Appendix to the article: When (and how) ideas become arguments. The regulation of party donations in Germany

**Table A1: Coding frame for Bundestag debates on the regulation of donations, 1986 debate**

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| *Code* | *Definition* | *Example* |
| Continuity to National socialism | Statements that relate private donations, especially large and/or corporate ones, to National Socialism, especially to business funding to the NSDAP by the “Friends of Heinrich Himmler” circle. | “Given the dark and criminal history of the financial power of the Flick company, the lack of any break with the continuity of the Flick rule is the worst fact the committee [of inquiry] could find, even worse than any crime the Flick company was involved in.” (Green MP Otto Schily, Bundestag 1986/3/13, 15646). |
| Danger of corruption | Statements that regard large and/or corporate donations as a threat to democracy irrespective of the German past, simply because they increase the dependency of political parties on wealthy donors. | “The apparent strong financial dependence of the FDP is similarly disreputable. The corporate attempt to save the FDP in 1975/76, in which the Flick company participated with EUR 1.5 million – it is a pity we do not know how much other companies gave –, illustrates that without corporate money, the FDP and its parliamentary branch would have ceased to exist.” (SPD MP Peter Struck, Bundestag 1986/3/13, 15652). |
| Prevention of Communism | Statements that regard any donation – corporate, large, or undisclosed – as preferable over no donation because donations ensure that Communist ideas cannot take root in Germany. | “Only the German Communist Party receives a higher share of state funding than the Greens […], even though this funding is provided by another country [the Soviet Union].” (CDU MP Manfred Langner, Bundestag 1986/3/13, 15632). |
| Legal framework encourages donations | Statements that emphasise that the German funding regime was designed to provide political parties with a mixed income from membership dues and state funding as well as donations for good reasons. If there were cases of illicit funding (which these statements dispute), this calls for incremental changes and not for structural reforms. | “I wish to ask you: What is your charge against us? Do you charge us with receiving money from Flick? Is it this was you charge us with, dear colleague Dr Struck? Obviously, this is the only remaining charge. Is this a problem? Is this unethical? Why criticize this, given that the Bundestag has – also with your votes – upheld, just like the Constitutional Court, that donations are also a politically necessary matter not to be criticized from a moral perspective?” (CDU MP Friedrich Bohl, Bundestag 1986/03/13, p. 15656). |

**Table A2: Coding frame for Bundestag debates on the regulation of donations, 1993 debate**

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| *Code* | *Definition* | *Example* |
| Transparency & matching strengthen democracy | Statements that endorse the reform envisaged in 1993 because its positive impact on a more balanced democratic political competition, namely by creating a level playing field with respect to donations once unlimited tax deductibility is abolished. | “[…] the problem of large donations has all in all been solved. Until now, one of the largest problems was that donations up to 60,000 Euros were tax-deductible. This amount has now been reduced to 12,000 Euros for couples and 6,000 Euros for individuals.” (SPD MP Gert Wartenburg, Bundestag 1993/11/12, 16405). |
| Parties & disclosed donations essential | Statements that endorse the reform envisaged in 1993 because it strengthens political parties as the single most important actors in democracy, in particular by increasing transparency. | “Considering this and the fact that political parties are – according to one expert – ‘the vivid force which constitutes parliamentary democracy, rendering the strengthening and support of political parties a necessary condition of a functioning democracy’, I think that we can be content with it [the envisaged reform].” (CSU MP Wolfgang Zeitlmann, Bundestag 1993/11/12, 16406). |
| Democracy requires more regulation | Statements that criticise the 1993 reform because it does not sufficiently regulate large donations, both with respect to transparency and more limited tax-deductibility. | “The threshold for tax-deductibility of donations in the proposed reform tripled [compared to what the Constitutional Court and an expert committee had previously suggested]. This threshold now has no relation anymore to the average income. With respect to the average income in the East, it is simply crazy. This has nothing to do with real life anymore.” (Green MP Werner Schulz, Bundestag 1993/11/12, 16408). |
| Court overstretched separation of powers | Statements that criticise the 1993 reform because too much of it was decided in a legal rather than in a political fashion by the Constitutional Court. | “I regard it as unfair that corporate donations to associations remain tax-deductible while corporate donations to political parties are not deductible any more. I do not believe this is a solution that will last for long. I am fully aware that the Constitutional Court has decided this way. However, even the Constitutional Court can come to different conclusions in future judgements.” (CSU MP Kurt Faltlhauser, Bundestag 1993/11/12, 16412). |