ausland* [Museum and institute for German foreign trade and promotion of German interests abroad]. It was established in the last years of World War I in 1917, under the patronage of King Wilhelm II of Württemberg. According to Udo

M. Metzinger, the institute later changed its name to *Deutsches Ausland-Institut* (DAI). It organized cultural activities such as exhibitions and photo shows for German-speaking people abroad. Between 1933 and 1945 its activities were influenced under agendas of race politics and Germanization. A few years after World War II, in 1949, its name was changed to the current *Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen* (ifa). It aims at organizing art exhibitions in Germany and abroad and was involved in mediating a new image for Germany internationally through art exhibitions and German language courses (Metzinger 2013, Metzinger 2007).

According to its official website, ifa has three main aims: firstly, to promote “cultural exchange to assist peoples, nations and religions in learning from one another and in living together”; secondly, to “achieve peace and justice, protecting human livelihoods and cultures and attaining a united Europe”; and thirdly, to take “dialogue” into account as a center of its activities, because it “counts cultural diversity as a valuable asset”. Other aims ifa sets out to achieve are initiating “intercultural dialogue”, working as a “competence center” for the foreign affairs ministry, and giving “international people an opportunity to get to know Germany”. The operational field of ifa is in cultural, educational, civil society, political and media networks as a European base institute. It aims at target groups such as young people and those active in the field of media and culture, scholars and academics, as well as political and cultural institutes, NGOs and policy makers (ifa 2015a).

6.2.3.2 Organizational Structure

ifa has a main office, an art gallery, a library and a German language course institute in Stuttgart. Its *Zivik* office and an art gallery are located in Berlin. Up to 2005 it had an art gallery in Bonn, which was closed down due to financial problems. ifa is governed by a *Präsidium* [steering committee] and *Generalsekretär* [general secretary]. The presidency generally does not deal with executive duties but makes decisions such as choosing the executive team. There is little information about the mechanisms of the presidency and its members, although the available information illustrates that the members of the presidency are diverse, from representatives of the foreign ministry to representatives of the

Land of Baden-Württemberg and the city of Stuttgart.¹¹¹ The head of the executive body is the general secretary. From 1998 to 2013, ifa was led by two different general secretaries. The first was Prof. Dr. Kurt-Jürgen Maaß, who served in this position from 1997 to 2008; Maaß is a researcher in the field of foreign cultural policy, and his book was reviewed in 3.2.5. From 2008 to the end of the analysis period of this research, Ronald Grätz was in the position of general secretary of ifa.

ifa works with four departments: dialogue, media, art and administration. The dialogue department has had sections such as *Dialogforen* [dialogue forums]; integration and media; *Zivik* program [civil program]. The civil program concentrates on supporting NGOs and civil society actors that work in so-called third world countries. The dialogue department is in charge of the German language course institute, which is located in Stuttgart. The dialogue forum of the dialogue department was first established in 1997. It is supported by the press and information office of the federal government and foreign ministry of Germany (ifa 2003: 62).¹¹² It addresses media and their influence on society, and media is the main issue of the programs which it implemented together with professional experts and journalists (ifa 2005a: 40). According to the ifa annual report, the special program of European-Islamic cultural dialogue between 2001 and 2006 is organized under this section. The details will be explained later. The media department mainly focused on publishing the magazine *Kulturaustausch* [cultural exchange] and activities of the ifa library. Later it was involved with the issue of *Grundsatzfragen Auswärtiger Kulturpolitik* [basic questions of foreign cultural policy], under which research and scientific activities are promoted in the field of foreign cultural policy. Activities such as the *Rave* research prize and *Qantara* internet portal have been organized in this department. The responsibility for the dialogue forum was also transferred to this department from 2012. The department of art deals with a very original and historical task of ifa, which is to hold art exhibitions abroad. Based on ifa's annual reports, one of the main areas of focus of this department between 1998 and 2013 was the *ifa-Tourneeausstellung*

¹¹¹ This part of the organizational structure of ifa, the combination of federal and *Länder* organizations, is significant. It reflects the fact that German foreign cultural activities in some cases are organized through cooperation between organizations which are in charge of German domestic and foreign policy.

¹¹² The point of the dialogue section being supported by the press and information office of the federal government in 1997 coincides with a time at which the federal ministry attempted to work more actively in cultural policy but the *Länder* wanted to limit this interference at domestic level, as mentioned in 5.1.2.

[ifa touring exhibition]. Within the framework of this tour, a selected art exhibition is shown abroad yearly.

The structure of ifa changed slightly during the period of analysis of this study. For instance, after 2012 the section of “policy issues regarding to foreign cultural policy” of the media department was merged into or replaced by the dialogue forum. The dialogue forum as mentioned above was previously moved from the dialogue department to the media department. Hence the new section name is *Forschungsprogramm/Dialogforen* [research program/dialogue forums] from 2013. ifa’s annual report explains that this change was to give an opportunity to the personnel of the “research” and “dialogue forum” to work closely together (ifa 2012: 1). But according to a member of ifa’s staff, a reason for this change was incompatibility between the work and income of directors of the Department of Dialogue and Department of Media. Since a director in the Department of Dialogue at that time had an income equal to the director of Department of Media, he demanded to decrease sections and consequently works of its own department (Houssaini, personal communication, 2014).

ifa receives financial support from different sources, the foreign ministry, the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg and the city of Stuttgart. Its budget is smaller than the budget of other *Mittlerorganisationen* that receive assistance from the foreign ministry, although it has been increased yearly. For instance, the annual reports show that its total budget increased from about € 17 million in 2006 (ifa 2006b: 91) to more than € 18 million in 2008 (ifa 2008: 89).

6.2.3.3 Practices: Generally and Specifically for Intercultural Dialogue

General activities of ifa have been in the field of art exhibitions and German language classes. They have also included granting internships and scholarships to German and international applicants, holding seminars and conferences and inviting experts, diplomats, artists and journalists from Germany and other countries, as well as supporting civil society actors especially from Muslim and developing countries.

Although the main building, library and gallery of ifa are located in Stuttgart and not in Berlin, ifa still has many visitors. In 2002, about 25 thousand visitors went to the ifa gallery in Stuttgart and seven thousand people used the library facilities

of ifa. Also, 20 thousand books were borrowed from the library (ifa 2002b: II). The ifa library has rich documentation and books on foreign cultural policy¹¹³ and close contact with the Goethe Institute. Based on a deposit agreement between them, a copy of all new publications of the Goethe Institute is sent to the ifa library every year (ifa 2009: 16, ifa 2012: 16). On average, two million participants from almost 100 countries take part in the German language courses of ifa (ifa 2002b: II, ifa 2007: 3, ifa 2008: 3). The language courses, which were later offered under the name of *ifa-Akademie*, give a variety of options to international students by teaching lessons on the internet or physically in the evenings and at weekends and in the summer holidays (ifa 2012: 14).

The ifa gallery and art exhibition on an international level received positive feedback from the public. Between 2002 and 2008, at least one million people annually visited ifa art exhibitions and art tours around the world (ifa 2002b: II, ifa 2006b: 3, ifa 2007: 3, ifa 2008: 3). Iran has also been one of the destinations of the touring exhibitions. In 2005, an exhibition and symposium on the art of the German painter and sculptor Gerhard Richter took place in the Museum of Contemporary Art of Tehran (Goethe-Institute, 2005, p. 130). In 2013, Günther Uecker, a German painter and object artist, presented his visual art in an exhibition in Isfahan (ifa, 2013, p. 6).¹¹⁴

Publication of the *Kulturaustausch* magazine in hard and online prints is another ifa activity in the field of intercultural dialogue. One of the roles of the magazine is to discuss and analyze current issues that ifa includes in its programs. The *Stuttgarter Schlossgespräch* [Stuttgart castle conversation] is also jointly organized by ifa and the *Robert Bosch Stiftung*. This conference takes place annually. Issues such as immigration, integration and cultural globalization are discussed between experts from academia, media, politics and culture. The results of discussions of this conference have been published regularly in *Kulturaustausch* (ifa 2006b: 48, ifa 2007: 38).

From 2001, the *Rave Stiftung* in cooperation with ifa ran two scholarship and prize-giving programs. The *Rave* prize, which since 2013 has been called the *ifa-Forschungspreis Auswärtige Kulturpolitik* [Ifa research prize on foreign cultural

¹¹³ According to the personal observation of the researcher, the library has books on a diversity of issues relating to foreign cultural policy and is visited by students and researchers four days a week.

¹¹⁴ The successful cultural exchanges like these did not have a chance of being covered in the top news; but the unsuccessful exchanges like the cancelation of cooperation between museums in Berlin and Teheran, as mentioned in chapter 1, did receive a lot of media attention in 2016.

policy] (ifa 2013: 28), is to encourage researchers at Master's and PhD level to work in the field of intercultural dialogue and foreign cultural policy. Two researchers of Iranian origin have won this prize. In 2005 it was awarded for the PhD dissertation of Naika Foroutan on the topic of inter-civilizational cultural dialogue between the Western and Islamic world,¹¹⁵ and in 2012 for the PhD dissertation of Katayon Meier on the issue of culture and education: Neo-Kantian pedagogy as a transcultural education concept (ifa 2015b). The second program is the *Rave* scholarship, which goes to young curators, restorers, museum technicians and cultural managers from countries in transition and developing countries, as well as to applicants from Germany, enabling them to do an internship in their relevant field (ifa 2004: 65).

The online magazine *Aktuelle Kunst aus der islamischen Welt* [contemporary art from the Islamic world] received assistance from ifa from 2001. The website is an online art portal and gives artists from Muslim countries, South America and Africa an opportunity to present their artistic material. The website has been visited by 1.4 million users annually and is available in German, English and Arabic (ifa 2005a: 35, ifa 2008: 3). In 2007, the name of the online magazine changed to *Nafas*. According to the editors of the website, the new name fits more with representing the artwork of artists who are from countries with Muslim majorities. *Nafas* in many languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu, means "breath" and metaphorically in Sufism means "freedom".

ifa also implements projects to strengthen civil society of the third world countries via the *Zivik* department program called *zivile Konfliktbearbeitung* [civilian conflict management]. *Zivik* was established in 2001 to advise NGOs and the foreign ministry on issues relevant to civil conflicts. *Zivik* promotes and supports documented and evaluated projects in crisis regions of the world. According to its action plan, it is expected to consider armed conflicts including new forms such as terrorism and civil war (Die Bundesregierung 2004). From 2009 to 2011, more than 200 NGOs received advice from the *Zivik* department. Nearly seven million Euro per year have been allocated to the NGO projects in Africa, Asia and South America and in Israel and Palestine by *Zivik* (ifa 2009: 10, ifa 2011b).

¹¹⁵ This dissertation which is published as a book is reviewed in 3.2.4 of this research.

Along with the arrival of a new general secretary, Ronal Grätz, in 2008, some new projects were added to the activities of ifa in the field of press and media, prize awards and seminars. Since 2008 ifa has been cooperating with the European journal *Kulturreport/EUNC Jahrbuch*. This magazine has a European base and is printed in four languages, English, French, German and Spanish (ifa 2013: 31). In 2009 ifa established the *Theodor Wanner Prize*, to be awarded to artists and activists in social, political, entrepreneurial or financial fields. Individuals who strive to foster dialogue among cultures through their art and social activities can be nominated for this prize. Furthermore, to inform German citizens of international relations and provide a forum for dialogue between them and the foreign ministry, ifa created a new program in 2011 called *Außenpolitik-live - Diplomaten im Dialog* [Foreign policy live- diplomats in dialogue]. Major players in this program are German diplomats who hold foreign posts abroad. Based on information from the ifa annual report, the seminars have taken place in different federal states of Germany and in the presence of German ambassadors from France, Egypt, Russia and Poland (ifa 2012: 11-12).

The Arab Spring (ifa 2011b: 16) and climate change (ifa 2011b: 11) have been the recent topics of lecture programs and studies of ifa. The reality of “digital age” has changed the form but not the content of ifa activities. The changes are intended to fit ifa activities with a global and unclear audience in the world:

“Yes, there is a change. So now we don’t think about departments, in format or in target groups, we think on issues. The main issue for the institute in the next years, to 2017, is global citizenship. So I ask about global ethic, or to discuss global issues, global citizenship in a sense that Ban Ki-moon said, and command these global developments from the cultural perspective. The first training would be full on digital diplomacy. Or how to use digital instrument in social networks in foreign relations [...] We have to think about the other kinds of dialogues. Maybe all the electronic instruments help us to get through dialogue. Nowadays, in this moment, they resolve problems. For example, we have no target group which we can define. The target group is anybody, in twitter or Facebook, it can be a young person or a journalist, it can be EVERYBODY. And you get a response and answer from everybody. And you have to react. And react really quickly. And meet another structure, another institute, the man’s power” (Grätz, personal communication, 2015).

There were so many analytical points on the cultural activities of ifa regarding intercultural dialogue that it is more effective to present them in four smaller segments. The following give an overview of “media dialogue” activities, a

specific forum established to deal with a project of European-Islamic cultural dialogue, the internship program of “Cross-Cultural Praktika”, and the specific attention paid by ifa to civil society.

6.2.3.3.1 Dialogue with Muslim Countries through Media Dialogue

ifa started through its dialogue forum to implement *Mediendialog* [media dialogue] with Arab countries from 1997, three years before it focused on those countries with the specific budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. The media dialogue was to hold seminars and workshops on democracy and the role of media in democratic societies. In 1997 a seminar was held in Heidelberg and attended by experts from Arab countries and Germany (ifa 1997). The next media dialogue was held in 1998 in Amman, Jordan, where issues such as human rights and the rights of women were discussed (Abu Zaid 1998: 11). The media dialogue in 1999 took place in Rabat, Morocco. A result of that media dialogue was submission of a resolution by participants from 13 Arab countries, Germany and Switzerland. The resolution was determined in 10 articles (ifa 1999).

In the post-9/11 period, the media dialogue extended to include new issues and more Muslim countries. Academics, journalists and political experts from Egypt, Amman, Syria, Algeria, Palestine, Morocco, Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Germany can be seen among the participants in this period (ifa 2003: 69, ifa 2006a: 80, ifa 2007: 38-39). Also, the media dialogue was not limited to Muslim countries, with participants from countries such as Serbia, Ukraine, USA, France, Israel also among the partners of the project (ifa 2002b, ifa 2006a: 75).

Iran was also a partner of ifa media dialogue between 2002 and 2005. The first German-Iranian dialogue took place in 2002 in the offices of IPIS in Tehran. The topic of this dialogue was “globalization, challenges and chances” (ifa 2002b: 63, ifa 2003: 70). The second was in 2003 in Hamburg and Berlin and discussed issues such as the relationship between Iran and its neighbor countries in the Middle East and the chances for democratic development of legal security in the region (ifa 2004: 71). In 2005, the third German-Iranian media dialogue was held in the offices of IPIS on the responsibility of the media in relation to global threats (ifa 2005b: 87, ifa 2006a: 74). The ifa further coordinated some scientific

seminars in 2005 in Isfahan and Tehran. From the German side Dr. Oliver Hahn, a research fellow from Dortmund University, presented topics such as trends in the conflict, crisis and coverage of crisis in the Middle East, journalistic cultures, public diplomacy and media diplomacy among Western and Middle Eastern countries. From the Iranian side some professors from the Allameh Tabtabaee University, Tehran University, University of Isfahan, as well as journalists, broadcasters from news agencies and experts from Iranian radio and TV participated (ifa 2006a: 81).

After 2005, some projects regarding Iran that were also supported by ifa were in the context of media and journalism. In 2008, ifa initiated a program for six local politicians, including some staff of the city council of Tehran, and two journalists to visit Germany. It took place in Berlin, Cologne and Essen (ifa, 2008, p. 44). Ifa also coordinated a conference for German and Iranian journalists, NGO activists and media experts in 2010. The conference was a response to the situation of the post-2009 presidential election in Iran and the role social media played in civilian demonstrations in the streets of Tehran and other cities. *Deutsche Welle* also assisted with holding this conference (ifa 2010a: 12, ifa 2011a).

6.2.3.3.2 A Forum for Dialogue and Understanding

What has ifa specifically done regarding European-Islamic cultural dialogue? At the time, ifa received very little budget from the foreign ministry compared with other *Mittlerorganisationen*. This program and budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue was therefore perceived as an opportunity to illustrate the ability of ifa to implement convincing cultural projects. The forum of *Dialog und Verständigung* [Dialogue and understanding], *Cross-Cultural Praktika* [Cross-cultural internships], and cooperating with other German cultural actors in the online magazine *Nafas* and the website of *Qantara* are among the specific efforts of ifa regarding European-Islamic foreign cultural policy.

The Forum of Dialogue and Understanding was established in 2002 by the department of dialogue to conceptualize and then implement specific projects relevant to dialogue with Muslim countries. The project started from a concept

paper which was developed by Jochen Hippler.¹¹⁶ The concept paper explains basic political conditions for conducting intercultural dialogue between Germany as a Western country and Muslim countries. The paper also mentioned conceptual initial considerations which had to be taken into account by German partners in dialogue with Muslim partners. The paper advises that attention should be paid to target groups of the Muslim countries in the future dialogue programs, and that the audience in “Muslim countries” should not be viewed so generally. Moreover, it mentions that the focus of dialogue should not be merely on academics and intellectuals but on ordinary people in Muslim countries, too. The paper finally suggested initiating intercultural dialogue with a mix of projects, such as writing a “white paper” about the position of intercultural relationships, inventing a “journalism prize” called “dialogue among cultures”, coordinating “co-written books” by German and Muslim authors, and finally directing a “film” on the issue of intercultural dialogue. The paper expected that these intercultural dialogue projects could be implemented within four years (ifa 2002a).

The dialogue department took the points of the concept paper seriously and implemented some intercultural dialogue accordingly. In 2002, ifa organized a seminar in *Schloss Neuhausen* and invited politicians, diplomats, journalists and authors from Germany and Muslim countries. The result of the seminar was the creation of a group to work on writing a joint book. The dialogue department held many workshops and meetings between authors from Germany and some Muslim countries to manage and finalize the co-written book. It was a report about the Muslim-Western relationship (ifa 2003: 62) on the topic of “western and Islamic world- a Muslim position” (ifa 2004: 64). It was finally written jointly by six authors from six different Muslim countries (Bakr et al. 2004).¹¹⁷ Co-writing the book was difficult for the authors because the articles were not written individually but jointly by at least two different authors. Also, this was not easy for the organizers of ifa, because they had to coordinate meetings and discussions

¹¹⁶ This is the third time that the name Jochen Hippler has been mentioned thematically in this research. He was invited to Iran in 2008 with the assistance of Fatemeh Sadr to participate in a conference of the dialogue NGO of Khatami (see 6.1.3.4). He was the director of one of the twenty projects which the DAAD funded from 2005 to 2013 in academic exchanges between Iran and Germany (see 6.2.2.3.1). Both participation in the conference in Iran and leading the DAAD project took place years after Jochen Hippler wrote this working paper for ifa.

¹¹⁷ The authors of the book “western and Islamic world- a Muslim position” were as follows: Salwa Bakr from Egypt, Bassam Ezbidy from Palestine, Hassan Kassab-Hassan from Syria, Fikret Karcic from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mazhar Zaidi from Pakistan and Dato Jawhar Hassan from Malaysia. The preface of the book is written by Alois Graf von Waldburg-Zeil, the president of ifa at that time, and the introduction is by Jochen Hippler.

about different parts of the book. But in the end, both were satisfied with the result. Work on the book began in 2002, and it was finally published in 2004 in three languages, German, English and Arabic (ifa 2004: 64, ifa 2005a: 42). A former general secretary of ifa mentioned that the co-written book was a unique experience, because it showed a development in the German attitude towards cultural dialogue with the Islamic world:

“Because one of the key findings was that the Muslim intellectuals who participated in the book said that the problem is that the West already set the agenda, over hundreds of years, and our countries do not want it anymore. We want to set the agenda jointly. This is possible just by dialogue” (Maaß, personal communication, 2015).

Also, he explained that the book was welcomed by the German institutions, including cultural and political ones. Many German cultural organizations which were unfamiliar with the idea of the Euro-Islamic cultural dialogue but had an interest in implementing relevant activities in the post-9/11 period paid attention to the book. Hence it was republished immediately after its first publication, as the former general secretary mentioned (Maaß, personal communication, 2015). The book was also partly translated in one of the research projects which received support from Rayzani in Berlin (Rayzani in Germany 1392 [2013]). This indicates that it also attracted the attention of a main Iranian cultural actor in Germany.

The next co-written book to be produced in the framework of intercultural dialogue was *War, repression, terrorism: Political Violence and Civilization in Western and Muslim societies*. Writing of the book started in 2003 and continued up to 2005 (ifa 2003: 64, ifa 2005a: 39). The final book was published in 2006 (Hippler et al. 2006) and distributed in 6,000 issues (ifa 2006b: 42).

In none of the mentioned co-written books have the Muslim participants been Iranian authors. This point has been raised with some participants in the field study. A former general secretary responded that it was because decision makers in ifa could not be sure that Iran would keep its stable peaceful approach towards the international realm, even at the time of Khatami. In his view, Ahmadinejad’s anti-Israeli discourse made ifa’s decision makers sure that they made the correct decision not to start a deep cultural dialogue with Iran:

“I think, you know, Germany has [a] special relation with Israel. Because of our own history and there was a president of Iran who said that we have to kill (them). But for a German government it is very difficult to start a special

dialogue program with Iran, because of Israel. You saw how Israel reacted to Obama [...] against Iran [...] ¹¹⁸ I think Obama made a good thing with Iran but Germany is not in [that] position to react like that (Maaß, personal communication, 2015).

But a person who managed both projects of co-written books explained that he did not include Iranian authors in the project, simply because he did not have enough knowledge about Iran and Iranian authors at that time:

“I personally think I had at that time not enough experience and study on Iran. So I was avoiding Iran because it was too complicated and big for me. I did not want to interfere with Iranian side when I did not know my partner. So I used my contacts that I knew from the other Muslim countries” (Hippler, personal communication, 2016).

ifa also planned some seminars in the context of intercultural dialogue for the federal government to explain how a realistic picture of Germany should be mediated through cultural activities. Relevant activities by ifa include holding the seminar of “Germany as a partner in intercultural dialogue” and inviting researchers such as Udo Steinbach, who had experience in Arab-EU dialogue and “critical dialogue”, as a key speaker (ifa 2003: 65).

6.2.3.3.3 Cross-Cultural Praktika, a New Form of Intercultural Dialogue

The next dialogue-based program is introduced from 2005 as part of a scholarship program. It is called *Cross-Cultural-Praktika* (CCP) [Cross-cultural internships]. CCP does not offer an opportunity for studying and educational courses, but it is aimed at young applicants who want to gain experience of working in their field studies and in “intercultural competence” (ifa 2004: 65, ifa 2005a: 39). Because ifa does not have branch offices abroad, the German embassies in different countries help it to conduct its cultural programs. With regard to the CCP, the German embassies abroad, including in Iran, advertise the project and collect initial applications from applicants. As mentioned in 6.2.1.3, a director of the press section in cooperation with the cultural section interviewed and selected Iranian applicants for CCP in the first stage. The second stage of selection is done by a specific team of the CCP project. The final list of applicants with great

¹¹⁸ This refers to the reaction of Benjamin Netanyahu to the Obama administration’s progressive approach to the nuclear deal with Iran. In a speech to a joint session of the USA Congress, Netanyahu successfully mobilized republican senators to pressure their democratic senators to oppose Obama.

potential to receive the scholarship is then clarified, after prior agreement with the foreign ministry. According to an ifa statistic, there were three times more CCP applications from Muslim countries in 2010 than in 2005. The number of scholarships started from 20 per year in 2005 and reached 70 per year in 2014 (ifa 2010b). Based on information from the official website of ifa, about 360 women and men from 31 countries have participated in the project, including 27 from Egypt, 16 from Iran, 11 from Kyrgyzstan and 56 from Germany.

Iranian applicants have been awarded the CCP scholarship almost every year. They received 6% of the internships from 2005 to 2010. This number is lower than the number awarded to countries like Afghanistan, although Iraq, Syria, Malaysia, Lebanon, Indonesia, Yemen, Palestine, Jordan, Algeria and Nigeria had fewer participants than Iran up to the end of 2010. 18% of participants have taken part in the CCP project from Germany (ifa 2010b). Iranian applicants who participated in the CCP program have originally been employees or colleagues of institutes and organizations. They were mostly from Tehran, and then from cities such as Qazvin and Gorgan. Seyed Emad Tabatabaei, the second Iranian CCP scholarship holder, was introduced by the Imam Musa Sadr Institute, which was mentioned in 6.1.3.4. In an interview for this research, Tabatabaei mentioned that he heard about CCP when he was organizing travel for Johannes and Martina Hartkemeyer from Germany to Iran. This couple taught in a workshop of the dialogue center of the Imam Musa Sadr Institute. Since the cultural section of the German embassy assisted travel at that time, one of its employees shared the news about CCP with him. Tabatabaei's field was judicial law, so he applied for the CCP and was able to get a four-month internship in a German court (Tabatabaei, personal communication, 2016). Other Iranian applicants, most of whom happen to be women, have received scholarships to do internships in diverse fields. Just one German applicant got an internship from CCP to stay in Iran. Twenty participants from Iran were able to participate in the program. A list of their names, date of their internship, their original organization in Iran and host organization in Germany is provided in Appendix 8 at the end of this research.

The CCP project has received highly qualified applications from Iran. A director of the press section of the German embassy who is in charge of pre-selecting the applications mentioned that it was a tough job to select from the applications:

“We had 200 applicants, not every single one was so qualified but I think at the end I had to make such a tough decision and discussion with my colleagues, a group of 40 people who I could all send to Germany” (Their, personal communication, 2014).

The limited budget for CCP is one of the reasons that, despite receiving high-quality applications, ifa cannot give internships to more Iranians. Countries such as Afghanistan have a specific extra budget from the foreign ministry relating to stabilizing the social situation there. Countries of the so-called Arab Spring are also in the category of “transition countries” for the specific budget from the foreign ministry. Hence CCP is able for organizational reasons to give more internship opportunities to applicants from those countries.

The fact that just one German applicant had the opportunity of completing an internship under CCP from 2005 to 2013 has been scrutinized. A head of CCP answered that firstly, CCP theoretically gave more opportunities to international than German applicants. Secondly, Iran attracted less attention among the German applicants, and this is not something in ifa’s control. German applicants have more interest to go to Asian countries like Malaysia or Indonesia. Thirdly, in the few cases in which German applicants had an interest in doing an internship in Iran, they faced visa problems (Sodeik-Zecha, personal communication, 2014).

A variety of German organizations and institutes cooperated on the CCP project by giving young applicants from Muslim countries and elsewhere the opportunity to do an internship. Among the organizations, ifa’s annual reports mention the following: Deutsch-Arabische Gesellschaft für Umweltstudien; Al-Jazeera Channel; Berlin Bureau; Deutsche Welle (DW) – Online and Radio sections, 3sat/ZDF; Redaktion Kulturzeit; exilio – Hilfe für Migranten, Flüchtlinge und Folterüberlebende e.V.; Literaturwerkstatt; Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches und internationales Strafrecht; Medienprojekt Wuppertal; Miteinander – Netzwerk für Demokratie und Weltoffenheit; Photomarketing; Plenum im Landkreis Reutlingen – Region Aktiv e.V.; Qantara.de – Dialogue with the Islamic world; Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg/ RBB – radiomultikulti; Südwestrundfunk/ SWR; and the Theater an der Ruhr in Mülheim an der Ruhr (ifa 2006b: 43).

Because CCP was launched with assistance from the special budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue, it seems that it theoretically has to do with preventing conflict and terror. A director of the project mentioned that the project does not

have a major political aim, but at the lowest level it contributes to resolving the conflict between Western and Muslim countries. It is an activity to influence participants on a personal level:

“I think we are contributing in a sense that there is this theory of conflict resolution with track 1, track 2, track 3. But what is clear is that we are on the lowest level [...]. In this individual level, every change in politics somehow is with people, with individuals. We are contributing with that, if we help people to understand how intercultural dialogue work, what are the challenges, what are the risks, what are the barriers, because our internships, are the people who are coming here. They face these problems in a very small quantity level which is [rooted] also in a big political level, like an American president does not understand some cultural social religious aspects underground, [so he makes] a big mistake. Because he does not understand how people think and behave. We try to help them [participants] to find solutions. [to understand] how to overcome these barriers [...]. So these are very very small experiences, and lessons, learned by people who come here or the Germans who go to the different countries” (Sodeik-Techa, personal communication, 2014).

CCP has developed and increased a diversity of projects from its original form. For instance, in 2007 *Cross-Cultural-Journalistenpraktika* [journalism internships] were initiated alongside the routine CCP scholarships for Muslim countries, which gave seven journalists from six Arabic countries internships to work in media centers in Germany (ifa 2007: 37). Also in 2012, because the Arab Spring issue was high on the agenda for the foreign ministry, “Cross-Cultural-Plus” was established with the budget of “transformation partnership” of the foreign ministry. The project was to give more internship opportunities to applicants from Egypt and Tunisia and Germany (ifa 2012: 13). Cross-Cultural Plus is like the CCP project, but it additionally gives scholarship holders an opportunity to apply for funding to undertake a project in their own countries after their internship, as a head of the project explained (Hülquist, personal communication, 2014). He added that the funds allocated to alumni of this project are between two and three thousand Euros. *Children in Peace*, which was completed in Yemen in sport, and *Allez les femmes- envisages Tunis/Blasti* [Go women- regarding Tunis/Blasti], which was a photo project to give opportunities to the women of Tunisia, are examples of activities of alumni of Cross-Cultural Plus (ifa 2013: 24). In early 2013, the main CCP project team decided to establish a network of CCP alumni. A council of representatives from 15 countries, including Iran, was therefore established. The network aims, among other objectives, to plan some projects with the help of alumni (ifa 2013: 23). From 2009, the subheading *Islamic-European dialogue* was removed from the list of

activities of ifa's annual report. The main sources of projects such as CCP were supplied by the dialogue budget of the foreign affairs ministry (Sodeik-Zecha, personal communication, 2014).

6.2.3.3.4 Supporting Civil Society

The last point concerns the status of the relationship between ifa and the German foreign ministry. As mentioned above, ifa initially sent a dialogue proposal to the foreign ministry and could thus illustrate its efficiency with regard to implementing activities for European-Islamic cultural dialogue. According to a former general secretary, ifa at that time had a small budget. It started dialogue projects with a modest budget of 300,000 Euro. The dialogue projects were so developed that, in 2013/2014, ifa received seven million Euro for implementing them. In fact, one third of the ifa budget, according to the former general secretary, comes from the financial sources of cultural dialogue (Maaß, personal communication, 2015). Close contact with the foreign ministry and convincing it of ifa's ability to implement dialogue activities are significant points. Together they raise the question of whether ifa is under the authority of the foreign ministry because of its financial sources, or is the foreign ministry is dependent on ifa because of its diverse and high-quality cultural dialogue activities with Muslim countries. Is ifa a civil society? How can it be explained?

One answer is that, since the foreign ministry does not have expertise in implementing cultural activities abroad (because it operates in the diplomatic and political rather than cultural field), it is dependent on its *Mittlerorganisationen*, including ifa (Hülquist, personal communication, 2014). Each year it requests cultural institutes to propose their projects on specific issues, including European-Islamic cultural dialogue. Based on the proposals, the foreign ministry decides which best fits the issues. It is therefore difficult to say that the foreign ministry dominates the decision making of *Mittlerorganisationen*, because it needs their professional cultural activities. In some regards, *Mittlerorganisationen* like ifa are dependent on the foreign ministry. For instance, with regard to the CCP project, a director explains that the bureaucrats of the foreign ministry had to be convinced that this project still needs to continue. A ceremony to celebrate its 10th anniversary was held for that reason in 2016; it was a tactic to attract public

attention to the importance of this project (Sodeik-Zecha, personal communication, 2014). The first answer is thus that the relationship between ifa and the foreign ministry is mutual rather than one sided.

The second answer is that, as far as political issues in cultural programs are concerned, the foreign ministry has a tendency to interfere. For instance, one of the Iranian applicants who had a good chance of getting a CCP internship failed at the final stage of ifa decision making, because the foreign ministry specifically was against him. This applicant was working in a news agency dependent on the Iranian state; the foreign ministry therefore perceived him to be a radical or closed-minded person and declined to give him a chance. To the mind of the member of ifa staff who told this story, all people, whether liberal or radical, should have an equal chance of intercultural dialogue. According to the analysis of another participant of the study, however, because *Mittlerorganisationen*, including ifa, can endanger the relationship between Germany and other countries through their cultural activities, it is rational to expect the foreign ministry to interfere in some cases which may be politically risky (Hippler, personal communication, 2016).

The third answer is that, as far as strengthening civil society is concerned, ifa attempts to pursue its activities even if the foreign ministry as part of the German state is not happy about it. The permanent projects of ifa which were mentioned above illustrate that there has been a gradual approach in ifa to strengthen civil society. The projects gave different opportunities to NGOs as well as to artists, researchers and journalists inside and outside Germany. But how can an institute convince the state to step into “two-way” communication? A director of the dialogue forum of ifa explained in conversation that convincing the German state had been always a tough job; but because Germany is a democratic country, there is a great possibility to do that:

“This is fortunately Germany, you know? I mean this is difficult. This is a fascinating question to ask what state is and what the civil society is. This is so hard to answer. Even Western society differs a lot. Even in Western Europe some of the cultural institutes really are part of the foreign office, ja? And in some, not, and in Germany they are not. I mean by law legally we are independent, we are civil society but we receive the public money, ja? And this is no secret, we are depending on it. So we cannot do anything which endangers receiving this money. From a broader perspective, it is very well done. If it works well, it is a wonderful system of check and balance... because foreign ministry they don't

have personnel means and professional skills to implement what we do. So in this regard they depend on us. And we depend to their money [...]. I can try, and I hope I don't enter to the prison. So the worst thing that can happen is that a person in AA [foreign ministry] says I hate this Mrs. Triebel, ja? [...] but not more than this against me. I mean they are boss to decide how this tax-paid money is used for the broader target to keep Germany as a civic power in the international field in a sustainable way" (Triebel, personal communication, 2014).

Therefore it can be said that ifa increasingly attempts to be independent from the German state despite being a civil society organization which is dependent on it financially.

6.2.3.4 A Summary on Analysis of ifa

To conclude this section, a question will be repeated: What are the main characteristics of the intercultural dialogue activities which have been implemented by ifa and what have been the main points to influence them? Since the original cultural activities of ifa were art exhibitions and cultural activities abroad, the activities in the framework of intercultural dialogue were in the same field. It has been significant, however, that the content of these cultural activities found more dialogical dimensions over time. For instance, communication with global citizens through the website and Facebook became more serious. ifa specifically implemented projects relating to European-Islamic cultural dialogue, although it had already implemented some media dialogue from 1997. It initially proposed it to the foreign ministry in such a professional and innovative way that its dialogue budget was gradually increased. ifa's activities and organizational structure underwent some changes between 1998 and 2013 according to the priorities of the foreign ministry (9/11 and Arab Spring), general secretaries (focus of Latin American countries in time of Grätz) and time (climate change and communication technologies). Transparency of information has been significant in ifa, which has made it possible to study the cultural activities of this institute in this research. It has been significant that dialogue activities such as CCP are not only still ongoing today but also their basis and format are used to implement other activities aiming at transformation countries or refugees. ifa has also cooperated with other German cultural actors, like the press section of the German embassy in Iran, to initially select applicants for CCP. The relationship between ifa and the foreign ministry has been mentioned mostly as a mutual relationship,

although interference by the foreign ministry in political cases or ifa's insistence regarding work as a civil society organization have been observed.

6.2.4 Goethe Institute

The Goethe Institute is one of the oldest German cultural institutes. Many old Iranians remember its name automatically with a memory of “ten nights of Goethe”, which was held before the Islamic Revolution in Tehran. This event was organized by the Goethe Institute and an Iranian writers' association. Young Iranians, however, remember the Goethe Institute automatically as the name of the German language school of the German embassy in Tehran. The Goethe Institute does not have permission for political reasons to work officially in Iran, but it undertakes its activities as part of the German embassy. In fact, the Goethe Institute has not implemented a specific project like the DAAD and ifa in the framework of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. But since it has supported the intercultural dialogue activities of the German embassy on the one hand, and kept in contact with Iranian artists and authors on the other, details of its activities are presented here. Its history is described in 6.2.4.1, its organizational structure in 6.2.4.2., details of its practices in 6.2.4.3., and a summary of the points in this section in 6.2.4.3.

6.2.4.1 History and Organizational Aims

The story of the Goethe Institute/GI goes back to 1923, when the *Deutsche Akademie* (DA) was established to develop and institutionalize the German language at domestic and foreign level. After World War II, in 1951, when German intellectuals and politicians, learning from the bitter lesson of the Nazi era, planned to represent Germany in a new way, the DA changed its name to the Goethe Institute. The institute reflected different objectives of German foreign cultural policy. For instance, it used to develop the national-socialist policies from 1933 to 1939 (Michels 2005: 102) and the propagation policies between 1939 and 1945 (Michels 2005: 176). Changing the DA to Goethe Institute in 1951 did not happen from *Stunde Null* [hour zero] as Steffen Kathe argues (2005: 65). It took time to gradually change the status of relationship of the new institute with the

German state, to modify its structure, ideas, personnel and activities in a way to mediate the image of a *nette Deutsche* [nice German] abroad and to set a “good foreign cultural policy” through “public relations” (Kathe 2005: 46). As the chronology of activities of the Goethe Institute on its official website shows, its activities have gradually developed from running language courses to organizing cultural activities abroad. In the period of Willy Brandt, the Goethe Institute adjusted its activities to a developed concept of foreign cultural policy, which was defined as “dialogue and partnership”. One of the main high points of establishing this relationship between the Goethe Institute and the foreign ministry is a contract between them which was first made in 1976 and renewed at various intervals.¹¹⁹ This contract regulates the independence of the Goethe Institute as a cultural institution.

As mentioned in the Goethe Institute’s annual reports, besides promoting German language knowledge around the world, it aims to maintain international cultural cooperation and mediate a comprehensive picture of Germany by providing information on cultural, social and political life (Goethe Institut 2007b: 2, Goethe Institut 2008: 7, Goethe Institut 2010c: 2, Goethe Institut 2013b: 4). Moreover, the Goethe Institute considers encouraging and teaching the German language to be a key qualification for education, vocational training and understanding. It claims that the German language is the link between many people and Germany. The Goethe Institute therefore sees it as a duty to set quality standards for teaching German in the world.

6.2.4.2 Organizational Structure and Budget

The Goethe Institute is governed by the *Präsidium* [board of trustees] and *Vorstand* [board of directors]. The official website of the Goethe Institute provides detailed information on its organizational structure (Goethe Institut 2015b). The president is head of the *Präsidium* and the *Mitgliederversammlung* [general assembly]. The president does not run operations in the Goethe Institute but makes long-term decisions. The secretary general of the Goethe Institute is actually head of *Vorstand* and has a senior position. He/she answers to the *Präsidium* on the operational activities of the Goethe Institute.

¹¹⁹ The last date of renewing this contract was 2004, between the general secretary of the Goethe Institute at the time, Andreas Schlüter, and the director of the department of culture and education of the German foreign ministry, Wilfried Grolig.

Members of the board of trustees are not just from the top positions of the Goethe Institute, such as its president and vice-president; three members of the board are also from the foreign and domestic offices of the Goethe Institute. Moreover, there are members such as president of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts and director of the German Literature Archive on the board. It correspondingly has two members from the federal government and two guest members, who, according to information on the official website of the Goethe Institute, are from the federal foreign office -head of division 606- and the president of the DAAD. Members of the general assembly are supposed to discuss conceptual issues of Goethe Institute activities in the biannual meetings. The 32 full members of this meeting are not only employees of the Goethe Institute and representatives of other cultural organizations but also individual personalities, such as a writer, a dancer, a publisher and an artist. Besides advising the board of trustees and general assembly, the *Beiräte* [advisory board or individual board members] offer professional advice on the Goethe Institute projects. One of the duties of the advisory board is, for instance, preparing the Goethe Institute's awards event, which is called *Goethe Medaille*.

The general secretary is in charge of different departments and sections. As the organizational chart of the Goethe Institute illustrates, the board of directors deals with both sections, located in Germany and internationally. The six departments of the Goethe Institute are as follows: information; culture; language; human resources; finance and central services. The main building of the Goethe Institute including these departments is located in Munich. The thirteen regional offices which work abroad are as follows: Central Eastern Europe (Prague); Northern Africa/Middle East (Cairo); North America (New York); Eastern Asia (Seoul); Southern Asia/Australia/New Zealand (Jakarta); Sub-Saharan Africa (San Paulo); Southern Asia (New Delhi); Eastern Europe/Central Asia (Moscow); Southwestern Europe (Brussels); and finally Southwestern Europe (Athens).

With such a complicated and sophisticated structure, the Goethe Institute is able to extend its cultural and contact offices over a large area. According to its annual report 2012/2013, besides managing 13 institutes in Germany and 13 regional offices, the Goethe Institute runs 135 institutes and 12 *Verbindungsbüros* [contact offices] in 93 countries. It offered more than 246,000 German language courses and 5,800 cultural events worldwide and worked with three thousand employees

in 2013 (Goethe Institut 2013c: 73 and 107). In 2004 it established its own headquarter in Pyongyang in North Korea. It is the first Western information center in the country. The Goethe Institute has offices in most Muslim countries, including Morocco and Egypt.

In Iran, the Goethe Institute had a contact office and a German language institute (though officially it is under the authority of the German embassy) between 1998 and 2013. As mentioned in 2.3, the Goethe Institute established an office in Tehran in 1958, aiming at offering German language courses there. It later developed its activities to include cultural activities such as collaborative music concerts, exhibitions, film shows. It also cooperated with Iranian artists and authors on different projects. According to H. E. Chehabi, more than 10,000 visitors attended the cultural activities of the Goethe Institute in Tehran in 1970. In 1975 it opened its second office in Shiraz. The *Goethe Ten Nights* was a literature program of the Goethe Institute which attracted a great deal of attention from Iranian authors and intellectuals in 1977. The program was coordinated with the help of the *Anjoman-e adabi-e Tehran* [literature association of Tehran], which was famous for being an opponent of Mohammad Reza Shah, the last king of the Pahlavi dynasty. After the collapse of the Pahlavi dynasty, it was expected that the Goethe Institute would have a good chance of being tolerated by the new Iranian state, because it had echoed the voice of Pahlavi's opponents. But this expectation proved to be wrong (Chehabi 2001). The Goethe Institute's activities faced some limitations and finally, in 1987, following the *Rudis Tagesshow* crisis (as mentioned in 2.3), Iran's Goethe Institute was closed down. Later, the Goethe Institute was able to work through a few offices as follows: a contact office, which is located in the cultural section of the German embassy in Tehran; a language institute, which is called the *Deutsches Sprachinstitut Teheran* (DSIT), and a *Dialogpunkt* [dialogue point], which works like a library for Iranians who want to learn German.

The director of the contact office of the Goethe Institute in Tehran argues that there have been several meetings and negotiations to open the Goethe Institute officially in Iran, but still there is no positive result.¹²⁰ He did not mention any Iranian authority as a negotiation partner. He just stated that the German

¹²⁰ The interview was conducted in September 2014. When the information was updated at the beginning of 2017, the Goethe Institute was still not officially open in Iran.

ambassador deals with this issue in his meetings with Iranian authorities (Buhtz, personal communication, 2014). In the view of a former general secretary of the Goethe Institute, the issue of re-opening becomes “very complicated and strange” but negotiations are so positively developed that “any moment” the Goethe Institute can be opened officially in Iran (Knopp, personal communication, 2016). Nevertheless, it seems that there is still some hesitation among Iranian authorities on this issue. In talks with a former director of Rayzani, it was mentioned that the minister of Islamic culture and guidance of Iran at the time of Rouhani had a very encouraging view regarding re-opening the Goethe Institute in Iran, but he was concerned that, if the Goethe Institute started to cooperate with Iranian dissident authors and artists, it would be difficult for him to manage the radical reactions from Iranian hardliners (Imanipour, personal communication, 2014). It is important here to remember the clash of powers between the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state and institutes under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector, which was argued in 5.2.1. It can explain this concern on the part of the culture minister, who at that time was Ali Jannati. The minister was battling on two fronts to negotiate both with conservatives and civil society, including authors and artists, to find a solution for implementing diverse cultural activities, such as concerts and music events, in Iran. This is one of many contexts that help to explain why re-opening the Goethe Institute was problematic. Jannati resigned at the end of 2016.

Although the Goethe Institute does not work officially in Iran, it has an active role through the work of its other offices in the country. Even the German language institute DSIT is known as the Goethe Institute amongst Iranian language learners.¹²¹ DSIT opened in 1995. It holds courses and exams at different elementary and advanced levels for language learners. It also organizes different workshops and seminars for teachers. The contact office has been established since 2003 to consider the reopening process of the Goethe Institute in Tehran. Christiane Krämer-Hus-Hus (Goethe Institut 2003: 108), Alfred Walter in 2004 (Goethe Institut 2005: 130), Filiz Durak in 2008, (Goethe Institut 2009: 94), Rita Sachse-Toussaint in 2010 (Goethe Institut 2010b: 102), and Rainer Buhtz in 2013 (Goethe Institut 2014: 110-111) were directors of the contact office until 2013. The role of the dialogue point, which was established in 2005, is also significant.

¹²¹ According to observations of the researcher.

Talking to the first Iranian director of the dialogue point revealed that it has an important role in promoting the language skills of Iranian applicants of the DSIT and creating an opportunity for dialogue among them. They would gather there and spend their time with books and CDs in different fields in the German language (Riazi, personal communication, 2016). The dialogue point centers, according to the official website of the Goethe Institute, are located in countries that have no Goethe Institute. They have basic equipment for learning German, including reference books, electronic media, video films, music recordings, daily newspapers and weekly magazines in German. Besides Iran, seven other countries including Iraq and Tunisia have a dialogue point. The Iranian dialogue point is operated under the supervision of the regional office of the Goethe Institute, located in New Delhi (Goethe Institut 2015a). Iran's dialogue point, besides dealing with the field of German language, focused on two more cultural issues: "architecture, art, design" and "environment" (Goethe Institut 2013a).

Besides the contact office, other buildings of the Goethe Institute are located outside the German embassy. The first building of the DSIT was located in the north of Tehran, in *Yakhchal*. It held Goethe Institute courses and exams up to 2013. Since then, the main classes of the DSIT, its library and its *Mediothek* have been transferred to a new building near to *Yakhchal* in *Dibaji* Street. The dialogue point is located in the old building in *Yakhchal*. It is interesting to mention that the information office of the DAAD has moved since 2014 to one of the buildings of the Goethe Institute in *Yakhchal*.

The main budget of the Goethe Institute comes from the foreign affairs ministry, although it also has some internal income, sponsors, partners and third party institutes to supply its financial needs. According to its official website in 2014, the Goethe Institute had 106 sponsors and 22 partners with a variety of international bases, including Indonesia (YAD foundation), and French and American (French-American Cultural Foundation) and Thai (Thai-Deutsche Kulturstiftung) cultural institutes. Moreover, there are business foundations, such as the Siemens foundation, and political foundations, such as the Heinrich Böll and the Bosch foundation, which support the Goethe Institute financially. The total budget of the Goethe Institute increased between 1998 and 2013. Its total budget increased from 196.1 million Euro in 2006 (Goethe Institut 2007a: 114) to 301.5 million Euro in 2013 (Goethe Institut 2014: 208). Approximately three

quarters of the budget comes from the German foreign ministry and one quarter from the income of the institute, including German language courses and cultural events and activities.

The Goethe Institute also receives the budget of the European-Islamic cultural dialogue from the foreign ministry. According to annual reports of the Goethe Institute, it allocated 466,000 Euro in 2005, then 540,000 Euro in 2006 (Goethe Institut 2007b: 16) and 764,000 Euro in 2007 (Goethe Institut 2008: 16) to promote cultural activities relating to “European-Islamic dialogue”.

6.2.4.3 Practices: Generally and Specifically for Intercultural Dialogue

The main activities of the Goethe Institute include promoting German language learning inside and outside Germany and cooperating and coordinating cultural activities such as theater and music festivals. The Goethe Institute also supports researchers and authors in the fields of linguistics, culture and science, and it finances the publication of books, magazine and brochures, as well as online and e-print journals.

The Goethe Institute has several publications. Its annual report is available online on its official website. There are also some brochures that it publishes on different issues. For instance, the *Flugmodus* brochure reports on a selection of articles which have already been published online on its website (Goethe Institut 2012a: II). The *Goethe-Institute and Europe* is another brochure which provides information on cultural and educational projects and activities of the Goethe Institute at European level (Goethe Institut 2011b: 6). In the specific field of intercultural dialogue between Western and Muslim countries, there is a cultural journal which is supported by the Goethe Institute. It is called *Fikrun wa Fann* [Art and thought]. The first issue of *Fikrun wa Fann* was released in 1963 by Annemarie Schimmel, who has already been mentioned as a scholar in the field of Islam and the Middle East and is highly respected by both Iranian cultural actors, Rayzani and ICDAC. The journal gave writers of Western and Muslim countries an opportunity to write on literature and philosophy topics and thus exchange ideas. The magazine has been published in Arabic, English and German. Since 2010, along with publishing its first e-paper, Farsi has also been added to the languages of *Fikrun wa Fann* (Goethe-Institute, 2010a, p. 33). The editorial team

of *Fikrun wa Fann* reacted to the so-called Arab Spring from its initial moments in early 2011 by coordinating a meeting between writers and journalists from Egypt, Taman, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Iran, Britain and Germany to discuss the issue of “from 9/11 to Arab Revolution” (Goethe Institut 2012b: 49).

The presence of some Iranian writers and intellectuals in *Fikrun wa Fann* is significant. One of its editors is Manuchehr Amirpour, who was a former director of the cultural attaché of Iran before the Islamic Revolution. Even after leaving his official position, he cooperated on *Spektrum-Iran*, the permanent magazine of Rayzani, by publishing his articles (Amirpur 1996, Amirpur 2001).¹²² Navid Kermani is another cultural figure of Iranian origin who had close contact with *Fikrun wa Fann* in the period of the study. He is a scholar, famous for his analysis and writings.¹²³ Kermani’s view regarding interfaith dialogue in the Middle East was reviewed in 3.2.1. He was also one of the intellectuals invited to the dialogue with Islam conference which was organized by the cultural department of the foreign ministry in 2005, as mentioned in 5.1.2. He was also especially selected as a guest key speaker at the 65th anniversary of the German constitution in the German federal parliament, in May 2014. In his speech he mentioned the concept of freedom and religious tolerance. He argued that there was a long way to go for both to be reached in German society. He innovatively used this point to promise both Iranian and German authorities present at the meeting that both will be reached in Iranian society, too:

“In the other country which I have its passport [Iran], despite all protests and all sacrifices, freedom remained impossible. But I want to say from this desk that, Gentlemen President, Madam Chancellor, ladies and gentlemen, dear guests and the excellency the ambassador of the Islamic Republic [...]: it will take no 65 years and not even 15 years till time that in Iran, a Christian, a Jew, a Zoroastrian or a Bahai [all from religious minority groups in Iran] naturally can speak as the guest speaker in a freely elected parliament” (Kermani 2014).

Navid Kermani was one of the candidates that the CDU seriously discussed in 2016 to nominate for the German presidency. Although finally Frank-Walter Steinmeier, then foreign minister, was nominated and elected as president, this

¹²² He is also the father of Katajoun Amirpour, an Islam scholar, who was mentioned 6.1.3.3 as a female scholar of the World Religions Academy of Hamburg, the academy which was in cooperation with the Islamic Center of Hamburg.

¹²³ *Dein Name* [your name] is the title of a book he wrote which tells stories from his grandfather. The book is in German and gives completely different images: It describes different atmospheres that come from his origins, Iranian culture. *Gott ist schön – Das ästhetische Erleben des Korans* [God is beautiful - the aesthetic experience of the Quran] is the name of another book by Kermani. The book gives a non-theological approach to understanding the Quran.

degree of attention to Kermani, as a theologian and author, in the German political sphere is significant. It can be concluded with this point that the Goethe Institute, even without having an official institute open in Iran, has reflected the voice of Iranian former cultural actors and dissent authors through its journal *Fikrun wa Fann*.

The Goethe Institute has also cooperated on the Quantara project, which will be explained further in the next subchapter. The other dialogue forum which is supported by the Goethe Institute is the website of *Li-lak*, which was established in 2006 to promote a dialogue opportunity for young Arab and German authors (Goethe Institut 2010b: 33). Li-Lak in English means “for me - for you”. The target group of Li-lak is young Arab and German students in Germany. According to a report on its activities, it tries to open up discussion about “integration”, football, music and optimistic future prospects in Germany (Gsell 2006). Hence it can be said that this website of the Goethe Institute is mostly involved in domestic cultural activities.

The discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue is included by the Goethe Institute in its annual reports after 2002. Activities such as reopening the Goethe Institute in Kabul in 2002 and increasing cultural events and programs with Muslim countries have been mentioned as the main “focus on dialogue with Islamic world” (Goethe Institut 2003: 22). The project “MIDAD-Stadtscheiber” [writer/recorder of the city] is also significant. It gave an opportunity to writers and journalists of both Germany and some Muslim countries to exchange their knowledge and views. In 2004, for instance, the German writer Jose Oliver and the Egyptian writer Ibrahim al-Farghali participated in the MIDAD-Stadtschreiber project to hold German-Arabic literature forums in the cities of Cairo and Stuttgart respectively (Goethe Institut 2005: 97). Another German writer, Ulla Lenze, also had an opportunity to participate in this program and travel to Damascus in 2004. She conducted an online-diary writing workshop for a Syrian audience (Goethe Institut 2005: 89). In 2006, a program of German language classes for Turkish Imams and diplomats was held, which was mentioned in the annual report in the framework of the integration policy and intercultural dialogue (Goethe Institut 2007a: 34-35). The Goethe Institute also supported some individual artists who implemented dialogue-based activities. A significant project in this regard is *this situation*. It was directed by Tino Sehgal and was an art

project intended to create temporary situations for unregulated discussion in different places. Mostly the situation was to talk about philosophical issues. *This situation* started as a result of travel from Germany to India. Members of the team communicated with some local people from different countries located between Germany and India. They encouraged people to participate in their discussions. During four months of travel, local participants from different cities of Germany, Serbia, Turkey, Georgia, Iran, the Emirates and India were instructed by the team members in the rules of the project and then participated in it themselves. There was an exhibition on the project of *this situation* in November 2011 in Tehran (Goethe Institut 2012b: 78-79).

The Goethe Institute managed to implement different cultural activities in Iran between 1998 and 2013. For instance, the 2006/2007 annual report showed that 16 cultural programs were held in 2006 in the fields of literature, music, film theater and exhibitions, and nearly 22 thousand people participated in them (Goethe Institut 2007a: 71). One of the main focuses of the Goethe Institute in Iran has been to hold German language courses. In 2006 and 2007 an average of 150 Iranian applicants (Goethe Institut 2007a: 14, Goethe Institut 2008: 107) took part in German language courses of the DSIT. Based on observation in the period of conducting this research (from 2012 to 2016), the DSIT was not the only institute to hold German language classes. Language institutes such as *Kish* and *Kish-Air* were offering English and German language courses. The interest of Iranian applicants to take the DSIT German language exams was so high that an average of 2,000 Iranian applicants sat them between 2008 and 2011 (Goethe Institut 2009: 94, Goethe Institut 2010b: 102, Goethe Institut 2011a: 122, Goethe Institut 2012b: 119). The dialogue point, library and *mediathek* of the Goethe Institute are open five days a week. Use of their equipment and material is possible both for learners at the DSIT and other applicants (Riazi, personal communication, 2016).

The Goethe Institute used available cultural opportunities in Iran between 1998 and 2013 to implement or support implementation of cultural activities. One cultural opportunity was supporting German artists to participate in the international *Fajr* festival of Tehran.¹²⁴ In the field of theater, in 2003 a group from Stuttgart Theater participated in the festival with a play called *I Furiosi* (Goethe Institut 2003: 108). In 2005 a German artist, Helena Waldmann, who

¹²⁴ The Fajr Festival has been held every year since the early years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran in the fields of theater, film, music and puppet play.

cooperated with an Iranian group, performed the play *Letters from Tentland* (Goethe Institut 2005: 130). A German director, Ania Gronau, participated in the *Fajr* festival in the same year with an act of a play *Johanna* (Goethe Institut 2006: 124). Another German director, Johannes Volkmann, directed a paper theater titled *Die Töne reißen aus* [the sounds of tearing] in 2003 at the *Fajr* international puppet festival (Goethe Institut 2003: 108). In the field of music, the band *Ensemble Integrales* from Hamburg participated in the *Fajr* music festival in 2003 (Goethe Institut 2003: 108). One year later the band coordinated a joint concert with an Iranian composer, Alireza Mashayekhi, in Tehran (Goethe Institut 2005: 130). The twin friendship between the cities of Isfahan and Freiburg was used as an opportunity by *Theater im Marienbad*, a theater from Freiburg. A group from this theater played in Isfahan and afterwards in Tehran (Goethe Institut 2004: 118) with support from the Goethe Institute. In a cooperation between the German and French embassies, concerts, literature meetings and script readings were conducted in the city of Isfahan in 2005. This event is reflected in the annual report of the Goethe Institute (Goethe Institut 2005: 130), so it is likely to have also been supported by the Goethe Institute. A number of seminars and workshops were held in the field of film. A series of discussions and events between some Iranian film producers, documentary makers, TV producers and a group of media producers from the ARTE TV channel, a European cultural channel (Goethe Institut 2003: 108), took place in 2003, as reflected in the annual report of the Goethe Institute. There were also some book exhibitions which were prepared for children on *Freuden der Kindheit* [Joys of Childhood]. Literature events were also organized with the support of the Goethe Institute in different Iranian cities. Readings of the *West-Eastern Divan* of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe by the German poet Albert Osterhaus Maier and the Iranian writer Shariar Mandanipour in Isfahan, Shiraz and Tehran are one example of those events (Goethe Institut 2006: 124). The Goethe Institute also held an exhibition, *Verletzungen – Verbindungen*, of the paintings of Günther Uecker¹²⁵ in the Museum of Contemporary Art of Tehran in 2012 (Goethe Institut 2013c: 132).

The Goethe Institute planned some cultural events in Germany for Iranian authors, too. For instance, the ICDAC, whose activities were discussed in 6.1.2, reported

¹²⁵ There is a claim that he was the first Western artist for decades to be invited to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran; this claim is wrong, because the Goethe Institute itself reported that in 2007, it coordinated an exhibition by a German painter in the same museum.

in its journal that the Goethe Institute held literature seminars and workshops in Berlin in 2004 with participation by Iranian authors and poets, among them Moniru Ravanipor, Syamak Golshiri, Shams Langrudi and Ali Abdullahi (ICDAC 2004c: 169). Cooperation between the ICDAC and the Goethe Institute during the last years of Khatami's presidency has also been discussed. In a joint meeting in 2004, for instance, Boroujerdi, the last president of the ICDAC, and Paul von Maltzahn, then German ambassador in Iran, (ICDAC 2004d: 116) talked about increasing cooperation between the ICDAC and German institutions, including the Goethe Institute.

Reviewing the cultural activities which have been mentioned above indicates that the Goethe Institute had a high level of cooperation with both Iranian and German institutes. For instance, it cooperated with *Kānun-e Parvareš Fekri-ye Kudakān va Nojavānān* [Center for intellectual development of children and youth] (Kanun for short), a significant Iranian cultural actor. Kanun also appeared to be a partner of activities of the Grüter family, as will be mentioned in the next subchapter. The other Iranian cultural institutes that have cooperated in activities of the Goethe Institute are as follows: the dramatic art center of Iran; the dramatic art center of Isfahan; the *Roudaki* foundation; and Cinematheque at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Tehran. On the German side, the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg, the Berlin *Hauptfond*; the German foreign ministry; and Berliner Festspiel GmbH [Festival theater foundation of Berlin] are significant.

As studying annual reports and information of participants in the study suggest, besides strengthening its existing cultural activities, the Goethe Institute did not implement any specific project regarding European-Islamic cultural dialogue like those implemented by the DAAD and ifa in their context. There are some reasons for this: Firstly, as a director of the section of culture and development of the Goethe Institute explained, the political restrictions on the Goethe Institute in Iran generally caused a low level of engagement with this country. Secondly, Iran was not a priority of European-Islamic cultural dialogue, because the main aims of that dialogue were to prevent terrorist attacks after 9/11. The Goethe Institute therefore approached the Arabic-speaking countries and Indonesia as the main target countries of this dialogue (Wetzel, personal communication, 2014). Thirdly, a former general secretary of the Goethe Institute argued that it did not have the intention to implement the project of European-Islamic cultural dialogue in a

framework that the foreign ministry expected from the Goethe Institute. In his view, there was always resistance from the Goethe Institute to follow “whatever” the foreign ministry expected it to do (Knopp, personal communication, 2016).

6.2.4.4 A Summary on Analysis of the Goethe Institute

To close this section on the Goethe Institute, it is necessary to repeat the question: What are the main characteristics of the intercultural dialogue activities which have been implemented by the Goethe Institute and what have been the main points to influence them? From studying its cultural activities generally, it is clear that the Goethe Institute had success in implementing or helping to implement a variety of cultural activities, including German language courses, art, music and theater events. It managed to implement these activities through its different offices and with the assistance of the cultural section of the German embassy, despite having no official status in Iran. Not only in Iran but also in Germany the Goethe Institute has implemented activities with the participation of open-minded and dissenting Iranian thinkers. This dimension of cultural activities of the Goethe Institute has been so clear that it even created some concerns with regard to opening its office in Iran in the open political atmosphere under Iranian president Rouhani. Unlike the DAAD and ifa, the Goethe Institute did not implement a specific intercultural dialogue activity in the context of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”.

6.2.5 Other German Cultural Actors

Besides the cultural institutes and organizations mentioned above, there are other German institutes, centers and private groups which also played a role in supporting intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany. However, they were involved in this type of activities to a lesser degree than the main actors discussed above. Some of these cultural actors will be described briefly in this subchapter.

6.2.5.1 Political Institutions

The German parliament, political parties and institutes have influenced intercultural dialogue between German and Muslim countries in different ways.

For instance, a budget established for “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” by the foreign cultural commission of the German federal parliament is one of the instruments they use. The visit to Iran by Wolfgang Thierse, a member of the SPD, and at the time president of the German parliament, positively influenced the relationship between Iran and Germany in 2001. When Thierse traveled to Iran, he visited his counterpart, Mehdi Karroubi. Because Thierse talked to Karroubi during this meeting on issues including the future of the arrested Iranian participants of the conference of “Iran after the Elections” (which will be discussed later), some of the Iranian hardliners accused him of interfering in the domestic affairs of Iran. But Karroubi defended him against this accusation and mentioned that it is common for politicians to talk about internal, international and regional issues (Frankfurter Allgemeine 02.02.2001). During this visit, Thierse not only promised to open political and economic cooperation of the two countries (Spiegel 19.02.2001) but also encouraged pupil exchange between Iran and Germany (Manfred and Gisela Grüter, personal communication, 2016). This issue will be discussed in detail in 6.2.5.7. Furthermore, at the time of Khatami, members of political parties frequently participated in joint round tables with IPIS, as mentioned in 6.1.3.2.

There are six political foundations which play an important role promoting political knowledge in German society. They are think tanks of different political parties of Germany and at the same time hold seminars and workshops to improve the knowledge of German citizens of political and social issues. For instance, in 2007 more than 45,000 German citizens attended programs of these six political foundations (Anheier/Toepler 2009: 724). A main part of their budget comes from the German parliament. Each political foundation receives its budget according to the amount of votes its supported party has already gained in each parliamentary election (Massing 2015). The six political foundations are as follows:

1. *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung* (“Stiftung” means foundation), which is associated with the *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands/CDU* party. It has been established since 1955;
2. *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, which politically is affiliated with the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands/SPD*. It has been established since 1954;

3. *Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung*, which is close to the *Christlich-Soziale Union/CSU*. It has been established since 1966;
4. *Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung*, which politically is associated with the *Bündnis 90/die Grünen*. It has been established since 1986;
5. *Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung*, which is associated with *die LINKE* [left wing]. It has been established since 1990;
6. *Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung*, which is close to the *Freie Demokratische Partei/FDP*. It has been established since 1958.

Three of these political foundations were mentioned specifically in the field study. The Konrad-Adenauer foundation has organized the *Hafis-Dialog Weimar* seminar since 2010. The seminar takes place annually in Weimar and offers experts, professors of universities, authors and artists who participated in joint cultural and educational projects between Iran and Germany a chance to discuss their views and exchange ideas. Some of the participants of this study, like Fatima Chahin-Dörfliner (personal communication, 2015) and Azadeh Zamirirad (personal communication, 2015), were reached through the *Hafis-Dialog Weimar 2014*. Moreover, the *Iran-Reader* is the name of a periodical on Iran which is published by the Konrad-Adenauer foundation and under the supervision of the director of the Iran section, Oliver Ernst.

The Friedrich-Ebert foundation has been mentioned by some members of the dialogue center of the Imam Musa Sadr Institute. In 2005, the foundation supported the dialogue center to invite Johannes and Martina Hartkemeyer to Iran to lead a workshop on dialogue skills and techniques (Tabatabaei, personal communication, 2016; Sadr, personal communication, 2014).

The Heinrich-Böll foundation is mentioned in the field study because of its role in organizing a conference called “Iran after the elections”. According to Ziba Mir-Hosseini and Richard Tapper, the victory of reformists in the parliamentary election of Iran in February 2000 prompted the foundation to organize a conference on this topic. Different authors, human rights activists, clergymen and politicians were invited to take part in the conference in Berlin. Although the Heinrich-Böll foundation’s organizers wanted to open the atmosphere to talk about the possibility of democratic progress in Iranian society, it “attracted attention of huge Iranian groups who live in exile” and were opponents of the

Iranian government (Mir-Hosseini/Tapper 2006: 36-37). Meanwhile, as discussed in 6.1.3.1, the Iranian national TV, the IRIB, propagated this event negatively against reformists of Iran, which created a problem for some of the Iranian conference participants. On their return to Iran, some of them were arrested, and the death penalty was even initially imposed on one of them, Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari (Mir-Hosseini/Tapper 2006: 39). The sentence was changed to a lighter punishment, and he currently lives under political asylum in Germany.

The next institute is a think tank, *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* (SWP) [German Institute for International and Security Affairs]. According to its official website, the SWP was founded as a private initiative in 1962. In 1965 the German parliament unanimously decided to support it as an “independent research center”. Besides specific financial support from the parliament, the SWP receives funds from some German and foreign research funding organizations (SPW 2012). The SWP also had joint meetings with Iran’s IPIS at the time of Khatami, as mentioned in 6.1.3.2., but the SPW decided to decrease its relationship in the period of Ahmadinejad. A member of staff of the SWP explained that, after President Ahmadinejad expressed his official views against Israel, the SWP experts decided to stop their meetings and exchanges with IPIS (Zamirirad, personal communication, 2015).

The next German organization is the *Deutsche Islamkonferenz* [German Islam conference]. This organization is discussed as a political rather religious institution, because the aim behind establishing it related to the integration of Muslim communities in Germany, not mobilizing them religiously. It was established in 2006 by the ministry of the interior to conduct dialogue between Muslim communities and the German state and focus on improving social the integration of Muslims in Germany (Busch/Goltz 2011: 29). Some academic debates regarding the German Islam conference have been reviewed in 3.2.4. Although the Islam conference is characterized by domestic cultural policy, some diplomats who participated in this study argued that it achieves an aim of foreign cultural policy too. It does so because preparing an opportunity for dialogue between the German state and Muslims in Germany sends out a signal on an international level that an attempt is being made to decrease cultural misunderstanding between the state and Muslim immigrants (Kreft, personal communication, 2014; Gnodtke, personal communication, 2016). A former

commissioner of the dialogue amongst cultures told a story to explain the strong connection between domestic and foreign policy in this context: the publication of the cartoon of Prophet Mohammad by a member of the press media in Denmark in 2005 met with reactions from some groups in Germany. These reactions created some problems for Germany in Muslim countries:

“For example, in Germany we have a small group which is called pro-Köln, pro-NRW or pro-Deutschland, a right wing group. They wanted to do a demonstration in Berlin, showing Mohammad cartoons in front of Mosques, provoking Muslims in Berlin. The senate (of the *Innenministerium* or interior ministry) prohibited the demonstration with this argument that this would disturb public order. [The] right wing group went to the court and they got a right [allowance] by the court. The court accepted that showing the cartoons is covered by the freedom of speech and freedom of opinion. So they had demonstration. This was reported in Al-Ahram, for example, a main newspaper in Egypt. And there was an attack to our embassy. Not a very effective one but somebody used a Molotov cocktail through the wall and tried to smash the window. He has a copy of the report of Al-Ahram in (his) pocket which was about that demonstration in Berlin” (Kreft, personal communication, 2014).

The attack on the German embassy in Egypt was not “an effective one”, as the interviewee explained, but an attack on the American embassy in the same context was much more brutal. The demonstrations on a similar issue in Libya resulted in the murder of the American Ambassador in Libya in 2011. This shows why the German Islam Conference can have a foreign cultural effect: The attack on the German embassy in Egypt could have been avoided if there had been intercultural dialogue between different German groups and the German state about the issue of the Mohammad cartoons in 2005. In the view of this interviewee, it is important to explain for all involved German groups that the German state has a difficult responsibility to protect minority rights as well as the right of freedom of speech.

6.2.5.2 *Religious Institutions*

The German Catholic and Protestant churches and organizations have played a key role in starting cultural dialogue with immigrants who came to Germany after the early 1950s. These immigrants mostly had a Muslim background. The *Deutsche Bischofskonferenz* (DBK) [German bishops conference], which is a Catholic institution and one of those that have been active in the realm of dialogue with immigrants and Muslim communities in Germany. The DBK has also organized different interfaith dialogues with Muslim communities all over the

world. Moreover, it dedicated the main topic of its annual gathering in 2003 to “Christians and Muslims in Germany” (CIBEDO e.v 2009: 537). The *Deutsche Ordensobernkonferenz* [German superiors conference] is another religious actor that participated in interreligious activities, as the annual report on German foreign cultural policy illustrates (Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 180).

The financial resources of religious institutions in Germany generally come from *Kirchensteuer* [church tax], which is paid by German citizens who are officially members of the church (FOWID 2005, Petersen 2007). The institutions also receive support from the German federal government, for instance from the foreign ministry to implement activities in specific issues or with specific countries. Between 2009 and 2013, religious and church institutions and organizations received approximately two million Euro annually (Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 80, Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 85, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 81, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 121, Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 180) to implement cultural activities abroad. In addition, the foreign ministry cooperates with the *Katholischer Akademischer Ausländerdienst/KAAD* [Catholic academic exchange service] and *Brot für die Welt* [Bread for the world] to fund scholarship programs abroad (Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 180).

The role of the *Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands* (EKD) is also considerable because of its domestic as well as its international efforts in the realm of interreligious dialogue. According to Martin Affolderbach, in 1974 the EKD published numerous brochures on the issue of Islam and under “Muslims in Germany”. It also published a book, *What everyone needs to know about Islam*, the eighth edition of which was published in 2011. Also, the EKD played an important role relating to establishment of the *Islamisch-christliche Arbeitsgruppe* (ICA) [Islamic-Christian working group] project. The ICA is a permanent discussion forum which consists of members of Islamic organizations and the Protestant and Catholic churches in Germany. It is considered to be the “first nationwide dialogue committee of this kind” (Affolderbach 2015: 33-34).

The EKD also implemented a specific interfaith dialogue with religious delegates from Iran and Britain between 2005 and 2006. As mentioned in 6.1.2.3, in 2002 an official delegation from the EKD traveled to Iran to visit the German church of Tehran. The delegation also visited other cultural and religious institutions including the ICDAC, ICRO and the IID NGO. During these meetings and

through these contacts, Martin Affolderbach, who was a member of the EKD delegation, was able to develop a triangle interfaith dialogue jointly with the head of the IID, Ali Abtahi, as well as Charles Reed from the Church of England. The triangle conference was called “Building Communities through Dialogue”. The first meeting was held in October 2005 in London, the second in Tehran in January 2006, and the third in May 2006 in Berlin (Affolderbach, personal communication, 2015). These three meetings are explained in detail on the official website of the EKD (Affolderbach 2006, EKD 2006). The main topic of the first meeting, in London, was the role of religion in the formation of values and cohesion of societies. Interreligious cooperation in Britain was also discussed. Besides the religious delegates, some British politicians and members of the Anglican Archbishop’s staff of Lambeth Palace participated in this meeting. The London meeting was an initial level to allow the three German, Iranian and British participants to get to know each other. One of questions from the Iranian participants in this meeting was about the freedom of religion in Iran. The Iranians were evasive in answering this question. The second meeting of the conference, which took place in January 2006 in Tehran, was mostly on the issue of religious minorities. The presence of Jewish and Armenian participants from Iran and participation of some members of religious institutes of Qum and the Iranian state institutes were significant points of the second meeting. The former president Khatami also attended. Networking between various participants developed on a more personal level during the second meeting. Nevertheless, some questions regarding the freedom of minority religions in Iran were left unanswered by the Iranian delegates. The third meeting of the conference was held a few months later, in May 2006, in Berlin. One of the topics of this meeting was Christian-Muslim cooperation in Germany. The experiences of the foreign ministry and the federal chancellor’s office in cultural activities with Muslim people in and outside Germany were discussed. Also in the third meeting a conference was organized at Humboldt University. Professor Feldtkeller from the German side, Dr. Riordan from the British side, and Dr. Pazouki from the Iranian side were among the participants of this meeting. Although the triangle conference, in the view of both the German and the Iranian partners, was considered a success, it did not continue after 2006. One of the reasons for stopping the project was the political problem that the director of IID faced in Iran after the 2009 presidential election. Ali Abtahi was arrested in that period and could no longer work actively in the field

of interfaith dialogue. As an organizer of the EKD explained, this event led to discontinuation of the meetings:

“And after that we wanted to continue, the next sessions. It was interrupted by something which you may call the green revolution. And Mr. Abtahi was arrested. And as far as I know he was in a while in the prison. We tried to get a contact with him and continue but it was very difficult to do. So I just have the draft of this continuation in my hand which was planned for 2008 and 2009. But they did not take place” (Affolderbach, personal communication, 2015).

The *Evangelische Akademie Loccum* (Loccum Academy for short here) is a further institute that has organized seminars and conference on both sociopolitical and interreligious dialogue. Iran has also been one of the issues the Loccum Academy was interested in working on. The Iranian Rayzani and the Iranian embassy were mostly the permanent invited guests of the Loccum Academy's events, as a former director of Rayzani mentioned (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016). For instance, the conference “*Der Iran- Ein Land im Aufbruch*” [Iran- a country on the verge of change] is one of those activities. It was supported by the German foreign ministry and took place over three days. The main topics of this conference were “Iranian culture and art”, “the role of policy and religion in social life”, and “rights of minorities and women”. Different experts, professors, diplomats and journalists from both Iran and Germany participated in this conference. Especially participation of academic figures such as Reza Dawari, who was at that time the head of the Iranian Academy of Education, and Udo Steinbach, who was previously mentioned as a German delegate in the critical dialogue and at that time was the head of the Orient Institute of Hamburg, are significant (Loccum Akademie 2002). The next event to be organized by the Loccum Academy was an exhibition of *Iranische Kalligrafie* [Iranian calligraphy], which was visited by members of the Iranian Rayzani and embassy. This event took place in 2004 (Mohr 2004). A two-day conference with the title *Wie kann die iranische Zivilgesellschaft gestärkt werden?* [How can Iranian civil society be made stronger?] was also organized by the academy in 2013. The conference dealt with the topic of the nuclear program of Iran and was held with the participation of the Iranian ambassador and some Iranian and German diplomats and experts (Loccum-Akademie 2013).

6.2.5.3 Academic and Pedagogical Institutes

Three academic institutes have been mentioned in the field study because of their role in intercultural dialogue with Muslim countries, including Iran. The *Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung* (AvH) is significant for its support of academic projects and applicants at higher educational level. The *Zentralstelle für das Auslandsschulwesen* (ZfA) and *Pädagogischer Austauschdienst* (PAD) are key in the field of training at school level. Their relevant activities are presented in this section.

The AvH is an academic institute in the field of higher education activities. The foundation was established shortly after the death of Alexander von Humboldt, a German explorer and cosmopolitan who was famous for fighting for the freedom of research, in 1860. At the beginning it was dedicated to “nature research” and “tourism”. It was re-established in 1953 by the former German chancellor Konrad Adenauer to sponsor scholars on lengthy periods of research in Germany (AvH 1999: 10). Its budget is provided by institutes and federal ministries such as the foreign ministry, ministry of education and research, and ministry for economic cooperation and development (AvH, 2003, p. 27). The AvH aims at improving its offers for “global researchers”, “to win the best of the best”, and so to “strengthen research in Germany”. At the same time, it claims to support “the international cultural dialogue as a long-term peace and security policy” (AvH 2006, AvH 2007, AvH 2008, AvH 2009, AvH 2010, AvH 2011, AvH 2012, AvH 2013, AvH 2014). The academic support of the AvH is provided by encouraging “persons” and not “projects” (AvH 2011: 6). It grants research fellowships to foreign and German scholars who already have PhD degrees; in some cases, for instance for the project of “the German Chancellor fellowship for prospective leaders and international climate protection fellowship program”, applications can be made from other, lower educational levels, as a member of staff of the AvH explained (Schaarschmidt, personal communication, 2014). Furthermore, the AvH offers research awards to internationally recognized foreign scholars of any age (AvH 2000: 30).

Since 2002 the AvH has also been receiving support from the special fund for European-Islamic cultural dialogue from the foreign ministry. With this budget the AvH added a new subheading to its annual report under “European-Islamic dialogue”. A short-term scholarship for former scholarship holders, who are called

Humboldtians and come from Muslim countries, is mentioned in the framework of this European-Islamic dialogue (AvH 2004: 141, AvH 2005: 67, AvH 2006: 32, AvH 2007: 37, AvH 2008: 29, AvH 2009: 81, AvH 2010: 78, AvH 2011: 28, AvH 2012: 28, AvH 2013: 28, AvH 2014). Some seminars and university speeches on topics such as “the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and its repercussions on the tribal areas of Pakistan”, “Pakistan after September 11”, or “Democratization in Bangladesh and the recourse to Islam for political purpose”, “Turkish literature in German language books- a study of conditions for intercultural understanding through translated literature” were also supported by the AvH and reflected in the annual reports under European-Islamic dialogue (AvH 2003: 178). Moreover, 203 researchers in various scientific fields were supported by the AvH between 2002 and 2014 in the framework of European-Islamic dialogue, as a member of the AvH staff explained. They came from 33 countries, including Egypt, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan. Nevertheless, it seems that the AvH list is a little inaccurate because it even mentions applicants from Israel, Slovakia and South Africa. These countries do not seem to be significant for their Muslim population. In this framework, some Iranian applicants have had an opportunity to receive a scholarship from the AvH in the fields of electronics, material science, metal physics, organizational chemistry, theoretical chemistry, macromolecular chemistry, physical chemistry, technical chemistry, linguistics, Iran studies, and palaeontology, according to information from the field study (Schaarschmidt, personal communication, 2014). However, it is not clear whether these lists and information refer to the European-Islamic dialogue project exclusively or are mixed with the list of the routine scholarships that can go to Iranian applicants yearly. It was highly significant that annual AvH reports were available from 1998 to 2013. Members of AvH staff assisted the researcher with accessing the annual reports and answering her questions by email. Her request for a face-to-face interview was refused, however, for reasons such as a change of building.

PAD is the next institute which has implemented some projects in the intercultural dialogue realm. PAD is a parastatal organization and part of the *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK) [The standing conference of the ministers of education and cultural affairs of the *Länder* in the federal republic of Germany]. In 5.1.2 it was explained that cultural affairs in Germany are not managed by a federal cultural ministry. Each *Land* has a ministry of culture to deal with its

cultural affairs. The KMK works on behalf of the *Länder* of Germany on issues which need to be considered in a unified way. In this context, PAD works in the international school-exchange and international cooperation fields. PAD has launched different programs to empower both teachers and pupils. For instance, the *Schulen: Partner der Zukunft* (PASCH) [Schools: Partners for the Future] program, which has been established since 2008, is significant. It was launched with the support of the foreign ministry to give young people access to German language and education worldwide. It has a network of schools that teach in German abroad. The foreign ministry has selected the Goethe Institute, the center for foreign education (ZfA),¹²⁶ the DAAD and PAD to implement the PASCH initiative (Goethe Institut 2010a). PASCH had 1,800 members worldwide in 2016 (KMK 2016).

PAD also initiated a specific program within the framework of European-Islamic cultural dialogue in 2002. Through this program, female experts in the education field from Muslim countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Palestine and Indonesia were invited to Germany to participate in special seminars. The seminars informed the participants about the German education system generally and about measures to integrate pupils from immigrant/Muslim families in German schools in particular. An example of the schools discussed were those in the *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia, which has the majority of Muslim immigrants in Germany. Although the budget for the program ended at the end of 2004, the program continued in 2005 because of the interest of the participants from the Muslim countries (PAD 2008a: 17). In 2006, it changed with the assistance of the foreign ministry to include male experts as participants in the projects. Also some theoretical issues, such as “separation of state and religion in the educational school system”, were further discussed in the teacher-training seminars (PAD 2007b: 23, PAD 2008a: 7). In 2008, a new program, the *Africa-Initiative*, was added to the structure of the European-Islamic cultural dialogue project of PAD. Hence more participants from countries such as Mauretania, Mali and Morocco were included in the program (PAD 2008a: 17). The program was discontinued after 2009, as a member of the PAD staff mentioned (Finkenberger, personal communication, 2014) and the annual reports confirm. The number of participants between 2006 and 2009 was 188 (table 10). Considering different parts of the project between 2004 and 2009,

¹²⁶ More information about ZfA is provided later.

it can be said that it stimulated knowledge on the roles of church and state in the educational systems of a Western-style democracy. It gave information on the basic patterns of secular societies and their constitutional and legal system, according to annual reports of PAD. The seminars in the project provided an opportunity for discussion between educational experts from different backgrounds (PAD 2007b: 23, PAD 2008a: 17, PAD 2009b: 31-32). Seven Iranian participants also took part in the PAD program from 2004 to 2009 (PAD 2005, PAD 2007a: 10, PAD 2008b: 9, PAD 2009a: 13).

Table 10. Number of participants of PAD program of European-Islamic cultural dialogue, 2002-2009, made by researcher

International participants	Time								Total
	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	
Number	21	36	24	20	17	16	41	32	207

Source: PAD (PAD 2005: 9, PAD 2007a: 10, PAD 2009a: 13, PAD 2010: 17), reformed by the researcher

Another institute is ZfA, which was established in 1968 and is part of the federal office of administration. The work of the ZfA in some regards is similar to that of PAD, but PAD focuses on projects to train and promote the knowledge of teachers while the ZfA's focus is on pupils. The ZfA works with international German schools and some other schools abroad. It supports about 1,200 schools worldwide, including more than 140 German schools abroad (ZfA 2016). International German schools have both German and international pupils. For instance, based on information of the annual report of the ZfA, just 17 out of 83 pupils of the German school of Iran (DBST) in 2008 were German. The rest were Iranian and international pupils (ZfA 2008: 157). The lessons in the German schools abroad are taught in German. Pupils who are not German can acquire the German language certificate (DSD) after passing their courses. The ZfA provides the German schools abroad with personnel, financial and pedagogical assistance. To meet its responsibilities, the ZfA receives assistance from the foreign ministry and the federal government. About 2,000 teachers working in the German schools are employed by the ZfA.

The ZfA has been one of the institutes to receive the special budget for European-Islamic cultural dialogue from the foreign ministry. Although intercultural dialogue has been mentioned in its annual reports as a significant point of its cultural projects, there appears to be no specific project like those implemented by the DAAD and ifa on European-Islamic cultural dialogue, although the *Aktion Afrika* project covers participants from some Muslim countries. *Aktion Afrika* began in 2008 and aimed at educational and cultural cooperation in Africa. The project is coordinated with other German cultural institutes such as the Goethe Institute and the DAAD and state actors such as PAD and the DW (ZfA 2008: 20-21). The other project which has been conceptualized in the framework of intercultural dialogue between the Western and Muslim world in the post-9/11 period is *Unterschiede Leben – gemeinsam füreinander da sein* [living differences - to be together for each other]. It is a school exchange project which was conducted in 2007 and 2008 between four schools from two European and two Arab countries. Pupils of the German school in Egypt, the German School in Prague, the Schmidt School in Jerusalem and the sibling School-Gymnasium in Winterberg participated in this exchange (ZfA 2008: 129).

A project led by the German school of Iran (DBST) can also be seen in the context of intercultural dialogue for giving opportunities to Iranian pupils of a school in the city of Bam and German pupils of DBST. The story of this exchange goes back to an earthquake which devastated the city of Bam in the south of Iran in 2003. In this earthquake one third of the population of Bam lost their lives. Two years later, some teachers of the DBST joined a visit to Bam which was organized by the Evangelical church of Tehran in early 2005. On this visit they heard about the school of *Shamsadini*, a school specifically for female pupils. The school was completely destroyed in the earthquake. Its pupils lost all or most of their family members and their lives were devastated. The visit motivated the teachers to initiate meetings and projects between the two schools. In their view, these projects may help the Iranian pupils to overcome their sorrow. The initiative was supported by the German embassy and the German auto company Daimler Chrysler (ZfA 2008: 155-157). Later, the project received 2,000 Euro in donations from the public to two bank accounts which were advertised for the project in Tehran and Cologne (DW 2008). The project took place in three exchange programs in 2006 and implemented different cooperation activities such as the art project *Bam rā dobāre misāzim* [Rebuilding Bam], as well as cooking,

constructing a model airplane, and Farsi calligraphy. The project was continued later in a new project called “100 flowers in Bam” (DW 2008). Pupils of both schools cooperated in this project to make a flower garden in front of the newly rebuilt *Shamsadini* school. A significant point in the DBST pupil exchange was that most of the participants were female. One of the organizers of these projects stated in a published interview that female pupils of DBST were selected for the exchanges because *Shamsadini* was a female school, but in future she hoped mixed groups could participate in cultural exchanges between the two schools (DW 2008). The project between the DBST and the school in Bam did not continue after 2008. A reason, as one of the organizers of that project mentioned, was the political and economic atmosphere under Ahmadinejad. Most of the pupils of the DBST were children of people who worked in international and German business centers. The economic and political business of international partners in Iran gradually slackened at that time, so some of the German and international families, and consequently their children, slowly started to leave Iran. As a result, the school did not have the same ability as in the past to initiate and continue its cultural activities (Chahin-Dörflinger, personal communication, 2015).

6.2.5.6 Art and Cultural Institutions

One of the institutes which have implemented activities to reflect international, including Iranian, culture for a German audience is the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt* (HKW) [House of cultures of the world]. HKW is a cultural institute that exhibits international contemporary art in the German capital Berlin. It was established in 1989 by the federal government commissioner for culture and the media (BKM), although it also receives support from other federal institutes such as the foreign ministry, as well as from the city of Berlin (Auswärtiges Amt 2002: 40).

Among the cultural activities of the HKW, specific programs were conducted to present Iranian culture and society. As mentioned in subchapter 6.1.1.3, a director of the Iranian Rayzani, Mohammad Ali Rajabi, had a close friendship with Hans-Georg Knopp, a head of HKW at that time. Through this friendship, some traditional music concerts were conducted with the support of the HKW in 2001. Also, the HKW organized a three-month festival of Iranian art in 2004. In this

festival, which was called *Entfernte Nähe* [a far near distance], new art by Iranian artists was shown. The festival had various dimensions because it presented the relationship of Iranian artists who live in exile to their homeland, as well as the relationship between Iranian artists who live in Iran and abroad. For instance, Farhad Moshiri exhibited his project of materials in gold, from a sofa to a stereo. Through his art he was criticizing the new-rich generation in Iran and the culture of consumption. Another artwork in this festival featured a key, shining in green, white and red, the colors of the Iranian flag. The key was reminding all young Iranian soldiers who were “brainwashed” in the Iran-Iraq war, as the artist himself explained in the report of HKW. According to the narration, before some military operations, some young Iranian soldiers were given a “small plastic key”, which was supposed to open the door to “paradise”. Another exhibit in this festival was by Parasto Forouhar, whose parents were murdered in 1998 in an organized terror attack in Iran, which is discussed in 6.1.3.1 under the serial killing of authors. The artist presented a fabric, printed with images of small sharp knives. Shadi Ghadirian also participated in the festival with her photo project titled “domestic life”. The photos presented some women in traditional Iranian dress with their faces covered by kitchen materials. Part of the festival was assigned to showing a film by Marjane Satrapi titled “Persepolis”. The film was a narration of the director’s childhood in Iran. The festival also had a relic of Imam Khomeini on show in a glass case, though this part of the exhibition was attacked by some of the Iranian audience, who seemed to be from Iranian opposition groups in exile, as mentioned in the report of the HKW (HKW 2004).

6.2.5.7 Volunteer Projects

Some individual German volunteer groups have also implemented cultural activities in the framework of intercultural dialogue. The volunteer group of Manfred and Gisela Grüter, referred to in this research as the Grüter family, is a significant example and implemented many cultural activities between Iran and Germany. The Grüter family implemented different projects, including pupil exchange, art exhibitions and pedagogic seminars for teachers. Each of these projects was organized officially under the name of an institute such as *Königin Luise Stiftung* (KLS) or *Hafis Gesellschaft*. But the volunteer presence of the Grüter family played a main role in implementation of the initial activities and creating a network. With the help of the network they managed to initiate the next

intercultural dialogue activities. Projects took place from 2001 to 2015. From 2016, the Grüter family changed the focus of their cultural activities to refugees coming to Germany. The initial idea of organizing these activities came to the Grüter family in 2000, after they participated in a major anti-racism event, *Menschlichkeit und Toleranz* [Humanity and tolerance], which was organized in front of a Jewish synagogue in Berlin:

“[It was a] manifestation in Berlin against racism and for friendship with other cultures. This manifestation was supported by democratic parties, churches of different religions including Muslims, Jewish, Protestants and Catholics, as well as high political representatives. After that we thought we should do something” (Manfred and Gisela Grüter, personal communication, 2016).

After that event, the couple decided to launch a project to inform themselves and others about different cultures. They wanted to challenge the “enemy image” that young German people might have in their mind of “foreign cultures”. At that time, Manfred Grüter was a teacher at the KLS, so the family decided to develop their idea in this school. They started to contact different embassies, requesting information about their cultures. Among them, the Iranian embassy answered immediately and positively. Although in the framework of the first project, the Grüter family organized exchange with Malta and Slovenia, the exchange with Iranian partners was developed because of the “positive feedback of Iranian embassy” and active engagement of Iranian partners in the coming years (Manfred and Gisela Grüter, personal communication, 2016). Consequently, the Grüter family led a cultural program between the KLS and the Iranian embassy school of Berlin. Through this cultural program the Iranian pupils received assistance with the German language from the German pupils of the KLS. Also, both sets of pupils participated in each other’s celebrations: Nowruz and Christmas. A significant point of this project was to explore the tolerance of Iranian families regarding German school culture, as explained in a report for a member of the German press. Part of the school activities in Germany is swimming in mixed female and male groups. This is routine in German school programs, but it can be a controversial issue among the immigrant or international families who live in Germany. A question therefore arose as to whether swimming would be included or excluded in the exchange between KLS and the Iranian embassy school. This question was discussed one year later, between a father of a male pupil of the Iranian school and Manfred Grüter. The father gave

his permission with the argument that, “he [his son] should just learn to close his inner eyes to sin” (Lohse 14.03.2004).

The Grüter family managed to organize a series of cultural programs after the experience of the first exchange with the Iranian embassy school. Appendix 9 presents details of these projects. The appendix suggests that a variety of organizations and institutes supported their projects. The KLS received assistance in the initial projects of the Grüter family; the cultural section of the German embassy in Tehran; the UNESCO school project/the German UN Commission; the section of dialogue among cultures of the foreign ministry; and the German-Iranian *Handelskammer* industrial association also assisted the projects. The *UNESCO Weltnaturerbe Wattenmeer* [UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea] mainly supported the photography project in 2010. The *Kunst baut Brücken* [Art builds bridges] project was conducted in the framework of activities of the *Hafis Gesellschaft*, but the evangelical church of Iran played a supporting role, too. Potsdam University and the Technical University of Berlin also promoted the scientific part of seminars for pupils and teachers in some projects.

On the Iranian side, a number of organizations have supported the programs of the Grüter family. They are the ministry of labor and social affairs, the Iranian embassy and Rayzani in Germany. The Iranian schools *Shohadaye Kargar*, *Farzanegan*, *Kherad*, and *Mahdavi Educational Complex*, as well as the school network *Bonyād-e Dāneš va Honar* [Science and art foundation], contributed to some projects. The Iranian parliament library, *Khāne-ye Honarmandan* [Iran art forum], and Kanun supported and were involved in some projects of the Grüter family too. The University of Sharif has helped to create the core of the school network and support some scientific seminars for projects. Projects of the Grüter family in the period of analysis of this study up to 2013 are presented in appendix 9. The details have been gathered in several informal and formal communications with the Grüter family as well as relevant extended texts collected in the field study.

The Grüter family managed to develop these diverse projects by networking with both Iranian and German partners. Although German actors have assisted projects of the Grüter family in an active way, the Grüter family has stated that without the steady cooperation and affirmative view of Iranian actors such as the embassy and Rayzani, working on these projects would be almost impossible. In one of the

pupil exchanges the participants had a chance to visit the NGO of IID of Ali Abtahi, which illustrates that the projects have cooperation from both Iranian state and non-state actors. Female and male pupils participated in the projects. German pupils in Iran were sometimes invited to stay with the families of Iranian pupils during the project period, and vice versa. The close relationship between the Grüter family and Mohammad Ali Rajabi, a director of Rayzani, was a high point in assisting the Grüter family to construct a network with Iranian partners of the projects. Even when Rajabi left office, the Grüter family remained in contact with him, which resulted in more projects with his assistance when he became the director of the library of the Iranian parliament.

6.2.5.8 A Summary on Analysis of other German Actors

To conclude the points of 6.2.5, it is necessary to return to the question of the main characteristics of the intercultural dialogue activities that were implemented by the other German actors and the main points influencing them? Most activities in this category were implemented in the context of education, such as school exchanges of the ZfA and the Grüter family, pedagogic projects of PAD and higher education scholarships of AvH. Networking has been one of the high points in the work of other cultural actors in Germany, which reflects an integrated foreign cultural policy with a central role of the German embassy in Iran. The role of the German media, especially DW, in supporting dialogue between Iranian journalists was significant, but the time of this support, in the post-2009 presidential election period, indicates that political reasons played a role. German political foundations and the Loccum Academy followed democratic trends in Iran and consequently attempted to construct the cultural relations between the two countries by holding sessions and seminars on those trends. Nevertheless, these attempts have not always been successful when it comes to the reactions of hardliners in Iran and opponents of dialogue in Germany. Other issues, such as separation of state and religion, have also been discussed in the context of pedagogic projects of the PAD. Because some participants of these projects were Iranian, and in Iran the separation of state and religion does not officially apply, it seems that this issue has been indirectly political rather than pedagogic. Remarkably, some projects which have been titled cultural dialogue have a new form, like the photography exchange of the Grüter family. Moreover,

the focus of projects was not just on social and cultural issues, but also natural disasters, which were a topic of some projects of the ZfA and the Grüter family. The EKD, too, managed to conduct triangle interreligious dialogue with the assistance of the NGO IID between Germany, Britain and Iran. Also, diverse images of the culture of Iran were presented in Berlin with the efforts of the HKW. The final point relates to the high transparency of information on activities and organizational structure of the majority of actors which have been discussed in this subchapter. This transparency made listing the activities and analysis possible and easier.

6.2.6 Attention of the German Media to Intercultural Dialogue

Besides the cultural organizations and groups, the media also play a role in foreign cultural policy. Media like TV, newspapers and magazines, films and internet portals create an image for people about other cultures. There is a question of whether media counts as an “actor” or a “mediator” of intercultural dialogue; in this study it is discussed separately from the actors, although this question is returned to at the end of the segment. The analysis is presented in three segments: 6.2.6.1 considers the structure of the German media; 6.2.6.2 contains information on DW as a state media broadcaster responsible for creating a cultural image of Germany abroad; and 6.2.6.3 discusses internet media which are active specifically in the field of intercultural dialogue. The concluding points are made in 6.2.6.4.

6.2.6.1 Structure of the German Media

The media in Germany are managed by both “public” and “private broadcasting industries” (Bösch et al. 2016). The *Länder* play a strong role in public broadcasting, according to rules stipulated in the German federal constitution. The *Länder* create programs of public broadcasting individually or jointly based on agreements. All public broadcasting corporations are governed by an independent broadcasting council, which is called the *Rundfunkrat*. The *Allgemeine Rundfunkanstalten Deutschlands* (ARD), which is also called *Das Erste* [the first], is an example of public broadcasting, while RTL is an example of private

broadcasting in Germany. *Deutsche Welle* (DW) is the exception in the German media system. Based on the federal legislation, it is designed to provide services, including radio, TV and internet, to foreign countries. The German newspapers are managed locally and regionally. In 2008 it was reported that 135 daily newspapers and 354 weekly newspapers were printed. There is only a small number of national newspapers published in Germany, as among them *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

The German media play a role in intercultural dialogue because they cover news regarding Muslim countries generally and Iran specifically. This research has not scrutinized literature on the German media; however, a comparative analysis with the Iranian media illustrates its significant characteristics. Because the role of the German judicial system in defending the rights of minority groups (including Muslims) is strong, it is difficult for the media to noticeably use Islamophobia rhetoric. At the same time, the freedom of the press is defended by the constitution and the judicial system. Hence sometimes, in cases such as publishing or re-publishing the cartoon of Prophet Mohammad, the media do partially create an image of Islam. Furthermore, fear of foreigners, and specifically of Muslim refugees, among the German population is reported to have risen since 2014 (Huffington Post 16.06.2016).¹²⁷ The right-wing organizations are also increasingly using anti-Islamic rhetoric to further their ideas and find receptive supporters. Some experts refer to this situation as “Germany’s new Islamophobia boom” (Gude et al. 2014). The point is that, even if the media covers news in German society in a neutral way, it still cannot ignore covering demonstrations by right-wing political groups. The work of the German media can then be seen as a representation of Islamophobia after all. Moreover, the German media, like many others in the world, care about news value in their news coverage. In this context, because “bad news” is worth covering,¹²⁸ news relating to Iran’s nuclear program and the cancelation of cultural events between Iran and Germany has a better chance of being covered. Nevertheless, issues such as the high number of female students at Iranian universities or a significant reduction in the sentence of

¹²⁷ The Huffington Post reviews a study in this news which claims “every second respondent [...] of 2,420 people said they sometimes felt like a foreigner in their own country due to the many Muslims here, up from 43 percent in 2014 and 30.2 percent in 2009”.

¹²⁸ News items which essentially reflect negative issues, whether about “war” or a “local sewer commission”, practically speaking “will get out” and attract more attention from audiences than happy or neutral news Fuller, Jack 1997: News Values: Ideas for an Information Age: University of Chicago Press. This explains the well-known saying “bad news is good news”.

stoning in Iran after the “critical dialogue” between Iran and the EU still attract less attention from them.

The media are also perceived as an important instrument in German foreign cultural policy, as the annual reports on German foreign cultural policy regularly emphasize. Publication and exhibitions of books at international level, as well as the production of films and coordination of film festivals, are some of the activities which are mentioned frequently in the annual reports (Auswärtiges Amt 2002: 24-27, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 27-30, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 30-31). Nevertheless, the member of the media in Germany in the realm of foreign cultural policy is Deutsche Welle, which has covered and implemented different cultural activities to make an image for Germany abroad. The following segments provide more information on this broadcaster.

6.2.6.2 *Deutsche Welle*

Deutsche Welle (DW) was established in 1992. Its 24-hour TV program is broadcast in three languages, German, English and Spanish (Auswärtiges Amt 2001: 10), and its radio version and website are available daily in more than 30 languages. DW cooperates with international partners on some projects. For instance, through the program of the DW *Fortbildungszentrum*, which is supported by the BMZ, DW cooperates on media projects with international partners and awards scholarships to international applicants (Auswärtiges Amt 1999: 9, Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 10). DW contributes to training programs for a regular international audience through its *learning ear* radio program (Auswärtiges Amt 2011a: 37). It assists journalists through seminar and exchange programs, which are implemented by the DW Academy. For instance, the “Young Media Summit” workshop was held in Cairo with the participation of bloggers and citizen journalists of Muslim countries. DW also prepared a three-day program of “Media dialogue” in Mexico City with the participation of journalists, opinion makers and media artists from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Colombia, Peru, Mexico and Germany (DW-Akademie 2012: 23-26).

DW has specifically promoted internet portals under the discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue and further media cooperation for Iranian participants. The next subchapter deals with these portals.

6.2.6.3 Internet Portals

DW has specifically been involved in a number of projects relating to intercultural dialogue with Muslim countries. Firstly, almost all of its Farsi content is broadcasted through the DW Farsi website. Secondly, DW cooperated in the internet portal project for Qantara (since 2003), which in Arabic means “bridge”. It is in three languages, English, Arabic and German and contributes to dialogue with Muslim countries by producing news and analysis on cultural events and social concerns in those regions. Qantara has also reflected on significant issues such as “nuclear agreement between Iran and Western countries” and “refugees”. The Goethe Institute, ifa and the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* [Federal center for political education] also cooperate in the Qantara portal. An evaluation study undertaken by the department of culture and communication of the foreign ministry in 2013 showed that Qantara has been highly appreciated by the public and is recognized as a bridge between Germany, Europe and the Islamic world. Based on this evaluation, Qantara could work as a “credible tool of foreign cultural policy” (Bickel 2014). In 2014, there were some discussions on closing down Qantara. But it was finally decided that the project had to be continued as it was, as a former commissioner of the intercultural dialogue of the foreign ministry explained (Mulack, personal communication, 2015).

The next internet portal which is operated by DW to facilitate intercultural dialogue between Germany and Muslim countries is called “*Ru dar Ru*”, which means “face to face” in Farsi. It was established in 2010 to extend the journalism skills of normal Iranian internet users. The project was developed after the 2009 presidential election crisis with the support of the Farsi internet portal of DW. It aimed at supporting the “engaged Iranians” who had an interest in participating in citizen journalism and engaging in “independent information gathering”, as Cornelia Pieper, a state minister of the foreign ministry at that time, mentioned in a seminar which was organized by ifa and DW. *Ru dar Ru* gave Iranian users an opportunity to write their posts in the portal. Afterwards, their written text would have a chance to be professionally evaluated and processed, and then it could be uploaded onto the website as a news item (ifa 2011a: 7). *Ru dar Ru* also introduced some weblogs by Farsi-language bloggers to its audiences (DW

2010b) and held a photo competition for Iranian photographers in 2010 (DW 2010a).

To sum up the relevant points of this segment, the specific structure of the public media in Germany and the active role of DW are both relevant to create a possibility for intercultural dialogue. The public media in Germany allows different state and non-state actors to play a role. It works with a system of checks and balances to let different voices be heard within society. Because the different actors also highlight different cultural priorities, it seems that they have a good opportunity to indirectly prepare ordinary German audiences for intercultural dialogue. It is significant that the DW does not just cover news about the world and Germany in thirty languages (including Farsi) but also actively implemented and supported specific internet portals to give access to more and younger audiences all over the world. It is therefore possible to conclude that the German media has played a role beyond that of a mediator.

6.3 Discussion of the Results of Chapter 6

The main points of chapter 6 will be presented in 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, with a constructive summary of each implementing actor following in 6.3.1. Because there are eight actors in total, 6.3.1 contains a long text and eight sections. Characteristics of intercultural dialogue activities which have been implemented by Iranian and German implementing actors will be analyzed in 6.3.2. The content of both subchapters of the summary are useful; firstly, because it gives a quick image of the background, organization and practices of the implementing actors of Iran and Germany; and secondly, because it is useful for the reader to follow the analysis of the next chapter, which will discuss why intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany has had its specific characteristics.

6.3.1 Summary of Points on Iranian and German Implementing Actors

This subchapter presents the main points concluded from the investigation of the field study of Iran regarding actors of intercultural dialogue. Some of the points will be discussed in 6.3.2 to explain the characteristics of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany. Some will be used in chapter 7 to discuss the different dimensions of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy and the role intercultural dialogue has played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other.

6.3.1.1 Summary of Points on Rayzani

- **Focus on conferences and seminars:** Rayzani was involved mainly in cultural activities such as exhibitions, cultural weeks, publications, seminars and conferences. It also supported other German cultural actors such as the HKW with music concerts and the Grüter family with their pupil exchange. It is significant that, among those activities, seminar and conference are the forms of activity which can be categorized as “two-way communication” with Rayzani playing an active role.
- **Lack of long-term projects:** publishing the *Spektrum Iran* journal is one of the main and long-term activities of Rayzani. No other long-term projects in the realm of cultural dialogue between Iranian and German participants or interfaith dialogue have been implemented by Rayzani. Nevertheless, the concept of a long-term project is not unfamiliar in the context of ICRO and consequently for the staff of Rayzani, because the CID has continuously implemented round table meetings on the issue of interfaith dialogue with international churches and institutes, as discussed in 5.2.3.
- **Accompanying German cultural actors:** although Rayzani did not play an active role in implementing the various cultural activities in the framework of intercultural dialogue, it often assisted German actors that wanted to implement cultural activities between Iranian and German participants.
- **Failure to coordinate cultural activities:** Rayzani failed to play a central role in coordinating foreign cultural activities of the ICDAC and the embassy in Germany. Firstly, the main people who decided on the

activities of the ICDAC had no interest in working with Rayzani between 2000 and 2005. Secondly, there has been disagreement between the Iranian embassy in Germany and Rayzani. The embassy has preferred to coordinate some of its cultural activities, such educational and film activities, through a small office in the embassy called the cultural section. Rayzani also did not network actively with Iranian cultural institutes located in Germany, such as the Islamic Center of Hamburg. It seems that it even did not network actively with suboffices of ICRO, such as the *Saadi* foundation and the CID. Some organizational and administrative reasons were given in the field study for this fact. Consequently, despite officially being the main actor to deal with cultural activities in Germany on behalf of the Iranian state, Rayzani practically failed to play a coordinative and central role.

- **Establishing a new NGO to fit the German structure:** Rayzani supported the founding of the Islamic studies foundation NGO, according to one of its directors, in order to establish a Shia professorship at a German university. The reason has been mentioned that Rayzani was unable to do this because of its governmental base. This point suggests that the directors of Rayzani themselves were fully aware of the incompatibility of cultural structures in Iran and Germany.
- **Overlooking available potentials:** there is a question of whether Rayzani could or could not use the available potential of the available Iranian cultural actors. For instance, the Islamic Center of Hamburg, the CID of ICRO, and Kanun in some regards were able to meet the needs of Rayzani in specific fields. With their assistance Rayzani could fill the gap of incompatibility of its structure with the German structure. This point nevertheless requires more study.
- **Confusing for German actors as external to the embassy:** because Rayzani is located apart from the Iranian embassy, some German diplomats who have been in contact with the embassy fail to understand exactly Rayzani's role and its functions compared with the cultural section of the embassy.
- **Understanding Rayzani as a type of Goethe Institute or an agent of the regime:** in the view of some German and Iranian participants of the study, Rayzani is like the Goethe Institute, with marginal differences,

while some German participants understood it to be an institute under the authority of the Iranian “regime”. These two points suggest that, firstly, the structure of German and Iranian cultural actors of foreign cultural activities is understood according to the participants’ knowledge of their own cultural institutes and structures. Secondly, understanding of the cultural institutes in the other country was, in some cases, influenced by political issues. Thirdly, some German participants of the study were not aware of key differences between Iranian and German cultural institutes.

- **Role of directors to form activities:** directors of Rayzani had a key role in forming the main cultural activities at different times. Despite the guidelines and aims of ICRO, which Rayzani is supposed to follow, its directors practically place specific priorities, such as music in one period or religious activities in another, above other activities.
- **Lack of reports on the activities:** the access to information on the activities of Rayzani has been a major challenge. No annual report or official records on activities were available to the researcher. Data collection was therefore limited to information from participants in the field study and some websites.

6.3.1.2 Summary of Points on the ICDAC

- **Short life:** the ICDAC worked from 1997 to 2005, after which it started to merge into Iranian state organizations. The short life of the ICDAC has been cited by some of the participants of the study as one of the reasons that it could not achieve its aims.
- **Organizationally new:** following the initiation of the idea of dialogue among civilizations, Khatami intended to establish a new center, despite using available cultural institutes and organizations like the foreign ministry or ICRO. This center was intended to be as little dependent on the state as possible and pursue its aims liberally. The problem with this idea was that such a center was new in the context of Iranian organizations. It could not continue its life after his presidency, not only for political reasons (the new president Ahmadinejad was not sympathetic to the idea) but also for organizational ones. A reason for its short life was the incompatibility of its structure with that of existing institutes in Iran.

- **General aims and duties:** reviewing the aims of the ICDAC “to coordinate the activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations to extend the idea of dialogue among civilizations” indicates that it was overlapping with the aims of ICRO regarding coordination of foreign cultural activities with international organizations. Also, one of the aims was “to coordinate foreign cultural activities of the state institutes based on views of Khatami”. Achievement of such an aim by a non-state organization is not foreseen in any legislation passed by the parliament. This raises the question of how, without having such organizational efficiency, the ICDAC could achieve this aim.
- **Lack of an action paper:** it was not only a purpose of the ICDAC but also the council of ministers’ expectation of it to conceptualize the idea of dialogue among civilizations in practical terms. However, in the end, no concept paper or action paper was produced by the ICDAC. Either such a concept exists and the researcher was unable to find it, despite searching libraries and talking to former presidents, or the aim was too abstract or the life of the ICDAC too short for it to be achieved. Still, for an institute which worked under the presidential office budget and in the context of the Iranian political system, its short life should not be surprising.
- **Not networking with proper German partners:** the ICDAC had contact with a variety of international partners including Germany. But it did not develop contacts with those whose activities fit its own. For instance, the journal of the ICDAC mentions AvH as one of the future partners. But AvH is a German higher education foundation. It is not the best fit for cooperating with a multicultural organizational center like the ICDAC. Then, paradoxically, relevant institutes whose activities were compatible with the ICDAC were neglected as future partners. For instance, there was no active cooperation between the intercultural dialogue section of the German foreign ministry and the section of dialogue with Islam of the EKD or with the interfaith dialogue section of the ICDAC. The EKD later develop an interfaith dialogue with the NGO IID.
- **Initiating but not accomplishing projects:** the ICDAC supported many investigations and publications on diverse issues. Most of those projects were successfully undertaken in the time of the ICDAC, although some were not completed. For instance, with assistance from the ministry of

education and training, the ICDAC revealed a project to teach a book on “dialogue among civilizations” in schools. But the project had not been implemented even before the presidency of Khatami was over.

- **Activities shaped by ICDAC presidents:** presidents of the ICDAC had changed the focus of activities and even structure of the center in their periods of office.¹²⁹ The first president had a very diverse approach to art, film, and philosophy, and to audiences, like youth and women and small towns. The structure of the ICDAC served those activities at that time. The second president, who had experience of heading the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance, focused on fields such as publication and translation, as well as academic research on history and philosophy, among other things.
- **Merger in Khatami’s time:** the process of merging the ICDAC into state organizations and finally closing it down began under Khatami, not Ahmadinejad. One narrative which is strongly echoed by many Iranian participants of the study is that the ICDAC was closed because of limitations imposed under Ahmadinejad. This story puts all the burden of the merger and closure of the ICDAC on the shoulders of the Ahmadinejad administration, while the merger had organizational reasons, too, and started in Khatami’s time.
- **Not informing staff about merging the ICDAC:** members of staff of the ICDAC and staff of the CID worked in the new institute of dialogue among religions and civilizations in the initial stage of the merger, but they did so separately, and then steadily began to clash. A lack of budget and pressure from ICRO on employees of the former ICDAC to resign are some of the reasons for this clash. Another reason is neglected in the narrative of the participants in this research: On the eve of the merger, there was still a lack of information among members of staff of the ICDAC about what was going on. A failure to inform staff may have been caused by an emotional reaction of junior officers, the president of the ICDAC and the administration of Khatami, for they hoped that the ICDAC could survive with the current staff in the newly emerged center. The lack

¹²⁹ With the exception of Boroujerdi, who was president in a time of crisis for the ICDAC; he attempted just to keep the existing organizational structure, so the changes in his time were out of his control.

of information could also have been a political reaction, however, to put pressure on ICRO not to close the ICDAC immediately.

- **Focus on domestic activities:** the ICDAC implemented several cultural activities, such as the publication of books, journals and translations, holding seminars and exhibitions, construction of memorials, inviting important figures (such as Jürgen Habermas) to Iran, and assisting academic research and similar. Moreover, it cooperated on some international academic conferences, although the main focus of these activities was domestic audiences rather than the international public, and the target groups were mostly Iranians. The ICDAC did not focus practically on implementing activities which bring together Iranian and international participants.
- **Criticism from hardliners:** some international activities of the ICDAC and its budget thereafter attracted a great deal of attention from some conservative press media and clergymen. According to the budget law of Iran, however, the ICDAC received much less budget than ICRO. Appendix 1 shows a comparison of the budgets.

6.3.1.3 Summary of Points on Other Iranian Cultural Actors

- **Weak role of Iranian political parties and parliament:** although reformist parties at the time of Khatami supported the discourse of “dialogue among civilizations”, they did not actively play a role in constructing the infrastructure to apply it in an organized and institutionalized way. For instance, the specific budget at that time was allocated to the ICDAC as a subsection of the presidency. The budget was not offered to all relevant cultural institutes, asking them to apply for activities relating to the specific issue of dialogue among civilizations, but allocated to a section which would clearly only exist in the short period of a presidency. At the end of Khatami’s presidency, the Iranian parliament was mostly occupied by conservative representatives. The failure of reformist parties can therefore be counted as one of the reasons that the budget for dialogue among civilizations could not be replaced in a new structure.

- **IPIS using dialogue among civilization as discourse:** participants in this research stated that the reason for the ICDAC not being merged inside the foreign ministry was that it did not fit into the ministry's structure. But the discourse of "dialogue among civilizations" mostly had a central role in talks of members of IPIS in their meetings with Western countries, including Germany, at the time of Khatami. Therefore, it seems that the discourse was perceived rather as rhetoric than a full program for IPIS and consequently for the foreign ministry. It was rhetoric which had an expiry date and was not used in the international meetings of IPIS after Khatami.
- **Interfaith dialogue implemented even by hardliners:** a variety of religious institutes which received support from the seminary of Qum and the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state played a role in studying different religions and cooperating in interfaith dialogue activities. Among them, Aryan and Al-Mustafa Universities have academic cooperation with the DAAD in the context of intercultural dialogue. Hence even Iranian religious institutes which are identified through their conservative approach or their hardliner directors have shown themselves internationally to be partners of "dialogue".
- **Limited opportunity of civil society:** those NGOs which get no support from the Iranian state, like the interfaith NGO IID and the dialogue NGO of Khatami, have faced limitations to work in last two decades in Iran, especially after the presidential election of 2009. The dialogue center of Imam Musa Sadr is still working, although it does so in the field of teaching the skills of dialogue, not conducting dialogue among cultural and political groups.
- **Lack of data on academic exchange:** there is a lack of information about the number of foreign students who had the chance to study in Iran and receive financial support from ICRO and relevant Iranian ministries. It seems that there is a tendency to support foreign students in the field of Islamic studies, Farsi language and Iran studies, though there are also exchanges in engineering and medical science.
- **Role of an intercultural dialogue volunteer:** in the period in which there was a good chance of the idea of dialogue among civilizations initiating intercultural dialogue activities from the Iranian side with the rest of the world, the volunteer activities of Fatemeh Sadr were significant. She had

experience of living in Germany, knowledge of the German language, friendship and kinship with Khatami, as well as a keen interest in dialogue. These elements all together made her an informed mediator to advise on inviting German experts on relevant issues to Iran. She translated a book in this field from German to Farsi and was part of the project of the school book on dialogue among civilizations which was implemented by the ICDAC. Finally, she established the dialogue center of Imam Musa Sadr.

- **Recognition for the Islamic Center of Hamburg through people like Khatami:** the Center is under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state, although it has been identified by German participants of the study with its former directors, such as Khatami and Shabestari Ghaemmaghami, who are well known for their dissident thinking. This center has not appeared as a significant religious actor in Germany to implement organized and long-term interfaith dialogues with certain churches or institutes in Germany.
- **Questioning the financial sources for Khatami's dialogue NGO:** conservative press media like *Resalat* challenged the financial sources for Khatami's dialogue NGO. Their argument was that Khatami made a new law in his late presidency to preserve a budget for his own NGO. Though such a law has not been found, Khatami did pay the expenses of the NGO from the income of his international speeches as former president. This source dried up when Khatami's passport was confiscated by the Iranian authorities in the post-2009 presidential election period.
- **Lack of transparency:** it is difficult to conclude with any degree of certainty the role that other Iranian cultural actors played in intercultural dialogue. Perhaps there are reports or internal bulletins which could not be accessed by the researcher. It is hard to believe that cultural organizations and state authorities in charge of Iranian foreign cultural policy do not reflect the results of their work in an organized way in annual reports. But since there has been a lack of transparency of information for the public, and for the researcher as well, it is concluded here that the role of other cultural actors in intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany has been weak and vague.

6.3.1.4 Summary of Points on Iranian Media

- **Partial coverage by the IRIB:** the Iranian TV and Radio (IRIB) are under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. The discourses of intercultural dialogue have not received noteworthy coverage by it, negative or positive, although the IRIB partially covered the conference of “Iran after Election”, which was initiated by the Heinrich Böll foundation. This led to long prison sentences for several Iranian participants on their return to Iran. It consequently influenced the image of Iran in Germany and vice versa. The conference was an opportunity to discuss the victory of reformists in an Iranian parliamentary election.
- **Efforts of limited press media:** some press media, even under judicial limitations and short life made great efforts to reflect news and articles on other cultures. *Nafe* and *Madresse* magazines are examples of this type of press media. Some press media also wished to establish communities for dialogue between reformists and intellectuals. The main editorial team of the *Āeen*, which was established by a reformist party, started their meetings one year before publishing the magazine.

6.3.1.5 Summary of Points on Cultural Section of the German Embassy

- **Coordinating with a central role:** the cultural section cooperated closely with other sections of the German embassy in Tehran, like the press section. It also supported other *Mittlerorganisationen*. It supported the Goethe Institute by giving it a contact office and continuing its German language courses under the name of DSIT. The cultural section assisted the DAAD by continuing its academic activities via its information center and lectureships in Tehran and Isfahan when the DAAD could not officially work, between 2008 and 2012. Together with the press section it aided ifa in the process of selecting Iranian applicants for the CCP project. The reception party of the ambassador on the anniversary of German reunification was a chance for the cultural section to gather small and large cultural actors that have implemented cultural and intercultural dialogue activities. As part of this gathering they communicated with an Iranian audience and informed them about their activities.

- **Cultural activities despite difficulties:** the cultural section faced some political limitations to implementing cultural activities in Iran. It was also criticized by some German opposition groups and individuals. It faced intercultural dialogue budget limitations from the foreign ministry after some of its cultural programs in Ahmadinejad's time were canceled. From the activities of the cultural section, however, it is still apparent that it engaged heavily with German cultural actors to implement cultural and intercultural dialogue activities. The difficulties of working in Iran were lessons for the cultural section in overcoming them or finding short-cuts to focus on cultural activities in an innovative way. In some interviews with German participants, the point that there are two sectors of the Iranian state was mentioned as a key problem. The interviewees stated that there is a good chance to work with the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state, but they should be observant to identify the correct time. A director of the press section, for instance, applied for a different budget from the foreign ministry for a media dialogue when she realized that the political atmosphere in Iran made it appropriate to do so. She also suggested a study trip project with the cooperation of the Goethe Institute. These are examples of short-cuts.
- **Cancellation of projects for security reasons:** according to participants of both the cultural and press sections, some cultural projects like media dialogue were canceled by the Iranian authorities in the period of Ahmadinejad because of security concerns.
- **Observing interest of the Iranian young generation:** it was mentioned that the young Iranian population makes up the biggest portion of the audience at music concerts and art exhibitions from Germany in Iran. Also, where cultural projects of *Mittlerorganisationen*, such as ifa's CCP and the DAAD scholarships, were advertised through limited informal networks of the cultural section, a high number of qualified candidates applied.
- **Developing dialogue with ordinary people:** the cultural section assisted intercultural dialogue activities for specific target groups, such as students and theologians. It also assisted activities like the study trip for different German and Iranian journalists, artists and staff of organizations. In this type of intercultural dialogue, ordinary participants would also get the

chance of dialogue with people of other cultures. A head of the cultural section specifically emphasized that the dialogue should not be limited to experts and professors and should be developed to also give ordinary people and journalists a chance.

6.3.1.6 Summary of Points on the DAAD

- **Working as a university club:** the DAAD claims to work as a university club and represents Germany through its academic activities. What was observed in the field study confirms that it works in such a capacity: It attempts on the one hand to supply financial resources to German and foreign university projects, and on the other hand it encourages German universities to cooperate with international universities on different projects. It has a complicated organizational structure, but universities which have experience of working with it are familiar with its difficulties and complications. In collecting data in the field study, it became apparent that reflecting the needs of universities is the main concern. Participants of two teams which received a specific budget of intercultural dialogue from the DAAD stated that they had a free hand to determine different parts of their projects independently.
- **Complicated organizational structure:** the organizational structure of the DAAD is complicated and difficult to understand for outsiders. Nevertheless, firstly, relevant and detailed information on the structure is available from reviewing its annual reports. Secondly, the map of the DAAD structure, updated each year in the annual report, provided access to the relevant section in charge of discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. The DAAD launched a specific project of “German-Arab/Iranian-university dialogue” by *Referat 444* in the southern hemisphere department.
- **Transparency on projects and budgets:** the annual reports of the DAAD from 1998 to 2013 were available, partly through its website and partly through visits to the DAAD offices in Bonn. The annual report contains detailed information on the structure, aims, projects and budget of the DAAD, supported by different tables, charts and figures.

- **Increased cooperation with Iran, despite difficulties:** a budget that the DAAD assigned to academic cooperation with Iran shows an upward trend from 1998 to 2013. Despite facing official problems at the time of Ahmadinejad, the DAAD could continue its activities with the assistance of the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran. When it could not keep its information office open and the contracts of its lecturers in Tehran and Isfahan were not extended by the Iranian authorities, it was able to continue to offer scholarships and work with universities which were the partners of German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue with the help of a local employee.
- **Lack of understanding in Iran as civil society:** the complicated structure of the DAAD on one hand and the transparency of information on its financial source, which is the German foreign ministry, are two reasons why it is not perceived as being independent from the German state. A director of the information center explained that, in most academic and official meetings with Iranian partners, he will be asked whether the DAAD is a foreign ministry agent. The next reason for such a problem can be the lack of existence of a university club or *Mittlerorganisation* in Iran.
- **Definition of dialogue in the DAAD context:** the discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue has expressed and defined itself in the academic context of the DAAD as a specific project, though it was organized in such a way as to continue its ongoing academic exchanges. It was mentioned by a participant of the research that, because the aim of the DAAD is to reflect the academic community's needs, the meaning of dialogue is the implementation of more projects which reflect their demands. Therefore, without going into an abstract definition of culture, culture has been defined at the DAAD as working more with international universities, he explained.
- **Detailed planning and assessment of dialogue projects:** the DAAD implemented the German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue program from 2005. This project has a detailed and sophisticated map illustrating which different activities are expected to reach certain outputs, outcomes and impacts and finally achieve the aim of "shaping peaceful cooperation across cultural borders". The DAAD also undertook research to assess

individual university projects. The assessment shows that the DAAD cares whether it achieves its claimed aims or not.

- **Supporting diverse issues as dialogue projects:** the DAAD supported 21 academic projects in the framework of German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue. The projects cover diverse issues from “computer science and medical care” to “theater” and “film”.
- **Understanding different dimensions of the other society:** through interfaith university dialogue, the German side realized that the Iranian side was more open-minded than it originally believed before the project. The project was a door to realizing how different theologians in Iran think about other religions. Also, participants in the peaceful change project emphasized that students learned new things which were unknown to them before their visit. For instance, German students learn about social participation of women and different types of hijab in Iran.
- **Cooperation beyond the DAAD project:** the interfaith university dialogue project continued to work with its Iranian partners even after the financial resources from the DAAD ended. The new project concerned a study book on Shi’a Islam and Catholicism with the cooperation of professors of the partner universities. German and Iranian students had built a friendship, too. One German student some time later made a study visit to Iran and was assisted by Iranian participants of that project. Duisburg-Essen University and the institute for humanities and cultural studies of Iran also concluded an agreement to continue their academic activities in future.
- **Realizing specific apolitical complications:** both investigated DAAD projects faced some complications in their intercultural dialogue activities, but the complications had little to do with political issues. For instance, cooperation in the peaceful change project with the second partner was stopped because of inappropriate responses from the Iranian coordinator of that institute. Hence the problem was in “organizational coordination”, which plays an important role in intercultural dialogue between two countries which have different organizational efficiencies. Also, it has been stated that translation of key theological notions has been a challenge in the interfaith university dialogue project. Hence the problem lay in the

“theological vocabulary”, which plays an important role in intercultural dialogue between two different faiths of two different countries.

6.3.1.7 Summary of Points on ifa

- **Implementing cultural activities to actual audience:** One of the roots of ifa is a museum which was to prepare art exhibitions for Germans abroad at the beginning of the 20th century. Later, ifa could shape its activities to the requirements of German foreign cultural policy in each period. Reviewing the activities of ifa according to the collected data of this research shows that it added activities to its routine cultural activities based on the necessities of European-Islamic cultural dialogue from 2002 to 2008 and the Arab Spring from 2011 and 2013, although it also pursues aims such as strengthening civil society abroad. It also takes the development of media and social communication into account. In the last years of the analysis period of the research, issues such as global citizens, digital diplomacy and climate change, and activities such as implementing dialogue between diplomats and an ordinary audience and promotion of cultural awards attracted more attention from the general secretary of ifa. It can therefore be concluded that ifa has taken the actual time and audience into account.
- **Transparency of projects and budget:** Open access is available to the annual reports of ifa. They contain detailed information about its activities, visitor numbers at the exhibitions, and its budget. There is very little information about the organizational structure of ifa in the annual report, but its official website provides a version of an updated organizational chart.
- **Changing structure and activities over time:** The structure of ifa did not change between 1998 and 2013 and always operates with four departments. But there have been changes to some sections of its departments, which are explained in the field study with bureaucratic reasons and the concerns of directors of departments. Also, following the issue of European-Islamic cultural dialogue and the Arab Spring, the form of some activities brought new additions to the structure, with CCP, for instance, becoming a permanent section of the dialogue department from

2005. The backgrounds of the general secretaries have also had some effects. At the time of Ronald Grätz, who is Brazilian-German, some cultural activities between Germany and South American countries were implemented by ifa.

- **Dialogue even before 9/11:** ifa started the media dialogue seminars with Arab countries in 1997. This refutes the claim of some Iranian participants that practices regarding intercultural dialogue attracted attention worldwide after 1998 and Khatami's idea of dialogue among civilizations.
- **Competing for dialogue budget:** As a small *Mittlerorganisation*, ifa has attempted to evidence its efficiency in implementing activities in the context of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. When the dialogue budget was established, the then general secretary Maaß and his team applied for it, although with some reservations. They were nevertheless gradually able to demonstrate their efficiency in dialogue projects and obtain a large part of ifa's budget from the dialogue funds.
- **Conceptualizing dialogue with Muslim countries:** One of the initial activities of ifa in the context of European-Islamic cultural dialogue was to determine a concept-paper regarding dialogue with Muslim countries. The concept-paper not only defined the dialogue but also expressed its sensitivities and suggested practical projects to realize it. ifa was the only German cultural actor to devise such a concept-paper. The concept produced activities such as two co-written books and the CCP project. The co-written books gave the opportunity to different Muslim authors to write together about their views on the West and terrorism. CCP is designed to give applicants from Muslim countries the opportunity to do an internship and work for a certain time in Germany and for German applicants to work for a certain time in Muslim countries.
- **Keeping the CCP project alive:** It has been significant that the CCP project existed until the end of 2013 and even up to the time of finalizing this research (end of 2016). The structure of the project fits the issues, for instance, in the context of journalism and the Arab Spring. A recent update of the research showed that a project like CCP gave opportunities to refugees.
- **Focusing on small aims:** CCP is a project which originated in the context of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. Hence it is expected to achieve

general aims such as prevention of terrorism. But it was stated in the field study that CCP is intended to achieve small aims, such as communicating with Muslim people on a personal level and practical experiences.

- **Not focusing on dialogue with Iran:** ifa has implemented a variety of activities, such as media dialogue, art exhibitions, mutual visits, seminars and internships under CCP, with Iranian participants. Nevertheless, ifa did not focus on Iran in its projects in the context of European-Islamic cultural dialogue compared with other Muslim countries. Political reservations because of Ahmadinejad's radical rhetoric against Israel and the lack of knowledge of Iran on the part of the director co-written projects and the low budget for CCP have been given as main reasons of this lack of focus.
- **Close contact and cooperation:** ifa cooperated closely with the foreign ministry. For instance, it has been significant to observe a seminar called *Diplomaten in Dialog* at the open days of the foreign ministry in 2015 and 2016, both of which were organized by ifa. It also worked closely with DW, the Goethe Institute on the Qantara project, and Rave Stiftung and the Robert Bosch Stiftung on joint projects such as awards. CCP received assistance from the cultural section and press section of the German embassy in Tehran to conduct the first stage of its selection process. Even the interpersonal relationship inside ifa has been significant. The former general secretary of ifa was still in close contact with the current members of staff of ifa, according to observations of this research.
- **Bargaining over civil society:** One of ifa's priorities in cultural activities is civil society. Its *Zivik* section, for instance, is specifically designed to support NGOs and civil society actors abroad. Also, the importance of the issue of civil society is apparent from the details of ifa's other cultural activities. For instance, most Iranian CCP applicants between 2005 and 2013 were women. Strengthening women is one of the aims of civil society activities. Such support by ifa of civil society is interesting, because a large part of ifa's budget comes from the state, specifically the foreign ministry. How is it possible to strengthen civil society with state funds? Firstly, ifa has attempted to remain the expert for cultural activities and studies. Compared with the foreign ministry, which needs cultural activities but does not have the expertise to implement them, it has a bargaining advantage. Secondly, because it is small, it is used to

competing with other cultural institutes to obtain funds for its projects. Thirdly, since Germany is a democratic state, as mentioned by a director of the ifa dialogue forum, it is possible to bargain with the state to strengthen civil society without the threat of prison for ifa staff.

6.3.1.8 Summary of Points on the Goethe Institute

- **Operating the German language institute in Iran:** The origins of the Goethe Institute are in a German language institute that was established in 1923. Its tasks developed to include more diverse cultural activities, such as cooperating in the cultural field internationally and mediating an image of Germany through information. Apart from a short suspension after World War II, it has been working continuously ever since. In Iran, although the institute faced problems working officially, it continued its German language courses in the framework of the DSIT.
- **A defined relationship with the foreign ministry:** The Goethe Institute addresses its independency in a contract with the foreign ministry in 1976. This contract explains in detail the boundaries of tasks and expectations on both sides. It gives a great deal of independence to the Goethe Institute in the sense that its financial needs are met by the foreign ministry but it can determine its programs and policies independently.
- **Multi-member bodies:** Although the Goethe Institute has been perceived by some Iranian participants of this study as a suboffice of the foreign ministry, there is evidence to prove its independence in some regards. Its abovementioned contract with the foreign ministry is evidence that the institute strives to remain independent. Also, the organizational structure of the Goethe Institute shows that the board of trustees and directors are diverse. They are not merely members of the German state; some *Länder* and county representatives, as well as artists and authors, can also be seen in this structure.
- **Identification with Iranian dissident authors:** In an Iranian context, the Goethe Institute is perceived to a high degree to engage with dissident authors. Firstly, its old journal, *Fikrun wa Fann*, is published in Farsi besides English, German and Arabic. Secondly, the presence of dissident authors such as Navid Kermani on the editorial board of the journal is

significant. Thirdly, it is apparent that the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance had an interest in opening the Goethe Institute but was concerned about its support of Iranian dissident authors and artists.

- **Assisting innovative dialogue activities:** The Goethe Institute assisted through its contact office with the study trip project of the press section, as mentioned in 5.2.2.1. It also supported an individual dialogue project, “this situation”, undertaken by the artist Tino Sehgal.
- **Constructing a new working structure in Iran:** Although the Goethe Institute was not officially open in Iran from 1998 to 2013, it was able to contribute to cultural and intercultural dialogue activities. For instance, young Iranians who used to learn German in the DSIT courses called it the Goethe Institute, not DSIT. The Goethe Institute contact office in the cultural section of the German embassy also assisted in projects such as journalist exchanges and study trips together with the press section. Also, its dialogue point turned out to be a favorite place for Iranian language learners to gather and meet. Talking to a director of the contact office revealed that he was not fully aware of which Iranian authorities are responsible for allowing the Goethe Institute to open in Iran. Taking all this information into account, it seems that the Goethe Institute constructed a new structure for dealing with cultural affairs in Iran without even being officially open in the country. Not being officially open has not prevented it from undertaking cultural activities in Iran.
- **No special project on European-Islamic cultural dialogue:** Besides strengthening cultural activities in Muslim countries, the results of this research show that the Goethe Institute did not conduct a specific project on European-Islamic cultural dialogue like that of ifa and the DAAD. Because the Goethe Institute has constantly resisted the interference of the foreign ministry in its programs, it tried to implement the cultural activities from the European-Islamic cultural dialogue budget in its own way. It was stated in the field study that Iran was not the focus of the Goethe Institute projects in European-Islamic cultural dialogue, firstly because Iran was not the focus of terror prevention in the post-9/11 period, and secondly because it did not have an official office in Iran.

6.3.1.9 Summary of Points on Other German Cultural Actors

- **Transparency of information:** Common to the “other” institutes and organizations, including media, political, religious, academic, art and volunteer German actors, is that most of them had an annual report or organized website which gave detailed information about their structure, aims and activities. Where more information was needed, members of staff of PAD, ZfA and AvH assisted the researcher. AvH even sent its annual reports and the Grüter family some publications and reports to the researcher.
- **Pedagogic framework for dialogue:** PAD, which works specifically on pedagogic issues for teachers and educational systems, implemented some projects in the field of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. Teachers and academics from different Muslim countries had a chance in these workshops to learn about different school contexts in the German *Länder*, and specifically that of North Rhine-Westphalia.
- **Discussion of sensitive issues:** Although all topics of PAD discussions and dialogues are not reflected in the annual reports, it is clear that one issue was the separation of state and religion in the German school system. This is a sensitive issue, because some participants of these workshops came from countries in which the relationship between the state and religion is controversial. In Iran, for instance, the state, the Islamic Republic, respects Islam as its official religion. Hence discussing the separation of religion and state is a political rather than cultural issue for participants. At the same time, however, the issue reflects current challenges of German schools in specific *Länder* which have pupils from Muslim immigrant families. Hence the separation of state and religion is expressed as a solution to form educational behaviors and lessons in those schools, otherwise Muslim pupils would be forced to respect Christian rules, which are those of the religion of the majority of the German population. As a result, it seems that the issue is double-edged considering both political and apolitical problems.
- **Implementing dialogue in the international school system:** German schools abroad engaged in intercultural dialogue activities of the PAD project, PASCH and ZfA. Specifically in the field of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany, the project of the German school of Tehran

and a school in Bam, and pupil exchanges of the Grüter family are significant.

- **Strengthening high education scholarship as dialogue:** The discourse of European-Islamic cultural dialogue has been realized in AvH projects by supporting more academics in Muslim countries.
- **Natural disasters in dialogue:** Besides social and cultural issues, other issues such as natural disasters have also been considered in dialogue projects. The initial motivation behind the exchange between the German school of Tehran and a school in Bam was to help the female pupils who had lost their families in the Bam earthquake.
- **Failure and success in dialogue on political issues:** The conference implemented by the Böll foundation in 2000 in Berlin to represent a reformist image of Iran in Germany attracted the attention of opposition groups, who demonstrated against it, and biased coverage on Iranian TV. Therefore, it can be concluded that it failed to achieve its aims. By contrast, the Friedrich Ebert foundation successfully assisted the dialogue center of the Imam Musa Sadr Institute to hold specific seminars on skills of dialogue in Iran with the assistance of a German expert. From 2010 the Konrad Adenauer foundation succeeded in holding the *Hafis-Dialog Weimar* to discuss actual cultural projects and issues with both German and Iranian participants. The SPW has also participated in some meetings with IPIS in the framework of constructive dialogue. Loccum Academy, too, has managed to organize different events with Iranian partners, not only on interfaith dialogue and art but also on human rights and nuclear power issues. These examples show that attempts to implement dialogue in political issues have not always failed.
- **Foreign dimension of the German Islam Conference:** The German Islam Conference has also been involved in dialogue between the German state and Muslim communities since 2006. The foreign cultural policy dimension of the German Islam Conference has been emphasized as a significant point. It was mentioned in the field study that, because a German court decision to allow demonstrations supporting the cartoon of Prophet Mohammad in 2005 resulted in an attack on the German embassy in Egypt, communication between the German state and Muslims inside Germany is also a matter of foreign cultural policy.

- **Developing interfaith dialogue via networking:** One of the members of the EKD delegation who traveled to Iran in 2002 developed a network with Iranian religious institutes and organizations. This communication network resulted in implementation of a triangle interfaith dialogue between the NGO IID of Ali Abtahi, EKD of Germany and the Church of England.
- **Limitations of triangle interfaith dialogue:** It has been mentioned that delegations from three countries, Iran, Germany and Britain, have discussed different issues, including the rights of followers of minority faiths, in the interfaith dialogue meetings. Iranian participants responded reluctantly to such issues or left questions unanswered, however.
- **Diverse images of Iran in Berlin:** The HKW specifically implemented cultural activities such as traditional Iranian music concerts and art exhibitions about Iranian culture. The friendship between a head of the HKW and a director of Rayzani supported these activities. The art exhibition on Iran reflected different dimensions of Iranian culture; for instance, a model of a personal room of Ayatollah Khomeini and a textile painted with an image of knives, which was designed by Parasto Forouhar, the daughter of two victims of the political serial killing in 1998 in Iran, both had the opportunity to be presented in the exhibition.
- **Innovative activities in pupil exchanges:** Diverse projects were implemented by the Grüter family in the field of pupil exchanges. A biography project, for instance, was designed to encourage pupils of both Iran and Germany to collect information and write about famous German and Iranian figures in Iran and Germany respectively. A photography project also encouraged German and Iranian pupils to carefully observe Iran and Germany respectively and record their observations in photos.
- **Networking to develop projects:** Although the starting point for the Grüter family's activities was the school project, they also used networking with both Iranian and German institutes and actors to extend their activities into other fields. Calligraphy and photography are two of the other fields of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany they explored.
- **Participation of pupils in mixed-sex groups:** The pupil exchange between the German school of Tehran and a school in Bam shows that

some events were attended by female participants only. The reason was that the school in Bam was a girls' school. Although some Iranian female schools participated in the Grüter family pupil exchanges, all the exchanges included participants of both sexes. The Grüter family mentioned that having mixed-sex groups was openly and willingly accepted by Iranian families and authorities.

6.3.1.10 Summary of Points on German Media

- **Different voices through public and private media:** There are two types of media system in Germany. The public system works with different political and social groups and organizations and receives financial support from the state. The private media focus on different issues according to industrial advertising and economic benefit. This double system makes it possible to reflect different voices.
- **DW and the cultural image of Germany abroad:** DW is the part of the German media that deals specifically with issues such as mediating a cultural image of Germany internationally, although it has also implemented some specific activities regarding dialogue with the Muslim world.
- **Internet portal:** Qantara is one of the examples of how intercultural dialogue is considered in German internet media. The internet makes it possible to reach a larger audience inside and outside Germany, in Muslim countries.
- **Reflecting sensitive issues in DW activities:** The issue of the 2009 presidential election played a role in creating two DW projects. In cooperation with ifa, DW held a conference in 2010 on the issue of journalism and social media. It also set up a website, *Ru dar Ru*, to assist citizen journalism in Iran in the period in which there were demonstrations in Iran against the results of the 2009 presidential election.

6.3.2 Characteristics of Intercultural Dialogue Activities between Iran and Germany

This chapter specifically analyzes intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany. They have certain distinguishing features. For instance, Iranian and German implementing actors did not have similar roles in implementing them. In some, the German actors had an active role and the Iranian actors a passive role. Moreover, activities in some cases were not limited to classical or traditional forms such as seminars or conferences but took the form of company internships or a philosophical discussion on a long journey from Germany, crossing Iran, to India. Exploring these characteristics is key to understanding the role intercultural dialogue has played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany, because it gives a basis for analysis of why a foreign cultural policy could or could not achieve a specific aim.

Table 11 gives an overview of forms, types and content of cultural activities undertaken by German implementing actors. The activities of the main case study actors and other German cultural actors are considered in the table:

Table 11. Intercultural dialogue activities undertaken by German implementing actors

Activities	German Institutes
Conference, seminar and meeting	Ifa, some political foundations and DW
Exchange of Iranian and German artists, and support to musicians and performers	HKW, Goethe Institute and Grüter family
Exchange of Iranian and German students, researchers, professors and academics, in framework of study trips, workshops and similar	DAAD
Exchange of Iranian and German pupils, in framework of study trips, workshops and similar	ZfA and Grüter family
Workshops for Iranian and German teachers	PAD and Grüter family
Publications	ifa and Goethe Institute
Internet and online portals	Qantara as a cooperative project of Goethe Institute, ifa, DW, <i>Ru dar Ru</i> as project of DW, <i>Nafas</i> as project of ifa
Co-written book (but Iran was not the partner)	Ifa
Study travel for mixed groups e.g. Iranian and German journalists, artists, NGO activists and employees of state organizations	Cultural and press section of German embassy and Goethe Institute
Cultural festivals, art and book exhibitions	Cultural section of German embassy, ifa and Goethe Institute
Academic support for research, scholarships	AvH, DAAD

for Iranian and German scholars	
Internships	Ifa
Media dialogue	Ifa and press section of German embassy
German language courses	Cultural section of German Embassy, Goethe Institute, ifa ¹³⁰
German lecturships	DAAD
Innovative discussion projects like <i>this situation</i>	Cultural section of the German embassy, Goethe Institute
Photography project for pupils	Grüter family
Biography project for pupils	Grüter family
Flower garden project	Grüter family
Cultural awards	Ifa, Goethe Institute
Interfaith dialogue	EKD, DAAD

Intercultural dialogue activities undertaken by Iranian implementing actors are shown in table 12:

Table 12. Cultural activities undertaken by Iranian implementing actors

Activities	Iranian Institutes
Conference, seminar, meeting	ICDAC, Rayzani, dialogue NGO of Khatami, IPIS, Islamic Center of Hamburg
Exchange and support of musicians and artists	Rayzani, ICDAC
Inviting and commemorating famous figures	ICDAC, Rayzani, dialogue NGO of Khatami
Publication and translation	ICDAC, some Iranian press media, Rayzani
Farsi language course	Rayzani
Academic support to Iranian and foreign scholars	ICDAC, ICRO, ministry of science, research and technology, and ministry of medical care
Training course for dialogue skills and philosophy	Dialogue center of Imam Musa Institute and ICDAC
Interfaith dialogue	Rayzani, CID of ICRO and NGO IID

Table 11 contains more cultural actors and more diverse activities than table 12. German actors implemented a large number of cultural activities in diverse forms and various fields. Also, several activities implemented by German actors gave both Iranian and German participants an opportunity for dialogue. Activities such as conferences, seminars and language courses are common to table 11 and 2. Both Iranian and German actors have therefore had an interest in implementing classical or traditional forms of activities which symbolize intercultural dialogue. Nevertheless, in table 12 it can be seen that German actors paid attention to an advanced or new form of activities offering cultural dialogue to both Iranian and German participants. For instance, ifa's CCP program, the DAAD's German-

¹³⁰ Ifa holds classes in Stuttgart. In some cases internship holders from the CCP project, including Iranians, have a chance to learn German at the ifa institute during their stay in Germany.

Iranian-Arab University dialogue, and the study trips of the Goethe Institute have a significant place in table 12.

Although table 11 and 12 illustrate intercultural dialogue activities of both Iranian and German actors, they have limitations when it comes to reflecting a qualitative analysis of their characteristics. For instance, if German actors have appeared so successful in implementing intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany, this cannot be attributed alone to their ability to do so, but also to Iranian actors accompanying them to make this intercultural dialogue possible. Moreover, pointing out that intercultural dialogue activities have been implemented in the educational and academic field is not enough; it is also significant that intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany have been implemented in the academic and educational field more than in any other.

Four main characteristics of the intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany can therefore be identified and are described below.

6.3.2.1 Active Role of German Actors to implement Intercultural Dialogue

The data collected in the study suggests that German cultural institutes, organizations and private groups play an active role in implementing cultural activities in the framework of European-Islamic cultural dialogue between Iranian and German participants. Meanwhile, comparison of the collected data indicates that the Iranian cultural institutes and organizations play a weak role in implementing intercultural dialogue activities in the framework of interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations between German and Iranian participants.

6.3.2.2 Tendency of Iranian Actors to Accompany Intercultural Dialogue

Besides the active role of German implementing actors, it is important to remember that the dialogue has two sides. Without the Iranian implementing and political guiding actors playing an accompanying role, the German actors could not appear as active in the field study. For instance, the ICDAC, although weak in specific intercultural dialogue between Iranian and German participants, nevertheless represented and refreshed the concept of dialogue among civilizations in Iranian society at least for eight years. In this regard, it promoted

cultural activities on the domestic level and consequently indirectly accompanied German actors in implementing intercultural dialogue activities with Iranian participants. Similarly, it should not be ignored that Rayzani, despite having no specific plan to implement interfaith dialogue or dialogue among civilizations, and despite having some conservative members of staff and even in the difficult time under Ahmadinejad, still assisted some intercultural dialogue activities of German actors. Without Rayzani, ICRO and the Iranian authorities, it would be impossible for German actors to implement intercultural dialogue.

6.3.2.3 Advanced and New Forms of Intercultural Dialogue

Among the intercultural dialogue activities which have been reviewed in this chapter and outlined in table 11 and 12, some activities are different from the classical or traditional conferences and seminars between the two sides of a dialogue. They take a new and advanced form. For instance, ifa implemented an internship program, CCP, which offers applicants from Muslim countries the opportunity to work for four to six months in a German company or institute. The program also offers internships to German applicants in Muslim countries. This form of activity is new and offers cultural dialogue on a deeper and more interpersonal level to both German and Muslim, including Iranian, applicants.

6.3.2.4 High Number of Intercultural Dialogue Activities in Education

Intercultural dialogue activities in the educational and academic field were implemented more than in any other field, as the collected data of this study suggests. The DAAD has supported 21 university projects between Iranian and German universities. These projects not only cover scientific issues such as environment and engineering but also film direction, theater and interfaith dialogue. AvH increased the number of its scholarships to Muslim applicants, including Iranians, in higher education. PAD and the ZfA have appeared active in developing workshops and school projects with Muslim countries. Also, the Grüter family implemented several innovative projects with Iranian schools from 2001 to 2013. It therefore seems that the academic and educational field appeared to be a safe and preferred gateway for intercultural dialogue between the two countries.

6.3.2.5 Intercultural Dialogue and the Effect of the Presidential Change in Iran

The intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany were affected by the presidential change in Iran. At the time of Khatami, from 1997 to 2005, some cultural activities were first implemented under the discourse of dialogue among civilizations. A triangle interfaith dialogue was launched between Iran, Germany and Britain. Generally, the German cultural actors had more possibilities and fewer problems implementing intercultural dialogue activities in Iran. During the presidency of Ahmadinejad, from 2005 to 2013, the ICDAC was not in operation. Cultural organizations like the DAAD faced limitations. They were forced to close the information center in Tehran. The Iranian authorities refused to extend visas for two German lecturers in Isfahan and Tehran. The cultural section of the German embassy also faced some problems. Because of the security concerns of some Iranian participants at the time of Ahmadinejad, the cultural sector canceled cultural programs.

The presidency change in Iran clearly had an influence on intercultural dialogue activities. Two important points must be added to this conclusion, however. Firstly, at the time of Ahmadinejad, it was difficult to conduct intercultural dialogue, but not impossible. He did not cause the intercultural dialogue activities to stop entirely. Secondly, Ahmadinejad himself was not directly responsible for closing down the ICDAC. It has been discussed in 6.1.2 that the ICDAC officially started to merge into two organizations (one after the other) late in Khatami's presidency following the decision of Khatami's team. ICRO, which was committed to merging the ICDAC with itself, did finally stop staff of the former ICDAC working. The president had some power over ICRO, but he did not manage it directly. The ICDAC was therefore not affected directly by Ahmadinejad, but it did not work during his presidency.

Chapter 6 has been a major chapter in this research. It gave a comprehensive and complete image of the Iranian and German actors of intercultural dialogue, their structure, aims and activities. The analytical points of this chapter are used to explore the specific characteristics of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany in the next chapter. The next chapter further presents discussions on the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany.

Chapter 7: Analysis of the Characteristics of Intercultural Dialogue

Chapter 7 presents arguments to analyze four characteristics of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany from 1998 to 2013. It contains three subchapters. 7.1 presents reasons for these characteristics. 7.2 deals with answering the research question by presenting arguments on how and in which regards intercultural dialogue could achieve the aims of German and Iranian foreign cultural policy towards each other. Chapter 7 closes with a summary in 7.3.

7.1 Analysis of the Characteristics of Intercultural Dialogue

Activities which were undertaken by the German and Iranian implementing actors in the framework of intercultural dialogue have four specific characteristics, as the results of chapter 6 show. They are 1) the active role of German actors in implementing intercultural dialogue activities for Iranian and German participants; 2) a tendency of Iranian implementing actors to accompany intercultural dialogue activities which were implemented by German institutes; 3) new and advanced forms of intercultural dialogue that are not limited to seminars and meetings between Iranian and German participants; 4) a multiplicity of intercultural dialogue activities in educational and academic fields; and 5) the effects of the presidential change in Iran. This subchapter will analyze why and how these characteristics appeared.

The points which were summarized in chapter six illustrate different dimensions of the atmosphere of intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany. Some of these points suggest that some political tensions have influenced intercultural dialogue activities between the two countries. This is discussed with more facts in 7.1.1. Nevertheless, major differences exist between the structures of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy, which consequently influence the intercultural dialogue activities; further discussions are presented to explain this analysis in 7.1.2. Iranian and German cultural organizations also have different organizational efficiencies which shape the way they implement intercultural dialogue activities; more arguments to discuss this point follow in 7.1.3.

7.1.1 Intercultural Dialogue as a Hostage of Politics?

From 1998 to 2013 a variety of intercultural dialogue activities under the discourses of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”, “interfaith dialogue” and “dialogue among civilizations” were implemented. Nevertheless, the number of and opportunities offered by the intercultural dialogue activities were not the same in all years. From 1998 to 2005 there were fewer political tensions in the relationship between Iran and Germany than from 2005 to 2013. It can generally be said that political tensions took the intercultural dialogue “hostage”, as one of the participants of the study formulated it (Nouripour, personal communication, 2014). It is significant, however, that cultural activities like intercultural dialogue have been a reason to keep the door open to negotiate with Iran over controversial issues like nuclear technology. Some participants of the study emphasized that point.

This subchapter argues in more detail on political issues and tensions which influence the implementation of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany. The Iranian domestic clashes which shape the intercultural dialogue activities are presented in 7.1.3.1. The cautious approach of the German state towards Iran, for instance towards Ahmadinejad’s foreign policy objectives, is analyzed in 7.1.3.2. Intercultural dialogue as an opportunity to open the door to political negotiations with Iran between 1998 and 2013 is also analyzed in 7.1.3.3.

7.1.3.1 Iranian Domestic Clashes

Domestic clashes between the democratically legitimated sector and religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state influenced the relationship between Iran and Western countries, including Germany. The change of presidents also played a role in reducing intercultural dialogue activities between 1998 and 2013. It has been mentioned in 5.2.1 that Iranian participants in this study did not have anything specifically against Iran's relationship with Germany. They perceived Germany as a trustable Western country, comparing it with Britain and France. But domestic clashes distracted the Iranian cultural actors from implementing intercultural dialogue activities in an organized and consistent way for Iranian and German participants for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the foreign ministry and the presidential office in Khatami's time were politically occupied with several crises, such as the chain murders,¹³¹ the attack on Said Hajjarian (in 2000),¹³² the ban on press media and arrests of journalists (in 2001).¹³³ Hence they could rarely concentrate on foreign cultural relations or specific Western countries in the realm of intercultural dialogue. This means that in those years when the young ICDAC was positioning itself among Iranian and international organizations as an implementer and supporter of the dialogue among civilizations activities, the Khatami administration was not focused on supporting or guiding it. Dialogue among civilizations thus became more like political rhetoric than cultural practice. It did play an important role in the speeches of Mohammad Khatami and meetings and negotiations of the foreign ministry and its think tank, IPIS, but it failed for political, and other, reasons, which will be discussed in 7.1.2 and 7.1.3.

Secondly, the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state generally had a more sympathetic relationship politically with the Ahmadinejad administration. It therefore found an opportunity between 2005 and 2013 to strengthen its own policies. Anti-Westernism, a focus on the nuclear energy, denial of the Holocaust

¹³¹ Chain murders refers to the killing of liberal and dissident authors and thinkers, which were partly done by the *Etela'at* [Iranian intelligence ministry] of Iran. The attack on Dariush Foruhar and his wife in 1998 attracted attention in Iranian society to this serial killing, which had begun in 1988. This issue was already discussed in 2.4.2.

¹³² Said Hajjarian, a reformist politician and an important member of Khatami's team, was shot in March 2000. His assailant was a member of Basij (Khiabany 2009: 113).

¹³³ Closures of the press media had already begun in 2000, when 21 newspapers closed down. This trend continued in 2001, when 47 press media including 16 dailies, 19 weeklies, and 7 monthlies were closed (Khiabany 2009: 113). As discussed in 5.2.1 and 6.1.3.1, the groups and organizations which are dependent on the religious sectors of the Iranian state, such as Basij and the judicial system, supported some attacks on reformists and put bans on the press media.

and challenging the legitimacy of the political existence of Israel were the main axials of the foreign policy of Ahmadinejad. Nevertheless, if these axials were not in harmony with the political views of hardliners or the leader, Ahmadinejad's administration would also face crisis, like the Khatami administration faced from 1997 to 2005. Attempts were made during Ahmadinejad's presidency to eliminate the dialogue among civilizations, like any other discourse which recalled Khatami's or reformist thinking. That is why the ICDAC systematically and for a bureaucratic reason (not having a specific budget) was closed down in the process of merging into ICRO. From the responses of the participants from ICRO in the research, like their reluctance to answer the questions or attempts to change the subject, it became clear that they were not politically in agreement with continuing cultural activities under the discourse of dialogue among civilizations, not because they had something against dialogue, but because it came from Khatami.

The facilities of the ICDAC, like the *Farmanyeh* building, would probably have served Ahmadinejad's idea of "global management of the world", but some clashes between the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state and Ahmadinejad prevented this from happening. As mentioned in 6.1.2.2, in 2008 Ahmadinejad tried to merge the former ICDAC into the International Center for Globalization Studies (ICGS). This center mainly concentrated at the time of Ahmadinejad on developing his idea of global management. Hence the target of this executive order was to use the *Farmanyeh* building for these aims, because at that time the ICDAC had been eliminated as an organization and there was no point in merging it with a third organization. The clash between ICRO, the host organization of the former ICDAC, and the ICGS over owning the *Farmanyeh* building continued until 2011, when a clash between Ahmadinejad and the leader became publicly apparent. Ahmadinejad fired the foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, who was initially suggested by the leader for this position, in late 2010. This action can be perceived as a "dispute with the leader" and a domestic power struggle (Warnaar 2013: 47). In this context, ICRO's director in 2011 let the ICGS know that, under no circumstances or president's executive order, would the *Farmanyeh* building be given to the center for globalization.¹³⁴ Hence in the domestic political clash between the late Ahmadinejad administration and the

¹³⁴ But *Farmanyeh* was given to the presidency at the beginning of President Rouhani's time.

religiously legitimated sector, the ICDAC did not serve Ahmadinejad's idea during his presidency.

Thirdly, the clash between the cultural section of the Iranian embassy and Rayzani did not happen just at the time of Khatami. The conflict existed before and after his presidency and reflects the duality of Iranian foreign cultural policy. But in Khatami's time, because the director of Rayzani was suggested by the president himself and the embassy had more in common politically with the president, there were fewer conflicts to their respective organizations working together.

Fourthly, the limitations on civil society and the media in Iran are rooted in the political influence of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state on the Iranian parliament and judicial system. Homa Katuzian meanwhile argues that Iran is a "short-term society" compared with European societies, as discussed in 2.1. The weak civil society and media of Iran can be understood in this context. But according to the results of this study, organizations such as Kanun and the Islamic Center of Hamburg have been working for a long time, but the social infrastructure of Iranian society has not been prepared to let civil society play a greater role in intercultural dialogue. The short-term society alone is not the reason for the weakness of civil society and the media in Iran. The imposition of restrictions on the reformist Iranian press media, which reflect dissent and liberal views, is political. Their right to freedom of speech must be protected legally by the Iranian parliament and the judicial system. As the domestic crisis at the time of Khatami shows, however, both of these institutions are under the authority of the religious sector of the Iranian state and work in the interests of the leader.

For the four reasons discussed in this section, it can be argued that the Iranian discourses of intercultural dialogue were affected by the clashes between the democratically and religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state. This led to dialogue activities being implemented under the discourse of "dialogue among civilizations" for a short time. It also led to interreligious dialogue activities being taken out of the hands of the international office of the culture ministry (from the second half of the 1980s). Furthermore, the change of presidents from Khatami to Ahmadinejad had an impact in that the intercultural dialogue cooperation between the two countries generally decreased.

7.1.3.2 Cautious Position of Germany towards Iranian Nuclear Program and Official View on Israel

Mohammad Khatami, in his speech to the 58th general assembly of the UN in 1998, presented a peace-seeking image of Iran through his suggestion of the idea of dialogue among civilizations. It coincided with the beginning of Gerhard Schröder's period of office as German chancellor, who paid significant attention to the federal government's role in the foreign cultural policy of Germany, as mentioned in 5.1.2. Also, both Ronald Herzog, who was German president in 1998, and Johannes Rau, who was the president from 1999, had an encouraging view towards the idea of dialogue with other/Muslim countries. In such an atmosphere, the cultural relationship between the two countries improved up to 2005. For instance, Khatami and Rau met in Weimar and inaugurated the *Hafiz-Goethe* memorial in 2000. The DAAD at that time established German lectureships in both Tehran and Isfahan. The Grüter family implemented diverse activities between Iranian and German pupils, with the support of Rayzani and other German cultural actors. Nevertheless, at the time of Khatami some German cultural actors still had concerns about establishing serious intercultural dialogue activities with Iran. A former general secretary of ifa (Maaß, personal communication, 2015) mentioned in an interview that, in order to invest in cultural dialogue activities with a country, it was important to have an approach for the future. With regard to Iran, he could not be sure about the future. What happened during the time of Ahmadinejad proved to him that he was right not to risk such cultural investment.

The beginning of the presidency of Mahmud Ahmadinejad (August 2005) roughly coincided with the beginning Angela Merkel's term as chancellor (November 2005), when Horst Köhler had already been elected as German president a few months earlier (July 2004). In his first speech to the 62nd general assembly of the UN, in contrast to Khatami, Ahmadinejad presented a revolutionary image of Iran. He emphasized that Iran had a right to develop a civil nuclear-power program. No Iranian president before him had involved himself publicly in nuclear power affairs. The nuclear issue is usually considered by the leader and the Supreme National Security Council, whose members are appointed by the leader himself (Warnaar 2013: 137-135). The speech was an initial signal to strengthen the idea that Ahmadinejad's administration generally shared a similar political view to that of the leader. The leader encouraged Ahmadinejad's approach to the nuclear

issue. In this trend, both Ahmadinejad and the leader used the nuclear issue “to stigmatize reformists, depicting them as defeatists willing to negotiate away Iran’s interests” (Chubin 2015). In April 2006 Ahmadinejad announced that Iran had managed to enrich uranium to a level which is needed to make reactor fuel (Security Council Report 2017: 15). His words aroused concerns among the international powers. They started to negotiate with Iran. The failure to convince Iran to stop its nuclear power program resulted in new economic sanctions against Iran. In 2006, draft resolution 1737 was prepared by the UN Security Council (Security Council Report 2017: 14). Resolution 1737 was finalized in 2007 (p.15). In 2008 a new resolution, No. 1803, was concluded in the UN Security Council, setting more economic sanctions against Iran (p.10). In reaction to this international response, Ahmadinejad tried to attract the attention of South American, African and Muslim countries to support Iran’s nuclear power project. In this regard he had some success. For instance, in May 2010 a declaration to support the Iranian nuclear program was signed in Tehran by the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Brazil (Warnaar 2013: 148-149). Nevertheless, besides political satisfaction for Ahmadinejad’s administration, this declaration did not help the Iranian economic situation, which was in poor shape under the sanctions.

Yet it is important to see what Germany’s reaction to Iran was politically. In the years 1977–1978, 1987–1988, 1995–1996, 2003–2004, 2011–2012, Germany was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and therefore did not play a direct role in any sanctions against Iran between 2006 and 2011. Indirectly it tried to solve the conflict between the UN and Iran. For instance, in June 2006 the permanent Security Council members plus Germany, known as EU 3+3, offered Iran a “package of economic cooperation” in return for “suspension of Iran’s uranium enrichment”. But Iran did not accept this offer (International Business Publications/Ibp 2005: 39). This behavior of Germany, as part of EU 3+3 or active in the Security Council, refers to what was discussed in 2.4.1 about the international policy of Germany after World War II. Because of its experience of starting that war, Germany follows a motto of “never alone”. This political behavior nevertheless influenced its cultural policy towards Iran, too. It has been discussed in 5.1.2 that some German participants refused to apply when approached in this research to explain their views about German foreign cultural policy regarding Iran. Their reason was that any decision in this regard was

postponed to observe the results of the nuclear deal of the Group of P5+1 and the Iranian delegation of Rouhani in Switzerland.

The next issue which created concerns for the German side to set a cultural policy towards Iran was the radical rhetoric of Ahmadinejad towards Israel. Ahmadinejad in the first year of his presidency attracted the attention of the international media and powers to the issue of Israel and Palestine. His view again was not that far from that of the leader. In his speech at the “The World without Zionism” conference in Tehran, Ahmadinejad quoted a statement of Ayatollah Khomeini that Israel should be “wiped off the map”. This statement drew a critical response from the Western countries and the UN (International Business Publications/Ibp 2005: 50). Referring to the discussion in 2.4.1, Germany has followed the specific motto of “never again” in its international policy since World War II. Because the Holocaust is part of Germany’s history, it also reacted to the Iranian president’s radical rhetoric against Israel. This issue stopped common meetings of German political actors with IPIS, for instance, as discussed in 6.1.3.2. It also simultaneously decreased the interest of the intercultural dialogue section of the German foreign ministry in improving cultural activities with Iran. Consequently the budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue towards Iran was cut, as discussed in 6.2.1.3.

Germany’s cautious approach to nuclear power and the anti-Israeli rhetoric of Ahmadinejad and consequently limiting its political relations with Iran is understandable. Nevertheless, restricting intercultural dialogue with Iran for political reasons seems to challenge the philosophy behind the European-Islamic cultural dialogue project. If it was initiated to promote the cultural relationship between Germany and Muslim countries, including Iran, then it should not stop or be suspended until such time as political relations are normalized. This situation is explained by a representative of the German parliament as “taking intercultural dialogue as hostage of the sanction”:

“There is a mood (in German side), if there is trouble with nuclear power of Iran, there should be more boycott. And there are more sanctions. And there is a broad mood to take intercultural dialogue as hostage of the sanction too... I would not say this is a formula for any conflict in the world, but with Iran I don’t see the necessity of interrupt any intercultural relations” (Nouripour, personal communication, 2014).

That being said, suspending intercultural dialogue activities with Iran was not something that all German authorities and cultural actors agreed with. For instance, talks with staff of the cultural section (Tier, personal communication, 2015; Graf, personal communication, 2015) and a former German ambassador in Iran (Bernd, personal communication, 2015) revealed that many attempts were made to continue cultural relations with Iran, even in difficult times, by applying different budgets of the foreign ministry or continuing the activity of the DAAD and the Goethe Institute even when they were not officially open in Iran.

To sum up the points relating to Germany's cautious position towards Iran, it should be emphasized that, even if some diplomats, representatives of the German parliament, authorities and directors of cultural organizations decided to suspend intercultural dialogue with Iran for political reasons, or did not focus on Iran, this decision did not practically lead to the dialogue being stopped. Arguments on the integrated foreign cultural policy of Germany and the high organizational efficiency of German cultural actors, which were discussed above, present reasons why German cultural actors appear to be successful in intercultural dialogue with Iran.

7.1.3.3 Keeping the Door of Negotiation Open through Intercultural Dialogue

It is discussed above that some participants of this study refused to talk about intercultural dialogue with Iran on the eve of nuclear negotiations (2013). Furthermore, intercultural dialogue with Iran has not been a focus for organizations like ifa because of some political concerns regarding Iran. Nevertheless, despite all these political considerations, some German diplomats appreciated the opportunity of "being in contact with Iran". Some of the interviewees of this study, who were directly in charge of organizing the European-Islamic cultural dialogue (Kreft, personal communication, 2015; Mulack, personal communication, 2016), believe that maintaining cultural activities with Iran has been an advantage for Germany over other Western countries, because it gives Germany a better opportunity to work with Iran internationally on important issues. Germany has had an opportunity to "know

Iran” through different actions, including intercultural dialogue activities. This is significant comparing it with a country like the USA, which not only officially has no diplomatic relationship with Iran, there has also been no substantial cultural or academic cooperation between the two countries in the last decades. So in a case like the negotiations on the nuclear program with Iran, the USA has limited sources for its decisions. It has access to information from its lobbies and think tanks, which have “a lot of exile Iranians”, so the information comes from sources which are against any relationship with the Iranian state. Germany’s sources of information are more up to date. It is already in contact with Iran through several cultural organizations that work with Iranian partners. Even the foreign ministers of the two countries can exchange views, when necessary, on the sidelines of UN meetings.

Consequently, it can be concluded that intercultural dialogue activities, among many others taking place between Iran and Germany, have had a role in keeping the door of negotiation with the Iranian state open over important issues like the nuclear program between 1998 and 2013.

7.1.2 Different Structures of Iranian and German Foreign Cultural Policy

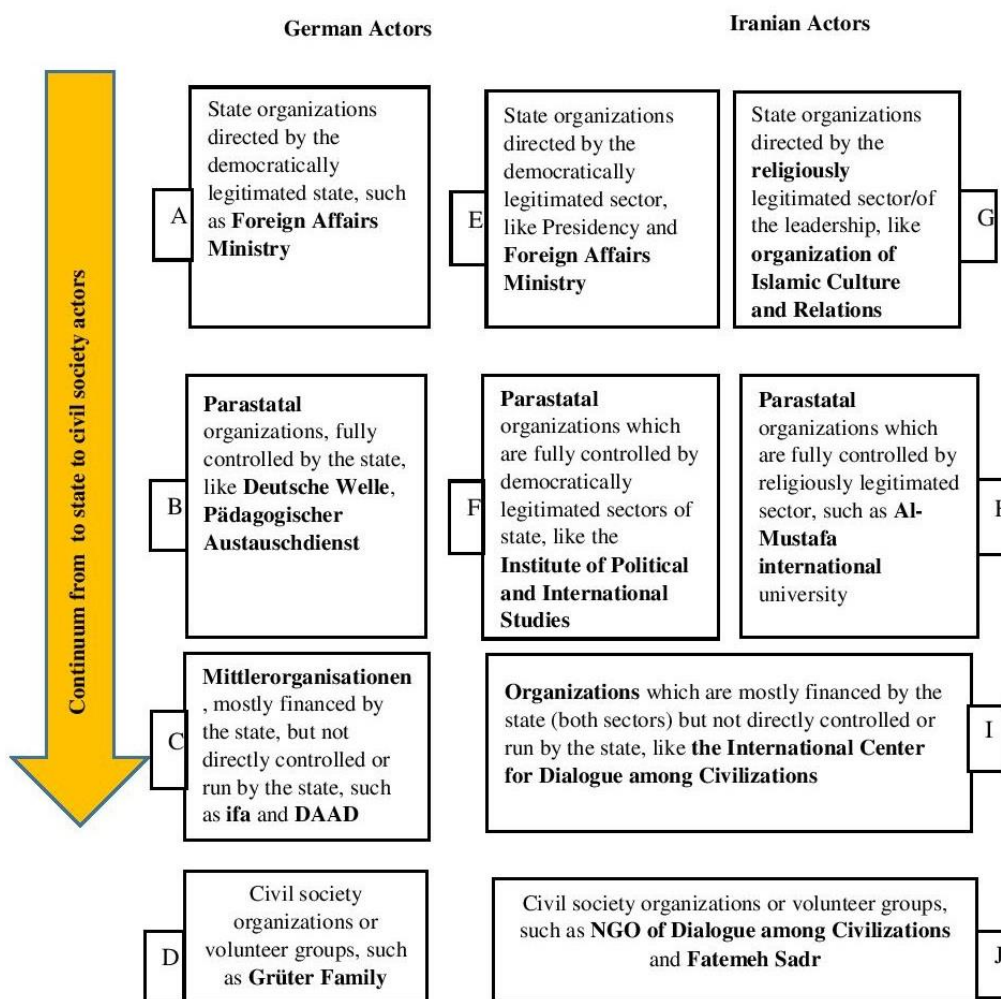
Foreign cultural policy generally appeared as a system of principles to guide the governments’ decisions regarding their cultural image abroad. For Germany, it became important after World War II to have a new cosmopolitan cultural image. It worked to make an image that depicts Germany (the German nation) as different from the Nazi ideal. Moreover, in the post-9/11 period, Germany cared about making a friendly and dialogue-oriented image for itself specifically towards Muslim countries. The main aim was to contribute to peace and prevent terrorism. For Iran, an Islamic and revolutionary image of Iran/the Iranian nation became important after the Islamic Revolution. It attempted to create an image of Iran that was different from what the Pahlavi dynasty tried to represent. In the post-Iran-Iraq War period, Iran has changed its foreign cultural policy objectives and pursued some pragmatic aims in international relationships, specifically with Western countries. Hence both Iran and Germany have a common point in their foreign cultural policy, which is to represent their countries culturally abroad. Nevertheless, there are still some differences between them.

This subchapter presents arguments to highlight the differences between the Iranian and German foreign cultural policies regarding their relationship firstly with their respective government (in 7.1.2.1), secondly with civil society (in 7.1.2.2), and thirdly with their diplomatic system (in 7.1.2.3).

7.1.2.1 State and Foreign Cultural Policy

Germany and Iran have different political systems, as was explained in 5.1.1 and 5.2.1. The structure of the political system in West Germany after World War II became that of a federal republic. After the unification of East and West Germany in 1990, East Germany adopted the political system of West Germany. Together they again constituted the Federal Republic of Germany. The state in this system resulted from legitimized democracy, for instance through the election of members to the *Länder* and federal parliaments. In contrast, the Iranian political system is not simple. The Iranian state has two legitimated sectors. The first is legitimated by democratic process, such as electing members of the parliament and the president by the people. The second sector of the Iranian state has a religious/authoritarian legitimation. This sector is constructed via the Shi'a Islamic theory of *Velayat-e Faqih*. The head of the religiously legitimated sector is the leader. Therefore it is clear that the relationship of the Iranian cultural actors to the Iranian state is not similar to that of the German cultural actors to the German state. The relationship of Iranian actors to the democratically legitimated sector must be differentiated from their relationship to the religiously legitimated sector. Figure 12 illustrates a typology of Iranian and German organizations and institutes which have implemented foreign cultural activities:

Figure 11. The Iranian and German cultural actors categorized according to their relationship to their state, compiled by the researcher



Source: by the researcher

Figure 12 shows the German actors on the left in boxes marked A, B, C and D. Box A shows the German actors that are more dependent on the German state. It contains organizations which are controlled by federal government, for instance the foreign ministry. A list of state organizations which directly or indirectly play a political guiding role in German foreign cultural policy was presented previously in 5.1.2. The foreign ministry has played a key role in German foreign cultural policy compared to other state organizations, specifically through its department of culture and communication. In some cases it directly implements cultural activities, such as holding conferences or inviting international groups to discuss specific issues. Basically, however, it works closely with parastatal organizations, *Mittlerorganisationen*, private institutes and groups which assist it in implementing cultural activities abroad. In box B are institutes which are categorized as parastatal organizations. Organizations of the PAD, which is governed by the *Kultusministerkonferenz* (KMK), are an example of this type, as

discussed in detail in 6.2.5.5. Parastatal organizations are not completely under the authority of the state. They are initiated by the state to contribute to specific issues such as education and mass communication, but they are organized by people outside the state. Box C of figure 12 shows *Mittlerorganisationen*. These institutes are quasi non-governmental institutes. They receive part of their funds from the German state and part from other sources, for instance from the *Länder*. Their board of trustees and directors are mixed with members of state, authorities from the *Länder*, academics, artists and other individuals. The *Mittlerorganisationen* have attempted to keep decisions about their activities and projects independent from the German state. The DAAD is an example of this type, which was discussed in 6.2.2. Box D of figure 12 presents a type of cultural actor which has the least dependency on the German state compared with other actors. Institutes which are governed by the church, such as the EKD, are in this category. Although church-based institutes get part of their funding from the German state, their directors are loyal to the rules and aims of the Evangelical or Catholic churches of Germany. Private groups or volunteer individuals are also included in this category. The Grüter family is an example of this type. Its activities were discussed in 6.2.5.7.

Iranian cultural actors are presented in boxes on the right side of figure 12 from E to J. Because the Iranian state has two sectors, boxes E and F illustrate those organizations which are dependent on the democratically legitimated sector, and boxes G and H those which are dependent on the religiously legitimated sector. As discussed in 5.2.2, there are a number of organizations which are governed fully by the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state. Box E shows this type of organization. The presidential office and foreign ministry have a key role compared with other actors of this type in Iranian foreign cultural policy, as the results of this research show. Parastatal organizations that are dependent on the democratically legitimated sector, as box F presents, have played a role in implementing foreign cultural activities too. For instance, the think tank IPIS can be categorized in this type.

Box G of figure 12 illustrates Iranian state organizations which are dependent on the religiously legitimated sector. A list of organizations of this type is presented in 5.2.2. The main example of this type is ICRO. ICRO is governed mostly under the authority of the leader, although its budget comes from the Iranian parliament.

Also, just two members of the higher council of ICRO are ministers, representing the democratically legitimated sector. The rest of the members of the council represent the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state. Box H in figure 12 shows parastatal organizations which are dependent on the religiously legitimated sector and play a role in implementing cultural activities abroad. It is hard to categorize any Iranian organization as this type. The only example which was observed in the field study was the *Al-Mustafa* international university of Qum. It is directly under the authority of the leader, but it is managed by theologian academics. However, it is questionable to call a university a parastatal organization, because then all universities in Iran and Germany would be parastatal since they receive funding from ministries and *Länder* authorities. The *Al-Mustafa* international university can be classed as a parastatal organization here because it is dependent on a specific sector of the Iranian state, the religiously legitimated sector, to be involved in religious activities, including interreligious activities with other countries. Box I of figure 12 shows those Iranian organizations which can be categorized as *Mittlerorganisationen*. The ICDAC roughly fits this type. It received funds from the presidency but independently implemented cultural activities with some international partners. Box J of figure 12 illustrates civil society or volunteer individuals that implement cultural and intercultural dialogue activities. The dialogue NGO of Khatami and different projects which Fatemeh Sadr supported in the field of dialogue are the examples in this box.

Comparing the content of figure 12 illustrates that the German actors have a relationship to the (single-sector) German state and in this regard their activities have been integrated into German foreign cultural policy. Activities of state, parastatal and civil society actors have been coordinated by the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran, which is the only organization working on behalf of the German state thereat. *Mittlerorganisationen* such as the Goethe Institute, the DAAD and ifa, although they have differences in background, organization, budget, aims and status of relationship with the foreign ministry, have been informed about projects of the foreign ministry, which is the main guiding organization of German foreign cultural policy, on equal terms. There has been more or less the same opportunity to apply for the budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue for all of them, even volunteer groups such as Grüter. Therefore,

none of them had an advantage or disadvantage for being part of a political group or section of the German state.

In contrast to the German (single-sector) state structure, the Iranian dual-state structure is significant in figure 12. Iranian foreign cultural policy is set by the Iranian state, which consists of a democratically and a religiously legitimated sector. The Iranian state and parastatal organizations and civil society actors implemented activities under procedures of these two state sectors, but in some regards the duality of the system stopped them from functioning properly. That is why their activities can be said to have been fragmented in Iranian foreign cultural policy. For instance, the foreign ministry and consequently the Iranian embassy in Germany have the main authority to guide foreign, including cultural, affairs. But it does not have an open hand, because ICRO and consequently Rayzani are in charge of setting cultural activities and have a specific budget and the relevant means to do so. However, ICRO and Rayzani are not the sole authority for implementing cultural activities abroad, including in Germany. To act legally abroad, they are also dependent on the permission of the foreign ministry and the embassy. Meanwhile, none of these actors, the embassy or Rayzani have efficient coordination and cooperation to handle cultural activities in Germany. Each one argues that the other should be eliminated. Furthermore, some cultural activities of the ICDAC (like cooperating with organizations of Muslim countries) not only did not fit in the framework of the Iranian embassy's cultural work in Germany (like preparing travel by Iranian directors to film festivals in Berlin), it also did not fit with the activities of Rayzani (like supporting a traditional Iranian music festival in Berlin). It worked in a fragmented way to implement general activities with some international, including German, partners. The same problem could be seen in the work of other Iranian cultural actors. Although IPIS, press media, religious institutes such as the Islamic Center of Hamburg, the IID, the dialogue NGO of Khatami, and the ministries of education and technology implemented cultural, religious and academic activities with German partners, all these activities fitted into the foreign cultural policy of Iran in a fragmented way. In fact, the dual Iranian state constructed a foreign cultural policy into which Iranian cultural actors could fragmentarily fit their activities.

In summing up the points regarding the relationship between the state and the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany, it is important to highlight the integration of the actors of intercultural dialogue in the political culture. On the German side, despite the differences in size, age, budget and aims among the actors, those that are involved in foreign cultural activities generally are oriented on a single plan and purpose, which is determined and updated by the German foreign ministry. These actors are integrated in the political culture of a single-sector state. In Iran, meanwhile, the actors are fragmented because they are part of at least two different political cultures: some of them follow the aims of the foreign ministry, and consequently the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state, and some of them follow the aims of ICRO, and consequently the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state.

7.1.2.2 Civil Society and Foreign Cultural Policy

A greater number of German parastatal organizations, *Mittlerorganisationen* and civil society actors implemented cultural activities for German and Iranian participants than their counterparts on the Iranian side. Review of the history of Germany in 2.4.1 mentioned that, after World War II, German cultural institutes evaluated and changed to gain distance from the authority of the German state and become closer to the meaning of non-governmental and civil society. A reason for this change was a desire not to repeat what happened during the Nazi regime, when cultural instruments were used for racist government policies to represent the German nation as a superior nation in the world. An example of the institutes which tried to keep their distance from the German state in the post-war period is the Goethe Institute. Although some Iranian participants of this research perceived the Goethe Institute as part of the foreign ministry, it significantly concluded a contract with the foreign ministry in the 1970s governing its independency. Furthermore, unlike the DAAD and ifa, the Goethe Institute did not implement a specific long-term project relating to European-Islamic cultural dialogue. This shows that the Goethe Institute in all cultural matters, including intercultural dialogue activities, did not necessarily follow what the foreign ministry expected of it.

By contrast, the role of civil society in Iran is limited. Parastatal institutions with a dependency on the democratically legitimated sector of the Iranian state, like IPIS, did not implement cultural activities directly. They used the discourse of dialogue among civilizations in their meetings at a particular time. Parastatal institutions like the *Al-Mustafa* international university, which is under the authority of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state, did not have a strong role in implementing cultural activities with German partners. It simply accompanied a project which was funded by the DAAD. The ICDAC was the only example of a body that works as a *Mittlerorganisation* and implemented some cultural activities with German partners. But it had a short life. It was closed down after the presidency of Khatami. The cultural activities of the dialogue NGO of Khatami and the IID of Abtahi faced problems under Ahmadinejad, and specifically in the post-2009 presidential election period. Activities of volunteers like Fatemeh Sadr also faced limitations during the presidency of Ahmadinejad. The activities of the dialogue center of Imam Musa Sadr, which was established with the efforts of Fatemeh Sadr, concentrated on specific groups of society like teachers and parents. The members of the center avoided initiating discussions between religious and social groups because they did not want to endanger the life of the center for political reasons.

Directors and some members of both Rayzani and the ICDAC were aware of the lack of or weak presence of Iranian civil society and its disadvantages for developing cultural activities with German partners. The establishment of a new NGO of the Islamic Studies Foundation and renewal of the NGO of Amirkabir under the name of Hafiz by Rayzani between 2008 and 2013 indicate understanding of this gap. The ICDAC also steadily assisted NGOs and university communities to implement cultural activities; it has been mentioned that at least 100 NGO and university communities were in contact with the ICDAC before its closure in late 2005. Nevertheless, both Rayzani and the ICDAC did not use the full potential of the limited parastatal organizations and civil society that were already available. For instance, both had little or no cooperation with the institute for the intellectual development of children and youth (Kanun). In the context of the organizational structure of figure 12, Kanun could be categorized as a parastatal organization in box F. It has appeared as a partner in intercultural dialogue activities of the Grüter family, as explained in 6.2.5.7. The possibilities that Al-Mustafa international university and the Islamic Center of Hamburg as

parastatal organizations have had to establish a Shi'a professorship at Münster University, was not used by Rayzani. Perhaps there was no need to establish a new NGO to fill the gap of civil society at that point in time.

To sum up, a clear difference between Iranian and German foreign cultural policy is the engagement of civil society. It is much greater in German foreign cultural policy than in Iranian foreign cultural policy, and it is significant that even the Iranian cultural actors, like Rayzani, are aware of this difference. It has been observed that a director of Rayzani even established two NGOs to solve the problem of the lack of civil society engagement for a short time.

7.1.2.3 Diplomacy and Foreign Cultural Policy

Iran and Germany also have different structures to administer their diplomacy in the context of foreign cultural and intercultural dialogue activities. On the Iranian side, there are at least two types of experts that deal with foreign cultural activities. On the one hand there are experts and directors of ICRO and consequently Rayzani who are not trained diplomats. For instance, the minister of Islamic culture and guidance, who is the head of the higher council of ICRO and has a key role in appointing the directors of Rayzani, is not a trained diplomat. Some experts in this category may be addressed as “diplomat”, but they are not trained as such. As one of the participants in the study explained, having *darajeh* [rank] of a diplomat is different from having the “position” of a diplomat. The director of Rayzani has the lowest rank in the diplomatic system but inhabits the position of a diplomat (Khatibzadeh, personal communication, 2014). On the other hand there are trained diplomats of the foreign ministry who are in charge of Iran's relationship with Western countries, including Germany, but they do not have a close relationship with ICRO and Rayzani. Furthermore, both types of experts, whether untrained or trained diplomats, have not been fully aware of or in contact with available civil society or other state and parastatal organizations to implement the foreign cultural activities. These factors construct an inconsistent type of diplomacy that has an uneven structure and is administered on both domestic and foreign level by experts from both the democratically and religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state. Some cultural activities, such as film festivals, are managed by the cultural section of the Iranian embassy in Germany. Others, such as religious activities, are conducted by Rayzani.

Depending on the time and characteristics of the directors of Rayzani, some cultural activities such as music festivals would be conducted by Rayzani too. The Iranian diplomats in charge of analyzing issues on the relationship between Iran and Germany are rarely informed about cultural activities between the two countries. Both these experts had little contact with (or little information about the capacity of) the other cultural actors, such as the IRIB, Islamic Center of Hamburg and Kanun. This uneven diplomacy has some similarities with the fragmentation model of diplomacy discussed by Rebecca E. Johnson (Johnson 2011: 666) and in 3.2.5 in this research. A part of Iranian diplomacy that is mostly in charge of foreign cultural affairs is trained at domestic level.

The German side has at least two types of experts that deal with foreign cultural activities. The directors of the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran and commissioners of the intercultural dialogue section of the foreign ministry's department of culture and communication are trained diplomats. The second types of experts are the key members of the German *Mittlerorganisationen* who are professionally trained in their own field, whether it is the DAAD's academic exchange or ifa's internship exchange. Two of the commissioners and one of the ambassadors of the German embassy in Iran who were interviewed in this research have had experience of working in Muslim countries; three of them knew Arabic and two of them knew Farsi. The ambassador shared a wealth of contact information of other ambassadors and Iranian and German cultural actors with the researcher. Although the issue of foreign cultural policy is a task of the federal republic and specifically in the hands of the foreign ministry, there is close cooperation between actors at *Länder* and federal level relating to intercultural dialogue activities. PAD, for instance, is counted as an educational actor at *Länder* level, but it also cooperated in European-Islamic cultural dialogue. ifa is managed by some members of and received part of its budget from the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg and the city of Stuttgart. However, it also assisted the foreign ministry to implement some cultural projects in the context of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. Taking all these points into account, it can be concluded that the diplomacy behind Germany's foreign cultural activities has a coordinated model. It has some similarities with Johnson's concentration model, because it is administered by both authorities that have a role at *Länder* and federal level. The diplomacy model also has some similarities with the fusion model (Johnson 2011: 667), because it allows a large amount of space for the activity of civil society.

What is significant in this model, which is closer to “coordinated diplomacy”, is that the trained diplomats and professional cultural experts and authorities of the *Länder* cooperate in a harmonious way to implement cultural activities.

To sum up the points regarding the role of diplomacy in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany, the mixed model of Germany and the inconsistent model of Iran are significant. The uneven structure of diplomacy in Iran, which at political level is directed by the foreign ministry and at cultural level by ICRO, makes it practically difficult to achieve the aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy. The coordinated diplomacy of Germany uses different actors from the foreign ministry and civil society, but decisions are nevertheless made by the foreign ministry. The diplomats decide on general cultural projects, but to implement them they use assistance from civil society and the *Mittlerorganisationen*.

7.1.3 Different Organizational Efficiency

The intercultural dialogue activities have been shaped to a major degree by the organizational efficiency of the relevant Iranian and German organizations. An organization which tries to reach the aims of foreign cultural policy and intercultural dialogue should be able to create proper plans with the assistance of experts or have the capacity to promote specific expertise. It also needs to gather resources which are necessary to implement its plans; resources such as financial aids, labor and technology. Organizational efficiency is also about the ability of an organization to implement its plans using contacts, networks and cooperation with other organizations to achieve its aims with the minimum possible expenditure of resources. However, it is significant that, if the expertise of one cultural organization is different from the other, the incompatibility of their structures makes cooperation between them inefficient or impossible. Another factor of organizational efficiency is a certain and clear order of decision-making for an organization’s plans and projects. The long-term projects in such an order are not influenced or eliminated by the personal will of a director, but change according to a specific bureaucratic trend. Transparency of information on the financial sources and organizational structure of an organization has a key influence on the quality and quantity of its activities, too. Without regular reporting on the details, there would be no chance to assess whether an organization has achieved its aims or not. Moreover, without transparency of information, there would be no

possibility to compare the achievements of one organization with those of another.

7.1.3.1 Different Types of Expertise

The implementation of cultural and intercultural dialogue activities relies on the skills, knowledge, experience and expertise of employees or members of staff of Iranian and German cultural organizations. Expert employees are valuable to intercultural dialogue because they can help to overcome the challenges of their professional work, domestic bureaucratic problems and difficulties of working with other country.

On the Iranian side, the main cultural actors discussed in chapter 6 are not concentrated on one specific expertise but on a mixture of skills. The ICDAC, for instance, focused under its first president on diverse activities, such as philosophy, theater, and music, worked on the target groups of women, youth, small cities, and supported publications. At the time of the second president it considered academic investigation on issues of political science, art, religion, history, geography, environment, and philosophy, and supported NGOs and student associations and cooperated with academic institutes and universities. It thus appeared rather as a promoter and supporter of diverse cultural and academic activities than an expert in specific cultural activity. Rayzani is seen as a religious expert because it is a branch office of a religious organization, ICRO. However, as discussed in 6.1.1.3, it sometimes clashes with the cultural section of the Iranian embassy, based on the argument that it should be the only cultural state agent to contribute to Iranian cultural affairs in Germany. The assumption that *Rayzani* is a religious expert is therefore challenged by the organization itself. Nevertheless, based on what has been observed in the field study, Rayzani did not play a central role in coordinating the activities of the Iranian cultural actors that have the capacity to implement cultural activities with different expertise.

On the German side there are different types of expertise. The cultural section of the German embassy is observed in the field study to be a central coordinator of activities of different German cultural actors. The cultural section has assisted the DAAD with expertise in the field of university exchange, AvH with expertise in the field of higher education, the PAD with expertise in teacher training, the ZfA with expertise in German schools abroad, the Goethe Institute with expertise in

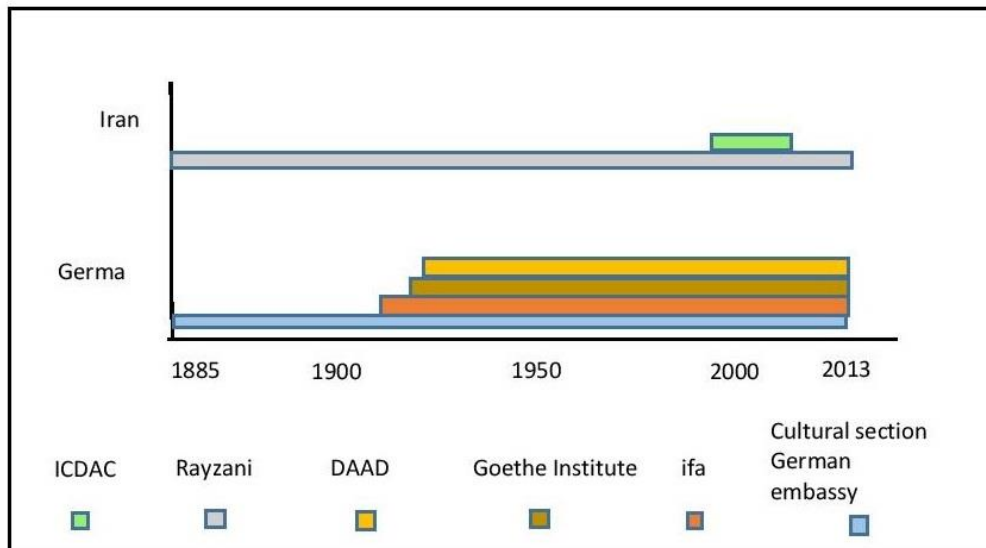
supporting German language, art and music, and ifa with expertise in art exhibitions and cultural exchanges with Iranian partners. It also supported the Grüter family in its pupil exchange and calligraphy projects and assisted the dialogue center of the Imam Musa Institute with preparations for German experts to travel to Iran in 2005 and 2010. Hence it can be concluded that the cultural section has appeared to be an expert in foreign cultural coordination.

The expertise of organizations which play a role in the implementation of cultural activities is a relevant factor in understanding how the German and Iranian states narrate their own culture, and which dimension of culture has priority for them in presenting their own nation. German cultural actors have a variety of expertise, from educational exchange to art exhibitions. It may suggest that Germany wants to show a cosmopolitan dimension of German culture, which also explains why the German side has been more active in implementing intercultural dialogue activities, given its greater/broader experience in different fields. Review of Iranian cultural actors suggests that Iran has a tendency to focus on just a few dimensions of its culture, mostly religious. It is no surprise, then, that the Iranian actors were the passive side in the intercultural dialogue activities between 1998 and 2013, since they do not have expertise in several fields.

7.1.3.2 Different Age of Organizations

How long an organization is active is also important for defining its organizational efficiency. The age of Iranian and German actors has differed significantly. Figure 13 compares the age of Iranian and German cultural actors.

Figure 12. Life span of Iranian and German cultural actors, according to their founding year



Source: by the researcher

As figure 13 shows, the ICDAC officially had seven years to implement cultural activities. The period is too short for a cultural institute to build a certain expertise for itself and an efficient network with other cultural actors. Rayzani, as indicated in figure 13, was established in its specific structure in 1994 and is still working today, but in principle it is continuing the cultural work of a cultural section that was formerly under the authority of the Iranian ministry of Islamic culture and guidance. The predecessor of both is the first office that was in charge of cultural affairs in the first Iranian embassy in Berlin, which was opened in 1885. The German cultural institutions that have been discussed in this research as the main cultural actors, as shown in figure 13, have a much longer lifecycle. The cultural section of the German embassy is rooted in the first cultural office, which was established in 1885. Clearly, the cultural section has changed structurally in some regards since 1945 and following the political change to the German state and changes in German foreign cultural policy. The next oldest cultural actor is ifa, because it has its roots in the old museum organization of 1917. The Goethe Institute, whose origins are in the DA institute, which was established in 1923, and the DAAD, which dates back to 1925, are the third and fourth oldest cultural actors in Germany.

The longevity of the German cultural actors can explain how projects such as the German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue of the DAAD and ifa's CCP project were able to continue. It can also explain why the Goethe Institute managed to

construct a new structure for working in Iran, despite not having an officially open branch office in the country.

Furthermore, as was discussed in 6.2.5.4, German churches and religious institutions have a history of experiencing cultural dialogue with the Muslim population, both through interfaith meetings and other events, from the 1970s. The German Islam Conference has also been established since 2006 to promote dialogue between the German state and Muslim associations. It helps to explain why the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” was not limited to rhetoric and produced some long-term projects by the German cultural actors.

The age or life span of organizations is relevant to explain the active role of the German actors in the intercultural dialogue activities. For instance, an old organization which has worked with Iranian and German participants for a long time would use the opportunity of a special project like “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” more easily and more productively than a young organization in Iran that is initiating intercultural dialogue under the discourse of dialogue among civilizations.

7.1.3.3 Financial Sources and Budget

Iranian and German cultural actors have received budgets and financial aid by different mechanisms. The cultural section of the German embassy receives its total budget from the foreign ministry. It seems that the department of culture and communication of the foreign ministry and the ambassador decide on how to spend it. Nevertheless, the cultural section and press section of the embassy can apply for other budgets from the foreign ministry. For instance, as explained in 5.1.2, division 600 of the foreign ministry’s department of culture and communication promotes a project called *Deutschlandbild im Ausland/DA*, which the press section of the German embassy applied for. A media dialogue was organized through this funding source in 2013. German cultural actors such as the Goethe Institute, ifa, AvH and the DAAD also receive an annual budget from different sources, mainly from the foreign ministry. However, they can also apply for a specific budget from the foreign ministry. In the case of European-Islamic cultural dialogue, all these *Mittlerorganisationen* applied to receive funds. The amount of this budget and assurance of receiving it differed from one *Mittlerorganisation* to the other. For instance, as mentioned in 6.2.33, the general

secretary of ifa at the time (2002) was not sure of receiving the budget, but after submitting a proposal and seriously promoting the project, was able to increase its portion of the budget from this source. A *Mittlerorganisation* like the DAAD had fewer difficulties obtaining this budget. Even some German diplomats emphasized in the interviews of this study that the academic exchange is a safe investment for German foreign cultural policy. Also, talking to participants of the research from the DAAD revealed that they are confident that their German-Arabic/Iranian university dialogue will not face financial problems in coming years. It can therefore be said that all German actors have received two types of financial resources: a fixed budget and a project-based budget. The European-Islamic cultural dialogue project-based budget has had some advantages, specifically in the context of intercultural dialogue. Firstly, it theoretically created a motivation for some cultural actors to put forward a strong proposal for intercultural dialogue to prove their efficiency and obtain part of the budget. It therefore also created competition between the actors to acquire the financial resources and retain them for the long term. Secondly, it guarantees long-term projects by the cultural actors in the field of intercultural dialogue. Continuation of intercultural dialogue projects has been mentioned in two projects of the DAAD, in 6.2.2.3.1 and 6.2.2.3.2, as a key to advancing participation in dialogue. Besides the advantage of the project-based budget for intercultural dialogue, it also has some benefits for the organizations themselves. The extra budget creates a new labor market for the organization, which can pay its new employees from the budget. Also, over a certain time it creates new expertise in an organization. For instance, as explained in 6.2.3.3, the CCP, which was established with the budget for European-Islamic cultural dialogue, was used structurally for the Cross Cultural Praktika Plus project, which is specifically for participants of so-called Arab-Spring countries.

None of the Iranian cultural institutes which have been investigated in this study published details of its budget and financial sponsors. When the directors and members of staff of the institutes were asked about the budget issue, they reacted with surprise or even anger. A common reply was that the budget is “confidential” and they have no right to talk about it. A search in different volumes of Iranian budget law produced information on the official budgets that ICRO and the ICDAC receive from the Iranian parliament. The details are shown in Appendix 1. But the organizations have received financial assistance from further state and

non-state sources, too. Therefore, with the available collected data, it is difficult to evaluate the mechanisms by which they receive financial resources. Two points are significant, however. Firstly, discourses of interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations have not been promoted as a cultural project by the Iranian political guiding actors, ICRO, the foreign ministry or the presidency, for Iranian cultural actors. By comparison, it should be recalled that in Germany, European-Islamic cultural dialogue was promoted as a project by the foreign ministry to German cultural actors. What happened in Iran was different. ICRO continued the work of the Hekmat Academy and the international office of the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance through a specific office, the Center for Interfaith Dialogue (CID). It is not clear how the CID received its budget, but it seems that it had a fixed annual budget from ICRO. Rayzani, according to observations in the field study, has a fixed budget and can apply for some specific budgets from different departments of ICRO. The dialogue among civilizations idea never led to a budget to which all Iranian cultural actors could apply directly for financial resources, but to a specific budget for the ICDAC. Nonetheless, the ICDAC gave an opportunity to some Iranian cultural actors to cooperate in projects or cooperated itself in their projects. For instance, the ministry of education and training participated in the project for a book of dialogue among civilizations, as explained in 6.1.2.3. Civil society and other Iranian cultural actors thus had few possibilities to compete over cultural activities in the context of interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations, because the budget for these specific issues was firmly allocated to the ICDAC, CID and Rayzani.

In summing up the points on financial sources and budget for intercultural dialogue activities, the availability of financial bases for cultural actors must be considered. An idea for developing dialogue opportunities among different cultures is important, but the actors implementing it need financial resources to do so. It seems that offering a project-based budget to cultural organizations has been an important reason for innovative and advanced intercultural dialogue activities being implemented on the German side. On the Iranian side, the contribution of a fixed budget to specific cultural actors may be a reason for the passive role of Iranian cultural actors in implementing intercultural dialogue activities.

7.1.3.4 Networking

Besides factors like expertise and the financial resources of an organization, networking at national and international level is a key factor in increasing the efficiency of an organization regarding implementation of intercultural dialogue. Networking in this context means to create a group of friends, contacts and key people, and keep the group active through regular communication for mutual benefit.

National networking among the Iranian cultural actors was non-existent or weak. Rayzani, as far as investigation in this study shows, was not engaged significantly with other Iranian cultural actors in conducting cultural activities. Nevertheless, depending on the personality and interests of the directors, some specific cultural organizations attracted the attention of Rayzani for cooperation. For instance, under Rajabi, Rayzani cooperated with the Institute for Human and Islamic Science of Hamburg on the translation of some religious books. When Imanipour was in office, the NGO *Amirkabir* was re-opened under the name of *Hafiz*, and the NGO Islamic Studies Foundation was established to assist Rayzani in its cooperation with German non-governmental actors. There was nevertheless only a small degree of networking, and it was limited to specific directors and not developed in a progressive order. Participation of Rayzani with the Islamic Center of Hamburg has also been observed on the level of “participation in some seminars”. Although most Iranian cultural institutes in Germany are active in the religious field, they did not assist¹³⁵ when Rayzani needed a non-state institution to conclude a contract with a German university to establish a Shi’a professorship. Instead it established a new NGO for this purpose. The cooperation between Rayzani and the cultural section of the Iranian embassy, as mentioned in 6.1.1, was likewise insubstantial.

The ICDAC did not engage significantly in networking with the Rayzani of Germany either. As mentioned in 5.2.2, the ICDAC organized a conference in 2003 in cooperation with ICRO and its Rayzani offices around the world. But Rayzani in Germany and the ICDAC did not cooperate on any project. It has been mentioned in the field study that a director of Rayzani at the time of Khatami personally requested an initial cooperation with the ICDAC, but he realized that Khatami’s administration and the ICDAC were not precise and clear about

¹³⁵ The reason that they did not assist may be that Rayzani did not ask for their help. There is no way to prove this, however, because the interviewees of the field study did not answer the relevant questions.

activities under the topic of dialogue among civilizations abroad (Rajabi, personal communication, 2016). Even the positive relationship between the ICDAC and the foreign ministry in Khatami's time did not lead to cooperation on any project for German and Iranian participants under the discourse of dialogue among civilizations.¹³⁶

International networking between Iranian and international actors has been observed as weak and fragmented. Because the Center for Interreligious Dialogue (CID) of ICRO managed to implement different long-term interfaith dialogue meetings with international religious actors all over the world, as was reflected in in 5.2.3, it is difficult to imagine that networking is an unknown concept in the organizational structure of ICRO. But Rayzani cooperated with some German cultural institutes and groups in fragmented way; at the time of *Rajabi*, for instance, with the HKW to implement music concerts and an art exhibition in Berlin. It also assisted the Grüter family both by connecting them with some schools in Iran and by introducing cultural institutes such as Kanun to them. The Loccum Academy was one of the perennial German partners of Rayzani to hold seminars on religious as well as human rights and later on nuclear issues. In terms of networking for the ICDAC, its familiarity with international institutes and organizations, including some German actors, was valuable. It is not clear, however, whether it would have used networking with them efficiently if it had had a longer lifecycle. Nevertheless, the point has been made that the ICDAC did not cooperate or express any interest in cooperation with those German cultural actors that fitted its cultural expertise. As mentioned in 6.1.2.3, it was interested in cooperating with AvH, but the expertise of AvH is in higher education. The ICDAC also had contact with the EKD, which became possible during the visit of an EKD delegation to Tehran in 2002, but it did not lead to any joint project. Because the ICDAC had an interfaith dialogue group, it is thinkable that the ICDAC and the EKD might together initiate a joint interfaith dialogue. The ICDAC did not use this particular contact, but the same visit resulted in networking between the IID of Abtahi and the EKD. Together they held an interfaith dialogue between Iran, Germany and Britain.

¹³⁶ The conference of Turan, which was organized by the office of documentation of the foreign ministry, was held in the context of dialogue among civilizations, as explained in 6.1.3.1. But according to information of an interviewee (Moujani, personal communication, 2016), it was not supported organizationally or financially by the ICDAC

Iranian participants in the intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany also illustrate different levels of interpersonal networking. For instance, Yunes Nourbakhsh, a lecturer at the University of Tehran who participated in the DAAD-funded peaceful change project, had great potential to network between Iranian and German actors, but he rarely used it to develop activities in the field of intercultural university dialogue. Firstly, he was an *imam* of the Mosque of Imam Ali of the Islamic Center of Hamburg when he was doing his PhD. In that position he participated in some interfaith dialogues in Germany. He secondly had strong ties with ICRO: When he set up the German studies department of the University of Tehran, he held a reception dinner in one of the main ICRO buildings in Tehran. Thirdly, he was a head of the International Center for Religious Studies of the University of Tehran, in which position he held some international interfaith seminars in Iran. Fourthly, he initiated the first department of German studies at the University of Tehran. It was at that time that he got in touch with Jochen Hippler, but at a conference which was held by the dialogue NGO of Khatami. After getting to know Hippler, Nourbakhsh invited him to speak at the official opening of the department of German Studies and then to participate in the peaceful change project. Given the potential of his contacts, it is important to understand why he did not play an active role in promoting intercultural university dialogue at the time or later. His reply to this question was that the structure of Iranian organizations does not support initiatives regarding dialogue. But his gradual success in his job (from 2013 to 2016 he was dean of the faculty of social science of the University of Tehran) suggests that he benefitted from his networking in promoting his position rather than intercultural dialogue in the university field.

As was discussed in 6.1.1.3, Homayoun Hemmati, a former director of *Rayzani*, and Nasr Hami Abu Zaid, were also in dialogue over philosophical issues in some sessions in 2005, but this contact did not result in successfully networking *Rayzani* with Muslim intellectual groups. Abu Zaid at that time actively participated in ifa's co-written book on dialogue between Muslim countries and the West.¹³⁷ It was mentioned in 6.2.3.3 that one of the reasons that Iranian authors were not invited to take part in this project was a lack of knowledge about Iran by the director of that ifa project. The meeting between the director of

¹³⁷ As mentioned in 6.2.3.3, the book on dialogue between Islam and the West was concluded in 2005, the book on terrorism in 2006.

Rayzani and Nasr thus clearly had the potential to network Iran in the ifa project, but it failed to do so. Unlike the two Iranian participants above, Fatemeh Sadr appeared active in networking. As mentioned in 6.1.3.4, she used her knowledge of Iranian and German society to promote a network, which in coming years led to some intercultural dialogue activities between the two countries. The invitation of Jochen Hippler to Iran, which consequently led to the peaceful change project of the DAAD, came about through her efforts. She also invited three dialogue experts to teach dialogue skills in Iran, and it was through her work that the dialogue center of the Imam Musa Institute was established.

On the German side, the networking of German cultural actors on a national level was strong. They also developed organized networking with Iranian cultural actors. The cultural section of the German embassy in Iran played a central role in communicating with German cultural actors as well as with individuals such as the Grüter family. The reception party of the ambassador on reunification day, as was explained in 6.2.1.3, indicates that the cultural section intentionally gave German cultural actors an opportunity to refresh networking. Divisions of the department of culture and communication of the foreign ministry had regular networking with the *Mittlerorganisationen*, parastatal organizations and private cultural groups, too. Cooperation among *Mittlerorganisationen* was also significant. The information center of the DAAD has been located since 2014 in one of the buildings of the Goethe Institute in Iran, as explained in 6.2.2.3. Furthermore, the Goethe Institute and ifa have concluded a deposit agreement regarding library exchanges, as explained in 6.2.3.3.

Regarding international networking, German actors generally cooperated actively with actors in Muslim countries; both the DAAD and the Goethe Institute, for instance, had fruitful cooperation with relevant authorities in Egypt. But they did not successfully develop sustainable networking with Iran. The Goethe Institute is still officially closed in Iran today, which makes cooperation with Iranian actors difficult for it. Although the DAAD is known by several Iranian universities and supported many intercultural dialogue activities of Iranian and German universities from 2005 to 2013, up to the end of 2016 it could not successfully cooperate with the ministry of higher education and technology to implement a common academic program. The level of information about Rayzani and the ICDAC among the German cultural actors was also not very high or relevant.

Interpersonal networking was important for German cultural actors. Martin Affolderbach from the EKD, who traveled to Iran in 2002, could not successfully connect with the CID of ICRO and the ICDAC, but did so with the IID of Abtahi. That networking led to a triangle interfaith dialogue between Germany, Iran and Britain from 2006 to 2008. The next example is that of Jochen Hippler, the director of the project for peaceful change, funded by the DAAD. In his co-written book project (from 2002 to 2006), he did not invite Iranian authors to take part in the project on account of his lack of knowledge about them. Having developed contacts with Iranian academic actors after visiting Iran in 2007, however, he initiated the peaceful change project with the cooperation of Iranian partners alongside other universities in Pakistan and Morocco. The final example is interpersonal networking in the project of interfaith dialogue of Paderborn University, funded by the DAAD. Mohagheghi, an Iranian researcher who worked at the German university, used her knowledge and experience of religious actors in Iran to add some Iranian universities to the academic exchange taking place between Paderborn University and a university in Lebanon. The role played by three Iranian PhD students, who were studying at that time at Paderborn University, in creating this triangle university interfaith dialogue should not be ignored.

The points discussed above generally suggest that part of the success of Germany in actively implementing intercultural dialogue between Iranian and German participants was down to the successful national and international networking of its cultural organizations and volunteer groups. If the clash between Rayzani and the Iranian embassy were not so great, they could likely also cooperate and use the cooperation of cultural organizations of both democratically and religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state to a much greater extent. Again, however, the weakness of the ICDAC in networking reflects a deeper problem of organizational efficiency among Iranian organizations. Most of the organizations investigated in this study failed to take networking seriously.

7.1.3.5 Incompatibility of Iranian and German Cultural Actors

The next issue in organizational efficiency is the incompatibility of the Iranian and German cultural actors. As has been discussed, structurally the Iranian and German cultural actors are under the authority of two essentially different states.

On the German side is a single, democratically legitimated state, which decides on its foreign cultural policy, whereas on the Iranian side is a duality of the democratically and religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state. A large number of German cultural actors that implemented cultural and intercultural dialogue activities for German and Iranian participants are from civil society. The main Iranian actors, meanwhile, had their basis in the Iranian state. Iranian civil society or organizations that were independent from the Iranian state had a limited opportunity to work in Iran, or they were short-lived. It is likely that the cultural actors on both sides could have overcome difficulties implementing intercultural dialogue if their origins had been more similar.

There are many actors of German civil society which assist in German foreign cultural policy. But for intercultural dialogue they need to work with counterparts in Iran which are also part of civil society. Because civil society is active in Germany and in Iran it is not, this results in an incompatibility of the organizational structures of intercultural dialogue actors.

Furthermore, the expertise of Iranian and German cultural actors is not compatible. As explained in 7.1.2.1, German cultural actors, besides the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran, have specific expertise in different areas, while Iranian cultural actors do not. Officially, Rayzani has expertise in the religious field, yet it tends to work in other cultural fields, such as the Farsi language, art exhibitions and similar. Those Iranian actors that have expertise in issues such as academic exchanges (like Iranian universities) or theater and art exhibitions (like Kanun) do not cooperate closely with Rayzani, although they would engage in the case of projects offered by the German cultural actors. At the same time, there are German actors that have expertise in topics such as academic exchange (like the DAAD) and theater (like the Goethe Institute). They work closely with the cultural section of the Germany embassy in Iran and cooperate even with those Iranian cultural actors that are not in close contact with Rayzani. Nevertheless, the interfaith dialogue between Iran and Germany is implemented by Iranian cultural actors (like Rayzani) and German cultural actors (like the Loccum Academy). Making some allowances, it can be argued that the organizational structure of Iranian and German organizations is compatible in their area of expertise regarding the issue of interreligious dialogue. Rayzani did not use the capacity of its own religious actors (like the CID of ICRO) fully in this

regard, however, and the German side clearly was not that focused on the field of interreligious dialogue.

Incompatibility of expertise and organizational origin is important in intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany because it resulted, in some cases, in misunderstandings between Iranian and German individuals who played a role in implementing intercultural dialogue. For instance, in the case of the Goethe Institute, despite being a *Mittlerorganisation*, it has been understood by some Iranian participants to be a state organization. A reason for this misunderstanding is that an organizational structure like a *Mittlerorganisation* rarely exists in Iran. Perhaps if the Farsi language center and the *Saadi* foundation could play a stronger role in holding Farsi language courses in other countries, including Germany, or if Kanun could institutionalize its role as an implementer of foreign cultural activities for youth in other countries, then the role of the Goethe Institute and its difference from Rayzani could be understood both by Iranian and German key figures.

The next example is the DAAD. It is an association of (nearly) all universities in Germany. The DAAD has been active for about one century in organizing academic exchanges between Germany and other countries, including Iran. The DAAD is a *Mittlerorganisation*. Its international academic projects are funded not only by the German state, but also by other, private organizations. Additionally, the DAAD receives a special fund from the intercultural dialogue section of the German foreign ministry to manage intercultural dialogue activities. Since there is no comparable university association in Iran, the DAAD had problems cooperating with some Iranian academic and university organizations and the ministry of higher education. That is because, firstly, the DAAD is not understood well by some Iranian authorities which have the ability to fund cooperation (like the ministry of higher education), and secondly, some Iranian authorities perceive the DAAD to be a state agency and not civil society, because of its state funding. Consequently, although the DAAD has undertaken constructive projects with Iranian universities, it still could not implement academic projects jointly with financial resources of Iranian partners.

Two of the characteristics of intercultural dialogue, which are discussed in chapter 6, indicate the active role of Germany and passive role of Iran in implementing intercultural dialogue activities. It is likely that if the organizations on both sides

were compatible, for instance the structure of the *Mittlerorganisation* also existed in Iran, then both sides could cooperate with each other more actively, or the Iranian cultural actors could implement some cultural activities more actively. The issue of the (in)compatibility of cultural organizations in Iran and Germany is mentioned in this study as an interesting result, although it needs to be studied more in future.

7.1.3.6 Different Role of the Directors of Cultural Actors

Generally, an organization implements activities based on the aims it strives to achieve and strategies it follows in its decision making. In both Iranian and German cultural organizations, besides the rules and regulations which were set according to the priorities of the Iranian and German state, their directors also played a key role in leading, forming and changing the activities. The role that German and Iranian directors played had some similarities and some differences.

On the German side, ifa had actively engaged in “European-Islamic culture dialogue” discourse between 2002 and 2008. According to data collected in this research, besides the role that the foreign ministry played in offering the relevant budget to ifa, the role of the general secretary in engaging in the project was significant too. Ifa’s implementation of cultural activities relating to South America in the period that it had a Brazilian-German general secretary is another indication of the significance of the director in cultural activities.

On the Iranian side also, the role of directors of Rayzani, who are appointed by the minister of Islamic culture and guidance and consequently by the democratically legitimated sector, is noteworthy. Rayzani, which organizationally is under the authority of the religious sectors of the Iranian state, therefore supported religious activities more than other cultural activities from 1998 to 2013. But because of the directors it had between 1998 and 2005, who were appointed by the Khatami administration, it implemented and cooperated in extra-cultural activities as well. The role of ICDAC presidents in determining its cultural activities has also been discussed in 6.1.2. At the time of the first president, activities were to involve different parts of Iranian society, such as children, youth, and women, while the main focus under the second president was on the academic field, for instance.

From 1998 to 2013, many Iranian and German cultural organizations which implemented intercultural dialogue activities changed their projects and plans. Changes to the plans of the cultural organizations indicate how critical the high-ranking officials were of their plans, how important the main issue of foreign policy and foreign cultural policy were to them, which topic would get better financial support, and so on. The personal interests and wills of the high-ranking officials also played a role in the changing projects of both Iranian and German cultural organizations. Nevertheless, an overall look at their projects and activities suggests that the changes in the practices of the German organizations were related more to main topics of the foreign ministry. Those of the Iranian organizations meanwhile illustrates that the weak intention of new high-ranking officials was a reason not to continue the practices of a predecessor, even if those projects fitted in with the main topics.

7.1.3.7 Transparency

Both the Iranian and German cultural actors put mechanisms in place to give others (ordinary people or other organizations, for example) opportunities to see their background, aims, structure and activities.. Nevertheless, the transparency of this information has differed between German actors and Iranian actors. The German cultural actors have a high degree of transparency of their information for the public, while the Iranian cultural actors have had a low degree of transparency or have concentrated on reporting details of their actions clearly to their higher authority, but not to people in general or other organizations in a public way.

To sum up, it can be concluded that the transparency of information has been significant in explaining the active or weak role of actors of intercultural dialogue in this study. Moreover, it enables German civil society, actors with no or limited dependency on the German state, for example, to obtain information about relevant projects and budgets and consequently apply for them. It also theoretically gives the general public a possibility to monitor and watch what type of activities are implemented with their taxes. The transparency of information also gives researchers a chance to assess the activities of cultural actors and analyze whether or not they have been successful in their tasks. In this research, if an Iranian organization was highly engaged in intercultural dialogue activities but did not reflect it in a publication, or no member of its staff talked about it, this

took the opportunity of monitoring and assessing it away from the researcher. It seems that the transparency of information on the German side has been one of the main reasons for the German actors being portrayed as the active part of the intercultural dialogue, because there has simply been more opportunity to access information about them compared with the Iranian side.

Subchapter 7.1 has analyzed the characteristics of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany from 1998 to 2013 based on the political reasons, different structures of their foreign policy, and their organizational efficiencies. The next subchapter is devoted to the arguments which will answer the main question of the study.

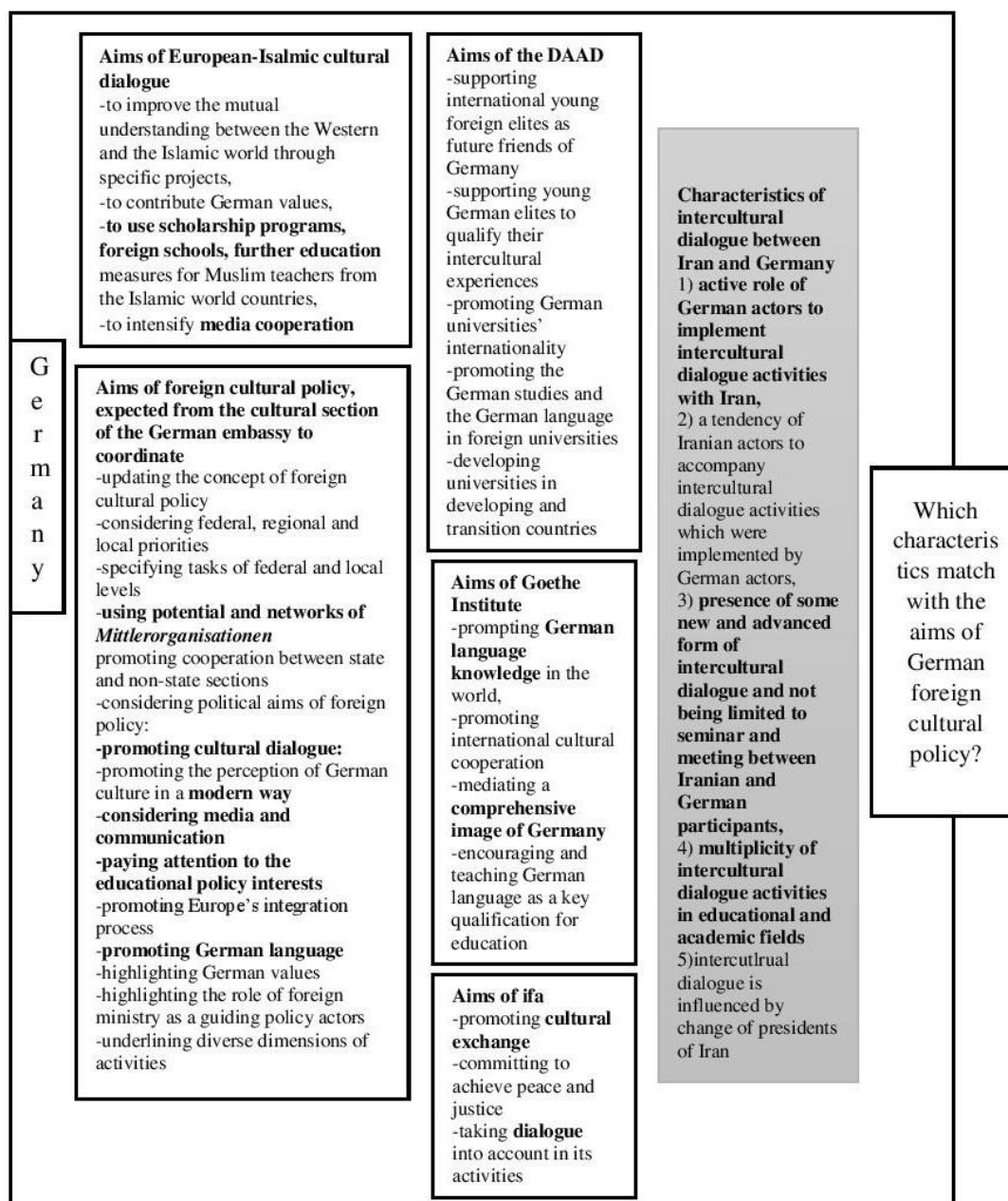
7.2 Answering the Research Question: The Role of Intercultural Dialogue in the Foreign Cultural Policy of Iran and Germany towards Each Other

This subchapter attempts to answer the main question based on the results and analysis of the study. The main question is: Which role(s) did intercultural dialogue play in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other, and why? Intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany, based on the results of the study which were concluded in 6.3.2 and reflected on at the beginning of this chapter, has four characteristics: firstly, German actors play an active role in it; secondly, Iranian actors showed a tendency to play an accompanying role; thirdly, the activities undertaken in the framework of intercultural dialogue have new and advanced forms; and fourthly, most intercultural dialogue activities took place in educational and academic fields. This subchapter will answer the question of which role intercultural dialogue, with these specific characteristics, has played in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany. To do this, the main question is divided into two parts. Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 present these questions and arguments to answer them.

7.2.1 Role of Intercultural Dialogue in German Foreign Cultural Policy towards Iran

To understand which role(s) intercultural dialogue played in German foreign cultural policy towards Iran, it is necessary to look again at what the aims of German foreign cultural policy generally have been, and which cultural actors have helped it to achieve its aims. Figure 14 visualizes these aims and presents the five characteristics of intercultural dialogue which resulted from this study.

Figure 13. Characteristics of intercultural dialogue based on the aims of German foreign cultural policy and aims of cultural actors



Source: the data comes from a combination of sources of (!!! INVALID CITATION !!! (Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 1-2, Auswärtiges Amt 2003: 5-9, Auswärtiges Amt 2004: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2005: 5-8, Auswärtiges Amt 2006: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2007: 5, Auswärtiges Amt 2008: 2, Auswärtiges Amt 2009: 6, Auswärtiges Amt 2010: 9, Auswärtiges Amt 2011b: 12, Auswärtiges Amt 2012a: 10, Auswärtiges Amt 2013a: 7, Auswärtiges Amt 2014: 15)), (!!! INVALID CITATION !!! (DAAD 2005: 8, DAAD 2006: 10, DAAD 2008: 10, DAAD 2009: 10, DAAD 2010: 12, DAAD 2011c: 15-16, DAAD 2012b: 16-17, DAAD 2013b: 16-17, DAAD 2014d: 16-17)), (ifa 2015a), (!!! INVALID CITATION !!! (Goethe Institut 2007b: 2, Goethe Institut 2008: 7, Goethe Institut 2010a: 2, Goethe Institut 2013a: 4))

As figure 14 shows, there are some aims of German foreign cultural policy, such as “promoting German values” or “considering political aims of the German

foreign policy”, which are too abstract to be assessed in a certain period of time or through a specific discourse or project of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. Nevertheless, this type of aims generally suggests that German foreign cultural policy pursues activities which dynamically represent Germany abroad in terms of culture. Some aims which are illustrated in figure 14 are clearly achievable and can be monitored to show whether cultural actors have attempted to achieve them or not. For instance, “potential and networks of *Mittlerorganisationen*” has been used because DAAD, the Goethe Institute and ifa played a practical role in foreign cultural activities on the one hand and in the project of European-Islamic cultural dialogue on the other.

The *Mittlerorganisationen* with their specific expertise could realize aims of German foreign cultural policy in different fields. The DAAD, for instance, worked to achieve the aim of “paying attention to the educational policy interests”. Ifa, among other actors, sets out to achieve the aim of “considering media and communication” through its media dialogue projects. The Goethe Institute, among other actors, attempts to achieve an aim of “promoting German language”.

As figure 14 shows, some aims of European-Islamic cultural dialogue are also too abstract to be monitored in a certain period of time within the study. For instance, it is difficult to measure whether the cultural activities which are considered in this study succeeded “to improve the mutual understanding between the Western and the Islamic world”, and specifically towards Iran, or not. Some of the aims are objective. The aim “to use scholarship programs, foreign schools, further education” was realized through the activities of the DAAD, among other cultural actors, with its academic exchange projects, while ifa, among other cultural actors, attempted “to intensify media cooperation” through its media dialogue activities.

In figure 14 the aims of German foreign cultural policy can be connected to the characteristics of intercultural dialogue. Three of the characteristics match these aims. A general aim of foreign cultural policy has been to actively represent Germany culturally abroad. The first characteristic suggests that the German actors did play an active role in implementing intercultural dialogue activities with Iran. The aim in German foreign cultural policy of “promoting the perception of German culture, in modern way” also seems to fit with the characteristic that

some new and advanced forms of intercultural dialogue activities were implemented. These new activities went beyond the traditional forms, like seminars and meetings, for Iranian and German participants. The German cultural actors have attempted to present German culture in a modern way. The aim in German foreign cultural policy of “paying attention to the educational policy interests” fits with the characteristic of the high number of intercultural dialogue activities in educational and academic fields.

Reviewing the aims of foreign cultural policy of Germany and its cultural actors reveals that, although some aims were abstract and general, some of them were clear and practically achievable. This simultaneously makes the implementation of cultural activities easier and assessment of the work of cultural organizations possible. It is not difficult to find a way to represent Germany through its academic activities worldwide, for example some strong organizations that create opportunities for different international pupils, teachers, professors and students to research and study. But an abstract aim like “representing German values” is a different matter. It is difficult to say what are German values and what are not. Equally, it is not easy to assess the work of a cultural organization when its aims are abstract. An organization can claim that it did a good job, but the aim is too abstract to be easily understood. The existence of such practical aims in German foreign cultural policy and German cultural organizations means that they can be analyzed in the context of the characteristics of intercultural dialogue activities. It seems that intercultural dialogue achieve some of the aims.

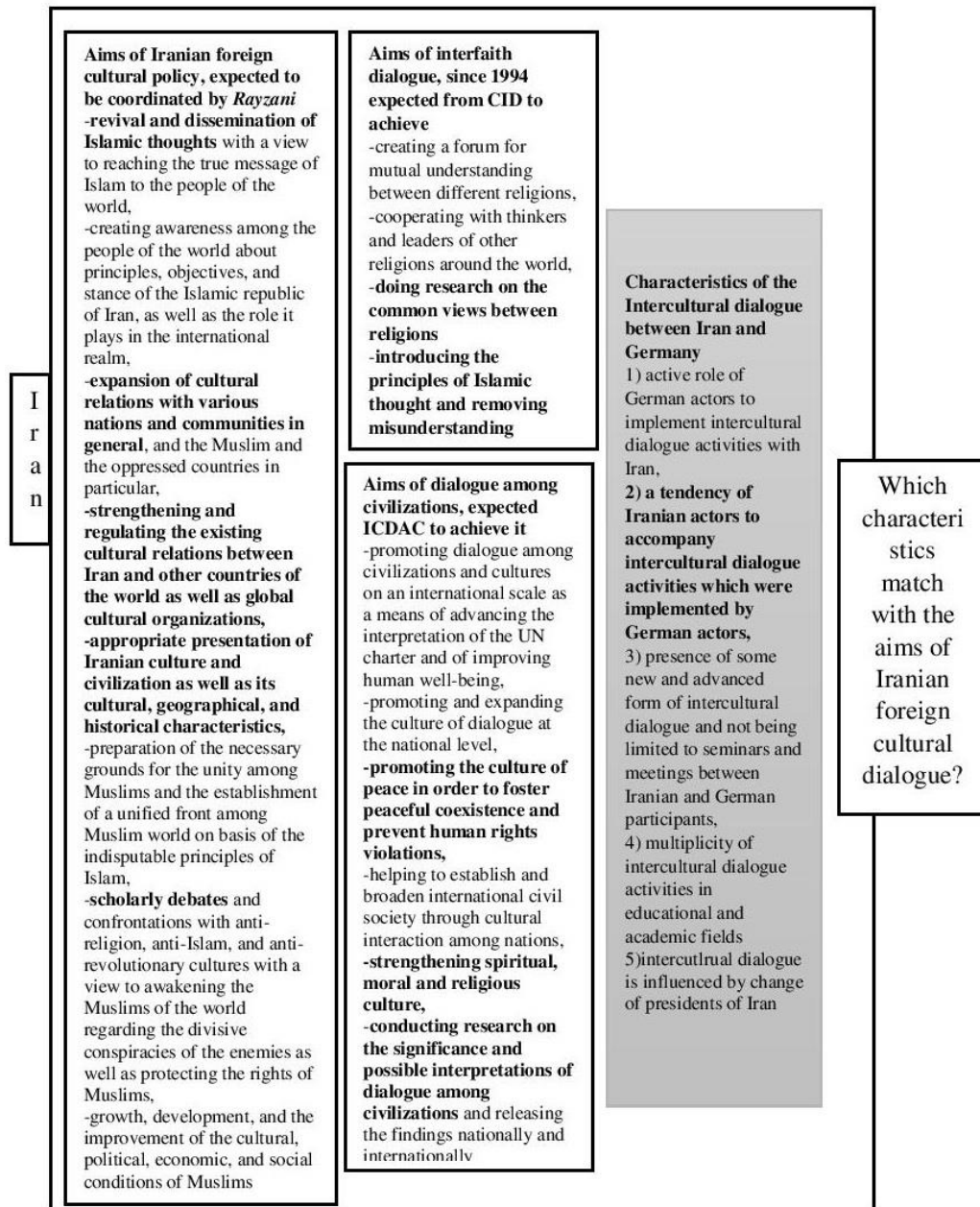
The intercultural dialogue activities which were implemented by German cultural actors between 1998 and 2013 did play a significant role in strengthening German foreign cultural policy towards Iran. Although German foreign cultural policy is not specific, clear and strategic regarding Iran, it still provided a suitable context for European-Islamic cultural dialogue discourse towards Iran, because it is constructed as a distinct element of German foreign policy. It is decided in an integrated way by a single democratically legitimated body of the German federal government, as discussed in 7.1.1. It is implemented by cultural actors including *Mittlerorganisationen* in an integrated way. Besides the integrated foreign cultural policy, the high organizational efficiency of the German actors worked as a factor to support the implementation of German foreign cultural policy through intercultural dialogue activities, as argued in 7.1.2. When the Iranian nuclear

power issue and statements of President Ahmadinejad against Israel were creating tensions between Iran and Germany, some key authorities were not inclined to engage in dialogue with Iran. That consequently influenced some dialogue projects or their financial sources, as argued in 7.1.3. Nevertheless, because intercultural dialogue projects of *Mittlerorganisationen* had a long timeframe and these organizations were convinced that using the opportunity for dialogue could strengthen their own issues, the political tensions did not dramatically reduce their activities with Iranian and German participants.

7.2.2 Role of Intercultural Dialogue in Iranian Foreign Cultural Policy towards Germany

To recognize which role(s) intercultural dialogue played in Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany, it is essential to look again at what the aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy have been generally, and which main cultural actors have helped it to achieve those aims. Figure 15 presents these aims and the five characteristics of intercultural dialogue which resulted from this study.

Figure 14. Characteristics of intercultural dialogue based on the aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy and aims of cultural actors



Source: the data comes from a combination of sources of (Rasmi newspaper 05.02.1996), (Tavassoli 2010: 89-90), (Geographical Researches 1377 [1999]: 143, ICDAC 2005b) Nejad Hosseini (1999: 2)

Figure 15 illustrates those aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy which the organization of Islamic culture and relations is expected to achieve. There are two types of the aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy. One is that the democratically legitimated sector tries to mediate a multi-cultural image of Iran abroad taking a generally pragmatic and diplomatic approach. In some regards it can monitor and influence foreign cultural activities, but it does not have access to specific means

and financial resources to achieve these aims, nor is it officially in charge of foreign cultural policy. The other type of aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy is pursued by the religiously legitimated sector, which intends to mediate a religious and revolutionary image of Iran abroad, as figure 15 shows. Muslim countries are the target group of most of the aims. Therefore they are not relevant as a measure of Iranian cultural policy towards Germany, which is not classed internationally as a Muslim country. Moreover, some of those aims, such as “revival and dissemination of Islamic thoughts with a view to reaching the true message of Islam to the people of the world” or “growth, development, and the improvement of the cultural, political, economic, and social conditions of the Muslims” are too abstract, which makes them difficult to evaluate in a certain period of time or through a specific discourse or project of interfaith dialogue or dialogue among civilizations. Nevertheless, these types of aims generally suggest that Iranian foreign cultural policy pursued activities which dynamically represent Iran abroad as a religious (or specifically Islamic or Shi’a) and revolutionary state. Nevertheless, some of the aims which are presented in figure 15 as aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy are achievable and can be examined whether Iranian cultural actors have attempted to achieve them or not. For instance, the aim of “expansion of cultural relations with various nations and communities in general” or “appropriate presentation of the Iranian culture and civilization as well as its cultural, geographical, and historical characteristics” are aims which seem to fit well with the aim of “promoting the culture of peace in order to foster peaceful coexistence and prevent human rights violations” of the ICDAC. Also, the aim of “scholarly debates and confrontations with anti-religion, anti-Islam” could be pursued by the CID, which is specifically in charge of Iran’s interfaith dialogue and has as one of its aims “introducing the principles of Islamic thought, and removing misunderstanding”. The aim of “strengthening spiritual, moral and religious culture” illustrates that the ICDAC also had a sympathetic approach to achieving the religious aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy. Moreover, the ICDAC’s aim of “conducting research on the significance and possible interpretations of dialogue among civilizations” and the CID’s aim of “doing research on the common views between religions” reveal a desire to realize an aim of Iranian foreign cultural policy, which is articulated as “scholarly debate”.

Returning to figure 15, there remains the question of whether the characteristics of intercultural dialogue match the aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy since it

generally aimed to actively present Iran as a religious and revolutionary state to the world but failed to do so, according to the analysis of its intercultural dialogue discourses in this study (the German actors played an active role, not Iran). It is nevertheless significant that, because Iranian foreign cultural policy aimed at “expansion of cultural relations with various nations and communities in general” and “strengthening and regulating the existing cultural relations with other countries of the world as well as global cultural organizations”, it made it possible, indirectly, for German foreign cultural policy to achieve some of its aims. That is because cultural dialogue has two partners; if one does not agree to enter into communication, the other partner cannot conduct it successfully. The characteristic of the tendency of Iranian actors to accompany intercultural dialogue activities which were implemented by German actors therefore fits the aims mentioned above.

The characteristics of implementing new forms of intercultural dialogue activities and of the frequency of intercultural dialogue activities in the academic and educational field do not fit with the actions of Iranian cultural actors. Nevertheless, the existence of highly qualified Iranian applicants in the academic projects of the German cultural actors on one hand, and the Iranian state’s history of cooperating on academic projects with the German state and German cultural actors on the other, make the many instances of academic cooperation possible. In other words, without the potential for academic cooperation with Iran, it would have been impossible for most of the intercultural dialogue activities between Iran and Germany to take place in the academic and educational field. Therefore the accompanying help of the Iranian actors should be considered instrumental in making intercultural dialogue in the academic field possible in a large number of cases.

As a result, it can be argued that the intercultural dialogue activities which were implemented for Iranian and German participants between 1998 and 2013 did play a role in supporting those aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany which were concerned with international cultural cooperation. Iranian foreign cultural policy is not specific, clear and strategic regarding Germany. It is also mixed up in Islamic propagation and Iranian foreign policy. Moreover, it is decided in a fragmented way by the democratically and religiously legitimated sectors of the Iranian state, as discussed in 7.1.1. Furthermore the Iranian cultural

actors compared with the German ones, in regards such as expertise, lifecycle and networking, are less organizationally efficient, as mentioned in 7.1.2. The political tensions and control over Iranian students in the intercultural dialogue projects created some problems, as mentioned in 7.1.3. But despite all these things, Iranian foreign cultural policy still pursued some aims which encouraged cooperation with international cultural organizations, including organizations and actors from Germany.

Intercultural dialogue played a supplemental role in strengthening both Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany and German foreign cultural policy towards Iran. Because the structure of foreign cultural policy in these two countries, the organizational efficiency of their cultural actors and their political considerations are different, intercultural dialogue also had different aspects. The discourses of interfaith dialogue, dialogue among civilizations (in the case of Iran), and European-Islamic cultural dialogue (in the case of Germany), could not make alone a big deal, but they supplement the projects and routines of the cultural organizations.

On one hand, German foreign cultural policy was aimed, besides some abstract objectives, at some specific, achievable issues like networking of local and federal organizations, *Mittlerorganisationen* and private actors to implement cultural activities abroad, promoting educational policy interests, and sponsoring media relations. On the other, practically speaking the German cultural actors that were active in European-Islamic cultural dialogue (like the cultural section of the German embassy, the DAAD, ifa, and the Goethe Institute) mostly already had experience of long-term working with Iranian participants. The combination of these two factors made the outcome of the supplemental role of intercultural dialogue significant. Hence intercultural dialogue, and consequently its budget, was able to play a supplemental role in achieving some aims of German foreign cultural policy towards Iran. The result was that the German actors appeared active, successful in implementing some advanced forms of intercultural dialogue activities and in implementing most of those intercultural dialogue activities in academic and educational fields.

When it comes to Iran, both the aims of foreign cultural policy and the actual circumstances of activity by the Iranian cultural actors are important. On one hand, Iranian foreign cultural policy is decided by two sectors of the Iranian state,

so it is not constructed in an integrated way but a fragmented one. Besides some abstract objectives, it also has some achievable aims which encourage cooperation and relations with other countries and cultural organizations, as well as supporting scholarly debates on religious issues. On the other, practically speaking the Iranian cultural actors which were active in the discourse of dialogue among civilizations were newly established, with no former experience of working with German participants, and shortlived (like the ICDAC). The Iranian cultural actors which were active in interfaith dialogue (like the CID) did not have a strong connection with the Iranian cultural actors that already had experience of working with German participants (like Rayzani) to implement relevant activities. Intercultural dialogue discourses and, accordingly, their specific financial sources thus only played a supplemental role in achieving a few aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy towards Germany. The significant result was that the Iranian cultural actors, with their interest in accompanying the German cultural actors, did appear to implement intercultural dialogue activities for Iranian and German participants.

7.3 Summary

Chapter seven considers two main issues. Firstly, it presents analysis to explain specific characteristics of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany. Secondly, it presents arguments to answer the main research question. In three main analyses, 7.1 attempts to explain why and how there have been five specific characteristics to implementation of intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany. They are: 1) with an active role of German actors, 2) accompanied by Iranian actors, 3) in some cases with new and advanced forms, and 4) frequently in the academic and educational field. The three analyses and points are summarized in table 13.

Table 13. Analysis of foreign cultural policy structure, organizational efficiency and political considerations of Iran and Germany which form characteristics of intercultural dialogue between the two countries between 1998 and 2013

Analysis		Iran	Germany
Foreign	Role of state	Fragmented The foreign cultural policy of Iran is determined by democratically and religiously legitimated sectors	Integrated German foreign cultural policy is constructed by a single sector of the Federal Republic of Germany in an

		of the Iranian state.	integrated way.
	Engagement of civil society	Not engaged significantly with civil society The presence of civil society to implement cultural and intercultural dialogue activities is weak, or it does not work in close contact with the main Iranian actors.	Joined with civil society Civil society, including <i>Mittlerorganisationen</i> and NGOs, has a high degree of cooperation with the German state to implement cultural activities abroad.
	Type of diplomacy	Uneven diplomacy The diplomacy that governs the foreign cultural activities of Iran is of an uneven type. Those who do not have a rank but hold the position of diplomat are also in charge of administering it (like directors of Rayzani).	Coordinated diplomacy The German diplomacy that governs the cultural and intercultural dialogue activities has a coordinated model. It has connections with authorities from both <i>Länder</i> and federal offices of Germany.
Organizational efficiency	Expertise	Cultural actors are specialized according to specific expertise , like the DAAD on educational activities	Cultural actors are multi-expertise and are not concentrated on a specific expertise
	Age of actor	Rarely old Organizations	Mostly old Organizations
	Budget	Fixed budget from the Iranian parliament, other sources are not publicly visible	Fixed budget and project-based budget
	Networking	Low degree of networking at national level , some attempts to network with German actors, but no successful long-term networking	High degree of networking at national level , attempt to network with Iranian actors, but no successful long-term networking
	Incompatibility	Cultural actors on both sides sometimes fail to organize organizational cooperation because the structure of their organizations and their expertise are incompatible .	
	Role of directors	Directors have decided on cultural activities in a significant way based on their background and political consideration of their time	Directors have decided on cultural activities, but the organizational efficiency is formed in such a way that they cannot eliminate a project at will
	transparency	Low degree of transparency of information about organizational structure, aims, activities and budget via publications	High transparency of information about organizational structure, aims, activities and budget via publications
Political		Domestic clash Clash between two sectors of the Iranian state and change of presidency	Cautious position of Germany The nuclear energy policy and view of Ahmadinejad about Israel
		Keepings door open for negotiation	

Table 13 presents a summary of the discussion in 7.1 of this chapter. Analysis in 7.1 is divided into three main arguments: **firstly** political considerations of Iran and Germany, **secondly** the foreign cultural policy structure, and **thirdly** the organizational efficiency of the cultural organizations of the both sides. Each of these arguments is explained with more specific arguments and facts.

As table 13 shows, domestic clashes inside Iran played a role politically. The religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state did not have a sympathetic relationship with the administration of Khatami (1997-2005) but shared more

similar views with Ahmadinejad's administration (2005-2013). This domestic clash influenced the intercultural dialogue with the West, including Germany. The change of presidents and the duality of the political system therefore both had a negative influence on developing and concentrating on intercultural dialogue. The cautious position of Germany towards Iran is also discussed. The nuclear energy policy of Iran at the time of Ahmadinejad and Ahmadinejad's anti-Israeli rhetoric, created some concerns for the German side about focusing on intercultural dialogue with Iran. Still, as has been discussed, intercultural dialogue, together with other cultural activities, created a chance for Iran and Germany to keep the door open to talk about controversial international issues like Iran's nuclear project. Such a door has not been open to other Western countries like America.

The second argument presented in 7.1.2 is on foreign cultural policy structure. It argues **firstly** the role of the state in forming foreign cultural policy. It explains that the foreign cultural policy of Iran is not determined by a united body of the state but by two democratically and religiously legitimated sectors. They have shaped the cultural policy of Iran on a worldwide level, but their duality leads to fragmentation in the work of their cultural organizations. For instance ICRO (consequently its branch office, Rayzani) as the agent of the religiously legitimated sector, and the foreign ministry (consequently the cultural section of the Iranian embassy), have cooperated in a fragmented way. In Germany, according to the results of this study, there is an integrated German foreign cultural policy. It is constructed in an integrated way by a united sector of the federal republic.

Engagement of civil society in foreign cultural activities is another key issue of this argument. In Iran, such an engagement has not been observed. But in Germany civil society, including *Mittlerorganisationen* and NGOs, has a high degree of cooperation with the German state to implement German cultural activities abroad. **Thirdly**, the type of diplomacy in the foreign cultural policy of both countries is analyzed. In Iran there is an uneven kind of diplomacy that deals with foreign cultural activities. Those who do not have a rank but hold the position of diplomat are in charge of administering it (like directors of Rayzani). Decision making about foreign cultural policy is mostly by the authorities that are in charge of Iranian domestic and national issues (like the minister of Islamic culture and guidance, who is the head of the higher council of ICRO). Finally,

Iranian diplomats do not work closely with civil society actors on foreign cultural activities. In contrast, on the German side foreign cultural activities are administered with coordinated diplomacy. It governs the cultural and intercultural dialogue activities with some connections to authorities from the *Länder* and federal offices of Germany, although the foreign ministry diplomats ultimately decide on it. Also, trained diplomats and foreign cultural experts mostly play a key role in shaping the activities. Finally, they also use the assistance of civil society.

The third argument to analyze the characteristics of the intercultural dialogue is presented in 7.1.3. It discusses organizational efficiency in the following seven points: 1) The expertise of the cultural actors in both Iran and Germany: in Germany, most of the cultural actors of intercultural dialogue have a specific area of expertise, like the DAAD on educational activities. Iranian cultural actors have had multiple areas of expertise and have not concentrated on a specific area. 2) The age of cultural organizations: only one of the discussed Iranian actors of intercultural dialogue has worked for a long time, whereas most of the German cultural actors are longer term. 3) Budget and financial support: the German government has assisted the cultural actors with fixed and project-based budgets; the Iranian state has meanwhile mostly offered a fixed budget. It seems that the project-based budget has been a good strategy to encourage German cultural actors to compete and prove their competence in intercultural dialogue activities. 4) The ability of cultural actors in networking: Iranian actors have a low degree of networking at national level. They made some attempts to network with German actors, but they did not successfully network long term. On the German side, a high degree of networking at national level has been seen. The cultural actors have also attempted to network with Iranian actors. But they have not been successful in long-term networking. 5) Incompatibility of cultural organizations: cultural organizations on both sides sometimes fail to achieve cooperation simply because the structure of their organizations and their expertise are incompatible. For instance, the DAAD is not understood by Iranian participants of this study as part of civil society because it has a foreign ministry budget. In Iran there are rarely organizations like *Mittlerorganisationen*, nor is there an association of universities like the DAAD. 6) The role of directors in the cultural organizations: directors in Iranian cultural organizations have decided on cultural activities according to their background and political considerations of their time. The

German directors have also changed some cultural activities and target countries, but the organizational efficiency is such that they could not eliminate a project at will. 7) Transparency: there has been little transparency in the Iranian organizations about their organizational structure, aims, activities and budget. That contrasts with Germany, where there has been a high degree of transparency of information about German organizational structure, aims, activities and budget. Poor transparency may have been a reason for a lack of awareness of some positive dimensions of the Iranian cultural actors.

But what does this analysis mean for this study? How can it explain the different characteristics of intercultural dialogue?

Intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany have been implemented actively by the Germany cultural actors and not the Iranian cultural actors, because the integrated structure of German foreign cultural policy was able to mobilize its instruments and means better than Iran, the analysis of this study suggests.

There have been some new and modern forms of intercultural dialogue activities implemented by the German side. Analysis of this study suggests that the organizational efficiency of the German cultural actors was enough strong to create such new forms of activities. The diverse expertise of the old German organizations with long-term experience of implementing cultural activities enables them to not stick to normal activities like holding a “conference” or “meeting” for experts, but to also try other forms of activities which indirectly offer ordinary German and Iranian participants the opportunity of dialogue, for example through a “student exchange” or “internship” for young graduates.

Most of the intercultural dialogue activities undertaken from 1998 to 2013 are in the field of education, schools and teaching. This characteristic can be explained with two reasons. Firstly, the strong potential of Iranian participants and educational institutions to be partners of German academic projects, as mentioned several times in the field study. Secondly, because of political clashes inside Iran on one hand and political considerations of Germany towards Iran on the other, “apolitical” issues or projects seem to survive better than others.

Intercultural dialogue was affected by the presidential change in Iran. This is also one of the characteristics of the intercultural dialogue. The analysis of the study suggests that Iran’s internal political clashes have been complicated and cannot be

explained simply by the duality of the political system. In Iran at the time of Khatami there was a chance for reformists to develop international relations with the West, including Germany. This chance had a positive influence on intercultural dialogue. However, some of the efforts of Iran's reformists were eliminated by the domestic problems created for Khatami and his administration by hardliners and the network of the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian system. The change of president to Ahmadinejad was a new era. In this period the president shared a similar conservative or radical view to that of the religiously legitimated sector towards the relationship with the West. Therefore intercultural dialogue generally faced more problems.

The second subchapter of chapter seven, 7.2, presents arguments to answer the main research question. To do so, the aims of Iranian and German foreign cultural policy and the main actors that play a role in implementing the cultural activities in the framework of specific discourses of intercultural dialogue were reviewed again. From examining those aims and achievements of intercultural dialogue and the five characteristics of intercultural dialogue, the study concludes that intercultural dialogue played a supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of both countries towards each other. Nevertheless, intercultural dialogue was able to play a significant role in strengthening the foreign cultural policy of Germany towards Iran. The German actors appeared active in this field. In Iran, meanwhile, intercultural dialogue was able to play only a minor role in supporting its foreign cultural policy Iran towards Germany. The Iranian cultural actors appeared as the accompanier in this field.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This chapter deals with the concluding discussions. An analysis of the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other is the main aim of the study. How can a theoretical discussion be constructed to answer this question? This study is conducted based on grounded theory. The investigation relies on empirical data from two field studies of Iran and Germany. The data were collected over more than five years using theoretical sampling. What appears here as the theoretical discussion is the analysis that is revised, reviewed and re-conceptualized several times. This theoretical discussion is an outcome of exploring the aims, backgrounds and activities of organizations which set the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany on the one hand, and their cultural actors that implement intercultural dialogue activities on the other. Activities which have been specifically implemented under discourses of European-Islamic cultural dialogue (on the German side), dialogue among civilizations and interfaith dialogue (on the Iranian side) are the focus of this study. The relevant activities of the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran, the DAAD, ifa, and the Goethe Institute as well as those of the Iranian Rayzani in Germany and the International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations were explicitly explored in this study. At least 200 texts from the Iranian side in Farsi and 150 texts from the German side in German, including annual reports, budget bills, bulletins, legal statements, regulations and similar, have been studied and analyzed. Moreover, at least 80 interviews have been conducted in this research in face-to-face talks with participants, by telephone and email. Five groups of politicians, high-ranking officials, members of staff, informed individuals and participants of specific dialogue projects are interviewed in this study. The main discussion of the study is therefore constructed from analyzing different types of data and combining them with the researcher's observation in the field study of Iran and Germany.

This chapter consists of five subchapters. The theoretical discussion of the study is presented in 8.1. Subchapter 8.2 presents contributions of this study to the academic debates. There are some perspectives of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany that should be considered in more depth. They are presented in 8.3. Because the researcher faced several open questions which are interesting and relevant for deeper investigation, in 8.4 some of these questions are presented for future studies.

8.1 Main Discussion: Supplemental Role of Intercultural Dialogue

This research began by explaining two examples of cultural events between Iran and Germany. One of them was a music concert of the *Berlin Staatskapelle* Orchestra, which was scheduled to be held in Tehran in 2015 but canceled because its conductor had an Israeli passport. The second event was an exhibition of art pieces collected by the wife of a former Pahlavi king but officially owned by a museum in Tehran. It was planned to hold the exhibition in 2016 in Berlin. Nevertheless, it too was canceled. These two examples are symbolic of how cultural relations between Iran and Germany are constantly affected by political tensions. This raised the question of how and why cultural actors on both sides have not given up initiating cultural activities, despite all difficulties. By taking a deeper look into the cultural activities between the two countries, the study showed that they are not limited to those which were picked up on by the media. Some have been implemented gradually and quietly between participants of both countries for nearly two decades. One type of these cultural activities is implemented within the framework of intercultural dialogue. This led to the assumption that the stability of the intercultural dialogue activities might have encouraged cultural actors to not give up on implementing cultural activities, despite all the political difficulties. For that reason, it was supposed that intercultural dialogue plays a significant role in their foreign cultural policies. Hence the main research question is formed as follows: What role has intercultural dialogue played with regard to the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other, and why?

The main discussion of this study is that the intercultural dialogue has played a supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of Germany towards Iran as well

as in the foreign cultural policy of Iran towards Germany. This can be ascribed to differences **firstly**, in the structure of foreign cultural policy of the two countries, **secondly**, in the organizational efficiency of their cultural actors, and **thirdly**, in their political considerations. As a result, intercultural dialogue played a different supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of each country. Intercultural dialogue did not support Iran and Germany in pursuing their foreign cultural policy aims in the same way given the aforementioned differences, but overall it helped them to strengthen their connection with the other side.

On the German side, the (idea and budget of) intercultural dialogue assisted German cultural actors to appear more active in the cultural relationship with Iran. That does not mean that the “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” has been taken up by all German intercultural dialogue actors in a similar way, nor does it mean that dialogue with Iran has been a priority for them all. It also does not mean that, in all the years from 1998 to 2013, there was no political tension between the two countries and the German intercultural dialogue actors could create opportunities for cultural dialogue for both Iranian and German participants without difficulty. So why, then, did the German cultural actors appear active? The results of the study on the characteristics of German foreign cultural policy and on the organizational efficiency of the German cultural organizations can help us to understand why. For instance, a cultural organization like ifa did not necessarily have an expert who is familiar with Iran (among other Muslim countries) in the early years when the European-Islamic cultural dialogue was initiated (2001 to 2005). Dialogue with Iran was also not a priority for ifa because of some political concerns of its high-ranking officials. Nevertheless, it still got involved in dialogue with Iran, for the following reasons: Firstly, because of the structure of German foreign cultural policy, ifa, like other *Mittlerorganisationen*, was informed to apply for European-Islamic cultural dialogue and consequently for the corresponding budget. Secondly, because of ifa’s experience in the implementation of cultural activities like internships for young graduates and “Media Dialogue” with other countries (organizational efficiency), it had the capacity to propose motivating projects to obtain the budget. Thus it could implement intercultural dialogue with Iran. The DAAD is the next example. The DAAD had faced limitations to working in Iran from 2008 to 2012, but it managed to involve Iran in the specific project of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”. Firstly, again like ifa, it had an opportunity to apply for the relevant

budget (due to structure of German foreign cultural policy). Secondly, it had extensive experience of working with participants (academics and students) from other countries. Thirdly, even in those years when it could not officially be active in Iran, its activities continued with the help of the cultural section of the German embassy in Iran (positive points of networking and integrated structure of German foreign cultural policy). Thus it simply used these potentials and advantages to appear active in the intercultural dialogue with Iran. The DAAD and ifa are the examples which show the strength of the German integrated foreign cultural policy and its organizational efficiency.

Sometimes “integrated foreign cultural policy” and “organizational efficiency” were not the case. For instance, the Goethe Institute and DAAD count as major cultural organizations which assist the foreign ministry to implement cultural activities abroad. It was mentioned by some members of staff of other German *Mittlerorganisationen* that they automatically received the budget of the “European-Islamic cultural dialogue”, without any requirement to prove their competence in intercultural dialogue activities. Such examples were rare, however.

The cooperation among the *Mittlerorganisationen*, civil society and the German foreign ministry has been key to enabling intercultural dialogue activities to be implemented continuously. Consequently, intercultural dialogue activities strengthen the position of these actors in Iran. In some cases, like that of the DAAD, they have a good impact on building trust amongst Iranian universities and ministry authorities. Intercultural dialogue has therefore assisted in achieving more aims of German foreign cultural policy and has played a supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of Germany towards Iran.

So what has been the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran towards Germany? With regard to the discourse of “interfaith dialogue”, the results of the study suggest that it was neither a unique opportunity for the Interfaith Dialogue Center of ICRO to organize regular meetings with German partners, nor did it benefit Rayzani in implementing long-term interfaith meetings with the help of other Iranian religious organizations located in Germany. Among the Iranian diplomats and politicians also there has been no objection politically against Germany. There has also been no lack of religious partners in Germany, because the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* and *Evangelische Akademie*

Loccum, for instance, have both implemented interfaith dialogue and invited Iranian delegations with the help of Rayzani or also ICRO. The analysis of the study in chapter 7 on the fragmented foreign cultural policy of Iran and its organizational efficiency makes the reason easier to understand. It seems that part of the ability of Rayzani to function has been lost because of the clash with the cultural section of the Iranian embassy. Consequently, Rayzani did not concentrate on the aims and available cultural discourses (like the interfaith dialogue which has been organized since 1994 by ICRO) because of time and effort spent on dealing with cultural affairs with the embassy. The presidential change in Iran also played a role, but only to a limited extent. For instance, at the time of Khatami, the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* initiated a triangle interfaith dialogue with Iranian partners (including some delegates from ICRO), which continued until 2008. At the time of Ahmadinejad, however, such interfaith dialogue was not observed.

With regard to the discourse of “dialogue among civilizations”, results of this study suggest that it did not play a significant role in initiating actual programs for both Iranian and German participants; nevertheless, as a motivating rhetoric it encouraged many German cultural actors and diplomats to consider working with Iran culturally. The reason for the failure of the dialogue among civilizations to create practical projects for Iranian and German participants, and through that create a cultural image for Iran in Germany, is not that there is any grudge against Germany politically. Some other reasons are significant. Firstly, the fragmented foreign cultural policy of Iran must be considered. Since 1994, ICRO has been responsible for foreign cultural policy, but its role was not recognized by President Khatami when he wanted to systematically implement his idea of dialogue among civilizations. This duality resulted in the creation of the short-lived International Center for Dialogue among Civilizations. Secondly, the ICDAC had organizational restrictions on implementing long-term activities. Even when it was officially working, it did not concentrate on a specific activity with a specific foreign partner. The young ICDAC experienced different types of activities under the three presidents, which again shows that organizational efficiency was not one of its strengths.

Although the two Iranian discourses of the intercultural dialogue were not used by the cultural actors systematically or specifically to develop cultural activities with

Germany, they still gradually helped the Iranian cultural actors to assist in cultural activities implemented by the German cultural actors. In the specific political atmosphere of Iran, in which most of the cultural activities with the “West” can easily be challenged by hardliners and conservatives, the two discourses work as a guideline or a manifest for the Iranian cultural actors. At the time of Khatami, for instance, as mentioned in chapter 6, the discourse of dialogue among civilizations was used in diplomatic meetings of Iran with the Western partners, including Germany.

The next example is the cooperation of some universities of Qum in the European-Islamic cultural dialogue of the DAAD, which took place on the theme of “interfaith dialogue”. Firstly, it is important to remember that dialogue has two sides: it does not matter if one side is interested in entering into dialogue; if the other side is not, dialogue cannot be conducted. Consequently, if one result of the study is that German cultural actors played an active role in the implementation of intercultural dialogue, it also means that there have been actors on the Iranian side who actively made opportunities for dialogue possible. Secondly, from the aims of Iranian foreign cultural policy, the aims of ICRO, it is clear that Iran cares about accompanying international cultural organizations and engaging in international cultural activities. The role of intercultural dialogue in Iranian foreign cultural policy should therefore be regarded as supplemental, because it helped to achieve a few aims of the Iranian foreign cultural policy.

The supplemental role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany is clearly not the same. The dialogue based on the potential of the foreign cultural policy and abilities of cultural actors in each country has played a supplemental role. Because Germany has an integrated foreign cultural policy and its cultural actors work with stronger organizational efficiencies, intercultural dialogue was able to play a stronger supplemental role in achieving its cultural aims in Iran. Because Iran’s foreign cultural policy is fragmented and its cultural actors work with some organizational inefficiencies, intercultural dialogue did not achieve a great number of Iran’s cultural aims towards Germany, although it did achieve a few. It therefore still played a supplemental role, but to a lesser degree than in Germany.

The results of this study must not be generalized as applying to the role of intercultural dialogue in any foreign cultural policy, or even to the role of the

intercultural dialogue of Iran and Germany in any time period. Intercultural dialogue, according to the results of this study, had a supplemental role in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany in a specific period, between 1998 and 2013. It is quite possible that a researcher working on the role of intercultural dialogue between Germany and Morocco at another time will have quite different results. The analysis here shows that intercultural dialogue is able to play a supplemental role in a foreign cultural policy which has either a fragmented structure (but still aims to cooperate with international cultural organizations) or an integrated structure.

8.2 Contribution of this Research in the Context of Academic Debates

In addition to analysis in the context of Iran and Germany's intercultural dialogue, the present study also contributes to existing literature. The study not only investigates intercultural dialogue in the context of foreign cultural policy but also highlights its achievements, such as "opening doors" to Iranian and German culture. Moreover, this study contributes to the current research on grounded theory. It not only applies this method in the context of political and social science but also deals with a large volume of collected data; neither is common in the current research. Furthermore, the study contributes to themes like diplomacy and science diplomacy in the context of the implementation of intercultural dialogue between two countries. These contributions are discussed in detail in this chapter.

8.2.1 Proposing a new Dimension to Intercultural Dialogue Research

The review in chapter 3 of the academic debates in the realm of intercultural dialogue shows that its religious and civilizational dimensions are considered key to contributing to conflict resolution and constructing peace between groups of people who are divided by different faiths and cultures. It has also been mentioned that intercultural dialogue in educational (Graf 2014, Sterkens 2001, Yaron 1993) and civil society (ITAD/COWI 2012) fields has attracted attention because of its practical relevance in promoting training methods and strengthening human cooperation. Some studies also consider intercultural dialogue in the context of

political aims (Ferdious 2003, Näss 2010, Schirch 2010, Wiafe 2010, Wiater 2010, Wrogemann 2006, Ye'or 2002). They focus on the role that dialogue can play to decrease security concerns. Nevertheless, there has been a gap in the studies in the realm of foreign cultural policy and intercultural dialogue.

It has been significant to observe that some countries do put effort, time and financial resources into extending projects under the discourses of intercultural dialogue. But why is that the case? The academic debates so far do not deal with what it is that convinces the policy makers, diplomats and high-ranking officials of a country to act on the discourses of intercultural dialogue. The main assumptions are that either they genuinely believe that they are assisting with world conflict generally, or they want to have dialogue with specific countries to solve conflicts or strengthen their friendship with them. Another possibility is that a country would use the instrument of intercultural dialogue with a country which had no or little political relationship with it. The absence of studies dealing with these issues made the question of this research relevant. This study attempted to follow a specific assumption that states engage in intercultural dialogue not just because of their asserted aims (using interfaith dialogue to contribute to world peace or European-Islamic cultural dialogue to prevent terrorism), but also because intercultural dialogue can achieve some aims of their foreign cultural policy abroad. The question of “which role has intercultural dialogue played with regard to the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany towards each other, and why?” has been worth asking and was important to answer for that reason. As a result, this study provides a new aspect of intercultural dialogue, which is its relevance to and harmony with the foreign cultural policy of countries.

The role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of a country can be “supplemental” if the country is strongly committed to implementing it in its cultural activities abroad. Germany’s foreign cultural policy is constructed in an integrated way, its organizational efficiency can support long-term cultural projects, and its cultural actors have rich experience of implementing cultural activities abroad. Thus intercultural dialogue has played a supplemental role in achieving many of its foreign cultural policy aims. If, however, a country has a dual political system, a fragmented foreign cultural policy, and some deficits in its organizational efficiency, intercultural dialogue still plays a “supplemental role” but can only achieve a few aims of foreign cultural policy.

8.2.2 Re-contextualizing Grounded Theory

There are a number of reasons why grounded theory is a proper methodology for this research. As mentioned in chapter 4, a theory which could efficiently guide exploring the role of intercultural dialogue in the foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany has not been found. A method was also needed that can deal with various unequal data, different political and cultural contexts and different routines of field study in Iran and Germany. But what is the contribution of this study with regard to applying grounded theory in the current literature? Charmaz argues that researchers should be confident of investigating “small number of interviewees” (Charmaz 2014: 25) or “small samples” (p. 41), because grounded theory is a method which enables them to analyze case studies deeply. This study has dealt with a huge amount of data. There was a large number of interviewees (81), for example. Because intercultural dialogue in the context of foreign cultural policy of Iran and Germany has a variety of sub-themes, it was important to investigate how intercultural dialogue worked in the view of informed individuals, members of staff and high-ranking officials or relevant organizations, diplomats and participants of specific activities. Therefore, according to experience from this study in the case of multi-subject research, a small number of interviewees would not be appropriate. Moreover, most studies which apply grounded theory are in nursing and similar fields (Mills et al. 2008: 2). In this study, however, grounded theory is applied in a social science field. It fits the issue of intercultural dialogue specifically and a comparative country-level study generally. It makes discovery of different layers of the function of intercultural dialogue in Iran and Germany possible. For instance, there is no hypothesis at the beginning of the research that the structure of the political system of both countries can influence the role of intercultural dialogue. This point is made solely by considering the data and observing the field study of Iran and Germany and comparing them through grounded theory.

8.2.3 Combining Elements in Diplomacy Theory

Some new trends of diplomacy (Johnson 2011) were reviewed in 3.2.5. These trends are threefold: fragmentation, concentration, and diffusion. In **fragmented diplomacy**, government departments which are traditionally associated with

merely domestic issues play a role. The **concentration** trend is explained by the cooperation between cultural actors in national and international levels, but under the supervision of authorities who are in charge of foreign policy. In the **diffusion** trend a democracy is governed by professional diplomats who find themselves required to engage with an increasing number of nongovernmental and civil society actors.

What is discovered in this study and can be added to the academic debate of Johnson is that there are also trends, as observed in the case of Germany, which combine some elements of the concentration and diffusion trends. Studying intercultural dialogue activities on the German side has revealed that, firstly, it has a diplomacy which is administered by authorities in national (*Länder*) and international (federal) levels;¹³⁸ secondly, there is close contact between its diplomats and the cultural actors that form civil society; and thirdly, different parts of this system work together in a **coordinated** way. Hence there is a trend which may have to be called **coordinated in diplomacy**.

The case study of Iran illustrated that its diplomacy fits both fragmented and concentration trends according to Johnson. On one hand, key decisions like appointing the director of Rayzani is decided by the heads of those parts of the state which decide on domestic policy, for instance by the minister of Islamic culture and guidance. On the other, diplomats who are trained by the Iranian foreign ministry also deal with some cultural activities. The relationship of administrators (domestic and foreign officers/diplomats/members of staff) with civil society is not strong. This is a type of **uneven** (or inconsistent) **diplomacy**.

As a result, this study proposes that “coordinated diplomacy” and “uneven diplomacy” should be added to Johnson’s theoretical discussion regarding trends of diplomacy.

8.2.4 Opening Doors to German and Iranian Cultures through Intercultural Dialogue

The intercultural dialogue activities between Iranian and German participants have been implemented under different discourses. As discussed in 5.1.3,

¹³⁸ However, decisions on foreign cultural policy issues are under the authority of the federal government generally and the German foreign ministry specifically.

“European-Islamic cultural dialogue” originally aimed to prevent terrorism and decrease conflicts between Muslim and Western countries. “Interfaith dialogue” was initially implemented in the early post-Iranian Revolution period as a way for Iran to communicate with the world through religious institutions, as explained in 5.2.3. The “dialogue among civilizations” also originally aimed at decreasing Islamophobia and was used politically as a cultural instrument to détente, as discussed in 5.2.4. It is difficult, however, to measure whether all these aims have been achieved by the mentioned intercultural dialogue discourses. One of the reasons is that some of these aims are so abstract that one cannot claim with confidence that they have been achieved completely or at all. For instance, the main reason for declining international tensions under Khatami could lie in his other political plans and not merely in his idea of dialogue among civilizations. With regard to “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” also, one cannot claim with confidence that it was the main reason that Germany had few difficulties with terrorism in the post-9/11 period (up to 2013, which is the end of the period of analysis of this study). Moreover, Iran has not been among those Muslim countries which were the target group of German terrorism prevention. Nevertheless, the achievements of participants in the cultural activities under the discourses of intercultural dialogue in some cases were no less valuable than the stated aims which may or may not have been achieved.

Through the opportunity of participation in the intercultural dialogue activities the participants could understand specific dimensions of Iranian and German culture and society. These dimensions are not reflected in books or media programs. In the “peaceful change” project of the DAAD, which was conducted by Duisburg-Essen University, for instance, the German students had a chance to encounter new images of political life of Iranian women in Iran. In private meetings they got to know an Iranian female political activist and in informal contacts in different Iranian cities they realized that the wearing of the hijab is not the same throughout the country. In the north of Iran women wear a loose hijab in the streets, while in big cities like Tehran there is a combination of modern and traditional hijab. These are complex and multidimensional but a self-discovered image of contemporary Iranian culture, which the German participants had a chance to experience through intercultural dialogue. Iranian students also had an opportunity to experience different images of German culture. For instance, in the peaceful change project some of them could revise the perfect stereotype image that they

had about Germany. One Iranian student revised and updated the image he had of the clean streets of Germany after he traveled to some German cities through this project. This self-discovered image of contemporary German culture is also a result of intercultural dialogue. Intercultural dialogue achieved some aims beyond objectives such as “to contribute German values” (Auswärtiges Amt 2000a: 1-2) and “introducing the principles of Islamic thoughts” (Rasmi newspaper 05.02.1996). By opening doors to Iranian and German culture, it enables participants to discover different dimensions of each other’s culture.

As the analysis of chapter 7 showed, the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany has also been a reason that the door to negotiation with the Iranian state over controversial issues like the nuclear program has remained open. This gave German diplomats and politicians, compared with other Western countries, the advantage of being a partner of dialogue with Iran in international affairs, because the two countries have more up-to-date information about each other and “know” each other relatively better than other countries.

This study adds to the academic debates the insight that intercultural dialogue has opened doors to and revealed diverse dimensions of Iranian and German culture. It has helped participants of two countries to observe things that they could not see easily through news and media. Intercultural dialogue has helped them to get to know different dimensions of their respective cultures better.

8.2.5 Expanding Copeland’s View regarding Science Diplomacy

As discussed in 3.2.5, Daryl Copeland argues that there is a specific type of diplomacy between countries which is based on their academic and education exchanges and on apolitical issues such as natural disasters. This diplomacy is called science diplomacy. In his view, science diplomacy uses neutral language to connect countries and through this advantage can successfully connect them even when they face difficulties in their regular diplomatic relationship.

This study proposes to add one more aspect to this view: Science diplomacy is a relevant instrument for continuing the relationship between countries that are in regular diplomatic contact with each other (in the case of Iran and Germany, there was no breach in their diplomatic relationship between 1998 and 2013), but political tensions indirectly affect their relationship. The result of this study

demonstrates that educational and academic exchanges varied little (and in some cases even increased) in the relationship between Iran and Germany when political issues were indirectly affecting their political relationship. As already mentioned in chapter 2, academic exchange has long been part of the relationship between the two countries. Iran and Germany have a history of university cooperation dating back at least to 1907. Therefore it seems that the academic field is rather a “safe ground” to perpetuate the relationship between Iran and Germany over time. The academic exchanges have been influenced less than other cultural fields by the political tensions between two countries. Hence intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany has created a great opportunity for science diplomacy. Academic exchanges have been operated in fields which were difficult for traditional German cultural actors to enter. An organization like the DAAD was able to support 21 instances of academic cooperation between Iranian and German universities from 2005 to 2013 (as clarified in 6.2.2.3) in a variety of fields, not just engineering and medicine but also theater and film, under the budget of European-Islamic cultural dialogue. It is worth remembering that the Goethe Institute has not had any great chance to work officially in Iran and successfully develop arts projects since 1986.

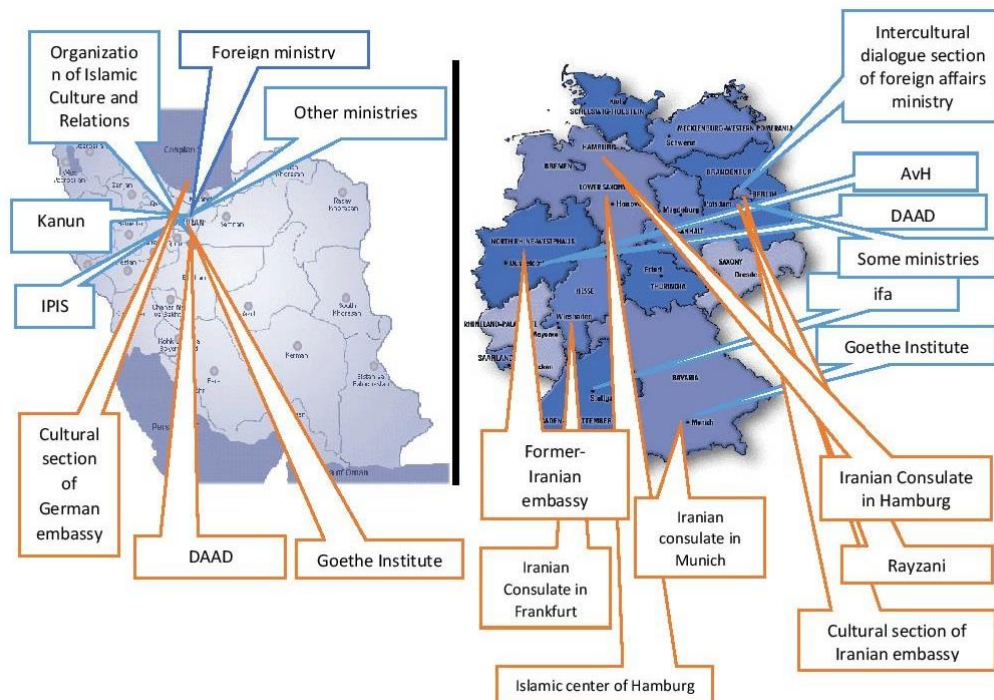
8.3 Future Perspectives for Intercultural Dialogue between Iran and Germany

This subchapter considers some perspectives based on the results of the study.

8.3.1 Concentration and Dispersion of Cultural Actors

At the end of the research, it is appropriate to look at a general map showing where the Iranian and German national and foreign cultural organizations are located in Iran and Germany. This map aims to help focus on important points in the relationship between Iran and Germany as it has emerged in this study. Figure 16 contains this map.

Figure 15. Map of Iranian and German national and foreign cultural organizations in Iran and Germany, compiled by the researcher



Source: by the researcher

The first point which has been significant in the field study and would potentially play a role in the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany in future is the concentration and dispersion of cultural organizations in the two countries. Although figure 16 does not reflect all cultural organizations discussed in chapter 6, it generally gives an accurate picture of those which are active or well-known.

On the Iranian side, the cultural organizations, whether Iranian-based such as IPIS, ICRO and Kanun, or German-based such as the DAAD and the buildings and contact office of the Goethe Institute, are concentrated in the capital city Tehran. On the German side, the cultural organizations, whether German or dependent on Iran, are not located solely in the capital city Berlin, but in other cities in Germany too. For instance, in Munich are both the main headquarters of the Goethe Institute and an Iranian consulate, which potentially offers a chance for cultural activities. In Hamburg there is the Islamic Center of Hamburg and an Iranian consulate. In Bonn are the main headquarters of the AvH and DAAD; the former Iranian embassy, which is occasionally active, is also located there.¹³⁹

One reason for the concentration of cultural organizations in Iran and their distribution in Germany may be the political structure of the two countries. Iran is governed based on a unitary or concentrated system, whereas Germany has a federal system. Nevertheless, according to the results of this study, the Iranian government tends to control the cultural image created of Iran abroad. Therefore by concentrating them in one place, it has a better chance to monitor activities of the cultural actors. What can this concentration mean for Iranian and German cultural organizations? It means that in future Iranian cultural organizations, those which are more dependent on the democratically legitimated sector would still face some restrictions in their activities. The German cultural organizations are not located across Iran but concentrated in Tehran, although it seems that they have managed with this limitation over the years. They have worked with a great degree of coordination with the cultural section of the German embassy and found their applicants through this section's existing networks in Iranian society. Therefore, it seems that they can efficiently use the opportunity of working in Iran even if they are concentrated in one city.

Distribution of cultural organizations in Germany can have potential for developing cultural activities and specifically intercultural dialogue for Iran in the future. For reasons which are discussed in this research, including the fragmented structure of Iranian foreign cultural policy and low level of organizational efficiency, the Iranian cultural organizations have not used the opportunity of being located in different cities in Germany. But there is still a promising perspective for their active role in future.

¹³⁹ For instance, at the time of the Iranian presidential election, the former Iranian embassy in Bonn was a voting station, according to observation of the researcher.

8.3.2 Continuing Accompanying Role of Iranian Actors

According to the results of this study, the active role of the German cultural actors in implementing intercultural dialogue activities for both Iranian and German participants can also be attributed to the accompanying role played by the Iranian authorities and cultural actors. But this role may be endangered in future if German cultural actors put issues on the platform of intercultural dialogue activities that challenge Islamic values and those of the Iranian state. For instance, as mentioned in 6.2.5.5, the issue of “separation of religion and state” in a pedagogic program of the PAD could be sensitive. Teachers from Muslim countries, including Iran, were participants in this project. In Iran, officially, the separation of state and religion does not apply. The other sensitive issue was reflecting the political crisis of Iran in 2009 which became subject of a conference held by DW and ifa; and a specific homepage of DW Farsi, *Ru dar Ru*. Both projects were implemented in 2010, in the post-2009 Iranian presidential election period. These projects were to remark on the political remark on the situation of journalists and freedom of speech in Iran.

There are some German cultural actors that have implemented cultural activities accompanied by Iranian actors and still discuss political issues. For instance, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation has managed to hold the annual *Hafiz-Goethe Dialog* since 2010. Loccum Academy has also appeared effective in holding seminars and conferences on political issues. It seems that both of these actors built a trusting relationship with Iranian actors. For instance, Loccum Academy is in contact with Rayzani and the Iranian embassy; while the organizer of the *Hafiz-Goethe Dialog* has built a strong connection with academic partners in Iran and the Iranian academic community living in Germany. It is therefore expected that in future these two organizations would develop more activities between the two countries. As mentioned, the DAAD, ifa and the Goethe Institute are also expected to continue their active role in future.

8.3.3 Strengthening the Positive Perception of Iran and Germany

Both Iranian and German participants who have been interviewed in this study have pointed out some points about the other country which indicate their positive understanding or perception. With the exception of an Iranian diplomat who

thought that Germany is too heavily influenced by America and Israel (“Germany is still occupied” [Karimi, personal communication, 2013], which refers to the occupation of Germany by the Western powers after World War II, from 1945-1949), nearly all Iranian participants expressed a positive perception of Germany. It is significant that they have some mistrust of the West generally, but when it comes to Germany, they stated that it is a country which is “more harmless than France and Britain to Iran” (Kharazi, personal communication, 2014) and “Iranian people have no negative view towards it” (Zahrani, personal communication, 2013). Therefore although Iran structurally and organizationally did not have a strategy to create cultural activities for a German public, it had no specific strategy to reject cooperation with German cultural actors. It even had a positive understanding regarding Germany.

The German participants who were interviewed in this study also expressed a positive perception of Iran. They emphasized “good relationship between two countries in time of different dynasties (Qajar and Pahlavi)” (Mulack, personal communication, 2013), “cultural understanding of two nations” (Erbel, personal communication, 2015), “academic capability of Iranian applicants” to participate in cultural activities of Germany (Mulack, personal communication, 2013; Sodeik-Zecha, personal communication, 2014; and Tier, personal communication, 2013). Concerns about implementation of cultural projects in Iran due to political tensions existed, but high-quality applications from Iran and interest in music concerts or art exhibitions (Erbel, personal communication, 2015) were reasons to keep the relationship with Iran going. It is worth remembering that reformist politicians like Khatami have been mentioned positively by German participants of the study as well (Kreft, personal communication, 2014 and Maaß, personal communication, 2014). As a result, intercultural dialogue as a form of cultural activity has helped to create a positive understanding of Iran and Germany.

8.3.4 Vague Definition of Intercultural Dialogue as an Advantage

What may also be relevant to understanding the perspective of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany are the vaguely defined discourses of intercultural dialogue in both countries. The “interfaith dialogue” discourse in Iran is not defined by its founder organization Hekmat nor by the latter’s successor, the

ICD of ICRO. It aims at “creating forum of understanding between different religions”, for instance, although the aims themselves are not precisely defined. Which faith is respected as religion is also not defined: Whether Buddhism is a religion, or *Bahae* accepted as a branch of Islam, is not clarified. “Dialogue among civilizations” in Iran is not defined specifically either. It has not been clear which “civilizations” are the desired partners of this dialogue. And it is less clear what the term “civilization” actually means. Such a vague articulation allows everybody to judge and decide for themselves whether Iran belongs to a pre-Islamic (Persian) or an Islamic civilization, or whether Germany represents a “Western” civilization. In Germany, the discourse of “European-Islamic cultural dialogue” had some ambiguities too. Terminologically it refers to Europe, while nearly all the actors that used its financial resource were German. This might imply that Germany is perceived as the representative of Europe in a dialogue with the Muslim world. But such a view is not openly stated. It is also not clear what the term “Muslim” exactly means. The target group of this discourse are the Muslim countries which played a role in the context of the 9/11 terrorism. But in this case, why have countries which had nothing to do with 9/11 also been included in it? It also raises the question of whether the term “Muslim countries” is not ignoring or discriminating against the non-Christian minorities of Lebanon or Egypt, for instance.

One possible reason to explain the vagueness of the discourses is that they work exactly *because* they are unclear and not precisely defined. Perhaps if they were direct and precise, intercultural dialogue partners could not easily implement or participate in cultural activities. The vagueness of the discourses has been helpful to reformist groups (or supporters of dialogue) in Iran in cooperating with German actors and convince radical and conservative groups. One of the Iranian participants of the study has mentioned a benefit of the vague discourse in the context of “critical dialogue” (1992-1996). In his view, the combination of terminology of “critical” and “dialogue” was beneficial, as it enabled both the Iranian and German authorities to uphold their relationship. The reformist Iranian authorities could convince the Iranian conservatives that “critical dialogue” is just a “dialogue” and has nothing to do with criticism. The German authorities, represented by people like Hans-Dietrich Genscher (former German foreign minister), could convince the German federal parliament that “critical dialogue” is

to “criticize” the Iranian government (Faridzadeh, personal communication, 2013). In a corresponding way it has benefitted German intercultural dialogue actors as well. If they faced criticism from the media or opponents about engaging in a program with Iran, they could respond that it is just a dialogue and an opportunity to talk to Iranian people, not with the Iranian state. In 3.1.1 a view of Leonard Swidler on the use of “dialog” by people who mean something else is verified. In his view, they may use the term incorrectly because they want to be “less aggressive” in their communication (Swidler 2007: 7). Results of this study suggest that using the terminology of “dialogue”, regardless of its accuracy, had helped cultural actors of both countries to implement and continue their cultural activities for Iranian and German participants. It has been a non-aggressive term to convince radical groups in Iran, and a non-decisive term to satisfy German opposition groups.

8.3.5 Necessity to promote Knowledge on Domestic Actors of Iran and Germany

The final point is that the Iranian actors of intercultural dialogue should be analyzed and categorized with more knowledge and deeper understanding in future. There is a general view that the cultural relationship between Iran and Germany is becoming more difficult, almost impossible even, because the Iranian state monopolizes all cultural actors and tries to represent Iranian culture selectively in the religious or ideological terms of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The suggestion of people who think like that is to stop cooperating with Iranian state organizations and focus on civil society in Iran. However, the results of this study contradict such a view, firstly because it is difficult, in the current situation in Iran, to find a “real” civil society, fully independent of the state. The organizations which are working independently from the Iranian state face limitations if they cooperate with Western, including German, organizations. In addition, only relatively few of them exist, and the variety of their expertise is limited. Therefore, it seems that the suggested solution to focus exclusively on civil society in Iran would simply reduce the number and quality of cultural partners and consequently Iranian participants of the intercultural dialogue projects. Secondly, it is wrong to categorize all Iranian state institutions as necessarily conservative or radical. Even inside the Organization of Islamic

Culture and Relations, there are liberal and open-minded members of staff or high-ranking officials who are ready to cooperate in cultural activities with Germany, if they are involved at an early stage. For instance, in the case of the cancelation of an art exhibition of the Contemporary Museum of Tehran in Berlin in 2016, which was mentioned in chapter one of this study, the Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations could possibly have helped, if it had been involved as a partner from the beginning. Rayzani got the news of the planned exhibition not from the Iranian foreign ministry or the Embassy but from the German media, and just a few days before it was due to begin (Abbasi, personal communication, 2016). If the Iranian foreign ministry and the embassy do not want to take Rayzani (and consequently ICRO) seriously as a partner for cultural activities in Germany, why should Rayzani, through their powerful political contacts in the religiously legitimated sector of the Iranian state, try to help to make the exhibition happen?

What can be learned from this example is that, in many cases, people in these organizations are wise enough to realize the benefits of cultural relationships with Germany, but they feel isolated and excluded and prevented from playing a role. That is why it is necessary not to stop working with cultural organizations which are dependent on the Iranian state but to try and understand them and find the right people working in them. It is important to be patient, spend time on building bridges, and build mutual trust.

8.3.6 Considering Germany as a Key to Future Iran-West Relationship

The historical relationship between Iran and Germany (which is referred to in chapter 2 of this research) and the long-standing intercultural dialogue activities between the two countries (which are analyzed in chapter 6 and 7) mean that Germany, as a specific European country, has a strong connection with Iran. No other Western (or European) country has constructed such a cultural connection with Iran. This connection makes Germany the key member of the West to deal with Iran on difficult issues like the nuclear deal. The 2015 Iranian nuclear deal is a very specific issue which not only the German parties on the left but also those on the right (like the AfD) are positive towards and inclined to uphold. Germany is therefore in a position to use its advantage and solve the sensitive problems and improve the relationship between Iran and the West.

8.4 Further Research Recommendations

Following on from the final answer and related points, it is clear that some questions have been raised which are interesting topics to be explored and answered in the future and in further research. At least four potential issues are recommended for further research: decision making, organizational efficiency, forms of learning in intercultural dialogue, and cultural exceptionalism.

In terms of decision making, it would be useful to spend more time exploring which key persons in a state decide on foreign cultural policy and how and why this is done. This study has explored, on the surface, what happens in decisions on German and Iranian foreign cultural policy. It would be valuable if research were to go into this issue in depth and discover what the mechanisms are for deciding on issues of foreign cultural policy in the target countries of Iran and Germany specifically and in other countries in general. It is also relevant to ask whether political base, age, education and gender of members of staff, high-ranking officials and politicians are significant to decisions on details of foreign cultural policy. However, exploring such issues thoroughly is a particular challenge, because foreign cultural policy is part of diplomatic and foreign policy. Therefore it is difficult not only to identify the people who play such a role in foreign cultural policy, but also to convince them to participate in the research.

The second issue would be to examine the organizational efficiency of organizations which play a role in implementing cultural activities abroad. During the stage of analyzing the data it became apparent in this study that a significant part of the problem of the intercultural dialogue between Iran and Germany resulted from the low organizational efficiency of the Iranian side. It would be valuable if a researcher with extensive knowledge of management, organizational trends or sociology of organizations were to explore the organizational efficiency of organizations which are intercultural dialogue actors.

Thirdly, it would also be important to conduct research on forms of learning in the intercultural dialogue activities which are implemented between international participants. For instance, whether gender, education or political orientation of participants would shape what they learn from and share with the other participants? Why? How?

Fourthly, in terms of cultural exceptionalism, it would be useful to study whether a country would benefit from the opportunity of intercultural dialogue in a specific field as a way of demonstrating its skills and its exceptional position. For instance, according to the results of this study, the German cultural actors have played an active role in implementing intercultural dialogue with the Iranian side. Most of the activities have been implemented in the academic field. There were some indications in the field study that German universities, for instance, could have a tendency to represent themselves as exceptionally brilliant in specific academic fields. This assumption has not been examined in this study, however. Therefore it is recommended that this issue be considered as a future research subject. Dialogue is a communication between two partners. In a dialogue, both sides should be treated equally. If the abilities and strengths of one partner in the academic field lead him/her to regard and present him/herself as superior to the other partner, the intercultural dialogue is challenged. The result of such research could also open a door to identifying negative aspects of the opportunity for intercultural dialogue.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Informal Conversation Data

At the beginning of the study some individuals were interviewed to make sense of the phenomena of intercultural dialogue in both Iran and Germany. All of them are visited personally. Some of them are contacted more than one times. They have been contacted from 2012 till 2014. The number of participants is seven and they are as follow:

Iranian participants:

1. Sadegh Tabatabai. He was an Iranian politician and lecturer in University of Aachen. In early years after Iranian Revolution her was special Iranian envoy in Germany.
2. Mohammad Khatami. He was president of Iran from 1997 to 2005.
3. Mohammad Moghaddam. He is the head of the international department of the institute and publication of Imam Khomeini
4. Mohammadreza Beheshti. He is son of Ayatollah Beheshti, one of the godfathers of the Islamic Revolution. He teaches Philosophy in University of Teheran.
5. Mohammadreza Saeedabadi. He is the Secretary General of Iran's National Commission for UNESCO.

German participants:

1. Jochen Hippler. He teaches in Duisburg-Essen University and organized some intercultural dialogue activities for ifa and DAAD.
2. Andrea Lueg. She is free-lance journalist and author.

Some other interviewees who are visited personally but for different reasons the content of their talk is not recorded, are also categorized in category of informal conversation. Their name though is listed in category of interviewees because they answered to specific questions of the study. Their name comes in appendixes – and -.

Appendix 2: Interview Data of the First Round

Table 14. Iranian participants in first round of interviews

Group	Number of interviewees: 25		
		Name and position of interviewee	Form and date of communication
Political	1	Sadegh Kharazi, former diplomat	Interview 19.02.2013
	2	Seyed Mohammad Kazem Sajadpour, former head of IPIS, diplomat	Informal conversation in Tehran, 14.09.2013
	3	Mohammad Mehdi Imanipour, head of Rayzani	Interview in Berlin, 26.08.2014
	4	Mohmmadreza Dehshiri, head of education department, ICRO	Interview in Tehran, 25.09.2013
Members of Staff	5	Taj-almoluk Maleki, former staff of political group of the ICDAC	Interview, 29.09.2013
	6	Parvin Daeepour, trainer in Dialogue Center of Imam Musa Sadr	Interview in Tehran, 10.10.2013
	7	Habibi, head of financial department of national center for globalization studies	Interview in Tehran, 21.09.2013
	8	Saeid Khatibzadeh, office of education of Iranian embassy in Germany	Interview in Berlin, 27.08.2014
	9	Abdullah Abbasi, in Rayzani	Interview in Berlin, 26.08.2014
	10	Ali Asghar Mosleh, former head of Group Philosophy, ICDAC	Interview in Tehran, 09.10.2013
	11	Farzad Farahmand, former staff of international department of the ICDAC	Interview, 16.08.2014
	12	Armities Shafiei, former staff of international department of the ICDAC	Skype interview, 13.03.2015
	13	Tarighat, in Rayzani	Interview in Berlin, 26.08.2014
High Ranking Officials	14	Vali Teimouri, head of international department of National Center for Globalization Studies	Interview in Tehran, 21.09.2013
	15	Ali Mohammad Helmi, head of Center for Interfaith Dialogue, ICRO	Interview in Tehran, 29.09.2013
	16	Seyed Abdulmajid Mirdamadi, former head of Center for Interfaith Dialogue, ICRO	Interview in Tehran, 12.10.2013
	17	Ali Abtahi, head of NGO of dialogue among religions	Interview in Tehran, 29.09.2013
Informed Individuals	18	Abdulkarim Soroush, theology researcher	Interview in Duisburg, 01.12.2012
	19	Mohammad Masjedjamei, former director of cultural office of Iranian foreign affairs ministry	Interview in Tehran, 17.10.2013
	20	Mohaghegh-Damad, theology researcher	Interview in Tehran, 13.10.2013

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21	Mohammad Kazem Anbarlooe, journalist of Resalt newspaper	Interview in Tehran, 20.09.2013
22	Sasan Tavassoli, researcher in theology	Skype interview, 03.03.2015
23	Fatemeh Sadr, volunteer organizer of dialogue, Dialogue Center of Imam Musa sadr	Interview in Düsseldorf, 21.08.2014
24	Hadi Khaniki, member of founding board of NGO of dialogue among civilization	Interview in Tehran, 19.09.2013
25	Saeed Hajarian, political strategist	Interview in Tehran, 13.10.2013

Table 15. German participants in first round of interviews

Group	Number of Interviewees: 24		
	Name and position of interviewee		Form and date of interview
Political	1	Otto Graf, head, director of the Cultural Section of German Embassy in Tehran	Interview in Tehran, 25.09.2014
	2	Bernd Erbel -former Ambassador in Iran	Interview in Berlin, 24.06.2015
	3	Heinrich Kreft, Commissioner for Dialogue with the Islamic World	Telephone interview, 18.08.2014
Members of Staff	4	Enzio Wetzel, Head of section of Culture and Development, Goethe Institute in Munich	Email, 08.07.2014 and 15.07.2014
	5	Katrin Schaarschmidt, from Division National Contact Point Mobility, EURAXESS, Programme Information Coordinator of AvH	Email, 16.06.2014 and 09.05.2014
	6	Sebastian Krauß, from Department Strategy and External Relations Division Press, AvH	Email, 16.05.2014,
	7	Niloufar Houssaini, from Cross-Cultural-Praktika department of ifa	Informal conversation, 11.08.2014
	8	Tim Hülquist, from CrossCulture Plus of ifa	Interview, 11.08.2014
	9	Inka Löck, from German-Arab Transformation Partnership and Cultural Dialogue, DAAD	Interview, 19.08.2014
	10	Maike Thier, head of press section of the embassy	Interview in Tehran, 25.09.2014
	11	Klaus Streicher, from dialogue with Islamic world section, foreign affairs ministry	Interview in Berlin, 08.07.2014
	12	Fatima Chahin-Dörflinger, staff of the Foreign service at the Tehran German Embassy School/ DBST	Informal conversation in Weimar, 08.10.2015
	High Ranking Officials	13	Bauch, office 602, media and culture department of the foreign affairs ministry
14		Martin Finkenberger,	Email communication,

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		Staff of PAD,	2014.11.04
	15	Dennis Schroeder, director of IC of DAAD in Iran	Interview, 01.10.2014
	16 & 17	Renate Dietrich: head of Arab Transformation Partnership and Cultural Dialogue; and Alexander Haridi: head of section of Iran/Iraq, DAAD	Group interview, 19.08.2014
Informed Individuals	18	Mohammad-Javad Faridzadeh, former president of the ICDAC	Interview, 18.10.2013
	19	Rainer Buhtz, head of contact office of Goethe Institute in German embassy in Tehran	Interview, 03.10.2014
	20	Kurt-Jürgen Maaß, former general secretary of ifa	Interview in Stuttgart, 16.06.2015
	21	Eva Sodeik-Zecha, head of program of Cross-Cultural Praktika, ifa	Interview in Stuttgart, 11.08.2014
	22	Martin Affolderbach, former-Speaker for Islam and world religions in the EKD Church Office	Telephone interview, 29.04.2015
	23	Omid Nouripour, member of German Parliament	Interview in Berlin, 27.08.2014
	24	Udo Steinbach, researcher in political science	Interview in Berlin, 25.08.2014

Appendix3: Interview Data of the second round

Table 16. Iranian participants in the second round of interviews

Group		Number of interviewees: 16	
		Name and position of interviewee	Form and date of communication
Political	1	Mohammad Rajabi, former director of Rayzani in Germany	Telephone interview, 28.01.2016
	2	Mostafa Tork Zahrani, former head of think tank of IPIS	Interview in Tehran, 24.09.2014
	3	Seyed Vahid Karimi, head of department of Europe and America, diplomat,	Interview in Tehran, 24.09.2014
	4	Kamal Kharazi, former Foreign affairs minister	Interview in Tehran, 24.09.2014
	5	Seyed Hossein Mousavaian, former Iranian ambassador in Germany, diplomat	Email contact, 03.11.2015
Informed individual	6	Mohammad Khatami, former president	Interview in Tehran, 30.09.2014
	7	Ahmad Naghibzadeh, research in political science	Telephone interview, 05.04.2015
High ranking officials	8	Attaollah Mohajerani, former President of the ICDAC	Interview in London, 31.01.2014
	9	Reza Maleki- former head of Education department of ICRO	Interview in Tehran, 06.04.2015

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	10	Amir Akrami, former head of center for interreligious dialogue, ICRO	Skype interview, 12.04.2015
	11	Ali Moujani, a head of Rayzani of Iran in Berlin	Informal conversation in Berlin, 17.06.2016
Members of staff	12	Mehran Movahedifar, head of cultural office of Iranian embassy in Germany	Informal conversation in Berlin, 25.06.2015
	13	Alireza Aghaee	Telephone Interview, 29.03.2016
Participant	14	Seyed Javad Miri, lecturer at institute for humanities and cultural studies, DAAD exchange	Telephone interview, 21.10.2015
	15	Edris Daryoushi, student on DAAD exchange	Interview in Duisburg, 26.01.2016
	16	Younes Nourbakhsh, lecturer at University of Tehran, on DAAD exchange	Telephone interview, 21.01.2016

Table 17. German participants in the second round of interviews

Number of participant: 15			
		Name and position of interviewee	Form and date of communication
Political	1	Hans-Günter Gnodtke, former Commissioner for Dialogue with the Islamic World	Skype interview, 23.01.2016
	2	Gunter Mulack, former Commissioner for Dialogue with the Islamic World, diplomat	Interview in Berlin, 26.06.2015
Informed individual	3	Matthias Küntzel, researcher in political science	Telephone interview, 22.01.2016
	4	Benjamin Weinthal, journalist from the Jerusalem Post	Skype interview, 07.11.2015
High ranking officials	5	Ronald Grätz, General Secretary of ifa	Interview in Düsseldorf, 31.12.2015
	6	Odila Triebel, head of department of dialogue, ifa	Interview in Stuttgart, 18.11.2014
Members of staff	7	Stefanie Notz, team member of “Iran-force”, foreign affairs ministry	Informal conversation in Berlin, 27.08.2014
	8	Petra Drexler: working in dialogue with Islamic world section;	Group conversation in Berlin, 13.11.2015
	9	Miriam Tutakhel: member of culture and media department of foreign affairs ministry	
	10	Sussan Riazzi, the former head of Dialogue Point of Goethe Institute in Tehran	Informal conversation in Cologne, 05.05.2016
Participant	11	Jochen Hippler, researcher in political science and organizer of	Interview in Duisburg, 06.02.2016

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		DAAD exchange	
	12	Jan Honrath, organizer of DAAD exchange	Interview in Duisburg, 03.02.2016
	13	Gesila and Manfred Grüter, volunteer organizers	Email contact, 23.01.2016
	14	Anika Mahla, student on DAAD exchange	Interview in Duisburg, 26.01.2016
	15	Hamideh Mohagheghi, researcher in Paderborn university, organizer in DAAD exchange	Telephone interview, 23.01.2016

Appendix4: Guide questions from interviewees

Table 18. Guide questions from participants in the first round of the study

Group	Guide questions
Politicians	<p>Initial open-ended questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do Iran/Germany have an approach to construct intercultural dialogue with other countries, in your view? When did it start? Was it interrupted? Why? Any specific approach towards Iran/Germany? Why? • Can you tell me what have been the reasons that intercultural dialogue has attracted attention from the foreign affairs ministry/----/----? What is the meaning of intercultural dialogue, to your mind? • When would you say was the beginning? When has your experience regarding this topic started? <p>Intermediate questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it develop? Which actors and institutions did you have in mind which play key role? • Which institutions and actors do you have in mind which could play a key role? • Was Iran a partner of ‘dialogue with Muslim countries’ for Germany? why? why not? • In the case of Germany: I have read in annual reports that institute X and Y was mentioned more? Do you know why? • In the case of Iran: I did not see any annual report in the foreign affairs ministry or archive of the national library regarding intercultural dialogue activities of Iran or foreign cultural policy? Do you know how can I get information in that regard? What happened to the ICDAC? Why did it not continue its work? <p>Ending questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think were the most important results of intercultural dialogue activities? What were the main obstacles? Why? • After having these experiences, what is your approach for the future? Would they continue? Why? Why not? • Is there something you might want to add? • Is there anybody in this field that you recommend I meet? Can you give me his contact details? Can I mention your name when I contact this person?
High ranking officials	<p>Initial open-ended questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main aims your institute tries to reach? Why do you think intercultural dialogue related to it?

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<p>and members of Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When did this program start? How did your institute get budget resources? • When did your experience regarding this topic start? <p>Intermediate questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has it developed? Which mechanisms have been used in relevant dialogue programs? Why? • Which programs have been specifically regarding Iran? Why? Why not? • In the case of Iran: how can I access any archive, annual report or document to inform myself about your relevant projects? • In the case of Germany: I did not have access to a few annual reports. How can I see them? Is there any other document which can give me information? • How was the status of your relationship with state/foreign affairs ministry/ presidency/parliament? Did they ask your advice because you have cultural contact with Iran/Germany? Why? • What was the nature of your relationship with other German and Iranian institutes? Any cooperation? Why? <p>Ending questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been the advantages of these programs? Did you reach your aims in the end? • Is there something you might want to add? • Is there anybody in this field that you recommend I meet? Can you give me his contact details? Can I mention your name when I contact this person?
<p>Informed individuals</p>	<p>Initial open-ended questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did Iran/Germany have an approach to construct intercultural dialogue with other countries, in your view? When did it start? Was it interrupted? Why? Any specific approach towards Iran/Germany? Why? <p>Intermediate questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been your criticize regarding that? • Do you know of some intercultural dialogue projects between Iran and Germany? Were they successful? Why? Why not? • In the case of Iran: what do you think about the idea of ‘dialogue among civilizations’? Could it play a role in foreign cultural policy? Why? Why not? • In the case of Germany: what do you think about the idea of ‘dialogue with Islam’? Could it play a role in the foreign cultural policy of Germany? Why? Why not? <p>Ending questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been the advantages of these programs? Did you reach your aims in the end? • Is there something you might want to add? • Is there anybody in this field that you recommend I meet? Can you give me his contact details? Can I mention your name when I contact this person?

Table 19. Guide questions from participants in the second round of interviews

Group	Guide questions
<p>Politicians, high organization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What in your view is the main obstacle and problem as well as a strong achievement of intercultural dialogue generally and towards Iran/Germany specifically?

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al position, member of Staff, informed individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why was Iran/Germany not a priority of foreign cultural policy of Germany/Iran? Why did the specific discourse of intercultural dialogue not reach Iranian/German participants? • Why was institutional cooperation between Iran and Germany regarding the issue of intercultural dialogue so low?
Participants	<p>Initial open-ended questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you get to know about this program? What was the application procedure? • Why did you have an interest in Iran/Germany? <p>Intermediate questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about your experience compared with other experiences? • What have been the strong points and obstacles of this project? <p>Ending questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can I return to you in the case of more questions?

Appendix 5. Budget of ICRO and the ICDAC

Table 20. Amount of budget dedicated to the ICDAC and ICRO by the Iranian Parliament. Table compiled by the researcher from the source of Iranian parliament budget law.

Year	The ICDAC Budget Code: 101045		ICRO, Budget Code: 114028	
	RIL	Euro	RIL	Euro
1376/ 1997			Total: 75,500,000 (1000 Rial) Spent abroad: 43,920,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1376 [1997]: 21)	1 Euro theoretical rate: =2, 197 IRR-Iran =34, 289. 660.94 Euro / €
1377/ 1998			Total: 79,500,000 (1000 Rial) Spent broad: 47,500,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1377 [1998]: 36)	1 Euro theoretical rate =, 916 IRR-Iran =41. 506. 021.05 Euro / €
1378/ 1999			Total: 76,500,000 (1000 Rial) Spent abroad: 44,715,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1378 [1999]: 42)	1 Euro theoretical rate = 2. 046. IRR-Iran = 37. 389. 267.73 Euro/€
1379/ 2000			Total: 84,323,000 (1000 Rial) Spent abroad: 48,240,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1379 [2000]: 61)	1 Euro theoretical rate =1, 773 IRR-Iran = 47, 552, 872.95 Euro/€
1380/ 2001			Total: 97,230,000 (1000 Rial) Spent abroad:	1 Euro theoretical rate =1,573 IRR-Iran 54, 831, 609.85 = Euro/€

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			54,000,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1380 [2001]: 82)	
1381/ 2002	16,740,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-b)	1 Euro rate= 1531 IRR-Iran =10, 931, 959.33	118,495,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-b: 643)	1 Euro rate= 1,531 IRR-Iran = 77, 382, 468.38 Euro/€
1382/ 2003	20,000,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-b)	1 Euro rate= 8 908 IRR-Iran = 2 ,245 ,215.73 Euro/€	Total: 148,800,000 (1000 Rial) (Plan and Budget Organization 1383 [2004]-b: 643)	1 Euro rate= 8, 908 IRR-Iran = 16, 704, 405 Euro/€
1383/ 2004	21,000,000 (1000 Rial), (Plan and Budget Organization 1384 [2005]: 195)	1 Euro rate= 10384 IRR-Iran =2 ,022 ,390.3 Euro	223,178,000 (1000 Rial) (Plan and Budget Organization 1384 [2005]: 281)	1 Euro rate= 10,384 IRR-Iran = 21, 493, 001.01 Euro
1384/ 2005	--- no budget can be seen in the Budget law		Total: 255,077 (million Rial) Religious activities: 3,000 (Plan and Budget Organization 1385 [2006]: 237-238)	1 Euro rate= 11, 709 IRR-Iran = 21, 783, 874.34 Euro/€
1385/ 2006			368,590 (in million Rial) (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of Presidency 1386 [2007]: 340)	1 Euro rate= 11, 087 IRR-Iran = 33, 245, 581.62 Euro/€
1386/ 2007			No information found	
1387/ 2008			Total: 584,261 (in million Rial) (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of Presidency 1387 [2008]: 176)	1 Euro rate= 13, 928 IRR-Iran = 41, 947, 461.97 Euro/€
1388/ 2009			747,648 (in million Rial) (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of	1 Euro rate= 13, 162 IRR-Iran = 56, 804 ,552.46 Euro/€

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			Presidency 1388 [2009]: 56)	
1389/ 2010			955,496 (in million Rial) (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of Presidency 1389 [2010]: 35)	1 Euro rate= 13, 377 IRR-Iran = 71, 429, 407.24 Euro/€
1390/ 2011			1,232,691 (in million Rial) (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of Presidency 1390 [2011]: 29) p.29	1 Euro rate= 14, 533 IRR-Iran = 84, 821, 049.81
1391/ 2012			1,698,827 million Rial (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of Presidency 1391 [2012]: 30) p.30	1 Euro rate= 14, 995 IRR-Iran = 113, 293, 749.5
1392/ 2013			ICRO+ Taqrib+Ahl-Bayt+ Uni Ahl-Bayt+ uni islamic religions 1,785,124 (in million Rial) ICRO: 1,115,700,000,000 (Plan and Strategic Supervision Department of Presidency 1392 [2013]: 26) p. 26	1 Euro rate= 15, 862 IRR-Iran Collection budget: 112, 542, 726.4 Euro/€ ICRO: 70, 339, 046.39 Euro/€

Source: The rate from RIL to Euro is converted with the help of an online tool (currency converter past, 2013)

Appendix 6. Iranian cultural Organizations

Table 21. Institutes and organizations which implemented cultural activities under discourses of interfaith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations, from 1998 to 2013

Institutes	Activity	Time
The Organization of cultural Documentation of Islamic Revolution of Iran, with help of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, and the Institute for Political and international Studies of the Foreign Affairs Ministry organized it. (Allahyari 1998, Daneshname-ye Islami 1999, Ketab-e Mah-e Din 1998, Organization of cultural Documentation of Islamic Revolution 1377 [1998])	Conference of “essence of dialogue among civilizations” [<i>Chisti-ye goftegoo-ye tamadon ha</i>] was hold in Teheran. international thinkers-book 47 selected articles.	on 13.12.1998 (22-23 Azar, 1377),
No Information about the actor	Conference of dialogue between civilizations of Iran and Spain	1998 (Teheran), 1999 (Madrid)
No Information about the actors	Festival of dialogue among civilizations	1999 (Esfand 1377)
The International center of dialogue among civilizations	Festival of Dialogue among Civilizations , activities such as Calligraphy (IRNA 2013)	2000 (1380 Or 1379)
Mofid university of Qum (Din Pajoohan Journal 2001a, Din Pajoohan Journal 2001b)	Conference of Human Rights and Dialogue among Civilizations	5 th and 6 th May 2001, (15 th and 16 th Ordibehesht, 1380)
Center for Women's Participation- President office (Center for Women's Participation 2003)	Conference of Woman in dialogue among civilizations	22, January 2001, 1379, in IPIS
No Information about the actors	Conference of Press media, serenity and dialogue among civilizations	2001 (1379)
Students	Second forum of Student Dialogue among civilizations communities	September 2001 (Mehr, 1380)
University of Tarbiat Modares, African Studies Department, The international center of dialogue among civilizations, the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the National Commission of UNESCO, the organization of	Conference of Cultural-Civilizaitonal relations between Iran and Africa	2001

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Islamic culture and relations, (Hafeznia 2001)		
University of Sharif and Roshd NGO	Precursors of Dialogue among Civilizations	2001 (1380)
The International center of dialogue among civilizations (Habibi 2001)	Second International Conference of Nowruz and dialogue among civilizations	2001 (1380) , in Arg Bam
The International center of dialogue among civilizations, and the office for Public Relations and International Affairs of the Kish Free Zone Organization (Eskandarfar et al. 2005)	Seminar of Fiction and Dialogue among Civilizations	2001 (Esfand, 1380), Kish
The Ministry of Cooperation [Vezerat-e Ta-a-von]	Conference of Public Relations and Dialogue among Civilizations	2001 (Esfand 1379)
University of Medicine, Ahvaz (2001)	Conference of Khozestan and Dialogue among Civilizations	2001 (29-30 Azar 1380)
Academy of Art, international center of dialogue among civilizations, (Jame Jam Online 06.10.2001)	Conference of Meaning of Art, for six weeks Clip-Announce of the conference by Alireza Eftekhari (Golpaigani 2001) Showing movies (Jame Jam Online 13.10.2001)	2001 (Mehr 1380),
the Cultural attaché of Belgrade, part of the organization of Islamic culture and relations, Ministry of Minority Affairs of Yugoslavia, Belgrade ¹⁴⁰	Dialogue among Civilizations in Belgrade	June, 2001
the Cultural attaché Tajikistan, The organization of Islamic culture and relations	Dialogue among civilizations, participants from Iran, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan	June, 2001
University of Pretoria and Embassy of Iran, South Africa (Khatami et al. 2001)	Conference of Dialogue among Civilizations, passing differences,	November, 2001
Imam Sadr Institute in Lebanon (Nasser 2001)	The 6th annual Conference of Common Terms focus on “dialogue among civilizations” in Lebanon, with message of	November, 2001

¹⁴⁰ Another reference is about holding a conference in Organized by the Presidency of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2003. In this conference Ahmed Jalali, the representative of Iran in UN, participated *Trajkovski, Boris/Matsuura, Koichiro /Moisiu, Alfred/Covic, Dragan/Parvanov, Georgi/Mesic, Stjepan /Drnovsek, Janes/Madl, Ferenc/Marovic, Svetozar/Picco, Giandomenico/Schneier, Arthur/Mitreva, Ilinka/Gligorov, Kiro/Zhelev, Zhelyu/Holkeri, Harri/Jalali, Ahmed/Bousnina, Mongi/Abramian, Ara* 2004: Dialogue among Civilizations: The Regional Forum on Dialogue among Civilizations Ohrid, 29 and 30 August 2003: UNESCO.

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	Khatami and Pope	
International center of dialogue among civilizations, Center of Strategic Center of Damascus university	Conference “how do we continue dialogue among civilizations?”	January, 2001
Organization of Sport and Center of Women’s Participation	Conference of Woman, sport and dialogue among civilizations	2002, 1380
No Information about the actors	Conference of urbanization and dialogue among civilization	2002 (1381), Shahr-e Rey
No Information about the actors	Conference of urbanization and dialogue among civilization	2002, (khordad, 1381) Isfahan
The Municipal of Mashhad	Conference of City and dialogue	2002, (Tir, 1381), Mashhad
International Center of Dialogue Among Civilizations, University of Shiraz, Office of Culture and Guidance of Province of Fars, Organization of Tourism, and Foundation of Fars Studies	Conference on "Iran and the West in the mirror of each others thoughts"	November, 2002, (Aban 1381)
Organization of Beatification of city of Teheran [sazman-e ziba sazi-ye shahr-e Teheran], which is part of Mayoralty of Teheran, (Art and Architecture Journal 2003)	Monument of Dialogue among Civilizations The painting is in 10 in 7 m, constructed by colorful mosaic. Painting was done by Parviz Heidarzade and designed by Seyed Hamed Mahdavi.	March, 2003 (Esfand, 1381)
University of Mohammed bin Abdullah from Morocco, International Center of Dialogue among Civilizations, President office, Organization of Islamic Culture and Relations, Organization of Youth, Industrial university of Isfahan, Governorship and Municipal of Isfahan	Conference of role of Language in Dialogue among Civilizations (Aref 2004)	May 2004 (Ordibehesht, 1381), in Isfahan university
Ministry of Higher Education, the society of students of the universities of Iran	Three days Forum of Student Dialogue among civilizations communities (Mehr News 07.06.2007)	2007 (1386)
The Iranian Cultural attaché of Tajikistan, The organization of Islamic culture and relations And Strategic Research Center, President office of Tajikistan (ICRO 2008)	Conference of “Dialogue among civilizations, Paste and today”, Ayatollah Taskhiri, the head of World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools participated	October 2008 (Mehr, 13879)

Source: the original sources which are used to make the list are in Farsi, they are translated by the researcher into English

Appendix 7. German-Iranian university projects under “German-Arabic / Iranian university dialogue”

Table 22. list of German and Iranian universities which cooperated with support of DAAD from 2006 to 2013

Time	Partner Universities	Project Info	Activities and Explanation
2013-2014	Germany: Technical University of Berlin, Iran: Iran University of Science and Technology [<i>Dānešgāh-e Elm va San'at</i>] Egypt: Cairo University, Turkey: Istanbul Technical University	Participatory Urban Regeneration of Deteriorated Areas Project director: Dr.-Ing. Somaiyeh Falahat	Study trip, meeting, teaching lectures, Summer School, workshop, establishing website on Participatory Urban Regeneration The project addresses the idea of citizen participation in the process of urban regeneration through case studies in the four cities of the academic participants.
2013-2015	Germany: Goethe Institute of the University of Frankfurt am Main and Institute for Religion and Jewish Studies of the University of Potsdam Iran: University of Religions and Denomination and Alzahra University Tehran/ Religious Studies section	Developing Comparative Methods in Religious Studies Project director: Prof. Dr. Catherina Wenzel	Study trip, workshop, excursion, Summer School, student and professor exchanges, visiting religious figures, co-research and publication, seminar The project concentrates on using comparative methods to discuss topics such as “Religion and secularization”. Teachers and students of the four universities plan to further deepen the discourse on methods, using relevant publications on secularization debate and check for comparability.
2010-2013	Germany: Freiburg University Iran: Isfahan University	Globalization and Health in the field of Psychotherapy Project director: Prof. Dr. Carl Eduard Scheidt	Summer school, PhD dissertations, post-doc, MA thesis, exchange of Iranian physicians, curriculum The project is aimed at discussing the issue of handling psychological and psychosomatic conditions using different cultural and professional experiences of the academics of both Iran and Germany.

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<p>2013-2015</p>	<p>Germany: Duisburg-Essen University, Iran: Bushehr University of Medical Sciences, University of Tehran, Egypt: Fayoum University, Egypt Nanotechnology Center, the Cairo University Indonesia: the Institute Teknologi Bandung/ section engineering</p>	<p>SusWaDialogue, Sustainable Water Dialogue Prof. Dr. André Niemann</p>	<p>Study trip, workshop, network meeting, online-cooperation on project, planning to establish a new training program at Master and PhD level on water management, excursion and visits to traditional water structure in cities such as Berlin and Yazd, networking between teachers and young scholars</p> <p>The project focused on historical context, current status and the requirements of the Water Management Systems in Germany and in three Muslim countries. Having mixed groups on both a national level -Arab, Iranian, south Asian and German- and religious level- Muslim and Christian- was one of the characteristics of the intercultural dialogue.</p>
<p>2012-2014</p>	<p>Germany: Duisburg-Essen University Iran: University of Tehran/Faculty of World Studies, Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, Center for Strategic Research Morocco: Mohammed V -Soussi University Rabat, University of Al Akhawayn Ifrane, Pakistan: Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Political Studies section</p>	<p>Peaceful Change and Violent Conflict – The Transformation of the Middle East and Western-Muslim Relations Project director: PD. Dr. Jochen Hippler</p>	<p>Student exchange, network and planning meeting, Summer School, workshop and seminar, excursion, co-writing articles, website, visiting religious, political and civil society figures</p> <p>The project is on the issue of “Arab Spring”, designed to bring alive discussion among the students, researchers and professors of the region about social political change in the Middle East.</p>
<p>2012-2014</p>	<p>Germany: Paderborn University Iran: University of Religions and Denominations Qom, University of Al-Mustafa International Qom Lebanon: University of Saint Joseph de Beyrouth</p>	<p>Theological University Dialogue Paderborn - Qom - Beirut Project director: Prof. Dr. Klaus von Stosch</p>	<p>Study trip, workshop, Summer School, seminar, exchange of professors and students, co-writing teaching booklet</p> <p>The project focused on the issue of “interfaith dialogue” and its relevance in directing scientific discussions in Catholic and Shia Studies. Having mixed working-groups on different levels of university, nationality and religion was one of the characteristics of this intercultural dialogue.</p>

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<p>2012-2014</p>	<p>Germany: Bauhaus-University Weimar Iran: University of Tehran Egypt: University of Alexandria, Jordan: American University Madaba, the German Jordanian University Amman, Turkey: Istanbul Sehir University</p>	<p>Urban Minorities In the field of Urban ? and Geography</p> <p>Project Director: Dr. Frank Eckardt</p>	<p>Study travel, joint project, workshop, conference, final publication of the results of the project</p> <p>The project focuses on marginalized groups. On the one hand, this is done by dealing with “outsider” groups, for instance in Germany, their target region and their specific legal, social and urban space; on the other hand, the reception, communication and confrontation between the “West” and the “Middle East” from different angles.</p>
<p>2011-2013</p>	<p>Germany: Hamburg University Iran: Tehran University and Hamadan University</p>	<p>Linguistics as a paradigm in cultural dialogue</p> <p>In the field of establishment and development of German-Iranian cooperation in research and teaching</p> <p>Project director: Prof. Dr. Ludwig Paul</p>	<p>Exchange in research and teaching, summer school, workshop, experience of new tutor and mentor systems in teaching</p> <p>The project aims at bundling several years of working relations in the field of Iranian linguistics with two Iranian universities and deepening them. It also aims to achieve a new quality of exchange relations in research and teaching.</p>
<p>2011-2013</p>	<p>Germany: Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) Iran: Tehran University of Medical Science (TUMS) and the Tehran University/School of Engineering</p>	<p>Facility Management for health institutions: introduction of a new management system in Iran</p> <p>Project director: Prof. Dr.-Ing. Dipl. Wi.-Ing. Kunibert Lennerts (KIT)</p>	<p>Discussion in working groups, "Train the Trainer" seminar, workshop, summer schools, conference, short courses on the project theme, structuring Master’s program, construction of first Facility Management Competence Center in Iran, congress on project topic</p> <p>The dialogue-oriented program is directed by the KIT university to introduce a specific management in Iranian health institutions and met with a high level of cooperation from the students and professors of Isfahan and Tehran Universities, as well as some hospitals and clinics.</p>

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<p>2010-2011</p>	<p>Germany: Bamberg University Iran: Shahid Beheshti University</p>	<p>Communication needs understanding: Cooperative Translating In the field of Iran studies Project director: Prof. Birgitt Hoffmann</p>	<p>Possible: Prof. Hoffmann in July 2011 had a specialized lecture for lecturers of the University of Shahid Beheshti in the field of Iranian studies (DAAD 2011c), workshops in Bamberg and Tehran, research stays of scholars and students</p> <p>The main issue was "Reiseberichte" [travelogues] and translation. In the seminar, some reports which were written in German about Iran were translated to Farsi, and vice versa. This project was to maintain that the text represents reality, therefore questions such as "what was the motivation of the writer?" and "what was the focused interest of the writer?" must be considered in the process of translation.</p>
<p>2010-2012</p>	<p>Germany: University of Rostock/Fakultät für Informatik und Elektrotechnik Iran: University of Tehran/School of Electrical and Computer Engineering</p>	<p>IT, Culture and Gender: Research Exchanges in German and Iranian Computer & Electrical Engineering</p> <p>Project directors: in 2012, Prof. Dr. Lars Schwabe; in 2010/2011, Prof. Dr. Djamshid Tavangarian</p>	<p>Common projects, workshop, Communication Seminar, participation in cultural events and excursion, writing and publishing results of the three-year project in a study, study stay for MA students at the University of Rostock under supervision of Tehran and Rostock University professors,</p> <p>The aim of the project is to allow Iranian female students from engineering sciences to collaborate with German students and scientists on handling shared current technical issues and reflecting the intercultural processes occurring in intercultural cooperation.</p>
<p>2010</p>	<p>Germany: Erlangen-Nürnberg Iran: Tehran University and Gorgan University</p>	<p>Natural Disaster and Risk Management: Perspectives of change for sustainable development in Alborz, Iran In the field of geography</p> <p>Project director: Prof. Dr. Achim Bräuning</p>	<p>Study travel, scientific lectures especially via internet portal, directing discussions in intercultural groups</p> <p>The project was on the topic of "Forestry and Wood Science" and "Agriculture and Natural Resources". It aims at sustainable networking between the participating institutions and universities in Iran and modernization and networking of teaching content and teaching methods in Iran, and promoting intercultural dialogue through jointworks and conceptualizing the administrative regulations which are needed in natural risk</p>

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			and preventive management
2008-2009	<p>Germany: Technical University of Berlin Iran: Shahid Beheshti University, Hamyaran Iran NGO Resource Centre, Building and Housing Research Center (BHRC), Urban Development & Revitalization Organization; and several other universities and institutions from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia</p>	<p>MENASHDA, Middle Eastern Northern African Sustainable Habitat Development Association</p> <p>In the field of Applied Geosciences</p> <p>Project director: Prof. Dr. Rudolf Schäfer, TU Berlin</p>	<p>Common projects, teaching program, research and planning</p> <p>The project is to implement concrete measures to promote the sustainable design of living spaces in the target region and build a stable management structure. Before the project ended, MENASHDA formed an international association to continue its activities in a South-South-North partnership structure.</p>
2006-2009	<p>Germany: University of Wuppertal Iran: Isfahan University of Technology +University of Shiraz</p>	<p>Earthquake-Proof Housing in Iran: Joint master and joint PhD of the University of Wuppertal and Isfahan</p> <p>Director of project: Prof. Dr. Georg Pegels</p>	<p>Summer school, common project to build a <i>Fachwerkhaus</i> [a model house], establishing joint Master and PhD course of studies</p> <p>The project was to create a network between German and Iranian engineers to share and develop experience of earthquake-proof housing. Given that Iran is located in a high-risk earthquake region and German firms are looking for experts, networking makes more sense for the university partners.</p>
2006-2008	<p>Germany: Frankfurt University Iran: University of Tehran Lebanon: American University of Beirut Jordan: University of Jordan/ UoJ, University of Yrmouk Marine Science Station Yemen: University of Sanaa</p>	<p>Establishment of a Middle Eastern Biodiversity Research, Training and Conservation Network</p> <p>In the field of Marine Zoology</p> <p>Project director: Dr. Friedhelm Krupp, Forschungsinstitut Senckenberg, Frankfurt</p>	<p>Networking, teaching programs, field study research, excursion inside Yemen and Iran, partly participation in field of PhD dissertations and regional curriculum, congress and presentation of project results</p> <p>The project aimed firstly to establish scientific exchange and was founded to aid understanding of biodiversity and biodiversity informatics practices in the specific local context; secondly to establish a new biodiversity informatics subject at the partner universities and to include it in the teaching system; and thirdly to contribute to the development</p>

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			of a knowledge-based society, extending the results of the research to everyday life.
2006-2008	Germany: Göttingen University, Faculty of Forest Sciences/Forest Ecology and the Göttingen Büsgen Institute/Department of Molecular Wood Biotechnology and Technical Mycology Iran: Mazandaran University and Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands of Iran	Sustainable Forestry Management Concepts to ensure Domestic Wood Supply in Iran In the field of Forestry Project Director: Prof. Dr. Alireza Kharazipour	Study trip, developing some parts of the botanic gardens of Iran and Germany, common research project, co-writing and publishing relevant articles The aim of the project was to create a German-Iranian network and develop the sustainable forest management concepts to secure domestic raw wood supply and to support reforestation of earthquake-hit areas with fast-growing tree species.
2007-2009 2015-2017	Germany: Film University of Babelsberg Konrad Wolf Iran: Sooreh Art University	German-Iranian documentary film project First: Talking Youth-2015-2017 Project director: Prof. Martin Steyer Second: Orient & Occident changing perspective- since 2008 Project director: Prof. Michael Hammon, 2007-2009	Study trip, developing and directing short films together, showing the product at the foreign office in Berlin, publishing DVD and BluRay version of the production The project was to encourage young film-makers of both countries to develop and direct movies together, each film about the guest country, subjects such as “worker”, “football fans” and “fan culture”. The project was done in two period of time by two directors.
2007-2009	Germany: Fachschule Osnabrück, Institute of <i>Theaterpädagogik</i> Iran: University of Tarbiat Modares, department of Theater + Tehran University, University of Theater and Film, Islamic Azad University of Tehran	Theatre Pedagogical Dialogue Project director: Andreas Poppe	Study travel, joint play, presentation of theater plays, active discussion of each other's artistic and didactic procedures in teaching and study of theater, playing a joint theater at international theater festivals in Osnabrück and Tehran, teaching in theater education courses by Osnabrück The project aimed at extending scientific, cultural and artistic dialogue between young Iranian and German teacher training students, to consolidate and expand their experiences through joint discussion and theater plays.
2007	Germany: Justus-Liebig- Gießen University Iran: Tehran University, Shahid Beheshti University, Gorgan University, Allameh Tabatabai University, Peyam Noor University,	Extension of Academic Exchange , Consultancy for Local Actions in Regional Development In the field of Geography and	Conference between scholars of the universities, initial conference to focus on Geography and Geosciences in Northern Iran (ZEU 2008: 35) It seems that it was an orientation visit and seminar that took place in Iran, but it did

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	Azad University	Geology Project director: Prof. Dr. Andreas Dittmann	not continue as a project in the subsequent years.
2006	Germany: Technical University of Munich Iran: University of Tehran, University of Sharif	Developing Computer-based Processes to assist with diagnosis and surgery In the field of Computer Science and Medical Technology Project director: Prof. Nassir Navab	Workshop held for students and professor exchanges.

Source: made by researcher with help of some members of staff of the DAAD

Appendix 8: Iranian scholarship holders of ifa's CCP program

Table 23. List of Iranian scholarshipholders of the CCP program, from 2005 to 2013

Time	Sending Organization	Host Organization
2013	Fatemeh Ahmadi Kamali from Center for Sustainable Development and Environment	Michael-Succow-Stiftung, Greifswald
2013	Heiko Hanke from the Deutsch-Iranische Krebshilfe e.V., Friedberg	Gesundheitskampagne "5 am Tag Iran-Deutschland", Deutsche Botschaftsschule Iran, Tehran
2012	Niloofar Shahrsebi from an Iranian NGO, Qazvin	Medica Mondiale, Köln
2012	Fezzeh Gholamreza Kashi from <i>Tarh O Manzar</i> Institute, Tehran	Arnold Bergsträsser Institut in Freiburg
2012	Mehran Aliasghazadeh from Construction Company <i>Jahanfaraz</i> , Gorgan	Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld in Trier
2011	Fatemeh Ziaeyan Bahri from Conservation and Watershed Management Research Institute/Department of Coastal Protection, Tehran,	Integrated School of Ocean Sciences/ISOS, Cluster of Excellence "The Future Ocean", Kiel
2010	Hoda Shakib Manesh from Institute for Trade Studies and Research, Tehran	Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht, Hamburg
2009	Tirazeh Zare Garizy from Iranian Resources & Engineering Management/IREM Co, Tehran	p2m berlin GmbH, Berlin
2008	Neda Nazmi from International	Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP),

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	Association for Iranian Managers/I-AIM, Tehran	Berlin
2007	Hannah Kaviani from Atieh Bahar Consulting, city of Tehran	Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), Berlin
2007	Marjam Ghaffari from Dr. Shirin Ebady Advocacy Office, Tehran	IGFM, Frankfurt
2006	Seyed Emadeddin Tabatabaei from Imam Mussa Sadr Stiftung, and Institute of Culture and Art "Nogteh Atf", Tehran	Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht, Freiburg
2006	Firouz Mahmoudi from faculty of Law and Political Science – Tehran University, Tehran	Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht, Freiburg
2005	Leila Alikarimi from Centre for Defenders of Human Rights/ CDHR, Tehran	Max-Planck-Institut für ausländisches und internationales Privatrecht, Hamburg

Source: ifa (2016); worked out by the researcher

Appendix 9: Intercultural dialogue projects with central role of the Grüter family

Table 24. List of intercultural activities that Grüter family organized from 2003 to 2013

Time	Program	Projects
2003	School Exchange KLS and <i>Shohadaye Kargar</i> School	Study travel to Tehran Six pupils, boys and girls, and four teachers from KLS (Grüter 2008)
2004	School Exchange SKL and <i>Shohadaye Kargar</i> School	Study travel to Berlin Six pupils, boy and girls, four teachers (Lohse 14.03.2004) from <i>Shohadaye Kargar</i> School
	Participation in school-network conference of the Iranian Science and Art Foundation	Study travel to Tehran and Isfahan by two German teachers and three pupils to participate in the conference which was organized by Iranian school network of the Science and Art Foundation, presenting projects on natural science and IT
2005	School-Exchange between <i>Farzanegan</i> school and KLS	Study travel to Berlin by Iranian pupils to present projects on the issues of earthquakes, training seminar by a professor from Potsdam University, Geological Research Institute, traveling to different cities
	Participation in school-network conference of the Iranian Science and Art Foundation	Travel by one teacher and one female pupil from KLS to town of Neishabour to present a PowerPoint on “dialogue among cultures”, traveling to different cities (Grüter 2008: 9-12)
2006	Youth in Dialog - Cooperation in three projects: Biography research, practice period and internet portal	Two to three visits to Tehran and Berlin by pupils of KLS and Kherad High School (later the pupils of Mahdavi Educational Complex joined), together writing a biography of German figures in Iran and Iranian figures in Germany; (e.g. <i>Gerhard Bachmann</i> and Dr. <i>Beheshti</i>), internships in e.g. German company MAN and UNESCO, exchanging thoughts and experiences in internet portal www.Shula21.de , presenting result of earthquake and biography projects in some exhibitions in Tehran and Berlin, traveling to different cities (Grüter 2008: 9-12)
April -2008 October	Schneewittchen [Snow White fairytale] project: Puppet theater workshop and	Ten German pupils, boys and girls, participated together with a group of Iranian pupils, also boys and girls, in a fairytale puppet workshop which was held by the Iranian cultural organization, <i>Kanon</i> , and performed together a European fairytale, Snow White, in different historic and

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	performance	public places of Isfahan (UNESCO 2008)
2009	<i>Goldapfelsins Tochter</i> [Daughter of bitter orange] project: Workshop and performance	Ten Iranian and eight German pupils presented a puppet performance: <i>Goldapfelsins Tochter/Doxtar-e Nārenj va Toranj</i> [Daughter of sour Orange], in the foreign affairs ministry, Berlin (Kalwa 2009)
	German-Iranian Teachers' Conference	About 70 German and Iranian teachers, social and science researchers participated in a seminar in Berlin on issues such as cultural projects between the two countries, theoretical and practical aspects and vocational education system (Grüter 2009) Besides German universities and academic institutes, researchers of a project called "Young Cities" also participated. Young Cities was a "Developing Energy Efficient Urban Fabric" project supported by the German federal government from 2008 to 2013; it concentrated on Tehran-Karaj region and <i>Hashtgerd</i> town in Iran (IBBA 2011).
2010	German-Iranian Teachers' Conference	German and Iranian teachers participated in a seminar in Tehran; the main issue was "Environmental Energy" and "not fossil energy" as well as the "Young Cities" project; visiting the main office of Kanoon in Tehran and excursion to Isfahan, visiting the participants of the last exchange and conference, and more networking were other activities (Triebel 2010)
2010	Photo workshop "I see something that you can't see"	Preparing photo workshops with Iranian and German pupils, taking photos together, printing the results as postcards, photo exhibition; main org-partner: UNESCO Weltnaturerbe Wattenmeer (German-IRIB 2013)
2011	"Kunst baut Brücken – Morgenland trifft Abendland"	Holding Iranian calligraphy workshop and exhibition by Iranian artist: <i>Sedaghat Jabbari</i> , in Richard Haizmann Museum, Niebüll, which is located in Nordfriesland, a German-Danish region Org-partner: Hafis-Gesellschaft Hamburg
2012	"Kunst baut Brücken – Morgenland trifft Abendland": Deutsche Schriftkunstaussstellung in Teheran	A joined exhibition of calligraphy art of a German artist, <i>Antje Glashagen-Stuck</i> , and the Iranian artist <i>Sedaghat Jabbari</i> in Tehran, in National Library and <i>Khane-ye Honarmandān</i> [Iran Art Forum] The org-partner: <i>Evangelischen Kirche deutscher Sprachen eine Gemeinschaftsausstellung</i> [the German Church]
2013	"Kunst baut Brücken – Morgenland trifft Abendland"	Holding exhibition and calligraphy workshop by a German artist group, <i>lettera'</i> , in Iran Artists' Forum and Iranian National Library, publishing book on activities of the project Org-partner: Hafis-Gesellschaft Hamburg

Source: made by the researcher based on information of the Grüter family and some publications which are cited in the table

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