Abstract

This thesis named „Analysis of the Official Israeli Discourse during the Second Intifada: Legitimization and Categorization“ is concerned with discursive construction of Palestinian terrorism and Israeli security policies by Israeli officials in the period following 2000. The paper draws on works which refuse to perceive language as neutral communication means to describe the social reality, and instead approach it as a tool to impose and maintain social and political inequality and dominance of some groups over others. These theoretical foundations underpin the following research which examines legitimation strategies employed by Israeli officials in order to justify Israeli controversial measures aiming to quell Palestinian terrorism during the Second Intifada. The paper identifies several discursive schemes through which Israeli state representatives purported to legitimize Israeli security policies that were harshly criticized at the time. The basic strategy is to depict and categorize Israelis as peace yearning people who relentlessly offer far-reaching compromises aiming to achieve calm, which proposals are being adamantly rejected by Palestinians whose only reaction is resort to terror. The thesis further deals with Israeli officials’ reframing of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a part of the US-led global war on terror in the post-9/11 era which interpretation positions Israeli as a Western states’ ally in this international struggle. Lastly, the paper examines legitimation strategies employed by Israeli politicians and high-ranking military officials.