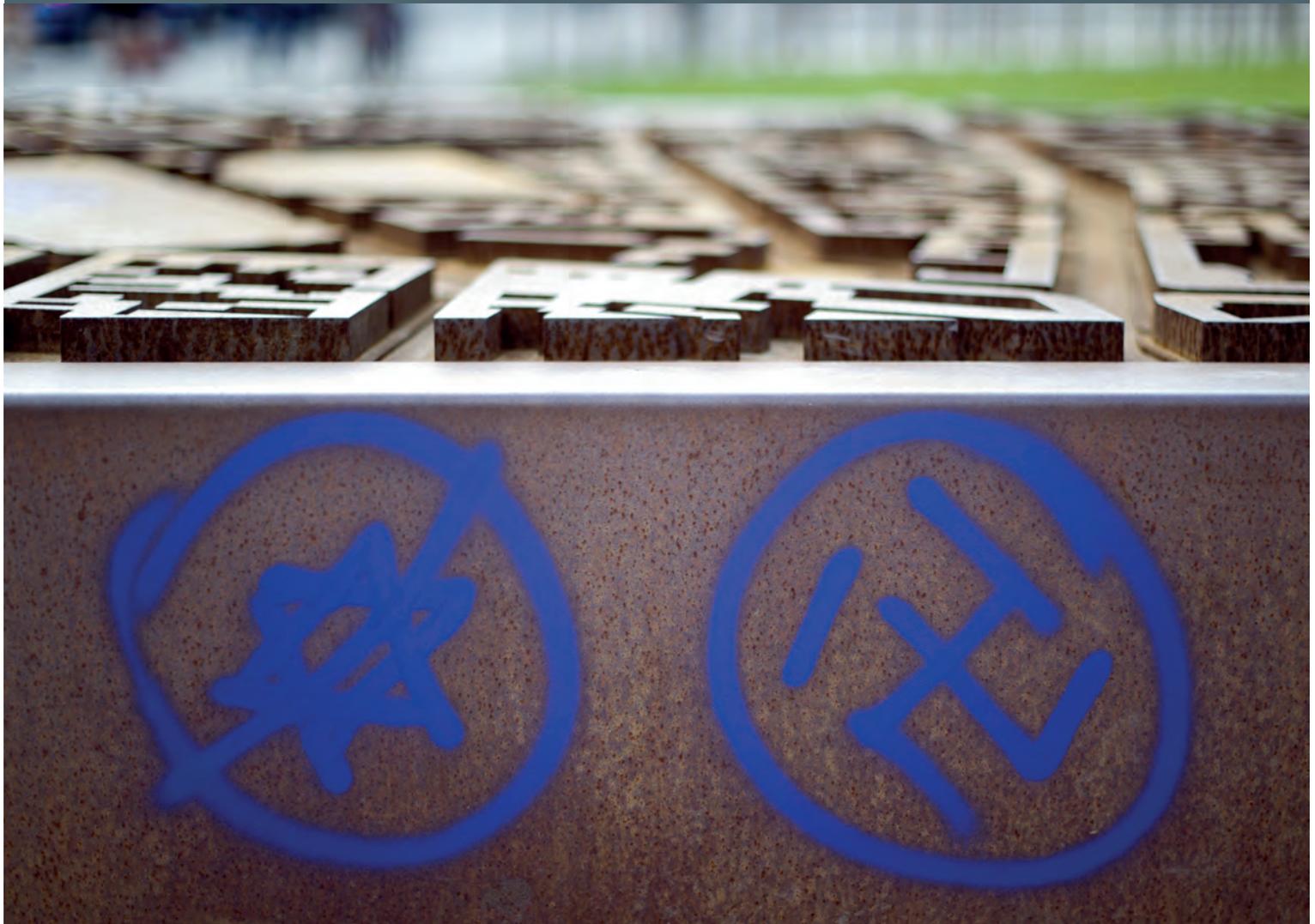




Bundesamt für  
Verfassungsschutz

# Antisemitism in right-wing extremism



# **Antisemitism in right-wing extremism**

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# 1 Introduction

For more than one hundred years, antisemitism has been among the ideological cornerstones of nationalist and völkisch political movements in Germany. Before, hostility towards Jews had been expressed through religiously and economically motivated patterns of argumentation and had been socially and politically motivated. Since the late 19th century, however, Jews or the people considered to be Jews were mainly rejected based on ethno-racist reasoning. This development culminated in the race doctrine propagated by the National Socialists. According to that doctrine, Jews were regarded as “vermin on the people’s body” to be systematically killed in the Holocaust later on.

However, antisemitism as such is no relic of National Socialism but rather a constant and Europe-wide phenomenon with a long history. Besides widespread latent antisemitism, i.e. a tacit agreement with anti-Jewish views or a vague aversion to Jews, to the present day, hostility towards Jews has time and again become evident in criminal offences motivated by antisemitism. The explosive force of antisemitism in Germany has been revealed for example by the attack by neo-Nazis on a Jewish restaurant in Chemnitz (Saxony) in September 2018 or by the right-wing extremist terrorist attack against a synagogue in Halle an der Saale (Saxony-Anhalt) on the most important Jewish holiday Yom Kippur in October 2019. Furthermore, police statistics show that although the number of antisemitic criminal offences has fluctuated in the last 20 years, it has stabilised at a relatively high level. Antisemitism is not unique to right-wing extremism and also exists in Islamist extremism, for example, but the majority of criminal offences committed in Germany motivated by antisemitism can be ascribed to the right-wing extremist spectrum.

In right-wing extremism, antisemitism fulfils various functions:

- It creates a sense of identity; this means that disparaging “the Jews” as a foreign group defined in a negative way enables right-wing extremists to identify with their own group assessed in a positive way.
- Antisemitic lines of argument use the activities of “the Jews” to provide a seemingly simple explanation for complex social developments.
- Delegitimising the existing state and social order as allegedly “Jewish” or “influenced by Jews” allows right-wing extremists to style themselves as the only rightful voice of the German people.
- Right-wing extremists hope to appeal to and mobilise those among the overall population with potentially antisemitic views, estimated at up to 20 per cent by relevant studies.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> See “Antisemitismus in Deutschland. Erscheinungsformen, Bedingungen, Präventionsansätze. Bericht des Unabhängigen Expertenkreises Antisemitismus” (“Antisemitism in Germany. Manifestations, conditions, approaches to prevention. Report by the Independent Panel on Antisemitism”), Berlin 2012, p. 20f.

The present brochure examines the different right-wing extremist groups, parties and tendencies regarding their antisemitic patterns of argumentation. This brochure is intended to give information about the very extremely diverse manifestations of antisemitism in today's right-wing extremism and to raise awareness for antisemitism, which is not always visible at first glance.

## 2 Definition

The term antisemitism is complex and is not used uniformly. It includes “all forms of hatred, prejudices and dislike against Jews”<sup>2</sup> and according to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) it can be defined as

*“a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”<sup>3</sup>*

Antisemitism is not only directed against Jews but also against people who are regarded as Jews or are associated with Jews. In many cases, antisemitism targets religious or practising Jews and their institutions; nevertheless, secular or converted Jews are regularly affected as well. Last but not least, the State of Israel, too, is the target of antisemitic attacks.

An analysis of antisemitism leads to the identification of six manifestations of antisemitism.<sup>4</sup> This categorisation, however, is ideal-typical.

2 Gideon Botsch, “Von der Judenfeindschaft zum Antisemitismus. Ein historischer Überblick (“From hostility towards Jews to antisemitism. A historical overview”), in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, vol. 64, no. 28-30/2014, pp. 10-17, specifically p.10.

3 IHRA working definition, in: [www.holocaustremembrance.com](http://www.holocaustremembrance.com) of 26 May 2016; retrieved on 16 July 2020.

4 See Armin Pfahl-Traugher, “Ideologische Erscheinungsformen des Antisemitismus” (“Ideological manifestations of antisemitism”), in: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, vol. 57, no. 31/2007, pp. 4-11.

In fact, antisemitism in right-wing extremism mostly appears as a combination of different forms.

- **Religious antisemitism**

The origins of antisemitism in Europe can be found in Christian anti-Judaism. This form of antisemitism is based on Christians presenting their own faith as an absolute and on the related rejection and disparagement of Judaism. In the Christianity of the High and Late Middle Ages, for example, Jews were often considered as murderers of Jesus. In addition, conspiracy theories were spread such as the allegation that Jews rob and kill Christian children in order to use their blood for ritual purposes.<sup>5</sup>

- **Social antisemitism**

In addition, social antisemitism developed. For the most part, it was based on economic reasoning. It can be traced back to social conflicts and manifests itself in the idea that Jews allegedly have a particular status within society. In the Middle Ages, Jews were barred from many professions. Therefore, they switched to trade and moneylending. Their hostile environment soon regarded them as unproductive usurers, swindlers and exploiters, and – in the shape of the financier at royal courts – as influential players behind the scenes.<sup>6</sup>

- **Political antisemitism**

Political antisemitism goes along with that idea. It claims that the allegedly powerful Jewish minority conspires against the non-Jewish majority in order to harm and dominate it. For that purpose, it uses the image of “the Jews” as alleged “masterminds and puppet masters” provoking economic crises, revolutions and even wars.

5 See Werner Bergmann, “Was heißt Antisemitismus?” (“What does Antisemitism mean?”), in: [www.bpb.de](http://www.bpb.de) of 27 November 2006; retrieved on 3 March 2020.

6 See Armin Pfahl-Traugher, “Ideologische Erscheinungsformen des Antisemitismus” (“Ideological manifestations of antisemitism”), in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 57, no. 31/2007, pp. 4-11, specifically p. 6f.

The idea of a Jewish conspiracy that ultimately aims for world domination is one of the most potent antisemitic stereotypes.

- **Racist antisemitism**

Racist antisemitism uses biologicistic patterns of argumentation and calls Jews an inferior mixed race. It is also alleged that all “higher” races are locked in a struggle with this “low” race, an existential battle that can only end in either victory or destruction. Jewishness is considered to be unalterable. It cannot be affected, neither by conversion nor by change of behaviour.

- **Secondary antisemitism**

In secondary antisemitism, remembering the persecution of Jews and the Holocaust is seen as a vilification of German identity and a moral humiliation pursued by Jews, serving as a means of receiving unjustified reparation payments or of legitimising the Israeli policy in the Middle East. An extreme variant does not just downplay the Holocaust but completely denies it. The strategy of “perpetrator-victim reversal” is used to accuse Jews of being behind this “lie of the century”, from which they allegedly benefit at the Germans’ cost.<sup>7</sup>

- **Anti-Zionist antisemitism**

Finally, there is anti-Zionist antisemitism which is also called “Israel-related antisemitism”. Hostility is directed against the State of Israel, which is delegitimised and – as a Jewish collectivity – vilified. This is done, among other things, by denying Israel’s right to exist or by placing Israel’s policy on the same level as the Nazi state’s.

<sup>7</sup> See Jürgen Zarusky, “Die Leugnung des Völkermords. ‘Revisionismus’ als ideologische Strategie“ (“The denial of the genocide. ‘Revisionism’ as ideological strategy”), in: Wolfgang Benz (ed.), “Auf dem Weg zum Bürgerkrieg? Rechtsextremismus und Gewalt gegen Fremde in Deutschland“ (“On the road to civil war? Right-wing extremism and violence against foreigners in Germany”), Frankfurt am Main 2001, pp. 63-86.

As a rule, the terms “Israelis” and “Zionists” then refer to “Jews”, who are collectively identified with Israel’s actions and held responsible for them.<sup>8</sup>

### **3 Manifestations and expressions**

The right-wing extremist scene is very heterogeneous. As a consequence, its respective manifestations and expressions vary considerably. On the one hand, there are small groups and individuals who mainly come to attention by antisemitic criminal offences or by statements made on the Internet. On the other hand, there are institutionalised parties and commercial publishing houses whose antisemitism is partly programmatic.

#### **3.1 Antisemitism in violence-oriented right-wing extremism**

Antisemitism continues to be a characteristic feature of the violence-oriented right-wing extremist scene. It continues to be an important element of the ideology among younger virtual groups as well. The members of such groups explicitly endorse National Socialism, using particularly provocative, partly anarchist language glorifying violence. They also voice imaginary scenarios regarding the large-scale expulsion and annihilation of Jews. Even if the agitation of violence-prone right-wing extremists, for instance, is ostensibly directed against Muslims, Jews are often described as the true root of all evil.

Exceptions are violence-oriented groups and individuals of the right-wing extremist scene who have only radicalised in the context of the “refugee crisis” in the years 2015 to 2017.

<sup>8</sup> See Samuel Salzborn, “Israelkritik oder Antisemitismus? Kriterien für eine Unterscheidung“ (“Criticism of Israel or antisemitism? Criteria for differentiation”), in: *ibid.* (ed.), “Antisemitismus. Geschichte, Theorie, Empirie“ (“Antisemitism. History, theory, empirical analysis”), Baden-Baden 2014, pp. 103-115, specifically p. 109.

As a rule, these have no or only very limited links with antisemitism, and they primarily display a strong hostility towards refugees and Muslims as well as an excessive fear of a collapse of the state order. Their patterns of argumentation focus on the supposed risk of an imminent “Islamisation of Germany”. Jews and/or the State of Israel are partly even regarded as allies in the fight against an alleged Muslim “invasion”. In that context, actual or supposed Muslim antisemitism even serves as a justification for the activists’ own xenophobia.

### **3.2 Antisemitism among right-wing extremist political parties**

Antisemitism plays a major role as an ideological identifier for right-wing extremist political parties. Antisemitic attitudes and enemy images are deeply rooted in the world of ideas of the parties’ members and activists. At present, though, agitation and propaganda are dominated by other enemy images and topics that those involved believe to be currently more likely to be taken up in the public discourse, such as the threat of “mass immigration”. Such patterns of argumentation are sometimes combined with antisemitic conspiracy theories.

#### **3.2.1 Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD)**



Antisemitic views are entrenched in the ideology of NPD (National Democratic Party of Germany), and they are often linked with positive references to historical National Socialism and views of historical revisionism.

Hostility towards Jews is mostly expressed by the use of antisemitic codes and alleged criticism of Israel. Sometimes, however, antisemitism manifests itself openly.

Moreover, NPD representatives regularly spread conspiracy theories in accordance with a political form of antisemitism by implying that there is a Jewish conspiracy for the purpose of

increasing Jewish influence. In his speech at a demonstration in Erfurt on 1 May 2018, the party chairman Frank Franz said, for example:

*“But the worst, dear friends, are not those who wear a kippa on their heads. The worst are the hundreds of thousands and millions who wear their own very special kippa in their napper – as a censorship tool of the Federal Republic, which has obviously completely robbed them of their sanity. The antisocial policies which we have to witness today have only become possible because of the fact that our nation has been re-educated for years and decades.”<sup>9</sup>*

Positions pertaining to secondary antisemitism are regularly voiced too. All Jews in general are accused of exploiting the Holocaust to impose their financial and political interests on Germany. Anti-Zionist antisemitism can be observed when Israel’s right to exist is denied and the Jewish state is vilified. In that context, antisemitic stereotypes are frequently used.

For instance, in May 2018 the NPD youth organisation Junge Nationalisten (JN / Young Nationalists) published a position paper in which Israel was described as the “enemy of all peoples”. According to that paper, solidarity with Israel, whose “parasitic state formation” is allegedly based on American arms deliveries and German funds, is a central pillar of the “FRG system” [FRG – Federal Republic of Germany]. However, the paper says, the “genuflection to the Zionist zeitgeist” contradicts German interests because “guilt cult, ‘over-foreignisation’ and combating the authentic national resistance” are the “apodictic characteristics of the anti-German trinity since the implementation of the FRG system by the Allies”.<sup>10</sup>

9 “1. Mai Demo 2018 in Erfurt – Rede von Frank Franz [4K]“ (“Demonstration in Erfurt on 1 May 2018 – Speech delivered by Frank Franz [4K]”) of 3 May 2018, in: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com); retrieved on 9 April 2020.

10 “70 JAHRE ISRAEL – KEIN GRUND ZUM FEIERN!“ (“70 years of Israel – No reason to celebrate!”) of 14 May 2018, in: <https://junge-nationalisten.de>; retrieved on 9 April 2020.

### 3.2.2 DIE RECHTE



The party DIE RECHTE (The Right) propagates a right-wing extremist world view, accompanied by revisionist theses and antisemitic positions.

The importance of antisemitic positions within the party is particularly evident from the nomination of Ursula Haverbeck-Wetzel, who has been convicted several times for Holocaust denial, as its top candidate for the 2019 European elections, and from its election campaign focusing on her imprisonment.

The party's antisemitic attitude is shown not least by its election posters. For instance, the slogan "Israel ist unser Unglück" ("Israel is our misfortune") refers to the slogan "Die Juden sind unser Unglück" ("The Jews are our misfortune"), which originated in the 19th century and was printed on every cover of the antisemitic Nazi smear sheet "Der Stürmer" ("The attacker") from 1927 onwards. The now deleted Twitter post of the party's national chair Sascha Krolzig, too, stating that the party DIE RECHTE is "the only consistently anti-Israeli party on the ballot paper"<sup>11</sup> reveals a clearly antisemitic attitude.

Numerous actions illustrate the antisemitism advocated by the political party. For example, on 14 May 2018 – the anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel – a vigil was held under the slogan "Der 70. Jahrestag der israelischen Staatsgründung ist kein Grund zu feiern: Wir fordern endlich einen gerechten Frieden im Nahen Osten!" ("The 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel is no reason to celebrate: we demand a fair peace in the Middle East at long last!"). Around the time of the vigil, some individuals made the futile attempt to remove the Israeli flag from the flagpole in front of the city hall of Dortmund.

<sup>11</sup> Twitter post of Sascha Krolzig (18 May 2019).



Demonstrations of the party DIE RECHTE in 2019.



“Stolpersteine” (literally: “stumbling blocks”) in Hesse.

### 3.2.3 Der III. Weg



Antisemitic views are deeply rooted in the political party Der III. Weg (The Third Way) too. On the party's homepage, the State of Israel is described as a "terror state", for example. Under the slogan "Was jeder gegen den zionistischen Völkermord tun kann" ("What everyone can do against the Zionist genocide"), the party openly calls for the boycott of products from Israel, the "Zionist ulcer in the Middle East", the "Zionist predatory state". According to Der III. Weg, this will help to "fight the genocide in Palestine".<sup>12</sup>

The party calls for the abolition of sections 86 (dissemination of propaganda material of unconstitutional organisations) and 130 (incitement to hatred) of the German Criminal Code – which, in the party's view, restrict the right to freedom of opinion and expression – in order to overcome the alleged "cult of guilt" which was imposed on the German people after World War II.<sup>13</sup> In 2019 the party stated that the current legal framework prevented one from effectively defending oneself against reproaches resulting from the Holocaust.<sup>14</sup> Der III. Weg asserted that the "Stolpersteine" (literally: "stumbling blocks") installed in various cities also embodied that "cult of guilt". These memorial plaques embedded in pavements at the former places of residence of – especially Jewish – victims of National Socialism are intended as a reminder of their deportation and murder. The political party Der III. Weg rather considers this practice of remembrance a proof of the "zeitgeist-related delusional cult of guilt" at the expense of the German people.<sup>15</sup>

12 "Israel-Boycott: Was jeder gegen den zionistischen Völkermord tun kann" ("Boycott of Israel: What everyone can do against the Zionist genocide"), of 24 July 2014, in: <https://der-dritte-weg.info>; retrieved on 5 July 2019.

13 "Juden ab ins Gas: Verfahrenseinstellung bei ausländischen Anti-Zionisten" ("Jews into gas: proceedings of foreign anti-Zionists closed") of 13 December 2014 in: <https://der-dritte-weg.info>; retrieved on 9 April 2020.

14 "Bundesdeutscher Propagandafunk strahlt ‚Holocaust‘-Serie aus den 70ern erneut aus" ("Federal German propaganda station rebroadcasts 'Holocaust' serial of the 1970s") of 23 January 2019, in: <https://der-dritte-weg.info>; retrieved on 9 April 2020.

15 "'Stolperstein' von KPD-Mann geschändet" ("'Stolperstein' desecrated by KPD member") of 18 August 2015 and "Stolpersteine in München weiter unerwünscht" ("Stolpersteine still unwanted in Munich") of 26 August 2015, in: <https://der-dritte-weg.info>; retrieved on 9 April 2020.

In the past few years, with a view to pointing out the allegedly global power of the Jews, the party has published relevant articles on its website time and again. For instance, a well-known investment company is said to be a company exclusively managed by Jews and to hold the reins in the financial community as a kind of world power.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, a pharmaceutical firm, as a company managed by Jews, has allegedly sold painkillers by the bulk although those painkillers are supposedly drugs.

From the party's point of view, this has led to an increase in drug trafficking on the black market.<sup>17</sup> By referring to classic antisemitic ideas, these statements imply that Jews not only control the financial community but also drive the population into drug addiction.

### **3.3 Antisemitism in the New Right**

General and comprehensive statements on the ideological feature of antisemitism in the New Right can only be made to a limited extent. It can at least be established, though, that an openly displayed antisemitism accompanied by “tough” language, which may also be pro-violence, is not an ideological feature of the New Right. This is where an ideological dividing line exists with other right-wing extremism tendencies.

However, there are indications within the New Right suggesting that individual protagonists adhere to political antisemitism. Such indications can especially be identified in the agitation against the investor George Soros: Soros, who founded the Open Society Foundations, spends a large amount of money to promote the concept of an “open” society. This includes, among other aspects the removal of migration barriers. Therefore, he serves as an enemy image and a personified example of “global elites” to some actors. Soros is

16 “BlackRock – die heimliche Weltmacht?” (“BlackRock – the secret world power?”) of 10 August 2018, in: <https://der-dritte-weg.info>; retrieved on 9 April 2020.

17 “Die Opioid-Schwemme und ihre Profiteure” (“The opioids oversupply and its profiteers”) of 23 November 2017, in: <https://der-dritte-weg.info>, retrieved on 9 April 2020.

often portrayed as a supposed mastermind, pulling the strings behind the scenes, e.g. regarding immigration to Europe, and constituting a catalyst for the “Great Replacement”.

The “Great Replacement” refers to a conspiracy theory according to which an unspecified elite aims at replacing the native population by migrants. This argumentation is sometimes also taken up by members of the Identitäre Bewegung Deutschland e.V. (IBD / Identitarian Movement Germany regd. assoc.).

The focus is put on Soros’ being a representative of the hated American financial capitalism. The fact that he comes from a Jewish family is at least hinted at.

### **The New Right**

The New Right is an informal network of groupings, individuals and organisations ranging from right-wing extremist to right-wing conservative forces. These forces partly hold anti-liberal and anti-democratic positions and intend to impose them in society and politics by means of different strategies. Parliamentary as well as extra-parliamentary movements, metapolitical theory construction and the protest in the streets are closely interlinked within the New Right spectrum. This complexity in combination with a content-related and ideological heterogeneity of the protagonists who coexist and/or co-operate on certain points does not make it possible – or only occasionally – to identify a coherent political agenda.

Furthermore, antisemitism also surfaces when the State of Israel and its policies which overstep the limits of acceptable freedom of opinion are examined. In addition to a neutral stance, two opposing camps can be identified: One camp stands up for Israel’s right to exist along with the Israeli foreign and security policy, placing itself in a Christian-Jewish

tradition, which has to be defended against (political) Islam. The other camp is explicitly critical of Israel, sees itself more in an anti-imperialist (and thus, for example, pro-Palestinian) tradition of thought and considers liberalism rather than Islamist extremism its main ideological enemy.

One of the reasons why antisemitism cannot be observed throughout the whole New Right is likely to be that antisemitism is often eclipsed by Islamophobia in this spectrum. Moreover, the New Right is marked by a high level of dynamism as regards the appearance of new protagonists as well as possible shifts of emphasis regarding ideological features.

### **3.4 Antisemitism in right-wing extremist worldview organisations**

In right-wing extremist worldview organisations openly antisemitic agitation continues to be a central ideological feature: ranging from antisemitic conspiracy theories of a Jewish elite ruling the world to racist antisemitism.

Right-wing extremist organisations and groups with a völkisch orientation strictly reject the three Abrahamic world religions. Among these religions, Judaism is of primary importance, which is why they treat it with particularly aggressive hostility. Thus, in many cases, the rejection of Christianity and of Islam is also a manifestation of antisemitic attitudes. For instance, these organisations and groups refer to “Judeo-Christianity”, a faith which allegedly replaced the native beliefs of the Teutons, Celts and other original peoples.

The understanding that somebody’s belief is, or should be, “genetically determined” is of major importance in the völkisch ideology. This goes back to a long tradition of theoreticians who exercised great influence on right-wing nationalist circles in Europe, especially since the turn of the 20th century.

From the start, antisemitism was a central element of the ideology of these theoreticians.

Contemporary actors of right-wing extremist worldview organisations maintain a close link with the ideology devised at that time.

The Bund für Gotterkenntnis (Ludendorff) e.V. (BfG / Society for the Knowledge of God (Ludendorff) regd. assoc.), for instance, follows Mathilde Ludendorff's "religious philosophical ideas", a faith denominated "God Knowledge". The latter includes antisemitic conspiracy theories and propagates a strict segregation of the "races". The September 2018 issue of the BfG-affiliated magazine "Mensch und Maß" states, for example:

*"We only have to know why a small Jewish group seeks to assume power [...] We should know that the Jews were promised in their holy scriptures to rule over non-Jews."*



Undated photograph of Mathilde Ludendorff.

The neo-pagan Artgemeinschaft – Germanische Glaubens-Gemeinschaft wesensgemäßer Lebensgestaltung e.V. (AG-GGG / Artgemeinschaft Germanic Faith Community) is currently the largest German neo-Nazi organisation adhering to völkisch, racist, antisemitic and anti-Christian notions. Its antisemitic agitation mainly becomes apparent in the context of the basic rejection of monotheistic religions. By establishing their own beliefs in the right-wing extremist scene, organisations such as AG-GGG strengthen the ties within the group, at the same time planting antisemitism into the members' consciousness with long-lasting effect.

### 3.5 Antisemitism in right-wing extremist music

In right-wing extremist music, antisemitism appears in very different and often rather subtle ways. Open hatred of Jews and especially the threat of and calls for violence and murder can mainly be found in texts of “underground productions”. These songs are either recorded by musicians of unknown identity or by musicians who, for example, team up for a single music project only. In addition, there are discs that are produced in small numbers by the musicians themselves. They are only offered to known buyers. There are diverse ways of distributing right-wing extremist discs. As a rule, the number of copies of such discs ranges from the medium three-digit to the lower four-digit range.

Diverse varieties of rock music continue to dominate the right-wing extremist music scene. In this field, there are numerous examples of antisemitic texts. In the 1990s already, song texts of right-wing extremist skinhead bands included antisemitic enemy images. The band Tonstörung, for instance, repeatedly used antisemitic conspiracy theories, and the band Kraftschlag publicly denied the Holocaust in its song “Sechs-Millionen-Lüge” (“Six millions lie”).<sup>18</sup>

After the turn of the millennium, too, antisemitic songs have remained a relevant part of right-wing rock music. An example of this is the CD “Milliarden Leichen für den Endsieg” (“Billions of dead bodies for the ultimate victory”) by the band 14Winterkampf88 (14 winter battle 88). In 2016 that CD was classified as being harmful to young people and as inciting hatred by BPjM (Federal Department for Media Harmful to Young Persons).

In its song “Fight against ZOG”<sup>19</sup>, which was classified as inciting hatred in 2015, the music band Wolfsfront (wolf front) openly shows its antisemitic attitude. The mere use of the abbreviation “ZOG”, known in relevant circles, indicates its antisemitic views.

Several prejudices and antisemitic codes have been combined in the text: the covert exertion of power, the greed for money, the equation of Jews with capitalism, exploitation and the worldwide stirring up of wars. The song calls for the fight against this alleged Jewish occupation. Over the years, the right-wing extremist music scene has become more professional and prepared for the critical examination of its song texts. In addition – just like the scene itself – the contents of the texts have been changing too. This means that relevant bands now increasingly adopt anti-Muslim and xenophobic patterns of argumentation.

### **3.6 Antisemitism in right-wing extremist publications**

Germany-based right-wing extremist publishing houses and distribution services publish and/or sell revisionist, xenophobic and antisemitic media, aimed at engendering or consolidating right-wing extremist convictions. Such publications can be assessed as intellectual instigation. Sometimes violent right-wing extremist offenders have or had

19 “ZOG” stands for “Zionist Occupied Government“.

literature from publishing houses known in this context in their possession.

Numerous examples of antisemitism and antisemitic conspiracy theories can be found in the neo-Nazi magazine named “Volk in Bewegung – Der Reichsbote” (“A people in motion – Messenger of the Reich”):

*“Since its defeat in World War II, the ‘FRG’ as an occupation construct has been under foreign domination, with German henchmen occupying and administering the German Reich on behalf of the allied victorious powers. This explains the endless series of anti-popular actions of the current rulers, such as ‘over-foreignisation’ and the driving out of our people and the other peoples of Europe by legions of non-European intruders. [...] The media and the educational system are in the hands of the occupying forces, and a ‘Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland’ (‘Central Council of Jews in Germany’) has the role, as stipulated by ‘state treaty’, of an influential watchdog.”<sup>20</sup>*

Furthermore, right-wing extremist publishing houses have come to attention by reprinting or republishing antisemitic books from the time of National Socialism. In addition, the dissemination of books written by Holocaust deniers is an essential part of the work of right-wing extremist publishing houses and distribution services.

### **3.7 Antisemitism on the Internet**

Another means for right-wing extremists to disseminate antisemitic ideologemes is the Internet. Thus, a new form of antisemitic propaganda has become established. The possibilities for communication opened up by the Internet – especially via social media and forums – form a virtual “echo

chamber”. The fact that people continuously hear like-minded others repeat their own views leads to a reinforcement of these views and results in them ignoring dissenting opinions. This digital interaction reinforces the idea held by right-wing extremists that they, in contrast to the rest of society, have realised that „the fortunes of the world” are controlled by the alleged “machinations” of a “Jewish clique“. This may lead to a radicalisation of individual users.

In addition to the classic social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, the contents of which are now subject to controls, there are a number of other platforms. Examples of such platforms are microblogging services like Gab, image boards like 4chan, gaming platforms like Steam, video platforms like BitChute or the Russian network vk.com. These services themselves are not right-wing extremist but the lack of moderation and anonymous use facilitate the spreading of antisemitic contents.

The Internet activities of Der Volkslehrer (The People’s Teacher) are an example of the way right-wing extremists make use of video logs (vlogs) as an effective means for them to disseminate right-wing extremist views and antisemitic conspiracy theories. Since the former YouTube channel Der Volkslehrer was blocked several times, the videos are now spread via a separate website or platforms such as BitChute. The videos of Der Volkslehrer offer a forum for historical revisionists such as Ursula Haverbeck-Wetzel or Horst Mahler.

On the Internet, several websites of solidarity with convicted Holocaust deniers can be found. These websites are used to publish short curricula vitae and texts of these individuals as well as online petitions for their release from detention. The criminal offence of incitement to hatred is reinterpreted as freedom of expression and the perpetrators are presented as martyrs.

A particularly drastic example of antisemitism on the Internet is the platform Judas Watch now classified as being harmful to young people. The platform hosted in an anonymised way in the USA collects data about individuals who and organisations that supposedly betray “white people”.

After the USA, the majority of the posts on the website have been made in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Above all, Jewish individuals and institutions are denounced on this platform and marked by a Star of David.

Social networks, Internet platforms and messenger services constitute virtual communication spaces that are anchors and contact points for right-wing extremists where they radicalise themselves, make statements with violent tendencies and even voice intentions to commit crimes, exchanging ideas and/or inspiring each other regarding the means, potential victims and place.

## 4 Conclusion

The violence-oriented right-wing extremist scene in particular is characterised by a hatred of Jews that is based on historical National Socialism and its typical antisemitism. All antisemitic patterns of argumentation can be found in this context, as well as imaginary scenarios and wishful thinking about driving Jews out of Germany and annihilating them. Such ideas are also included in song texts of right-wing extremist musicians, especially on discs sold privately and in small numbers.

As regards antisemitic views, right-wing extremist political parties are heterogeneous. Antisemitic views are deeply rooted in the agenda and ideology of the parties NPD and Der III. Weg. Even though anti-Zionist antisemitism especially is of great significance to the parties’ propaganda, it is not the focus of political agitation. The party Die RECHTE, however, consistently shows an explicit antisemitic orientation.

Within the so-called New Right, antisemitism is much less pronounced than it is in the rest of the right-wing extremist spectrum, which follows völkisch Nationalism or even National Socialism. Antisemitism within the New Right mainly manifests itself in its way of portraying George Soros referring to the financial community allegedly controlled by Jews.

When it comes to the spreading of antisemitism, apart from music and the classical print products of publishers and distributing services, the Internet plays a major role. Given the increasing controls of content on large and well-known social networks, the focus of antisemitic agitation and propaganda has moved to platforms that are hardly moderated and controlled, or not at all. Besides, anonymous messenger chats are used where mainly like-minded individuals get together. In these chats, radicalisation processes take place and a stage for hatred against Jews develops, including even live broadcasts of antisemitic violent acts and terrorist attacks.

On the whole, it can be said that antisemitic ideas are virulent in all tendencies of German right-wing extremism to varying extents and in different forms. The spectrum ranges from subtle insinuations to explicit fantasies of destruction and open threats of violence, from supposed “criticism” of Israel to völkisch-racist convictions. The stronger the orientation towards historical National Socialism and violence, the larger will be the extent of antisemitism, particularly in its racist form.



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