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The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities



**Moshe Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary
Antisemitism and Racism**

Antisemitism Worldwide 2019 and the Beginning of 2020



This report is dedicated to Dr. Esther Webman of blessed memory, our dear friend and colleague, who passed away abruptly on June 16th 2020.



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This report in full is available on the Kantor Center's website: <https://en-humanities.tau.ac.il/kantor>.

The Kantor Center Methodology

The report is based on the ongoing Kantor Center for the study of Contemporary European Jewry, the Moshe Kantor Database team's work, and on the various reports and data sent to us by organizations and contact persons in about 40 countries – a network we established during more than 25 years of activity. It should be noted that The Kantor Center and database is the only center, in Israel and abroad, that monitors and analyzes antisemitic manifestations worldwide, according to the same criteria, over such a long period of time that make a multi-year comparison possible. Nevertheless, we are aware of the possibility that not all the relevant data on antisemitic manifestations has reached us, because in many countries monitoring is not consistent or systematic; or because their databases are restricted to free public study because of States' rules; and because – as all monitoring agencies agree – not all manifestations are reported. Still, we do believe that information about the major manifestations has reached us.

The data and numbers presented herein on major violent antisemitic cases are the result of a specific monitoring and analysis system developed by the Kantor Center team, using specific criteria:

1. proven antisemitic motivation;
2. Counting a multi-event as one case;
3. No exaggeration or diminishing the severity of the situation;
4. Distinguishing between violent cases and verbal and visual manifestations.

Differences might occur between our published data on the number of violent incidents and those released by other monitoring communities and institutes. Monitoring communities and agencies sometimes present numbers of all types of antisemitic manifestations put together, violent, verbal and visual.

We are aware of the necessity to analyze antisemitism in the broadest possible context. Therefore, there can be no understanding of antisemitism without a solid background knowledge of the political, economic and social developments in any given country and in the international arena, and for this we are indebted to our contributors from the world at large.

Trends and Developments in Antisemitic Manifestations, 2019

First came Halle, and then Corona.

Although this report should deal with antisemitism in 2019 we cannot and should not disregard the implications of the coronavirus. It inspired antisemitic expressions that will be addressed here, while taken in proportion with regard to its larger effects.

Executive Summary

- The Coronavirus-inspired antisemitic expressions constitute forms of traditional Jew-hatred. In addition, extreme right activists, who advocate for the spreading of the virus among Jews, and Muslim Middle-Eastern circles, levelled new anti-Jewish accusations.
- 2019 witnessed a rise of 18% in major violent cases compared to 2018 (456 cases in 2019 compared to 387 in 2018), seven Jews were killed, and a rise in most other manifestations, in most countries. At least 53 synagogues (12%) and 28 community centers and schools (6 percent) were attacked. An increase in life-endangering threats (47%) and in attacks on private properties (24 %).
- The return of traditional, classic antisemitic stereotypes as well as the intensification of anti-Israeli and Islamist antisemitism, have contributed to the growing role of the antisemitic discourse that moved from the fringes of society into the mainstream public discourse.
- Despite the adoption of the 2016 IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism by more than 20 countries and by a host of institutes and organizations, it is still widely under-appreciated and not enough in use in order to identify and define antisemitic incidents.
- According to a 2019 FRA report, 41% of Jews aged 16-34 have considered emigrating from Europe because of antisemitism over the last 5 years. Antisemitism is the main factor pushing for emigration, a decision which might be enhanced by the perceptions regarding governments' responses to antisemitism, which are overwhelmingly considered inadequate.
- In Germany, the shooting at the Halle synagogue, on October 9, has become a landmark in the antisemitic activity in Germany that embodies all the present problems. The police registered 1839 antisemitic incidents nationwide, 5 cases a day, mostly perpetrated by neo-Nazis and extreme right-wingers. The role of radical Muslims in everyday harassments is yet to be fully assessed. Additionally, surveys have shown that the knowledge about the Holocaust is diminishing in Germany.

- In the US, a new phenomenon is emerging, one of increased violent antisemitic manifestations, with shooting sprees and numerous casualties, inspired by right wing ideologies as well as by certain groups within the Black Hebrew Israelites and the Nation of Islam.
- Online antisemitism proves to be increasingly dangerous: The perpetrators of major antisemitic attacks in 2019 were active in disseminating antisemitic propaganda online, through international networks of likeminded activists. “What happens on the internet does not stay on the internet” and the networks that propagate hate speech, whatever ideology inspires them, can have a direct impact on the life of groups targeted by various forms of hatred.
- A growing discrepancy between on-the-ground reality and governmental efforts.
- Underreporting by Jews in some countries corroborated by unidentified perpetrators.
- Problems facing the Monitoring Agencies remained unresolved.
- Surveys continue to raise awareness about the surging antisemitism.
- A number of significant achievements during 2019:
 - The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief presented a report to the U.N. General Assembly entitled “Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance,” warning against growing antisemitism inspired by Nazi and Islamist ideologies;
 - The EU established a working group to guide Member States in implementing steps against antisemitism.
 - The German - and Austrian - parliaments defined the BDS as a movement that uses antisemitic tactics, and reached a resolution according to which “the pattern of argument and methods of the BDS movement are anti-Semitic.”
 - The World Holocaust Forum, initiated and supported by Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish congress, held its fifth meeting on January 23, 2020 in Yad Vashem, under the auspices of President Reuven Rivlin, with heads of 52 states coming to declare their commitment to "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism".

The Coronavirus impact:

Since the beginning of March 2020, we have been receiving disturbing information on accusations of Jews, Zionists and Israelis, as individuals and as a collective, for causing and spreading the Coronavirus. Still, a word of caution is called for - let us put things in proportion:

First, blaming Jews for “why things go wrong,” as stated in the IHRA 2016 Working definition of Antisemitism, is a common practice as old as antisemitism, therefore, these manifestations do not represent a new development. In the past, world and national calamities, natural disasters, plagues, tsunamis, earthquakes, as well as world wars and economic crises were followed by accusations of the Jews for being their main perpetrators. Our task as researchers is to identify exactly the groups and movements that level these charges, the leaders who support or even spread them, and how much public attention is indeed given to them. Let us map the sources of these accusations but at the same time be careful not to readily attribute to Jews the status of a scapegoat in these exceptional times. So far, these accusations appear to be promoted mainly by the extreme rightists, ultra conservative Christian circles, Islamists, and to a minor extent by the far-left, each group according to its narrative and beliefs - Here are a few examples, all from March, just after the Coronavirus broke out and the death toll started rising worldwide:

- The old canard of poisoning water wells, originating in medieval times;¹
- God is spreading the virus in synagogues as a punishment for the rejection of Jesus Christ;²
- Global Jewry and Zionism conspire, as they have always done, to undermine world economic stability in order to facilitate their control over it – a libel which is the essence of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*;³
- Smart Jewish and Israeli initiatives have already led to the production of a vaccine and a medicine to counter the plague, and they will be sold to the world at large for a huge profit.⁴
- A known Italian artist repainted a short while before Passover a 15th century famous illustration of the blood libel that depicts tormented Simon of Trento surrounded by old bloodthirsty Jews – Trento is in the midst of the most Corona stricken area in Northern Italy. Although not directly connected to the Coronavirus crisis, this incident demonstrates once again the recent return of classical antisemitism;⁵

¹ <https://besacenter.org/perspectives-papers/coronavirus-conspiracy-theories-jews/>
https://www.camera.org/article/blood-libels-conspiracy-theories-and-coronaviruses/?fbclid=IwAR14g7JWSe_XLKIWu4t_4X8S_xPCry3Uox4_jf319Ujv5Sp_SrBMmIrOWj0; <https://forward.com/news/441421/anti-semitic-coronavirus-response-thrives-online-even-on-mainstream/?fbclid=IwAR333d3wVjvx56hJg7GOT5wKMJS1C5qs1AwziqTJWNxnJvopKNM55Qrc1Kg>.

² <https://www.rightwingwatch.org/post/rick-wiles-says-god-is-spreading-the-coronavirus-in-synagogues-as-punishment-for-opposing-jesus/>.

³ <https://twitter.com/DrDavidDuke/status/1239953516850040840>;
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/abrambrown/2020/03/16/the-private-goldman-sachs-coronavirus-meeting-thats-setting-the-internet-on-fire/#5f88173050dd>.

⁴ https://twitter.com/Speeder_1488/status/1242318961452232705;
<https://twitter.com/DrDavidDuke/status/1241576803334074368>;
<https://twitter.com/DrDavidDuke/status/1243212272245379074>.

⁵ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/prominent-italian-painter-unveils-a-work-depicting-anti-semitic-blood-libel/>;
<https://www.israellycool.com/2020/03/27/italian-painter-giovanni-gasparro-revives-the-original-blood-libel-against-jews/>.

- Accusations of Israel and Jews by Turkey and Iran, where regime dignitaries and scientists accuse Zionists and Americans of creating the virus as a weapon against the Iranian people and against Muslims in general.⁶

Beside these accusations, the calls to attack Jews have acquired a new dimension. The FBI warned against calls coming from Neo-Nazis and White Supremacists to spread the contagion among Jews, by using quite ugly personal interactions.⁷ Moreover, cyberattacks on Jewish institutions and groups trying to congregate online are a novel trend resulting from the increasing use of different digital social platforms.

A word about proportion: While it is quite tempting to portray the above-mentioned examples as representing or at least reflecting a widely accepted public mood and atmosphere, it is important to note that the pandemic has aroused a variety of other reactions:

- People of Asian descent are attacked and abused in many public places;⁸
- Certain Muslim leaders see in the outbreak of the plague in China a divine punishment against the regime, responsible for oppressing the Muslim Uygur population;⁹
- White supremacists call for the infection of Jews and cops alike;¹⁰
- Radical Imams see the Coronavirus as a God-sent punishment on heathens and infidels;
- The Sunnis consider the high death rate in Iran as a proper retribution for the Shi'a regime's deeds;
- ISIS considers the plague as an outcome of a divine plan to punish all infidels, and forecasts a general weakening of the West which should be exploited in order to renew its major attacks.¹¹
- In some Arab social media, however, a different discourse emerges, expressing hope that Jews will find a solution;¹²

⁶ <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/turkey/.premium-as-coronavirus-cases-spike-in-turkey-so-does-anti-semitism-1.8682725>; <https://www.memri.org/reports/turkish-politicians-press-public-react-coronavirus-virus-serves-zionisms-goals-decreasing>; <https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Iran-News/Irans-regime-pushes-antisemitic-conspiracies-about-coronavirus-620212>.

⁷ <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2020/03/26/white-supremacists-see-coronavirus-opportunity>; <https://abcnews.go.com/US/white-supremacists-encouraging-members-spread-coronavirus-cops-jews/story?id=69737522>.

⁸ <https://berlinspector.com/2020/02/05/europe-animosities-towards-chinese-and-other-asians-1/>; https://roma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2020/01/31/news/coronavirus_spunta_cartello_in_cinese_a_fontana_di_trevi_non_entrate_-247246234/?refresh_ce; <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-51581805>.

⁹ <https://besacenter.org/he/perspective-papers-he/מגפת-הקורונה-בעיני-אנשי-הדת-המוסלמים/>; <https://www.memri.org/reports/nj-friday-sermon-mohammad-abbasi-rutgers-university-faculty-member-coronavirus-divine>.

¹⁰ <https://www.policeone.com/coronavirus-covid-19/articles/fbi-white-supremacists-encouraging-members-to-infect-cops-jews-with-covid-19-j2AAfBOa7l2shUJV/>.

¹¹ <https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/divine-retribution-the-islamic-states-covid-19-propaganda/>.

¹² <https://besacenter.org/he/perspective-papers-he/מגפת-הקורונה-בעיני-אנשי-הדת-המוסלמים/>; <https://twitter.com/EdyCohen/status/1239876492701696001>.

These are but a few examples, since the material keeps flowing in: Conspiracy theories, conceived in many political and religious groups, always thrive in times of world crisis, certainly one of such a global destructive nature as the world is facing now.

Problems facing the monitoring agencies

Before delving into the analysis of numbers and data, let us pinpoint a number of problems facing monitoring agencies, and shed light on the difficulties of understanding antisemitism nowadays.

- First, the tendency we have described and warned against in the recent years has been formally recognized as **a shift of the phenomenon of antisemitism from the fringes of society to the mainstream. This shift is evident in many Western societies and especially in their social media.**¹³ **The return of traditional, classic antisemitic stereotypes as well as the intensification of anti-Israeli and Islamist antisemitism, have contributed to the growing role of antisemitism in the mainstream public discourse.** As a result, the monitoring of incidents, primarily on social media, has become more difficult, and demands a far wider effort and greater sensitivity.

- Second, the underreporting of antisemitic incidents in some countries has been and still remains a serious problem. According to major FRA (Fundamental Rights Agency) surveys most incidents that occur in the E.U. countries, (even up to 75%), remain unreported, and thus do not appear in any statistics or chronology, not even in police or community records.¹⁴ Moreover, the problem of categorization aggravates the difficulty of monitoring, since not all antisemitic cases that are recorded are registered as such. **It should be emphasized that in the Western and Western oriented world, where there are well-established monitoring agencies of antisemitic manifestations, governmental and non-governmental, detailed reporting is a common practice, whereas in some other countries the actual reported cases are far from reflecting the real situation, and in others monitoring is sometimes hardly or non-existent, or not open for research.**

- Third, the still unresolved problem of unidentified perpetrators. Numerous such cases exacerbate the difficulties of the monitoring efforts, let alone the need to apprehend the offenders, bring them to trial and thus increase deterrence. Desecrators of cemeteries and monuments, people who try to set synagogues on fire or beat Jews on the streets, those who spread their hostility via social media under the cover of anonymity, all act in a "hit and escape" method and aggravate the frustration of their victims. **The fact that the majority of perpetrators are not identified and**

¹³ <https://www.dw.com/de/steinmeier-verurteilt-wachsenden-antisemitismus-in-deutschland/a-47842707>; <https://www.srf.ch/news/international/juden-in-deutschland-antisemitismus-in-der-mitte-der-gesellschaft-wird-spuerbarer> ; <https://www.asf-ev.de/infothek/themen/begegnung-mit-dem-judentum/antisemitismus-in-der-mitte-der-gesellschaft/>.

¹⁴ https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-fundamental-rights-report-2019_en.pdf;
https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-antisemitism-overview-2008-2018_en.pdf.

apprehended goes hand in hand with the underreporting in some countries – reporting and filing complaints on such offenses seem pointless. Still, in recent years, local polices have been making increasing efforts to install camera systems where needed, and to better surveil potential perpetrators.

Fourth, **despite the adoption of the 2016 IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism by more than 20 countries and by many institutes and organizations, it is still not put to use widely as a means to identify antisemitic incidents and define them as such.**¹⁵

Fifth, many years of monitoring antisemitism have resulted in cooperation, and in data and opinion exchange among the various agencies and institutes, Jews and non-Jews alike. However, this has still not led to the establishment of common criteria, agreed by all monitoring agencies. **Each community or agency has its own criteria**, and makes its own decisions about sorting out the data related to the number of cases. Therefore, differences may occur between the numbers that reach us from diverse sources, and those that we present (see above the Kantor Center methodology).

2019 – data and numbers

Despite the obstacles described above, following are the findings we have managed to collect from a variety of sources worldwide:

The 18% increase in the number of major violent cases perpetrated in 2019 in comparison to 2018, stands for 456 cases (compared to 387 in 2018). This is a sharp rise, especially in view of the considerable decline in such cases during the years 2015-2017. At least 169 persons (37 percent of the major violent cases), were physically attacked, mostly in the public space - on streets, at schools, near Jewish sites, and some close to or even in their homes – a relatively new phenomenon, already noted in 2018 in France.¹⁶

At least 53 synagogues (12%) and 28 community centers and schools (6%) were attacked. These are protected institutions but unprotected sites suffered more attacks: 77 cemeteries and memorial sites (17%) were desecrated and 129 private properties were vandalized (28%). A large variety of means was used against these targets: fire weapons, mainly in the 15 shooting cases (3%); 21 cases of arson (5%), and 47 cases of cold weapon incidents (10%). The most frequent categories are threats – some of them life endangering – 131 cases (29%), and vandalism in all forms - 242 cases (54%, slightly more than half of the total).

It should be emphasized that the increase is reflected not only in the total of 456 major incidents, but almost in all their parameters: the number of persons attacked was higher in 2019 by almost 30 (a rise of 22%), life-endangering threats by 40 (a rise of 47%!), and 25 more private properties were damaged (a rise of 24%).¹⁷

¹⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Religion/Submissions/JBI-Annex1.pdf>.

¹⁶ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/2019/11/french-jews-fleeing-country/>.

¹⁷ See attached graphs, compiled by Dr. Haim Fireberg of the Kantor Center.

We would like to emphasize, as we did in previous reports, that major violent events are generally reported and recorded as presented here, whereas minor violence incidents - threats and harassments, face-to-face abuses, insults, accusations, shaming or graffiti, are underreported in some countries, and cannot be counted even where detailed reporting is available. On the other hand, a number of newly introduced technological tools have begun operating in the attempt to monitor incidents on social media, in which verbal and visual abuse is rampant. The Antisemitism Cyber Monitoring System (ACMS) developed and operated by the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs in Jerusalem, has spotted in 2019 several million antisemitic posts, written by about a quarter of a million users, in four languages.¹⁸

The role of surveys in promoting awareness

The monitoring of antisemitism relies not only on data collection and reports. Well-conducted surveys are a major tool for raising awareness to the phenomenon and evaluating the situation. In the course of 2018, especially towards its end, tens of thousands of Jews and non-Jews were addressed and expressed their perceptions. A smaller number of major surveys was conducted in 2019 and the beginning of 2020. We will refer to a few major ones, while taking into consideration the limitations of such surveys.

On a general note, **Europe is facing an overall rise in racism and xenophobia. The Council of Europe has sounded the alarm over growing racism and violence against minorities and NGOs in Europe, fed by ultra-nationalism, antisemitism, and anti-Muslim hate.** The alarm was motivated by the 2019 annual report issued by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). The report, released on February 27 (2020), found that forms of racism and violence are targeted not only against those deemed “different,” but against NGOs that are working for the “others” as well. “Europe is facing a shocking reality: antisemitic, anti-Muslim and other racist hate crimes are increasing at an alarming rate,” warned Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the Council of Europe. “We must stop the dissemination of toxic rhetoric from racist extremists which strikes at the very heart of our democracies.”

According to the report, growing antisemitism is due mainly to widespread rhetoric “by neo-Nazis and political extremists,” but ECRI also observed that this same rhetoric is also used as propaganda by some religious extremists, such as Islamists, and have led in the last ten years to dramatic events in some of the countries.¹⁹

In France where antisemitism continues spiraling, a new survey conducted by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) Paris came up with the following findings:

¹⁸ <http://antisemitism.mda.gov.il/en/projects/antisemitism-cyber-monitoring-system/>.

¹⁹ <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/23103/council-of-europe-launches-alarm-on-growth-in-racist-crimes>.

- **Nearly three-quarters, 73% of the general French public and 72% percent of the Jews, consider antisemitism a problem that affects all French society.**
- 47% of the general population and 67% of the Jewish respondents concede that the level of antisemitism in France is high, compared to 27% and 22% respectively who say it is low.
- 53% of the general population agree that antisemitism has been increasing compared to 18% who thought that it has been decreasing. Among Jews 77% say it has increased and only 12% that it has decreased.

The extent of antisemitic attacks on France's Jewish community, the largest in Europe, is alarming: 70% of French Jews say they have been victims of at least one antisemitic incident in their lifetime; 64% have suffered antisemitic verbal abuse at least once, and 23% have been targets of physical violence on at least one occasion, among which 10% claiming they were attacked several times.²⁰

Another alarming trend is the increasing perception of insecurity among Jews in Europe. The 2019 FRA survey "Young Jewish Europeans: perceptions and experiences of antisemitism"²¹ shows that **41% of Jews aged 16-34 have considered emigrating from Europe because of antisemitism over the last 5 years.**

Likewise, 42% of Jews aged 35-59 and 25% over 60 have considered emigration. Of the first group (16-34 age), 67% contemplate emigrating to Israel, 21% to another country outside of Europe, and only 11% consider remaining in a European country. Similar results also typify the second group aged 35-59, where 64% consider emigrating to Israel, 25% to a country outside of Europe and only 11% consider remaining in Europe. The last group, aged 60 plus, is even more prone to emigrate to Israel (80%).

Antisemitism is the main factor pushing for emigration, a decision which might be enhanced by the perception that governments' responses to antisemitism are overwhelmingly inadequate. 75% of the groups aged 16-34 and 35-59 consider that the state's measures to counter antisemitism are ineffective (roughly half of them are sure that the policies are ineffective and the other half consider such measures "probably" ineffective). In 2018, 70% of the respondents considered governments' measures to combat antisemitism ineffective. In both surveys, people were asked about their perception over the last five years. The changes, in just one year, show a concerning trend of diminishing trust in governmental responses to antisemitism.

Germany and the United States – significant changes and developments

Germany

²⁰ <https://www.ajc.org/news/ajc-paris-survey-french-jews-non-jews-agree-on-scope-of-antisemitism>.

²¹ https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-young-jewish-europeans_en.pdf.

Overall antisemitic manifestations rose during 2019 and in the beginning of 2020 in most of the countries and in most of its forms.²² Yet in terms of recent changes and developments regarding antisemitism, Germany and the United States deserve closer attention.

The shooting at the Halle synagogue door on October 9, the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, was aimed at perpetrating a massacre on the Jews congregated there to pray and has become a landmark of antisemitic activity in Germany. It embodies all the present problems. The killer was apparently no lunatic or “lone wolf.”

He acted, according to his own words written in English as member of a large, international community of antisemites, neo-Nazis and extreme right-wingers. This community includes supporters of the Alternative for Germany - AfD, the right-wing extremist party that, due to its electoral success, has for the first time since its establishment in April 2013, just 7 years earlier, changed the German political landscape. AfD politicians played down and underrated the Halle events and their perpetrator. German intelligence Investigations revealed the attempts of right-wing activists, whose numbers have grown rapidly, to profit from their contacts with the army and the police, even for terrorist goals. **A preliminary police report registered 1839 antisemitic incidents nationwide – 5 cases a day!! - the highest since 2001, mostly perpetrated by neo-Nazis and extreme right-wingers.**²³ Still, this report has been heavily criticized, mainly because it did not emphasize the role of radical Muslims in everyday harassments, so that **there is still a lot of research and monitoring work to be done to assess that role in the perpetration of antisemitic acts as well.**

Surveys have shown that the knowledge about the Holocaust is diminishing in Germany. High school students, and 40% of Germans between the ages 18 to 40 know little or have even never heard about it; between a quarter to a third of the Germans surveyed held antisemitic beliefs and stereotypes; and Israel-related antisemitism, mainly originating from Muslim students and staff, is already becoming normalized among school students and teachers. Young teachers cannot cope; WWII keeps slipping away from the memory of the post-war third generation; family biographies play a smaller role; and children from immigrant families adopt different historical narratives.²⁴

In his speech at Yad Vashem on the occasion of the fifth World Holocaust Forum on January 23, 2020, the German president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, overshadowed many other statements and moved his listeners with his own: “I wish I could say that Germans have learnt from History, but I can't say that when hatred and agitation are spreading, I can't say that when Jewish children are spat on in the schoolyard.” A few

²² See attached summaries of events according to countries.

²³ https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/antisemitische-kriminalitaet-hoehststand-bei-straftaten-von-;https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-young-jewish-europeans_en.pdf.

²⁴ [https://refubium.fu-](https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/22444/Naegel_Kahle_University_teaching_about_the_Holocaust_in_Germany.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y)

[berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/22444/Naegel_Kahle_University_teaching_about_the_Holocaust_in_Germany.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y](https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/22444/Naegel_Kahle_University_teaching_about_the_Holocaust_in_Germany.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y).

days later, **the German minister of foreign affairs, Heiko Maas, expressed fear that Jews might flee due to the rise in antisemitism and violence in his country.**²⁵

Though German high echelons, in the presidency, government and Bundestag, let alone the Chancellery, assume historical responsibility for the fate of the Jewish people, and show their constant commitment to struggling against antisemitism, and although German legislation is one of the best in Europe and BDS activities are widely rejected, the situation in Germany, 75 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, seems gloomy and painful to watch.

The United States

The Jewish communities in the U.S. are adjusting to a situation they have never known before: increasing antisemitic manifestations, violence, shooting sprees and numerous casualties.

In April, in an attack on the Poway synagogue in California, a member of the congregation was killed and three others wounded; in December, a shooting at a kosher supermarket in Jersey City ended up with four casualties, including a police officer; five were wounded in a Hanukkah party at the rabbi of Monsey's home. The ADL registered 780 cases of anti-Semitic incidents in its report for the first six months of 2019, which equal the number of cases during the whole year of 2018. The New York police department announced that half of the hate crimes during January-September 2019 were targeted against Jews.²⁶ The perpetrators are no longer just members of the White Supremacist groups. A new phenomenon has been emerging: assaults by African-American individuals who act on the spur of the moment or are inspired by certain groups within the Black Hebrew Israelites and within the Nation of Islam led by Louis Farrakhan, previously known for his virulent antisemitic views.

Anti-Zionism expressed in antisemitic terms was rampant among left wing activists as well, especially in reaction to the warm relations between the Israeli and American administrations, depicted as Israeli-Jewish deliberate attempts to dominate and manipulate American policies and leaders.

US Campuses. The situation on American campuses has been a major issue in 2019, much like in previous years. This is an issue of utmost importance, because it affects the future American and international leadership raised and educated on these campuses. Youngsters of all the religions and sectors of American society, as well as overseas students, shape their opinions and political inclinations on these campuses. **The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains the main issue on campuses. They trigger the dissemination of antisemitism by BDS groups and other mainly left-wing activists,**

²⁵ <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article205353291/Aussenminister-Maas-Damit-es-nicht-zum-massiven-Wegzug-von-Juden-aus-Deutschland-kommt.html>.

²⁶ ADL release, October 18, 2019, <https://www.adl.org/blog/one-year-after-the-tree-of-life-attack-american-jews-face-significant-threats>.

disguised as a legitimate criticism of Israeli policies. The most recent survey of AMCHA, the organization monitoring and fighting antisemitism on campuses, registered in 2019 some 300 incidents of harassment, vandalism and assault targeting Jewish students in more than 100 campuses. 60% of them were of Israeli-related antisemitic nature. The increase in the number of academic BDS-fueled incidents, is much higher than the number of incidents of discrimination, denigration and suppression of expression against Jewish students in 2018.²⁷

The BDS efforts on campuses, that include targeting the Working Definition of Antisemitism and related questions of Jewish identity, were summarized by the AMCHA director, Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, as follows: "In recent years, disputes surrounding the definition of antisemitism and related issues have dramatically increased and even taken center stage on some campuses. Specifically, the question of whether anti-Zionism is a form of antisemitism and should be treated as such, as well as the related questions of whether Zionism is an implicit part of Jewish identity and who gets to define antisemitism or represent Jewishness, have been discussed and debated with increasing frequency in the campus square, the student senate and conferences halls, often with negative consequences for many Jewish students."²⁸

The BDS movement

During 2019, **BDS activities may not have increased in number, but the BDS movement has certainly gained more prominence on social media and in the public discourse.** A number of factors have contributed to magnify public discourse on the boycott of Israel. First, major boycott campaigns against events taking place in Israel, such as the 2019 Eurovision music contest, and the support of international celebrities for the BDS cause, such as Roger Waters, were instrumental in reaching a wider audience worldwide. Secondly, legal activity against the BDS has intensified, especially in the U.S., both in terms of legislation introduced to counter anti-Israel boycotts and in terms of lawsuits questioning the alleged infringement on free speech. Such initiatives triggered a broader debate that also involved political activists, such as Congresswomen Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, who were pivotal in publicizing the anti-Israel cause. Finally, Israel's measures to counter BDS activists and supporters made the news when Israel decided to discontinue the visa permit of Omar Shakir, Human Rights Watch director of the Israel-Palestine Desk, for his support of anti-Israel boycotts.

Significant anti-BDS initiatives were advanced by various actors. In Germany, not only student organizations and local authorities have adopted anti-BDS resolutions, but also administrations of cultural events have countered BDS activists. Also worthy of attention is the "Arab Council for Regional Integration" initiative, which was launched by numerous actors from the Arab world, advancing overtures to Israel, stressing the

²⁷ <https://amchainitiative.org/reports>.

²⁸ Tammi Rossman- Benjamin, "A Survey of Antisemitic Activity and Trends on U.S. Campuses in 2019 and the Efforts to Address it," sent to the Kantor center on March 28, 2020, pp.3-4.

importance of cooperation and condemning the political use of the Arab-Israel conflict.²⁹

Online Antisemitism

The phenomenon of **online antisemitism proves to be increasingly dangerous**. The numbers of online antisemitic incidents grow higher and higher each year. This increase also reflects an intensified monitoring of social media and hate speech expressed in digital platforms. It should be noted that what happens online has major consequences in real life. **The perpetrators of the antisemitic attacks in Halle and in Poway were active in disseminating antisemitic propaganda online, through an international network of likeminded extreme right activists**. Likewise, the perpetrators of other racist crimes, such as in the Christchurch, New Zealand, mosque shooting in March 2019, were active in spreading online hate speech. Moreover, online media outlets are increasingly becoming the major source of information especially for the younger generations, with major consequences on their views of the world. Therefore, one can say that **“what happens on the internet does not stay on the internet”** and the networks that propagate hate speech, whatever ideology inspires them, can have a direct impact on the life of groups targeted by various forms of hatred.

Achievements in combating Antisemitism

Several days after the Halle shooting, in mid-October 2019, **Ahmed Shaheed, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, presented a report to the U.N. General Assembly entitled “Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance,” focusing on antisemitism**. “I am alarmed,” he summarized, “by the growing use of antisemitic tropes by white supremacists, including neo-Nazis and members of radical Islamist groups, in slogans, images, stereotypes, and conspiracy theories to incite and justify hostility, discrimination, and violence against Jews.” He expressed concern, or even alarm about what all societies are experiencing due to the increase of antisemitism worldwide. Jew-hatred, he warned, “is toxic to democracy if left unaddressed.”³⁰ **The Kantor Center research was extensively quoted in this report**, which was presented to the U.N. General Assembly by the Special Rapporteur, who spoke for the first time in such clear-cut terms, pinpointing the perpetrators from all sides, and warning against the consequences.

The European Commission Coordinator on Combating Antisemitism, Katharina von Schnurbein, called attention to major surveys conducted by her office, such as the Eurobarometer, which reflected the magnitude of the problem – every second European considers antisemitism as a problem. **Following the survey and the unanimous declaration of all E.U. member states to act against antisemitism and for the security of the Jewish communities, a working group was established to support**

²⁹ See Giovanni Quer’s article on the BDS movement herein.

³⁰ Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, *Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance*, September 20, 2019, accessed March 17, 2020, at <https://undocs.org/A/74/358>.

the member states in implementing this declaration. ³¹ Special envoys on antisemitism, appointed in 14 out of the 16 states (*Länder*) in Germany, work in coordination with Felix Klein, the Federal Commissioner for Jewish Life.³²

The IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism has been adopted by more than 20 countries, and by a host of institutes, such as the European Union, the State Department, the Church of England, and the French parliament. It has become a sort of a yardstick for standing against discrimination, a test of values promoting the rights of minorities. **The German and Austrian parliaments defined the BDS as a movement that uses antisemitic tactics, and reached a resolution according to which “the pattern of argument and methods of the BDS movement are anti-Semitic.”** Boris Johnson announced, following his election as prime minister, that he would forbid any bans, alluding to the BDS attempts to ban Israel.³³

A Code of Conduct against illegal hate speech expressions on the web was signed in 2019 with nine internet servers, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others, who are obliged to scan the material identified as such and to remove it within 24 hours. According to von Schnurbein, 72 percent of such material is already being taken off. The 2019 draft of a French law, inspired by a 2018 German law, stipulates heavy fines on violators if the 24-hour obligation is not respected, and calls for the establishment of a monitoring agency. In a ground-breaking decision, the European Union Court of Justice has enabled states to require a Facebook branch located in a certain country to take off materials in countries beyond its borders.³⁴

The World Holocaust Forum, initiated and supported by Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress, held its fifth meeting on January 23, 2020 in Yad Vashem, under the Auspices of President Reuven Rivlin. It was a tremendous success, with heads of 52 states, declaring a commitment to "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism"

These are all achievements of the highest importance, yet the question remains when and to what an extent their impact will be felt.

In conclusion, we would like to pose a cardinal question: will 2020 continue the trend observed in 2019 of violence and abusive language against Jews, or that of growing awareness and finding solutions? **Will the Coronavirus crisis result in more accusations of the lowest kind against the Jewish people and its state, or will the**

³¹ A summary of "European Union Activities in Combating Antisemitism in 2019," sent by Katharina von Schnurbein to the Kantor Center on March 20, 2020. https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/news_and_blogs_related_to_aid_and_fundamental_rights/documents/programme_working_group_on_antisemitism.pdf.

³² <https://www.dw.com/de/antisemitismusbeauftragter-strategien-im-kampf-gegen-judenhass-n%C3%B6tig/a-51229952>.

³³ <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/german-antisemitism-envoy-felix-klein-warns-against-spread-of-antisemitic-coronavirus-conspiracy-theories-3-4-2020>.

³⁴ See Talia Naamat and Giovanni Quer, "Combating Online Hate-Speech - Recent Developments and Policy Recommendations, on the TAU Kantor Center site.

understanding prevail that the fate of all mankind is intertwined, and that there is no way out of it but in cooperation and mutual support?

REGIONS

POST-SOVIET REGION AND EASTERN EUROPE/ Samuel Barnai and Inna Shtakser

The Russian Federation

The ADL monitoring organization announced in its last report, based on its April-June 2019 poll, that the most antisemitic countries in the world today are Poland, South Africa, Ukraine, and Hungary. The report was based on public opinion surveys.³⁵

In July 2019, the Institute for Euro-Asian Jewish Studies presented its new study according to which 47 percent of the FSU Jews residing in small towns or in rural areas experienced antisemitism first hand. On the other hand, only 15-26 percent of these residing in the regions' big cities reported experiencing antisemitism. 19 percent of the respondents in Ukraine and 7 percent of the respondents in Russia and in Belarus claimed that antisemitism has significantly increased during the recent years. More than 2000 respondents from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova were interviewed.³⁶

While Jews, as a main target of racism in Russia were long ago replaced by Muslim migrants from the Caucasus and the Central Asia, and the Levada Center opinion polls year after year claim that the level of popular antisemitism is going down, antisemitic events, year after year, still take place and considerable numbers of local Jews, especially in smaller cities, claim they or their acquaintances experienced antisemitism in person.³⁷ Thus it makes sense to claim that the change in government policy, rather than in public opinion, was the cause of the tiny number of 2019 reported antisemitic events. The Russian Federation, judging from the cases of antisemitic hate speech which ended up in court during the year, directed its judicial and police systems to deal harshly with any expression of antisemitism. The result was a major reduction in reported antisemitic attacks. The reports note the increasingly efficient treatment by the police and the courts of complaints, whether about vandalism or about hate speech. However, it is worth noting that the Article 282 of Russia's Criminal Code (incitement of hatred or enmity) was decriminalized in 2019 and as a result some convictions were canceled.³⁸

³⁵ *The ADL Global 100: An Index of Antisemitism* (2019), accessed April 23, 2020, at https://global100.adl.org/map?_ga=2.209551762.1868028104.1586292123-1362304909.1571678784.

³⁶ Institute for Euro-Asia Jewish Studies, *New extended study conducted with the support of the EAJC presented in Oxford*, July 22, 2019, accessed April 23, 2020, at <https://eajc.org/en/new-extended-study-conducted-with-the-support-of-the-eajc-presented-in-oxford/>.

³⁷ Vladimir (Zeev) Khanin, *Antisemitism I filosemitism v Rossii I Ukraine: ot evoliutsii k revoliutsii* (Tel-Aviv, 2019).

³⁸ Russian Jewish Congress and SOVA, *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019* (2020), accessed April 23, 2020, at https://rjc.ru/uploads/default/files/SOVA_Report_2019_A4_ENG_print.pdf, p. 7.

The importance of antisemitism as part of the 2019 discursive confrontation between Russia and Ukraine made the government pay more attention to it (as opposed to racism in general). Russia and Ukraine accused each other of antisemitism in the present and of collaborating with the Nazis during WWII. These accusations reflected their general awareness that antisemitism adversely affects any state's global reputation.

While several times guests of TV programs that dealt with the situation in Ukraine were expelled from studios for antisemitic expressions, media figures known as representing the views of the government (such as Vladimir Solovyov and Anna Shafran) deliberately emphasized the Jewish origin of the newly elected President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky. Mikhail Porechenkov and Ivan Okhlobystin, popular actors well-known for their explicitly nationalist anti-Ukrainian position, released a video with quasi-support of Zelensky. When Zelensky responded to the provocation, Okhlobystin published an antisemitic post.³⁹ In May, Sergey Glazyev, Advisor to the President of Russia, in his blog posted on the web-site of the nationalist newspaper *Zavtra* (Tomorrow) stated that the Trump administration supported Volodymyr Zelensky because of its good relations with the right wing leadership of Israel and that probably the South-East part of Ukraine, after "cleansing" the Russian population, will be settled by the "residents of the Promised Land exhausted by the permanent war in the Middle East and also by Christians fleeing Islamized Europe."⁴⁰

During 2019 no physical assaults on individual Jews were reported. The one case of a group planning to engage in anti-Jewish terror actions in Taganrog, a port city in southwestern Russia, was swiftly and efficiently dealt with by the local police. There were several cases of vandalism against Jewish property. For instance, vandals set fire to a stock of the Yeshiva "Torat Haim" in the Ramensky District of the Moscow region on the eve of Passover and Nazi symbols were painted on the wall. Likewise, the tombstone of the 19th century Jewish preacher Israel Salanter in Kaliningrad and next to the Moscow Choral Synagogue was vandalized.⁴¹ In September, Viacheslav Kotenko, a 30year old resident of the village of Aksay (Oktyabrsky District of the Volgograd Region) drew a cross on a memorial of Holocaust victims which the Russian Jewish Congress established in the village. In February 2020, the local court dismissed the charge of antisemitism and sentenced Kotenko to 280 hours of public work.⁴²

In July, two people were condemned for publishing antisemitic materials on social media. Residents of Petrozavodsk, Vladimir, Smolensk, Syktyvkar and Vladivostok were sentenced up to two years on probation.⁴³ Resident of Volzhsky, Volgograd Region,

³⁹ *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁰ http://zavtra.ru/blogs/glaz_ev_raskol; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-slams-putin-adviser-for-claim-ukraine-to-move-jews-into-cleansed-area/>.

⁴¹ *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, p. 2.

⁴² <https://ria.ru/20190918/1558803860.html>; <https://blhttps://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/340321/oknot-volgograd.ru/news/chto-grozit-zhitelyu-sela-aksay-podozrevaemomu-v-o>; <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/340321/>; <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/345813/>.

⁴³ *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, pp. 7-8; <https://7x7-journal.ru/articles/2019/10/25/pensioner-extremizm-sud>; <https://www.severreal.org/a/30382719.html>.

Sergei Lukyanov was charged with posting calls for violence against Jews, Caucasians and Central Asians on social media, and sentenced for one year and eight months imprisonment and a ban on working on the Internet for two and a half years. A resident of Kurgan Region was sentenced to two and a half years in prison for writing antisemitic slogans,⁴⁴ and several residents of Murmansk, Tula, Vyazniki (Vladimir Region), Ust-Vymsky district (Komi Republic), Saransk and Nizhnekamsk (Republic of Tatarstan) were fined or sentenced to compulsory labor for publishing antisemitic writings and comments on social media.⁴⁵

Anti-Jewish activity significantly focused on Jewish religious institutions. In Krasnodar, a group of local residents calling themselves the "People's Control" of the community "Congress of the Citizens of the USSR", showed up in July to "inspect" the local Or Avner synagogue. Their questioning of the rabbi, which focused on the alleged connections of the synagogue to Chabad and on the threat Chabad poses to the Russian people, was filmed and laid out on social media, accompanied by a tirade of xenophobic comments. In September, the rabbi of Krasnodar, Arie-Leib (Yuri) Tkach, filed a formal complaint to the region's Bar and to several other judicial authorities. In Perm several times during the year a group of local residents (among them well-known antisemite Roman Yushkov) demonstrated against a Chabad center. Yushkov and his supporter were fined for distributing antisemitic leaflets. Later on, a legal case was initiated against him.⁴⁶ Local activists protested against the celebration of Hanukkah by Jewish communities in Bryansk and Orenburg. In Saratov, Jewish Charity Center "Khasdey Yerushalaim" (Miloserdie) was registered as an NGO acting as a foreign agent by the Ministry of Justice.⁴⁷ In September criminal proceedings were initiated against Sergei Shurygin, leader of the Rostov on Don branch of the "Left Front" and founder of the "Union of the World Liberation Movement People's Brotherhood "AllatRa"/Union of peoples of Sun and peoples of Crescent". The organization claims to combat the Jews, specifically World Zionism and the Jewish orthodox organizations, specifically Chabad. Shurygin was charged with creation and participation in an extremist organization as well as with illegal acquisition and possession of weapons. The police was concerned that the group planned attacks against the local Hasidic Jews.⁴⁸

Some residents of St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Oblast complained in August to the Grand Choral synagogue about advertising posters of the "Novoselye" Housing Company, depicting a religious Jew holding out his hand, with the slogan: "Say 'Goodbye' to rent! A mortgage without a down payment." The synagogue, according to the report of the Russian-Jewish Congress, conducted an on-line survey, and 75

⁴⁴ <https://v1.ru/text/gorod/66263785/>.

⁴⁵ *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, p. 8; <https://www.interfax.ru/russia/668094>.

⁴⁶ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B_BrEvK0lw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6B_BrEvK0lw;);
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSXRK0TyzNY>;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGeKjk6XZdg>; http://www.ng.ru/ng_religii/2019-09-03/13_471_feor.html; *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, p. 5.

⁴⁷ *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁸ <https://ura.news/news/1052399553>; <https://svpressa.ru/society/news/244173/>;
<https://tass.ru/proisshestviya/6890846>.

percent of the respondents confirmed that they found this advertisement to be antisemitic. The management of the “Novoselye” Housing Company conducted a similar poll on social media. Although more than half of those who responded saw nothing antisemitic about the ad, the company decided to remove the contentious banners and posters anyways.⁴⁹ Likewise, despite the recommendation of the Orenburg Antimonopoly Service, “Slavitsa” company in Naberezhnye Chelny (Republic of Tatarstan) continued to produce ice cream with the insulting names “Khokhol”, “The Poor Jew” and “The American”.⁵⁰

Ukraine

While the government of Ukraine denies that antisemitism is a major issue in Ukraine, the press and the monitoring agencies periodically report vandalism against Jewish property including cemeteries and Holocaust memorials. The annual report of the United Jewish Community of Ukraine (UJCU) detected 66 cases of direct antisemitism (in comparison to 90 cases in 2018).⁵¹ The report indicate that the overwhelming majority of the cases deal with verbal attacks, acts of vandalism or antisemitic graffiti, posters and leaflets (mostly anonymous). Several cases deal with explicit expressions of antisemitism in the media and in social networks. Jewish organizations and their leaders (The head of UJCU Michael Tkach, Kyiv Central synagogue (Brodskyi synagogue), the Jewish community of Dnipro and its leader Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky) received antisemitic threats from Facebook or by mail.⁵²

Several times synagogues, Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust memorials were showered with stones, desecrated and vandalized by unknown persons (Kyiv; Lviv; Poltava, Rivne; Drohobych and Yavoriv, Lviv region; Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region; Kolomyia, Ivano-Frankivsk region; Bohuslav, Kyiv region; Vradievka and Bohdanivka, Mykolaiv region; Holovanivsk, Kirovograd region; Melitopol, Zaporizhia region).⁵³ On November 25, the statue of Yiddish writer Sholom Aleikhem (Solomon Rabinovich) was defaced with red swastikas. Several Ukrainian officials including the Minister of Foreign Affairs Vadym Pristayko as well as rabbi Moshe Reuven Azman, expressed disgust with the defacing and called for a prompt investigation.⁵⁴

In addition, the government seems rather tolerant towards the extreme right, which habitually glorifies the Nazi-collaborators as well as engages in racist, homophobic, and antisemitic hate speech. The glorification of WWII local nationalists who, while fighting for the independence of Ukraine also took part in the perpetration of the Holocaust, continued. Eduard Dolinsky, the director of the Ukrainian Jewish

⁴⁹ <https://moika78.ru/news/2019-08-05/268128-reklama-zhk-novosele-oskorbila-evrejskuyu-obshhinu-peterburga/>; <https://federalcity.ru/index.php?newsid=6290>; <https://antisemitism.org.il/ru/152831/>.

⁵⁰ *Report on Anti-Semitism in Russia 2019*, p. 6.

⁵¹ United Jewish Community of Ukraine, *Anti-Semitism in Ukraine: Report for 2019* (2020), accessed April 23, 2020, at https://jew.org.ua/images/pdf/Anti-Semitism_in_Ukraine_2019.pdf, pp. 8-9.

⁵² *Ibid.*; <https://kg.ua/news/v-ukrayini-mozhlive-stvorennya-drugogo-ierusalimu-grigoriy-omelchenko>

⁵³ *Anti-Semitism in Ukraine: Report for 2019*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Committee, registered numerous complaints on that score.⁵⁵ The post-Soviet Ukrainian governments in their attempt to construct a new national identity utilize the fight of the Ukrainian national movement in WWII for the promotion of independence. In terms of the current military conflict with Russia and the policy of de-communisation, any criticism of Ukrainian nationalist movements, however justified, frequently (and sometimes reasonably) is treated as pro-Soviet and pro-Russian.⁵⁶

Ukrainian Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk faced much criticism for attending on October 13 a concert honoring Ukrainian veterans which was organized by a Neo-Nazi Veterans Strong party. While Honcharuk confirmed his presence at the event, he refused to apologize for his attendance, and claimed that he was not aware of its political meaning and was there simply to honor the veterans. Several other mainstream Ukrainian politicians, including the Veterans Affairs' Minister Oksana Koliada, attended the event as well.⁵⁷

In Kiev during the weekend of December 13-15, an international neo-Nazi Asgardrei black-metal music festival took place with the participation of openly antisemitic and Holocaust-glorifying bands. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine announced on December 30 that in Dnepr during a memorial for the Holodomor victims one of the participants carried a placard with a Star of David saying 'Zionism – organizer of Holodomors in Ukraine.'⁵⁸

Vasyl Marushchynets, ex-consul of Ukraine in Hamburg, Germany, who was dismissed in 2018 after his social media neo-Nazi and antisemitic posts came to light, was reinstated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and received compensation of more than 230.000 Hryvnia for the missed wages after the Sixth Administrative Court of Appeal in Kiev ruled that his dismissal was illegal.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/eduard.dolinsky>. On August 25, Eduard Dolinsky protested against opening of a memorial to UPA members on the territory of the Jewish cemetery in Sambir, Lviv region. Rabbi Yaakov Dov Bleich, together with the Metropolitan of Kiev and All Ukraine (primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine) and the Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, held a prayer service for members of the OUN.

⁵⁶ For instance, Eduard Dolinsky protested against the November 12 decision of Kiev city council to name a city street after Nil Khasevich whom he described as an activist of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists involved during WWII in mass killing of Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, and Belarusians, and known for his antisemitic cartoons. He also, mistakenly, protested against another decision of the council to name a street after an SS battalion commander Ivan Pavlenko whom he described as a Nazi collaborator and war criminal. The Kiev city council though announced on its website that the street will be named after a different person, Viktor Pavlenko, a general of the Ukrainian People's Republic, who died in 1932.

https://24tv.ua/ru/mirovye_smi_rasprostranili_lozh_o_tom_chno_ulicu_v_kieve_nazovut_imenem_nacista_kolaboranta_n1234373.

⁵⁷ *Anti-Semitism in Ukraine: Report for 2019*, p. 8.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁵⁹ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/ukraine-restores-diplomat-who-blamed-jews-for-wwii-posed-with-mein-kampf-cake/>.

Estonia

On Saturday March 16, 2019, Chief Rabbi Shmuel Kot and two of his children were harassed by a 27 years old man who shouted “Sieg Heil” and “Heil Hitler” at them while they were walking to synagogue. The police received Rabbi Kot's complain and arrested the attacker.⁶⁰

In June, several tombstones were damaged at a Jewish cemetery in Tallinn.⁶¹

Lithuania

In Lithuania the battle over historical memory and the wish to exonerate Lithuanian nationalists, who collaborated with the Nazis during WWII, continued. Occasionally, this affected the relations of local Jewish organizations with the government and Lithuanian organizations. Whereas the Jews insist on the commemoration of the Holocaust, Lithuanians perceive the Jewish Holocaust as just one event in the Lithuanian 20th century tragedy, which was a Communist-inspired Holocaust of the Lithuanians (mass arrests both shortly before and after WWII) and historically more important. However, despite this battle over historical memory, hardly any antisemitic event was reported in 2019, and the entry of British Holocaust denier David Irving to the country was banned in April by the Foreign Ministry for five years.⁶²

In July, despite the protests by nationalists, the city council of Vilnius approved the renaming of a street that honored Kazys Škripta, who served as the envoy to Berlin of a pro-Nazi Lithuanian movement. Likewise, Vilnius Mayor Remigijus Šimašius ordered the removal of the memorial plaque honoring Nazi-collaborator Jonas Noreika from an external wall of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. The plaque was smashed with a hammer by Stanislovas Tomas earlier in April 2019 but was restored with the mayor's consent. In September the new plaque was installed without a permit in the same place by a *Pro Patria* organization.⁶³

In September, a swastika made of earth and flowers was laid out in front of the headquarters of the Jewish Community of Lithuania.⁶⁴ The Lithuanian Jewish

⁶⁰ <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/man-shouts-heil-hitler-at-estonian-chief-rabbi-and-children-on-the-way-to-synagogue>.

⁶¹ <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/headstone-smashed-dog-let-loose-at-jewish-cemetery-in-estonia>.

⁶² <https://www.jpost.com/international/lithuania-bans-holocaust-denier-david-irving-for-next-5-years-587911>.

⁶³ <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/1081731/sostines-taryba-apsisprende-skirpos-aleja-pervadina-i-trispalves>; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/lithuanian-capital-to-rename-street-honoring-anti-semitic-nazi-collaborator/>; <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/vilnius-mayor-orders-removal-of-contested-plaque-honoring-alleged-war-criminal>; <https://bnn-news.com/removal-of-a-controversial-memorial-plaque-in-vilnius-triggers-a-firestorm-203856>.

⁶⁴ <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/swastika-of-dirt-and-flowers-placed-in-front-of-lithuanian-jewish-community-headquarters>.

Community announced on October 18, that antisemitic graffiti was discovered on a Vilnius 'Walls That Remember' project commemorating the Jewish life in Lithuania.⁶⁵

Two years after Ruta Vanagaite's book *Our People: Journey With an Enemy* was taken off the shelves in Lithuania because of its allegations of collaboration between the local population and the Nazis during the Holocaust, it has had been adapted to a play staged by the state theatre in November, causing a renewed controversy in the Baltic state.⁶⁶

Arūnas Gumuliauskas, chairman of the Lithuanian parliament's Commission on Battles for Freedom and State Historical Memory and a member of the center-right Lithuanian Farmers and Greens Union party of PM Saulius Skvernelis, announced on December 16, his intention to introduce a new bill 'cleaning' Lithuania and its citizens of the Holocaust that occurred in the country during the Nazi occupation.

Hungary

The governing party of Hungary, Fidesz, and its Prime Minister Victor Urban try hard to distance themselves from antisemitic views, however, such views are still commonly expressed, including by major political figures. Specifically, notorious are the major politicians' ongoing attacks on the financier and the philanthropist George Soros, who is accused of trying to gain control over Europe in general and Hungary in particular through manipulation of liberal ideas.⁶⁷ For example, his interest in assisting the refugees is interpreted as an attempt to swamp Hungary with hostile and destitute foreigners. The Hungarian far-right is the most aggressive proponent of racist, antisemitic, and homophobic ideas, and it seems that these enjoy some popular support. Several cases of antisemitic verbal attacks against Jews as well as of vandalism were reported during 2019.

In May, the Foundation of Action and Protection (TEV), a Jewish organization that monitors and fights antisemitism in Hungary, announced the establishment of a security service in the Budapest traditional Jewish district, which is also a popular tourist destination. The security service's goal is to fight against verbal antisemitic

⁶⁵ "Walls that remember art installation vandalized," *Jewish Community of Lithuania*, October 14, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.lzb.lt/en/2019/10/14/walls-that-remember-art-installation-vandalized/>; "Anti-Semitic graffiti spray-painted on project depicting Jewish life in Lithuania," *Jewish News Syndicate*, October 18, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.jns.org/anti-semitic-graffiti-spray-painted-on-project-commemorating-jewish-life-in-lithuania/>.

⁶⁶ <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/lithuanian-state-theater-stages-controversial-play-on-holocaust-complicity>.

⁶⁷ "Why did Hungary's PM Viktor Orban turn on George Soros?," *BBC*, September 7, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-49600818/why-did-hungary-s-pm-viktor-orban-turn-on-george-soros>; "Hungary court orders govt apology over 'misleading' Soros survey," *France24*, November 20, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.france24.com/en/20191120-hungary-court-orders-govt-apology-over-misleading-soros-survey>; Patrick Strickland, "What's behind Hungary's campaign against George Soros?," *Aljazeera*, November 22 2017, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/hungary-campaign-george-soros-171122120334509.html>.

attacks by drunken tourists against Jews, particularly easily identified Orthodox Jews.⁶⁸ Several cases of antisemitic verbal attacks against Jews as well as acts of vandalism were reported in 2019. On August 18, a group of men approached the cantor Daniel Rosenfeld and his wife and told them that they are “filthy Jews’ who ‘belong in the gas chamber’” in Nyíregyháza, a city in northeastern Hungary. The victims registered a complaint with the police.⁶⁹

During the night between July 8 and 9, swastikas were painted on the building of the Old synagogue and on the wall of the local Fidesz seat in the village Tapolca, Veszprém County.⁷⁰

On October 23, a group of around fifty uniformed neo-Nazis, members of the paramilitary Légión Hungária (Hungarian Legion), attacked the Auróra Center, a well-known site of underground music and art scene in Budapest. They tried to torch the building, tore down and torched the rainbow flag at the entrance and plastered the building with neo-Nazi stickers. The Center belongs to the Jewish community, but provides space to other civil society groups, such as the Roma Press Center, a gay rights organization Budapest Pride, the Migszol refugee advocacy group, and the Zöld Pók agency for social activism. During the attack the Center was empty and nobody was injured. The newly-elected leftist-liberal mayor, András Pikó, condemned the attack, declared his solidarity with Auróra, and called on the police to provide security for the Center. Few hours later the place was opened again with a new rainbow flag flying from its doorway. Auróra describes itself as a social enterprise created to connect cultural programs, and civil and activist organizations committed to community building, fun and participatory democracy. As such, it has been targeted by the far-right and faced a sustained campaign of government harassment during the last two years.⁷¹

⁶⁸ "Budapest Jews to establish their own security service amid anti-Semitism fears," *The Times of Israel*, May 29, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/budapest-jews-to-establish-their-own-security-service-amid-anti-semitism-fears/>; "Jewish ‘Security Service’ to Fight Anti-Semitism in Budapest’s ‘Party District’," *Hungary Today*, May 29, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://hungarytoday.hu/jewish-security-service-to-fight-anti-semitism-in-budapests-party-district/>.

⁶⁹ "Hungarian cantor and wife called ‘filthy Jews who belong in the gas chamber’," *The Times of Israel*, August 30, 2019, accessed April 5, 2019 at <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/hungarian-cantor-and-wife-called-filthy-jews-who-belong-in-the-gas-chamber/>; Cnaan Liphshiz, "5 men tell Hungarian cantor and his wife they ‘belong in the gas chamber’," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, August 30, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/5-men-tell-hungarian-cantor-and-his-wife-they-belong-int-he-gas-chamber>.

⁷⁰ "Domestic Hooks were painted in the Old Synagogue in Tapolca and in the Fidesz Local Office," *Newsbeezzer*, July 12, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://newsbeezzer.com/hungaryeng/index-domestic-hooks-were-painted-in-the-old-synagogue-in-tapolca-and-in-the-fidesz-local-office/>; "Anti-Semitic Crimes and Incidents Report," TEV, July 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at https://tev.hu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/APF_monthly_2019JULangol_72dpi-KESZ.pdf.

⁷¹ "Neo-Nazis try to torch Jewish center in Budapest, activists say," *The Times of Israel*, October 24, 2019, accessed April 5, 2019 at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/neo-nazis-try-to-torch-jewish-center-in-budapest-activists-say/>; Eva S. Balogh, "The extreme right is on the rise again in Hungary," *The Hungarian Spectrum*, October 25, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://hungarianspectrum.org/tag/aurora-community-center/>.

On October 31, Laszlo Kover (Fidesz), the speaker of the National Assembly, mentioned in his speech during the unveiling of a statue commemorating the victims of 1919 'red terror' in Hungary, a number of unnamed individuals, describing them as 'intellectual terrorists who contributed to the Hungarians' intellectual degradation. Journalist Eva Balogh, who created the Hungarian Spectrum daily blog, pointed out that the details Kover provided clearly point to specific leftist individuals all of whom were also Jewish.⁷²

Gabor Miklosi, a Hungarian-Jewish journalist writing for the newspaper *Index*, opted not to stand up when, during the November 15 Hungary-Uruguay football match at the new Puskas arena, the Hungarian fans sang the far-right's unofficial hymn 'Without you'. Far-right journalists and politicians attacked Miklosi, claiming that the fact that he is not moved by the song is a proof that he does not belong to the Hungarian nation. On November 25, in response to both the US and the Israeli ambassadors' protests, the participants of the TV program *Sajtóklub* (Press Club) on which antisemitic comments about Miklosi were made, attempted to apologize, claiming they had no idea that he was Jewish. But according to Eva Balogh even the apologies clearly sounded racist and antisemitic. Balogh also referred to the Anti-Defamation League's April-June 2019 global survey on the state of antisemitism and pointed out that according to the survey, the older generation in Hungary was the least antisemitic, while the most antisemitic were the middle-aged. She also pointed out that Hungarian men proved considerably more antisemitic than women. The main gripes of Hungarian antisemites seem to be the influence of Jews in the finance and business world with George Soros as the main symbol of a hated Jew.⁷³

The politicians of the ruling Fidesz party, who are recently extremely careful about any expression of antisemitism, suffered an embarrassment during the congress of its youth organization Fidelitas on November 30, when Lajos Kósa, one of Viktor Orbán's deputies, delivered an antisemitic speech. The speech, full of complaints against voters' behavior during the last municipal elections, also claimed that the Jews, as a bloc, voted for an Arrow Cross man Gergely Kulcsár (Jobbik), an absurd accusation

⁷² Eva S. Balogh, "László Kövér's 'intellectual terrorists' all happened to be Jewish," *The Hungarian Spectrum*, November 5 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <http://hungarianspectrum.org/2019/11/05/laszlo-kovers-intellectual-terrorists-all-happened-to-be-jewish/>.

⁷³ Eva S. Balogh, "Fidesz and 'Our Homeland' join forces in an anti-Semitic campaign against 'nation haters'," *The Hungarian Spectrum*, November 24, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://hungarianspectrum.org/2019/11/24/fidesz-and-our-homeland-join-forces-in-an-anti-semitic-campaign-against-nation-haters/>; Eva S. Balogh, "'We are of the same blood,' the prelude to virulent anti-Semitic comments," *The Hungarian Spectrum*, November 19, 2019; accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://hungarianspectrum.org/2019/11/19/we-are-of-the-same-blood-the-prelude-to-virulent-anti-semitic-comments/>; "Antiszemita plakátokon támadják az Index újságíróit," *Media1*, November 24, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://media1.hu/2019/11/24/antiszemita-plakatokon-tamadjak-az-index-ujsgairoit/>; Eva S. Balogh, "'Sajtóklub's messages are not an aberration but part and parcel of the Orbán regime's nationalism," *The Hungarian Spectrum*, November 27, 2019, accessed April 5, 2019 at <https://hungarianspectrum.org/2019/11/27/sajtoklubs-messages-are-not-an-aberration-but-part-and-parcel-of-the-orban-regimes-nationalism/>.

considering the small number of Jews residing in the Hajdú-Bihar County in which Kulcsár ran for office.⁷⁴

Poland

Racist, homophobic, and antisemitic hate speech as well as acts of vandalism were frequent occurrences in Poland during 2019, not only by marginal far-right followers, but also by major mainstream politicians. Antisemitic manifestations appeared largely in connection to the issue of Holocaust-era property and the main driver has been the newly founded far-right bloc (Konfederacja), which entered the parliament for the first time in October. The Polish government continued to claim that Poles during WWII were heroic victims, who refused to collaborate with the Germans and paid a heavy price for it. Thus, it claims that blaming the Poles for their part in the murder of their Jewish neighbors, even if historically viable, is outrageous. In addition to previous legislation, the government interfered in several major appointments in institutions of higher education and in museums, to ensure that those who disagree with its contentions, however qualified, would not be appointed. Nevertheless, Polish vibrant civil society expressed a substantial resistance to racism and antisemitism, and held many public protests.

Polish-Israeli relations were strained because of the decision of the Polish PM Mateusz Morawiecki to skip the meeting of the Visegrád Group countries which was held in Jerusalem on February 18. The decision was provoked by the anti-Polish statements made by the Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and the acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Israel Katz.⁷⁵

Many of the antisemitic statements of Polish politicians, and particularly from the far right, were related to the Holocaust and to the alleged preference of Jewish victims over the Polish ones. On the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, on January 27, far-right leader, Piotr Rybak organized a protest march at the National Museum of Auschwitz-Birkenau, during which he accused the government for remembering only

⁷⁴ "Kövér László: A nemzettagadás képviselői a politikájukat az egyénre és a tömegre építik," *Magyar Nemzet*, November 30, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://magyarnemzet.hu/belfold/kover-laszlo-a-nemzettagadas-kepviseloi-a-politikajukat-az-egyenre-es-a-tomegre-epitik-7546424/>; Gado Janos, "A zsidók, akiknek "jólesik" a nyilasra szavazni," *Szombat*, December 1, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://www.szombat.org/politika/a-zsidok-akiknek-jol-esik-a-nyilasra-szavazni>; Eva S. Balogh, "High-ranking Fidesz leader's anti-Semitic comments shake the Hungarian Jewish community," *The Hungarian Spectrum*, December 1, 2019, accessed April 5, 2020 at <https://hungarianspectrum.org/2019/12/01/high-ranking-fidesz-leaders-anti-semitic-comments-shake-the-hungarian-jewish-community/>.

⁷⁵ Noa Landau, "After Netanyahu Holocaust Row, Polish PM Won't Attend Summit in Israel," *Haaretz*, February 17, 2019, accessed April 20, 2019, at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-after-netanyahu-holocaust-row-polish-pm-won-t-attend-israel-summit-1.6940626>; "Katz doubles down on Nazi comment," *Ynet*, February 22, 2019, accessed April 20, 2019, at <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5468267,00.html>; "Poland seeks Israeli apology for 'racist' remarks," *Times of Israel*, February 22, 2019, accessed April 20, 2019, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/poland-seeks-israeli-apology-for-racist-remarks/>.

murdered Jews and ignoring the Poles who were also murdered at that place.⁷⁶ In the same vein, Paweł Kukiz, a Parliament member and leader of the Kukiz'15 movement, attacked in a radio conversation on February 22 the alleged Jewish claims for reparations for the loss of their pre-WWII property in Poland.⁷⁷ Numerous statements against the alleged Jews' claims for property restitution were also voiced during a Polish nationalist march, held on May 11 in Warsaw.⁷⁸

A march of Polish radical nationalists took place in Auschwitz also in mid-August, vocally expressing similar objection to Jewish property restitution and complaining that Jews took over the camp memorialization and the camp's Polish prisoners are rarely.⁷⁹ On November 11, nationalist activists gathered signatures in support of a bill against property restitution during a Polish Independence March in Warsaw. The bill addresses nationalist concerns that Jewish restitution organizations may, with US support, claim heirless property appropriated from the Jews by the Nazis.⁸⁰ An election debate in *Kielce* on May 18, descended into a display of *antisemitism* and skullcap-throwing, as candidates argued over the issue of restitution to Jewish Holocaust victims.⁸¹

In the same vein, far-right populist leader Janusz Korwin-Mikke referred, amongst other things, to the antisemitic stereotype of the so-called Holocaust Industry in a program broadcast on July 29 in the YouTube channel of the daily newspaper *Rzeczpospolita*. He said that he and his friend Radio Maryja journalist, Stanisław

⁷⁶ "Far-right Poles protest Auschwitz commemorations," *The Washington Times*, January 27, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/jan/27/piotr-rybak-far-right-ipoles-protest-auschwitz-comm/>; "Holocaust: Polish police probe Auschwitz far-right protest," *BBC*, January 28, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47026904>.

⁷⁷ "Kukiz przypomniał o Żydach, którzy skazali 'Nila'. Lawina komentarzy," *Dorzeczy*, February 25, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.dorzeczy.pl/kraj/94745/kukiz-przypomniał-o-zydach-którzy-skazali-nila-lawina-komentarzy.html>.

⁷⁸ "Polish far-right marches in protest at US pressure for Holocaust restitution," *The Times of Israel*, May 12, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/polish-far-right-protests-protests-us-law-on-jewish-holocaust-restitution/>; "Polish Nationalists Protest US Over Holocaust Claims," *US News*, May 11, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2019-05-11/polish-nationalists-protest-us-over-holocaust-claims>.

⁷⁹ Anna Tatar (ed.), *The Brown Book* (Warsaw, 2019), accessed April 1, 2020, at https://www.nigdywiecej.org/docstation/com_docstation/172/brown_book_2019.pdf.

⁸⁰ Anna Koper, Kacper Pempel, "Polish far-right groups march on independence anniversary," *Reuters*, November 11, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-poland-independence-march/polish-far-right-groups-march-on-independence-anniversary-idUSKBN1XL22R>; Tim Hume, "Poland's Far Right Used Independence Day to Rally Against LGBTQ Rights," *Vice*, November 12, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/ne8gqd/polands-far-right-used-independence-day-to-rally-against-lgbtq-rights; "Polish far-right demonstrators protest against restitution of Jewish property," *Euronews*, May 13, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.euronews.com/2019/05/11/polish-far-right-demonstrators-protest-against-restitution-of-jewish-property>.

⁸¹ "Polish candidate puts kippah on rival, says her party 'kneels to Jews'," *The Times of Israel*, May 19, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/polish-candidate-puts-kippah-on-rival-says-her-party-kneels-to-jews/>; Daniel Sugarman, "Israel-Poland tensions rise further after Prime Minister describes potential restitution for Jews as 'a victory for Hitler'," *The Jewish Chronicle*, May 20, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/world/poland-tensions-rise-after-prime-minister-describes-restitution-for-jews-as-a-victory-for-hitler-1.484391>.

Michalkiewicz, have always made loud protests against the "Holocaust Industry", explaining that "There is a group of a few hundred individuals, generally of a mercantile denomination, who founded a company that lures compensation on the pretext that it is for the Jews murdered or injured in the Holocaust. It worked very well ... it flourished, but, unfortunately, Germany stopped paying, so they have had to find new sources – and their choice fell on Poland. There is currently such a storming attack on Poland to make it pay. ...They are a bunch of cheats."⁸² In another interview on October 14 to the YouTube channel wRealu24, Korwin-Mikke, denied that his newly established party, the Confederation of Freedom and Independence ('Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość'), which won seats in parliament in the elections held a day earlier, was antisemitic. However, he admitted that "we do hate Judeo-communism," and claimed that there remains in Poland "żydokomuna [Judeo-communism], i.e. those people who know only how to share public money; how to employ another Jew to fill any vacancy, and how to spend the taxpayer's money. They contribute nothing. We hate these people, but it has nothing to do with antisemitism."⁸³

Marcin Bustowski, a failed candidate of the Confederation of Freedom and Independence party, attacked on November 5 the ruling Law and Justice party politicians, claiming in a recording of which a copy reached the newspaper *Oko* that they represent Jewish interests. Bustowski denied that the recording was authentic.⁸⁴ Another candidate of the party Mirosława Modelska-Creech, justified the Jedwabne pogrom on October 24, claiming that many of the murdered Jews were NKVD agents and that Jews were partially to blame for the Holocaust.⁸⁵

In addition to public pronouncements, there were also cases of vandalism against Jewish property and of antisemitic manifestations, especially in football matches. For example, on August 1, hooligans of the Polish football club, ŁKS Łódź made threats towards municipal workers who were removing antisemitic graffiti from an old building in the city. The graffiti contained the slogan 'Jew Hunters', in which 'Jew' was painted with the colors of their rivals, Widzew Łódź, and 'Hunters' in the colors of ŁKS.⁸⁶ In Poznan on August 9, during a football match between Lech Poznań and Śląsk Wrocław, supporters of the local team held banners with the Celtic cross, a white supremacists symbol. They also displayed a banner adorned with the letters 'ŚŻK – Death to the Jewish whore', which amongst local football hooligans is a popular, antisemitic insult used against fans of Widzew Łódź, and a flag reading 'F...ck Antifa', expressing hatred against groups which openly demonstrate their anti-fascism. On the other hand, supporters of the visiting team displayed a characteristic red-and-white banner similar to the logo of the Blood and Honor organization, which in turn took its

⁸² Tatar, *The Brown Book*.

⁸³ Tatar, *The Brown Book*.

⁸⁴ Dominica Sitnicka, "Kandydat Konfederacji: 'Żydowska menda zalała nam parlament i ministerstwa'," *Oko*, November 8, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://oko.press/kandydat-konfederacji-zydowska-menda-zalala-nam-parlament-i-ministerstwa/?fbclid=IwAR2HA7Ew5Js01Pu7u5zR4QCt59PcjBp02UN88TlxI2KZ2WVQenl1lcyqMX8>.

⁸⁵ Tatar, *The Brown Book*.

⁸⁶ Tatar, *The Brown Book*.

name from the motto of the Hitlerjugend (Hitler Youth). Some of them wore t-shirts decorated with the slogan, 'White Empire'.⁸⁷ Similar slogans were displayed also in a derby match in Bielawa on August 31,⁸⁸ and in Krakow on September 29.⁸⁹

On Good Friday, April 19, residents of Pruchnik in the Jarosław County took part in a ritual procession known as the hanging of Judas, beating and burning its effigy.⁹⁰ Far-right activist, Sławomir Dul, demonstrated in Łódź on April 30, hanging an effigy of the late Polish-Jewish communist Jacob Bergman on the former ghetto wall with the caption 'Jew' and shouting: "I did it! I hanged a Jew!"⁹¹ On 12th May, a poster placed on the door of the Warsaw Wola Culture Centre was covered with graffiti displaying the inscription, 'Jude Raus' ('Jews out') and a star of David hanging on the gallows.⁹² Similar inscriptions were painted in Poznan on Grobla Street and in a village in the eastern county of Łódź in September.⁹³ Slogans, such as 'Attention! Parasites', 'No more Zionism', and 'Stop the claims mafia! Stop the Jewish occupation!' as well as images of Israeli and US ambassadors, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, and others were also hung on bus stops in Warsaw on September 25.⁹⁴ On August 27, Dawid Gurfinkiel, a Jewish musician was verbally attacked at the entrance of a Łódź pub by the doorman, just because he is a Jew, according to his complaint.⁹⁵

By the end of March, unknown perpetrators caused damage to the Czestochowa Jewish cemetery.⁹⁶ On 6th April, a monument to mass graves of Jewish Holocaust victims in Otwock in Central Poland was vandalized.⁹⁷ On July 21, the wall of the old

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Michael Bachner, "Polish crowd beats, burns Judas effigy with hat, sidelocks of ultra-Orthodox Jew," *The Times of Israel*, April 21, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/polish-crowd-beats-burns-judas-effigy-featuring-anti-semitic-tropes/>.

⁹¹ Cnaan Liphshiz, "Effigy of late Polish Jewish communist hung on gallows at former Lodz Ghetto", in *The Times of Israel*, *Haaretz*, May 2, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/effigy-of-late-polish-jewish-communist-hung-on-gallows-at-former-lodz-ghetto/>; <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/effigy-of-late-polish-jewish-communist-hung-on-gallows-at-former-lodz-ghetto-1.7190353>.

⁹² See Kantor Center's database: <https://antisemitism.org.il/en/146589/>.

⁹³ Tatar, *The Brown Book*.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ "Łódź: żydowski muzyk wyrzucony z pubu za naszyjnik z gwiazdą Dawida. 'Wiem gdzie mieszkaś'," *Strajk*, September 2, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://strajk.eu/lodz-zydowski-muzyk-wyrzucony-z-pubu-za-naszyjnik-z-gwiazda-dawida-wiem-gdzie-mieszkaś/>; "Pikieta solidarności z Dawidem, którego wyrzuconono z pubu za pochodzenie," *TVP3*, Spetember 2, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://lodz.tvp.pl/44206923/pikieta-solidarnosci-z-dawidem-ktorego-wyrzuconono-z-pubu-za-pochodzenie>.

⁹⁶ Alon Goldman, "Vandalism Again at Czestochowa Jewish Cemetery," *Czestochowa Jews*, March 28, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.czestochowajews.org/vandalism-again-at-czestochowa-jewish-cemetery/>.

⁹⁷ Katarzyna Markusz, "Monument in central Poland to mass graves for 2,000 Jewish Holocaust victims vandalized," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, April 7, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/monument-in-central-poland-to-mass-graves-for-2000-jewish-holocaust-victims-vandalized>; "Two swastikas daubed on stone marking mass grave near Polish ghetto," *The Jewish Chronicle*, April 8, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/world/two-swastikas-daubed-on-stone-marking-mass-grave-near-polish-ghetto-otwock-1.482726>.

Jewish cemetery in Tarnow was vandalized with a large antisemitic slogan: "Jews eat children. Jadowniki eat Jews," referring to a village in the region. On the next morning, the Committee for the Protection of Jewish Heritage in Tarnow has organized a clean-up in order to paint over the slogans.⁹⁸ In Krakow as well, perpetrators painted on September 30, a swastika and a sign reading, 'F...ing Jews get the f... out of Poland' on the historical Ghetto walls on Limanowska Street, and smeared tar on a plaque on the wall. The city immediately painted over them and the police started looking for the perpetrators.⁹⁹

Several investigations of cases of antisemitic statements in Poland were discontinued in recent years. At the beginning of November as well the Bialystok prosecutor's office discontinued an investigation of Jacek Medlar, a far-right former priest, for an antisemitic speech delivered in April 2016. The prosecutor justified his decision, claiming that comparing Jews to cancer planning to destroy Poland, as Miedlar did, is common in preaching and thus should not be prosecuted.¹⁰⁰ A month later on December 13, Miedlar was arrested following his tweet accusing the Jews for betraying Poland after it regained its independence on 1918.¹⁰¹

Although very different in nature, the case against historian Jan Tomasz Gross had been dropped on November 26. He was accused of defaming the Polish nation in his 2015 article, where he protested the mistreatment of refugees in Eastern Europe and claimed that during WWII Poles murdered more Jews than Germans.¹⁰²

It should be noted that there were also voices publicly expressing opposition to antisemitism and to belittlement of the Holocaust in Poland. In certain cases this led to government sanctions. The Gdansk rock band Trupa Trupa, for example, confronts antisemitism, hate speech and Holocaust denial in its songs. This was especially highlighted in their fifth album "Of the Sun", released in September. They were

⁹⁸ Facebook Post, *Jewish heritage Europe*, July 21, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://www.facebook.com/JewishHeritageEurope/posts/2819684084739870?comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22O%22%7D.

⁹⁹ Tatar, *The Brown Book*.

¹⁰⁰ Dominika Sitnicka, "Międlar: 'żydowski nowotwór, motłoch'. Prokuratura umarza, bo to 'kanon kaznodziejski'," *Oko*, November 15, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://oko.press/miedlar-zydowski-nowotwor-motloch-prokuratura-umarza-bo-to-kanon-kaznodziejski/>; "Polish former priest indicted for inciting hatred against Jews," *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, July 9, 2017, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.jta.org/2017/07/09/global/polish-former-priest-indicted-for-inciting-hatred-against-jews>.

¹⁰¹ "Polish far-right leader arrested for inciting anti-Semitism," *The Times of Israel*, December 13, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://www.timesofisrael.com/polish-far-right-leader-arrested-for-inciting-anti-semitism/?fbclid=IwAR0aID9P8_CrLEchzt41ZGw20rTd7KtQovzuFINpe5Aj_-yjwUdPA10wBWo.

¹⁰² "Polish prosecutors drop defamation case against Holocaust scholar," *The Times of Israel*, November 26, 2019 accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/polish-prosecutors-drop-defamation-case-against-holocaust-scholar/>.

interviewed about this several times during their December 2019 visit to Great Britain.¹⁰³

The Polish art community initiated protests against an unprecedented decision of the Minister of Culture Piotr Glinski, from the Law and Justice Party, to nominate a new director for the Center for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle (CCA) in Warsaw, one of the country's foremost institutions of contemporary art, without a customary open call process. The nominee, an art historian and a former manager of the Arsenal Poznan state gallery, Piotr Bernatowicz, was accused of exhibiting misogynistic, homophobic, racist, and antisemitic artworks. On January 1, 2020, he resumed his new position.¹⁰⁴

In May, the appointment of historian Dariusz Stola as director of the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews was extended in appreciation of his achievements, but the government, and particularly Piotr Glinski, refused to approve the renewal of his position and appointed an interim director. While no reasons were clearly stated, journalists seem to suspect that Stola's refusal to accept the Law and Justice party contention that Poles never committed any wrong towards any other nation is the main cause. On October 11, a picket in support of Stola was held in front of the Ministry of Culture building and about 6,000 people signed a petition for his reappointment.¹⁰⁵

In response to the delay in the signing of the paperwork awarding professorship to Michal Bilewicz, a Jewish social psychologist and a Coordinator of the Center for

¹⁰³ Zach Schonfeld, "Trupa Trupa Convert Historical Trauma into Post-Punk Catharsis on *Of The Sun*," *Paste Magazine*, September 11, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.pastemagazine.com/music/trupa-trupa/trupa-trupa-of-the-sun-review/>; Julian Maszalek, "Trupa Trupa: the Polish post-punk band confronting the Holocaust," *The Guardian*, November 29, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2019/nov/29/trupa-trupa-the-polish-post-punk-band-confronting-the-holocaust>; Ben Weich, "Polish rock band Trupa Trupa are confronting the Holocaust with their songs," *The Jewish Chronicle*, December 31, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/polish-rock-band-trupa-trupa-sing-about-their-country-s-part-in-the-holocaust-1.494796>.

¹⁰⁴ Mikolaj Iwanski, "Hunwejbini 'dobrej zmiany' w CSW? Kim jest Piotr Bernatowicz," *Krytyka Polityczna*, October 30, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kultura/sztuki-wizualne/mikolaj-iwanski-piotr-bernatowicz-dyrektorem-csw/>; Dorian Batycka, "Polish Art Community Rebuffs Ministry of Culture's Controversial Choice for a Museum Director," *Hyperallergic*, November 6, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://hyperallergic.com/526957/polish-art-community-petition/?fbclid=IwAR1Fje0KWmQsSvDnrxUcCZsyBlhxwC57rb6vZGrfXQIP3ZXOod4CoqU87Ws>; Alex Marshall, "A Polish Museum Turns to the Right, and Artists Turn Away," *The New York Times*, January 8, 2020, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/08/arts/design/poland-conservative-art.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Masha Gessen, "Poland's Ruling Party Puts an Extraordinary Museum of Polish-Jewish History into Limbo," *The New Yorker*, September 23, 2019, accessed on April 1, 2020, at <https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/polands-ruling-party-puts-an-extraordinary-museum-of-polish-jewish-history-into-limbo>; Emilie van Outeren, "Is the Polish Government Holding a Jewish Museum Hostage for Being 'Disobedient'?", *Haaretz*, October 3, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/is-the-polish-government-holding-a-jewish-museum-hostage-for-being-disobedient-1.7925924>; Konstanty Gebert, "History Held Hostage," *Moment*, October 29, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://momentmag.com/opinion-history-held-hostage/?fbclid=IwAR1MtpnkXNWurWONfNmnWOXmUtQhA2_1Qyo2RvJxdXog6AoN_xI3JdSN-Jk.

Research on Prejudice in the University of Warsaw specializing in antisemitism, racism, and hate speech in contemporary Poland, by president Andrzej Duda (Law and Justice Party), a group of academics issued a petition on social media demanding to grant Bilewicz the award approved already in 2018. The unusual step of delaying the signature, the petition claimed, raises suspicions of prejudice towards his academic and political activities against antisemitism and racism.¹⁰⁶

Slovakia

Antisemitic views were traditionally intertwined in Slovakian nationalism and in reactions to economic crises. While reported antisemitic events were few in 2019, they indicate the existence of popular antisemitism. Holocaust denial is also a major issue due to the ongoing trend among the nationalist right to glorify the WWII Nazi-supporting Slovakian government. They perceive the WWII Slovakian state, at the time totally controlled by the Nazis, as a historical precedence justifying their own claim for independence.

On July 9, the Slovak National Council deputy Stanislav Mizik (People's Party – Our Slovakia), charged due to a January 2017 antisemitic Facebook status, criticizing several president-awarded National Honors recipients, labeling them as Jews, and claiming that Jews should not be National Honors nominees, was declared innocent of all charges, since the Supreme Court was not convinced that Mizik, indeed, wrote the status. The Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia expressed concern that this might encourage further antisemitic expressions on social media.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Katarzyna Markusz, "Polish president withholds signature on paper to name Jewish scholar a professor," *The Times of Israel*, October 28, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/polish-president-withholds-signature-on-paper-to-name-jewish-scholar-professor/?fbclid=IwAR1GhPIXNVWWsdYJkIKTIvJ30RKMA-wW9nCEItYSanNiInZeyB-dU2IGQhE>.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Hanak, "Židia reagujú na Mizika: Aj počítačovní analfabeti zneužívajú sociálne siete," *Aktuality*, July 10, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/707642/zidia-reaguju-na-mizika-aj-pocitacovi-analfabeti-zneuzivaju-socialne-siete/?fbclid=IwAR0yrTU2h9a0OyDIIYoNnZDEtbHvNteGVsYXrHX61VkiNz2OF9P_3R9R-uA; "Far-right MP was not found guilty for publishing anti-Semitic Facebook post," *The Slovak Spectator*, July 9, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/22163902/extremist-mp-stanislav-mizik-found-innocent-in-the-anti-jewish-facebook-post-case-by-the-supreme-court.html>; "Supreme Court Definitively Acquits LSNS MP Mizik of Extremism Charges," *News Now*, July 9, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://newsnow.tasr.sk/crime/supreme-court-definitively-acquits-lsns-mp-mizik-of-extremism-charges/>.

According to a survey conducted in August by the Slovak National Uprising Museum in the town of Banská Bystrica, approximately 4 percent of the respondents aged 15 to 20 think that the Holocaust was either the right thing to do or never took place.¹⁰⁸

During the presidential campaign of 2019, political activist Tibor Eliot Rostas' journal *Zem a Vek* published a photo of Zuzana Čaputová, retouching her nose like in antisemitic caricatures.¹⁰⁹ In December Rostas was found guilty for publishing in May 2017 an article in which he approvingly cited antisemitic views of various figures in Slovak history.¹¹⁰ In the same month, fifty-nine tombstones in the cemetery in the northern town of Namestovo were reportedly vandalized.¹¹¹

Bulgaria

While the Bulgarian government was actively fighting against antisemitism in 2019, whether through legislation or policies, some antisemitic expressions, in particular in football matches were reported during the year. Journalists concede that racism is a common issue in Bulgarian football matches, and many observers were shocked by the Bulgarian fans' racist chants and Nazi salutes during the Bulgaria-England football match in Sofia on October 14. Some of the fans were detained.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Eva Stenclova, "Alarmujúce zistenie: Pre 4 percentá mladých je holokaust 'správna vec'," *Pravda*, August 22, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at https://spravy.pravda.sk/domace/clanok/523293-alarmujuce-zistenie-styri-percenta-mladych-fandia-holokaustu/?fbclid=IwAR2Ls4rwO0ZcF4fgKJGtop2-wlQHxxLiGcibGUQ-1Cyek4smh_uxdordlZU; Tomas Kysel, "Slovenský štát bol dobrý, myslí si päťna mladých. Pletú si aj Tisa s Kiskom," *Aktuality*, August 29, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/719355/slovensky-stat-bol-dobry-mysli-si-patna-mladych-pletu-si-aj-tisa-s-kiskom/?fbclid=IwAR3xvz--okUSO4J2b2WFFCwCTjxjpWHuJi7USXIQ0upf-onn2CdTh4hmkOk>; "The 1944 uprising failed and teenagers think the opposite," *Spectator*, August 28, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/22199548/the-1944-snp-uprising-failed-teenagers-think-the-opposite-survey.html>.

¹⁰⁹ "Zem a Vek upravil nos Čaputovej ako na antisemitských karikatúrach," *O médiách*, March 14, 2019, accessed April 20, 2019, at <https://www.omediach.com/hoaxy/15215-zem-a-vek-upravil-nos-caputovej-ako-na-antisemitskych-karikaturach>.

¹¹⁰ "Šéfredaktora Zem a vek Rostasa odsúdili, dostal pokutu," *SME Domov*, December 16, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://domov.sme.sk/c/22284832/sefredaktora-zem-a-vek-tibora-eliota-rostasa-odsudili.html>; Marian Repa, "Kauza Rostas: Ide o context," *Pravda*, December 16, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://nazory.pravda.sk/komentare-a-glosy/clanok/536301-kauzarostas-ide-o-kontext/>.

¹¹¹ "Slovakia: 59 tombstones vandalized in Jewish cemetery dating back to the 18th century," *Behind the News*, December 17, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at https://btnews.online/archives/115654/slovakia-59-tombstones-vandalized-in-jewish-cemetery-dating-back-to-the-18th-century/?fbclid=IwAR3vROznpPzg_wlurFtVN3dgOXUfarp_sDbvrjAE0IJOxh15y-CjGSScmkI; "Jewish Cemetery Vandalized in Northern Slovakian town," *Spectrum News*, December 17, 2020, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://spectrumnews1.com/oh/columbus/ap-top-news/2019/12/17/jewish-cemetery-vandalized-in-northern-slovakian-town>.

¹¹² George Wright, "Bulgarian Football and its Problem with Racism," *BBC*, October 15, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50060759>; Barnaby Lane, "A Bulgaria crowd appeared to make monkey chants and Nazi salutes at England's black players, and the team's captain begged the fans to stop," *Business Insider*, October 14, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://www.businessinsider.com/bulgaria-fans-made-nazi-salutes-monkey-chants-at-england-players-2019-10>; Alix Culbertson, "Bulgaria fans detained after racism at England Euro 2020 qualifier in Sofia," *Sky News*, October 17, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://news.sky.com/story/bulgaria-fans-detained-after-racism-at-england-euro-2020-qualifier-in-sofia-11836810>; "UEFA Punishes Bulgaria

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Bulgaria and Bulgaria's National Coordinator for the Fight against Antisemitism Georg Georgiev announced on December 30 2019 that the government of Bulgaria, together with several local institutions and the organization of the Jews in Bulgaria 'Shalom' established an official coordinating group for struggle against antisemitism. He also pointed out that Bulgaria recently increased the penalty for hate crimes from three to five years of imprisonment.¹¹³

for Fans' Racist Behavior," *The New York Times*, October 29, 2019, accessed April 2, 2020, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/29/sports/soccer/bulgaria-uefa-racism.html>.

¹¹³ 'Bulgarische regierung aktiv gegen antisemitismus', *Radio Bulgarien*, December 30, 2019, accessed at April 19, 2020 at <https://www.bnr.bg/de/post/101209689/bulgarische-regierung-aktiv-gegen-antisemitismus?fbclid=IwAR3yaVokEaL7THIAF-TCipZM38B0HMMz4ckHMGExJYXjFxbCF-lmKkgrn7U>; 'Deputy Foreign Minister: Bulgaria's efforts against antisemitism recognized worldwide', *The Sofia Globe*, December 30, 2019, accessed April 19, 2020 at <https://sofiaglobe.com/2019/12/30/deputy-foreign-minister-bulgarias-efforts-against-antisemitism-recognised-worldwide/>

LATIN AMERICA / Lidia Lerner and Galia Radosh Sverdlin

Argentina / DAIA

During 2019, DAIA, the umbrella organization of Argentina's Jewish community, received around 920 complaints of antisemitic acts. This marks an increase of 10 percent compared to the 834 cases reported in 2018. Most of the cases occurred in the virtual sphere - derogatory comments on social networks and websites, which constitute a persistent trend in recent years. In addition, there were at least three cases that have stood out for their severity and attracted media attention.

At the end of May, the facade of the premises of a Jewish merchant in Buenos Aires and the surrounding streets were defaced by antisemitic slogans and swastikas.

In June a rabbi in the city of Rosario was verbally assaulted by three people. They threw his hat on the floor and beat him while he was driving.

Finally, during the month of November a video, making a parody of the Shoah, students disguised as Nazis and harassing alleged Jews, circulated. It was created within the framework of a pedagogical activity of a school in San Juan, and the project was positively evaluated by the teacher in charge of the group.

A qualitative and quantitative examination of the complaints show that the exchange of virulent messages with a massive public in real time and the possibility of viralization in anonymity and impunity, led to the increase in expressions of Web 2.0 violence. They also determine the manifestation of antisemitism as well as other types of discrimination.

This situation requires efforts to establish legal-administrative and international cooperation mechanisms that prevent support for online crimes by the impunity of transnational technology companies. However, the biggest challenge lies in the prevention of discriminatory behaviors, since hate precedes the web.

It is time to be alert, and to strive to uproot the prejudices and discriminatory attitudes inherent in our culture; to strengthen public policies on issues of coexistence and interculturalism; and to enforce fundamental tools to counteract the spread of hatred and preconceptions.

The progressive increase in racist remarks towards Jews and other minority groups is an indication of an existing negative climate towards cultural diversity that must be observed and approached responsibly by the different government bodies of the State, to avoid the rupture of values that are fundamental to the full development of democracy.

During this year DAIA received approximately 1000 antisemitic complaints, 90 percent of which took place online.

Brazil / Samuel Feldberg

Brazil is normally depicted as a "racial paradise," according to Professor Tucci Carneiro from the University of São Paulo, but it is in reality a country prone to disguised racism, which includes antisemitism.

The best tool available for measuring the evolution of antisemitism in the Brazilian society over the last years is the ADL index. The table below shows answers to 11 questions that define negative attitudes towards Jews and the significant increase since 2014. In 2019, 25 percent of the adult population of Brazil was identified as prone to "antisemitic attitudes". This report introduces a series of examples to illustrate the major events which took place during the year.

There is also a high level of ignorance: 22 percent of the people interviewed have never heard about the Holocaust and 15 percent believe that the number of Jews exterminated is an exaggeration. Also, 55 percent of the respondents say they never met a Jew.

According to Fernando Lottenberg, the president of the Brazilian Jewish confederation (CONIB), "traditional antisemitism linked to the extreme right is now linked to contemporary antisemitism and to Islamic fundamentalism. The three factors are strengthened by the virulence of the social media, which increases not only the number of incidents but also its degree of aggressiveness.

The academic world holds numerous events presented as anti-Israeli or anti-Zionist but they are clearly antisemitic.

Events are boycotted and there is pressure on academic committees not to authorize courses or events related to Israel, students often disturb classes with protests or questions/comments totally out of context, and every conference that deals with the Middle East includes presentations that falsely accuse Israel of various criminal acts.

<u>The Index</u>	<u>2014 – 2019</u>
Percent responding "probably true"	16% – 25%
1. Jews are more loyal to Israel than to [this country/to the countries they live in]	42% - 70%
2. Jews have too much power in the business world	39% - 38%
3. Jews have too much power in international financial markets	34% - 38%
4. Jews still talk too much about what happened	

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| to them in the Holocaust | 57% - 63% |
| 5. Jews don't care what happens to anyone but their own kind | 21% - 27% |
| 6. Jews have too much control over global affairs | 29% - 27% |
| 7. Jews have too much control over the United States government | 17% - 14% |
| 8. Jews think they are better than other people | 19% - 25% |
| 9. Jews have too much control over the global media | 21% - 16% |
| 10. Jews are responsible for most of the world's wars | 13% - 25% |
| 11. People hate Jews because of the way Jews behave | 27% - 39% |

Antisemitic incidents in Brazil during the year of 2019

Types of Denunciations - 2019				
	Spray paintings/ Graffiti/ Banners/ placards	Antisemitic pages and comments in the social media	Diverse denunciations	
JAN	1	7	2	
FEV	1	2	5	
MAR	1	4	4	
APR	1	9	2	
MAY	4	10	4	
JUN	3	6	5	
JUL	2	6	0	
AUG	1	6	3	
SEP	0	2	1	
OCT	0	6	4	
NOV	2	5	3	
DEC	0	4	7	
TOTAL	16	67	40	123

The following are few examples of antisemitic manifestations in social media and caricatures:

Charges of cartoonist Carlos Latuff, May, 5, 2019:

carloslatuff



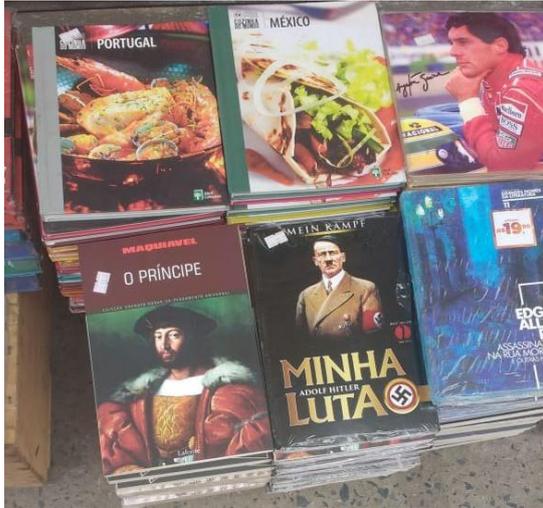
1,104 likes



Israel's army mission to Brazil to help with the disaster of the dam



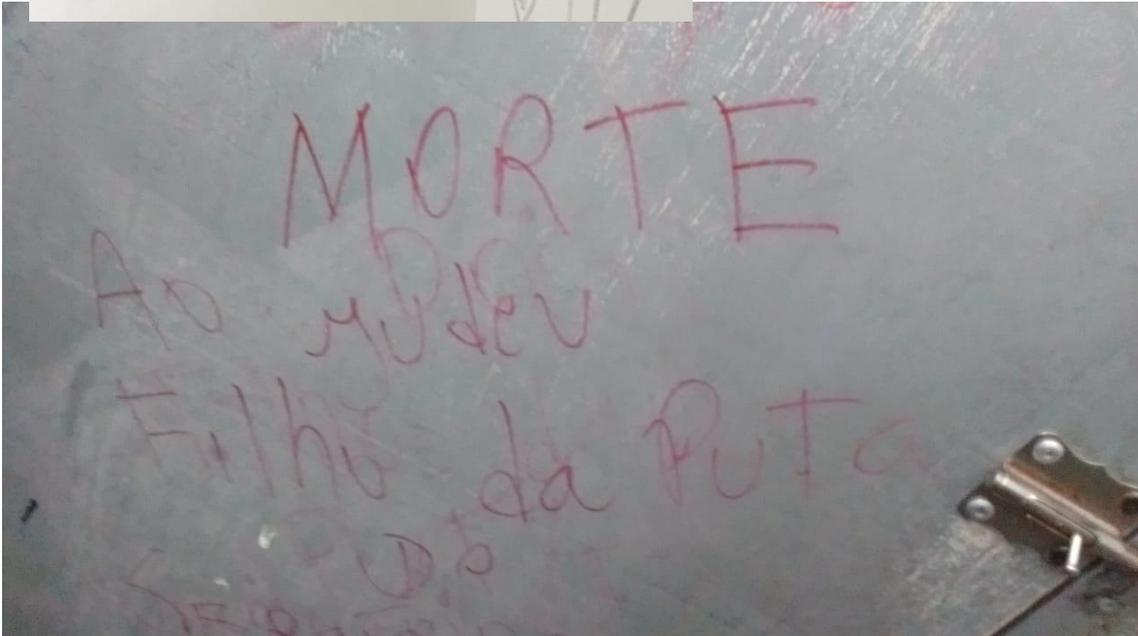
collapse in Brumadinho, Carlos Latuff, January 27, 2019:
 Sale of Hitler's Mein Kampf in a kiosk in São Paulo. It was identified for sale in several other places. January 28, 2019.



Painting in a wall at Faculdade Cásper Libero, faculty of journalism, February 15, 2019.



A painting at the door of a bathroom in a subway station,



Presidente Altino CPTM, Osasco, São Paulo, March 1, 2019.

Earth Day demonstrations at Avenida Paulista, São Paulo, March 30, 2019.



A sticker "Free Palestine" on the Jerusalem St. sign, April 3, 2019.



A university is threatened by a neo-Nazi group, April 11, 2019. ¹¹⁴



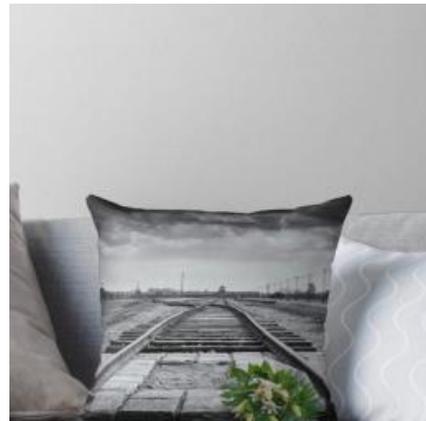
A student is detained for promoting Nazism, May 6, 2019. ¹¹⁵



Sale of home articles and clothing with Auschwitz images, May 7, 2019. ¹¹⁶



Mini Skirt
©Minny by K&S29F
€35.00
Size
M
Add to cart
View size guide
Delivery
Expires by 14 May
Standard between 14 - 20 h



Auschwitz concentration camp, Auschwitz II Birkenau
Throw Pillows
Size:
40 x 40 cm
Type:
Cover Only
€40.29
Buy any 2 and get 15% off.
Any size. Any artwork.
Add to Cart

Pro-Palestinian demonstration at Avenida Paulista, São Paulo, May 31, 2019.

¹¹⁴ <https://revistaladoa.com.br/2019/04/noticias/ameaca-a-ufpr-tem-assinatura-de-grupos-neonazistas/>. Accessed June 7, 2020.

¹¹⁵ https://www.diariodaregiao.com.br/_conteudo/2019/05/cidades/policia/1149864-estudante-suspeito-de-fazer-apologia-ao-nazismos-e-detido.html. Accessed June 7, 2020.

¹¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/auschwitzmuseum/status/1125814359391920129?s=12>. Accessed June 7, 2020.



A sticker on a lamppost in a neighborhood known for its Jewish population, São Paulo, July 4, 2019.



Blog accuses Israel's pharmaceutical industry of using aborted babies as raw material, July 21, 2019.¹¹⁷



Israel is an illegitimate state and its existence is an error of humanity, July 30, 2019.

¹¹⁷ <http://voltaire77.blogspot.com/2019/07/vacinas-da-morte-industria-farmaceutica.html>. Accessed June 7, 2020.



#MeuExAbusivo ISRAEL É UM ESTADO ILEGITIMO E SUA EXISTÊNCIA É UM ERRO DA HUMANIDADE



The FBI searching for an Egyptian connected to al-Qa'ida in Brazil, August 12, 2019.

01:29 · 30/07/2019 · Twitter Web App

MOHAMED AHMED ELSAYED AHMED IBRAHIM



DESCRIPTION

Aliases: Muhammad Ahmad Al-Qayid Ahmad Ibrahim	Place of Birth: Gharbeya, Egypt
Date(s) of Birth Used: April 5, 1977	Eyes: Brown
Race: Black	Weight: 160 to 170 pounds
Height: 5'11" to 6'2" (172 to 74 inches)	Complexion: Fair
Build: Thin, Physically Fit	Languages: English, Arabic
Sex: Male	

REMARKS

Ibrahim wears a trimmed beard.

DETAILS

Mohamed Ahmed Elsayed Ahmed Ibrahim is wanted for questioning in connection with his alleged role as an Al Qaeda operative and facilitator who has allegedly been involved in plotting attacks against the United States and its interests, and in providing material support to Al Qaeda since approximately 2013. He is located in Brazil.

SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND DANGEROUS

If you have any information concerning this person, please contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

Field Office: New York

University of Pernambuco (UPE) cancelled an event about peace between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East by André Lajst, executive director

of StandWithUs Brasil, after threats made by a pro-Palestinian organization, August 21, 2019.



Messages negating the Holocaust, glorifying Hitler and propagating Nazism, August 24, 2019.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2019/08/grupos-de-mensagens-negam-holocausto-louvam-de-hitler-a-eneas-e-propagam-nazismo.shtml?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=twfolha. Accessed June 7, 2020.



Extreme right placards attached to a wall in a neighborhood known for its Jewish population, São Paulo/SP, September 10, 2019.



A News coverage report that Brazil has 334 active neo-Nazi cells, November 18, 2019.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ <https://matheuspichonelli.blogosfera.uol.com.br/2019/11/18/brasil-tem-334-celulas-nazistas-em-atividade-diz-pesquisa/>. Accessed June 7, 2020.

Brasil tem 334 células neonazistas em atividade, diz pesquisadora



Integrante de grupo neonazista detido no Rio Grande do Sul (Reprodução)

"The police in Campo Grande registered a case of antisemitism. The aggressor says: I kill Jews,"

November 25, 2019.¹²⁰

Polícia registra caso de antissemitismo em Campo Grande: "Judeu eu mato", disse agressor, que afirmo

Autor ainda tentou atirar três vezes contra a vítima, mas o revólver falhou

24 NOV 19 - 15h:11 | EDUARDO MIRANDA

Curte 325 Compartilhar

Boycott Israel – an exposition entitled: “Palestine – from ethnic cleansing till resistance and international recognition” at the state capitol of Rio Grande do Sul, organized by the Brazilian Arab Palestinian Federation and the Committee for solidarity with the Palestinian people, November 25, 2019.



An individual went to a bar wearing a Nazi armband at Unai (MG). The police was called but did not intervene, December 16, 2019.¹²¹

¹²⁰ <https://www.correiadoestado.com.br/policia/policia-registra-caso-de-antissemitismo-em-campo-grande-judeu-cu/364033/>. Accessed June 7, 2020.

¹²¹ <https://revistaforum.com.br/brasil/video-acionada-policia-militar-nao-abordou-nazista-de-unai-mg/>. Accessed June 7, 2020.



Chile/ Gustavo Guzmán

In February 2019, three Israeli tourists suffered a deadly accident in Torres del Paine, Patagonia. This event brought multiple displays of antisemitism in the Internet. As some rejoiced over the accident, others called to ban the entry of Israelis. Not few claimed that Jews are taking control of Patagonia, echoing the infamous *Plan Andinia*.

Few weeks later, during a mass rally in Santiago on March 8, left-wing feminists chanted “the whole [Chilean] territory to become anti-Zionist.” This was an updated version of a left-wing, anti-General Pinochet chant of the 1980s.

In early October, a bitter controversy took place. Like every Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish Community sent presents to multiple personalities of Chilean society. The presents consisted of small jars of honey and a letter expressing the Jews’ “commitment to building a more inclusive, caring society.” Left-wing Deputy Gabriel Boric, who also received the gift, commented in response that Jewish-Chileans “should first request Israel to return the illegally occupied Palestinian territory,” collectively blaming Jews for the actions of Israel.

After October 18, 2019, massive political rallies took place in Santiago and other major cities on a weekly basis. In those gatherings, many youngsters raised the Palestinian flag as a political symbol. Remarkably, most of them have no Arab ancestors.

The growing left-wing identification with the Palestinians and the subsequent demonization of Israel constitutes one of the most critical developments of antisemitism in Chile today.

Mexico / Renee Dayan Shabot (Tribuna Israelita)

Antisemitism has never been an official policy in Mexico and the Government does not support discrimination nor violent act. The country has an Antidiscrimination Law that considers antisemitism as a discriminatory action. Nevertheless, antisemitic manifestations, especially in mass and social media appear frequently.

In 2019 negative articles in the traditional media decreased compared to previous years, however, as it happens in other countries, antisemitism in social media increased. In order to monitor this phenomena, Tribuna Israelita, one of the main Jewish community organizations in Mexico, implemented the use of a new tool to keep track and identify the sources, the arguments and the “influencers”.

	Total
Incidents	
Graffiti (swastikas, flags, flyers, etc.)	4
Verbal aggressions or threats	3
Other	5
Total	12
Incidents on Radio and TV	
Radio	2
TV	0
Total	2
Support for the Palestinian cause	
Events (conferences, seminars, etc.)	14
Concentrations (demonstrations, rallies, etc.)	9
Other	5
Total	28
TOTAL	42
Written Media	
Neutral articles (including, op-eds, cartoons and letters to the editors)	3,018
Negatives articles (including op-eds, cartoons and letters to the editors)	251
Positive articles (including op-eds, cartoons and letters to the editors)	14
TOTAL	3283

Incidents



During the year, the dynamics of the Israeli-Arab conflict triggered antisemitic and anti-Zionist arguments mainly in newspapers, social networks and public demonstrations. Several events that took place in Mexico generated antisemitic reactions mainly in the social media platforms.

For example, in response to Tribuna Israelita’s social media posts regarding the #WeRemember campaign for the Holocaust Memorial Day, several Antisemitic and anti-Zionist comments were made: "This holohoax talk is getting boring...;" "When are you going to remember the massacre of the Palestinian people?;" "Since there is nothing to do about it, stop talking about the past and put an end to the barbarity of the invading Jews against the Palestinians;" "How do you want the anti-Semitic community not to grow? By believing that you're superior than others, being arrogant, and despite the way you're you want us to feel sorry about what happened to your people? I'm sorry you weren't annihilated completely."

Another major example was the “Instituto de la Juventud de la CDMX” (INJUVE), Mexico City’s Youth Institute. On May 27th, it posted on its social media channels a message on the birth anniversary of Joseph Goebbles, Nazi Minister of Propaganda, defined as “the father of propaganda”. The post was harshly criticized. The Jewish Community strongly condemned the social media post stating that with the information they shared, “Nazi apologism” was committed and described as “unacceptable that a public institute would give this kind of publicity to the most racist, antisemitic and bloodthirsty political party in the History of the 20th Century.” The next day, the Broadcasting, Communications and Alternative Media Deputy Director of the Institute who was responsible for the social media post, was fired. The Institute deleted the image and apologized. Besides the multiple posts criticizing the Goebbles’s post, many antisemitic and anti-Zionist messages were also posted, such as *"Jews always play the victim, but at the same time they are 'favored' by life, for some strange reason the vast majority of them are millionaires or belong to the high class...very strange;"* *"Nothing in this world reminds me of Nazis and their brutality more that the Israeli Defense Forces and the ghetto they imposed on the Palestinian people. I can't believe how they ended up becoming everything they hate."*

The assassination of two Israeli criminals, who were linked to organized crime, money laundering, extortions and kidnapping, at a restaurant in the Artz Mall in Mexico City, triggered several antisemitic reactions in the press and the social media. For example, Francisco Zea wrote in daily *Excélsior* on July 29 that “in order to understand the scope of the most evil and efficient secret service in the world, I recommend Gordon Thomas’

Gideon's Spies: The Secret History of the Mossad. Sócrates A. Campos Lemus accused the Jewish community of protecting the two men and enabling them to act. Writing in *Diario Imagen* on July 30, he claimed: "both assassinated men were no less than big shot criminals in Israel, and without any problems they entered the Country, they even had a work permit, they were protected by the Jewish Community that has a special security group, to constantly ensure the safety of its members ... the same community has a huge capacity for "money laundering" and legal companies that can be used for financial moves, and their expertise is fabric and jewelry smuggling." Similar views were expressed in the social media as well.

A ruling of the Supreme Court of Justice issued on October 30, which stipulated that workers cannot be discriminated for having tattoos as long as they do not incite extreme hatred, also triggered antisemitic and anti-Zionist responses. The ruling was issued in response to a lawsuit against a Jewish employer by a worker complaining that he was fired for not covering or eliminating the swastika tattoo he had on his neck. Posts called to "*fire those who have the star of David tattooed for having relations with the genocidal, racist, ethnocide and thief entity of Israel*"; explained that "*Jews are one of the most toxic religions out there, they believe they are untouchable and eternal victims of the "holocaust", they never adapt and don't give a f*ck about costumes, religion or ways of the places they go to, they do whatever they want because they have a lot of money, and you know the worst of it? They are arrogant, filthy, loud, ARCHAIC...*"; and claimed that "*This proves that we live in a world controlled by Jews*"; and that "*Jews have harmed us Mexicans more than the Nazis*".

Support for the Palestinian cause

Throughout the year, the conflict between Israel and Palestine, mainly in Gaza, prompted various antisemitic comments, such as "*The soapy ashes and their allies will be exterminated and erased from history because of the atrocities and inhumanity they imposed on the Palestinian people, the people who had the misfortune of letting them settle in their Country*".

As in previous years, pro-Palestinian groups organized demonstrations and events albeit with low attendance. On March 4, for example, Mexico City Autonomous University (UACM) held a panel on "Palestine: the apartheid and shame wall", with the participation of Mohamed Saadat, Ambassador of the Special Delegation of Palestine in Mexico. A rally "Against Israel for the total bombing of Gaza" was held on March 26, in downtown Mexico City; and Palestinian Land Day was commemorated on March 27, at the Indomitable Memory Museum in Mexico City with the participation Mohamed Saadat and Araceli Cortés of the Coordination of Solidarity with Palestine. A demonstration organized by "Mexicans who support Palestine" was also held on May 7, in front of the Israeli Embassy "to protest against human rights and international violations, made by Israel towards the Palestinians for more than 70 years."



The Jewish community's actions to fight antisemitism

The community continues to monitor and to respond to antisemitic manifestations in various ways:

1. Public Relations/ Releasing informative materials/ Presence in social networks
2. Organizing visits to Israel
3. Organizing youth programs at Universities
4. Participation at the International Book Fair in Guadalajara
5. Monitoring Written Press and Social Networks with state of the art programs.

ARAB COUNTRIES / Esther Webman z"l

The assessment of the volume of antisemitic manifestations in the Arab world had been always a problem since it is mainly verbal, and it is impossible to reach every and each antisemitic utterance, but it seems that there is a decrease in the overall antisemitic manifestations in the various media outlets, especially in newspapers. This might be the result of the new political constellation of the post "Arab Spring" Middle East, which is immersed in so many unresolved problems and created new strategic alliances that further marginalized the Palestinian problem. The tension in the Gaza Strip as well - the Palestinian marches of return and the demonstrations on the fence between Israel and the Strip - diminished during the year as both Hamas and Israel were preoccupied with internal political and social problems and sought a long-term lull. This is not to say that antisemitic discourse disappeared and that the preoccupation with the Jews did not continue unabated in Islamist outlets.

A review of the Arab antisemitic discourse in 2019 reveals two major traits: on the one hand, a reactive discussion triggered by events in Israel, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as well as by regional and international developments; on the other hand, an ideational rhetoric unrelated to events. While the first type of discourse included discussions in mainstream newspaper articles and TV programs on the Holocaust, on the combat of antisemitism, and on subjects which were on the Israeli public agenda, the second was mainly typical to religious sermons and random statements, combining

religious anti-Jewish motifs and classical antisemitic themes, such as the blood libel and conspiracy theories. This review focuses on the reactions to concrete events and comprises of two parts: one relates to issues pertaining to the Holocaust and the other relates to issues revealing patterns of thinking about the Jews.

The Holocaust in the Arab public discourse

The Holocaust continued to arouse heated debates on various occasions, whether connected with its commemoration or unrelated to any specific event. Those debates exposed the persistence of certain themes which typified the Arab Holocaust discourse since its early development in the 1940s. Arab writing about the Holocaust rarely attracted international or Israeli attention, but on May 18, 2019, few days after Israeli Holocaust Remembrance Day, and two days after May 15, marked as Nakba Day by the Palestinians, AJ Plus, al-Jazeera video content platform posted a video titled "The Gas Chambers Killed Millions of Jews –That's How the Story Goes. What is the Truth behind the Holocaust and How did the Zionist Movement Benefit from it?". The title clarifies by itself the crux of the claims raised in the video. It Casted doubt about the number of Jewish Holocaust victims; it emphasized that Jews were not the only victims and wondered why there is a focus only on them; it considered reparations paid to the Jewish victims of Nazism as being disproportionate to the reparations paid to other people who suffered similarly; it pointed to the Zionist movement's agreement with Hitler, stressing that "the much-regurgitated narrative of the Holocaust sorrows" paved the way for the Jewish immigration to Palestine; it referred to large museums commemorating "the tragedy of the Jews" as provoking great interest in this event, "even though similar crimes, no less heinous, are still being perpetrated against other peoples;" and concluded by asserting that "Israel is the biggest winner from the Holocaust, and it uses the same Nazi justification as a launching pad for the racial cleansing and annihilation of the Palestinians." The video, which was narrated by Kuwaiti-born Palestinian Muna Hawwa, a journalist and producer for al-Jazeera network, drew strong criticism after its translation into English by the US-based non-profit Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). In response, the video had been removed and al-Jazeera suspended Hawwa and another journalist. Moreover, Yasir Bishr, the executive director of its digital division, said that the network "'completely disowns the offensive content in question', and would not tolerate such material on any of its network's platforms."¹²²

Unsatisfied with al-Jazeera's reaction, the Palestinian Fatah movement, according to Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) reposted the video on its official Facebook page on May 20, clarifying that "al-Jazeera TV made a favor to the occupation [i.e., Israel] and

¹²² Memri, "Antisemitism on Al-Jazeera Network," Clip No. 7231, May 18, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/tv/al-jazeera-holocaust-denial-israel-biggest-winner-same-justification-annihilate-palestinians/transcript>; Memri, Special Dispatch No. 8073, May 20, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/reports/memri-translates-antisemitic-video-al-jazeera-network-israel-biggest-winner-holocaust-uses>;
"Al Jazeera suspends two journalists over Holocaust report, Al-Jazeera (English), May 20, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/al-jazeera-suspends-journalists-holocaust-video-190519190913206.html>.

erased the video," and hence it is published again. On May 24, it posted another video titled "Palestinian journalist pays the price of al-Jazeera's capitulation to [Israeli] occupation pressure, thus becoming herself a victim of the Holocaust," in which Hawwa explains why she was suspended.¹²³ She also tweeted a clarification on "the commotion over the Holocaust story" on May 22, stressing that her story "didn't deny the Holocaust, neither did it justify, nor argue whether it is a crime against humanity that deserves all condemnation." She acknowledged the Holocaust as a humanitarian catastrophe that all humankind should denounce, but repeated her allegations that Zionism and Israel abuse of the pain and suffering of the Holocaust victims and silence criticism against them. Antisemitism, she added, "has become a loose accusation that can be used against whoever dares to criticize Israeli policies."¹²⁴

A few days later, journalist Raja Talab wrote in an article in Jordanian daily *al-Ra'y* that he watched the video and found it "highly objective", allegedly raising several legitimate points for debate. Among those he referred to questions such as whether Hitler meant to kill only the Jews, the lack of written evidence to the decision to exterminate the Jews, and the Zionist cooperation with Nazism. The Holocaust is a fact, he concluded, "and a big crime against humanity, but it is important that we Arabs do not continue to pay its price!"¹²⁵ This approach to the Holocaust in mainstream Arab discourse – acknowledging the Jewish tragedy while accusing Zionism and Israel of exploiting the Holocaust and committing crimes against the Palestinians – reflects the entrenchment of the new discourse which emerged in the mid-1990s and legitimized a more open and diversified discussion of the Holocaust.

A similar approach was expressed by Tunisian writer Amal Musa, who discussed the epithet "Never Again" on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day. "It is not our [the Arabs'] business to acknowledge or deny the existence of Holocaust victims," but "we the Arabs and Muslims should be able to interact intelligently and rationally with this international day," to prove how the lessons of the Holocaust are not applied and in fact it is "reproduced against the Palestinians in various forms." This day provides Israel with political gains, shielding it from criticism over its conduct against the Palestinians. Moreover, she claimed, we are witnessing how religion and race are becoming driving forces in international and geo-political relations, and how the image of the Arab and the Muslim suffers from "a symbolic and sometimes physical Holocaust," in view of a spreading phobia from the Arabs and Muslims in many countries.¹²⁶

¹²³ Itamar Marcus, "Fatah Posted offensive Holocaust video after Al-Jazeera condemned and removed it," *PMW*, May 21, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=27711.

Fatah Facebook Page, May 24, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at <https://www.facebook.com/officialfateh1965/videos/342768186426648/>.

¹²⁴ @MunaHawwa, May 22, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at <https://twitter.com/MunaHawwa/status/1131307899349819393>.

¹²⁵ Raja Talab, "Why Only the Jews?," *al-Ra'y*, May 26, 2019, accessed January 20, 2020, at <http://alrai.com/article/10485858>.

¹²⁶ Amal Musa, "Never Again," *al-Sharq al-Awsat*, January 27, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://aawsat.com/home/article/1563141/%D8%AF-%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B3%D9%89/%C2%AB%D9%84%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%B1%D8%A7>

Two other events proved the complexity of the attitudes towards the Holocaust in the Arab world: the demolition of a Holocaust memorial in Morocco, and the performance of a play titled "Sobibor" at 'Ayn Shams University in Egypt. In August 2019, the BBC in Arabic reported the demolition of a Holocaust memorial, built at the Moroccan village of Ayt Fasaka near Marrakech, as part of a compound that was supposed to include a museum for "the commemoration of the six million Jews perished in the European death camps by the Nazis." The project was initiated by the German PixelHelper NGO in an attempt to enhance friendly relations between Muslims and Jews. The local authorities demolished the memorial after one year of construction because the organization did not have the proper building permits. Ahmed Wihman, president of the Moroccan Observatory against Normalization with Israel, expressed his support of the decision to demolish the "building of shame, the so-called Holocaust memorial," but criticized the government for allowing the erection of the monument in the first place, particularly since, according to him, the owner of the project is "a homosexual Freemason with Zionist ideologies."¹²⁷

A more sophisticated response to this issue was written by London-based Lebanese scholar Gilbert Achcar, who is the author of a book and articles dealing with the Arabs and the Holocaust. Achcar considered the establishment of Holocaust memorials in countries, which did not participate in the destruction of the Jews and had no connection to it, as a reflection of the audacity of Zionist and western colonial thinking. The US, for example, he maintained, built in its capital the biggest and most famous Holocaust museum although she was not involved in the Holocaust, but she does not have at least a similar museum commemorating the annihilation of the original inhabitants of America, the victims of the slave trade and the slavery of black Africans. Europeans, he went on to say, committed numerous awful colonial annihilation campaigns against the peoples of the Southern World but they commemorate only the Jewish Holocaust, during which Hitler, a white man, engaged in an extermination campaign against whites. Instead of a Holocaust memorial in Morocco there should be a monument for the Moroccan soldiers who participated and died in the liberation of Europe from Nazism. Even worse, Achcar continued, is the memorialization of the Holocaust without referring to the refusal of the Zionist movement to demand Great Britain and the United States to open their doors to European Jews seeking refuge from Nazism "in order to force them to go to Palestine in support of its project to establish a state at the expense of the Palestinian people." Achcar also criticized Yad Vashem for portraying the Palestinians as playing a significant role in the Holocaust – "a big lie disseminated by the Zionist propaganda." While not rejecting the erection of Holocaust memorials in Arab countries, he warned that those should make sure to denounce "the real role of the Zionist movement and its exploitation of the memory

%D8%B1-%D9%84%D8%B0%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%8B
%C2%BB.

¹²⁷ Memri, "Moroccan Authorities Demolish Holocaust Memorial," Special Dispatch No. 8250, August 28, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/reports/moroccan-authorities-demolish-holocaust-memorial-built-german-ngo-anti-normalization>.

of the Holocaust for justifying its heinous and growing persecution against the Palestinian people."¹²⁸

The other event which sparked a heated debate, exposing prevailing attitudes towards the Holocaust was the performance of the play Sobibor by a student theatre group at 'Ayn Shams University in August. Written by Muhammad Zaki, a young playwright and stage manager, and based on the 1987 British television film "Escape from Sobibor", the play described the persecution of the Jews in the camp and the successful escape of 200 Jews with the help of a Russian officer. The controversy, explained writer Muhammad al-'Ajati, did not evolve around the artistic value of the play, but stemmed from the subject of the Holocaust, which is perceived as "a Zionist invasion" leading to normalization. While some writers discussed the limits of free speech, others presented the play as a potential justification of the ongoing maltreatment of the Palestinians by the Zionists. In contrast, al-'Ajati supported the performance, emphasizing that the Holocaust should not be a taboo. It should be denounced and discussed as a historical human tragedy, which does not prevent opposition to Zionism as a colonial project.¹²⁹

Critic Amniyya Tal'at was one of those identified by al-'Ajati as categorically rejecting the play, because of its alleged potential "to serve the enemy's interests." Instead of dealing with the Palestinian problem, she claimed, "which essentially is an identity, national and religious problem," and with the massacres perpetrated by Zionism against the Arabs, including Egyptians and Palestinians, the play arouses empathy towards the Jews, which cannot be separated from the Zionists. International Zionism," she concluded, "embodied in the Israeli entity exploited the Holocaust story to achieve international gains that it does not deserve." Tal'at raises the major arguments that traditionally hindered Arab willingness to study and research the Holocaust.¹³⁰

Hamad Subh intertwined the demolition of the memorial in Morocco with the performance of Sobibor, considering them as a proof of the infiltration of what he calls "the Holocaust myth." Subh denied the Holocaust claiming that various estimations show that no more than half a million Jews had been killed. But both incidents according to Subh were signs of the continual monopolization of the tragedies of World War II by Jewish organizations and the state of Israel, "in order to extort

¹²⁸ Gilber al-Achcar, "The Audacity of the Zionist and Colonial Thinking," *al-Quds al-'Arabi*, September 3, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://www.alquds.co.uk/%D8%B5%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%81%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%87%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A/>.

¹²⁹ Muhammad al-'Ajati, "Sobibor from the Holocaust in Poland to the Holocaust on the Stage," *al-Shuruq*, September 1, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://www.shorouknews.com/columns/view.aspx?cdate=01092019&id=5f022543-65cd-4464-a724-db443abf24e2>.

¹³⁰ Amniyya Tal'at, "Sobibor, A Theatre Show in Cairo that Distorts History and Asks for Sympathy Towards the Holocaust's Jews," *al-Akhbar*, August 22, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at http://omneyataaat.blogspot.com/2019/08/blog-post_22.html.

international sympathy and justify the rape of the Palestinians' homeland and all the crimes committed daily against the Palestinian people." He praised the Ayt Fasaka memorial demolition, and expressed sorrow for the penetration of the Holocaust propaganda in the minds of 'Ayn Shams students, which contradicts the adamant refusal of the Egyptian people to normalize relations with "the historic enemy of the *umma*." In conclusion, he asserted that "we are all responsible for defending the purity of our youth minds...from the misinformation and lies of the Jews."¹³¹

Numerous other references to the Holocaust, unrelated to any event, were made in the course of the year by scholars, journalists and politicians, ranging from denial of the Holocaust¹³² to justifying it,¹³³ and equating Israel with Nazi Germany and Palestine with Auschwitz.¹³⁴ On October 14, a conference titled "The Holocaust – The Biggest Lie in Modern History" was held in Jordan and broadcasted by al-Finiq TV. Researchers and journalists, such as Muwaffaq Muhadin, president of the Jordanian Writers Association, and Mahmud 'Awad participated in the conference and as its title indicated, they mainly engaged in the denial of the Holocaust. They reiterated several motifs: Jews were not systematically murdered; no more than 400,000 Jews were actually killed by the Nazis; the number of Roma and Russians killed was much greater than the number of Jews; Zyklon-B was not used for killing the Jews but for purifying clothes from diseases; there is no evidence of furnaces, of ashes or bodies to suggest that the Nazis burnt the Jews; the Final Solution meant driving the Jews out of Germany. Concluding his presentation, 'Awad applied the famous phrase of Joseph Goebbels, Nazi propaganda minister, "lie and lie again until the people believe you," to the Jews, asserting that they say "lie and lie again until you believe yourself."¹³⁵

¹³¹ Hamad Subh, "The Holocaust Myth Infiltrates the Arab Consciousness," *Dunya al-Watan*, September 8, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/articles/2019/09/08/501507.html>.

¹³² See for example, Memri, "Egyptian Journalist Al-Azab Al-Tayyeb: The Holocaust Is Zionist Propaganda For the Purpose of Making Money; A Few Hundred Thousand Jews Were Killed At Most; Gas Chambers Were Too Small To Be Used for Genocide," Clip No. 7412, March 7, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/tv/egyptian-journalist-azab-tayyeb-denies-holocaust-gas-chambers-lie-six-million-zionist-propaganda-profitable/transcript>.

¹³³ See for example, PMW, "Holocaust explained by Fatah: Jews deserved to be killed because of 'who they are'," March 4, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://palwatch.org/page/15378>.

¹³⁴ See for example, Nan Jacques Zilbernik and Itamar Marcus, "'Auschwitz is here in Palestine' says PA leader Jibril Rajoub," July 25, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://palwatch.org/page/15990>.

¹³⁵ Memri, "Researchers at Holocaust Denial Conference in Jordan: Jews were not systematically murdered in Holocaust, 'Final Solution' was to expel Jews due to their destructive influence," Special Dispatch No. 8354, November 8, 2019, accessed January 27, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/reports/researchers-holocaust-denial-conference-jordan-jews-were-not-systematically-murdered>.

Articles in the same vein were published in the daily Jordanian paper *al-Dustur*, denying the Holocaust while denouncing Zionism for exploiting it by becoming “distinguished victims”,¹³⁶ and for perpetrating Nazi-like crimes.¹³⁷

In striking contrast to these attitudes Australian-based Iranian Shi'ite cleric Muhammad Tawhidi, posted in his personal Facebook account in February, photos from his visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp wearing a black shirt with the hashtag *#WeRemember*, adding that he is “proud to be the first *Shia* Muslim Imam to pay his respects at Auschwitz. The Jew is NOT my Enemy.”¹³⁸

Similarly, the Saudi English-language daily *Arab News* published on April 30, an article by American historian Ellen Wald commemorating the Holocaust. Published few days after the deadly shooting at a synagogue in Poway, California, and on the eve of Holocaust Memorial Day in Israel, Wald enumerated the atrocities and genocides throughout the 20th century, emphasizing that they should all be commemorated, but asserting that there is “one particular 20th century genocide, the lessons of which we can never forget...the Holocaust stood out because of its scope and the character of its perpetrators.” She outlined major events in the history of the Holocaust, and stated that the Holocaust should be studied by everyone, concluding that “we must learn and remember what was done in the past so that we never repeat it.”¹³⁹ Although there was a disclaimer at the end of the article, clarifying that the views expressed in it do not necessarily reflect *Arab News* point of view, the mere publication of the article is of a great importance.

Another event which drew attention to the diverse Arab attitudes towards the Holocaust was the purchase of €600,000 worth of items belonging to Adolf Hitler by a Swiss-Lebanese Businessman Abdallah Chatila in a controversial auction held by Hermann Historica auction house in Munich in November. Realizing the fear of his Jewish friends that such items fall into the wrong hands, Chatila decided to acquire them and donate them to a Jewish foundation which transferred them to Yadvashem. In appreciation of his generosity Chatila was hosted in Israel by Yadvashem and Israeli

¹³⁶ ‘Abd al-Rahim Jamus, “Europe and Zionism and exhausting the Role of Distinguished Victims,” *al-Dustur*, December 7, 9, 2019, accessed January 27, 2020, at <https://www.addustour.com/articles/1118821>; <https://www.addustour.com/articles/1119184>.

¹³⁷ Marwan Sudah, “Zionist Massacres and Nazi Conspiracies,” *al-Dustur*, December 9, 2019, accessed January 27, 2020, at <https://www.addustour.com/articles/1119207>.

¹³⁸ Imam Tawhidi, Facebook, February 3, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at The Australian-based Iranian Shi'ite cleric Muhammad Tawhidi, Australia posted in his personal Facebook account in February, photos from his visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp wearing a black shirt with the hashtag *#WeRemember*, adding that he is “proud to be the first *Shia* Muslim Imam to pay his respects at Auschwitz. The Jew is NOT my Enemy.”

¹³⁹ Ellen R. Wald, “Remember the Holocaust so its horrors are not repeated,” *Arab News*, April 30, 2019, accessed January 26, 2020, at <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1490386>.

President, Reuven Rivlin.¹⁴⁰ The Arab media reported the event, but whereas international outlets in Arabic have done it in an objective manner, Arab papers did not hide their disdain towards Chatila. Lebanese pro-government daily *al-Akhbar* published an article by Yahya Dabuq defining him as "the filthy Arab",¹⁴¹ and the Lebanese Boycott campaign against supporters of Israel submitted a call to the Boycott Desk at the Ministry of Economics to undertake measures against him.¹⁴²

Negative thinking about the Jews

Several issues prompted responses in the Arab media which evinced persistent negative thinking about the Jews. Jews were accused of being behind the misfortunes that befell Arabs and Muslims all over the world. They were said to support and promote the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1930s, who implemented their sordid conspiracies to corrupt and destroy the Arab and Muslim *umma*, and distort the image of Islam. Even its founder Hasan al-Banna allegedly had Jewish origins.¹⁴³ Radical Islam, explained senior PA official Mahmud Habbash in an interview to the Syrian news channel, was invented and planted in the hearts and minds of the younger generations by colonialism to destabilize the Arab nation and justify the Jewish state.¹⁴⁴ Egyptian journalist Dandarawi al-Hawari even defined the Brotherhood, the Jews and the Shi'a as the "evil trinity".¹⁴⁵ Similarly, the equation between ISIS' worldview and Jewish extremist thought, which was raised already in 2014 by some commentators who distanced themselves from the negative image of the Islamic Caliphate, continued even after the demise of the Islamic state and the killing of its founder and leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Jordanian writer Rashad Abu Dawud even claimed that Baghdadi found refuge in Tel Aviv after he accomplished his destructive mission.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ "Abdallah Chatila on why he spent €600,000 on Nazi memorabilia," *Deutsche Welle*, November 29, accessed January 27, 2020, at <https://www.dw.com/en/abdallah-chatila-on-why-he-spent-600000-on-nazi-memorabilia/a-51463461>; Adam Rasgon, "Israel Welcomes Lebanon-born Businessman who bought and is donating Hitler items," *Times of Israel*, December 8, accessed January 28, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hitler-artifacts-bought-by-swiss-lebanese-businessman-to-be-given-to-yad-vashem/>.

¹⁴¹ Yahya Dabuq, "'Abdallah Chatila: 'The Filthy Arab' is a Hero in Israel,'" *al-Akhbar*, December 9, accessed January 27, 2020, at <https://al-akhbar.com/Politics/280759>.

¹⁴² "'Abdallah Chatila Donated to the Holocaust Museum in Occupied Jerusalem and Visited the Zionist Entity,'" December 9, accessed January 27, 2020, at <http://www.boycottcampaign.com/index.php/ar/activities/letters/2250-2019-12-09-07-53-45>.

¹⁴³ 'Isa Muhammad al-'Umayri, "Brotherhood Zionism," *al-Bayan*, August 11, 2019, accessed February 11, 2020, at <https://www.albayan.ae/opinions/articles/2019-08-11-1.3624354>.

¹⁴⁴ Memri, "Senior PA Official Mahmoud Habbash: Normalizing Relations with Israel is Treason...", Clip No. 7457, August 6, 2019, accessed February 11, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/tv/senior-pa-official-habbash-normalizing-israel-treason-occuation-takfiri-ideologies-manufactured-west-justify>.

¹⁴⁵

Dandarawi al-Hawari, "The Brotherhood, the Jews and the Shi'a..The Trinity of Evil in the World!!," *al-Yawm al-Sabi*, November 16, 2019, accessed February 11, 2020, at <http://www.al-yawm-al-sabi.com/News/1109004-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%A9>.

Abdallah Habbash, "Abdallah Habbash: 'The Filthy Arab' is a Hero in Israel," *al-Dustur*, October 23, 2019, accessed February 11, 2020, at <https://www.addustour.com/articles/1109004-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B7%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%A9>;

Rashad Abu Dawud, "Al-Baghdadi in Tel Aviv..Drinks a Toast for his 'Successful Mission'," *al-Dustur*, October 29,

The Jews were also implicated in the terrorist attacks on the two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, during Friday prayers on March 15, by white supremacist Brenton Tarrant, killing 51 people and injuring 49. Already on the same day, they were depicted as the perpetrators and the root cause of the discord between Muslims and Christians. Qatari sociologist 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khazraj al-Ansari posted two videos on his YouTube channel and Facebook, claiming that "always and forever, when there is discord and problems in the world... search for Cohen, Mohen, and the gang...By God nobody benefits from the discord that occurred today except for those impure people, the Jews." He also warned Christians in the West that the Jews were their "real enemies", who took control of them and stripped them of their religion, and now strive to generate battles between Christians and Muslims.¹⁴⁷ Similarly, Sudanese cleric Shaykh 'Abd al-Jalil al-Karuri asserted in a local TV channel on the same day that the Jews were behind the massacre, also assuming, like al-Ansari, that they stand to gain from it. Defining them as the "enemies of both Christians and the Muslims," he concluded that "even if the perpetrator was not Jewish, he was acting in the interest of the Jews as he was fanning the flames between Christians and Muslims."¹⁴⁸ Even in Australia there were voices that sought to blame Israel and Zionism for the massacre. At a rally against hate and racism held in Auckland on March 23, Ahmad Bhamji, chairman of the Auckland-based 'Umar mosque, accused the Israeli Mossad and Zionist businesses based in New Zealand of supporting the shooter and even supplying him with arms.¹⁴⁹

Assessing the overall situation of Arabs and Muslims worldwide, Egyptian chief editor Usama Sharshar warned that hate and violent speech against Islam and Muslims in Europe and the US is expected to grow in the near future because of the rise of the extreme Right, which was enabled only by "the support and funding of Zionism." He also predicted that "the forthcoming war will be a war of ideas between Islam and International Zionism, which strives according to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to destroy the world, Islam and the Arabs" by pushing them into sectarian strife and border conflicts.¹⁵⁰

2019, accessed February 11, 2020, at

<https://www.addustour.com/articles/1110317-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%BA%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D9%84-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D9%8A%D8%B4%D8%B1%D8%A8-%D9%86%D8%AE%D8%A8-%C2%AB%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D9%85%D9%87%D9%85%D8%AA%D9%87%C2%BB!>

¹⁴⁷ Memri, "Search for Cohen and the Gang – Qatari Sociologist blames the Jews for the News Zealand Massacre in Antisemitic Tirade," Clip No. 7085, March 15, 2019, accessed January 27, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/tv/qatari-sociologist-ansari-blames-jews-for-nz-christchurch-mosque-massacre>.

¹⁴⁸ Memri, "Sudan Sermon by Sheikh Abd Al-Jalil Al-Karouri: The Jews are behind NZ massacre; They are the enemies of Christians and Muslims," Clip No. 7087, March 15, 2019, accessed January 28, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/tv/saudanese-cleric-abd-jalil-karouri-perpetrator-new-zealand-christchurch-attack-interest-jews-enemies/transcript>.

¹⁴⁹ Memri, "Ahmed Bhamji...: Mossad, Zionist Businesses Paid, Supported Christchurch Shooter, Special Dispatch No. 7966, March 27, 2019, accessed February 2, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/reports/ahmed-bhamji-chairman-new-zealand-mosque-hosted-new-zealand-prime-minister-ardern-mossad>.

¹⁵⁰ Usama Sharshar, "The Extreme Right... From New Zealand to the Netherlands," *al-Nahar*, March 21, 2019, accessed February 3, 2020, at <https://www.alnaharegypt.com/597305>.

Jews were implicated in the discussion of the Christchurch attacks in another subtle way. Since the incident was perceived as a result of spreading Islamophobia, few commentators examined it as a phenomenon that deserves attention and combating, comparing it to antisemitism. Growing fear from Muslim migrants and Islamist terrorism exacerbates in the West hate speech against Islam and Muslims, explained Jordanian scholar Hasan al-Barari. Incitement and hate speech are allowed in the West under the pretext of freedom of speech, instead of fighting them as they fight Holocaust denial, he suggested. "Freedom of speech ends if one of us denies the Holocaust," and hence France enacted laws that send deniers to prison.¹⁵¹ In the same vein, Saudi writer 'Abdallah al-'Awlaki called upon Muslims to "demand from the western media to criminalize the notion of Islamophobia just as the Jews managed regarding antisemitism."¹⁵²

The resurgence of antisemitism in Europe and the US accelerated the adoption of measures for combating antisemitism by various governments, as well as the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which among other things considers anti-Zionism as a form of antisemitism. These developments triggered reactions by Arab commentators who mainly expressed a tacit agreement rejecting any linkage between the two, and considering it as a deliberate confusion of disparate terms and an affront to history, which aims not only to support Israel but also to condone its deeds against the Palestinian people.

In response to French president Emmanuel Macron's decision in February to promote laws fighting antisemitism in line with the definition, Palestinian writer Suhayl Kaywan accused Zionists of exploiting this definition in order to denounce anyone who attacks the Zionist movement or Israel for its deeds, blaming him of antisemitism. Kaywan, who brought a couple of examples to allegedly prove Israeli inhumane behavior, rejects all forms of antisemitism and racism manifested against Jews and non-Jews, but also against all forms of anti-Humanism, "which encompasses all human beings and all the downtrodden on earth."¹⁵³ One cannot but understand Macron's statements as an attempt to counter the French popular movement, which manifest the failure of his economic and social policies, added journalist Nabil Salim. "The hanger of antisemitism that the West relies upon to justify its pro-Israel positions is no

¹⁵¹ Hasan al-Barari, "The Terrorism in New Zealand and the Responsibility of the Arab Leadership," *al-Sharq*, March 18, 2019, accessed February 3, 2020, at <https://al-sharq.com/opinion/18/03/2019/%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a5%d8%b1%d9%87%d8%a7%d8%a8-%d9%81%d9%8a-%d9%86%d9%8a%d9%88%d8%b2%d9%8a%d9%84%d9%86%d8%af%d8%a7-%d9%88%d9%85%d8%b3%d8%a4%d9%88%d9%84%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%82%d8%a7%d8%af%d8%a9-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%b9%d8%b1%d8%a8>.

¹⁵² 'Abdallah al-'Awlaki, "Will New Zealand Awake the West?," *al-Riyad*, March 18, 2019, accessed February 20, 2020, at <http://www.alriyadh.com/1744199>.

¹⁵³ Suhayl Kaywan, "No to Antisemitism...and a Bigger No to Anti-Humanism," *al-Quds al-'Arabi*, February 20, 2019, accessed February 5, 2020, at <https://www.alquds.co.uk/%D9%84%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7-%D8%A3%D9%83%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%A5%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9/>.

longer convincing after the exposure of its dangerous political goals, the most important of which is legalizing Israel's crimes and violations of international laws."¹⁵⁴ Egyptian writer and politician Amina al-Naqqash considered Macron's statements as an attempt to gain Jewish support in light of the Yellow Vests demonstrations demanding his resignation. The opposition to them came from inside France, she added quoting Dominique Vidal in *Le Monde Diplomatique* as claiming that "the bill criminalizing anti-Zionism reflects ignorance of history and stupidity." In the name of this logic "one could consider millions of Jews who refuse to live in the occupied Palestinian territories as antisemites, and...give a green light to the suppression of rights."¹⁵⁵

Similar responses were voiced after the French National Assembly's decision on December 3 to define Anti-Zionism as a form of antisemitism. Writer 'Abdallah al-Ayyubi claimed that the law will allow to "cover up Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people." From the Zionist propaganda point of view, he explained, antisemitism means hatred of the Jews, and the term does not apply to other Semites. "This creates a dangerous confusion and leads to the religious covering of politics," he added, because the soldiers who commit the crimes are affiliated with the state and are not identified by their religion. "The hatred of Jews should be separated from the policies of the state, he concluded."¹⁵⁶ The adoption of the law reflected, according to Jordanian author Muhammad Kharrub, "the Jewish-Zionist influence which governs the current French arena, especially in the era of the present French president," although the Jews constitute less than one percent of France's population.¹⁵⁷ Syrian Paris-based writer Salam al-Kawakibi also criticized the French resolution, which was adopted despite its denunciation by 127 Jewish intellectuals in the French daily *Le Monde*, and the opposition of the left representatives who perceive it as limiting freedom of speech. Kawakibi as well insisted on the need to distinguish between Judaism as a monotheistic religion and Zionism as a political ideology, especially among Arabs, who tend to confuse them and easily embrace Holocaust denial and resort the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.¹⁵⁸

The German Bundestag's decision in May to label the anti-Israeli BDS as an antisemitic organization, the State Department's decision in August to update its definition of antisemitism to include comparisons between contemporary Israeli policy and Nazi policies, as well as State Secretary Mike Pompeo's statement in November that Israeli settlements in the West Bank are not "inconsistent with international law", drew similar reactions. For example, Amina al-Naqqash considered the German decision as

¹⁵⁴ Nabil Salim, "The Hanger of Antisemitism," *al-Khalij*, February 27, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <http://www.alkhaleej.com/studiesandopinions/page/a945f738-c9c9-45f9-9c51-7461353fe36e>.

¹⁵⁵ Amina al-Naqqash, "Antisemitism or Accommodating Israel?" *al-Bayan*, February 27, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <https://www.albayan.com/opinions/articles/2019-06-06-1.3577492>.

¹⁵⁶ 'Abdallah al-Ayyubi, "The Legislation would Embolden Israel's Aggression," *Akhbar al-Khalij*, December 6, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <http://www.akhbar-alkhaleej.com/news/article/1192745>.

¹⁵⁷ Muhammad Kharrub, "European Zionism Invigorated [by] French 'Hug' of Israel," *al-Ra'y*, December 7, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <http://alrai.com/article/10514009>.

¹⁵⁸ Salam al-Kawakibi, "Anti-Zionism is not Antisemitism," *Geiroon*, December 8, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <https://geiroon.net/archives/160892>.

a proof of "the legalization of thuggery in international relations, which allows Israel to suppress the Palestinian people," and of the success of the European Zionist lobby. "The boycott campaigns against the racist colonial Zionist entity are a legitimate right of the Palestinian people and a struggle against Fascism and not antisemitism," she asserted.¹⁵⁹ Kuwaiti-Palestinian political scientist Shafiq Nazim al-Ghabra considered the criminalization of the comparison between Israel's and Nazi deeds, as giving a free hand to Israel to continue "the ethnic cleansing, the theft of lands and the occupation," and as recognition of Israel as the sole representative of Judaism. Moreover, "the inability to remind Israelis of Hitler's [deeds]... eliminates the most important lessons drawn from the Nazi behavior towards its victims," and opens the door for the replication of his crimes. Al-Ghabra dealt with various aspects of the Holocaust, concluding that "the Holocaust and the extermination were indeed a crazy idea which integrated science and technology to exterminate the indigenous people," wondering if Zionism did not implement this in the highest level?"¹⁶⁰

A common view about antisemitism was expressed by Ahmad al-Raysuni, the head of the Qatar-based International Union of Muslim Scholars (IUMS), in an article, written in 2003 and reposted on June 25, on the organization's website. "Given [the Jews] exalted and comfortable status in the world, one would expect the notion of antisemitism to disappear," he claimed, explaining that antisemitism had been replaced since the end of World War II, by the tendency "to glorify the Jews and grant them privileges and financial and moral compensation. But the Zionist movement...continues to wave the sword of antisemitism at the entire world. The truth is that the real antisemitism today is that which is directed at Arabs and Muslims."¹⁶¹

The discussion of antisemitism in mainstream Arab discourse, like the discussion of the Holocaust, calls for differentiating between Zionism and Judaism, Zionists and Jews, but in most cases it fails to do so. It manifests little sympathy towards the Jews, and reverts to political claims that reveal entrenched antisemitic themes and negative thinking about the Jews.

¹⁵⁹ Amina al-Naqqash, "Anti-Fascism, not antisemitism," al-Bayan, June 6, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <https://www.albayan.ae/opinions/articles/2019-06-06-1.3577492>.

¹⁶⁰ Shafiq Nazim al-Ghabra, "The Israeli Aggressive Ideology and the Meaning of the Holocaust," al-Quds al-Arabi, August 14, 2019, accessed February 9, 2020, at <https://www.alquds.co.uk/%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%84%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%86%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A-%D9%88%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%86%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84/>.

¹⁶¹ Memri, "International Union of Muslim Scholars Head: The True Victims of Antisemitism Today are Islam and the Muslims," Special Dispatch No. 8158, July 8, 2019, accessed February 11, 2020, at <https://www.memri.org/reports/international-union-muslim-scholars-head-true-victims-antisemitism-today-are-islam-and>. The article is not available on the IUMS website anymore.

COUNTRIES

Australia / Jeremy Jones

1. Antisemitic incidents

The reporting period for physical incidents of antisemitism in Australia is October 1 to September 30. In the 12 months ending September 30, 2019, 368 incidents were logged by the central data base maintained by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, consisting of 225 attacks and 143 threats.¹⁶²

In terms of overall totals, this figure is below the average of 384 reports over the period from 1989 – 2018, although marginally higher than the year ending 2018. Within this total there were marked variations within different categories and it is notable that considerable media coverage misrepresented the 30 percent year on year increase in reported incidents of verbal abuse, harassment and intimidation, as if this constituted an overall increase in number of reports or in the intensity of activity.

The total number of 225 attacks (which includes physical violence and vandalism, direct personal abuse and graffiti) was well above the average over the previous 30 years of 130 incidents, but was below the total recorded in the year ending 2012 and similar to the number of reports in 2007. The total number of threats (which consisted of emails, telephone calls, letters, leaflets, posters and stickers) of 143 was well below the average of 254.

In the most serious category, which involves violence committed against individuals and property vandalism (not including graffiti), the 16 reports cases are well below the average of 25 during the previous 30 years. It can be contrasted with the years 2001 and 2008 when more than three times that number of cases were reported and 1991, 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2010, which had totals double or more than the 2019 figure.

Harassment and verbal abuse and intimidation was the single largest category of incidents, which has been the case in a majority of reporting periods. The total of 114 incidents was well above the average of 65 incidents but below the number of cases reported in 2015 and each of the years between 2007 and 2012.

Telephone threats incidents were at the precise average of the previous 30 years while postal mail has become almost non-existent as a means of transmission of threats. Graffiti was logged at the highest ever total of 95 (compared to the average of 40). This is particularly significant as one daubing of graffiti can often be viewed by a large number of individuals, magnifying its negative impact. Reports of miscellaneous incidents such as stickers, leaflets and posters is the category which has the most dramatic variations from year to year: 27 reported cases in 2019 compared to 137 in the previous year but also to two incidents from 2015.

¹⁶² The ECAJ Report on Antisemitism in Australia in 2019 was authored by the ECAJ's Research Director, Julie Nathan, and is available at <https://www.ecaj.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ECAJ-Antisemitism-Report-2019.pdf>.

The most difficult category in terms of accurate recording, reporting and analysis is email. The first reports in this category were registered in 1995 and grew each year dramatically until 2003 and then peaked again in 2008, 2009 and 2013. This is complicated due to the way online technology has been incorporated in the lives of both antisemites and their targets. Despite genuine attempts at consistency in reporting and analysis, for example, there are difficulties often in identifying whether a number of individual emails have been sent or someone has sent to many recipients. However, the category must nevertheless be maintained, given that many victims of antisemitic abuse and threats have received these through email. 82 reports were received during the year compared to an average of 147 over the previous 25 years.

In summary, the year in review in Australia saw a statistically and insignificant year-on-year rise in reports of antisemitic violence and harassment directed against Jewish Australians, which for the fifth successive year was below the long-term average (2015 was the year of the smallest number of reports since 1992 and the third lowest on record). The total number of incidents was well below the figures for 2002, 2009 and 2013.

2. Far right wing activity

As noted above, there was a considerable increase in reported incidents of graffiti, constituting the worse period for such incidents in the time the data base has been maintained. It is significant that in many of these messages clear identification with Nazism was evident, due to language or symbols. Other graffiti used expressions such as “kill the Jews” or “gas the kikes”.

Researchers who have focused on online expressions of racism and antisemitism have seen a significant expansion of expression of antisemitic opinions, including by some who unambiguously identify themselves as white supremacists or even Nazis. Although much of this interpretation cannot easily be reported by hard evidence as to increases or decreases in activity, it is unarguable that it is an area of activity which is not only of concern in itself but can be reflected in real life manifestations of violence, let alone promotion of hatred.

The massacre of Muslim worshippers in the Christchurch Mosque in New Zealand in March was committed by an Australian and inspired intense discussion, with participants falling into three camps. There were some who applauded the act, some who accused its perpetrator of being a pawn of Jewish people and others who disapproved of his actions, generally out of pragmatic concerns.

3. 2019 Australian federal election

It is not uncommon, during election periods in Australia, for the temperature of political and public debate to rise and for fringe groups to seek to exploit opportunities to make public interventions. However, the level of recorded antisemitism during the

2019 federal election was atypical. Firstly, a very large number of emails which denigrated one of the Jewish parliamentarians running for re-election, which contained a variety of insidious and vicious antisemitic comments were received across Australia. A number of Jewish candidates, regardless of political affiliation or the geography of their constituencies, had election material vandalized and defaced with antisemitic messages. There were also other candidates whose material was subjected to similar treatment, but anecdotal evidence suggests that Jewish candidates were specifically targeted.

4. Antisemitism in anti-Israel activity

The political subculture of obsessive and intellectually bereft anti-Israel campaigning continued to exist in Australia. However, the Middle East in general did not appear to be a particular priority for most individuals involved in Australian political life, including for those on the fringes.

Most of the public debates which took place did not involve any articulation of antisemitism, although this does not mean that some of the most passionate opponents of Israel were not motivated by antisemitic beliefs. Where antisemitism was most evident in this subculture was in the social media pages of a number of anti-Israel groups, particularly those who support boycotts of, divestment from and sanctions against, Israel.

The most common feature of antisemitism expressed in this area related to a supposed Jewish control of power globally and of public discourse in Australia, supplemented by views of Israelis embodying historic Jewish characteristics, such as blood lust.

5. Religiously motivated antisemitism

Overwhelmingly, Australian churches actively oppose antisemitism and the most significant issues relating to Jews which comes from this quarter is from individuals who may have cultural rather than meaningful and ongoing relationships with Christianity, as well as from those who justify supersessionism and adopt the bigotry emanating from international groups including the Middle East Council of Churches.

A former Anglican Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, George Browning, is prominent in the anti-Israel network in Australia and has put forward arguments relating to Israel which have been widely interpreted as satisfying criteria for antisemitism in his blog.¹⁶³ Another issue arose in the period in review with another churchman, Anglican Priest Rod Bower, for the way in which he used Holocaust analogies in discussing Australian public policy, for which he subsequently apologized.

In comments on social media pages identified with both these men overt anti-Jewish commentary was posted and not removed by those with responsibility for maintaining the sites.

¹⁶³ <https://www.georgebrowning.com.au/blog>.

6. Muslim organizations and media

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry documented extensive online activity from overt antisemitic contributors, who presented themselves as both Australian and Muslim. In a number of instances there was no obvious presence of activity by these groups and individuals beyond online discussions. However, some of the antisemitic activity was promoted by or focused around the activity of groups and organizations which reached beyond the internet.

Hizb-ut-Tahir, an organization which functions in a number of countries includes overt antisemitic material in its own online postings and reportedly does so in its various meetings in different parts of Australia.

The Islamophobia Register of Australia which generally provides a service of exposing and countering anti-Muslim sentiment and actions has a public record of opposition to antisemitism and does not promote antisemitic content online. However, the organization's facebook page has posted a series of overt and incendiary anti-Jewish comments which have been allowed to stay online by the administrators.

There are also a number of online news services which have published anti-Jewish material. Ran Porat of Monash University documented this activity in articles in the *Australia Israel Review*. He has particularly noted the items in Farah News online which has had a number of overt anti-Jewish articles, including such tropes as calling Jews malicious, greedy and mentally degenerate, as well as working hand in hand with the devil. This news service has even used the Protocols of the Elders of Zion as a reference work.

It should be emphasized that there are extensive positive and constructive relationships between Jews and Muslims in Australia.

7. Response to Antisemitism

In a liberal democratic society, which is both ethnically and religiously diverse, it would not be surprising if there were no contemptible expressions due to their bigotry and malice. The presence of individuals in Australia who not only hold antisemitic views but act on them may not be welcome but it is also not surprising. However, any discussion of this subject needs to consider how the broad community and political and social leaders of public opinion respond when presented with evidence of the reality of antisemitism in the community.

There are no openly antisemitic members of Federal Parliament, let alone overtly antisemitic parties. Even far right political groups will not openly admit to being hostile to Jews if they want to be elected to any Australian public office. When a series of swastikas was daubed in February on public art at a popular Sydney beach, federal,

state and local politicians responded immediately with condemnation and calls to ensure the perpetrators were speedily identified and brought to justice.¹⁶⁴

When a Jewish organization made public two of the most confronting incidents of antisemitic harassment, involving children, there was widespread disgust throughout the political and media commentaries and immediate calls for reform of systems which had proven incapable of dealing with such matters.

When a racist, antisemitic organization organized a demonstration allegedly on the subject of limiting immigration but which had a broader racist agenda, the single parliamentarian who supported it was widely condemned, receiving absolutely no, even guarded, support from any of his colleagues. Members of the general public rallied to ensure they massively outnumbered those who had called the original demonstration.

On June 4, Australia was admitted to full membership of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and since that time there has been ongoing promotion of the principles contained in the Working Definition of Antisemitism.

In addition to a number of statements by politicians across the spectrum condemning individual incidents of antisemitism, a significant event took place in November when MPs from the various parties represented in South Australia's parliament held a session marking the 10th Anniversary of the London Declaration of Parliamentarians, condemning antisemitism and pledging to work against it. A number of parliamentarians, who had not yet signed, took part in a public ceremony where they signed the Declaration and joined others in recommitting to combatting all forms of antisemitism wherever they occur.

During the year in review the Federal Government committed itself to introducing legislation on the subject of Religious Discrimination. Although the Jewish people are covered by Federal anti-racist legislation (this has been affirmed by Court findings over the past 20 years) specific concerns of the Jewish community also came into play in consideration of this proposal. There have been some contentious comments regarding alleged special privileges accorded to religions, which might not be accorded to other philosophical systems, but so far there has been very little indication of antisemitism in this debate.

¹⁶⁴ Michael Bachner, "20 swastikas spray-painted near Bondi Beach in Australia," February 10, 2019, accessed April 6, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/20-swastikas-spray-painted-near-popular-beach-in-australia/>.

Appendix/ Jeremy Jones, The Last Word: Minority Reports¹⁶⁵



Antisemitic posters and graffiti saw a big jump in 2019

It goes without saying that even one act of antisemitic violence, vandalism, intimidation or harassment is one act too many. It also should go without saying that there is no place for anti-Jewish activity (or any other form of bigotry) in contemporary Australia. However, it is a reality that out of the many hundreds of millions of interactions between Jewish and non-Jewish Australians each year, some of them involve behavior which is abhorrent and despicable. The most infamous of these, during the year in review, involved bullying of school children and toddlers.

This year the Executive Council of Australian Jewry released its 30th annual analysis of reports of antisemitic violence, vandalism, harassment and intimidation in Australia. The methodology employed by the two individuals who have maintained the database over the three decades has been as consistent as possible, which means we now have the possibility of making sensible and considered overall assessments of this activity.

The total number of incidents qualifying for the database this year was 368, up from 366 last year and well up on the 190 from 2015. The figure is, nevertheless, lower than the average since 1990, of 384. It is also well below the highest annual number of reports logged, 962 ten years ago.

When incidents are divided into direct face-to-face harassment and violence and property damage, as opposed to threats conveyed through email, telephone, the post etc., the direct attacks came to the second-highest level ever reported – 60 percent above average. On the other hand, threats were recorded at a level of only 60 percent of the previous average.

Breaking the statistics down further, incidents involving actual property damage or assault were at 64 percent of the previous average, while graffiti was at the highest level ever recorded and face-to-face harassment was 40 percent above average.

¹⁶⁵ Jeremy Jones, "The Last Word: Minority Reports," *Australia/Israel Review*, December 20, 2019, accessed April 7, 2020, at <https://aijac.org.au/australia-israel-review/the-last-word-minority-reports/>.

Australians were most likely to encounter antisemitism in the form of graffiti, which was documented at high levels during the federal election campaign. It should be noted that incidents of assault can vary greatly in their level of seriousness and impact and the same email received by a different person may have quite a different effect on the recipient's well-being. Graffiti making a direct threat or the daubing of a symbol of hatred will all be offensive, but can vary greatly in terms of impact.

Shortly before the publication of the 2019 antisemitism report, a study of reports of anti-Muslim activity in Australia was released. Based on demographics and the content of each report, a Jewish person in Australia is eight times more likely than a Muslim to report being the victim of an assault or threat. It is also implied that Muslim women suffer the highest level of face-to-face invective or violence, followed by Jewish men. The common factor appears to be visibility, due to head coverings. An attack on a Muslim Australian appears most likely to be opportunistic, based on proximity of victim and aggressor, while attacks on Jewish individuals and institutions seem to involve more forethought.

It is difficult to draw too many conclusions, however, it certainly seems that the Jewish community and Muslim researchers both received a large number of reports of offensive, abhorrent, un-Australian behavior and it is reasonable to assume that there were other incidents not reported. Both reports prompted strong and unambiguous condemnations from across the political spectrum.

Refreshingly, some of the victim-blaming which has taken place in past years was not as obvious. While egregious assaults and attacks on both Muslims and Jews have received a fair degree of media attention, less coverage has been given to some of the strong statements from people in positions of political or other forms of leadership.

Experience over many years would indicate that, if we are to successfully push back against bigotry and stop the entrenchment of racism, there are few measures as important as vocal and principled condemnations of these ills from political leaders.

Austria / Florian Zeller

The impact of the government crisis

This annual report on antisemitism is written after a turbulent year in Austrian politics. The coalition government of the conservative Austrian People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei, ÖVP) and the far-right Freedom Party (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, FPÖ) broke over the so-called "Ibiza affair" after about one and a half year in office. The crisis erupted on May 17, as far-right party leader and Vice-Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache and Johann Gudenus, a deputy of the Freedom Party and its leader in parliament, came under pressure to resign after the exposure of hidden-camera recordings of a sting operation in a luxury villa on the island of Ibiza. In the recordings, Strache and Gudenus are seen discussing with a woman, purporting to be the niece of a Russian oligarch wanting to invest in Austria. In the video, both politicians appeared receptive to proposals to provide the Freedom Party with positive news coverage in return for government contracts. Strache and Gudenus also hinted at corrupt political practices involving other wealthy donors to the Freedom Party in Europe and elsewhere. As a result, the coalition broke and Austria held new elections in September, leading for the first time in its history, to a coalition government between the People's Party and the Greens. The "Ibiza affair" affected the situation of antisemitism in two ways since it relieved the Freedom Party - a main factor in promoting antisemitism, from any government responsibility and unleashed antisemitic stereotypes in the political debate.

Reports, figures and trends in Antisemitism

The following data consists of "service-based data", i.e. the documentation and statistics provided either by victim protection organizations, NGOs or the police. A small number of NGOs and political organizations collect data on incidents and also monitor antisemitism in the media. The police also compile reports and statistics for the annual report of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution ("Verfassungsschutzbericht"). In addition, there are some federal country institutions, which also collect data, such as the "Antidiscrimination Office Styria" that enables reporting of discrimination on their website and funds the phone application "Banhate" for easily accessible reporting.

Currently, there are three major institutions that collect and publish data on antisemitic and/or racist incidents systematically: the NGOs Forum against Anti-Semitism (FGA); Civil Courage and Anti-Racism Work (ZARA), which monitors antisemitism as a sub-category of racist or (extreme) right-wing incidents; and the foundation Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance (DÖW), which monitors current activities of the extreme right as well as antisemitism, including Islamist and left-wing Israel-related antisemitism. At the time of writing of this report, the annual reports 2019 of DÖW, FGA, and ZARA, as well as the data of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, have not been published yet.

The data acquired by those are mainly based on the documentation of antisemitic incidents and, as a consequence, determined by the access of victims to respective institutions (NGOs, police, etc.) and by the social incentives or restraints to report—a fact, which constitutes a general bias-problem regarding service-based data collection. The actual extent or prevalence of antisemitism, as well as the underlying social-psychological reasons for antisemitic resentments, could only be analyzed by integrated qualitative-quantitative studies, which are still rare in Austria. Service-based data, however, definitely allows an estimation of trends.

As mentioned before most annual reports were not published yet, therefore, this report refers to unpublished statistics from ZARA. They counted a total of 172 incidents linked to antisemitism, 87 of them took place online. Out of all antisemitic cases, 96 were registered as prosecutable under the Prohibition Act (“Verbotsgesetz”). The Prohibition Act of 1947 contains various provisions to combat the resurgence of National Socialist activities by way of law. Another 13 are subject of the provision sec 283 Criminal Code incitement to hatred (“Verhetzung”).

Antisemitism study

Additional to the service-based data in March 2019 the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) Study on Antisemitism was released and is thereby closing a research gap on the status and development of antisemitic tendencies in Austria. The study was commissioned by the president of the National Council Wolfgang Sobotka. The results are based on 2700 Interviews including also of an Arabic speaking and Turkish speaking groups of 300 participants each, to investigate the so-called “Imported Antisemitism”. It is important to mention that these two samples are not necessarily representative, because certain groups may be over-represented and their opinions magnified while others may be under-represented. Despite this however, the results showed that both groups had almost in every case much higher result. Further research will be required to investigate these phenomena to produce representative results.

The study discovered different forms of antisemitism in the Austrian population, among them 10 percent of manifested antisemitism and about 30 percent latent antisemitism.

Main results:

- Traditional antisemitism describes Jews as a powerful force. 39 percent of the respondents agreed to the sentence “The Jews control the international business world” and 14 percent agreed to the statement “Jews have too much influence in Austria”.
- Israel related antisemitism. Every third person (34 percent) agreed that “The Israeli treatment of the Palestinians is not basically different than the Germans’ treatment of the Jews in the Second World War.” 29 percent approve to “If I see the politics been made by Israel I can understand why someone has something against Jews.” The third question in this context implies the

destruction of Israel: 11 percent agree that “If the state Israel doesn’t exist anymore, there would be peace in the Middle East”.

- Secondary antisemitism. 36 percent agreed with the statement “Jews try to gain advantage from the fact that they have been victims during the Nazi era”, and 37 percent were “against the constant repetition of the fact that Jews died in the Second World War”.
- Antisemitism and Integration. 19 percent agreed to the two statements: “Jews have no interest in integrating into the country they are living in. That’s the main the reason for their constant problems” and “The history of persecution of the Jews is no coincidence, at least partly it is their own fault”.
- Manifested antisemitism. As already mentioned, there is a rate of 10 percent of manifested antisemitism in Austrian Society. In the IFES Study, this is measured by a combination of racist antisemitism and Holocaust denial. The questions being asked were: “You can’t expect of a Jew to be decent” (8 percent), “If I meet someone, I know in a few seconds if this person is a Jew” (12 percent). Similar rates were found in reference to Holocaust denial. 10 percent considered that “In reports about concentration camps or the persecution of the Jews many things are getting exaggerated”.
- Traditional Anti-Judaism. 14 percent of the respondents agreed that “Jews are still responsible for the death of Jesus”. The Study highlights that considering the efforts by Christian churches this figure is relatively high.
- The study also investigated the general public opinion on antisemitism and found that 41 percent agree that “Because of the persecution of the Jews in the Second World War we have a moral obligation to stand with Jews in Austria”; and 56 percent to the statement “Jews contributed a lot to the cultural life in Austria”.¹⁶⁶

Education and Antisemitism

The IFES Antisemitism Study also found correlation between antisemitism and the level of education. A more detailed national survey on Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness in Austria, commissioned by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, was conducted by the polling firm Schoen Consulting between February 22 and March 1. The survey held 1,000 interviews with Austrian adults aged 18 and over.

Some of their major findings were:

- More than half (56 percent) of those surveyed did not know that six million Jews died during the Holocaust. 36 percent believe two million or less were killed.
- 58 percent indicate that something like the Holocaust could happen again in other European countries.

¹⁶⁶ Paul Unterhuber and Franz Sommer, *Antisemitismus-Studie 2018: Ergebnisanalyse und Überblick* (Vienna, 2018), accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.antisemitismus2018.at/downloads/>.

- Austrians complicated relationship with their country's Holocaust legacy is exemplified by the majority of Austrians (**68 percent**) who say that Austria was **both a victim and a perpetrator of the Holocaust**, while only 13 percent said they were only perpetrators.
- When asked to name a death camp, concentration camp or ghetto they had heard of, 42 percent of Austrians could not name Austria's Mauthausen, a death camp which imposed some of the harshest conditions of imprisonment and is located approximately 100 miles from Vienna.
- While 51 percent were familiar with Adolf Eichmann, the administrator and organizer of Hitler's "Final Solution," only 14 percent knew that Eichmann was Austrian.¹⁶⁷

While this result shows serious knowledge gaps and the persistence of the Austrian Victim Myth, it should be clear that simply more education is not a guarantee for less antisemitism in a society. This does not mean that Austria should not invest in more education about the Holocaust however, it is important to also implement antisemitism critical education. As Austrian researcher Elke Rajal argues it is important to differentiate between "antisemitism critical" education besides Holocaust Education and general information about Judaism. That's because the relationship between education and antisemitism is more difficult than at first glance. While raw data shows that more education results in less antisemitic resentment, it is important to keep in mind that historically Austrian universities played a vital role in promoting antisemitism long before the so-called "Anschluss" and despite the high education level. Also, the decline in antisemitism with a higher level of education could illustrate that social groups with higher education find new forms to articulate antisemitism or have more awareness of what is socially acceptable to say.¹⁶⁸

Since most service-based data is not available yet it is difficult to estimate a trend on this basis. The IFES Antisemitism Study, however, reveals that antisemitism is still alive in Austria and is articulated in different forms. Especially worrying is that the education about the Holocaust seems to decline and the victim myth is here to stay.

Incidents and the normalization of antisemitism

The following is a selection of antisemitic incidents, which were reported by the media and became an issue of public debate. This list makes no claim to completeness. Unfortunately, there were many more incidents that would be worth mentioning.

¹⁶⁷ Claims Conference, "New Survey by the Claims Conference Finds Critical Gaps in Holocaust Knowledge in Austria," accessed March 24, 2020, at <http://www.claimscon.org/austria-study/>.

¹⁶⁸ Elke Rajal, "Mit Bildung gegen Antisemitismus? Möglichkeiten und Grenzen antisemitismuskritischer Bildungsarbeit," *SWS-Rundschau* 2 (2018), pp. 132-152, accessed March 24, 2020, at https://www.academia.edu/36927635/Mit_Bildung_gegen_Antisemitismus_M%C3%B6glichkeiten_und_Grenzen_antisemitismuskritischer_Bildungsarbeit.

In February a celebration for the antisemitic Milli-Görüs founder Necmettin Erbakan at Community College Vienna was cancelled after its exposure by the media.¹⁶⁹ Erbakan stated in an interview 2010 in the *Welt* that “Jews have ruled the world for 5700 years. It is a reign of injustice, cruelty, and violence. They have strong faith, it’s a religion that says they should rule the world. Look at the one Dollar bill. On it is a symbol, a pyramid of 13 steps, with an eye on the top. It is the symbol of Zionist world domination.”¹⁷⁰ Another event which triggered in February a controversy on antisemitism was the Rosa Luxemburg Conference in Vienna “Against Nationalism and Antisemitism - also in the Left” that led to the withdrawal of the support of the Platform Radical Left,¹⁷¹ and the Austrian Students' Association.¹⁷² Both criticized the involvement of the antisemitic Anti-Imperial Coordination (AIK) and their links to the far right.

In March, ORF TV channel broadcasted a documentary about Franz Dinghofer, idolizing him as an important national figure, failing to mention that he was an antisemite and member of the NSDAP.¹⁷³ The debate about his personality renewed also the struggle against the renaming of a street in Linz “Dinghoferstrasse”.¹⁷⁴ BDS Austria and other organizations held the so-called “Israeli Apartheid Week” in Vienna in March, and this year they were not allowed to hold events in buildings owned by the city.¹⁷⁵

Christian Schilcher, the deputy mayor of Braunau am Inn (Adolf Hitler’s home town), published a poem in April in the Easter edition of a local newspaper affiliated to his far-right Freedom Party. The poem, “*Die Stadtratte (Nagetier mit Kanalisationshintergrund)*”, roughly translates as “The City Rat (Rodent with Sewerage Background)”. The imagery, which is widely associated with antisemitic propaganda, was promoted by the Nazis before and during the Holocaust. In response to the harsh

¹⁶⁹ Colette M. Schmidt, "Antisemiten-Gedenken in Wien abgesagt," *Der Standard*, February 11, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000097855863/antisemiten-gedenken-in-wien-abgesagt>.

¹⁷⁰ Boris Kálnoky, ""Erdogan ist ein Kassierer des Zionismus," *Die Welt*, November 8, 2010, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article10769062/Erdogan-ist-ein-Kassierer-des-Zionismus.html>.

¹⁷¹ "Gegen Nationalismus und Antisemitismus – Auch in Der Linken," *Plattform Radikal Linke*, February 8, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://radikale-linke.at/de/2019/02/08/gegen-nationalismus-und-antisemitismus-auch-in-der-linken/>.

¹⁷² "Stellungnahme der ÖH Uni Wien zur Entziehung der Unterstützung für die Rosa-Luxemburg-Konferenz 2019," accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.oeh.univie.ac.at/aktuelles/stories/stellungnahme-der-oeh-uni-wien-zur-entziehung-der-unterstuetzung-fuer-die-rosa>.

¹⁷³ Christoph Kotanko, "Franz Dinghofer war NSDAP-Mitglied," *Nachrichten*, March 14, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.nachrichten.at/politik/innenpolitik/franz-dinghofer-war-nsdap-mitglied;art385,3110443>.

¹⁷⁴ Christian Diabl, "Junge Linke will Dinghoferstraße umbenennen," *Meinbezirk*, January 27, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at https://www.meinbezirk.at/linz/c-politik/junge-linke-will-dinghoferstrasse-umbenennen_a3168120.

¹⁷⁵ "Vienna museum cancels Palestine event with leader of South African anti-apartheid struggle," March 21, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://bdsmovement.net/news/vienna-museum-cancels-palestine-event-leader-south-african-anti-apartheid-struggle>; "Wien macht anti-israelischen Aktivisten einen Strich durch die Rechnung," March 22, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.israelnetz.com/politik-wirtschaft/politik/2019/03/22/wien-macht-anti-israelischen-aktivisten-einen-strich-durch-die-rechnung/>.

reactions, Schilcher initially defended himself, saying his poem had been designed to “provoke, but not to offend or hate” and apologized for the “historically charged” comparison between human beings and rats. Two days later he resigned from his office.¹⁷⁶

The German-Italian artist Luigi Toscano's exhibition "Lest We Forget", lining up photos of Holocaust survivors in the Vienna Ring Road for a month since May 7, was repeatedly vandalized. In reaction, the Muslim youth organization (MJÖ), Young Caritas, Catholic Youth and the Austrian Union of Jewish Students joined hands, guarded and repaired the portraits.¹⁷⁷ The United Nations Human Rights Office condemned the attacks and expressed concern about the rise in antisemitic incidents taking place in a number of European countries and the United States.

At the end of October, the antisemitic Magazine “Alles Roger?” was discontinued. In January the magazine published an antisemitic article on George Soros, which was criticized by the Press Council, and in February the Human Rights Organization “SOS Mitmensch” revealed that Harald Vilimsky (Freedom Party) financed the magazine alongside other antisemitic magazines with taxpayer money.¹⁷⁸ In October it had been reported that the German national fraternity "Pennales Corps Austria zu Knittelfeld" published an antisemitic songbook which praises Hitler and Nazi Germany and refers to Rothschild as the "biggest pig". Wolfgang Zanger, member of the National Council for the Freedom Party, and known for his positive views about national socialism were, is responsible for this fraternity, and he currently is investigation for violation of the prohibition law.¹⁷⁹

In the beginning of the year 2020, the report of the investigation committee into the history of the Freedom Party (Historikerkommission) was published. The party sought to distance itself from antisemitism and racism, but it seems that the report did not hold scientific standards, and mostly focused on the denial of the relationship with the

¹⁷⁶ "Politician from Hitler's home town resigns over 'deeply racist' poem," *The Guardian*, April 23, 2019, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/23/politician-from-hitlers-home-town-resigns-over-deeply-racist-poem>.

¹⁷⁷ JTA, "Photos of Holocaust survivors on exhibit in Vienna vandalized for 3rd time," May 27, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/photos-of-holocaust-survivors-exhibited-in-vienna-vandalized-for-3rd-time/>; "Viennese repair Holocaust survivor photos," *Deutsche Welle*, May 29, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.dw.com/en/viennese-repair-holocaust-survivor-photos/a-48941837>.

¹⁷⁸ "Ronnie Seunig: Magazin 'Alles roger?'," *Der Standard*, October 31, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000110550338/ronnie-seunig-magazin-alles-roger-ist-eingestellt>; "SOS Mitmensch: Vilimsky finanziere 'rechtsextreme Szene' mit Inseraten," *Der Standard*, February 25, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000098552305/sos-mitmenschvilimsky-finanziert-rechtsextreme-szene-mit-inseraten>.

¹⁷⁹ "Zanger ist vor allem fürs Austeilen bekannt," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, October 31, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/oesterreich-fpoe-liederbuchaffaere-1.4663579-2>; "Liederbuchaffäre: Justiz darf gegen Wolfgang Zanger vorgehen," *Tiroler Tageszeitung*, December 12, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.tt.com/artikel/16437573/liederbuchaffaere-justiz-darf-gegen-wolfgang-zanger-vorgehen>.

NSDAP, and ignored the role of fraternities and the connections to the extreme right "Identitarians".¹⁸⁰

Over the past years, a new antisemitic myth has emerged in Austrian public discourse in relation to Tal Silberstein, an Israeli political campaign advisor who did dirty campaigning for the social democrats (SPÖ), turning him into a code name for conspiracy, like the name Soros.¹⁸¹ The term is not only used by the far-right but also in mainstream and leftist political discourse. In 2017 Peter Pilz former member of the Green Party demanded to make Austria "Silberstein Free", and Sebastian Kurz considered the election as a "referendum on whether we want to have Silbersteins in Austria or not."¹⁸² In the so-called "Ibiza affair" several Freedom Party members and Sebastian Kurz claimed without any proof it could be Silberstein who is responsible for the scandal.¹⁸³

Conclusion

This year published studies reveal that antisemitism is still deeply rooted in Austrian society. Most public incidents were associated with the extreme right political spectrum and the Freedom Party. Oskar Deutsch, head of the Jewish Community, emphasized the systematic character of antisemitism in the Freedom Party.¹⁸⁴ The Austrian Mauthausen Committee announced in September that they counted as many cases linked to the Freedom Party as never before,¹⁸⁵ and it seems that there is an ongoing normalization of extreme right language in Austrian Politics, despite the new government coalition with the Green Party.¹⁸⁶ The continuity of extreme right language in public debate leads to a more hostile climate against most social and racialized minorities. Still, the antisemitic incidents had little or no consequences for

¹⁸⁰ FPÖ-Bericht relativiert die eigenen NS-Bezüge, sagen Historiker," *Der Standard*, February 3, 2020, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000114104569/fpoe-historikerberichtexperten-bewerten-blaues-papier>; "Historiker zerpflückten FPÖ-Historikerbericht," ORF, February 3, 2020, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://orf.at/stories/3153029/>; Entspricht nicht wissenschaftlichen Standards, ORF, April 10, 2018, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://science.orf.at/stories/2906019/>

¹⁸¹ Liam Hoare, Move Over Soros: Meet the anti-Semites' New 'Dirty', 'All-powerful' Jewish Bogeyman, *Haaretz*, May 26, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/.premium-move-over-soros-meet-the-anti-semite-new-all-powerful-jewish-bogeyman-1.7286028>.

¹⁸² "Kritik an Pilz, der Österreich 'Silberstein-frei' Machen will," *Der Standard*, October 9, 2017, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000065616803/kritik-an-pilz-der-oesterreich-silberstein-frei-machen-will>.

¹⁸³ Michael Wuliger, "Österreichs Regierungskrise: Der Jud ist schuld," *Juedische-Allgemeine*, May 23, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.juedische-allgemeine.de/kultur/das-silberstein-komplott/>.

¹⁸⁴ "IKG-Chef geht mit 'System FPÖ' ins Gericht," ORF, November 10, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://orf.at/stories/3143747/>.

¹⁸⁵ "Die FPÖ – so viele Einzelfälle wie noch nie," APA-OTS, September 10, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20190910_OTSO197/die-fpoe-so-viele-einzelfaelle-wie-noch-nie.

¹⁸⁶ Laurin Lorenz and Markus Sulzbacher, "Forscher warnen vor Normalisierung rechtsextremer Sprache," *Der Standard*, January 13, 2020, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000113249864/forscher-sehen-rechtsextreme-sprache-bei-tuerkis-gruen>.

the people involved. No charges were pressed in the case of an internal WhatsApp communication of the conservative student representation at the University of Vienna's Law School ("AG Jus") where they shared antisemitic pictures,¹⁸⁷ and the songbook case concerning Fraternity Germania was also closed.¹⁸⁸ This lack of consequences is worrying because it encourages the disinhibition ("Enthemmung") regarding open antisemitic hate speech. Moreover, there is pressure on the media by the right-wing populist government which resulted in the dropping of Austria from place 11 to 16 in the freedom of the press index.¹⁸⁹ This could have deterrent effects on confronting antisemitic incidents by the Press.

Canada / Ran Ukashi (B'nai Brith)

While Jews were viciously attacked and/or killed in New York, New Jersey, California and Germany in 2019, the number of antisemitic incidents in Canada set records for a fourth consecutive year.

The 2019 Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, produced by B'nai Brith Canada's advocacy arm, the League for Human Rights, recorded 2,207 incidents of antisemitism, an increase of more than 8 per cent compared with the previous year. This marked the second successive year in which the 2,000 plateau was exceeded, amounting to an average of more than six incidents per day.

Assaults became more brazen and violent in 2019, with several occurring in broad daylight and some directly in front of eyewitnesses.

Such incidents included:

- An assault against a visibly observant Jewish man by a Montreal taxi driver.
- A Toronto woman being spat on after being accosted with antisemitic abuse by her neighbour.
- A group of Hasidic children in Outremont, Que. being sprayed with tar by a construction worker.
- A physical attack against two young observant Jews in a Toronto area public park.

Other incidents included:

¹⁸⁷ "Keine Anklage nach antisemitischen Postings in AG-Studentengruppe," *Der Standard*, January 10, 2020, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000095841986/keine-anklage-nach-antisemitischen-postings-in-ag-gruppe>.

¹⁸⁸ "Liederbuch-Affäre: Verfahren gegen "Germania" eingestellt," *Kurier*, March 11, 2019, accessed March 25, 2020, at <https://kurier.at/chronik/niederosterreich/liederbuch-ffaere-aufloesungsverfahren-gegen-germania-eingestellt/400432030>

¹⁸⁹ "Austria: attacks on press freedom," *Reporter Ohne Grenzen*, March 8, 2018, accessed March 25, 2020, at <http://www.rog.at/pm/austria-attacks-on-press-freedom/>.

A workplace supervisor abused a Jewish employee in Montreal, verbally harassing him and then throwing a coin at him.

- A student-union representative in Toronto refused to endorse a campaign to bring kosher food to campus because a group supporting the idea was “pro-Israel.”
- Two male youths gave a Nazi salute outside a Winnipeg Jewish school in full view of students.
- In St. John’s, Nfld., spray-painted swastikas appeared on road signs and fences.
- In Gabriola Island, B.C., antisemitic graffiti was spray-painted on the main building at a Jewish summer camp.
- In Edmonton, a cleric publicly suggested that “international Zionism” was behind the ISIS terrorist organization.

There was an increase of more than 11 per cent in anonymous online harassment, much of it advocating genocide and Holocaust denial.

As above-mentioned, for the fourth year in a row, Canada has witnessed in 2019 a rise in overall antisemitic incidents, emanating from a wide variety of sectors in Canadian society. As in previous years, the primary sources of antisemitic incidents emerged from across the political spectrum, including threats to the physical safety of the Jewish community, incitement to hatred, and the mainstreaming of antisemitic sentiment in public forums to a significant extent.

Brazen Antisemitic assaults

In March, a Hasidic Jew was mugged in Montreal, Quebec, and had his tallit (prayer shawl) and tefillin (phylacteries) stolen. In April, a Jewish employee was abused by his workplace supervisor when he was verbally assaulted and then had a coin thrown at him. In Toronto during the month of June, a woman was accosted by her neighbor with antisemitic abuse and was then spat on by the assailant, and a Jewish couple was attacked by four youths in the middle of the street, and in Outremont, Quebec, a group of Hasidic teenagers were sprayed with tar by a construction worker.

Other examples of assaults included:

- In July, a Montreal taxi driver hurled antisemitic epithets at an observant Jew and violently assaulted him after the individual took a photograph of the taxicab’s license.
- In August, two Toronto-area observant Jewish boys were attacked by a single youth, one of whom was punched in the face, while the other sustained a broken arm. On the same day, an assailant with a similar description was reported to have slapped a child of an observant family while the family was walking outside on Shabbat. In a Montreal-area a Hasidic child was slowly

rammed with a car while crossing the street and drove off when approached by the child's father.

- In October, a Jewish student at a university in Toronto was spat on by someone hurling antisemitic epithets.

Unfortunately, in many of the assault cases, the assailants could not be identified or apprehended, allowing them to evade justice. However, the July incident involving the Montreal-area taxi driver led to charges against the driver following B'nai Brith Canada's liaising with the victim of the assault and reporting the incident to the police and the taxi company. The driver was immediately fired from the taxi company and was arrested in August.

Institutional Antisemitism

As was the case in previous years, 2019 witnessed worrying, and continuing, cases of high-profile cases of antisemitism among highly respected and important sectors of Canadian society, including at various levels of government, and increasingly at post-secondary education institutions. B'nai Brith advocacy led to positive outcomes in many cases where institutional antisemitism has manifested. However, the existence of this phenomenon among mainstream institutions and organizations is concerning, and indicative of a growing acceptance of certain antisemitic sentiments.

For instance, following a B'nai Brith campaign, "Vision TV", a well-known national television station, focusing its content on religious and cultural programming of all types, cancelled a program called *Muslim Perspectives*, which regularly conveyed antisemitic and anti-Israel conspiracy theories. The program which also promoted the *Crescent International*, a propagandistic publication that has published the works of Holocaust deniers, and articles advocating genocide by suggesting that "Muslims will deal the deathblow to Yahud [Jews]," and calling for "the total destruction of the Israeli nation-state."

In March, B'nai Brith Canada gave a deputation to the Toronto Executive Committee of City Council to express concern over the annual "al Quds Day", sponsored by Iran, which takes place on public property without the requisite permits, and promotes hateful and antisemitic messages that violate the City of Toronto's anti-discrimination bylaws and policies. Unfortunately, no policy proposal or explanation as to why "al Quds Day" rallies are permitted to continue in contravention of the City's own policies has been provided.

In July, Trinity-St. Paul's United Church, a major congregation of the United Church of Canada (UCC) in Toronto, was set to provide space for an event entitled the "Ghassan Kanafani Resistance Arts Scholarship Launch," in honor of the former leading member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) — a listed terrorist organization in Canada — who helped to organize a 1972 attack on Israel's main airport that left 26 civilians dead. Following B'nai Brith's intervention the church, after an initial hesitation, cancelled the event.

Aside from these incidents, we also saw a disturbing dalliance with antisemitism across the political spectrum in Canada. Following are several examples:

- Maxime Bernier, leader of the People’s Party of Canada, refused to distance himself from his aide, Martin Masse, despite being presented with evidence that Masse had suggested that Zionism was “just another fancy justification of killing and displacing Palestinians;” described B’nai Brith and other Jewish groups in Canada as “ethnic barons”, and Israel as a “police state”, among other antisemitic and discriminatory statements.
- The Quebec National Assembly passed Bill 21, which prevents Quebecers who wear “religious symbols” such as the kippah, hijab, or turban from serving as teachers, police officers or judges, and affects the promotion of people wearing such religious symbols who are already working in Quebec’s public sector. The bill was widely opposed by faith groups and civil liberties organizations across the political spectrum, including B’nai Brith, and is currently facing legal challenge in Quebec courts.
- A former federal candidate for the New Democratic Party (NDP) in the Nova Scotia riding of Dartmouth-Cole Harbour was ousted as a nominee over a series of tweets comparing Israel to Nazi Germany, stating that “Gaza is the new Auschwitz and Israeli the gatekeepers!” and referring to the people of Israel as “the new #Pharaohs, #Nazis.”
- In August, Hassan Guillet, a federal Liberal Party candidate was ousted following B’nai Brith Canada’s revelation that he made several antisemitic and anti-Israel comments, including claiming that Jared Kushner, President Trump’s son-in-law, was manipulating American foreign policy in favor of Israel because of his Jewish background, and that “Zionists control American politics.” Guillet had previously celebrated the release of Islamist activist Raed Salah, head of the Northern branch of the Islamic movement in Israel and a Hamas sympathizer, from an Israeli prison after serving a nine-month sentence for “incitement to violence and racism.” Salah, among other things, accused Jews of staging the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and claimed that Jews use children’s blood for baking “holy bread”. Guillet hailed Salah as a “jihad-fighter” and “frontier-fighter” whom “Allah will surely support,” and prayed that Salah will someday be successful in the fight to liberate “the whole of Palestine.”
- In September, the Mayor of Ottawa, Jim Watson, and an Ottawa city counselor, Eli El-Chantiry, refused to rescind a letter of congratulations that was presented to the Syrian Canadian Club on behalf of the mayor, at an event honoring the Syrian Socialist National Party (SSNP) — a political party that supports the current Assad regime, despite being B’nai Brith Canada’s warning of the party’s virulent antisemitism and support for the regime’s atrocities.

- In October, a member of the Provincial Parliament in Ontario called for the release of senior PFLP member, Khalida Jarrar, referring to her as his “parliamentary colleague,” following her re-arrest by Israel on suspicions of “involvement in terrorist activity.” Demands for an apology for the remarks were met with no substantive response.

Overall we can observe that across the political spectrum antisemitic expressions, support for members of listed terrorist organizations, and association with established antisemites continues to transpire in Canada with an alarming degree of frequency, despite being a marginal phenomenon in general.

Campus Antisemitism

Over the course of the year, there have been a significant number of reports to B’nai Brith Canada of students facing harassment on campus from fellow students for being openly supportive of the State of Israel and/or being Jewish. Jewish students regularly face insults, intimidation, and in some cases physical violence, including being spat on by other students. They have also communicated concerns over expressing their perspectives on Israel or related political issues for fear of academic penalties, unfavorable references, and possible career obstacles. Following are some of the more extreme incidents of antisemitism at postsecondary institutions in Canada in 2019:

- In October, B’nai Brith Canada learned that a federal grant was used to produce a guide instructing Canadian Muslims on how to vote in the 2019 federal election. The guide, entitled *Canadian Muslim Voting Guide: Federal Election 2019*, was drafted by sociology professor Jasmine Zine and others, and released by the Canadian Islamophobia Industry Research Project at Wilfred Laurier University on October 18, three days before the election. The guide, which acknowledged support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), a federal agency that assigns research grants, identified six “key issues” for Canadian Muslims, among which was support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, and assigned various grades to Canadian political parties according to their degree of support for the movement.
- In November, the University of Toronto Graduate Students’ Union (GSU) refused to support a drive to make kosher food accessible on campus because it was backed by the Jewish student group Hillel, which was seen by the GSU as being “pro-Israel”. As such, the GSU determined that the call for kosher food availability on campus was contrary to the “will of the membership” in an apparent reference to its adoption of the BDS movement in 2012. It should also be noted that the GSU is the only student union in Canada with a committee dedicated to promoting BDS. This incident shocked the Jewish community both in Canada and beyond, and led some 80 University of Toronto faculty members to send a letter to the university’s administration demanding the immediate availability of kosher food on campus. In response to

overwhelming public pressure emerging from this campaign, the GSU apologized for “the harm that this response has caused,” but avoided any discussion of its support for the BDS movement.

- In late November, at York University an anti-Israeli student group rallied in an attempt to shut down a speaking engagement by *Reservists on Duty*, an Israeli organization that tours North American campuses. The number of protestors in some cases exceeded 100, with some protestors calling for violence by chanting "Viva, viva intifada!" referencing the two waves of Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians in the late 1980s-early1990s and in 2000. Police had to intervene and ensure the safety of the speakers and the students, and even escorted several people out of the building.

Preliminary conclusions

In sum, we have observed that harassment, vandalism, and violence continue to be persistent problems in Canada, although still a marginal phenomenon throughout the country. Moreover, we have seen a year over year increase in antisemitic incidents which necessitates a concerted response from all levels of government, postsecondary institutions, police agencies, and civil society organizations to combat the growing phenomenon, similar to the broad growth in antisemitism worldwide.

We have seen a dramatic increase in antisemitic incidents taking place in Ontario compared to 2018, and a significant increase in Quebec as well. Moreover, we have noticed an uptick in antisemitism in parts of Canada where historically there was less recorded incidents. While it is less surprising that antisemitic incidents are more common in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, where Canada’s Jewish population is the largest, the rapid and sustained increase is cause for concern. This is all the more concerning as we have all too often seen muted responses to brazen antisemitic incidents and expressions at the political level, in postsecondary institutions, and in the public sphere.

We have also observed the continued prevalence of “online” antisemitism, by far the largest growing form of antisemitic expression in the country. In 2019, online antisemitism constituted the majority of all incidents of harassment and over a third of the total incidents. Moreover, the relative anonymity afforded through various social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and others, makes it more difficult in many cases to identify and levy consequences against the purveyors of online antisemitism.

Over the previous six-year period, we observed that there is reason to believe that a “new normal” has emerged in Canada in terms of the amount of antisemitic incidents transpiring in the country. Increased reporting to B’nai Brith Canada does contribute to this larger number, and reflects increased willingness among both the Jewish and non-Jewish communities to report incidents to both B’nai Brith elected officials, and law enforcement agencies. In addition, there is a growing awareness in the Jewish community that “more needs to be done” to combat antisemitism.

This information coupled with the most recently available police-related hate crime statistics for 2018 demonstrate that while there has been a decline in hate crimes against Jews in Canada for that year, Jews by far remain the most victimized group on the basis of religious identity.

B'nai Brith continues to monitor and respond to incidents, as appropriate, and advocates for effective solutions to mitigate and eliminate antisemitism wherever and whenever it emerges.

Czech Republic /Zbyněk Tarant

Summary

The Czech Republic is generally considered a safe country for the Jews and despite the turbulent events in the international arena, 2019 did not bring any significant change to this trend. The country feels torn between East and West, between Euroscepticism on the one hand and fears of Russian or Chinese influence on the other. Despite the political polarization of the society and growing resentment to political correctness discourse, the political leaders have manifested their resolve to fight antisemitism by means of parliamentary resolution denouncing all forms of antisemitism, including the attempts to single out Israel for boycotting. The social panic caused by the refugee crisis has somewhat dissipated, leading to a decline of anti-immigration and far-right parties, and forcing them to seek alternative topics. Social media, such as Facebook or mainstream media sites, reflected the major “mainstream” cases of antisemitism in the “mainstream society”. The Jewish community reported several cases of vandalism and harassment during the year, but the total data for 2019 was not available at the time of writing this report.

The far-right and right-wing populist scenes continued to be burdened by personal disagreements between leaders of various factions, while voters of both right-wing and left-wing populist parties were attracted by the populism of the leading centrist political party ANO. Three significant trials with defendants facing charges of terrorism took place in Czechia. None of these cases was directly linked to antisemitism, but the age-category and ideological backgrounds of the attackers may force the government to reconsider anti-terrorism strategies and commonly used perpetrator profiles.

Legislative affairs

On October 15, the Constitutional Court ruled against the law, which was supposed to tax financial restitutions to churches for property stolen or destroyed by the Communist regime. Unlike the Catholic church, which received most of its property back in physical form, the Jewish communities, along with smaller Protestant and Evangelical churches would have been severely damaged by this law as their property is mostly lost and was expected to be reimbursed financially. Some of this property

included buildings or pieces of art originally stolen by the Nazis, but never returned or later destroyed by the Communist regime, which took power three years after WWII. The court decision to invalidate the law was welcomed by the Jewish communities as well as by Israeli diplomats, who criticized the controversial legislation.¹⁹⁰

A week later on October 22, the Czech Parliament approved a non-binding resolution denouncing antisemitism and calls for boycotts of the State of Israel.¹⁹¹ The resolution, among others *“strongly condemns all manifestations of anti-Semitism directed against individuals, religious institutions, organizations as well as the State of Israel, including the denial of the Holocaust; rejects any questioning of the State of Israel’s right of existence and defense”* and it also *“condemns all activities and statements by groups calling for a boycott of the State of Israel, its goods, services or citizens.”*¹⁹²

Attitude surveys

One survey on attitudes of Czechs to other national groups, including Jews, was conducted in March by the Center for Public Opinion Surveys. It showed no significant changes in comparison to previous surveys since 2013 in the mostly indifferent attitudes of the society towards Jews. 41 percent of the respondents have expressed indifferent stance; 32 percent found Jews to be “sympathetic” or “somewhat sympathetic”, while 15 percent have described them as either “un-sympathetic” or “somewhat un-sympathetic”. As a result, Jews were ranked similarly to Greeks and Vietnamese and slightly better than Germans.¹⁹³

190 "Ústavní soud zrušil kontroverzní zdanění finančních náhrad z církevních restitucí," *E15.cz*, October 15, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.e15.cz/domaci/ustavni-soud-zrusil-kontroverzni-zdaneni-financnich-nahrad-z-cirkevnych-restituci-1363309>.

191 "Sněmovna odsoudila antisemitismus, odmítla výzvy k bojkotu Izraele," *iDnes.cz.*, October 22, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/snemovna-antisemitismus-izrael-usneseni.A191022_163907_domaci_kop.

192 Knaan Liphshiz, "EU official welcomes Czech resolution that calls Israel boycott anti-Semitism," *The Times of Israel*, October 26, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/eu-official-welcomes-czech-resolution-that-calls-israel-boycott-anti-semitism/>.

193 Milan Tuček, "Vztah české veřejnosti k národnostním skupinám žijícím v ČR – březen 2019," April 15, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c2/a4905/f9/ov190415.pdf.

Czech sympathies towards other national groups (2013-2019)

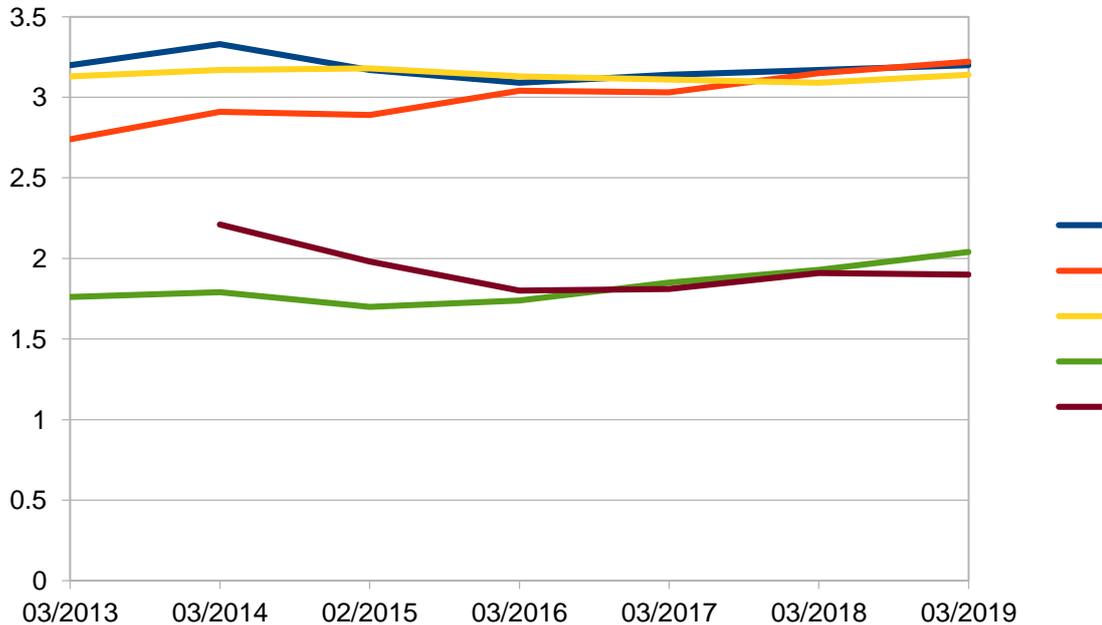


Figure 1: Czech attitudes towards other national groups (2013-2019). Jews were ranked similarly to Vietnamese or Germans (source: Center for Public Opinion Surveys – Czech Academy of Science)

Incidents

Hard data about the antisemitic incidents are still being processed by the responsible authorities, but nothing seems to be hinting that 2019 would bring any significant change in terms of numbers of antisemitic incidents. The last Annual report on antisemitic manifestations was published by the Czech Federation of Jewish Communities in April 2019 and covered the period between January and December 2018. The report, which included manifestations on the internet and physical attacks on persons or property, recorded 333 incidents in 2018, a vast majority of which took place online. The wave of harassment and threats recorded in 2014 and 2015 seemed to have dissipated in 2018. The data for 2019 is expected to be published by the community in spring 2020.

Asked how it perceived the situation of antisemitism during 2019, the Jewish Community in Prague responded:

In 2019, we have recorded a significant growth of online antisemitism (articles, discussion boards, social media posts). This growth, however, must not necessarily point to a worsening of the Czech society's attitudes to the Jewish community. It might be just a result of a more effective monitoring and detection. Cases of physical violence or direct threat were

rare, and even less than in 2018. We have recorded several cases of vandalism with a clear or at least suspected antisemitic motive and there seems to have been the same or slightly higher number of such cases than in the previous year. The Jewish Community paid significant attention to the BDS movement and to the differentiation between legitimate criticism of the State of Israel and what should be labeled as antisemitic according to the [Working] definition. The growth of activities of foreign far-right extremists and White Supremacists is seen as a worrisome trend, yet no direct threat to the Czech Jewish community occurred.¹⁹⁴

According to my research, the most productive sources of online antisemitism in the country were websites combining conspiracism with esotericism and pro-Kremlin propaganda. From the 100 antisemitic websites in the country in September, about 70 can be labeled as conspiracist or esoteric; 23 far-right; and 6 as Catholic traditionalist. This is a continuing trend since at least 2014. When using these numbers, please note that my research lists entire websites or blogs, while the Jewish community lists individual articles and posts. Also, not all websites identified as antisemitic in my research must have published an antisemitic article during the year. Some may have published antisemitic content in the previous years, but continue to host it.

Table 1 – Summary of currently available data on antisemitic incidents in the Czech Republic according to multiple sources

Source Description	Variable	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Police records*)	Crimes targeting “Jewish Race”	8	9	37	9	22	25	10	13	x	x
	Crimes targeting “Jewish Religion”	2	0	1	0	2	3	2	1	x	x
Interior Ministry’s Report on Extremist Manifestations**)	Extremist crimes with antisemitic subtext	28	18	9	15	45	47	28	27	15	x
Jewish Community reports on antisemitic incidents***)	Physical attack on property (vandalism)	5	5	6	3	5	5	x	x	3	x
	Physical attack on human	0	1	0	1	1	0	x	x	2	x
	Harassment & Threats	11	11	10	9	37	34	x	x	9	x
	Other verbal manifestations (articles, websites, pictures, videos)	31	26	82	156	191	182	x	x	333	x

Sources:

*) Data obtained from the Czech Police Directorate under the Free Access to the Information Act (č. j. PPR-20789-3/ČJ-2018-990140).

**) Compilation of Interior Ministry’s Reports on Extremism.

***) Compilation of Jewish Community’s Reports on Antisemitic Manifestations,¹⁹⁵

(x – no data available)

194 E-mail correspondence with the Prague Jewish Community representative, January 2, 2020. In possession of the author.

195 Federace židovských obcí v ČR, *Výroční zpráva o projevech antisemitismu, 2015*, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.fzo.cz/wp-content/uploads/Výroční%20AD-zpráva-o-projevech-antisemitismu-v-České-republice-za-rok-2015.pdf>.

Table 2 – Timeline of crime-rate with extremist subtext in the Czech Republic from 2005 to 2019 according to the Ministry of Interior

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Extremist crimes in the Czech Republic	196	217	265	252	238	173	211	201	175	143	153	179	90*	
Percentage of overall crime-rate (%)	0,05	0,06	0,08	0,08	0,08	0,06	0,06	0,07	0,07	0,07	0,08	0,09	x	
Cases solved	119	126	186	168	157	116	144	132	114	99	102	136	x	
Numbers of defendants	181	195	293	231	246	208	198	157	154	x	132	102	69*	
Hate crimes targeting specific groups (out of the total extremist crimes):	Anti-Romany	59	75	77	65	69	52	42	53	33	25	27	x	x
	Anti-Muslim	0	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	5	7	3	x	x
	Anti-Arab	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	5	8	x	x	x
	Antisemitic	18	27	48	28	18	9	15	45	47	28	27	x	x

Source: Compilation of Annual reports on extremism from 2005 to 2016, Ministry of Interior

(x – no data available, *preliminary data only from January to August 2019)

Terrorism

There were no cases of terrorism against the Czech Jewish community in 2019. However, three noteworthy trials with defendants facing charges of terrorism have taken place. In the first case, the perpetrator, a 72-year old Jaromír Balda, an active supporter of the right-wing populist Freedom and Direct Democracy party, cut down trees on railroad tracks in 2017, causing train derailment and several injuries in order to create a false-flag terrorist attack that would be blamed on Muslims. A more severe disaster was avoided only thanks to the vigilance and quick reflexes of the train drivers. Balda was sentenced in December 2019 to four years in prison on charges of terrorism and while the case had no antisemitic linkage, it is a noteworthy example of the radicalization taking place among the oldest generation.¹⁹⁶ According to his own testimony, Balda became radicalized after reading the conspiracist, pro-Kremlin websites, which also happen to be the most important source of antisemitism in the Czech Republic. The second terrorism trial involved also a defendant, who was radicalized online after reading the conspiracist pro-Kremlin websites. In this second case, Erik Eštu was sentenced to probation for having joined the pro-Kremlin militias in Eastern Ukraine.¹⁹⁷ In the last case, a Slovak national, Dominik Kobulnický, who converted to Islam and became radicalized online, gathered large amounts of chemicals and explosives, and probably intended to carry out a lone-wolf terrorist

196 Balda spáchal teroristický čin. Nejvyšší soud odmítl skutek překvalifikovat, *Česká televize*, December 18, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/3007673-ani-nejvyssi-soud-nezbavil-seniora-baldu-trestu-za-terorismus>.

197 "Boj za proruské separatisty nebyl terorismus, řekl soud. Vojákovi dal jen podmínku," *Aktuálně.cz*, September 17, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/soud-zmírnil-vojakovi-trest-za-ucast-v-bojich-na-ukrajine/r~5fe1de66d93211e984260cc47ab5f122/>.

attack. He faces up to nine years in prison under charges of terrorism, but the trial has not been concluded at the time of writing this report.¹⁹⁸

There was also one case of mass shooting in December in a hospital in Ostrava.¹⁹⁹ The killing spree, which left behind six dead, is considered the worst incident of such a kind in the country since 2014. The case was not an antisemitic or a politically motivated attack, and does not fulfill the definition of terrorism. It is mentioned in this report due to the role of pro-Kremlin conspiracist websites in the aftermath of the massacre. Possibly the most notorious of these websites is *Aeronet*, which attempted to hint at some alleged Jewish or “Rothschild” connection to the shooting, having constructed an antisemitic conspiracy theory in less than 24 hours after the incident.²⁰⁰ *Aeronet* itself is a secretive online outlet with unknown personal background and suspected links to Russian or pro-Russian groups and has intensified its anti-Jewish agenda during the year for unclear reasons.

198 "Islamistovi ze Slovenska navrhli za přípravu teroristického útoku devět let," *iDnes.cz*, October 24, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at https://www.idnes.cz/praha/zpravy/dominik-kobulnicky-soud-devet-let-teroristicky-utok-propagace-islam.A191024_111111_praha-zpravy_rsr.

199 "Gunman shoots dead six in Czech hospital then kills himself," *The Guardian*, December 10, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/10/gunman-kills-czech-hospital-ostrava-shooting>.

200 See: Masakr v Rothschildově Ostravě vyvolává více otázek, než je množina poskytovaných odpovědí!... *Aeronet*, December 11, 2019, accessed April 1, 2020, at <https://aeronet.cz/news/masakr-v-rothschildove-ostrove-vyvolava-vice-otazniku-nez-je-mnozina-poskytovanych-odpovedi-proc-strelec-zabijel-pacienty-kdyz-mel-pry-spadeno-na-lekare-proc-na-unikle-fotografii-z-cekarny/>.

France / Riva Mane

In his speech at the fifth World Holocaust Forum official ceremony at Yad Vashem in January 2020, President Emmanuel Macron conceded that **"the dark shadow of antisemitism is being reborn. [...] Antisemitism is back. It is here and its cortege of intolerance and hate is here. France won't accept."**²⁰¹ Indeed, the number of recorded antisemitic incidents in France continued to rise in 2019, with a 27 percent increase over the dramatic rise of 74 percent in 2018. According to the French Interior Ministry and the SPCJ (Service de protection de la communauté juive) official data,²⁰² most of the racist hate crimes recorded in France in 2019 were antisemitic incidents targeting Jews, who represent less than 1 percent of the country's population (approximately 500,000 Jews out of a population of 65 million).

The following figures are based on filed complaints and therefore are significantly lower than the actual number of antisemitic incidents:

- The number of recorded antisemitic incidents increased by 27 percent in 2019 with a total of 687 compared to 541 in 2018.
- 60 percent of the total of 1142 racist hate crimes in France were antisemitic incidents directed against Jews.
- 151 of the recorded antisemitic incidents were severe incidents categorized as "actions" (attacks on people or their possessions, homicides, physical violence, arson, defacing and vandalism), a 17 percent decrease compared to 183 actions in 2018.
- There were 536 cases of antisemitic threats (Threatening word and gesture, insult, flyers, hate mail and graffiti), reflecting a 50 percent increase compared to 358 threats in 2018.
- Attacks and threats against Muslims (representing about 9 percent of the French population) increased by 54 percent with 154 incidents compared to 100 in 2018.
- Anti-Christian acts remained stable but highest of all with 1052, mainly attacks on goods or property with a religious character.

Since 2017, the number of antisemitic acts has increased by 121 percent.

AJC Paris Report on Antisemitism

According to a poll conducted by AJC (American Jewish Committee) Paris in cooperation with the Foundation of Political Innovation in October-November 2019:

²⁰¹ John Irish, "Macron, in Israel for Holocaust memorial, warns of 'dark shadow' of anti-Semitism," *Reuters*, January 23, 2020, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-holocaust-memorial-macron-jewishcommu/macron-in-israel-for-holocaust-memorial-warns-of-dark-shadow-of-anti-semitism-idUSKBN1ZM1LV>.

²⁰² Ministère de l'intérieur, Communiqué de presse: "Statistiques 2019 des actes antireligieux, antisémites, racistes et xenophobes," January 26, 2020, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Le-ministre/Communiqués/Statistiques-2019-des-actes-antireligieux-antisemites-racistes-et-xenophobes>.

- 73 percent of the French public and 72 percent of Jews "consider antisemitism a problem that affects all of French society."
- 47 percent of the general public and 67 percent of the Jewish respondents said the level of antisemitism in France is high.
- 70 percent of French Jews say they have been victims of at least one antisemitic incident in their lifetime; 64 percent have suffered antisemitic verbal abuse at least once; and 23 percent have been targets of physical violence on at least one occasion.
- Only 47 percent of Jews and 48 percent of the general public expressed confidence in the French government's tackling antisemitism."²⁰³

Major incidents

Peak in February and the "Yellow Vests" Movement

Antisemitic incidents reached a peak during the month of February with 160 recorded incidents of a total of 687 incidents.²⁰⁴ Some linked the spark of incidents to the Yellow Vests ("Gilets Jaunes") anti-government social protest movement.²⁰⁵ The violent behavior of some of the movement's supporters and the infiltration of antisemitic elements from the far-left and right have raised many fears in France.²⁰⁶ CRIF president Francis Kalifat stated: "I would not say that the movement is antisemitic but I say that these mass movements are always exploited by antisemites."²⁰⁷ Vincent Duclert, a specialist on antisemitism in France at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, added that although it is not an antisemitic movement, perhaps it offers "a new space for different kinds of antisemitism to come together: from the extreme right and extreme left, but also from radical Islamist or anti-Zionist groups, and some types of social conservatives."²⁰⁸

On 11 February, two trees planted in Saint-Genevieve-des-Bois, in memory of Ilan Halimi, the 23-year-old Jewish man tortured and killed in 2006 by a gang of Islamist thugs, were chopped down just before the anniversary of his death. The Sainte-Genevieve-des-Bois City Hall said in a statement: "They want to assassinate Ilan Halimi

²⁰³ AJC Paris and the Foundation of Political Innovation, *Analysis of Anti-Semitism in 2019* (Paris, December 2019), accessed April 16, 2020, at http://www.ajc.org/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-01/AJCParis_Analysis_of_anti-Semitism_in_2019_Jan2020.pdf.

²⁰⁴ Jewish Community Security Service (SPCJ), *2019 – Report on Antisemitism in France* (Paris, 2020?), accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.antisemitisme.fr/dl/2019-EN>.

²⁰⁵ Lucy Williamson, "Gilets jaunes: How much anti-Semitism is beneath the yellow vests?," *BBC News*, February 19, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-47286576>.

²⁰⁶ "Spate of anti-Semitic acts sparks outrage in France," *The Telegraph*, February 12, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.france24.com/en/20190212-france-anti-semitism-acts-outrage-rise-vandalism-jewish-symbols-halimi-veil-bagelstein>.

²⁰⁷ "France's Yellow Vest Movement Dogged by anti-Semitism and Extremist Conspiracy Theories," *Haaretz*, January 29, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/france-s-yellow-vest-movement-dogged-by-anti-semitism-and-conspiracy-theories-1.6890985>.

²⁰⁸ Williamson, "Gilets jaunes: How much anti-Semitism is beneath the yellow vests?."

a second time."²⁰⁹ French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said near the spot where the trees were chopped down that "antisemitism is spreading like poison. [...] By attacking the memory of Ilan Halimi, it's the Republic that's being attacked," vowing that the government would take action. The incident was the latest in a series of antisemitic incidents, including swastikas drawn on Paris postboxes with the portraits of the late Holocaust survivor and Minister Simone Veil and the word "Juden" sprayed on the window of a Paris restaurant "Bagelstein".

On 16 February, French Jewish philosopher and writer Alain Finkielkraut was verbally attacked in Paris with antisemitic remarks and threats by protesters of the Yellow Vests. The offensive remarks included: "Dirty Jew" "you're a hater, you're going to die, you're going to hell", "Dirty Zionist", "France is ours" and "return to Tel Aviv". Police intervened to protect Finkielkraut, and President Macron condemned the attack in a series of statements on Twitter: "[These] antisemitic insults [...] are the absolute negation of what we are and what makes us a great nation. We will not tolerate it." On 12 July, a 36-year-old salesman was convicted in Paris for attacking Finkielkraut and violating France's anti-racism laws and sentenced to two-month' probation, though prosecutors requested six months.²¹⁰

On 19 February, 96 tombs and gravestones were desecrated with swastikas and vandalized in the Jewish cemetery in the French village of Quatzenheim in Alsace, drawing nationwide outrage. President Macron visited the cemetery and promised that his government would take action. The incident occurred following a wave of antisemitic incidents in Paris in previous weeks and just hours before a large rally in Paris against antisemitism. The Alsace region has suffered a rash of antisemitic vandalism during the year.

On 25 February, a young Jewish man wearing a kippa was violently attacked in his car with stones and tear gas by a group of youngsters in Saint-Brice, near Sarcelles, a suburb of Paris. The attackers also yelled antisemitic insults at the victim including "Youd" (derogatory term for Jew). The victim was brought to the emergency room at the hospital.

Other incidents

On 2 December, around 107 graves were desecrated with antisemitic inscriptions and swastikas at the Jewish cemetery of Westhoffen, near Strasbourg, while graffiti against Jews was also found in nearby Schafhouse-sur-Zorn.²¹¹ The Westhoffen

²⁰⁹ Shiril Sitbon, "Memorial to French Jewish murder victim Ilan Halimi is vandalised as figures show antisemitism is soaring," *The Jewish Chronicle*, February 12, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/world/memorial-to-french-jewish-murder-victim-ilan-halimi-is-vandalised-figures-show-antisemitism-soaring-1.479938>.

²¹⁰ "Attacker of French philosopher Alain Finkielkraut convicted for shouting anti-Semitic epithets," *JTA*, July 14, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/attacker-of-french-philosopher-alain-finkielkraut-convicted-for-shouting-anti-semitic-epithets>.

²¹¹ "'Jews are France', says Emmanuel Macron after 107 Jewish graves desecrated in anti-Semitic attack," *The Telegraph*, December 4, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at

incident occurred on the same day the French parliament was scheduled to vote on a draft resolution condemning antisemitism and recommending the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.

A week later, on 9 December, an Israeli student identified as Yogev Burshtein, 31, was attacked in Paris at the Château d'Eau metro station after he spoke on the phone in Hebrew. Two men reportedly of African origin, began shouting, cursing and threatening him. One of them attacked the victim striking him on the head, body and face until he lost consciousness and was taken to hospital with injuries and a broken nose.

Responses and measures

- A few hours after the desecration the Jewish cemetery in Quatzenheim on 19 February, and days after the announcement of Interior Minister Castaner that antisemitic incidents in France rose by 74 percent in 2018, tens of thousands participated in some 70 marches across France protesting against antisemitism under the slogan "That's Enough" ("ça suffit") following a wave of antisemitic incidents mainly in Paris. The demonstrations were held.²¹² President Macron, former presidents Francois Hollande and Nicolas Sarkozy, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe and leaders of most of the country's major political parties participated in the march in Place de la Republique in Paris. Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right National Front party (FN), held a separate event, accusing the other political parties them of doing nothing to tackle Islamist networks and claiming that "the antisemitic far-left is trying to infiltrate the gilets jaunes movement."²¹³
- On 2 December, following the desecration of the Jewish cemetery of Westhoffen, Macron pledged to fight antisemitism saying "Jews are and make France."²¹⁴ While visiting the cemetery on December 4, Interior Minister Castaner condemned the graffiti as a sign that "hate is on our national territory," and announced the creation of a national office for fighting hate crimes.²¹⁵ With the release of the Ministry of Interior's official report on hate crimes in France for 2019 on January 26, 2020,²¹⁶ Castaner stated that his office is creating a network of special investigators around France and has designated experts on racism and antisemitism in gendarmeries and governmental departments. An online platform

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/12/04/jews-france-says-emmanuel-macron-107-jewish-graves-desecrated/>.

²¹² "Vandals Desecrate Jewish Cemetery in France, Paint Swastikas on Graves," *Reuters*, February 19, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/vandals-desecrate-jewish-cemetery-in-france-paint-swastikas-on-graves-1.6954544>.

²¹³ Williamson, "Gilets jaunes: How much anti-Semitism is beneath the yellow vests?"

²¹⁴ "Jews are France", says Emmanuel Macron after 107 Jewish graves desecrated in anti-Semitic attack."

²¹⁵ "Castaner annonce la création d'un 'office national de lutte contre la haine'," *Le Point*, December 4, 2019, accessed April 19, 2020, at https://www.lepoint.fr/societe/castaner-annonce-la-creation-d-un-office-national-de-lutte-contre-la-haine-04-12-2019-2351384_23.php.

²¹⁶ See note 2.

that would allow investigators to chat with witnesses and victims of hate is also being set up.²¹⁷

- On 3 December, the French National Assembly passed a resolution which defined some forms of hatred of Israel as expressions of antisemitism. The bill proposes to adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism, which states inter alia that anti-Zionism is a modern form of antisemitism.²¹⁸ The bill was passed after weeks of debates in the French media and a dramatic increase in antisemitic incidents in France during the previous year. A group of 127 Jewish intellectuals signed a petition against the bill saying that it is "problematic" because it "delegitimizes the legitimate [...] criticism of the state of Israel."²¹⁹
- On 19 December, the Paris Appeals Court upheld a lower court ruling that Kobili Traore, a Muslim man who brutally beat and killed his Jewish neighbor Sarah Halimi in 2017, will not stand trial because he was "not criminally responsible" for his actions, since his judgment was impaired by heavy consumption of cannabis which aggravated an existing mental condition.²²⁰ The court said Traore "does appear to have voluntarily ended the life of Sarah Halimi" and retained the aggravated element of a hate crime in the indictment against Traore. The court's decision sparked outrage in the Jewish community and in the wider French public, as many believe Halimi's murder was an antisemitic act. On 5 January, 2020, hundreds of members of the French Jewish community and their supporters demonstrated against the Court's verdict,²²¹ and later in January President Macron expressed his support for putting Traore on trial but was rebuked by senior judicial officials.²²²

²¹⁷ "France reports 27% increase in anti-Semitic acts," *The Times of Israel*, January 26, 2020, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/france-reports-27-increase-in-anti-semitic-acts/>.

²¹⁸ Manon Rescan, "La résolution controversée sur la lutte contre l'antisémitisme adoptée par les députés," *Le Monde*, December 12, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2019/12/03/1-assemblee-nationale-adopte-une-resolution-controversee-sur-la-lutte-contre-l-antisemitisme_6021535_823448.html.

²¹⁹ "New French bill equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism 'is going very far afield'," *France 24*, December 3, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.france24.com/en/20191203-new-french-bill-equating-anti-zionism-with-anti-semitism-is-going-very-far-afield>.

²²⁰ Timothée Boutry, Meurtre de Sarah Halimi: «irresponsable», le suspect devrait échapper au procès, *Le Parisien*, July 12, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <http://www.leparisien.fr/faits-divers/affaire-sarah-halimi-irresponsable-le-suspect-devrait-echapper-au-proces-12-07-2019-8115681.php>.

²²¹ "Hundreds rally in Paris to seek justice for murdered Jewish woman Sarah Halimi," *France 24*, January 5, 2020, accessed April 16, 2020, at https://www.france24.com/en/20200105-hundreds-rally-in-paris-to-seek-justice-for-murdered-jewish-woman-sarah-halimi?ref=tw_i.

²²² Ben Cohen, "French President Macron Rebuked by Top Judicial Officials After Urging Trial for Antisemitic Murder of Sarah Halimi," *The Algemeiner*, January 27, 2019, accessed April 16, 2020, at <https://www.algemeiner.com/2020/01/27/french-president-macron-rebuked-by-top-judicial-officials-after-urging-trial-for-antisemitic-murder-of-sarah-halimi/>.

Germany / Sarah Rembiszewski

And then there was Halle...

On October 9, 2019, Yom Kippur, the highest Jewish holiday two people were killed in Halle (Saale), in the eastern state of Saxony - Anhalt. The victims were not Jewish but the murderous attack was motivated by antisemitic hatred. They were killed when neo-Nazi Stephan Balliet (27) tried to storm a synagogue. Balliet fired his rifle at the door of the synagogue several times, but failed. Instead, he shot and killed a passerby on the street and executed a construction worker at a nearby kebab place. He broadcasted his crimes online, clearly committing himself to his antisemitic, anti-feminist and racist stance. Five users watched the livestream as it unfolded and 2,200 others viewed the video shortly thereafter (without initially reporting it to the police).

At first the authorities talked about the “lonely wolf” scenario. But soon terrorism experts clarified all over the media the methods of motivating potential perpetrators, the networking and recruitment of followers of hate groups, reflected in the case of the Halle shooter. Federal Prosecutor General Peter Frank explained that right-wing extremists, so-called lone perpetrators, often do not act alone. Even when they commit acts of violence by themselves, they are part of a virtual community that applauds and encourages the murders on the internet. The fact that before his murderous attack he recorded and posted his hate message in English also shows that Balliet intended to reach an international community of antisemites, neo-Nazis, right-wing extremists, supporters of international right-wing populists, including members and sympathizers of the extreme right-wing Alternative for Germany Party (AfD), which is represented in all state parliaments, including the Bundestag.²²³

Josef Schuster, head of the Zentralrat, made serious accusations against the police and called it a scandal that the synagogue was not protected on Yom Kippur.

The attack in Halle was the second extreme right-wing murder in Germany in 2019, after the killing in June of Walter Lübcke, a conservative Christian Democrat. Lübcke was the first German politician to die at the hands of far-right extremists since 1945. German Jewish leaders and politicians accused the far-right AfD of fuelling the kind of hatred that made the deadly antisemitic attack in Halle possible. Contrary to the indignation of the representatives of all political parties, there were members of the AfD, like the Leipzig city councilor and state parliamentarian Roland Ulbrich (AfD) who downplayed the attempted antisemitic massacre as “property damage”. He provocatively posted on Facebook: "What is worse, a destroyed synagogue door or

²²³ "Amoklauf von Halle: Die Bekenner schreiben von Stephan Balliet jetzt auf Deutsch," *1984Magazin*, October 10, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://19vierundachtzig.com/2019/10/10/das-bekennerschreiben-des-attentaeters-von-halle-stephan-balliet-auf-deutsch/>.

two Germans killed?,"²²⁴ implying that the Jews in the synagogue are not Germans. Another AfD politician, Stephan Brandner, who was voted out as the chairman of the Bundestag Legal Committee in November - the first such incident in parliamentary history, retweeted a statement asking why politicians were "hanging around" mosques and synagogues in Halle following a terrorist attack, when the two victims had been "Bio-Deutsche" (organic Germans) who liked to listen to "Volksmusik".

A couple of weeks before the Halle shooting, on September 20, Ahmed Shaheed, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, presented a report to the UN General Assembly entitled "Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance," focusing on antisemitism. "I am alarmed", he summarized, "by the growing use of antisemitic tropes by white supremacists, including neo-Nazis and members of radical Islamist groups, in slogans, images, stereotypes, and conspiracy theories to incite and justify hostility, discrimination, and violence against Jews." Jew-hatred, he warned, "is toxic to democracy if left unaddressed."²²⁵

In his historic statement at Yad Vashem in January 2020, 75 years after the liberation of Auschwitz three months after the incident, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier referred to the phenomenon of antisemitic hatred as "the same evil", alluding to the Third Reich's antisemitism. "I wish I could say that our memories made us immune to evil," he said, adding that "the evil spirits show themselves in a new guise today. Even more: They present their antisemitic, their ethnic, their authoritarian thinking as an answer for the future, as a new solution to the problems of our time...But I can't say that [that all Germans had learned from history] when hatred and agitation are spreading. I can't say that, when Jewish children are spat on in the schoolyard."²²⁶

One day before the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, Germany's Foreign Minister expressed fear that Jews may flee his country due to antisemitic violence and proposed an action plan to prevent it.

This was after the "turning point" in Halle, however still before what was to be called four months later the "Dambruch" (dam break) when the extreme right wing AfD "tricked" the Thuringian parliament and for the first time a prime minister of a German state parliament (the *lander*) was elected with the votes of the AfD. And again we heard superlatives of shock and indignation from all democratic parties, as if a situation like that had not been taken into account by the main players of this short but frightening break of what was acceptable in postwar Germany. The vote and scandalous acceptance of the vote by Thomas Kemmerich of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) was a predictable, possible scenario and showed not so much the

²²⁴ AP, "German security services want more powers to fight extremism," October 15, 2019, accessed March 17, 2020, at <https://www.baynews9.com/fl/tampa/ap-top-news/2019/10/15/german-security-services-want-more-powers-to-fight-extremism>.

²²⁵ Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, *Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance*, September 20, 2019, accessed March 17, 2020, at <https://undocs.org/A/74/358>.

²²⁶ http://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Reden/2020/01/200123-Israel-Yad-Vashem-Englisch.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

ignorance of the main players, as their irresponsibility as well as powerlessness and shame. Due mainly to the spontaneous protests of the civil society, people of all ideological background who demonstrated in the streets of Germany, the elected candidate, Thuringia's prime minister for 25 hours, had to announce his resignation. It should be clear that the "breaking of a taboo" on February 5, 2020, may change the political landscape of the Federal Republic, as the inclusion of the AfD has become a possible power option, moving Germany to the very right.

Josef Schuster, head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, who felt horrified by this development, accused the FDP of "leaving the consensus of the democratic parties not to work with the AfD or to count on the support of right-wing populists."

Surveys after "Halle"

75 years after the liberation of survivors of the Auschwitz concentration camp, knowledge about the Holocaust is diminishing, especially among pupils and students. According to a survey conducted by the German Forsa Institute for Social Research and Statistical Analysis, only every second 14 to 16 year-old in Germany can classify the name of the extermination camp. 71 percent of older students know something to do with the term. According to a 2018 CNN poll, 40 percent of 18- to 40-year-old Germans know little about the Holocaust or have never heard of it. Moreover, meetings with survivors, the last witnesses will soon be no longer possible.

A survey of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), conducted in Germany before the attack in Halle, showed that antisemitism is gaining a stronger foothold in German society. Out of the 1,300 Germans respondents, 27 percent agreed with antisemitic statements and stereotypes about the Jewish people. Some 41 percent think "Jews talk about the Holocaust too much and that "Jews are more loyal to Israel than to Germany." Around 20 percent believed that Jews have "too much power" over the economy, international financial markets and the media. Another 22 percent agreed that "people hate Jews due to the way they behave." The study also found that one in four Germans (25 percent!) holds antisemitic beliefs.²²⁷

A survey done for ARD public broadcasting by the pollster Intratest dimap a week after "Halle" showed that 59 percent of voting-age Germans believe that antisemitism is spreading in their communities, compared to 40 percent in a sampling last year – an increase of 19 percent.²²⁸

²²⁷ "One in four Germans holds anti-Semitic beliefs, study finds," *DW*, October 24, 2019, accessed March 18, 2020, at <https://www.dw.com/en/one-in-four-germans-hold-antisemitic-beliefs-study-finds/a-50958589>; Imanuel Marcus, "WJC President Lauder in Halle: 'We Need Action'," *The Berlin Spectator*, October 26, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://berlinspectator.com/2019/10/26/wjc-president-lauder-in-halle-we-need-action/>.

²²⁸ "Anti-Semitism rising in Germany, survey finds," *Deutsche Welle*, October 18, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://www.dw.com/en/anti-semitism-rising-in-germany-survey-finds/a-50879966>.

In 2019 the trend of rising numbers of antisemitic incidents has continued, a fact that the Kantor Center has observed during the last 25 years. The tendency it described and warned of, finally was recognized officially as a shift from what was called the fringes of the German society towards the mainstream. Mostly related to traditional antisemitic stereotypes as well as anti-Israel antisemitism, the phenomenon of antisemitism has been well established in the mainstream discourse of society. This makes the monitoring of incidents more difficult, especially as underreporting of antisemitic incidents is a serious problem, in addition the problematic official monitoring systems based on police records - not all antisemitic incidents are reported and not all are registered as antisemitic.

One of the problems of identifying an antisemitic event lies in the fact that in Germany, as well as elsewhere, there exist a lack of communications among those who deal with it at schools, at the courts or at the police, as well as a lack of knowledge on how to define and respond to antisemitism. A typical example is a Muenster court ruling on October 21. The German police was not allowed to prohibit the slogan "never, never again Israel" during radical right-wing neo-Nazi demonstrations, as this does not fall under "hate speech". According to the judges, this slogan, often raised in neo-Nazi demonstrations, does not constitute a criminal incitement against Jews. Hence, it is permissible in line with the right of freedom of expression although it is possibly an "exaggerated and polemical criticism" of the politics of the State of Israel. The Dortmund police have thus failed in its attempt to ban the right of the extreme right supporters to use this slogan during their Monday demonstrations.²²⁹

Antisemitism commissioners have been appointed in 14 of the 16 German states following the appointment of Felix Klein as the Federal commissioner in 2018. Klein proposed to draft a national action plan against antisemitism and to expand paragraph 49 of the criminal code to include antisemitism, and especially antisemitic motivation and goals as punishable offenses. On November 29, the federal government released a law proposal to tighten legislation of antisemitic crime. Klein called for a stricter criminal law as to hate mails and threats. So far, according to paragraph 130 of the criminal law, they do not fall under the category of "incitement".²³⁰ In view of the rising antisemitism, Klein also suggested that more German companies deal with their past during the Nazi regime. The Federal Association of German Industry (BDI), for example, should launch "a new initiative" for companies to deal with their history during the Nazi dictatorship.²³¹

²²⁹ "Doppelte Polizei-Schlappe vor Gericht: Nazis in Dortmund dürfen 'Nie wieder Israel' rufen," Ruhr24, October 23, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://www.ruhr24.de/dortmund/dortmund-nazi-demo-vierten-nie-wieder-israel-rufe-erlaubt-13153987.html>.

²³⁰ "Härtere Strafen für antisemitische Straftaten als 'klares Zeichen gegen Judenfeindlichkeit, Ausgrenzung und Hass'," *Wochenblatt*, November 30, 2019, accessed March 18, 2020, at <https://www.wochenblatt.de/boulevard/regensburg/artikel/307482/haertere-straften-fuer-antisemitische-straf-taten-als-klares-zeichen-gegen-judenfeindlichkeit-ausgrenzung-und-hass>.

²³¹ "Mehr Unternehmen sollen NS-Vergangenheit aufarbeiten," *CSR Magazin*, December 31, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://csr-news.net/news/2019/12/31/mehr-unternehmen-sollen-ns-vergangenheit-aufarbeiten/>.

The IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism

The German government recognized the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism in 2017, and many state institutions use it, but the Bavarian State Government in May was the first state government to officially adopt the definition as a working basis for combating antisemitism. As a result many Bavarian umbrella organizations, associations and institutions have followed suit and adopted the definition during the year, including the DGB Bayern in May; the Media Council of the Bavarian State Center for New Media (BLM), the Evangelische Akademie Tutzing, the Bavarian State Executive of the Confederation of Displaced Persons in Bavaria (BdV) in July; the Bavarian Youth Ring in October; the Alliance of Values Bavaria and the Association of Bavarian Business e. V. as an umbrella organization of 134 associations and 42 individual companies in November.

BDS

Another phenomenon, related to the definition of antisemitism, for a longtime a controversial issue, is the anti-Israel BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement. Following its calls to boycott the Eurovision Song Contest 2019 in Israel, a majority of lawmakers in the Bundestag voted in May in favor of a motion to label BDS movement as an entity that uses antisemitic tactics to fulfill its political goals. The strongly-worded, but ultimately non-binding, resolution was passed, with the backing of Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian-Democratic Union and the Social Democrats (SDP), along with the opposition Green Party and Free Democratic Party. Calls to boycott Israel, according to the Bundestag resolution, "are reminiscent of the most terrible phase in German history [...] and 'Don't Buy' stickers on Israeli products inevitably evoke associations with the Nazi slogan 'Don't buy from Jews!'" The language of the bills proposed ranged in severity from a complete and enforceable ban on BDS — coming from the far-right AfD party — to a simple condemnation of any form of antisemitism which might be found within the BDS movement, backed by the Left Party. The final resolution states that "the pattern of argument and methods of the BDS movement are antisemitic," and calls on the German government not to support events organized by BDS or other groups that actively pursue its aims. It further vows that parliament won't finance any projects that call for a boycott of Israel or actively support the movement. Consequently, similar resolutions against BDS and antisemitism were adopted by many city and state councils, students' unions, trade unions, and more throughout Germany.²³²

Radicalization, army and police

²³² Botschaft des Staates Israel, *Quellensammlung zum Thema Antisemitismus Schwerpunkt: Israelbezogener Antisemitismus und Antizionismus*, January 30, 2020, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at https://embassies.gov.il/berlin/departments/offentlichkeitsarbeit/Documents/Quellensammlung%20zu%20Antisemitismus,%20israelbezogenem%20Antisemitismus%20und%20Antizionismus%20_%2031.01.2020.pdf.

The number of right-wing extremists active in Germany rose significantly in 2019. Germany's federal domestic intelligence service (BfV) and the state-level intelligence services identified over 32,200 right-wing extremists. That figure is about 30 percent higher compared to 2018, when authorities counted 24,100 people involved in right-wing extremist networks. One of the main reasons for the spike is due to the fact that the BfV has been including groups affiliated with the far-right AfD party for the first time in its count of right-wing extremists.

The same tendency can be observed in what has been described as right-wing terrorism. A spokesperson for the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) told the German media outlet Redaktionsnetzwerk Deutschland that it currently had a list of 60 people that it officially considered as right-wing extremist Gefährder, a criminal designation for suspects considered threats to public safety. This official number is considered as far too low and has to be revised by a new system.²³³ According to the same report, the BKA estimated the number of religiously motivated Gefährder at 660. the number has skyrocketed from 2007 to 2018 and has increased almost tenfold during that period. According to the BKA, the number of left-wing extremists was 5 at the end of January 2020.²³⁴

Recently, a process of rethinking has begun in Germany with regard to the classification, prevention and combating of right-wing terrorism by the security authorities.²³⁵

Right wing extremist groups (and others...) seek to boost their "combat skills" by recruiting military and police members. Germany's Military Counterintelligence Service (MAD) is even investigating soldiers of an elite unit, known as Special Forces Command, or KSK, for involvement in extremist activities.²³⁶ These groups are recruiting new members inter alia among the martial art's fans and competitors through systematic infiltration of an increasing number of neo-Nazi members into the free fighting community. The same modus operandi can be observed in the army, where neo-Nazis and extreme rightists not only recruit potential new members, but also ameliorate their fighting skills and enjoy easy access to weapon training. Today however, extreme rightists (and others ready to use violence), do not have to volunteer to the army in order to get good training and access to weapons, but can choose between hundreds of internet sites, where one can receive detailed instructions where to get weapons and how to build and use them. The trial of a neo-Nazi "terrorist" cell

²³³ "Deutlich mehr rechtsextreme Gefährder," *Tagesschau*, February 20, 2020, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/bka-rechtsextreme-gefaehrder-101.html>.

²³⁴ Nelle Katharina Wissmann, *The Right-wing Extremism in Germany. An Underestimated Threat?*, *Notes du Cerfa*, No. 151, Ifri, December 2019, accessed March 18, 2020, at <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/notes-de-lifri/notes-cerfa/right-wing-extremism-germany-underestimated-threat>.

²³⁵ Ibid.; "Deutlich mehr rechtsextreme Gefährder," *tagesschau*, February 20, 2020, accessed March 18, 2020, at <https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/bka-rechtsextreme-gefaehrder-101.html>.

²³⁶ "Neo-Nazi scandal hits German elite military unit," Deutsche Welle, December 1, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://www.dw.com/en/neo-nazi-scandal-hits-german-elite-military-unit/a-51490089>.

accused of plotting a violent political uprising in Germany opened in September 2019 amid reports that the country's far-right scene is growing more armed and radical. Eight members of the so-called Revolution Chemnitz group aged between 21 and 32 stand trial on charges of "forming a right-wing terrorist organization to achieve their political goals ...to shake the foundations of the state with serious violent acts."²³⁷

Schools and universities

For years, there have been voices from the Jewish community complaining about the growing antisemitism in the schoolyards. "The number of young people from our community who report hostility is increasing," said director of the Cologne synagogue Abraham Lehrer, in March. "Teachers say that [Du Jude] is used as a dirty word in their school playground, even though not a single Jewish child attends school." This hatred is based on ignorance, inability to deal with the phenomenon and sometimes indifference. Educators are also increasingly encountering Israeli-related antisemitism, mainly but not only from Muslim.²³⁸ Indeed, 75 years after the Holocaust, "Du Jude" is a common insult used in school playgrounds and in classrooms.

Ignorance about antisemitism among schoolchildren often prevails among teachers, who sometimes trivialize the subject or sometimes even tolerate it. Educators sensitized to the topic, on the other hand, often feel overwhelmed and left alone. These are just a few of the results of the study, published in 2018 "Mach mal keine Judenaktion!" ("Do not take action against Jews!", led by sociologist Prof. Julia Bernstein from the Department of Social Work and Health at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences (Frankfurt UAS). The 17-month qualitative social science study followed the question of how Jews experience antisemitism in schools and how teachers deal with antisemitism. The results were in accordance with the trends observed by the Kantor Center in previous years.

The findings of the study are:

1. Antisemitism in relation to Israel is normalized among schoolchildren and teachers. It manifests itself as a so-called "criticism of Israel", which often hides aggressiveness and hatred of Jews.
2. Antisemitism is not perceived as a unique phenomenon, and is often misunderstood as racism. The similarities and differences between the two are often not understood.
3. Current antisemitism is frequently articulated in the context of National Socialist antisemitism and the Shoah. There is a clear continuity of antisemitism. "We were surprised by the dimension of the use of National Socialist symbolism among young

²³⁷ "Far-right 'terror' group in dock in Germany over attack plot," *AFP*, September 30, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <http://www.rfi.fr/en/contenu/20190930-far-right-terror-group-dock-germany-over-attack-plot-0>.

²³⁸ "Abraham Lehrer: 'An Kölner Schulen wird »Du Jude« als Schimpfwort benutzt'," *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, March 17, 2019, accessed April 10, 2020, at <https://www.ksta.de/koeln/abraham-lehrer--an-koelner-schulen-wird--du-jude--als-schimpfwort-benutzt--32226920>.

people as well as the fantasies of exterminating the Jews with a direct reference to the Shoah," says Bernstein.²³⁹

Problems in adequately dealing with antisemitism in class and at universities are similar to those affecting the treatment of antisemitic incidents in Germany today. The Ministry of Culture has developed a handout "Dealing with Antisemitism in Schools", which contains didactic and pedagogical basics as well as concrete teaching suggestions.²⁴⁰

The Digital Contemporary Witness Archive at the Free University of Berlin found out in a study of university teaching on the subject that there is a problem, especially among young teachers. Even with prospective history teachers, there is no guarantee that they will be sufficiently prepared in their studies to offer up-to-date teaching, the study says. A problem is exacerbated because the demands on teaching grow, the time interval increases, family biographies play a smaller role, and students from immigrant families have a different approach to the topic.²⁴¹

Statistics

In 2019 the Federal Police Office (BKA) registered nationwide 2,032 crimes motivated by antisemitism, compared to 1,799 in 2018 which corresponds to at least five incidents a day. Most offenses were attributed to neo-Nazis and other right-wingers. Violent offenses were also on the rise. The police preliminarily counted 72 antisemitic acts of violence. Two people were killed and at least 35 people injured in the violent attacks.²⁴²

The number of reported antisemitic crimes in Bavaria has increased significantly in 2019. According to the figures of the Bavarian State Criminal Police Office (LKA), 307 cases were registered in the Free State last year, an increase of about 40 percent compared to the previous year. Almost 300 of these offenses were related to the right-

²³⁹ See: https://www.frankfurt-university.de/fileadmin/standard/Aktuelles/Pressemitteilungen/Mach_mal_keine_Judenaktion__Herausforderungen_und_Loesungsansaezte_in_der_professionellen_Bildungs-_und_Sozialarbeit_gegen_Anti.pdf. (accessed March 18, 2020)

²⁴⁰ Nadja Lissok, "Diskussion am KKT Schulen wollen Theaterstück über Antisemitismus nicht zeigen," *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, January 31, 2020, accessed March 18, 2020, at https://www.ksta.de/region/wir-helfen/diskussion-am-kkt-schulen-wollen-theaterstueck-ueber-antisemitismus-nicht-zeigen-33834036?dmcid=sm_fb&fbclid=IwAR3Q6-gjVFItQaiwc3gpEGO2cKj9ctT2X5QmRVVNmlClGroj07P9ugoEavg.

²⁴¹ Verena Nägel and Lena Kahle, *University teaching about the Holocaust in Germany*, translated into English by Roderick Miller (Berlin, 2018), accessed March 18, 2020, at https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/22444/Naegel_Kahle_University_teaching_about_the_Holocaust_in_Germany.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y.

²⁴² "Höchststand bei Straftaten von Judenhassern," *Der Tagesspiegel*, March 4, 2020, accessed April 10, 2020, at https://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/antisemitische-kriminalitaet-hoechststand-bei-straftaten-von-judenhassern/25608278.html?fbclid=IwAR1qRYtR5eMbbLSJHOE2p6xKvchB7TwBFN9MoDc6QyQOb_R4po_wGRNwHXE.

wing political spectrum by security authorities. The same trend was observed by RIAS in Brandenburg, while violent acts as defined by RIAS Berlin and Brandenburg have decreased during the first 6 months of the year.

Greece / Michal Navoth

Throughout 2019, antisemitic manifestations in Greece were mainly non-violent. As in 2018, there were no incidents targeting Jews, and acts of vandalism against Jewish sites were few and even less than those perpetrated in the previous year. Unlike the past, when Jewish cemeteries and monuments were traditional targets, in 2019 only Holocaust memorials were desecrated.²⁴³ In March, just four months after its inauguration, the Holocaust memorial in the northern Greek city of Trikala, erected to commemorate the deported Jews to Auschwitz was defaced three times.²⁴⁴ Likewise, antisemitic graffiti was painted in the public sphere of various cities.²⁴⁵ Similar to the previous years, conspiracy theories, like the one that Jews do not pay taxes, continue to circulate, and the social media facilitates the distribution of hate and trivialization of Holocaust.²⁴⁶

The year 2019 witnessed a change in the Greek political arena. In the snap election of July 7, the extreme right wing political party, Golden Dawn, failed to cross the 3 percent threshold and lost its seven-year-long parliamentary representation.²⁴⁷ To be sure, the Golden Dawn was defeated, but not the far right. A new party, the Greek

²⁴³ World Jewish Congress (WJC), *World Jewish Congress condemns desecration of Jewish Monument in Thessaloniki, two days before International Holocaust Remembrance Day*, January 27, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at

https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/world-jewish-congress-condemns-desecration-of-jewish-monument-in-thessaloniki-two-days-before-international-holocaust-remembrance-day-1-6-2019?utm_source=World+Jewish+Congress+Daily+News&utm_campaign=1b8dc0060c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_01_30_08_23&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1de7e9b27-1b8dc0060c-318793389.

²⁴⁴ World Jewish Congress (WJC), *World Jewish Congress condemns desecration of Holocaust monument in Greece*, March 14, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at

https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/world-jewish-congress-condemns-desecration-of-holocaust-monument-in-greece-3-4-2019?utm_source=World+Jewish+Congress+Daily+News&utm_campaign=1214d65c54-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_03_14_11_27&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1de7e9b27-1214d65c54-318793389;

The Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism, *Again, the holocaust monument in the center of Trikala desecrated*, March 19, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at <https://antisemitism.org.il/en/143107/>.

²⁴⁵ *Antisemitic graffiti in Athens*, April 3, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at

<https://antisemitism.org.il/en/144234/>; *Antisemitic graffiti in Karellas*, May 3, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at <https://antisemitism.org.il/en/146135/>.

²⁴⁶ Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), *KIS Announcement for the use of Holocaust Symbols*, May 13, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at

https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=831:kis-announcement-for-the-use-of-holocaust-symbols-&catid=12:2009&Itemid=41; *Greek journalist trivializes Holocaust in a tweet criticizing Opposition leader*, May 17, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at <https://enantiastonianisimitismo.wordpress.com/?s=greek+journalist+trivializes+holocaust>.

²⁴⁷ Renee Maltezos, *Golden Dawn loses its luster as Greeks reject militant far-right*, Reuters, July 8, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-election-golden-dawn/golden-dawn-loses-its-luster-as-greeks-reject-militant-far-right-idUSKCN1U31ND>.

Solution, squeezed into the Greek parliament. Though it is not a Neo Nazi party, it is in the far right of the political spectrum.²⁴⁸

The Greek authorities continue to undertake measure to combat antisemitism. While there is a concern for the still low application of anti-racism law 4285/2014, there were two referrals to trial for antisemitism out of the nine cases referred to trial in 2019-2020.²⁴⁹ Another positive development was the announcement made by the Minister of Education, Kostas Gavroglou, on February 11, that the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Education, has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. It did not take long for the next stage to follow. On November 8, on the eve of Kristallnacht's anniversary, Greek Prime Minister met with the President of the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS) and with the Head of the Greek Delegation to IHRA, to announce the formal adoption of the definition by Greece. Concomitantly, Greece has started the preparations for its 2021 Chairmanship of the IHRA, a position that will put Greece in the forefront of the fight against antisemitism by the preparation and implementation of legislative and educational initiatives.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Teller Report, *Legislative in Greece: the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn retreats, not the far right*, July 8, 2019, accessed March 16, 2020, at <https://www.tellerreport.com/news/2019-07-08---legislative-in-greece--the-neo-nazi-party-golden-dawn-retreats--not-the-far-right-.Hk7gORoeZB.html>.

²⁴⁹ Panayote Dimitras, *Prosecution of racist crimes in Greece 2015-2019*, Greek Helsinki Monitor, October 19, 2019, accessed March 17, 2020, at <https://racistcrimeswatch.wordpress.com/2019/10/19/1-908/>.

²⁵⁰ Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), *KIS Announcement for the Adoption of the Working Definition of Antisemitism by the Ministry of Education*, February 12, 2019, https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=818:kis-announcement-for-the-adoption-of-the-working-defintion-of-antisemitism-by-the-ministry-of-education-&catid=9:deltiatypoy&Itemid=32; *Greece Adopts the Definitions of IHRA for Anti-Semitism and Holocaust Denial – Announcement by the Prime Minister*, 11 November, 2019, https://kis.gr/en/?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=19&fontstyle=f-larger

[in the original – M.N.]; Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece (KIS), *KIS Statement for Kristallnacht and Greek PM's Announcement for the Adoption of IHRA's Definition of Antisemitism*, 9 November, 2019, https://kis.gr/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=855:kis-statement-for-kristallnacht-and-greek-pms-announcement-for-the-adopition-of-ihras-definition-of-antisemitism&catid=54:2009-05-27-11-10-17&Itemid=30

Iran / Liora Hendelman-Baavur

The global outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic in early 2020 activated the Islamic Republic's default mechanism of defense with a barrage of accusations against Iran's enemies. On March 11, the right-wing radical cleric Mehdi Ta'eb, the head of the strategic think-tank 'Ammar Headquarters' and a known conspiracy theorist, released a statement that "the Zionists and Americans created this virus against Iran." In order to hit Iran, he continued, "They are willing to let 100 million people in the world die."²⁵¹ The next day Ali Karami, Professor of Medical Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering at the Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences, said in a televised discussion, that the Americans and Zionists have used the Iranian genome project, developed at Stanford University, in order to create this virus as "ethnic weapons" against Iran.²⁵² These accusations were joined by a new initiative of the organizer of the 2006 Iranian Holocaust cartoon contest, who is now peddling Coronavirus conspiracy theories via a new contest titled "we defeat Coronavirus".²⁵³



Submitted caricature no. 569, the Iranian contest "We Defeat Coronavirus" by Turkish animator Yuksel Cengiz, March 2020

Although the tone and scale of antisemitism in Iran have witnessed a drastic decline since its heyday under the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005-2013), throughout 2019 the Islamic Republic continued to employ and endorse it. Rare incidents like the vandalism of synagogues in Shiraz did not recur since December 2017, yet antisemitic discourse, rhetoric and imagery still prevail and trivialized in state-

²⁵¹ "Ta'eb: Corona was created by the United States and the Zionists," Khabar-e Dagh, March 11, 2020 (accessed April 24, 2020).

²⁵² "This virus has been manipulated," Sobh-e Qazvin, March 12, 2020 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁵³ The contest page on the website of Iran Cartoon (accessed March 30, 2020).

owned media, in publications, in conferences of semi-academic institutions and in cartoon contests. Leading clerics, headed by the country's Spiritual Leader, Ali Khamene'i, also continue to endorse Holocaust denial openly. Despite the persistence of Iranian officials, claiming that the Islamic Republic distinguishes between Zionism and Judaism, and that its rhetoric is not religious or racial and forms part of the needed assistance for the Palestinians and therefore legitimate, visual expressions imbedded in classic antisemitic motifs demonize the Jews as a whole, not just Zionists, often conflating both.²⁵⁴

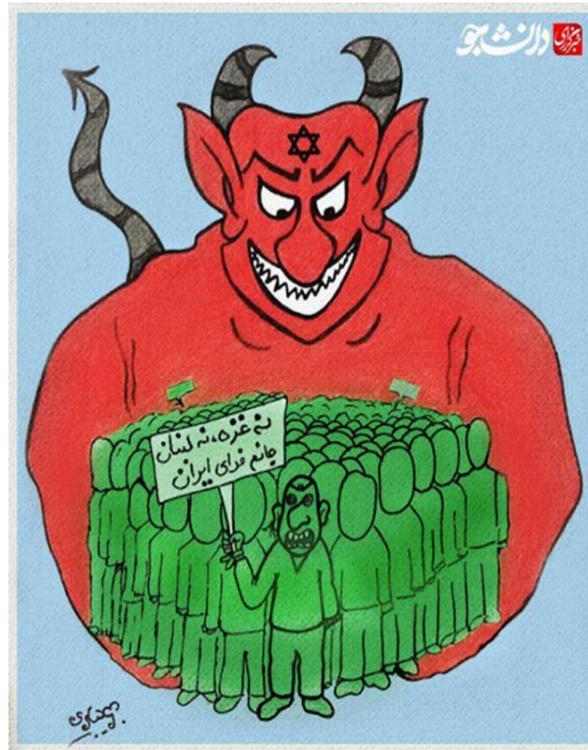
Full-scale crises streaming from political unrest, regional tensions, international isolation, economic paralysis and a series of natural disasters (floods, locust attack, air pollution and earthquakes), that have shaken Iran throughout 2019, were fertile ground for antisemitic manifestations. These were especially conspicuous in news outlets associated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and in cartoons, which draw on classic and modern antisemitic themes, including the demonization and dehumanization of Israel or Jews, and conspiracy theories of Jewish world domination or what they call "international Zionism."

The last days of December 2018 and early days of January 2019 witnessed multiple protests and strikes by wide circles of Iranian society due to economic grievances and the harshening of economic sanctions following the withdrawal of the U.S. from the international accord on Iran's nuclear program (JCPOA). Yet Ayatollah Khamene'i and other Iranian officials have repeatedly alleged that those who participated in the protests were "thugs" and "rioters" instigated and supported by foreign powers, namely the Zionists, Americans and their Arab allies. In a caricature, published in the website of the Student news agency, green-colored protesters (reminiscent of the 2009 movement for democratic reform) gathered behind the banner "neither Gaza nor Lebanon, my life for Iran," are presented as pawns of a contented devil, whose forehead is marked with a Star of David.²⁵⁵ When protests invigorated in November 2019 over an unexpected increase in gasoline prices, once again the head of the IRGC, Hossein Salami, accused "hostile elements", alluding to the U.S. and Israel, for provoking the unrest throughout Iran.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴ On this tendency, see: Meir Litvak, "Iranian Antisemitism and the Holocaust," in *Antisemitism before and Since the Holocaust*, edited by A. McElligott and J. Herf (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 205-229.

²⁵⁵ The caricature appeared in the students' news agency SNN.ir, December 30, 2018 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁵⁶ "Iran's Rouhani calls for release of 'innocent' protesters detained during country's Unrest," France24, December 4, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).



Climate change in Iran and its ramifications were also attributed to foreign interference associated with Israel/Zionists/Jewish influence. In April 2019, Iranian news agencies suggested that the heavy rains and extensive flooding, which have caught Iran by storm, were caused by manipulation of the weather by Iran's enemies and mentioned "the Zionist regime" as the probable culprit.²⁵⁷ This was not the first time that Iranian officials point finger at outside powers for waging a climate war against the Islamic Republic. In 2011 Ahmadinejad has accused European countries of plotting "to cause a drought" in Iran by using high tech equipment,²⁵⁸ and in July 2018, Gholam Reza Jalali, head of Iran's Civil Defense Organization, argued during an agricultural conference that Israel is stealing the water out of clouds passing over the Mediterranean.²⁵⁹ This year a report by the Tasnim, a news agency affiliated with the IRGC, insinuated that the Jewish-American Warner Bros. company produces its futuristic films, like the 2017 movie *Geostorm*, based on information it has about a U.S. plan to control global climate.²⁶⁰

Iran's foreign ministry also played the "blame card" strategy following a series of attacks in mid-2019 on tankers in the Gulf of Oman, which gave rise to additional

²⁵⁷ "Rumors of manipulation in the Iranian climate are due to ignorance and simplification," Tabnak, April 4, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁵⁸ Barney Henderson, "Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says Europe 'stealing Iran's rain'," The Telegraph, May 21, 2011 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁵⁹ Tom O'Connor, "Iran General says Israel behind climate change and is stealing clouds," Newsweek, February 7, 2018 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁶⁰ "Tasnim Special Report: Are the recent floods intentional?," Tasnim, March 30, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

canards and conspiracy theories.²⁶¹ The spokesperson of the Ministry, Hamid Reza Asefi, stated that these attacks were hatched by the Zionist regime of Israel and the U.S. to exert more pressure on the Islamic Republic.²⁶² Similarly, Javad Zarif accused the U.S., Israel and Saudi Arabia of a plot to “sabotage diplomacy” in a conspiracy against Iran to spark war. While the Iranian regime has been forcefully pursuing military adventurism in the Middle East region, Ayatollah Khamene’i has repeatedly attributed the anti-government protests that took place in Iranian allies Lebanon and Iraq to the U.S. and the Zionist regime via his bilingual twitter account as well.²⁶³

In September 14, drones attacked the state-owned Saudi Aramco oil processing facilities at Abqaiq and Khurais in East Saudi Arabia. Shortly after the incident, the Iranian backed Houthi movement in Yemen claimed responsibility for the attack. In a caricature published in Tasnim, the heavy blow of the Yemeni "sword" that landed on Aramco's pipelines, meant to cut the oil revenues and supply for the warmongering U.S., Saudi Arabia, and Israel, which are held responsible for the ongoing fighting in Yemen.²⁶⁴

A dominant theme in Iran's response to regional politics in 2019 is associated with growing concerns in Tehran over the warming ties between Israel and the Gulf states, especially with Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Republic's arch-nemesis. Leaks by senior diplomatic sources in Egypt about multilateral efforts to organize a summit between the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, and the Saudi Crown Prince, Muhammad bin Salman, in Cairo gave rise to a spectrum of verbal reactions, antisemitic illustrations and conspiracy theories in Iran. A broad international media attention to the U.S. led Middle East conference in Warsaw in February triggered Iranian reactions in the hardline media as well. One caricature featured a Saudi lizard and an Israeli rat conniving in a dark cave against a joint target - the Iranian lion.²⁶⁵

²⁶¹ The term "the blame card" was adopted here from Majid Rafizadeh, "Iran's Damaging Anti-Saudi Agenda" Arab News, February 23, 2020 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁶² "US, Israel behind Tanker Incidents in Sea of Oman: Iran's Ex-Envoy," Tasnim, June 17, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁶³ The Supreme Leader of Iran's official website khamenehi.ir, October 30, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁶⁴ The caricature appeared under the headline: "Saudi Arabia's hand under the knife of Yemen's Ansarulla," Tasnim, September 17, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁶⁵ The cartoon appeared under the headline: "Secrete meeting between Ben Salman and Netanyaho," Tasnim, January 15, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).



The Iranian demonization and dehumanization of the Saudi-Israeli alliance often depicted under the auspices of the U.S., presented them equally hostile toward the Islamic republic. On other occasions, they are described as similar in their brutality toward innocent populations, placing emphasis on the antisemitic accusation of "ritual murder" of children, Palestinians by Israel and Yemenis by Saudi Arabia. Additional illustrations evoked stereotypes of Jewish domination by focusing on the submission of the Arabs to a Zionist/Jew or else focused on the treachery of the infidel Arabs.²⁶⁶



Another evocative caricature corresponded with an earlier speech delivered by Grand Ayatollah Nuri-Hamedani, a hardline cleric who in the past insisted that it was necessary to "fight the Jews and vanquish them so that the conditions for the advent

²⁶⁶ The caricature appears under the headline: "The Arabs' submission to the Zionist regime," available at Akhbar-e Khavar Mianeh, March 2, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

of the Hidden Imam [the Shi'i messiah] are met."²⁶⁷ Speaking at a religious conference in Qom in late 2018, Nuri-Hamedani evoked the notion that no one can serve two masters, stating, "The House of Saud cannot serve custodian of the Islamic holy shrines and simultaneously serve America and Israel. Islamic nations are united everywhere in the world and this unity will prevail over all problems".²⁶⁸ Following his speech, a caricature that appeared in Tasnim, captured a Saudi man (*al-Saud*) bending in front of "the Jew" (*al-Yahud*) and his [American] "lackey" (*al-Johud*) while greeting them: "I'm at the service of criminals!"²⁶⁹ Historically, the term *Yahud* or *Johud*, which is rooted in colloquial Persian, had acquired negative connotations in Iranian culture while other terms denoting Jews, like *Musavi* or *Kalimi* (stemming from Musa [Moses] who is considered in Islam as *kalim-Allah* [one who spoke with God]), had more positive association.²⁷⁰



The reinstatement of economic sanctions on Iran after President Donald Trump abandoned the nuclear deal in May 2018, followed by Washington's policy of "maximum pressure" on the government in Tehran to compel it to renegotiate the accord badly affected Iran's economy in 2019. President Hassan Rouhani held Saudi Arabia and its allies, along with the Zionist regime (Israel), responsible for compelling the United States to withdraw from the nuclear agreement with Iran and halt its negotiations with Tehran to lower oil prices.²⁷¹ The following month, the German

²⁶⁷ Quoted in Meir Litvak, "The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Holocaust: Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism," in *Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective: Convergence and Divergence*, edited by Jeffrey Herf (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 255.

²⁶⁸ "Ayatollah Nuri Hamedani: The House of Saud cannot be a servant of the Two Sanctuaries and the US and Israel at the same time," Tasnim, November 27, 2018 (accessed, April 25, 2020).

²⁶⁹ The caricature appeared in the news agency Tasnim, December 2, 2018 (accessed April 20, 2020).

²⁷⁰ Orly R. Rahimiyan, "'The Jew has Money Too': Representations of Jews in Twentieth Century Iranian Culture," in *Constructing Nationalism in Iran: From the Qajars to the Islamic Republic*, edited by Meir Litvak (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 175-6.

²⁷¹ The President of the Islamic Republic, Hassan Rouhani in a meeting with artists, the official Presidential website, May 18, 2019, and also Editorial Staff, "Rouhani Blames Saudi, Israel for Trump's Exit from Iran Deal," Iran Front Page, October 16, 2019 (accessed April 20, 2020).

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas visit to Iran received widespread coverage in the country's media, which seemed to unanimously criticize Germany and the EU for their inability to help Iran circumvent U.S. sanctions and fulfill obligations as part of the nuclear deal. The ultra-conservative newspaper Javan ran a front-page cartoon depicting Maas wearing blue Star of David glasses, a necktie depicting the American flag, a swastika armband, sporting a toothbrush mustache and performing a Nazi salute.²⁷²



Another leading ultraconservative daily Kayhan claimed that a "significant number of German parliament seats are held by non-German Zionists." The newspaper also called the German approach toward what it described as the "illegitimate and childlike regime" of Israel as "degrading" and "nothing but slavery".²⁷³ Drifting beyond legitimate criticism of international relations and foreign policy, Javan's portrayal of the Zionist-Nazi and Kayhan's column are an unambiguous manifestation of Holocaust inversion, a depiction in which the victim and the perpetrator conflate. Seeking to delegitimize Israel by associating it with the epitome of evil (Nazi Germany), according to Manfred Gerstenfeld, is not only a distortion of history but symbolically shifts the moral responsibility for genocide, and thus contains elements of Holocaust denial.²⁷⁴

The motif of Israel as "the devilish Jew" in Iranian media recurred in cartoons responding to leaks about the Trump administration's plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A cartoon by Mozaffar Yulchibu, published in the Tehran-based reformist newspaper 'Ettamad on May 7, depicts Premier Netanyahu as a vampire under the headline: "this gentleman is bloodthirsty."²⁷⁵

²⁷² "Iranian media portrayed German Foreign Minister Haiku Moss as a Nazi," Deutsche Welle, DW, June 12, 2019 (accessed April 20, 2020).

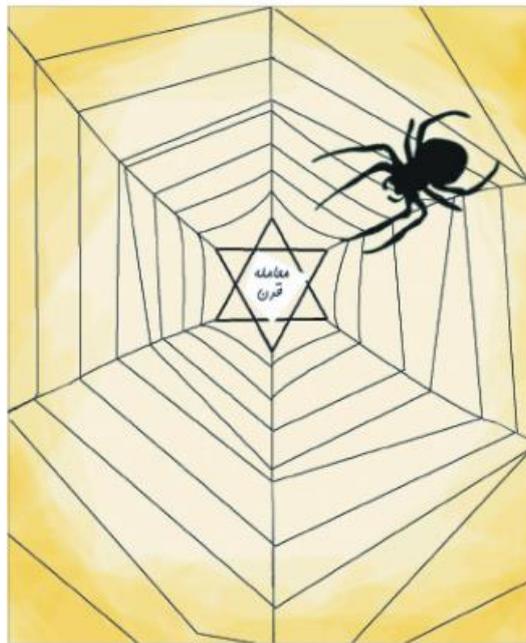
²⁷³ "Germany should apologize," Kayhan, June 11, 2019 (accessed April 20, 2020).

²⁷⁴ Manfred Gerstenfeld, "The Abuse of Holocaust Memory Chapter Seven: Holocaust Inversion: The Portraying of Israel and Jews as Nazis," April 21, 2017, accessed April 20, 2020, at ManfredGerstenfeld.com.

²⁷⁵ "This gentleman is bloodthirsty," Ettamad, May 7, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).



The association of Judaism with malevolent creatures (zoomorphism), a classic antisemitic motif, appeared in another cartoon published in Javan. It shows the "Deal of the Century" weaved inside a Star of David within a broader spider's web, insinuating the Zionists/Jews control America.²⁷⁶



By late 2019, Ayatollah Khamene'i has blamed "the Zionists" for distorting the words of the Imam (Khomeini) regarding the elimination of Israel, and emphasized that "the enemies of the Islamic Republic are the Zionists and the Zionist regime, not the Jews".²⁷⁷ Yet his endorsement of Holocaust denial, antisemitism at its peak, quickly followed. Exactly a month later, in mid-December, Khamene'i tweeted (in both Persian

²⁷⁶ The caricature appeared in the newspaper Javan, June 1, 2019 (accessed March 29, 2020).

²⁷⁷ "Ayatollah Khamene'i: Israel's elimination is not the extermination of the Jews, we must help the Palestinians," BBC in Persian, November 15, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

and English) his annual commemoration of Roger Garaudy, a noted French Holocaust denier, including the quote: "The Jews exaggerated about killing themselves by Hitler in World War II."²⁷⁸

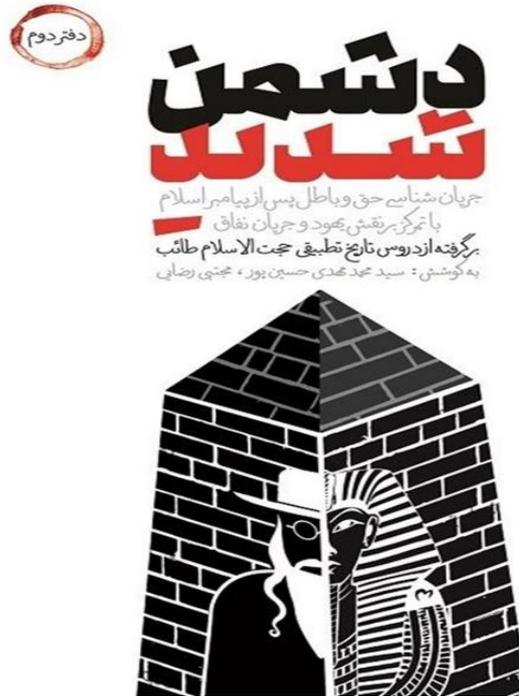
The persistence of the Islamic Republic to echo the classic themes of Jews as "evil conspirators" and "fabricators of holy scriptures" enable the diffusion of an antisemitic interpretation of Islamic-Shi'i history that corresponds with the Iranian regime's anti-Zionist indoctrination. In May 2019 the second volume of a series titled: "The Fierce Enemy" (*doshman-e shadid*) was published by the Qom-based Shahid Kazemi Press. The series engage with re-affirming Imam Ali's succession according to the Shi'i narrative and exposing the alleged role of the Jews in falsifying the early history of Islam.²⁷⁹ The illustration on the book cover suggests a correlation between the image of Pharaoh (on the right), who is presented in the Qur'an as a tyrannical ruler and serves a timeless paradigm of a sinner, idolater as well as an oppressor and a conservative Jew (on the left), as if they were opposite sides of the same coin.²⁸⁰ Whereas the Umayyad Yazid Ibn Mu'awiyah epitomizes the ultimate oppressor in Shi'ism, the book's suggested-linkage directs the attention to a new target in Iranian imagination. On various occasions, the book's author the cleric Mehdi Ta'eb has stated that the Jews need to go through three stages to achieve their goals of reaching the "promised land": to seize Jerusalem, to "liberate" the territory between the Nile and the Euphrates, and then to gradually take over the rest of the world.²⁸¹

²⁷⁸ "Iranian leader Khamenei praises French Holocaust denier on Twitter," Jewish News Syndicate, December 17, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁷⁹ "The role of the Jews," Tasnim, May 26, 2019 (accessed April 24, 2020).

²⁸⁰ On the image of Pharaoh and the concept of tyranny, see Agnieszka Erdt, "The Concept of Tyranny in the Anti-Israeli Discourse in Contemporary Iran," in *Iran, Israel, and the Jews: Symbiosis and Conflict from Achaemenids to the Islamic Republic*, edited by Aaron Koller and Daniel Tsadik (Oregon, 2019), p. 401.

²⁸¹ Khaybar.net, "Iranian Ideologue Mehdi Ta'eb: The Jews Are Behind Media, ISIS; Plot to Take Over the World," MEMRI, November 29, 2018 (accessed April 5, 2020).



Revisionist narratives with similar gross accusations also continue to find their way online and disseminate via semi-scientific institutions such as the Center for Jewish Studies. Operating under Iran's virtual domain and in affiliation with the Supreme Leader's website, the center has close to 11,000 registered members and over 9,000 followers in its telegram account. One of its leading posts in 2019, for instance, associated the martyrdom of the Prophet's daughter, Fatima, in the seventh century with Jewish intrigues.²⁸²

Several neo-Nazi websites, like *i-nazi.ir*, operate under the Islamic Republic's virtual domain as well. The website of the Iranian National Socialist Organization (INSO), Iran Shahr, disavows any political activity, and proclaims to be a law-abiding research and scientific institution for historical studies (see its banner on the left). Other than diffusing adulation to Adolf Hitler, the Nazi Party and its fascist ideology, the first issue of INSO's monthly organ, published in December 2019, was dedicated to "the myth of the Holocaust" (on the right).²⁸³

²⁸² The website of the Iranian Center for Jewish Studies jscenter.ir (accessed April 15, 2020).

²⁸³ The website of Iranshahr.ir (accessed April 20, 2020).



Finally, antisemitism and anti-Zionism constitute two building blocks in the ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran,²⁸⁴ and the IRGC's increasing role in advancing this ideology both in overt and covert means may not come as a surprise. In September, the Tehran-based NGO "the International Institute of Independent Thinkers and Artists," held the New Horizon (Ofac Now) Conference in Beirut for the first time in its seven-year history, which focused on Israel's influence on the U.S. foreign policy.²⁸⁵ Operated by Iranian key figures who are personally sanctioned by the U.S. for operating on behalf of the IRGC,²⁸⁶ the New Horizon's conferences openly solicit contributions from "high-ranking anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist" from Europe and America.²⁸⁷

Whereas the Islamic Republic promotes neo-fascist ideas via the sponsorship of international conferences, in 2019 Tehran has managed to disrupt an initiative to host a traveling exhibition created by YadVashem to highlight Muslim Albanians who sheltered Jews during the Holocaust. The exhibition was to be hosted by the London-based Center for Islamic Enlightenment, which is run by a Shi'a sect that follows Grand Ayatollah Sadeq Hosseini Shirazi. Nevertheless, this initiative to create a united front of Jews and Muslims against hatred, encountered heavy pressure by Tehran and other Islamists that eventually led to its cancelation.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ Rusi Jaspal, "Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism in Iran: The Effects of Identity, Threat, and Political Trust," *Contemporary Jewry* 35 (2015), pp. 211–235.

²⁸⁵ The New Horizon website, "About us," <http://newhorizon.ir/about-us/> (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁸⁶ "Treasury Sanctions Iranian Organizations and Individuals Supporting Intelligence and Cyber Targeting of U.S. Persons," Press Release US Department of Treasury, February 13, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁸⁷ David Israel, "Tehran Launches Anti-Zionism Conference in Beirut," *Jewish Press*, September 24, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

²⁸⁸ "Holding an Exhibition in Support of the Holocaust in the Bureau of the Shirazi Sect," *Mehr News Agency*, January 11, 2019 (accessed April 25, 2020).

Italy / Stefano Gatti and Betti Guetta (CDEC)

The *Osservatorio antisemitismo* of the Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center (CDEC) in Milan is the only center on the Italian Peninsula that monitors, collects, compiles and studies antisemitic incidents (assault, threats, damage and desecration, abusive behavior, etc.) in Italy. *Osservatorio* is especially engaged in monitoring antisemitism online due to its recent dramatic increase.

Antisemitic incidents are reported to *Osservatorio* in a number of ways, most commonly by mail, through its website and by phone, particularly the 24hour hotline *Antenna Antisemitismo*, run on behalf of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities (UCEI). It is a facility established to record and analyze reports of antisemitic incidents.

Osservatorio disseminates collected information and data and supports initiatives that report and combat antisemitic acts. Its website (www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it), daily updated, numbers approximately 500 daily entries, at times it peaks 3,000. Web query from Google on the term “anti-Semitism” shows that *Osservatorio* website is on its page one, at the top of results. Its archive includes the most comprehensive library in Italy of antisemitic books published since 1945. Moreover, it keeps numerous collections of antisemitic magazines, photos, audio and video tapes/recordings.

Osservatorio works, since December 2019, with Vox – Osservatorio Italiano sui diritti allo studio on the “La Mappa dell’Intolleranza” [Map of Intolerance], in collaboration with Università Statale of Milano, Università of Bari, Università La Sapienza of Rome and the Sociology Department of the Università Cattolica of Milano.

Antisemitism in Italy in 2019: methodological approach

Osservatorio classifies an antisemitic incident as any malicious act aimed at Jews, and Jewish organizations or property, where there is evidence that the victim or victims were targeted because they are (or are believed to be) Jewish. In this vein, it has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of Antisemitism.

Osservatorio does not trawl the internet looking for online incidents to log. It records only antisemitic incidents that are reported either by the media or by a person who is a victim or witness.

The total of antisemitic incidents recorded in 2019 is only indicative, as the actual amount of antisemitic incidents is much larger. An accurate figure would be impossible to quantify. It is more frequent a serious antisemitic incident to be reported than a verbal or written one. Hence, the collected data mirror only the reported incidents and not reflect the whole spectrum of antisemitic incidents occurred throughout the year. The *under-reporting*, namely the lack of reporting of antisemitic incidents, represents a significant problem as it distorts the real understanding of the phenomenon. A second relevant problem is the *under-recording*: police forces or the legal units fail in judging a crime to be antisemitic.

In any case, it is undeniable that existing data indicate that Antisemitism is on the rise. Antisemitism keeps growing visibility on social media, it has become normalized and harassment is a daily occurrence.

This report describes antisemitic incidents perpetrated by single individuals or groups of extremists – neo-Nazis, haters of Israel, religious fanatics etc. – which disseminate their hatred mainly on online platforms. Whereas violent anti-Jewish acts distinguish the extremist political groups (right, left, etc.), prejudice against Jews is widely spread among socio-cultural classes and political and ideological groups. Prejudice emerges in many forms, from different sides of the political spectrum.

Antisemitic incidents in Italy in 2019

251 antisemitic incidents has been registered in 2019, a significant rise compared to 197 incidents in 2018.

	2019	2018	2017
January	23	14	13
February	22	13	10
March	17	8	3
April	26	24	8
May	26	24	10
June	20	25	10
July	21	20	19
August	13	14	4
September	22	13	14
October	19	16	9
November	24	13	21
December	18	13	9
TOTAL	251	197	130

Breakdown of Antisemitic Incident

Posts	173
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Defamation and insults	31
Graffiti/Imagery	23
Threats	9
Mass-media	5
Vandalism	3
Banalization of the Holocaust	3
Assaults	2
Discrimination	2
TOTAL	251

Online Antisemitism

The rise of antisemitic incidents, in particular incidents that involve social media, is related to events in which the Jews and/or the State of Israel are at the center of attention.

The second half of 2019 in Italy was characterized by two significant phenomena: The growth of intolerance and Holocaust denial, and the intensification of the political debate around the appointment in January 2018 of Liliana Segre (survivor of Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp) as Senator for life. This prompted the Italian government to appoint Professor Milena Santerini as national coordinator for the fight against antisemitism.

Antisemitism is increasing at the global level and wildly prevalent in social media. One of the main issues today regarding antisemitism is the standardization of the phenomenon on the web, which gives antisemitic speech a tremendously loud and hateful echo. Social media has proven an essential and convenient vessel, through which those who wish to harass, abuse and threaten Jewish individuals and institutions, as well as those who simply wish to disseminate their prejudice, are able to freely express their antisemitism. Antisemitism is fully legitimized. Even more troubling, antisemitic messages often include incitement to violence.

Numerous sites function around the clock to advance racial hatred, preaching white supremacy, classical antisemitism, and more violence-inspiring prejudice, all of which, not ineptly, have been suggestively lumped together under the label of "Hate". In such an environment, the promotion of conspiracy theories, the resurgence of stereotypes from the Middle Ages, the demonization of Jews/Zionists and the Jewish state, the use of the Jews/Zionists as scapegoats has become the norm. As a result, they may lead to fierce actions against the Jews.

Web 2.0 has allowed the development of a culture in which racism, intolerance and antisemitism became socially accepted, particularly among young people. For

example, a Whatsapp group called “Shoah Party”, created by Italian teens in October 2019, shared antisemitic, racist, Nazi and pedopornographic contents.

Online antisemitism is openly conveyed and expressed while using extremely aggressive and demonizing iconographic and lexical forms. Antisemitic posts are innumerable. *Osservatorio antisemitismo* regularly monitors about 200 social media (Facebook, Twitter, VK, etc.). In 2019 *Osservatorio* selected and collected 2,565 posts [652 of groups like “Revisionismo Storico”, “Fronte Palestina”, “Rothschild la bestia che domina il mondo” (Rothschild the beast that runs the world), and 1,913 of individuals like Chris el Malik, Joe Fallisi, Fra-Fra-Fra].

Prevalent online antisemitic posts, sorted below by order of relevance, relate to:

- Neonazis/Neofascism ideology
- Conspiracy theories
- Anti-Zionism ideology
- Banalization and trivialization of the Shoah

In 2019, *Osservatorio* recorded 314 online websites, which share antisemitic contents, and classified them by four ideological standpoints, although their messages often overlap.

Radical right: 118

Antisemitism has always been part of the far-right extremist and neo-Nazi speech. On the web, far right extremist websites and social network groups are quite active demonstrating, through their various publications, the supremacy of the White race and the danger “caused by” the Jewish people in Europe. They promote Nazi theories with strict symbols and codes.

Conspiracy: 112

The resurgence of conspiracy theories is more than popular on the web. These websites spread the theories which accuse Jews of being responsible for the most recent and tragic events, in order to supposedly control the world. These theories have been quite popular since the end of the 19th century with the publication of the famously false tract, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The access to the web gave these theories a “second chance” by using the same approach as a century ago.

Anti-Zionism: 68

These websites apply classical antisemitic stereotypes (e.g. deicide, blood libel accusation, exploitation, hatred against mankind) to the State of Israel and to “Zionists”.

Holocaust denial: 16

A constant trend in antisemitic discourse is Holocaust denial and distortion, and a manipulation of the Shoah for antisemitic purposes. These websites attempt to negate the established facts of the Nazi genocide of European Jews. Holocaust denial and

distortion generally claim that the Holocaust was invented or exaggerated by Jews as part of a plot to advance Jewish interests.

The Italian most virulent antisemitic website is “*Maurizio Blondet&Friends*” (about 30,000 daily entries), which regularly posts antisemitic articles.

Antisemitic slurs

Even if antisemitism was always prevalent amongst far-right extremists and branches of neo-Nazis, it is also popular among other groups, for example the anti-Zionists pro-BDS, the global movement of boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel.

Antisemitic allegations include a wide array of conspiracy theories which blame Jews for many problems. This issue has crystallized around a series of clichés – prominent in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* – purportedly describing the Jewish plan for global domination. It also targets the straw man stereotype of Jews as bankers in control of the world’s economies, manipulators of public opinion abusing mass media, and oppressors of independent nations’ free potential. This stereotype arsenal has diversified by adding a series of new characters (for instance the “American Jewish lobby”, etc.) and also movements like the “No Vax”.

The Arab-Israeli conflict helps to feed antipathy towards the Jews, as they are popularly associated with Israel and its politics. Israel is compared to Nazi Germany, and the Gaza Strip is portrayed as a concentration camp. The demonization of the State of Israel, considered the embodiment of all evil, fuels antisemitism. Invariably, the most popular, recurring and present antisemitic allegations refer to the State of Israel.

Holocaust denial, distortion and trivialization, which strengthen antisemitic hatred and conspiracy-fueled sentiments, are disseminated on social platforms. “New” antisemitism shares most of its traits with the “old” antisemitism which prevailed in Europe until the end of the Second World War. The blood libel accusation is a recurrent motif in the anti-Jewish propaganda campaign, and old and new caricatures stressing grotesque facial features or criminal activities as well as other antisemitic tropes freely circulate in the web.

An alarming trend of antisemitic incidents was discerned in schools: verbal abuses directed at Jewish students, online trivialization of the Shoah and antisemitic offences posted on Facebook by teachers.

Defamation and insults

Perpetrators are usually neo-Nazis, anti-Zionists pro-BDS and those who accuse Jews of conspiracy. Symbols of the Palestinian cause propaganda - flags, pennants, stickers, etc., were sent by regular mail to Rabbis of five Italian Jewish Communities.

Graffiti/imagery

Most of the perpetrators are far right extremists. They often are hooligans of Italian soccer teams. The word “Jew” or antisemitic jeers are shouted or written to insult the opponent team. The main target of antisemitic hatred remains Holocaust victim Anne

Frank, whose name and image became in recent years an unwelcome focus of offenders. For instance, the Star of David was spray-painted on a wall next to the shop of a Jewish trader in Leghorn and swastikas were drawn on the intercom of a Jewish couple (he is a rabbi and the wife a teacher) in Rome.

Threats

Perpetrators are usually far right extremists, although one of the most virulent offenders on social media is a far left ex-terrorist.

Vandalism

Most of damage and desecration incidents are perpetrated by far right extremists. For example, on the periphery of Asti a farmer reproduced on his field, using his tractor, a gigantic swastika; in Fosdinovo, a town in Central Italy, some Neonazis vandalized the Partisans commemorative plaque; and a young hooligan broke a window of the Trieste synagogue with a blunt object.

Physical assaults

For the first time in years two antisemitic assaults were recorded in 2019. In Rome a woman was spitted in the face by a neo-Nazi, and in Prunetto, a small town in Northern Italy, a man was insulted and slapped by a stranger.

Discrimination

Incidents of discrimination refer to anti-Zionism/far left extremism. In Sardinia an Israeli musician was removed from a music Festival program because he was considered a “Zionist”. BDS-Italy has promoted a vast campaign to boycott Israeli goods. About 100 far left organizations have jointed the BDS-Italy campaign.

Public speech

Osservatorio investigates and focuses also on the opinion of Italians about Jews. In the last decades, racist and antisemitic prejudices have become by and large more legitimate. Prejudices and stereotypes against the Jews are common in public speeches of Italian public figures. They foment xenophobia, intolerance and antisemitism. Their antisemitic expressions go unchallenged, and are widely disseminated, amplified and shared on social platforms, often re-posted or doubled down. Some politicians, professors, intellectuals and journalists have used fake news to corroborate their antisemitic claims.

Antisemitic books

In 2019 *Osservatorio antisemitismo* registered the publication of 50 antisemitic books (49 in 2018). 15 are re-prints of books, whereas 35 are new books. Books such as Nikolai Gogol’s “Taras Bulba” or Georges Simenon’s “The Madman of Bergerac” – despite their antisemitic prejudices and sinister sentiments – are not included in this total. Only books devoted to polemic against the Jews are enumerated.

Italian publishing houses that release antisemitic books are numerous, and some have been active since the 1960s. Most of the published books contain conspiracy theories, others are re-prints of Nazi ideologues' texts, or support Holocaust denial theories. 21 Italian publishing houses published antisemitic books:

- 9 are linked to conspiracy ideology;
- 6 are linked to far right ideology;
- 3 are linked to pre-Council Catholicism;
- 1 is linked to far left ideology;
- 1 is linked to Islamism;
- 1 does not relate to any particular ideology, it is rather a general publishing company.

Although the antisemitic books published in 2019 received almost no attention by mass-media, they were attentively reviewed by numerous social networks, websites, and public fora. Some books, in particular those dealing with conspiracy theories, sell very well, and they are available on Amazon or IBS.

Netherlands / Hanna Luden (CIDI)

Summary report

"I will not let them scare me," said the owner of the kosher restaurant HaCarmel in Amsterdam, where a suspicious package was placed at the door in early January. This was not the first incident involving this restaurant, whose windows were previously smashed in an attack in late 2017. The security of Jewish institutions has greatly increased in recent years. This time the threat fortunately turned out to be 'just' a fake bomb. Should Jews fear for their security in the Netherlands? And in Europe? Should they fear for their safety because they are Jewish? The world saw several violent incidents against Jews in 2019, such as the attack on a synagogue in the German city of Halle during Yom Kippur prayer and the attack during Hanukkah in the American state of New Jersey. Although the Netherlands was spared such tragedies, 2019 was not a quiet year as far as antisemitism is concerned. CIDI registered 182 antisemitic incidents²⁸⁹, excluding incidents of online hate speech. This number marks an increase of 35 percent since 2018.

However, it seems that many incidents remain unreported. For this reason, the CIDI Monitoring is not an absolute representation of the situation in the Netherlands, but

²⁸⁹ *An incident is an occurrence of an antisemitic act, which may be a repeated event. For instance, when the same person verbally abuses a number of people because of their (alleged) Jewish identity in the same way, this is counted as one incident, even when there are multiple victims. This prevents a biased measurement of antisemitic occurrences. However, it also means that large-scale incidents contribute the same to totals as less significant ones*

because the same methodology has been used over the years, the results are reliable and accurately reflect fluctuations and trends, and thus highlight problems as well as achievements.

A closer look at the figures

The incidents have been divided into categories. In the category "Real Life" - antisemitic interactions in person - the number of antisemitic incidents more than doubled. 61 'real life' incidents were recorded, compared to 27 in 2018, an increase of 126 percent. Verbal abuse has never been more frequent than during this year. It is the highest number of antisemitic verbal abuse ever measured. CIDI does not record online antisemitic hate speech in a comprehensive manner. The vast number of such expressions simply makes this impossible. In order to grasp the scope of the problem better, CIDI commissioned a research organization to conduct a study of antisemitic hate on social media.

Monitoring results

The number of antisemitic incidents in the category "Public Sphere" has almost doubled - an increase of 92 percent; 26 in 2018 versus 50 incidents in 2019. In the subcategory 'Sport', incidents have tripled from 5 to 16. Antisemitic chants by soccer fans accounted for the vast majority of the increase. Within the category 'Public Sphere', the subcategory 'Demonstrations' also grew explosively, from 5 to 18 incidents. The BDS demonstrations on Dam Square in Amsterdam turned out to be fertile ground for antisemitic expressions. The number of written antisemitic abuse (letters, e-mail messages) rose to 25 incidents compared to 21 in 2018. Here, too, a medium shift was observed: what was once sent by letter and e-mail is now often expressed via social media. Numbers alone do not tell the whole story. For instance, reports of Far-Right antisemitism have slightly decreased. However, such political antisemitism takes place overwhelmingly on the Internet, on discussion platforms and on social media. Besides, reporters of 'ordinary' incidents often do not know what the perpetrator's political views are. A promising decline in the number of incidents can be seen in two categories: the number of incidents in the immediate vicinity (with neighbors, at school and at work) fell from 40 in 2018, to 28 in 2019. In the category of vandalism (destruction and graffiti), the number of registered incidents fell from 21 in 2018, to 14 in 2019. This contrasts with developments in other countries, where several desecrations of graves have been reported. Unfortunately, the year 2020 started with a grave desecration in the Dutch town Dordrecht. This might be "copycat" behavior. Such phenomena of mutual influences are well-known.

Online Antisemitism

CIDI recorded 127 examples of antisemitic hate speech on social media. In the recent years, we have witnessed a shift in antisemitic activity to the digital sphere. CIDI regularly and increasingly receives reports of antisemitism on social media, including Facebook, twitter, YouTube.

In the autumn of 2020 CIDI commissioned – for the first time - a research organisation to systematically analyse the on-line segment using (semi) automatic methods. Unfortunately, due to technical limitations, platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram as well as images and videos could be analysed.

Twitter. An extensive automatic analysis followed by human control, resulted in 747 Dutch-language tweets which clearly contain antisemitic texts; 52% of cases consist of so-called *classic antisemitism*, such as "Secretary Timmermans is a traitor whose Jewish master still wants us to go to the gulag". In 68% of the cases contain a negative reference to Jews and Israel, while 11% contain Antisemitic references to the Holocaust.

Websites and Forums. The research revealed 286 Dutch-language websites, blogs and forums that contain antisemitism. Classical Jew-hatred predominates in 79% of the cases, followed by anti-Zionism with antisemitic character. Conspiracy theories about Israel and "the Jewish lobby" appear in many classic antisemitic incidents. Examples are Maroc.nl and Morocco.nl.

The Working Definition of Antisemitism and criticism of Israel

In the past year, the discussion about the IHRA's working definition of antisemitism has flared up again. The European Parliament and many countries such as Germany and France have adopted the definition as a legally non-binding instrument. The Dutch Parliament and some city councils (including Amsterdam) have also done so. This means that the definition provides a reference for policy-makers to determine whether a statement, behavior, or situation is antisemitic in nature. Not everyone is happy with the definition, and this is mainly related to where the boundary lies between criticism of Israel and antisemitism, and to comparisons between current events and the Holocaust.

We have found the IHRA Working Definition a useful instrument for recognizing and consciously dealing with antisemitism. However, collecting evidence remains a major challenge when registering incidents. Two examples for illustration: (1) A family is convinced that a violent incident against them has antisemitic motives. As CIDI could not confirm nor disprove this, it could not include the incident in its records. (2) Auschwitz images were sold for decoration via the online shop bol.com. - a disgusting case, which required considerable efforts to have it removed, but the reference to Jews could not be shown.

Recommendations

Antisemitism and racism should always be recognized, named and condemned as soon as they appear. This also applies to the virtual world and to social media platforms. Being alert to this should be everyone's task: in the street, at school, in discussion

groups, on social media, in the halls of parliament and elsewhere. Both repressive and preventive measures are needed for a safe society free of hatred and antisemitism.

- Train police, civil servants, teachers, etc. on awareness and sensitivity to antisemitism;
- Teach about Judaism and the Holocaust. Portraying Jews only as victims and not as a vibrant culture is an obstacle to understanding;
- Train teachers and provide them with tools to fight conspiracy theories;
- Recognize and combat antisemitic abuse, regardless if the victim is Jewish;
- Provide insight into data on antisemitic crime; not only the number of incidents should be reported, but also the type of incidents and the perpetrators should be identified;
- Encourage reporting of antisemitic incidents and ensure fast, smooth procedures;
- Push social media companies to keep their platforms “clean”;
- Promote digital citizenship and media literacy to curb and reduce online the spread of hatred;
- Track down offenders, even when hiding behind anonymous online accounts;
- Continuously improve the effectiveness of measures taken by social media companies to prevent and combat antisemitism;
- The recent initiative to combat racism in soccer is a welcome step. CIDI encourages implementing credible repressive measures as well as working on a supporter-friendly environment; use supporters’ positive energy to promote tolerance and respect for diversity as a culture in the stadiums.

Portugal / Ruth Calvão²⁹⁰

What has changed in 2019?

A peculiar combination of forces, from an anti-Israeli extreme left/left coalition government to an anti-Jewish extreme right in Parliament, growing sentiments of national fundamentalism as result of migration to Europe as well as a significant rise of requests for Portuguese nationality by Sephardic Jews, brought to surface a significant increase of antisemitic manifestations and anti-Zionism.

1. Antisemitism as “ancestral hate”

The idea of a “wave” of Jewish/Israeli “invasion” to Portugal has been exploited in the media and increased significantly in 2019, giving the wrong feeling that there are “thousands” of Jews/Israelis who are living in the country. There are currently about 150-200 citizens living in Portugal of the 49,000 who applied for nationality. Only about 12,000 have obtained it to date. Most of them come from Israel but also from France, England and Turkey. Stereotypes of ancestral hate such as Jews control the world's economics, business, media and politics are striking roots in the public as well as in government bodies that often express insulting phrases against Jews. For example, "Jews always bring wealth so it is important to attract them to our economy;" "Jews have always been traditional tax collectors and know how to make money so they will now give a push to Portugal;" "It is an opportunity for us to be able to give letters to the world again, and the Jews are the ones who control the world finances and so the more the better;" They "are money making machines;" "There are no poor Jews, so if they bought or settled in a village, they will pull it out of the hole."

These phrases were uttered by government officials, linked to tourism, investment and agriculture in public speeches / events / interviews, in what was supposed to be a compliment. There were several documentaries and interviews about the “invasive wave” also on the four national TV channels and leading newspapers where the focus of the speech was “the Jews came to enrich us and do business,” stressing that Portugal is a welcoming country without antisemitism, and whitewashing Portugal's role during the Inquisition and the Holocaust. The perception that remains, in most cases, is that the Jewish people actually had no reason to “leave” in these periods.

Therefore, it is increasingly unfavorable to present the motivation of the newcomers to the country as well as the Jewish contribution to various areas of society. For example, the control by Altice, a French multinational telecommunications corporation founded and headed by French-Israeli billionaire Patrick Drahi, of the national communications company (PT/MEO) triggered a spate of

²⁹⁰ The author is thankful to the community members: Jose Carp and Miriam Assor (Lisbon), Hugo Vaz (Porto) and Moisés Morão (Belmonte) for the material they provided her.

antisemitic comments on social and regular media. The direct consequence is a greater discomfort and a marked distrust in the mainstream population of this new Jewish presence, which for centuries was considered “unassailable, individuals useless to society, devoid of scruples, with no inclination towards agriculture, in addition to being factors of ethnic and religious disintegration.”

According to the three Portuguese Jewish communities in Lisbon, Porto, and Belmonte, and my own work in areas related to nationality, tourism and the Center for Jewish Studies in Trás-os-Montes (CEJTM), there were no recorded acts/actions of attack on people, property damage, theft or physical violence. I did not have direct knowledge of any case of this nature, however, the National Observatory has not yet published its annual internal security report.

There is a greater sense of security in northern Portugal (Porto and Belmonte) manifested by members of these communities with regard to the use of Jewish symbols in the public space as well as participation in Jewish events. Their main concern is whether the situation of Portuguese “bubble” in the face of an increasingly anti-Jewish Europe will continue.

In decreasing order, antisemitism was more felt in terms of discriminatory gestures, words of hate/racism, threats and verbal harassment, slogans, posters in public spaces:

- The worst by far is the internet;
- Media other than the internet;
- Political events;
- Social situations;
- In political discourse/political debate;
- In the academic world;
- In public space/cultural events;
- Sports and other events.

According to the government's annual report on cybersecurity in 2019, the Portuguese attitudes towards online hate speech is underestimated and taken less seriously than in other European countries.²⁹¹

Examples of antisemitism

Cartoons

- A cartoon by cartoonist António e André Carrilho published in the newspaper *Expresso*, featuring US President Donald Trump blind wearing a Jewish skullcap while being led by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as his guide dog donning a

²⁹¹ Centro Nacional de Cibersegurança (CNCS), *Relatório Cibersegurança Em Portugal* (December 2019), accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.cncs.gov.pt/observatorio/relatorios>; António Bento, "O anti-semitismo em Portugal resumido em sete anedotas judaicas," *Observador*, February 7, 2020, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://observador.pt/opiniaao/o-anti-semitismo-em-portugal-resumido-em-sete-anedotas-judaicas>.

Star of David collar around his neck, did not meet any public reaction. Only some members of the Jewish community repudiated it in comments on social networks. Had it not been for the *New York Times* that caused a week later a worldwide debate on freedom of opinion and expression and antisemitism, it would have been forgotten in "Terras Lusas" (Portugal), where the cartoon was not considered as antisemitic or pejorative.²⁹²

- Another well-known cartoonist, Vasco Gargalo, published few caricatures in newspapers with a clear antisemitic message, but they continue to be published. One of them featured Benjamin Netanyahu pushing a coffin covered with the Palestinian flag into an oven under the slogan "Arbeir Macht Frei." Apart from the Lisbon Community and few International Jewish NGOs that condemned them and asked for their removal nothing was done so far.²⁹³

A Neo-Nazi conference

On Saturday, August 10, an unprecedented conference of European neo-Nazis was organized in Lisbon by the New Social Order (Nova Ordem Social - NOS) movement, led by Mário Machado. About 100 people were present. "From Spain to Poland, through Bulgaria, Italy, Germany and France, this afternoon several NOS 'comrades' will be present from Europe. Among them is a member of the German Die Rechte party, Matthias Deyda, who described Adolf Hitler as 'the greatest German statesman in history,' or Josele Sanchez, director of the far-right digital daily *La Tribuna de Cartagena*." ²⁹⁴

Anti-Zionism/ Antisemitism/Anti -Israel

The Portuguese left continued its ferocious anti-Zionism/anti-Israel campaign in public and private media, almost normalizing antisemitic rhetoric. This rhetoric is less and less questioned and leads to the expression of opinions with no historical basis and no concrete facts, and without being aware that criticism of Israel can be done without being antisemitic. This fact associated with the "Jewish wave", mentioned above, is explained by a socialist politician as: "Bourgeois capitalism was identified as a synonym for Jewish capitalism that exploits the work of others and stops producing, becoming parasitic." Consequently, Israel and the US are perceived as an imperialist and

²⁹² Miguel Marujo, "Cartoon de António acusado de antissemitismo. NYTimes pede desculpas por o publicar," *Diário de Notícias*, April 29, 2019, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.dn.pt/cultura/cartoon-de-antonio-acusado-de-antissemitismo-nytimes-pede-desculpas-por-o-publicar-10843545.html>.

²⁹³ Daniel Dias, "Cartoonista Vasco Gargalo acusado de anti-semitismo por comunidade Judaica," *Publico*, February 4, 2020, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.publico.pt/2020/02/04/culturaipsilon/noticia/cartoonista-vasco-gargalo-acusado-antisemitismo-comunidade-judaica-1902857>.

²⁹⁴ "Os rostos da conferência neonazi em Lisboa, *Sábado*, August 10, 2019, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.sabado.pt/portugal/detalhe/os-rostos-da-conferencia-neonazi-em-lisboa>; "Líder de movimento extremista Mário Machado diz que 'é alvo a abater'," *Dnoticias*, August 10, 2019, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.dnoticias.pt/pais/lider-de-movimento-extremista-mario-machado-diz-que-e-alvo-a-abater-MM5097097>.

destabilizing enemy that oppresses other peoples and humanity in general. In the [esquerda.net](#) site and the blog “delito de opinião there were several posts accusing Israel of using the Holocaust for her own benefit of making others feel “guilty”.²⁹⁵

An open letter to Joacine Katar Moreira

Moreira was a newly elected parliament member of the eco-socialist political party, “Livre”, when it abstained in a vote on a proposal to condemn Israel following an Israeli-Palestinian confrontation in Gaza in November. She was harshly criticized for her neutral position by all left parties and her own party, which led a very “dirty” campaign against her on a political and personal level, resulting in discrediting her, and reducing her political powers and parliamentary tasks. After two months of an intense campaign she was expelled from the party. Israeli ambassador to Portugal, Raphael Gamzu, sent her an “open letter”, congratulating her for her courageous stand.²⁹⁶

South Africa/ David Sacks (SAJBD)

1. Overview

The number of antisemitic incidents in South Africa dropped to a fifteen-year low in 2019. A total of 36 incidents of abuse and harassment considered to be wholly or in part motivated by antisemitism were logged by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) and Community Security Organization. This was a more than 40 percent drop from the 62 incidents logged in 2018, and close to a 50 percent drop from the annual average of 66 incidents recorded since 2006. The decline can in part be attributed to the relative quiet on the Israeli-Palestinian front, notwithstanding the flare-up that occurred late in the year between Israel and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza.

These figures are consistent with the relatively low rates of antisemitism in South Africa that have been recorded since comprehensive records began to be maintained in the mid-1990s. Only in 2009 and 2014, the years when major conflicts (Operation Cast Lead and Operation Protective Edge) took place between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, has the annual total of incidents exceeded the one-hundred mark. When these two unusually high years are removed from the equation, the average annual total

²⁹⁵ See for example, <https://delitodeopiniao.blogs.sapo.pt/regresso-a-cristofobia-com-o-10661955> (accessed April 19, 2020); Gonçalo Frota, “Tiago Rodrigues cancela espectáculo em Israel e adere a boicote cultural,” *Publico*, May 17, 2018, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.publico.pt/2018/05/17/culturaipilon/noticia/tiago-rodrigues-cancela-espectaculo-em-israel-e-adere-a-boicote-cultural-1830415>; See also, Raphael Gamzu, “Porque é que vocês nos odeiam mais do que o necessário?,” 1 and 2,” *Publico*, July 28, August 4, 2018, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.publico.pt/2018/07/28/mundo/opiniao/por-que-e-que-voces-nos-odeiam-mais-do-que-o-necessario-1-1839304>; <https://www.publico.pt/2018/08/04/mundo/opiniao/porque-e-que-voces-nos-odeiam-mais-do-que-o-necessario-2-1840019>.

²⁹⁶ Raphael Gamzu, “Carta aberta a Joacine Katar Moreira,” *Publico*, November 29, 2019, accessed April 19, 2020, at <https://www.publico.pt/2019/11/29/politica/opiniao/carta-aberta-joacine-katar-moreira-1895483>.

worker. Similar offensive Facebook messages were sent in April to another community member by a former acquaintance, including allegations about the corrupt, anti-human nature of Jews and their religion and invoking the Khazar theory that Ashkenazi Jews are imposters.

In May, a Rabbi and his wife reported that Home Affairs officials made insulting comments to them on their religious practices after they arrived at Oliver Tambo airport and were initially not allowed to go through because of a problem with the status of one of their children. The officials concerned belittled the concerns they expressed about obtaining kosher food in the event of their having to stay at the airport over Shabbat, including saying that if they “accepted the Lord Jesus Christ” their problem would go away. Another example of offensive remarks was the antisemitic comments made by a visiting Catholic priest in May in the course of addressing the St. Davids Inanda School assembly. He described Jews as “vengeful, loveless and arrogant”. He further said that Jews were raping the country, felt ‘entitled’, were not the chosen race, and caused wars and poverty.

In June in response to her post on the "miracle of the Six Day War", Alyssar Sabra messages accusing the Jews inter alia of "slaughtering innocent people" and describing them as "the world's most hated race for a reason." In the same vein, a Muslim student reportedly commented following the screening of a documentary relating to apartheid at a Wits Engineering School lecture in July that if Hitler had succeeded in wiping out the Jews there would be no apartheid state of Israel. He was subsequently disciplined by the university following representations by the SA Union of Jewish Students. In August, Jordan Pieters, a coloured woman in Cape Town whose father reportedly Israeli, posted a series of insulting instagram messages about the ‘racism’ of the white Jewish community, including an image of her making an obscene gesture towards the the SA Jewish Museum. On November 15, a Man in a Muslim garb drove past the CSO protector by Torah Academy Boys High School and screamed "child killer" as well as “Allahu Akbar, death to Israel”.

In January graffiti reading ‘JEWS!!’ was painted on the wall of a building close to SAJBD offices in Cape Town, and a tweet claiming “I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan” was sent to SAJBD in response to the announcement of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. A month later a Swastika alongside a shape of a heart with the word ‘Hitler’ inside was daubed on road outside Pretoria Orthodox synagogue. Other graffiti of a swastika and Magen David was drawn on a path in Bantry Bay in May.

On occasion, antisemitic statements were made from political platforms:

- In April, the radical Black Nationalist Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Party for the second consecutive year issued an Easter message redolent with Christ-killer undertones. Referring to Palestine as “the birth and death place of Jesus Christ” (thereby intimating that Jesus was a Palestinian), it urged solidarity with the people of modern-day Palestine, who represented “the suffering,

permanently crucified, disfigured, and humiliated naked body of Christ hanging on the summit for all shame.”²⁹⁷

- During a Johannesburg City Council meeting on 24 May Abubakr Thapelo Amad, sole representative of the Al Jama-eh party, asked when commenting on water shortages in certain areas: “What measures have the MMC placed to mitigate the problem or is he telling us that the DA City of Johannesburg is trying to set up the same trend as the Western Cape of water scarcity to benefit the few Jewish communities?” This echoed (unsubstantiated) claims made the previous year by representatives of the African National Congress in the Western Cape that the ruling Democratic Alliance in the province had orchestrated the city’s water crisis to benefit the “Jewish mafia”.
- In June one of the country’s largest trade unions, the National Union of Metalworkers of SA, and the smaller SA Cabin Crew Association released a joint statement, claiming that the Rothschilds were “interfering” in State-Owned Enterprises for “selfish and greedy purposes.” The statement alleged that the wealthy family intended to collapse South African Airways (SAA) so it could be privatized.²⁹⁸
- In response to a tweet claiming that Gauteng Mayor Herman Mashaba was “reclaiming the city that the ANC gave to Nigeria,” member of the Executive Council for Human Settlements and Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Lebogang Maile, tweeted on September 20, 2019, that “His actually giving them to Jews ask him who are the new owners of these buildings?”²⁹⁹ The Democratic Alliance reported Maile (who persistently denied any wrongdoing) to the province’s Integrity Commissioner for Hate Speech directed at the Jewish community. According to the *SA Jewish Report*, a list of 22 companies recently awarded tenders to work on land and properties in the inner city showed that none of their directors were Jewish.

3. SAJBD responses

Wherever perpetrators of antisemitic acts could be identified and located, the SAJBD took action deemed by it to be appropriate to the nature of the offence, the circumstances and the attitude of the offending party. Wherever possible, a process of conciliation was followed with the aims of achieving a suitable apology combined with an educational process (usually a tolerance awareness program run under the auspices of the SA Holocaust Foundation).

²⁹⁷ Jordan Moshe, “EFF turns Easter message into anti-Israel diatribe,” *South African Jewish Report*, May 2, 2019, accessed April 7, 2020, at <https://www.sajr.co.za/news-and-articles/2019/05/02/eff-turns-easter-message-into-anti-israel-diatribе>.

²⁹⁸ “Rothschilds have captured SOEs like the Guptas, unions allege,” *The Citizen*, June 15, 2019, accessed April 7, 2020, at <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/protests/2143586/rothschilds-have-captured-soes-like-the-guptas-unions-allege/>.

²⁹⁹ <https://twitter.com/lebogangmaile1/status/1175119954951245827>.

In more serious cases of antisemitic behavior, in which the offending party refuses to admit fault or apologize, the SAJBD took stronger action, including laying criminal charges or through laying complaints with the Equality Court or the SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC).

In August, the SAJBD's long-running hate speech case against Bongani Masuku, International Relations Secretary/Spokesperson for the powerful Congress of South African Trade Unions, was heard by the Constitutional Court, the country's highest judicial forum. The case generated much interest in legal circles as it will impact significantly on how South African law interprets questions relating to prohibited hate speech. It is based on various threatening, inflammatory and derogatory statements made by Masuku against the South African Jewish community and its leadership for their support of Israel in the early months of 2009.³⁰⁰

In September, a case of "crimen injuria" (a crime unlawfully, intentionally and seriously impairing the dignity of another) against freelance writer Matome Letsoalo for a series of threatening and highly abusive twitter posts in June 2018 reached the Randburg Magistrates Court. Letsoalo's tweets included the statement "The #Holocaust Will be like a Picnic When we are done with all you Zionist Bastards. Fuck All of You", alongside images of Holocaust victims and of protestors burning an Israel flag.³⁰¹

³⁰⁰ Nicola Miltz, "Masuku hate speech case heads to Con Court," *South African Jewish Report*, May 23, 2019, accessed April 7, 2020, at <https://www.sajr.co.za/news-and-articles/2019/05/23/masuku-hate-speech-case-heads-to-con-court>; Ilanit Chernick, "High profile hate speech case heard in South Africa's Constitutional Court," *The Jerusalem Post*, August 28, 2019, accessed April 7, 2020, at <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/high-profile-hate-speech-case-heard-in-south-africas-constitutional-court-599954>.

³⁰¹ Nicola Miltz, "Writer to be prosecuted or anti-Semitic rant," *South African Jewish Report*, September 26, 2019, accessed April 7, 2020, at <https://www.sajr.co.za/news-and-articles/2019/09/26/writer-to-be-prosecuted-or-anti-semitic-rant>.

Switzerland (French part) / CICAD

With **114 recorded acts**, the CICAD report for 2019 ends with an **increase in serious and worrying acts - 14 acts in 2019 compared to 6 in 2018**. The acts listed online are decreasing - 100 acts against 168 in 2018, especially on the platforms for commenting on French-speaking media.

Insults, death threats against Jewish children going to school, desecration of the stele in memory of the victims of the Shoah, discriminatory comments in the context of a job interview. Uninhibited antisemitism is now expressed in broad daylight. While the vast majority of antisemitic acts recorded by CICAD in recent years have concerned the Internet and social networks, in 2019 we note an increase in acts targeting people and property.

Faced with these discriminatory phenomena, CICAD mobilizes daily in favor of the victims while adopting a proactive approach to awareness-raising and education. The authorities must take the necessary measures and support programs in the fields of education, training and legal protection.

Finally, it is important to note the legitimate concern of the Jewish communities regarding the terrible events that took place in 2019, including the attack on the synagogue in Halle, Germany. As CICAD has repeatedly pointed out, it is up to municipal, cantonal and federal authorities to support projects aimed at strengthening security. The Confederation's Intelligence Service (SRC) mentions in its last report that "Jewish interests could also be affected in the event of attacks on Swiss territory."

CICAD publishes for the first time in its report a national analysis, prepared by CICAD and the FSCI (Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities) on antisemitism in Switzerland.

Switzerland – Preliminary Antisemitism Report 2019 / Simon Erlanger

The following report for the year 2019 is based on personal impressions. However, it can be assumed that – while the overall situation seems stable – the threat level remains high with antisemitic incidents of all kind still occurring frequently.

The last available data

The 2018 Report on Antisemitism published by the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities (SIG) and the Foundation against Racism and Anti-Semitism (GRA) counted 42 antisemitic incidents. This number is almost the same as in 2017. SIG and GRA only collect data for the German-speaking part of Switzerland. The French-speaking part of the country is covered by the Geneva-based "Coordination Intercommunautaire Contre l'Antisemitisme et la Diffamation" (CICAD), which

publishes its report separately. It counted 174 antisemitic incidents in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. The higher number provided by CICAD derives from the fact that CICAD adds antisemitic comments and talkbacks on the Internet to the overall number of incidents. SIG and GRA recorded Internet-related cases separately. In addition to the 42 incidents they counted 535 antisemitic incidents on the internet committed by Swiss users.

The young are increasingly targeted

Since the publication of the above reports the magazine *Beobachter* has published in November 2019 an inquiry of the experiences of young Jews at work, at school, and at the university.³⁰² It turned out that a majority of young Jews has experienced antisemitism on a regular basis. Most of the incidents went unreported. In an interview to the magazine SIG-president Herbert Winter stated that the general atmosphere has indeed worsened. He identified the internet a major culprit.

Not stable

Therefore, the impression that in the middle of the massive resurgence of antisemitism in Europe, neutral Switzerland is an island is deceptive. The situation seems only to be stable in comparison to 2017. But by that year antisemitic acts in Switzerland had already reached a record high not seen since the 1930s. During 2017 the number of antisemitic incidents in Switzerland had increased by 52 percent thereby ending years when antisemitism was seen to be on retreat.

Due to methodological and political problems most antisemitic acts still go unreported, despite an effort by the SIG and the GRA to collect the relevant data. For example, there were four reported attacks in Basel on the local kosher butchery between September and October 2018, which resulted in massive and highly visible property damage. There were many further attacks on people and property in the same neighborhood by the same perpetrator who was apprehended in Summer 2019 and has been put to trial since. None of the attacks were publicly reported on. In Zurich it was the Charedi communities which were increasingly targeted in 2019. Again, one notices that most incidents go unreported. This was pointed out by the Swiss Federation of Jewish communities already last year.

The talkbacks and postings on the internet and Social media are a major issue. Some new and improved methods have already been employed by SIG and GRA. It is however clear that with many millions of daily postings in social media and tens of thousands of talkbacks every 24 hours the 535 recorded antisemitic posting are just the mall tip of a gigantic iceberg.

Still no new study in sight

As stated in every report in the last years, there is still no new study on Swiss antisemitism. It seems also that there is no study planned for the near future. As a non-member of the EU, Switzerland was also not included in the “Second Survey on Discrimination and Hate Crime against Jews in the EU - Experiences and Perceptions

³⁰² <https://www.beobachter.ch/gesellschaft/antisemitismus-wie-junge-juden-der-schweiz-gemobbt-werden>. Accessed June 8, 2020.

of Antisemitism.” There are a few older and contradicting studies. In a general survey on coexistence, integration and prejudice the Federal Bureau of Statistics (Bundesamt für Statistik) found in 2017 that 12 percent of Swiss to be antisemitic. In contrast the “ADL Global 100” study found in 2014 that the very high number of 1,7 Million Swiss or 26 percent of the Swiss harbor antisemitic attitudes. This would make Switzerland one of the most anti-Jewish countries on the continent. In order to get an adequate picture, a more localized study based on a larger local sample should be conducted.

The only reliable sources on Swiss attitudes toward the Jews are outdated. In 2000 the “gfs” Research Institute in Berne found that 16 percent of the Swiss harbored intense antisemitic feelings. Although this was about European average at the time, the number was double the percentage in older polls. The 2000 findings were topped by a 2006 study held by the University of Geneva's Department of Sociology, which found 20 percent of the Swiss being “affected by antisemitism.” The gfs Research Institute responded with a new study in 2007. While it found only 10 percent of respondents to be openly antisemitic, some 53 percent of respondents were highly critical of Israel; 50 percent were thinking at the time that Israel was leading a “war of annihilation” against the Palestinians; and 13 percent stated that Israel has no right to exist.

IHRA Definition not yet fully accepted

Antisemitism und Anti-Israelism as defined by the IHRA definition of Antisemitism have certainly increased in 2019, emanating from all sides of the political spectrum - the left, the Greens, the religious right, the extreme right, the Islamists and even mainstream liberals. While Switzerland is one of the 31 members of the IHRA, which accepted the EU Working definition as binding in 2016, the definition still has not been accepted fully by the Swiss parliament. In June 2019, the Upper Chamber, the Ständerat, accepted a resolution by the social-democratic MP Paul Rechsteiner, asking the government to prepare a report on the IHRA-definition which would be then discussed and adopted by both houses of parliament.

Security costs

As reported in past years the Swiss confederacy and the cantons had since 2015 refused to contribute to Jewish security, as they would have been obliged to do by the Swiss constitution. Since then security costs have soared and turned out to be a very heavy burden for the Jewish communities, which brought some of them to the brink of financial collapse. It is only in 2018, after years of controversy, that the Swiss Confederacy has finally agreed to provide limited funds for “training and prevention”.

The money is not supposed to be used for actual security cost. Communities will have to come up with a so-called prevention course. All in all, a mere half a million Swiss Francs is made available to the 16 Jewish communities which are members of the Swiss Federation of Jewish communities SIG. Besides the Jewish communities all mosques, several hundred Muslim communities and so-called “threatened groups” can apply for the funds. While obviously of little practical use, the modest financial contribution of the Swiss Confederacy is also intended to serve as an incentive to the cantons to provide themselves funds for the security of the Jewish communities. In Zurich, the canton is indeed about to provide funds to the Jewish communities

recognized by the state. In Basel Jewish security has already been taken over by the canton, thereby alleviating the financial burden of its 214 year old community.

What lies ahead?

The coming major challenge for Swiss Jewry will not be about security. It will be the attempt to prohibit through parliament the import of Kosher meat. While Shechita has been outlawed since 1893 (the ban was part of a backlash against the emancipation of Swiss Jews between 1866 and 1879 which was forced on Switzerland by the US and France), the import of Kosher meat was always possible under a heavy quota and customs system. Now this might well be changed in an act which would constitute an attack on the continuity of organized Jewish life in Switzerland. While this has been an issue for a while, the battle lines were not yet drawn and the public debate has not yet started. But this could well happen in 2020.

United Kingdom / Mike Whine (CST)

The CST recorded 1,805 antisemitic incidents in the UK in 2019, the highest total that CST has ever recorded in a single calendar year. This is seven percent higher than the 1,690 antisemitic incidents reported to CST in 2018, making 2019 the fourth consecutive year in which the annual record has been broken.

The record totals in 2019 and the preceding three years were due to consistently high monthly totals, at a time when Jews, antisemitism and the Labor Party were the repeated subjects of national controversy. Debate surrounding Brexit also made this a politically contentious time during which recorded hate crime rose more generally, affecting many communities. These relatively lengthy contexts differ from the pre-2015 antisemitic incident highs, which were largely caused by temporary ‘spikes’ and sudden ‘trigger’ events.

An increase in reports of online antisemitism, particularly on social media, is the largest single contributor to the record total of incidents in 2019. CST logged 697 instances of online antisemitism, comprising 39 percent of the annual total and a rise of 50 percent from the 466 online incidents reported in 2018 (which was 28 percent of that year’s total). Six hundred and sixty seven of these online incidents – which include antisemitic social media posts, emails, direct messages, comments on online articles, and website hacking – fall into the category of Abusive Behavior. Such a high escalation may reflect rising engagement in and intensity of arguments on social media, particularly where antisemitism is expressed in the context of political disagreements, as well as a greater capacity and motivation to report online antisemitism to CST.

These totals are only indicative, as the actual amount of antisemitic content that is generated and disseminated on online platforms is much larger. In some cases, social media has been used as a tool for coordinated campaigns of antisemitic harassment, threats and abuse directed at Jewish public figures and other individuals. Where this is the case, CST will record a coordinated campaign as a single incident, even if it involves multiple tweets, posts or comments.

The incident peaks recorded throughout the year correlated with periods when discourse around Jews and antisemitism was prominent in news and politics due to the continuing controversy over allegations of antisemitism in the Labor Party. The general election in December was preceded by Jewish community figures, most notably the Chief Rabbi, publicly voicing unprecedented concerns regarding a leading political party.³⁰³ February saw several MPs leave the Labor Party, some of whom cited antisemitism as an important reason for their decision. In 224 of the 1,805 cases of antisemitism reported, the offender or offenders, and the abuse they expressed, were related to the Labor Party, or the incidents occurred in the context of arguments about alleged Labor Party antisemitism. This is an increase from the 148 incidents of this kind recorded in 2018.

CST recorded 157 incidents in the category of Assault, an increase of 27 percent from the 124 incidents of this type recorded in 2018. This is the highest number of incidents in this category ever reported to CST in a calendar year. Seventy-two of these 157 antisemitic assaults, or 46 percent, took place across just three boroughs of Barnet (29), Hackney (28) and Salford (15). These boroughs are home to some of the largest Jewish populations in the UK, and some of the most visibly Jewish communities. There was one additional incident that was serious enough to be classified as Extreme Violence.

Incidents of Damage & Desecration to Jewish property rose by 11 percent, from 79 incidents in 2018 to 88 incidents in 2019. Forty-five of these incidents involved damage done to the homes and vehicles of Jewish people, 12 to Jewish organizations or companies, ten to synagogues, seven to Jewish schools, and three to cemeteries.

There were 98 incidents reported in the category of Threats, which includes direct threats to people, institutions or property, rather than more general abuse. This marks a fall of nine percent from the 108 incidents of this type recorded in 2018.

CST recorded 1,443 incidents in the category of Abusive Behavior, an increase of eight percent from the 1,334 instances of Abusive Behavior recorded in 2018. This is 80 percent of the year's total incidents tally and is the highest number of incidents in this category ever reported in a single calendar year, once again making Abusive Behavior the highest single category of antisemitic incident type.

There were 18 incidents recorded in the category of mass-produced antisemitic Literature. This is a decrease of 58 percent from the 43 incidents recorded in this category in 2018, a drop explained by the diminishing circulation of one particular leaflet that was widely and repeatedly distributed across London and Hertfordshire in 2018.

³⁰³ Anshel Pfeffer, "Britain's Chief Rabbi Had No Choice but to Speak Out Against Corbyn Ahead of Election," *Haaretz*, November 27, 2019, accessed April 6, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/.premium-why-britain-s-chief-rabbi-had-no-choice-but-to-speak-out-against-corbyn-1.8191272>.

In the incidents in which a particular type of rhetoric, motivation or ideology could be identified, conspiracy theories were the most common single brand of discourse, present in 370 incidents recorded (20 percent of the overall total of 1,805 incidents). This conveys the extent to which antisemitic tropes have become embedded across the social and political spectrum. In 342 incidents, a combination of two or more political and religious discourses were detected, a rise of 20 percent from the reported 285 incidents in which this was the case throughout 2018. This reflects the complex and multifaceted nature of contemporary antisemitism, in which offenders viewing themselves as left wing may deploy antisemitic tropes common to the far right; and many offenders express an incoherent, self-contradicting mixture of anti-Jewish extremism.

Although conspiracy theories often unite far right and far left expressions of antisemitism, there remain differences in how and when they are communicated. Antisemitism that emanates from the far left is frequently wrapped up in self-justifying political discourse and explanation, for example using antisemitic language in defense of the Labor Party or its leadership, while the antisemitic language of the far right is usually more direct, violent and knowingly insulting.

At the beginning of the year, the Law Commission commenced a wide-ranging review of hate crime to explore how to make existing legislation more effective. CST was among the many bodies to give evidence on the effectiveness of current laws as well as concerns about the dramatic growth in online antisemitism. The Commission is expected to report by the end of 2020.

In February, the government pledged £14 million in grants to cover security for schools, synagogues and other Jewish institutions, bringing the total grant to £65.2 million since the scheme was introduced in 2015. The grant is managed on behalf of the government by the Community Security Trust, who distribute the fund to pay for security guards at Jewish schools and other communal buildings.

In the same month, Parliament held an extraordinary debate on Antisemitism in Modern Society, opened by James Brokenshire, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in which prominent Jewish and non-Jewish parliamentarians recorded their, and their constituents' concerns and experiences. In summing up, the Secretary concluded that it had been a painful but thought-provoking session in which the importance of education and moral and political leadership was repeatedly stressed by the many speakers.

In May, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, announced a statutory investigation into the Labor Party to investigate allegations that the Party, or its employees or agents, may have committed unlawful acts under the Equality Act 2006. The ongoing investigation will focus on a sample of the many complaints that it had received about antisemitism within the Party. It may also examine what steps had been taken to implement the recommendations made in the reports on antisemitism

by Baroness Royall, the Parliamentary Home Affairs Committee and in the report prepared by Baroness Chakrabarti. In early January 2020, the police arrested six Labor Party members as a consequence of the Party's own internal investigation into antisemitic behaviour.

In September, the Communities Secretary announced that local authorities must do more to act against antisemitism and urged them, and the universities that had not yet done so, to adopt the IHRA Working Definition of antisemitism. He added that he would be writing to university and local authority heads urging them to do so, noting that universities and local authorities should not be pursuing their own foreign policies with their seeming obsession with Zionism to the detriment of delivering high quality services. He also announced the appointment of MP Rehman Chisti to succeed Lord Ahmad as the UK Envoy for Freedom of Religion and Belief. He would be joining Lord Pickles, the Envoy for Post Holocaust Issues, and Lord Mann, the Advisor on Antisemitism who had been appointed in July, as three senior politicians dedicated to combating antisemitism and its historical consequences. The former MP and Shadow Chancellor, Ed Balls, was at the same time appointed as co-chair of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation Advisory Board.

In November, the Church of England published *God's Unfailing Word*, its first authoritative statement on antisemitism which is intended to provide guidance to the 800 million Anglicans world-wide, as well as other Protestants. In it, the Church apologized for centuries of anti-Jewish persecution. Attitudes towards Judaism over centuries had provided a "fertile seed-bed for murderous antisemitism", it stated, and Anglicans and other Christians, must not only repent for the "sins of the past" but actively challenge such attitudes or stereotypes. It added that "The attribution of collective guilt to the Jewish people for the death of Christ and the consequent interpretation of their suffering as collective punishment sent by God is one very clear example of that," and that "Within living memory, such ideas contributed to fostering the passive acquiescence if not positive support of many Christians in actions that led to the Holocaust." The report urges Christians to "think carefully" about evangelising their Jewish neighbors, and that they should be conscious of the participation of Christians over the centuries in stereotyping, persecution and violence directed against Jewish people, and that this had contributed to the Holocaust. Christians today should therefore be sensitive to Jewish fears, and Christian theological support for the State of Israel, and Christian Zionism, should not be treated as a form of religious fundamentalism but as a central tenet of their faith. In an afterword to the document, Ephraim Mirvis, the chief rabbi, welcome the statement but admonished the church for failing to reject those Christians who seek to convert Jews to Christianity, as the Vatican had done in 2015.³⁰⁴

³⁰⁴ "God's Unfailing Word: key passages," *Church Times*, November 21, 2019, accessed April 6, 2020, at <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2019/22-november/news/uk/god-s-unfailing-word-key-passages>; Jack Mendel, "Chief Rabbi: Church's historic antisemitism report 'fails to address conversion'," *Jewish News*, November 21, 2019, accessed April 6, 2020, at <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/topic/gods-unfailing-word/>.

Many Jews in the UK were immensely relieved by the substantial defeat of Jeremy Corbyn's Labor Party in the December general election, in which it lost 59 seats and its share of the vote plunged to 32 percent, irrespective of whether they supported Boris Johnson's Conservative Party. The reasons for its worst defeat since before the Second World War included the public's concern over the growing antisemitism; lack of trust and respect for Jeremy Corbyn; the party's indecision and disunity on the referendum decision to leave the European Union; unrealistic economic policies; neglect of working people's concerns and neglect of security issues, particularly in traditional Labor strongholds of the Midlands and northern regions, which have historically been their strongholds.

Numerous sentences were held during the year against perpetrators of various antisemitic manifestations. In January, James Malcolm was jailed for two years and four months at Glasgow Sheriff Court for damaging and defacing Jewish gravestones at a local cemetery and writing antisemitic and Nazi slogans on the window of a Scottish Parliament member's office. In February, Jemail Issac was convicted at Stratford Magistrates Court and fined £140 for screaming anti-Jewish slogans at children. In April, Alkarim Versi was imprisoned for three months suspended for 15 months, and ordered to undertake rehabilitation activity and pay £115 victim surcharge at Harrow Crown Court for racially aggravated harassment of security guards outside a local synagogue.

In June, Michal Szewczuk and Oskar Dunn-Koczorowski were jailed for terrorism offences at the Central Criminal Court London. Szewczuk was sentenced to just over four years for encouraging terrorism and possession of a document useful to a terrorist and Dunn-Koczorowski given an 18-month detention order for encouraging terrorism. Both were members of the neo-Nazi Sonnenkrieg Division and managed its account on the Gab social media site, encouraging terrorist attacks including against Jews. Also in June, Shane Pegg was sentenced at Highbury Magistrates Court to 140 hours of unpaid work, 20 days Rehabilitation Activity and ordered to pay £185 victim compensation and surcharge for shouting anti-Jewish comments to the owner and another employee of the company where he formerly worked.

In July, Tristan Morgan was sentenced to an indeterminate hospital order, and a ten-year terrorist order, at the Central Criminal Court London for an arson attack on Exeter Synagogue on Tisha B'Av. The court noted that he was obsessed with antisemitism and Nazism and possessed a large number of knives and antisemitic literature. His sentence reflected his fragile mental state and his eventual release will be conditional on his rehabilitation.

In August, Rahan Rahman was fined £200 and ordered to pay £85 costs at Nottingham court for accusing the police officer who had arrested him on another charge of being Jewish.

In September, Shehroz Iqbal was imprisoned for 12 months suspended for 24 months, 30 days' rehabilitation activity, 60 hours unpaid work and a £100 fine at Snaresbrook Crown Court east London for intending to stir up racial hatred. He had posted antisemitic posters outside a local synagogue and at a train station. He had previously been convicted of similar offences against Jews, and of making death threats to a Jewish motorist. Also in September, David Aherne was jailed for 12 weeks at Wood Green Crown Court for shouting antisemitic abuse at a Jewish couple and their children who were travelling on the same bus. In the same month, at Holborn Magistrates Court, a man called Lorinczi was imprisoned for six months suspended for eighteen months, fined £100 for criminal damage and ordered to pay £200 victim compensation and required to attend alcohol addiction treatment and 30 days' rehabilitation for throwing a glass bottle and making antisemitic comments at men in the street.

In October, a 16-year-old boy whose name could not be publicized due to his age, was jailed for six years and eight months at Manchester Crown Court for planning terror attacks against synagogues and other targets in Durham where he lived and for disseminating terrorist publications. He had prepared detailed plans to firebomb the synagogues and other targets and published a manifesto called *Storm 88: A manual for practical sensible guerrilla warfare against the kike system in Durham city area*.

In November, Andrew Prendergast was convicted of burglary and racially or religiously aggravated damage at Preston Crown Court after smashing a window at Blackpool Reform Synagogue. He subsequently admitted to police that he wanted to blow the synagogue up. Also in November, Sam Hemmati was jailed for three years at Wood Green Crown Court after admitting to harassing and stalking Jewish women. He had bombarded numerous victims with antisemitic messages on social media platforms over the course of seven months. He also admitted the religiously aggravated robbery of a Jewish man. Again in November, Dan Zaharia was jailed at Chester Crown Court for 19 months for subjecting a Jewish psychologist and his family to a decade-long campaign of antisemitic abuse. He was also ordered to pay a victim surcharge and given an indefinite restraining order.

In December, Andreas Dowling was jailed for four years and five months at Exeter Crown Court on charges of communicating false information with intent. He had sent more than 100 bomb hoaxes to colleges, police stations and schools, including Jewish schools in the UK, USA, and Canada threatening to bomb them with sarin gas. In doing so he referenced Hitler's birthday on 20 April.

During the course of 2020, the government provided an additional £2.2 million for schools to teach lessons from Auschwitz and £1.7 million for visits to Bergen Belsen, the camp liberated by British troops.

USA / Aryeh Tuchman

Antisemitic incidents hit all-time high in 2019

The American Jewish community experienced the highest level of antisemitic incidents in 2019 since tracking began in 1979, with more than 2,100 acts of assault, vandalism and harassment reported across the United States, according to new data from ADL (the Anti-Defamation League). The record number of incidents came as the Jewish community grappled with vicious and lethal antisemitic attacks against communities in Poway, Jersey City and Monsey, and a spree of violent assaults in Brooklyn.

The 2019 ADL Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, issued on May 12, found that the total number of antisemitic incidents in 2019 increased 12 percent over the previous year, with a disturbing 56 percent increase in assaults. The audit found there were, on average, as many as six antisemitic incidents in the U.S. for each day in the calendar year – the highest level of antisemitic activity ever recorded by ADL.

There were five fatalities directly linked to antisemitic violence and another 91 individuals targeted in physical assaults. Incidents were reported in every one of the 48 contiguous United States and Washington, D.C. More than half of the assaults nationwide took place in the five boroughs of New York City, including 25 in Brooklyn alone.

“This was a year of unprecedented antisemitic activity, a time when many Jewish communities across the country had direct encounters with hate,” said Jonathan A. Greenblatt, ADL CEO. “This contributed to a rising climate of anxiety and fear in our communities. We are committed to fighting back against this rising tide of hate and will double down on our work with elected leaders, schools, and communities to end the cycle of hatred.”

ADL’s Center on Extremism identified 234 incidents targeting Jewish synagogues and community centers in 2019. This included the white supremacist shooting at a Chabad center in Poway, California, which killed one worshipper, a 60-year-old woman who was mourning her mother’s death, and injuring three more, including the rabbi.

Major findings

A total of 2,107 antisemitic incidents occurred across the U.S. during 2019 - a 12 percent increase from the 1,879 incidents recorded in 2018.

ADL’s Audit classifies all incidents into three categories: assault, harassment and vandalism. Of the total incidents reported during the year there were:

- 1,127 harassment incidents, cases where one or more Jews reported feeling harassed by the antisemitic language or actions. Acts of harassment increased by 6 percent from 1,066 in 2018.

- 919 vandalism incidents, cases where property was damaged in a manner which that harmed or intimidated Jews. Swastikas, which are generally interpreted as symbols of antisemitic hatred, were present in 746 of these incidents. Acts of antisemitic vandalism increased 19 percent from 774 in 2018.
- 61 assault incidents, cases where individuals were physically targeted with violence accompanied by evidence of antisemitic animus. Antisemitic assault increased 56 percent from 39 in 2018. Eleven of the 61 assaults were perpetrated with deadly weapons such as guns or knives. The 61 assault incidents harmed 95 victims, including five fatalities.

There were incidents reported in every state, except Alaska and Hawaii. The states with the highest numbers of incidents were New York: 430; New Jersey: 345; California: 330; Massachusetts: 114; and Pennsylvania: 109. Combined, these states account for nearly 45 percent of the total number of incidents.

ADL's Center on Extremism has gathered the complete 2019 data, as well as data from the previous two years, on ADL's H.E.A.T. Map, an interactive online tool that allows users to geographically chart antisemitic incidents and events nationally and regionally. "It's clear we must remain vigilant in working to counter the threat of violent antisemitism and denounce it in all forms, wherever the source and regardless of the political affiliation of its proponents," said Mr. Greenblatt. "We need to ensure that synagogues and community centers have the right security measures in place to prevent the next potential attack. We plan to work with members of Congress and other elected officials this year to ensure that funding is in place and that all states mandate Holocaust education, which can serve as an effective deterrent for future acts of hate."

270 antisemitic incidents attributed to known extremist groups or individuals inspired by extremist ideology were recorded. This represents 13 percent of the total number of incidents.

K-12 schools, as well as colleges and universities, continue to experience a significant number of antisemitic incidents. 411 incidents were recorded at K-12 non-Jewish schools in 2019 (up 19 percent from 344 in 2018), and 186 incidents at colleges and universities (down 10 percent from 201 in 2018).

There were 234 reported incidents at Jewish institutions such as synagogues, Jewish community centers and Jewish schools - a decrease of 12 percent from 265 in 2018. More than 170 were incidents of harassment and 60 were incidents of vandalism. Fifty of the incidents targeting Jewish institutions were perpetrated by domestic extremists. At least 170 antisemitic incidents referenced Israel or Zionism. Of those, 68 took the form of white supremacist groups' propaganda efforts, which attempt to foment anti-Israel and antisemitic beliefs. Most of the remaining incidents were expressions of anti-Israel animus that incorporated antisemitic imagery or harassment and demonization of Jewish students for their real or assumed connection to Israel.

The Audit offers a snapshot of one of the ways American Jews encounter antisemitism, but a full understanding of antisemitism in the U.S. requires other forms of analysis as well, including but not limited to, public opinion polling, assessments of online antisemitism, and examinations of extremist activity, all of which ADL offers in other reports, such as ADL Global 100, Quantifying Hate: A Year of Anti-Semitism on Twitter, Online Hate and Harassment: The American Experience, Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2019, and the ADL Survey of American Attitudes Toward Jews.

How ADL is responding

In response to the historic rise in antisemitic incidents over the past four years, ADL has made the following policy recommendations:

- Nationwide, public officials and civic leaders should use their bully pulpits to speak out against antisemitism and all forms of hate and extremism.
- Congress should hold additional hearings on the increase in hate crimes, the rise of extremist groups and proliferation of their propaganda, and support legislation, including the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act that calls on the federal government to improve coordinated responses and collect data on domestic terrorism.
- Congress should increase funding for non-profit security grants for synagogues and other houses of worship, schools, and community centers.
- Policymakers must support efforts to provide law enforcement officials with the tools and training they need to prevent and effectively respond to hate crimes. Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies should also improve their procedures for responding to and reporting hate crimes. Congress should approve the pending Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act and fully fund Section 4704 of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act for “technical, forensic, prosecutorial, or any other form of assistance” to state and local law enforcement authorities for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.
- School districts should promote anti-bias, bullying prevention and Holocaust education programs in elementary and secondary schools. University leadership should respond firmly and forcefully to antisemitic acts on college campuses, including incidents that target Jewish students because of their actual or perceived support of the state of Israel. Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, state legislators and mayors should increase funding to promote an inclusive school climate and for anti-bias education, Holocaust and genocide education, and hate crime prevention.

The ADL Audit includes both criminal and non-criminal acts of harassment and intimidation, including distribution of hate propaganda, threats and slurs. Compiled using information provided by victims, law enforcement and community leaders, and evaluated by ADL’s professional staff, the Audit provides a regular snapshot of one

specific aspect of a nationwide problem while identifying possible trends or changes in the types of activity reported. This information assists ADL in developing and enhancing its programs to counter and prevent the spread of antisemitism and other forms of bigotry.

ARTICLES

European Union Activities in Combating Antisemitism in 2019/ Katharina von Schnurbein

Antisemitism has been on the rise across Europe and beyond over the past years and the European Commission has applied a firm policy to use all instruments at hand to prevent and fight antisemitism and other forms of hatred and intolerance.³⁰⁵ The ultimate aim of the Commission's action has been and continues to be to ensure a future for Jews in Europe and to ensure that Jews can go about their daily lives free from security concerns.

In support of evidence-based policy making and to complement the 2018 Second Survey on the Perception and experience of Antisemitism among the Jewish community³⁰⁶ by the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the European Commission published in January 2019 a Eurobarometer³⁰⁷ that surveyed the perception of antisemitism by Europeans in general. It showed that every second European regards antisemitism as a problem in their respective country - a solid basis for political action. In addition, our survey about the perception of antisemitism among young Jewish Europeans³⁰⁸ (16-25 years) revealed that every other young Jewish European had experienced an antisemitic incident in the past year.

Following the unanimous adoption by all EU Member States of the Council declaration on antisemitism and security of Jewish³⁰⁹ communities in December 2018, the Commission created in January 2019 a working group to support Member States in drafting and adopting the national strategies against antisemitism to which they had committed in the declaration.

The working group brings together two representatives per Member State and one representative from each national Jewish community. This setting allows for much needed dialogue between the state authorities and the Jewish communities on issues like security, education, data collection of incidents and victims support.

³⁰⁵ For more information, see the Commission's website: https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=50144.

³⁰⁶ *Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism - Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU*, December 2018, accessed April 20, 2020, at <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/experiences-and-perceptions-antisemitism-second-survey-discrimination-and-hate>.

³⁰⁷ *Eurobarometer 484, Perceptions of Antisemitism*, January 2019, accessed April 20, 2020, at file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/ebs_484_en.pdf.

³⁰⁸ *Young Jewish Europeans: Perceptions and experience of antisemitism*, July 2019, accessed April 20, 2020, at <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2019/young-jewish-europeans-perceptions-and-experiences-antisemitism>.

³⁰⁹ *Council Declaration on the fight against antisemitism and the development of a common security approach to better protect Jewish communities and institutions in Europe*, 15213/18 (Brussels, December 6, 2018), accessed April 20, 2020, at <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15213-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

The first working group meeting in June 2019 discussed the topic of security. It brought together national law enforcement agents, Jewish communities and counter-terrorism experts. It discussed how to improve joint risk assessments, increase trust and cooperation between communities and law enforcement authorities, and strengthen physical protection. Yet, the attack on the Synagogue in Halle (Germany) happened despite all these efforts. The perpetrator deliberately acted against the Jewish community and on Yom Kippur. Following the attack, EU Member States were urged again to improve security for Jewish communities. In addition, a program was developed to financially support them and religious communities with the protection of places of worship.

The second working group meeting in December focused on “Education about Jewish life, antisemitism and the Holocaust”. The Eurobarometer on antisemitism has shown that only 3 percent of Europeans are very well informed about Jewish life. The group discussed how antisemitism can be challenged in classrooms by teachers, in schoolbooks and in curricula, and concluded to broaden education against antisemitism and include next to Holocaust education also teaching about Jewish life and history as well as contemporary antisemitism.

The third meeting scheduled to be held in spring 2020 will focus on the use of the IHRA definition by Member States in data collection of antisemitic incidents and victims support. Six Member States still do not record antisemitic incidents according to the FRA annual report on antisemitic incidents. The FRA report for the first time introduced monitoring of the national application of the IHRA definition, which by the beginning of 2020 has been adopted by 17 EU Member States.

The internet remains the number one place of antisemitic incidents. By committing social media companies across Europe in May 2016 to tackle illegal hate speech within 24 hours there was a substantial decrease in the amount of visible and open incitement to hatred and violence. Whereas before the Code of Conduct only one fourth of illegal content was removed, today, 72 percent of the content deemed illegal is removed. So, while more needs to be done, the close cooperation with the platforms and civil society is yielding first results. The President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, committed to further strengthen initiatives combating antisemitism and illegal hate speech online, in a new Digital Services Act to upgrade liability and safety rules for digital platforms, services and products.

In addition, internet perpetrators must be taken to justice. This means capacity building among law enforcement agencies and better understanding of the different forms of antisemitism through the IHRA definition. To this end, some Member States have introduced dedicated state prosecutors and have taken measures to ensure that incidents with the indications of an antisemitic bias will never be closed without trial.

Antisemitism is not confined to Europe as the attacks in the US have tragically shown. Beyond creating momentum and the necessary structures within the European Union, the EU engages with its international partners to support Jewish communities globally,

highlight that antisemitism is a global threat and a human rights violation. In June 2019, the Coordinator on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life addressed the informal UN Assembly in the first ever debate on antisemitism in this framework, initiated by the EU, Israel, Canada and the US.

Antisemitism will remain high on the agenda of the new Commission. Shortly after taking office, Ursula von der Leyen, confirmed in her speech on December 10, 2019 that “a rising challenge needs a stronger response.”³¹⁰ The team around the Commission Coordinator for combating antisemitism and for fostering Jewish life has been enlarged and will work closely with Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President for Promoting the European way of life, who has been entrusted with the task of fighting against antisemitism on the political level.

Action on the national and the local levels will be essential to ensure that the commitment taken by EU member states translates into real improvement of the security of Jewish Europeans life. The European Commission will continue to work closely with national authorities to ensure just that.

³¹⁰ *Speech by President von der Leyen at the high-level event ‘After Halle: from words to action against anti-Semitism’*, December 10, 2019, accessed April 20, 2020, at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_19_6734.

The Laundering of Antisemitism under Universal Public Values / Irwin Cotler

The global resurgence of antisemitism has found particular expression in global institutions, and the universal public values they embody and are intended to serve. Indeed, antisemitism is being actively laundered under universal public values – masked under the protective cover of the United Nations, the authority of international law, the culture of human rights, and the struggle against racism. Regrettably, the laundering of antisemitism under universal public values effectively subverts these values as it seeks to portray Israel and the Jewish people as the enemy of all that is good and the repository of all that is evil. This strategy is not only prejudicial to Israel and the Jewish people, but undermines these universal values themselves, incriminating the UN in these pernicious and prejudicial falsehoods, as illustrated in the following brief examples.

First, the laundering of antisemitism under the protective cover of the UN finds dramatic expression in the annual December meeting of the General Assembly, wherein it adopts around 20 resolutions of condemnation against one member state – Israel, in comparison to only a handful of resolutions against all other states combined. This singling out of one member state for differential and discriminatory opprobrium is a standing denial of the UN charter commitment to “equality of all nations large and small,” while the major abusers of human rights continue to enjoy exculpatory immunity.

A second example is the laundering of antisemitism under the culture of human rights, where the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) – mandated to promote and protect human rights pursuant to the UN Charter – regularly singles out Israel for disproportionate and discriminatory indictment. The UNHRC has passed more resolutions targeting Israel than any other country, and has established more investigations and commissions of inquiry than any other country – where Israel’s guilt is always already presumed in the founding mandate. The UNHRC has listed Israel on the agenda of every session as a permanent item, under number 7, called “violations by Israel of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.” In contrast, agenda Item 8 speaks of “human rights violations in the rest of the world.” There is thus a situation – an Alice in Wonderland-like inversion – where one state is singled out for condemnation even before the hearing begins.

A third example – in this case, of laundering under the authority of international law – occurred when the Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention put Israel in the docket for violations of international humanitarian law. This was only the third time in 50 years that any state has been so accused. On all three occasions, that state happened to be Israel, with the worst of the human rights violators, such as Syria or Iran, given yet another exculpatory pass.

Fourth, Israel is singled out and condemned as the most grievous violator of all that humanity cherishes, with resolutions at the World Health Organization presenting the Jewish state as the world's great violator of health rights; by UNESCO for cultural violations; the International Labor Organization for labor violations; the UN Commission on the Status of Women for violations of women's rights, and on.

Finally, antisemitism is laundered as part of the struggle against racism, involving not "simply" the indictment of Israel as an apartheid state, where apartheid is defined as a crime against humanity under international law, but the call for the dismantling of Israel. Moreover, Israel must be dismantled not only because it is an apartheid state, but a Nazi one.

The call for its dismantling emerges, therefore, as not just hortatory but imperative; for it would shock the conscience of humanity to have an apartheid Nazi state existing as part of the international community. Accordingly, all supporters of this apartheid Nazi state are deemed collaborators in an international criminal conspiracy, which has an intimidating and silencing effect on supporters of Israel, if not an incitement to hatred and violence against them.

What is of particular concern is not only the laundering of antisemitism under universal public values and the resultant delegitimization of Israel and the Jewish people, but that it undermines the values themselves. It erodes the integrity of the UN; diminishes the authority of international law; corrupts the culture of human rights; and shames the real struggle against real racism.

Jews are the canary in the mineshaft of global evil. While it may begin with Jews, it does not end with Jews. Universal public values – and the humanity they uphold and protect – are on the line as well.

A Survey of Antisemitic Activity and Trends on U.S. Campuses in 2019 And Efforts to Address It / Tammi Rossman-Benjamin

Antisemitic Activity and Trends in 2019

A survey of antisemitic activity on college and university campuses in the United States in 2019 revealed approximately 300 incidents of harassment, vandalism and assault targeting Jewish students on more than 100 campuses.³¹¹ Although the total number of such antisemitic incidents was about the same as in 2018, for the second year in a row those incidents identified as expressing classic antisemitism³¹² decreased significantly in 2019 (by 49%), while Israel-related antisemitic acts³¹³ increased significantly (by 60%).

Other continuing and emerging trends highlight the hostility that pro-Israel Jewish students faced on many campuses during the year:

Continuing Trends – Rising Number of Academic BDS-Fueled Incidents and Faculty Complicity

Efforts by students and faculty to promote and implement an academic boycott of Israel (academic BDS) continued to be strongly linked to acts targeting Jewish and pro-Israel students for harm. This is because although academic BDS ostensibly targets Israeli universities and scholars, it cannot be implemented on a campus without direct harm to students who want to travel to, study about or advocate for Israel, a disproportionate number of whom are Jewish.

While compliance with academic BDS guidelines³¹⁴ can be linked to the significant overall increase in Israel-related antisemitic incidents from 2018 to 2019, it is most prominent in the following three categories of antisemitic behavior:

- **Discrimination** – Acts involving the unfair treatment or exclusion of students or staff because of their perceived association with Israel increased by 51 percent to 62 incidents.
- **Denigration** – Acts involving the public shaming, vilifying or defaming of students or staff because of their perceived association with Israel increased by 67 percent to 120 incidents.
- **Suppression of Expression** – Acts involving the shutting down or impeding of Israel-related speech, movement or assembly increased by 69 percent to 49 incidents.

³¹¹ All data in this report compiled from AMCHA Initiative's database of antisemitic incidents on U.S. campuses: <https://amchainitiative.org/search-by-incident#incident/search/display-by-date/search/>.

³¹² Examples of classical antisemitic incidents: swastika graffiti; posting of neo-Nazi recruitment flyers; anti-Jewish slurs such as "Kill Jews"; the vandalism of a Jewish group's menorah.

³¹³ Examples of Israel-related antisemitic incidents: graffiti stating "Zionists to the gas chamber"; chants of "Zionists off our campus" at an anti-Israel rally; organized efforts to disrupt and shut down a student-organized pro-Israel event; vandalism of a Jewish student's Israeli flag.

³¹⁴ <https://usacbi.org/guidelines-for-applying-the-international-academic-boycott-of-israel/>

Here are some examples of how attempts to implement academic BDS have resulted in increased antisemitic activity in 2019, continuing the robust trend seen in 2018:³¹⁵

- **Boycotting Israel-Related Educational Opportunities** - Faculty members' attempts to carry out the guidelines of academic BDS by refusing to write letters of recommendation for students wanting to study in Israel and by faculty bodies voting to shut down their school's programs in Israel both threatened the rights of students to travel to or study in Israel. For the second year in a row, the faculty of Pitzer College in California voted to suspend their study abroad program at the University of Haifa, and along with Pitzer students, protested when the college president vetoed the vote. At New York University, the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis voted by a large majority to cut all ties with NYU's Tel Aviv program. And at the University of Michigan, where, in 2018, two faculty members refused to write letters of recommendation for their students wanting to study on university-approved programs in Israel. Another faculty member publicly stated that he wanted to "go on record", stating that he would not write a letter of recommendation for any student wanting to study abroad in Israel, in compliance with academic BDS and in solidarity with his colleagues.

Anti-Zionist student groups on at least eight campuses undertook campaigns to stop students from participating in educational trips to Israel. For example, at the University of Vermont, Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) circulated a letter, signed by 15 student groups, urging all students to refuse to go on a Hillel-sponsored trip to Israel. And at Harvard University, the Palestine Solidarity Committee sent a message through student group email lists that denigrated students who would participate in a spring break trip to Israel and the disputed territories, stating, "By going on this trip, you will be complicit in the whitewashing of...human rights violations against Palestinians."

- **Shutting down Zionist expressions** - Compliance with academic BDS's guidelines to "boycott and/or work towards the cancellation" of on-campus events or activities that "promote the normalization of Israel in the global academy" resulted in numerous protests, disruptions and cancellations of Israel-related events hosted by students and faculty during the year. For example, at Arizona State University, an event featuring injured IDF veterans organized by Jewish and pro-Israel student groups was disrupted by protesters, who initially blocked the event entirely, causing it to be moved, and then intimidated participants of the event upon their exit from the new destination. At CUNY Brooklyn College, members of SJP stood directly in front of a pro-Israel student group's display in a campus quad, and loudly chanted "Long Live the Intifada", "Netanyahu, We Indict You with Genocide", and "Free,

³¹⁵ <https://amchainitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Eliminationist-Anti-Zionism-and-Academic-BDS-on-Campus-Report.pdf>.

Free Palestine". They called pro-Israel group's board members "murderers," and ripped up one of the group's flyers, calling it "fascism." And at Duke University, a student-launched petition titled "Can't Learn about Justice from a War Criminal," with over 500 signatures, called on Duke University to cancel a departmentally-sponsored talk with former Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.

- **Boycotting Zionist groups and individuals on campus** - Anti-Zionist student groups also complied with the guidelines' call for anti-normalization in their pursuit of boycotting and excluding Jewish and pro-Israel students and student groups from campus life. At Williams College, Massachusetts, for example, the student government voted against recognizing Williams Initiative for Israel as an official registered student organization as a result of the group's support for Israel, making it the first group in more than a decade to comply with all the requirements for recognition but fail to receive it. At Columbia University, SJP issued a statement to the campus community arguing that "social ostracization is a powerful tool that the student body can use to voice their rejection of Zionism," calling for the "de-platforming" of Israel advocacy groups and encouraging their "peers and allied organizations to boycott all pro-Israel advocacy groups and clubs." An op-ed in the Princeton University student newspaper urged students not to vote for a Jewish candidate running to be president of the student government, "given his front-and-center background as a member of the Israeli Defense Forces...[that] calls into question both his ability to represent the student body and his moral standing." And at University of California Davis the SJP organized a petition to recall the Jewish, pro-Israel student body president, which stated that the "student body will not tolerate Zionism."
- **Denigrating Zionist groups and individuals on campus** - The academic BDS guidelines' promotion of a "common sense" boycott that calls for "conscientious citizens" to respond with "due criticism" to "egregious individual complicity in, responsibility for, or advocacy of [Israel's] violations of international law" can be linked to dozens of instances of public shaming and denigration of pro-Israel students and student groups. For instance, SJP members at Georgia State University issued a statement accusing pro-Israel students of "anti-blackness, harassment, and genocide support." During a guest lecture in an anthropology class at UCLA, the speaker accused a Jewish student in the class of having "alliances with white supremacists" after she expressed that she was offended at the speaker's anti-Israel lecture. At the University of Michigan, anti-Zionist students demonstrating outside of the campus Hillel during Passover services charged Hillel with "contributing to Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism on campus." And at a meeting of the student government at Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, that included a vote on an anti-Israel divestment resolution, members of SJP called Jewish and pro-Israel students who opposed the resolution "fascists" and "racists."

Finally, it is important to note that while student activists play an important role in the promotion and implementation of academic BDS, it is primarily a faculty-driven boycott, whose rise in prominence and popularity on campuses across the country over the last few years is linked to the increased participation of faculty in the anti-Zionist rhetoric and behavior associated with it. Although the overall contribution of academic departments and individual faculty to antisemitic behavior and expression was about the same in 2019 as in 2018 (86 incidents and 87 incidents, respectively), the number of department and faculty-related incidents involving the targeting of Jewish and pro-Israel students for discrimination, suppression of expression and denigration rose from 16 incidents in 2018 to 24 incidents in 2019. In addition, incidents involving individual faculty or departmentally-sponsored anti-Zionist expression were very strongly correlated with Israel-related behaviors targeting students for harm, suggesting that anti-Zionist rhetoric expressed by faculty in classrooms and at departmentally-sponsored events may well encourage hostile behavior towards Jewish and pro-Israel students.

Emerging Trends: Challenging the Definition of Antisemitism and Jewish Identity

In recent years, disputes surrounding the definition of antisemitism and related issues have dramatically increased and even taken center stage on some campuses. Specifically, the question of whether anti-Zionism is a form of antisemitism and should be treated as such, as well as the related questions of whether Zionism is an implicit part of Jewish identity and who gets to define antisemitism or represent Jewishness, have been discussed and debated with increasing frequency in the campus square, the student senate, classrooms and conference halls, often with negative consequences for many Jewish students.

This controversy appears to have arisen as a response to efforts from the Jewish community to ensure Jewish students are afforded the same protection from anti-Zionist-motivated harassment as they are from harassment motivated by classic antisemitism, which has not been the case historically. These efforts have primarily included attempts to get universities and the U.S. Department of Education to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism when enforcing university harassment policies or federal anti-discrimination law. The IHRA definition, which has been adopted or recognized by 18 countries, including the U.S. Department of State, and is widely accepted by worldwide Jewry, identifies several examples of anti-Zionist rhetoric as antisemitic. The proponents of the IHRA definition believe that if it is used by school and government officials as the basis for adjudicating the motivation of harassing behavior, then anti-Zionist motivated harassment will be addressed identically to harassment motivated by classic antisemitism, and Jewish students will be adequately protected from all forms of antisemitism.

But as efforts to promote the use of the IHRA definition in the context of higher education have increased over the last few years, so, too, have the efforts of anti-

Zionist individuals and groups to dispute the linkage between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. In 2019, rhetoric denying a link between anti-Zionism and antisemitism or between Zionism and Judaism was reported **126 times, nearly four times** the number of instances found in 2018. For example at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, a student government resolution entitled “Condemning Ignorance of Racism and Equating Anti-Zionism with Anti-Semitism” was passed by a large majority of student senators. At DePaul University, Chicago, SJP hosted an event entitled “How Anti-Zionism Does NOT Mean Anti-Semitism,” featuring a representative from the anti-Zionist group Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP). At Portland State University, buttons with the slogan “anti-Zionism is not anti-Semitism” were on sale at a campus event hosted by the school’s JVP chapter, and an op-ed by JVP leaders at Stanford University was entitled “White supremacy is anti-Semitic, anti-Zionism is not.”

Expression denying the link between anti-Zionism and antisemitism was often accompanied by accusations that Zionists, including Jewish and pro-Israel students on campus, were acting in bad faith by using the charge of “antisemitism” to silence pro-Palestinian speech. Zionists were also accused of themselves being antisemitic in their defense of Zionism and denigrated for claiming to speak for all Jews. For instance at UCLA, the Anthropology Graduate Student Association issued a statement claiming, “Anti-Zionism is not anti-Semitism... [and] we hope UCLA students and the Daily Bruin will employ a more intellectually rigorous perspective before weaponizing false allegations of anti-Semitism to erode academic freedoms.” At University of Michigan, a panel discussion hosted by the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies included a Stanford University professor who stated, “Zionism as manifested today in the state of Israel is not only fascist but also anti-Semitic in that it assumes a monolithic Jewish identity [and] denies all Jews that do not conform to that profile any place in the state of Israel.” And at San Francisco State University, the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Program in the College of Ethnic Studies posted to its official Facebook page an open letter to the university president stating, “Arab, Muslim and Palestinian communities...[and] other indigenous communities, communities of color and marginalized communities, including our Jewish sisters and brothers...are equally insulted by the continued attempt of Israel apologists to claim that Israel and Zionism speak for all Jews and own Jewishness.”

Moreover, expression denying the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism or between Zionism and Judaism was very strongly linked to the Israel-related harassment of Jewish and pro-Israel students: schools with one or more incidents involving such expression were **more than twice as likely** to host acts of Israel-related behavior targeting students for harm, and **the more such expression, the more Israel-related acts of aggression**. Given that **70 percent** of such rhetoric was expressed by members of anti-Zionist student groups such as SJP and JVP or at events hosted by these groups, and that members of these same anti-Zionist groups were responsible for a majority of the incidents of Israel-related harassment, denials of the antisemitic nature of anti-Zionism may have been efforts to ensure that their anti-Zionist behavior would not result in disciplinary or legal action.

Though anti-Zionist Jews represent a small fraction of worldwide Jewry, it is important to note the outsized role they play in legitimizing the arguments that anti-Zionism is not antisemitism and that Zionism is not a fundamental part of Jewish identity. In 2019, **more than 40%** of rhetoric advancing these arguments were made by Jews identifying themselves as anti-Zionists or at events sponsored or co-sponsored by a Jewish anti-Zionist group, often in conjunction with SJP. The usefulness of including anti-Zionist Jewish voices was articulated by an SJP leader at Northwestern University, Evanston, who stated in an article in the student newspaper that “working with Jewish students” was important for “making sure that the distinction between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism is clear.”

JVP is by far the anti-Zionist Jewish group most active on college campuses across the country. Although the organization was established in 1996 as a Jewish group opposing certain policies and actions of the Israeli government, in January of 2019 JVP’s leadership announced the group was officially an “anti-Zionist” organization,³¹⁶ opposed to the very existence of a Jewish state. During the year, there was a **45 percent** increase in overall JVP campus activity, from 118 occurrences in 2018 to **171 occurrences**. Not surprisingly, schools with an active JVP student group were **3 times more likely** to have occurrences of expression denying that anti-Zionism is antisemitism or that Zionism is part of Jewish identity, and the more overall JVP-involved campus activity, the higher the occurrence of such expression.

Efforts to Address Campus Antisemitism in America in 2019

In recent years there have been concerted efforts to ensure that Jewish college and university students receive the same protection from harassment motivated by Israel-related antisemitism as from harassment motivated by classic antisemitism. In 2019, these efforts focused on urging universities and state and federal governments to adopt and utilize the IHRA definition of antisemitism in adjudicating acts of harassment against Jewish students, as well as legal efforts to fight specific cases of anti-Zionist-motivated harassment using Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

- **Campus efforts** – Student activists on several campuses sought to enshrine the IHRA definition of antisemitism, particularly its acknowledgement of the antisemitic nature of anti-Zionism, in resolutions considered by their student governments, with mixed results. At George Washington University, some aspects of the IHRA definition were included in “The Anti-Semitism Condemnation Act,” but other clauses identifying demonizing claims about Israel as antisemitic were removed before passage of the resolution in the student senate. At Stanford University, a “Resolution to Recognize Anti-Semitism in Our Community,” which quoted the IHRA definition but left out the definition’s examples of anti-Zionist expression, was passed unanimously in the undergraduate student senate. At University of Illinois Urbana

³¹⁶ Jewish Voice for Peace, *Our Approach to Zionism*, accessed June 3, 2020 at <https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/zionism/>.

Champaign, despite strong support among Jewish students for including the IHRA definition in a resolution entitled “Combating Anti-Semitism,” not only was the resolution passed without any mention of the definition, but later that year an SJP-sponsored resolution declaring that anti-Zionism is not antisemitism was passed by a large margin in the student senate. Only at the University of St. Thomas was a resolution including the full IHRA definition passed by the undergraduate government.

- **State efforts** – The Florida state legislature passed a bill mandating that the state’s public schools and universities treat discrimination motivated by antisemitic intent in an identical manner to discrimination motivated by race. In addition, the bill contained the full IHRA definition and specified that it should be used in determining antisemitic intent.
- **Federal efforts** – For the third year in a row, the Anti-Semitism Awareness Act, requiring that the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) use the full IHRA definition of antisemitism in adjudicating cases of antisemitic harassment under Title VI, failed to pass into law. However, in December 2019, President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing “all executive departments and agencies charged with enforcing Title VI” to use the IHRA definition of antisemitism, including its examples identifying anti-Zionism as antisemitism.
- **Legal efforts** – In 2019, at least five Title VI complaints were filed with the DOE by legal groups alleging that Jewish students had been the victims of anti-Zionist-motivated harassment. Three complaints were filed before President Trump issued his executive order regarding campus antisemitism – at Duke University/University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (UNC),³¹⁷ New York University³¹⁸ and University of California Los Angeles³¹⁹ – with the DOE launching investigations into all of them. The complaint against Duke/UNC led to two separate resolution agreements, with UNC committing in November to respond to and investigate allegations of antisemitic harassment and to issue a statement that such harassment will not be tolerated,³²⁰ and Duke University

³¹⁷ https://zoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Letter-to-Kenneth-Marcus-re-UNC-Duke-Gaza-conference-4-17-19.pdf?utm_source=Unknown+List&utm_campaign=e84bd6e566-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_04_18_01_18&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-e84bd6e566-&utm_source=Unknown+List&utm_campaign=e84bd6e566-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_04_18_01_18&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-e84bd6e566-

³¹⁸ "U.S. Department of Education investigates anti-Semitic incidents at NYU," *Jerusalem Post*, November 19, 2019, accessed June 3, 2020, at <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/NYU-antisemitism-investigation-ongoing-following-several-incidents-607954>.

³¹⁹ Stand With Us Complaint to the U.S. Department of Education, October 7, 2019, accessed June 3, 2020, at <https://www.standwithus.com/ucla-titlevi-complaint>.

³²⁰ "University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill agrees to resolution over anti-Semitism complaint," JTA, November 14, 2019, accessed June 3, 2020, at <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/university-of-north-carolina-at-chapel-hill-agrees-to-resolution-over-anti-semitism-complaint>.

making similar commitments in the following month.³²¹ The other two complaints are still being investigated, as is a complaint about the harassment of Jewish students at Columbia submitted immediately after the President's executive order. Another Title VI complaint filed a week later at Georgia Institute of Technology by the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ)³²² has yet to receive an official response from the DOE.

While in 2019 considerable efforts were expended pushing for the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism by universities and government agencies so that anti-Zionist motivated harassment would be treated as antisemitism, these efforts elicited enormous pushback from anti-Zionist students and faculty, who adamantly denied the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Given the extent of such pushback, as well as its linkage to acts of anti-Zionist motivated harassment, it remains unclear how effective efforts to combat Israel-related antisemitism using the IHRA definition and civil rights law will ultimately be. In the meantime, therefore, it is beneficial to explore additional approaches to ensuring that Jewish students are protected from anti-Zionist harassment, which focus solely on the harmfulness of the behavior and do not depend on the motivation of the perpetrator or the identity of the victim.

BDS – Activities and Counter Measures / Giovanni Quer

During 2019, BDS activities may not have increased in number, but the BDS movement has certainly gained more prominence in social media and in the international public discourse. A number of factors have contributed to this process. First, major boycott campaigns against events taking place in Israel, such as the 2019 Eurovision music context, and the support of international stars, such as Roger Waters, for the BDS cause were instrumental in reaching a wider audience worldwide. Secondly, legal activity against the BDS has intensified, especially in the US, both in terms of legislation introduced to counter anti-Israel boycotts and in terms of lawsuits questioning the alleged infringement on free speech. Those initiatives triggered a broader debate that also involved political activists, such as Congresswomen Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, who were pivotal in publicizing the anti-Israel cause. Finally, Israel's measures to counter BDS activists and supporters made the news when they were applied, for instance with the decision to discontinue the visa permit of Omar Shakir, Human Rights Watch director of the Israel-Palestine Desk, for his support of anti-Israel boycotts.

At least 28 states in the US, including Kentucky and Mississippi, passed anti-BDS laws in 2019. In Texas, a federal judge established that political boycotts are a form of free

³²¹ "Duke University resolves anti-Semitism discrimination complaint," JTA, February 4, 2020, accessed June 3, 2020, at <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/duke-university-resolves-anti-semitism-discrimination-complaint>.

³²² Mark Goldfeder, "ACLJ Files Federal Complaint to Combat Antisemitism in Major University Campus," ACLJ, December 2019, accessed June 3, 2020, at <https://aclj.org/israel/aclj-files-federal-complaint-to-combat-anti-semitism-on-major-university-campus>.

speech protected by the First Amendment. Therefore, the state cannot require private contractors to refrain from endorsing the BDS. In another case in Maryland, however, the judge opined that insofar as anti-BDS legislation is aimed to prevent discrimination, it does not restrict constitutionally protected rights. As a general trend, numerous states have amended anti-BDS legislation limiting its applicability to contract of at least \$100,000. Although not related to BDS directly, a federal court in Canada and the European Court of Justice have established that labelling products originating from the post-1967 territories administered by Israel is a matter of consumer protection. Regrettably, the European court has argued that product labelling aims to protect the consumer for making ethical choices with respect to the origin of the product, without considering the complexity of the legal arguments in favor and against the Israeli settlements. In Spain, courts have confirmed the jurisprudence annulling BDS policies adopted by local authorities, not only on grounds of constitutionally mandated powers, but also on account of illegal discrimination on the basis of nationality that BDS activities enact.

Among the fields of action, university campuses remain a major ground for anti-Israel activism. Students' BDS activism shows a certain change in the strategy of action. In comparison to 2018, activists try to push the BDS agenda through "students' referenda" and campaigns targeting university authorities. Although BDS resolutions continue to be adopted by students' representative bodies, they fail to be endorsed by academic administrations. In light of such failures, BDS activists organized "referenda" on campuses, pretending to reflect the general will of the students' population as a way to pressure universities' governing bodies into introducing anti-Israel policies. In at least two cases, BDS initiatives were successful: the NYU Department of Social and Cultural Analysis passed a resolution of non-cooperation with NYU chapter in Israel in May 2019; and the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies adopted a BDS motion in June. As an opposite trend, universities' presidents and directors appear to be more vocal in opposing the BDS agenda, especially in the US. Moreover, students' organizations in Germany have adopted major anti-BDS resolutions, showing an increased activism against anti-Israel initiatives.

In terms of visibility, BDS activism seems to privilege online campaigns, targeting companies, artists, and cultural events. At least nine major demonstrations took place in the US and Europe, five of them on occasions of cultural events involving Israeli participants and four of them against shops selling Israeli products. In addition to the notable campaign against the Eurovision music contest that involved different online and lobby operations, at least 18 online campaigns called for cancelling cultural events for Israeli participation or for personal views of the artists perceived as pro-Israeli. Such campaigns were largely unsuccessful: targeted artists responded to BDS claims either by rejecting boycotts as a means of political action, as the Brazilian musician Milton Nascimento did, or by ignoring them altogether, as the musicians Bon Jovi and Lionel Richie did. The long and established career of these artists certainly contributes to their capacity of shrugging off BDS pressure, which may not be the case for young artists, who address a younger audience, which is more exposed to anti-Israel narrative.

With respect to divestment campaigns, three major online campaigns were organized on various internet platforms targeting the companies AirBnB, for publicizing residence options in Judea and Samaria, and Puma, for sponsoring the Israel Football Association.

Seven other divestment campaigns targeted corporations and small businesses for their diverse connection to Israel. The underlining argument of these campaigns is that making business with Israel, specifically when it involves the post-1967 territories, contributes or amount to violations of international law. The 2019 Amnesty International report “Destination Occupation – Digital Tourism and Israel’s Illegal Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,” which argues that tourism business involving Israeli destinations in Judea and Samaria amounts to war crimes, contributed to the legal discourse against Israel.

In the realm of Christian associations, the Anglican Church of Southern Africa endorsed BDS in September, and the Executive Council of the US Episcopal Church decided to divest from a number of companies, claiming that they violate human rights law for operating in the post-1967 territories. In at least four cases in Germany and the US, activists within Christian Churches tried to push BDS events that were eventually cancelled. Besides Christian organizations that openly support BDS, such as the WCC (World Council of Churches) and the Catholic Pax Christi, there is a trend of activism within other organizations to further the BDS narrative as a form of Christian commitment for justice, which still encounters opposition among leaders.

While in the West BDS activists operate by advancing anti-Israeli arguments based on human rights and international law, in the Arab world the discourse is primarily focused on anti-normalization, whereby any indirect contact with Israel is the reason to attack sportspersons, cultural figures, and politicians. The BDS is promoted in the West through a network of organizations and grass-roots movements that are connected to the BNC (the Boycott National Committee), which promotes anti-normalization as a cornerstone of its anti-Israeli agenda. This may have far-reaching implications in terms of Israel’s delegitimization among the larger public, precisely because anti-normalization, with its uncompromising rejection of Israel’s right to exist, permeates the BDS narrative, increasingly diffused in the mainstream. Furthermore, antisemitic tropes emerge in the context of BDS failure or anti-BDS initiatives, interpreted in certain Arab media through conspiracy theories that depict the “powerful Zionist lobby” as relentlessly luring American and European governments for achieving its goals.

Significant anti-BDS initiatives were advanced by various actors. In Germany, not only students’ organizations and local authorities have adopted anti-BDS resolutions, but also administrations of cultural events have countered BDS activists. Also worthy of attention is the “Arab Council for Regional Integration”, which was launched in November by numerous actors from the Arab world and advances overtures to Israel

stressing the importance of cooperation and condemning the political use of the Arab-Israel conflict.

This report analyzes the main BDS campaigns and initiatives during 2019 in different sectors, including divestment, culture, academia, and the law and concludes with emphasizing anti-BDS initiatives.

BDS initiatives

Divestment initiatives

At least 10 divestment initiatives targeted companies, shops, and cooperation agreements over links to Israel. Largely unsuccessful, these initiatives were significantly visible for their online presence. The language in support of the boycott is usually entrenched in human rights and international law, but the actual focus is the cooperation with Israel.

Security companies and military industries are among the primary targets of boycott campaigns. One of these companies is the Israeli International Defense Electronics Company, Elbit Systems, which for over a decade has been accused of furthering international law violations. The HSBC bank group decided to divest from it over the alleged production of cluster bombs, although Elbit clarified that it does not. HSBC also stated that the decision does not stem from BDS pressure, but from corporate social responsibility reasons.³²³ Another company that has come under the BDS radar is the Israeli AnyVision, producing technologies for facial recognition. The BDS National Committee launched a boycott campaign against AnyVision, claiming that its security products are used by Israeli security forces and therefore “enabling the occupation.” Other Spanish and French companies that use AnyVision products were called upon to divest.³²⁴

Sometimes, divestment campaigns are launched by BDS groups that mobilize trade unions. In South Africa, the local BDS group pressured the Brimstone Investment company for participating in consortium with Israeli Central Bottling Company for the acquisition of another South African firm to retract from the deal.³²⁵ Despite the month-long campaign and the mobilization of trade unions, the deal was eventually approved in September.³²⁶

³²³ Tovah Lazaroff, “Elbit rejects HSBC's BDS disclaimer stating: ‘We don’t produce cluster bombs,’” *Jerusalem Post*, January 3, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Elbit-rejects-HSBCs-BDS-disclaimer-stating-We-dont-produce-cluster-bombs-576250>.

³²⁴ BDS National Committee, “Boycott AnyVision: Israel’s ‘field-tested’ facial recognition surveillance company,” accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://bdsmovement.net/news/boycott-anyvision-israels-field-tested-facial-recognition-surveillance-company>.

³²⁵ “Brimstone to review Clover acquisition after boycott threats,” *Business Day*, February 7, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/companies/retail-and-consumer/2019-02-07-brimstone-to-review-clover-acquisition-after-boycott-threats/>.

³²⁶ Ilanit Chernick, “BDS fails to derail Israeli-S. African multi-million dollar deal,” *Jerusalem Post*, November 10, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/BDS-fails-to-derail-Israeli-S-African-multi-million-dollar-deal-607418>.

Four companies promoting tourism solutions, AirBnB, Expedia, Booking.com, and TripAdvisor, were attacked by a report published by Amnesty International in 2019, inviting them to divest from the post-1967 territories, and arguing that this kind of business might amount to war crimes.³²⁷ The report accuses Israel of war crimes for having established civilian settlements in these territories. The idea that companies may be held criminally responsible for international crimes is debatable, unless it is a major, incontrovertible contribution to the commission of a gross human rights violation, war crime, or crime against humanity. Therefore, certain claims put forward by the report, such as suggesting that tourism in the post-1967 territories may amount to war crimes and that company managers may be subject to prosecution thereof,³²⁸ appear to be a form of political pressure on companies into divesting from Israel more than contributing to enhancing their ethical standards.

Cultural boycott initiatives

At least 22 boycott campaigns targeted cultural events involving Israeli artists or international artists performing in Israel. On some occasions, the reason for the boycott was simply an opinion expressed by the artists that was interpreted as pro-Israeli.

The major campaign organized aimed at the Eurovision international music contest started already in 2018 by different actors. BDS groups mobilized artists and LGBT circles in an effort to influence both public opinion and decision makers into withdrawing from the context. Besides an open letter signed by a group of artists in Sweden,³²⁹ UK and Ireland were the principal states where BDS actors operated, also pressuring public TV channels.

One of the first appeals to boycott the contest was published on January 28. It was promoted by Palestinian LGBT organizations and signed by over 100 LGBT groups from around the world. The text of the appeal associates the 1968 Stonewall riots in the US, which shaped the LGBT community awareness against police violence, to the Great March of Return, initiated and led by Hamas in 2018, and aiming to storm the fence along the Gaza Strip border with Israel.³³⁰ Contextually, artists began joining the

³²⁷ Amnesty International, "Destination: Occupation – Digital Tourism and Israel's Illegal Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," *Amnesty International*, 2019, p. 8, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2019/01/destination-occupation-digital-tourism-israel-illegal-settlements/>.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³²⁹ 171 Swedish artists published a public letter against Eurovision competition in the *Aftonbladet*: "Sverige måste säga nej till Eurovision i Israel," *Aftonbladet*, April 2, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.aftonbladet.se/debatt/a/MRno2m/sverige-maste-saga-nej-till-eurovision-i-israel>.

³³⁰ "Boycott Eurovision in Israel And Tel Aviv Pride!" *Pinckwatcher*, January 28 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <http://www.pinkwatchingisrael.com/portfolio/boycott-eurovision-in-israel-and-tel-aviv-pride/>.

boycott campaigns, through open letters in the press,³³¹ online campaigns,³³² and *ad hoc* art work.³³³

Besides the UK, Ireland was the main focus of boycott activity: the national TV Corporation RTÉ was the target of a campaign aimed to persuade not to broadcast the Eurovision,³³⁴ including a petition promoted by IPSC (Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign),³³⁵ and another petition signed by a number of Palestinian singers.³³⁶ By April, it was clear that the Eurovision would take place, yet the campaign continued, mobilizing also local authorities, such as Derry, Sligo, Galway, to pass resolutions asking for the withdrawal of Ireland.³³⁷

A number of international artists came under the radar of BDS activists for performing in Israel, including Milton Nascimento, Jennifer Lopez, Paul Anka, Bon Jovi, and Lionel Richie. Sometimes, campaigns use the artists' identity and minority heritage to convince them to boycott Israel. None of these campaigns were successful. However, it seems that younger artists and younger audiences are more prone to anti-Israel radicalism, perhaps due to the generational gap.

Other BDS initiatives targeted cultural festivals for being hosted in Israel, for featuring Israeli artists, or for being otherwise connected to Israel, such as the UK "Seret" film

³³¹ "The BBC Should Press For Eurovision To Be Moved From Israel," *The Guardian*, January 29, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/jan/29/the-bbc-should-press-for-eurovision-to-be-moved-from-israel>; Stephanie Convery, "Australia's Eurovision Hopefuls And SBS Face Pressure To Boycott Event In Israel," *The Guardian*, February 7, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2019/feb/08/australias-eurovision-hopefuls-and-sbs-face-pressure-to-boycott-event-in-israel>. The musician Brian Eno wrote a piece on *The Guardian* pledging for the relocation of the song context to another state; see, Brian Eno, "Israel must not be allowed to use Eurovision as a propaganda tool" *The Guardian*, 18 February 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/feb/18/israel-eurovision-propaganda-oppression-palestinians>.

³³² See <https://www.change.org/p/european-broadcasting-union-support-eurovision-2019-in-tel-aviv>.

³³³ The British band Slovo released in March on YouTube a song titled "Not my kinda party," which contains the wording "I don't sing for apartheid", "This is not for me, this is apartheid", and "Free Palestine." See, <https://youtu.be/4OkkgASV4So>.

³³⁴ Cónal Thomas, "'This will be tricky:' Diplomacy at RTÉ after public urged broadcaster to boycott Eurovision 2019," *The Journal*, February 19, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.thejournal.ie/this-will-be-tricky-public-urged-rte-to-boycott-eurovision-2019-4498162-Feb2019/>.

³³⁵ "Call for boycott of Eurovision in Israel," *The Irish Times*, March 7, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/call-for-boycott-of-eurovision-in-israel-1.3816672>.

³³⁶ "Call for boycott of Eurovision in Israel," *The Irish Times*, March 25, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/call-for-boycott-of-eurovision-1.3836874>.

³³⁷ "Eurovision in Israel boycott motion to be tabled in Derry" *Derry Journal*, February 26, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.derryjournal.com/news/eurovision-israel-boycott-motion-be-tabled-derry-99691>; Callum Lavery, "Sligo County Council votes unanimously to call on RTE to boycott the Eurovision," *The Journal*, April 5, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.thejournal.ie/sligo-city-council-boycott-rte-eurovision-2019-4578711-Apr2019/>; The Galway City Council motion, "Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Galway City Council held on Monday 13th May 2019 at 11.00am in City Hall, College Road, Galway," Galway City Council, May 13, 2019, p. 9, accessed April 27, 2020, at https://www.galwaycity.ie/uploads/downloads/council_meetings/130519_02_Minutes.pdf.

festival,³³⁸ and the Berlin Pop-Kultur Festival.³³⁹ The growing cooperation between Israel and India in the cultural field was also an occasion for advancing the anti-Israel boycott against the Indofest entertainment event that took place in Tel Aviv in October.³⁴⁰

Academic boycott initiatives

Universities, campuses, and other academic institutions appear to be the most active front of BDS activities, especially in the US and the UK, where anti-Israeli activism is met with a certain degree of success – of the 22 BDS initiatives, at least 3 were successful. Compared to 2018, there are more cases in which university administrations or presidents reversed decisions to adopt boycott policies. Anti-BDS activism is also growing, especially in Germany, where students' groups advance anti-boycott resolutions.

In February, the Bristol Student Union adopted a slightly modified version of the 2016 boycott resolution, adding a paragraph that calls for divestment from businesses also in other contested territories.³⁴¹ Despite this amendment, the resolution remains intrinsically anti-Israel, insofar as it singles out the Jewish State as an alleged major violator of international law. A major case of BDS policy involved the NYU Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, which passed a resolution of non-cooperation with NYU chapter in Israel in May. Interestingly, the decision does not officially endorse the BDS call, but it states that cooperating with Israel would contravene the Ethical Code of the university and violate the principle of non-discrimination.³⁴² In the UK, the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRIMES) adopted a BDS motion in June, which accuses Israel of infringing on Palestinians' right to education and urges BRIMES members to advance boycott policies in their academic institutions.³⁴³

On the counter-boycott side, various BDS motions were opposed or reversed. In March the students' body of the Pitzer College adopted a motion calling to divest from an agreement with Haifa University but was rejected by the College President,³⁴⁴

³³⁸ "UK cinemas should boycott the Israeli film festival Seret" *The Guardian*, April 25, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/25/uk-cinemas-should-boycott-the-israeli-film-festival-seret>.

³³⁹ See <https://artistsforpalestine.org.uk/2019/08/09/israeli-artists-boycott-pop-kultur-berlin-festival/>.

³⁴⁰ See <https://bdsmovement.net/bollywoodstandagainstapartheid>; a Twitter campaign also developed <https://twitter.com/hashtag/bollywoodstandagainstapartheid?lang=en>.

³⁴¹ "Divesting from Israel's Illegal Occupation of the West Bank," Motion presented to the Bristol Students' Union by Layla Assam and Mason Ammar to the Annual Members Meeting of February 26, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.bristolstu.org.uk/resources/divesting-from-israel-s-illegal-occupation-of-the-west-bank-with-approved-amendment>.

³⁴² See <https://as.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/as/departments/sca/about/resolution.html>.

³⁴³ See http://www.brimes.ac.uk/images/AB2019/Resolution_4_June_2019_-_AB.pdf.

³⁴⁴ "Pitzer College President Rejects Anti-Israel Boycott to Ensure 'Free Exchange of Ideas'," *The Tower*, March 15, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <http://www.thetower.org/7344-pitzer-college-president-rejects-anti-israel-boycott-to-ensure-free-exchange-of-ideas/>.

triggering a campaign by BDS activists who called for his removal.³⁴⁵ In a similar case, the Associated Students of the University of Oregon voted in favor of a BDS resolution in February, but the university judicial body found that the resolution contravened the principle of non-discrimination.³⁴⁶ At the University of Cape Town, South Africa, the Senate passed a resolution in March, advanced by the Palestine Solidarity Forum (PSF), endorsing the boycott of Israeli academic institutions, which was blocked by the University Council,³⁴⁷ and eventually dropped – a decision criticized as a consequence of “Zionist lobbying.”³⁴⁸

Facing the failure of BDS resolutions through university bodies, anti-Israeli activism has taken another strategy: lobbying University presidents and organizing referenda that would advance BDS by disguising it as the will of the student’s population. At Cornell University, Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), the most active organization promoting anti-Israel activism in US campuses, asked President Martha Pollack to divest from companies that are “complicit in the morally reprehensible human rights violations in Palestine,”³⁴⁹ to which she responded rejecting SJP’s arguments and BDS logic of singling out Israel and denying its right to exist.³⁵⁰ Subsequently, in April, a BDS resolution supported by SJP, Collective for Justice in Palestine and other groups, did not pass the vote at the Students Assembly.³⁵¹ Following the same strategy, in March, a referendum on the university divestment from Israeli companies was held among students of Brown University. 68 percent of the voters were in favor of the boycott, but they represented just the 27.5 percent of the undergraduate student.³⁵² It is highly unlikely that these “referenda” are really reflective of students’ will, but they further

³⁴⁵ Marcy Oster, “Pitzer student senate calls for president’s removal over Israel program” *The Jerusalem Post*, April 1, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Pitzer-student-senate-calls-for-presidents-removal-over-Israel-program-585402>.

³⁴⁶ Michael F. Haverluck, “Reversal: U. of Oregon rules BDS resolution unconstitutional,” *OneNewsNow*, February 14, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://onenewsnow.com/education/2019/02/14/reversal-u-of-oregon-rules-bds-resolution-unconstitutional>.

³⁴⁷ The resolution was blocked because its consequences had not been entirely considered, as Royston Pillay, the Council Secretary, said. Shira Kadari-Ovadia, “University of Cape Town Holds Off on Adopting Vote to Boycott of Israeli Academia” *Haaretz*, April 1, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-university-of-cape-town-holds-off-on-adopting-boycott-of-israeli-academia-1.7069877>.

³⁴⁸ Lisa Isaacs, “Anger over UCT’s about-turn on academic boycott against Israel,” *IOL*, November 25, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/anger-over-ucts-about-turn-on-academic-boycott-against-israel-37931587>.

³⁴⁹ See, “On Human Rights” Letter to the Editor, *The Cornell Sun*, February 26, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://cornellsun.com/2019/02/26/letter-to-the-editor-on-human-rights/>.

³⁵⁰ The response by Cornell University President was published in a Facebook Post of the local Hillel chapter on February 28, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.facebook.com/CornellHillel/posts/10157092435920948?>

³⁵¹ Some students also stressed that the proposal had a divisive effect on the campus community. Shiri Moshe, “Cornell Students Vote Down Divestment Resolution Targeting Israel After Acrimonious Campus Debate,” *The Algemeiner*, April 12, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.algemeiner.com/2019/04/12/cornell-students-vote-down-divestment-resolution-targeting-israel-after-acrimonious-campus-debate/>.

³⁵² “Brown University Students Pass Referendum Demanding School Divest from Israeli Firms” *Haaretz*, March 23, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/brown-university-students-pass-referendum-school-must-divest-from-israeli-firms-1.7045675>.

the liberal disguise by promoting the image of a democratic will of students on campuses.

In at least two cases, BDS resolutions were simply rejected. In April, the Students' Government Association of the University of Maryland rejected a BDS motion,³⁵³ and in August the Board of the academic association Society for the Study of Social Problems quashed a BDS motion presented two months earlier, even if for a low majority of votes.³⁵⁴

Anti-Israel boycotts: legal developments

Anti-BDS legal activism is steady, confirming the previous year's trends: in Spain administrative tribunals continue cancelling BDS motions adopted by local authorities, because it is outside their constitutional mandate and because it discriminates on the basis of national identity; and in the US new states have introduced anti-BDS legislation, while others have limited the scope of application to contracts worth at least \$100,000. However, there were two new developments: in the EU and in Canada, courts ruled in favor of labelling products originating from the post-1967 territories; and in Israel the Supreme Court has ruled on a case involving a BDS activist denied a work permit.

On March 25, Governor of the State Kentucky Matt Bevin approved the "ACT relating to state contracts and declaring an emergency," adopted by the parliament a week earlier, thus making it a law.³⁵⁵ Mississippi has also adopted the "Israel Support Act of 2019," approved by the Governor on March 15.³⁵⁶ In light of the harsh criticism of such legislation, several states have amended the original bills, limiting their scope to contracts of at least \$100,000. In Arizona, the anti-BDS legislation was amended, restricting the ban on doing business with companies boycotting Israel to contracts of at least \$100,000. The original 2016 anti-BDS bill was blocked by District Court Judge Diane Humetewa on ground of violation of freedom of speech.³⁵⁷

Other similar laws were challenged in courts during the year, including in Arkansas, Texas, and Maryland. Petitioners questioned the constitutionality of the anti-BDS laws, warning that they are deemed to impinge on individual freedoms covered by the First Amendment. It seems that a political boycott is protected by the First Amendment, but as long as legislation is aimed to prevent discrimination on basis of origin, anti-BDS laws are not to be deemed unconstitutional.

³⁵³ "University of Maryland Rejects Controversial BDS Resolution," *The Tower*, April 25, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <http://www.thetower.org/7278-university-of-maryland-rejects-controversial-bds-resolution/>.

³⁵⁴ See the minutes of the meeting, p. 12, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.sssp1.org/file/Business%20Meeting%20Minutes%2008-10-19.pdf>.

³⁵⁵ The scope of the law is limited to contracts of at least \$100,000 and does not apply to individuals or small businesses with five or less employees; see, <https://legiscan.com/KY/text/SB143/id/1957322>.

³⁵⁶ See <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2019/pdf/history/HB/HB0761.xml>.

³⁵⁷ Howard Fischer, "AG argues new law makes court ruling on Israel boycotts moot," *Arizona Capitol Times*, May 9, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2019/05/09/ag-argues-new-law-makes-court-ruling-on-israel-boycotts-moot/>.

In the case of *Bahia Amawi v. Pflugerville Independent School District, et al.*, the court established that the boycott is protected by the First Amendment, being a form of expression. Texas adopted on May 2, 2017, the “Act relating to state contracts with and investments in companies that boycott Israel,” which mandates the State Comptroller to create a list of companies that boycott Israel, from which state entities are compelled to divest according to a specific procedure.³⁵⁸ The plaintiff argued the unconstitutionality of anti-BDS law (H.B. 89), for having been denied a public employment contract over her refusal to sign a non-BDS commitment. Federal Judge Robert Pitman established that “Plaintiffs’ BDS boycotts are not only inherently expressive, but as a form of expression on a public issue, rest on ‘the highest rung of the hierarchy of First Amendment values.’”³⁵⁹ The judge also argued that the legislation is directed to prevent anti-Israel speech only, not negative speech on states in general. Therefore, it is restrictive of freedom of speech,³⁶⁰ for also being somehow punitive of Israel’s criticism,³⁶¹ and rejecting the argument that it is aimed to counter discrimination on the basis of national origin.³⁶²

In Maryland, Saqib Ali filed a lawsuit against the Governor, who passed a state law in October 2017 excluding from public tenders contractors supporting BDS,³⁶³ arguing that it violates his individual rights protected under the First Amendment, by impeding his participation in public tenders for being a BDS supporter. District Judge Cathreine C. Blake dismissed the petition. First, the judge noted that the governor limited the scope of the Executive Order to cases of discrimination, which thus “prohibits only national-origin discrimination against Israelis in the formation of a bid for a state contract, leaving Mr. Ali and other potential state contractors free to boycott Israel and Israeli companies outside the bid formation process without compromising their eligibility to receive and maintain procurement contracts with the state.”³⁶⁴ The judge further notes that there are concerns regarding the potential infringement on the right to participate in political boycotts,³⁶⁵ but the interpretation given by the State suffices to guarantee First Amendment rights.³⁶⁶

A pending case in Arkansas disputes these views. Arkansas Civil Liberties Union on behalf of the *Arkansas Times* filed a petition to suspend the anti-boycott law, in a lawsuit filed after the University of Arkansas-Pulaski Technical College required the

³⁵⁸ See, <https://legiscan.com/TX/text/HB89/2017>.

³⁵⁹ See “*Bahia Amawi v. Pflugerville Independent School District, et al.*,” 1:18-CV-1091-RP Order of 25 April 2019, p. 26, accessed April 27, 2020, at https://www.aclutx.org/sites/default/files/4-25-19_bds_order.pdf.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 35.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

³⁶³ See Executive Order 01.01.2017.25, “Prohibiting Discriminatory Boycotts of Israel in State Procurement” of October 23, 2017, accessed April 27, 2020, at <http://mdrules.elaws.us/comar/01.01.2017.25>.

³⁶⁴ See “*Saqib Ali v. Lawrence Hogan, et al.*,” Civil No. CCB-19-0078, (D. Md. October 1, 2019), p.1; accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://casetext.com/case/ali-v-hogan-2?q=Ashley&sort=date-ascending&p=1&type=case&tab=keyword&a=true&motionTypes=&claims=3a,3n,4a,19a&partyTypes=149,615,667&resultsNav=false>.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

newspaper's commitment not to boycott Israel in order to host advertisement. In January a federal judge in Arkansas dismissed a petition challenging the constitutionality of Act 710 of 2017, Arkansas' anti-BDS law, on grounds of incompatibility with First Amendment rights. Chief U.S. District Judge Brian Miller then found that political boycotts are not protected by the First Amendment.³⁶⁷ The suit has been revived at the Court of Appeals.

In two different jurisdictions, in the EU and Canada, courts decided in favor of labelling products originating from the post-1967 territories. While this is not per se a BDS activity, it is a relevant development that is in all likelihood a consequence of the mainstreamed anti-Israel boycott. Indeed, the post-1967 territories of Judea and Samaria trigger worldwide activism, like no other similar case, against the civilian presence of a certain state in areas of disputed sovereignty. Moreover, certain arguments such as the accusation of population transfer and the comparison to apartheid South Africa, proper of BDS discourse, considerably contributed to the rulings.

On November 12, the European Court of Justice decided in favor of labeling Israeli wine produced in the post-1967 territories. The ECJ ruled on a case originating in France, filed in 2016 by "Organisation Juive Européenne" and "Psagot Company," which contested France's policy of labelling products from these territories (Judea and Samaria). The question under discussion was whether the absence of labelling could mislead the consumer into believing that the product originated from Israel proper. EU law requires clear labeling for giving the consumer a proper picture of the product under a number of criteria, including health, economic, environmental, social, and ethical, which concur to the consumer's decision-making process. Making a direct reference to apartheid South Africa, the EU Advocate General Gerard Hogan suggested labeling in a legal opinion of June 13, 2019.³⁶⁸ On November 12, the Grand Chamber of the ECJ decided in favor of the labelling "in order to prevent consumers being misled as to the fact that the State of Israel is present in those territories as an occupying power and not as a sovereign entity."³⁶⁹ The court repeatedly makes the point that the settlements are in breach of international humanitarian law,³⁷⁰ also stating that Israel enacts a policy of population transfer.³⁷¹ Therefore, "it must be acknowledged (...) that consumers' purchasing decisions may be informed by considerations relating to the

³⁶⁷ Linda Satter, "Arkansas Times' lawsuit over Israel boycott law tossed," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, January 24, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2019/jan/24/suit-over-israel-boycott-law-tossed-201/>.

³⁶⁸ See Advocate General's Opinion in Case C-363/18, June 13, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2019-06/cp190073en.pdf>.

³⁶⁹ *Organisation Juive Européenne, Vignoble Psagot Ltd v Ministre de l'Économie et des Finances*, Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber), Case C-363/18, November 12, 2019, par. 37 ; accessed April 27, 2020, at

http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?jsessionid=05F6A15CAFACEC034525C7BB8096AB4C?text=&docid=220534&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=5809453#Footnote*

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, par. 50.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, par. 48.

fact that the foodstuffs in question in the main proceedings come from settlements established in breach of the rules of international humanitarian law.”³⁷²

In Canada, a private citizen filed a petition against the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) for failing to specify that certain wines originate from the post-1967 territories, and a Federal Court decided in favor of labelling wine produced there.³⁷³ The CFIA argued that Israeli custom laws apply to the territories it administers, therefore the products could be labeled as made in Israel and, in a somewhat sharp remark, it also noted that “if consumers had concerns with respect to where the Settlement Wines were produced, they can just Google the name of the wineries.”³⁷⁴ The court opined that “identifying Settlement Wines as being ‘Products of Israel’ is false, misleading and deceptive,” thus precluding the possibility of making “‘well informed decisions and well informed and rational choices’ in order to be able to ‘buy conscientiously’.”³⁷⁵ Acknowledging the intricate situation,³⁷⁶ including the legal controversy over the legality of the Israeli settlements,³⁷⁷ the court however determines that “one peaceful way in which people can express their political views is through their purchasing decisions,” and by labelling the products originating from post-1967 territories, the authorities enable the consumers to express their views through commerce choices.³⁷⁸

By making assumptions about the violation of international law, including the fallacious accusation of population transfer, the EU decision does not explain why certain other geopolitical contexts are not equally targeted by the same strict policy of differentiation of products. Moreover, in both cases, the courts opined that labelling products is somehow a matter of freedom of expression, because it enables the consumer to choose what to buy on the basis of political views. The prominence of the Arab-Israeli conflict is here evident, since similar contexts of conflict are not addressed by the same aggressive policies.

In Spain, administrative courts have confirmed in seven different decisions the steady jurisprudence against BDS motions adopted by local authorities under the campaign “space free of Israeli Apartheid,” promoted by various BDS activists. The underlining argument is that political boycotts fall within the jurisdiction of the state, and therefore local authorities do not have the power of legislating in such matters. In some cases, the courts also found that BDS policies would generate a discrimination based on nationality that is prohibited under the constitution.

³⁷² Ibid., par. 50.

³⁷³ *Kattenburg v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2019 FC 1003 (citation), Ottawa Ontario, Judgment in T-1620-17 of July 29, 2019; accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://decisions.fct-cf.gc.ca/fc-cf/decisions/en/item/419068/index.do>.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., par. 87.

³⁷⁵ Ibid., par. 101.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., par. 125.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., par. 5.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., par. 126.

Regarding the application of Israel's legislation that bans entry to BDS activists, the main case in 2019 concerned Omar Shakir of the international organization Human Rights Watch. In March 2017 Omar Shakir, HRW director of Israel Palestine desk, was denied entry to Israel on tourist visa for his support of BDS after being denied a work visa,³⁷⁹ but eventually received it a month later. However, after a year Israel's Ministry of Interior revoked his work visa because of his active support of BDS, ordering him to leave the country in 14 days³⁸⁰ - an order subsequently suspended by a court petitioned by Shakir. At that time, HRW was particularly active in opposing business in the pot-1967 territories, which was interpreted by the Ministry and the courts as a BDS activity, while Shakir consistently argued that his job focuses only human rights and avoided to address the question whether he supports BDS. An international campaign in support of Shakir started, including calls to stop the deportation order from the UN³⁸¹ and the EU,³⁸² while HRW went so far to compare Israel to Iran.³⁸³

In November, the Israeli High Court of Justice decided to reject Shakir's appeal, providing an interpretation to the anti-BDS law.³⁸⁴ The Court established that according to the spirit of the law, persons who can be denied entry into Israel include both those who directly support the BDS and call for a boycott as a political mean, but also those who use human rights discourse in order to advance Israel's boycott.³⁸⁵ The law also applies to cases of opposition to Israel's administration in areas of Judea and Samaria; the court clarifies that if someone campaigns against Israeli industry on basis of genuine human rights arguments, making the hypothetical example of a campaign against child labor, the law would not apply; but if the goal is to undermine Israel's presence in the area, even under the disguise of human rights rhetoric, then the law applies.³⁸⁶ Regarding the specific case, the Court finds that Shakir "is systematically, consistently, persistently and thoroughly involved in the advancement of the boycott movement and the divestment from Israel," even after he joined HRW.³⁸⁷

³⁷⁹ "Israel bars Human Rights Watch worker from country — again," *Times of Israel*, March 2, 2017, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-bars-human-rights-watch-worker-from-country-again/>.

³⁸⁰ Michael Bachner, "Israel to expel Human Rights Watch director for 'actively supporting' BDS," *Times of Israel*, May 9, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-to-expel-human-rights-watch-director-for-actively-supporting-bds/>.

³⁸¹ See the opened letter published on the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' website

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24516&LangID=E>.

³⁸² Noa Landau, "EU Joins Call for Israel to Stop Deportation of Human Rights Watch Director," *Haaretz*, April 30, 2019, at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-eu-joins-call-for-israel-to-stop-deportation-of-human-rights-watch-director-1.7184133>.

³⁸³ Noa Landau, "Joining the condemnation, HRW went so far to compare Israel to Iran," *Haaretz*, July 24, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-human-rights-watch-chief-says-israel-trying-to-shut-us-down-like-iran-1.7568249?=&ts=_1563952001019.

³⁸⁴ Specifically, art. 2 D of the Entry into Israel Law 5712-1952, introduced by amendment n. 28 of March 6, 2017. See *Human Rights Watch and Omar Shakir v. Ministry of Interior et al*, CASE 2966/19, High Court of Justice, Administrative Appeal, November 5, 2019.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, par. 21.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, par. 22.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, par. 22

The court's decision helps to clarify the distinction between human rights defenders and BDS activists, a line that is increasingly being blurred. The EU condemnation of the decision indicates precisely this confusion, and conflates BDS activists and human rights workers, but simultaneously states not to support the BDS.³⁸⁸

Anti-BDS activities

During 2019, various politicians declared their opposition to BDS, but the novel trend is the enhanced anti-BDS initiatives, especially by local authorities and cultural institutions in Germany. The key role of local authorities in combating anti-Israel bigotry was highlighted also by the launch of the International coalition of Mayors initiative in February, which would serve as platform for combating antisemitism and BDS.³⁸⁹ Increasingly, municipalities are adopting anti-BDS policies: the Bonn municipality adopted a resolution banning support for BDS groups,³⁹⁰ and the City Council of Graz (Austria) adopted a joint statement against antisemitism and anti-Zionism, which also calls on the municipality to refrain from supporting events promoting the BDS and on companies working with the municipality to act accordingly.³⁹¹

At the state level, Germany and the US took other steps to combat anti-Israel campaigns. In Germany, a number of anti-BDS resolutions indicate the established opposition to anti-Israel policies. The German Bundestag adopted on May 15, a motion condemning antisemitism, including its forms directed against Israel a “Jewish collective” and the BDS, stating that its “patterns of argumentation and methods are antisemitic;” the motion also calls on the government to cease funding organizations or projects that promote the boycott of Israel.³⁹² In the US, the bi-partisan House Resolution 246, “Opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and the Global Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement targeting Israel,” was adopted on July 23, 2019. The resolution, however, acknowledges the right to criticize any state.³⁹³

³⁸⁸ In November 11, 2019, the EU EEAS condemns the HCJ decision; see

https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/70214/Statement%20by%20the%20Spokesperson%20on%20the%20case%20of%20Human%20Rights%20Watch%20director%20Omar%20Shakir.

³⁸⁹ See “Int’l Group of Mayors Convene in Israel to Fight Boycotts Against Jewish State,” *The Tower*, February 28, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <http://www.thetower.org/7265-intl-group-of-mayors-convene-in-israel-to-fight-boycotts-against-jewish-state/>.

³⁹⁰ See Resolution n. 1911513, “In Bonn ist kein Platz für die antisemitische BDS-Bewegung,” May 14, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at https://www2.bonn.de/bo_ris/daten/o/pdf/19/1911513.pdf.

³⁹¹ See

https://www.graz.at/cms/beitrag/10340565/9375341/Aus_dem_Gemeinderat_II_Tagesordnung.html.

³⁹² Motion 19/10191, “Der BDS-Bewegung entschlossen entgegenzutreten – Antisemitismus bekämpfen,” May 15, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <http://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/19/101/1910191.pdf>.

³⁹³ See <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/246/text>. The resolution was preceded by House Resolution 496 of July 16, 2019, titled “Affirming that all Americans have the right to participate in boycotts in pursuit of civil and human rights at home and abroad, as protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution,” advanced by Ilhan Omar and cosponsored by other 18 Congresspersons. See <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/496/text>.

In a number of occasions, cultural institutions took measures against BDS events or BDS-supporters. The case that sparked a broader debate involves the Nelly Sachs Prize for writers. In September, the jury reversed the decision to award British author Kamila Shamsie, because of the author's support and participation in anti-Israel boycott, and her decision to not allow her book to be translated into Hebrew.³⁹⁴

Anti-BDS activism is also growing in the academia also among students' organizations, most notably in Germany. The "Deutsch-Israel Studierenden Konferenz" was organized in June 15-16, as part of the activities of the FZS, the umbrella organization of students' groups in Germany. The conference, gathering student representatives of the whole political spectrum, adopted a resolution against antisemitism and anti-Zionism, and condemned anti-Israel boycotts.³⁹⁵ Subsequently, the CampusGrün student group at Münster University followed suit, passing a resolution against the BDS in July 22.³⁹⁶

A new trend is discerned in BDS activities in the academia: they are becoming object of legal proceedings. For example, in *Simon Bronner et al. v. Lisa Duggan et al.*, the petitioners, former members of the American Studies Association (ASA), resorted to court for seeking damages suffered from the decision of the ASA to endorse the BDS call in 2012. On February 4, the court dismissed the lawsuit on procedural grounds, but also stated that the "Plaintiffs may have meritorious claims arising from their individual injuries as ASA members."³⁹⁷ Also, the use of public funds in universities has come under scrutiny regarding anti-Israel activities. Congressman Holding asked the Education Department to investigate the possible misuse of federal funds by the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) at Georgetown for the support of BDS activities.³⁹⁸

The anti-BDS policy endorsed by German authorities has had a major effect on civil society. The youth organization of the German federal trade union "Ver.di" adopted a motion banning cooperation with BDS-affiliated groups and BDS-promoters.³⁹⁹

An initiative worth mentioning is the Arab Council for Regional Integration, which was inaugurated at conference in London on November 19, with the participation of over 30 representatives of civil society organizations, politicians, and academics from different Arab countries, calling for the establishment of social, cultural, and economic ties with Israel. Some participants reportedly voiced their resistance to the boycott of

³⁹⁴ See the decision of the Jury, accessed April 27, 2020, at https://www.dortmund.de/de/leben_in_dortmund/nachrichtenportal/alle_nachrichten/nachricht.jsp?nid=600201.

³⁹⁵ See <https://www.fzs.de/2019/06/04/pm-erste-deutsch-israelische-studierendenkonferenz/>.

³⁹⁶ See <https://campusgruen-muenster.de/2019/07/22/gegen-jeden-antisemitismus/>.

³⁹⁷ See *Bronner et al. v. Duggan et al.*, No. 1:2016cv00740, Memorandum Opinion Granting Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, of February 4, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/district-of-columbia/dcdce/1:2016cv00740/178434/122/>.

³⁹⁸ These funds were allocated under Title VI of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which promotes the study of foreign language for advancing national needs, and according to Holding, the CCAS Board members support BDS and CCAS activities advance the anti-Israel boycott. See <https://legcounsel.house.gov/Comps/Higher Education Act Of 1965.pdf>.

³⁹⁹ See "Beschlüsse verdi BJK 2019", p. 61, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://jugend.verdi.de/service/bjk19>.

Israel, also because it is used as a weapon against any opposition in their own countries.⁴⁰⁰ *The New York Times* reported that the conference was initiated by Mostafa Desouky of the Saudi magazine *al-Majalla* and American Joseph Braudy. Among the participants were Anwar Sadat's nephew, Egyptian MP Muhammad Anwar Sadat and Palestinian academic Muhammad al-Dajjani, who promotes Holocaust education, as well as the former Kuwaiti Minister of Information, Sami Al-Nisf. The conference discussed various topics, including Jewish-Arab relations and the heritage of Jewish communities that fled from Arab countries, the political use of the Arab-Israeli conflict by Arab leaders, as well as religious extremism and its detrimental effects on the Arab and Muslim worlds.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰⁰ Sam Sokol, "Gathering in London, Arab intellectuals advocate stronger relations with Israel," *The Times of Israel*, November 21, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/gathering-in-london-arab-intellectuals-advocate-stronger-relations-with-israel/>.

⁴⁰¹ Khalil bin Twila, "Al-Hurra stood alone in its coverage: reconciliation with Israel takes over the conference of the 'Arab initiative'," *Al-Hurra*, November 20, 2019, accessed April 27, 2020, at <https://www.alhurra.com/a/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%AA%D8%BA%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%84-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84-%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%BA%D9%89-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%85%D8%A4%D8%AA%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9-/522106.html>.

The Delusion of the Absence of Antisemitism in India / Navras J. Aafreedi

Introduction: Proportion, Population, and History

Jews are only 0.0004 per cent of the total population of India, the second most populous country of the world with a population of 1.2 billion. It is home to the world's largest minority segment, the Indian Muslims, around 172 million. Muslims have their second largest population in India and their proportion in India's total population is 14.2 percent. The rest of the Indian population is largely Hindu, divided into numerous castes and linguistic, cultural and regional groups, with religious minorities, such as Christians, 2.3 percent, and Sikhs, 1.72 percent in India's total population. Even with this small proportion in the general Indian population, there are more Christians in India than the combined populations of Italy and France. The micro-minorities cover 0.7 percent of India's total population.

There is a millennium old documentary evidence of the Jewish presence in India, though according to Jewish oral traditions their presence in the country goes back three millennia. The number of Jews is in the range of 3,000 to 10,000. It is hard to reach a precise number because there is no consensus whether the Jews that have emerged as a result of Judaizing movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries should be counted or not. Indian Jewry includes three communities – the Baghdadi, the last to settle in India; the Benei Israel, numerically the largest; and the Cochini, perhaps the best known. In addition there are four Judaizing movements - the Benei Menashe in northeast India; and the Benei Ephraim, the Noachides and a section of Chhetiards, all in southern India.

Judaizing Movements

In spite of the claim of the Benei Menashe and the Benei Ephraim that they are descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, they are yet to be fully accepted into the Jewish fold by World Jewry, since most of their members went through self-conversion to Judaism. The Chief Rabbinate has accepted the claim of the Benei Menashe, but not that of the Benei Ephraim. Religious orthodox conversion to Judaism still remains a prerequisite for them to qualify as *olim* (immigrants to Israel). Anthropologists have called these Judaizing movements 'by-products of Christianity' as they were all Christians before they started practicing Judaism. It is believed that these groups moved towards Judaism because of several reasons: A desire to better their economic lot by migrating to Israel; the desire to escape caste-based discrimination in the case of the Benei Ephraim, who are all Dalits - people treated traditionally as untouchables in Hindu society;⁴⁰² and a desire to distance themselves from their pre-Christian animist past, especially among the Benei Menashe. A claim to lost Israelite tribes ancestry enables them to prove themselves to be of foreign origin and with that to

⁴⁰² Caste affiliation is based on a person's birth and if they prove themselves to be of foreign origin, it automatically enables them to get out of its orbit.

improve their perception in society, which deluded them even after their conversion to Christianity, for it was seen merely as a change of their faith, not of their descent.

India and China proved to be safe havens for Jews

It is a fact beyond any doubt that India and China are the only two countries where the Jews never faced persecution or antisemitism in spite of their long presence there. This is explained by the fact that the host society in both these countries was non-proselytizing and thus not interested in converting the Jews in their midst to its widely practiced religion, Hinduism in India and Confucianism in China. It is also understood that their being polytheistic made these nations more tolerant to religious diversity, unlike the monotheistic Christendom and the Muslim world, both practicing missionary religions. The numerical insignificance of Jews also worked in their favor, for they were never seen as a threat by the majority, unlike the Muslims and Christians in India.

Indian Jews survived unlike Chinese Jewry

The Chinese Jews ceased to exist long ago, whereas the Indian Jews are still around, though most of them live outside of India. It is estimated that there are around 80 to 90 thousand Indian Jews in Israel. Chinese Jews assimilated into the general Han population because of intermarriages, they lost contact with Jews elsewhere, and subsequently the loss of their ability to read their Hebrew scriptures led to their complete and absolute assimilation into the Han nation. Indian Jews were helped immensely by the endogamous nature of Indian society in retaining their separate identity. Cochini and Baghdadi Jews maintained strong contacts with Jews outside of India, kept good knowledge of their scriptures, the Hebrew language, Jewish theology and religious practices. A religious revival came about among the Benei Israel after their coming into contact with their co-religionists from Cochin and their interface with Christian missionaries who translated the Hebrew Bible into their Konkani dialect. They took from the Christian missionaries lessons in Hebrew and the Bible but refused to convert to Christianity.

There were several factors that triggered Jewish exodus from India, but antisemitism was not one of them. In fact, Indian Jews are said to have been the only Jews to have come to Israel with happy memories of the country they left behind. This helped the misconception that there has neither been any antisemitism in India nor were the Jews there ever discriminated against to emerge. The fact is just the opposite. The Jews were discriminated against, even if not because of their Jewishness, but because of their being non-Brahmans in the case of the Benei Israel in Maharashtra, even if it was not so with the Cochini and the Baghdadi.

The Anonymity of Jews in India and their being Victims of Anti-Muslim Aggression

Most of the Indians never come into any direct contact with Jews because of their small numbers and are thus largely ignorant of their existence. They are often mixed up with Zoroastrians, Christians or Muslims. Even the few Indians who are aware of their existence do not realize that some of them live in India, for they know about them only through secondary sources and not as a result of any direct contact. This anonymity has shielded the Jews in India to a large extent, but on certain occasions it has made them vulnerable to anti-Muslim aggression just because they share a number of religious practices and doctrines with Muslims. The Rodef Shalom synagogue in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), home to the only Reform Jewish congregation in India, was burnt down in an anti-Muslim riot in 1993, because it was housed in a building where Muslims resided. It is common to find Jews residing in predominantly Muslim neighborhoods. Jews were also victims of anti-Muslim violence.

Close Relations between Jews and Muslims

In fact, all synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in India are taken care of by Muslims, even if not financially. Eighty percent of the Indian Jews live in Maharashtra, where they reside in Muslim neighborhoods. The only engraver of Jewish tombstones for the entire state of Maharashtra is a Muslim. Most of the students in two of the three Jewish owned schools in Mumbai and those in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) are Muslim. The only Hebrew teacher in an Indian university is also a Muslim. Similarly, India's only Hebrew calligrapher happens to be Muslim, and it was largely at the initiative of Muslim academics that the first-ever conference on Hebrew language and culture took place in India. In the households of the Baghdadi community only Muslims were taken on as cooks because of the similarities between Jewish and Muslim dietary restrictions. A number of Urdu (the *lingua franca* of linguistically diverse Indian Muslims) words, mostly kinship terms relating to religion, became part of the vocabulary of the Benei Israel, such as *masjid* (mosque in Urdu and Arabic) for synagogue, and *namaz* for prayer.

Hindu Nationalist Admiration for Nazism & Fascism

Whenever Indian Jews have come under attack, the perpetrators were Hindus mistaking them for Muslims. Anthropologist Yulia Egorova argues that they were attacked because in the perception of the Hindu rioters they were different enough from the expected mainstream. The genealogy of the very blueprints of anti-Muslim discrimination in India can be traced to European antisemitism. Hindu nationalists lay great stress in their discourse on the Hindu tolerance towards Jews in India, masking, "anti-Semitic presuppositions about the alleged intolerability of the Jews." Official narratives aimed at displaying the alleged Indian/Hindu tolerance particularly mention the history of Indian Jews. Hindu nationalists construct Indian Jews as the perfect other and inscribe "India and Hinduism as a site of tolerance which succeeded in

accommodating a community”⁴⁰³ that had been persecuted for centuries in Europe. “This professed positive interest in Jewishness masks anti-Semitic presuppositions about the alleged intolerability of the Jews and is intricately connected to anti-Muslim sentiments of the Hindu right,” Egorova suggests. They are often seen as a model minority because of their numerical insignificance and undemanding nature.

India is an example of a situation where antisemitism of the past disguises itself as Islamophobia. Hindu nationalist leaders such as Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, H. S. Hedgewar and Bal Thackeray uninhibitedly used Nazi discourse to promote discrimination against Muslims and other minorities in India. Golwalkar, one of the leaders of the Hindu nationalist organization Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Organization), expressed his approval of Nazi policy towards the Jews:

To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic Race – the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by.⁴⁰⁴

Savarkar, another prominent figure in the Hindu Mahasabha, compared the Muslims to the Jews of Germany while accusing them of extraterritorial loyalties:

Today we the Hindus from Kashmere to Madras and Sindh to Assam will be a Nation by ourselves – while the Indian Moslems are on the whole more inclined to identify themselves and their interests with Moslems outside India than Hindus who live next door, like the Jews in Germany.⁴⁰⁵

Narendra Modi, the current Prime Minister of India, seen by many as a friend to Jews and Israel,⁴⁰⁶ is a member of the RSS.

The Hindu nationalist admiration for the Nazis brought them into direct contact with the Nazis. B. S. Moonje was the first Hindu nationalist to get in touch with the fascists and their leader Mussolini. Between February and March 1931, while returning from the round table conference, Moonje made a tour of Europe with a long stopover in Italy, during which he met Mussolini. His thirteen-page account of the trip and the

⁴⁰³ Yulia Egorova, *Jews and Muslims in South Asia: Reflections of Difference, Religion and Race* (New York, 2018), pp. 157-158.

⁴⁰⁴ M. S. Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood Defined* (Nagpur, 1939). E-book published by <http://hinduebooks.blogspot.com/>

⁴⁰⁵ Vinayak Damodar Sarvarkar, *Hindu Rashtra Darshan* (A Collection of the Presidential Speeches delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform) (Bombay, 1949), cited in Yulia Egorova, “Memory of the Holocaust in India: A Case Study for Holocaust Education,” in *Holocaust Memory in a Globalizing World*, edited by Jacob S. Eder, Philipp Gassert and Allan E. Steinweis (Gottingen, 2017), 217.

⁴⁰⁶ Shalom Salomon Wald and Arielle Kandel, *India, Israel and the Jewish People: Looking Ahead, Looking Back, 25 Years after Normalization* (Jerusalem: 2017), p. 23.

meeting is kept at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi. Visits to the Balilla and Avangardisti organizations, the keystone of the fascist system of indoctrination of the youth, strikingly similar to the RSS, were the high points of his stay in Italy. Moonje is known as the mentor of the founding supreme leader of the RSS, Hedgewar. Although it was largely Hedgewar's vision and work behind the structure of the RSS, one cannot overlook the important role played by Moonje in molding the RSS along Italian (fascist) lines. By 1934 fascism had become so popular among the Hindu nationalists that they held a conference on it on January 31, 1934. It was presided over by Hedgewar. A year before the conference an intelligence report had assessed that the RSS hoped to be in future India what the 'Fascisti' were to Italy and the 'Nazis' to Germany.⁴⁰⁷ Savarkar openly defended the Nazis and the Fascists. Once Savarkar became the president of RSS, his rhetoric against Muslims turned increasingly radical and distinctly unpleasant. He continuously referred to the Nazi treatment of Jews as a role model. In a speech he made on October 14, 1938, he suggested to draw inspiration from Germany in finding a solution to the Muslim problem in India: "A Nation is formed by a majority living therein. What did the Jews do in Germany? They being in minority were driven out from Germany."⁴⁰⁸

Even if not guilty of Holocaust inversion and denial, the Hindu right is certainly guilty of Holocaust trivialization. A survey conducted by the Anti-Defamation League, found that amongst the Hindus who had heard of the Holocaust, 48 percent considered the number of Jewish victims to be highly exaggerated, and 11 percent thought of the Holocaust as a myth. The overall figure for India was just as disappointing, with 20 percent of Indians expressing antisemitic sentiments. Hindus make up 80 percent of India's total population and about 14 percent of the entire world's population.⁴⁰⁹ For the advancement of their communalist agenda, the Hindu nationalists refer to the Holocaust as a trope in their anti-Muslim critique, such as Francois Gautier, a Delhi-based French journalist and a Hindu nationalist, who uses Holocaust imagery to depict the Indic religious communities "not only as the victims of Muslims but also as the ultimate victims in human history whose suffering was just as superior to that of the Jewish people as it was overlooked," resulting in the trivialization of the Holocaust.⁴¹⁰

Gautier belongs to a brigade of foreign-bred Hindu nationalist activists, such as David Frawley, Koenraad Elst, and Tarek Fatah, who enjoy immense popularity on social media.⁴¹¹ Gautier is followed by 126,896 on Facebook⁴¹² and 48,700 on Twitter.⁴¹³

⁴⁰⁷ NAI, Home Poll Department, 88/33, 1933.

⁴⁰⁸ MSA, Home Special Department, 60 D(g) Pt III, 1938. Translation of the verbatim speech made by VD Savarkar at Malegaon on October 14, 1938, cited in Marzia Casolari, "Hindutva's Foreign Tie-Up in the 1930s: Archival Evidence," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Jan. 22-28, 2000), pp. 218-228.

⁴⁰⁹ Vijeta Uniyal, "Why findings of ADL's Global anti-Semitism Survey should bother Hindus," *The Times of Israel*, May 16, 2014, accessed March 23, 2020, at <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/adl-global-100-survey-anti-semitism-hinduism-india/>.

⁴¹⁰ Egorova, *Jews and Muslims in South Asia: Reflections on Difference, Religion, and Race*, p. 60.

⁴¹¹ Himanshi Dhawan, "Where Nostradamus meets Ram Rajya – Why Hindutva's foreign-born cheer leaders are so popular", *The Times of India*, April 9, 2017.

⁴¹² <https://www.facebook.com/francoisgautierofficial/>.

⁴¹³ <https://twitter.com/fgautier26>.

Audrey Truschke, a historian of pre-modern India, recounts how over the last few years she has been attacked by Hindu nationalists with dozens of ugly messages, full of “vicious antisemitic slurs”, for her work on the Mughals, a Muslim dynasty that ruled most of northern and central South Asia in the 16th and 17th centuries. The messages frequently invoked the Holocaust and draw on crude antisemitic tropes, accusing her of pursuing her academic research for the sake of money. “Such language feeds on a wider global rise in anti-Semitism, including violent attacks on Jewish individuals and communities,” she writes in an essay she published in 2018. While she speculates that perhaps her last name sounds Jewish to those unfamiliar with eastern European surnames, she suspects darker reasons for this mistaken identification. Several of her academic advisors are Jewish and “frequently maligned as such by Hindu nationalists.” As a result, she is “evidently perceived as a Jew by association. More insidiously, the old antisemitic trope that Jews control universities still surfaces with alarming regularity. This is a sub-type of the foundational antisemitic trope that there is an international Jewish conspiracy to run the world. In other words, antisemitism blinds people into assuming that...[she is] Jewish, and then provides them with a remarkably hateful set of tools with which to attack” her.⁴¹⁴

Islamist Antisemitic Violence

The narrative of the absence of antisemitism in India is flawed for it completely overlooks the long existing antisemitic rhetoric among certain sections of its Muslim population, the second largest in the world. It is convenient to ignore it because this antisemitic rhetoric has never translated itself into violence against Indian Jews. There were attacks on Jews in Karachi in 1948, coinciding with the creation of the State of Israel. Karachi was now the capital of Pakistan, carved out of British India for her Muslims in 1947. Those who attacked were not the local Sindhi Muslims, but the Urdu speakers who had migrated from the plains of northern India and prior to settling in Karachi had never come across Jews. The Jews attacked in India have always been White/Western Jews. A few examples are the abduction of Israeli Jewish tourists in Kashmir in 1991 and the murder of one of them,⁴¹⁵ the killing of all Jews present at the Beit Chabad during the two days of the multiple terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November 2008 (The only Jew saved from there was the infant child of the rabbi, who

⁴¹⁴ Audrey Truschke, “Hindu nationalists increasingly use anti-Semitic slurs to target me – and that isn’t surprising,” *Scroll.in*, November 13, 2018, accessed March 23, 2020, at <https://scroll.in/article/901309/how-indias-hindu-nationalists-are-increasingly-using-anti-semitism-as-a-ready-tool-of-hate>.

⁴¹⁵ On June 28, 1991, there was an attempt to abduct seven Israeli tourists in Kashmir, during which one of them was killed, one went missing and three severely wounded by Islamist terrorists.

was rescued by their Muslim chef and his Christian nanny.),⁴¹⁶ and the explosion of an Israeli diplomat's wife's car in Delhi in 2012.⁴¹⁷

The Indian Ideological Roots of Islamist Antisemitism

However, the fact that Indian Jews were never attacked should not obscure the fact that some of the most prominent ideologues of Islamist antisemitism have been from India, such as Shah Wali Allah (also sometimes spelled Waliullah) (1702-1763), considered one of the originators of pan-Islamism, Rahmatullah Kairanwi (1818-1892), Syed Abul A'la Maududi (1903-1979), and Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi (1914-1999). Some of the most popular Muslim televangelists have belonged to India, such as Zakir 'Abdul Karim Naik (b. 1965), and some of the major ideological roots of Islamist jihadist ideology of which antisemitism is an integral part lie in India. India is also home to some of the largest Islamist movements, such as Tablighi Jama'at, the largest Sunni Muslim revivalist movement in the world; Jama'at-i-Islami, a prototype of political Islam in South Asia; Darul Ulum Deoband, alleged source of ideological inspiration to the Taliban; and Nadwatul Ulama of Lucknow. Islamic revivalism is a response to western and secular trends, calling for return to Islamic values and identities and to the purest form of early Islam as the solution to all the ills of Muslim societies and modern society as a whole. Antisemitism has emerged as an integral part of political Islam or Islamism in modern times. Bassam Tibi considers Islamism at its core a form of Jew hatred because of its belief that "the Jews" rule the world and hence are in conflict with Islam.⁴¹⁸ In an approach of self-victimization, the 'guilt' of the misery of Islamic civilization is attributed to 'crusaders and Jews', and therefore Islamists prefer to engage in polemics against them.⁴¹⁹

The emergence of Islamist antisemitism has been simultaneous to that of Islamic revivalism. The development of Islamic revivalism as a social movement is intertwined with the life histories and intellectual contributions of particular individuals. These individuals advanced the formative ideas, voiced the concerns of various social groups, and molded public debates by selecting certain ideas while rejecting the others. They produced an ideology that used social impulses to make a new discourse possible.

⁴¹⁶ On November 26, 2008, the Chabad Mumbai center was attacked by Islamist terrorists, who were trained in and came from Pakistan, along eleven other shooting and bombing attacks across the city. According to the radio transmissions intercepted by the Indian intelligence, the attackers were told by their senders that the lives of Jews were worth fifty times those of non-Jews. They took thirteen hostages at the center, murdered five of them, including the Rabbi and his pregnant wife. The only attacker caught alive, Kassab, admitted that Chabad was the primary target and all the other attacks were executed only to amplify the effect.

⁴¹⁷ On February 13, 2012, a car bomb exploded when Tal Yehoshua Koren, wife of the Defense Attaché at the Embassy of Israel, was on her way to collect her children from school. Although she survived, she was injured. Following investigations, four Iranian citizens were suspected to be involved in the attack. A Shia Muslim Indian journalist, Syed Mohammad Ahmad Kazmi, has been charged in the case. When he was released on bail on October 21, 2012, he was greeted by a crowd of supporters and was taken home in an open, decorated jeep in a procession of five hundred people in buses and cars carrying posters of Kazmi and raising the slogan "long live Kazmi!"

⁴¹⁸ Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (New Haven and London, 2012), p. 226.

⁴¹⁹ Bassam Tibi, *Islam in Global Politics: Conflict and cross-civilizational bridging* (London and New York, 2012), p. 154.

Some of the most important of these ideologues came from India. They are critical to understanding Islamism and the antisemitism inherent in it.⁴²⁰

The Indian Muslims have readily absorbed the Arab antisemitic propaganda because of their deference to Arabs on Islam. There was a convergence of Islamist Judeophobia and genocidal European antisemitism in contemporary Islam because of this.⁴²¹ Bassam Tibi identifies the phenomenon as the Islamization of European/Western antisemitism. Some of the ideological roots of Islamist antisemitism lie in India to which it returned in a far stronger form via the Middle East. All Indian scholars mentioned above played a crucial role in the rise of Islamism, and antisemitism is a common element in their writings. Some of the recurring themes are:

- 1) Jewish antagonism towards Islam since its advent
- 2) Projection of racism, jealousy, stubbornness, arrogance, treason, and deceit as traits of Jewish character
- 3) The accusation of the falsification of sacred texts

The impact of their writings was felt far and wide. Abul A'la Maududi (born in Hyderabad, India), leader of Jama'at-i-Islami, inspired both Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and Sayyid Qutb who inspired radical Islamist movements in Egypt. Nadwi played a pivotal role in spreading Maududi's ideology across the Arab world, and Indian philosopher Muhammad Iqbal was a source of ideological inspiration for Iranian revolutionary 'Ali Shari'ati. Video Recordings of lectures of Pakistani Islamic theologian Israr Ahmad continue to reach millions of Muslim homes globally through television broadcasts and the Internet. Islamic televangelist Zakir Naik, popular among Muslims in South Asia and in their diaspora across the world, is guilty of antisemitic rhetoric. He is barred from entering the United Kingdom, his organization is banned in India, and he has been living in self-imposed exile in Malaysia for several years now to escape trial in India.

The Global Influence of South Asian Muslim Diaspora

The numerical size and the geographical spread of the diaspora of South Asian Muslims, that is Muslims from the three states that emerged out of former British ruled India - Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, make them a highly influential group globally. They have their strongest presence in the United Kingdom, where they form three percent of the total British population. A 2009 survey of 166 Muslim schools in the United Kingdom, most of which subscribe to the curricula of the major Islamic institutions in India, found them to be teaching hatred for Jews. An example of the impact of South Asian Muslims, is that in the 1920s the Ahmadiyya, a South Asian Muslim sect, reached out to African American Muslims in the US and influenced them to organize on the

⁴²⁰ Seyyed Vali Raza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York and Oxford, 1996), p. 3.

⁴²¹ Salim Mansur, "Arab and Muslim Antisemitism: Reconsideration, Reflection, and Some Propositions," in *The ISGAP Papers: Antisemitism in Comparative Perspective, Volume Two*, edited by Charles Asher Small (New York, 2016), p. 72.

basis of religion, rather than nationality or culture. It was a novel approach, because the Arab diaspora had previously been organized along the lines of common national origin, culture and language, rather than religion. Today African American Muslims constitute 30 to 40 percent of the American Muslim population, South Asians 24.4 percent, and Arabs 12.4 percent.

Since the November 2008 attack on the Chabad Center in Mumbai, security of the synagogues in Mumbai has been tightened which has, in turn, made the boundaries between Jews of European and Indian descent even more prominent. Some sections of Indian Jewry are keen to dissociate themselves from “white,” Western Jews—and their security concerns—which, these Indian Jews feel, are intimidating to their Muslim neighbors, and adds to the visibility of their perceived connection with the State of Israel. However, Egorova is careful to point out that it may not be prudent to think of any perceived threat from local Muslims as baseless, for a plot by alleged agents of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba to attack Americans in Hyderabad, and the Jewish families in Guntur, was uncovered in 2004, four years prior to the attack on the Chabad Lubavitch Center.⁴²²

Lack of Awareness of the Holocaust and Jewish History

There is little awareness of the Holocaust in South Asia. The word Holocaust is often used loosely to refer to just any episode of mob violence, irrespective of its magnitude and scale and whether or not the violence was targeted against a particular group of people with the intention of completely annihilating them. Terms associated with the Holocaust have become part of Indian vocabulary and are quite commonly used. For example whenever the pollution levels in any India city cross a certain level, the press starts reporting that the city has turned into a virtual gas chamber. So much so, even the Supreme Court of India made the same analogy in January 2019.⁴²³

Indians learned about the Holocaust largely from the Jews who found refuge in India, because the press in India at that time was focused on reporting the struggle for national independence from the British and gave little space to news of the then ongoing Holocaust.⁴²⁴ Even the Jews among Indians, like most of their fellow countrymen, know fairly little about the Holocaust, let alone comprehend the scale and the magnitude of the colossal tragedy, as indicated by the Indian Jewish novelist Esther David. In an anecdote she narrates in her auto-ethnographic novel (actually a collection of short stories intertwined to each other) *Shalom India Housing Society* (2007), a Jewish character mistakes Yom HaShoah for a joyous Jewish festival meant to be celebrated, and organizes a party to do so. Holocaust commemoration events even in Mumbai (Bombay), which has the highest concentration of Jews in India, register

⁴²² Egorova, *Jews and Muslims in South Asia: Reflections of Difference, Religion and Race*, p. 46.

⁴²³ PTI, “Better not be in Delhi, it’s like ‘gas chamber’: Supreme Court”, *The Economic Times*, January 18, 2019, accessed March 23, 2020, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/better-not-be-in-delhi-its-like-gas-chamber-supreme-court/articleshow/67590551.cms>.

⁴²⁴ Shalva Weil, “From Persecution to Freedom: Central European Jewish Refugees and their Host Communities in India”, in *Jewish Exile in India: 1933-1945*, edited by Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Voigt (New Delhi, 2005), 64-84.

the participation of Jews in very small numbers. English language national daily newspaper *Hindustan Times* reported in 2011 that only twenty people turned up for a Holocaust commemoration event, jointly organized by the Israeli and German consuls in Mumbai.⁴²⁵ This testifies to the widespread ignorance of the Holocaust among Indians and to their lack of interest in learning about it.

Remedial Measures

“The ignorance about Judaism and Jewish history is, of course, a particularly fertile breeding-ground for antisemitism,” cautioned historian Robert Wistrich.⁴²⁶ The remedy to the menace of antisemitism lies in education and in an educational revolution. Study of Jewish history should be part of the curriculum at the secondary level of education and the Islamic seminaries should certainly take a stock of how the Jews are presented to their students. Sadly, little has been done in this direction.

In March 2019, a delegation of thirteen journalists from India visited Israel at the invitation of Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation included journalists from leading English-language newspapers in India such as *The Indian Express*, *The Times of India*, and prominent newsmagazines such as *The Week*. The delegation was addressed by David Gurevich, a post-doctoral fellow in the department of General History at Bar Ilan University and Founder of Ambassadors Online at the University of Haifa. He informed me that most of the questions he was asked touched upon the definition of antisemitism. Many wondered why certain ways of speech were considered as antisemitism, while if one talked about non-Jewish people in a similar manner it would not be seen as racism.⁴²⁷

The world’s oldest and the biggest Jewish advocacy organization, the American Jewish Committee, which maintains an office in India, has never published anything as a rebuttal to antisemitism or anti-Zionism in the Indian press. Their op-eds in the Indian press have focused on Indo-Israeli relations.⁴²⁸ The American Jewish Committee’s Asia Pacific Institute has collaborated with the Indian Pluralism Foundation, an NGO headed by a Muslim, Owaiz Aslam, for several events in Kolkata. Aslam, who claims that his maternal grandmother was Jewish, published an essay in a book brought out by the Indian Muslim fortnightly magazine, *The Milli Gazette*, in 2016. In his essay titled “Blockade of Gaza Strip – crime against humanity”, Aslam writes:

After more than 2000 years of living in oblivion as vagabonds these Jews where (sic) overwhelmingly rapturous on the accomplishment of declaring the State of Israel, redefining their identity as a national group

⁴²⁵ “Jews Pay Homage to Holocaust Martyrs,” *Hindustan Times*, May 3, 2011.

⁴²⁶ Robert S. Wistrich, “Anti-Zionist Connections: Communism, Radical Islam, and the Left,” in *Resurgent Antisemitism: Global Perspectives*, edited by Alvin H. Rosenfeld (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2013), p. 166.

⁴²⁷ Email from David Gurevich to the author, dated March 3, 2019.

⁴²⁸ This was revealed by Arjun Hardas, Representative of the American Jewish Committee Asia Pacific Institute in India and Sri Lanka, in an email to the author, dated March 16, 2019.

and not just as a religious group. The birth of Israel came at the cost of Palestinian blood and treasure at a very prodigious price.⁴²⁹

He makes a plethora of allegations against Israel and goes on to equate Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, with the terrorist Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State.⁴³⁰ I do not know if Aslam still has the same view of Israel and its prime minister while he collaborates with the American Jewish Committee in organizing panel discussions between Jews and Muslims and in commemorating the United Nations International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Kolkata. When he published the essay he had not collaborated with the American Jewish Committee until then. It certainly is an accomplishment if the American Jewish Committee has been able to convince him to abandon his anti-Zionism, but if it is not so, then the organization should definitely be more careful with the background check of the people it works with.

The only way to eliminate antisemitism is through the spread of education. Israel has done little for the promotion of Jewish Studies in India and it does not even seem to figure in its list of priorities when it comes to India.⁴³¹

Widespread ignorance of the Holocaust, craving for strong leadership, and the traditional Hindu nationalist admiration for Hitler and Nazism has made Hitler immensely popular in India.⁴³² The fact is that we not only require Holocaust education but also education in Jewish history to make the students completely understand as to why the colossal tragedy took place. It is because of this widespread ignorance of the Holocaust and of the Jewish history that people easily fall for the antisemitic propaganda aimed at denying or minimizing or trivializing or inverting the Holocaust.

Taking stock of this, in 2016 Presidency University in Kolkata allowed me to launch an undergraduate course in global Jewish history and a Holocaust focused postgraduate course. The undergraduate course in global Jewish history is an optional in the curriculum of BA History (Honours) at Presidency University, Kolkata. However, the new Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) imposed by the University Grants Commission, the central regulatory body of the institutions of higher education in India, is a threat to it as it does not leave us with enough room for such courses and makes it increasingly difficult to retain it. The CBCS system is nothing but an attempt by the UGC to bring about uniformity of syllabus and curriculum across India. The Holocaust

⁴²⁹ Owaiz Aslam, "Blockade of Gaza Strip – crime against humanity," in *Palestine Essays*, edited by Arshi Khan and Zafarul-Islam Khan (New Delhi, 2016), p. 250.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 252-253.

⁴³¹ Wald and Kandel, *India, Israel and the Jewish People: Looking Ahead, Looking Back 25 Years after Normalization*.

⁴³² Navras Jaat Aafreedi, ed., "India's Response to the Holocaust and its Perception of Hitler," Special Issue, *Café Dissensus*, no. 31 (January 2017), accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://cafedissensus.com/2017/01/20/contents-indias-response-to-the-holocaust-and-its-perception-of-hitler-issue-31/>; Navras Jaat Aafreedi, "The Paradox of the Popularity of Hitler in India," *Asian Jewish Life*, Issue 14 (April 2014), pp. 14-16, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://asianjewishlife.org/images/issues/Issue14-April2014/PDFs/Feature-Hilter-in-India.pdf>.

focused course that I still teach and the course in Global Jewish history that I have taught till now are the only such courses of their kind in all of South Asia.

Given the high rate of illiteracy and the low rate of education in India, cinema can be the most effective means of raising awareness of the Holocaust. Love for cinema is one of the few things that unite all Indians. There are a number of movie channels in India which can be approached for the telecast of films on the Holocaust dubbed in Hindi and other Indian languages on the national television. Such films could be distributed among NGOs working in India for public screenings for the promotion of communal harmony.

As far as the textbooks are concerned, Holocaust is rarely ever mentioned by name. The Nazi genocide against Jews is generally nothing more than a passing reference. Publication of literature on global Jewish history and the Holocaust in all of India's twenty major languages and the introduction of Holocaust and Jewish history at the secondary level of education can go a long way in remedying the situation in terms of raising awareness of the Holocaust and eliminating antisemitism.

Wald and Kandel make a number of recommendations, worth taking seriously, for Israel's much needed cultural diplomacy in India. The recommendations include production of literature and broadcasting material on the Holocaust, Israel, and the Jewish history in Indian languages.⁴³³ I have been trying to promote the study of Jewish history for more than a decade in India with some degree of success.⁴³⁴ Relevant education at all levels can be a far more effective means of eliminating antisemitism and anti-Zionism than anything else, and that is what we should all strive to promote. By 'all' I mean all of us, irrespective of race, religion, nationality, or any other identity. Ignorance of who the Jews are, lack of available credible sources of information, absence of the education of Jewish history and the Holocaust, and the embrace of Nazi and Fascist ideologies by the right wing for use against religious minorities – together these factors provide conditions conducive for antisemitism to thrive in a region that is home to one sixth of humankind. Indians have numerically the largest and geographically the most widespread global diaspora that has immense potential to influence opinion across the world. Sadly, there have hardly been any efforts to remedy the situation. We ignore it at our own peril.

⁴³³ Wald and Kandel, *India, Israel and the Jewish People: Looking Ahead, Looking Back 25 Years after Normalization*, p. 141.

⁴³⁴ Navras Jaat Aafreedi, "High Time Jewish Studies got introduced in Indian Academia," *Swarajya*, June 23, 2017, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://swarajyamag.com/culture/high-time-jewish-studies-get-introduced-in-indian-academia>; idem, "PM Modi Should Launch Jewish Studies to Fight Antisemitism", *News 18*, July 6, 2017, accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://www.news18.com/news/india/opinion-pm-modi-should-launch-jewish-studies-to-fight-antisemitism-1452777.html>; idem, "Indian Jewry and the Need for Jewish Studies in India," *Café Dissensus*, no. 12 (December 31, 2014), accessed March 24, 2020, at <https://cafedissensus.com/2014/12/31/guest-editorial-the-indian-jewry-and-the-need-for-jewish-studies-in-india/>; idem, "Absence of Jewish Studies in India: Creating a New Awareness", *Asian Jewish Life* (Autumn 2010), pp. 31-34, accessed March 24, 2020, at http://asianjewishlife.org/pages/articles/autumn2010/AJL_Feature_Absence_of.html.

Working Definition of Antisemitism

As adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance on 26 May 2016

In the spirit of the Stockholm Declaration that states: “With humanity still scarred by ...antisemitism and xenophobia the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils” the committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial called the IHRA Plenary in Budapest 2015 to adopt the following working definition of antisemitism.

On 26 May 2016, the Plenary in Bucharest decided to:

Adopt the following non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward 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.”

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal

institutions.

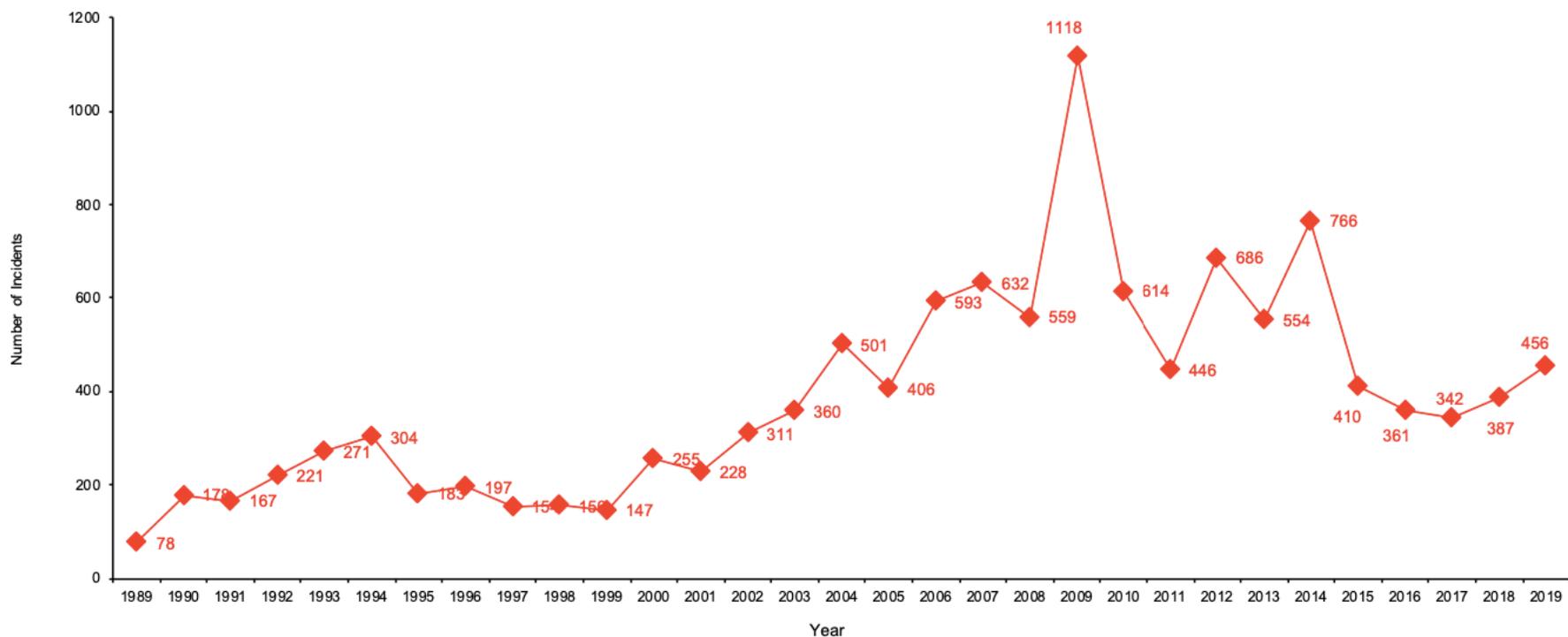
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

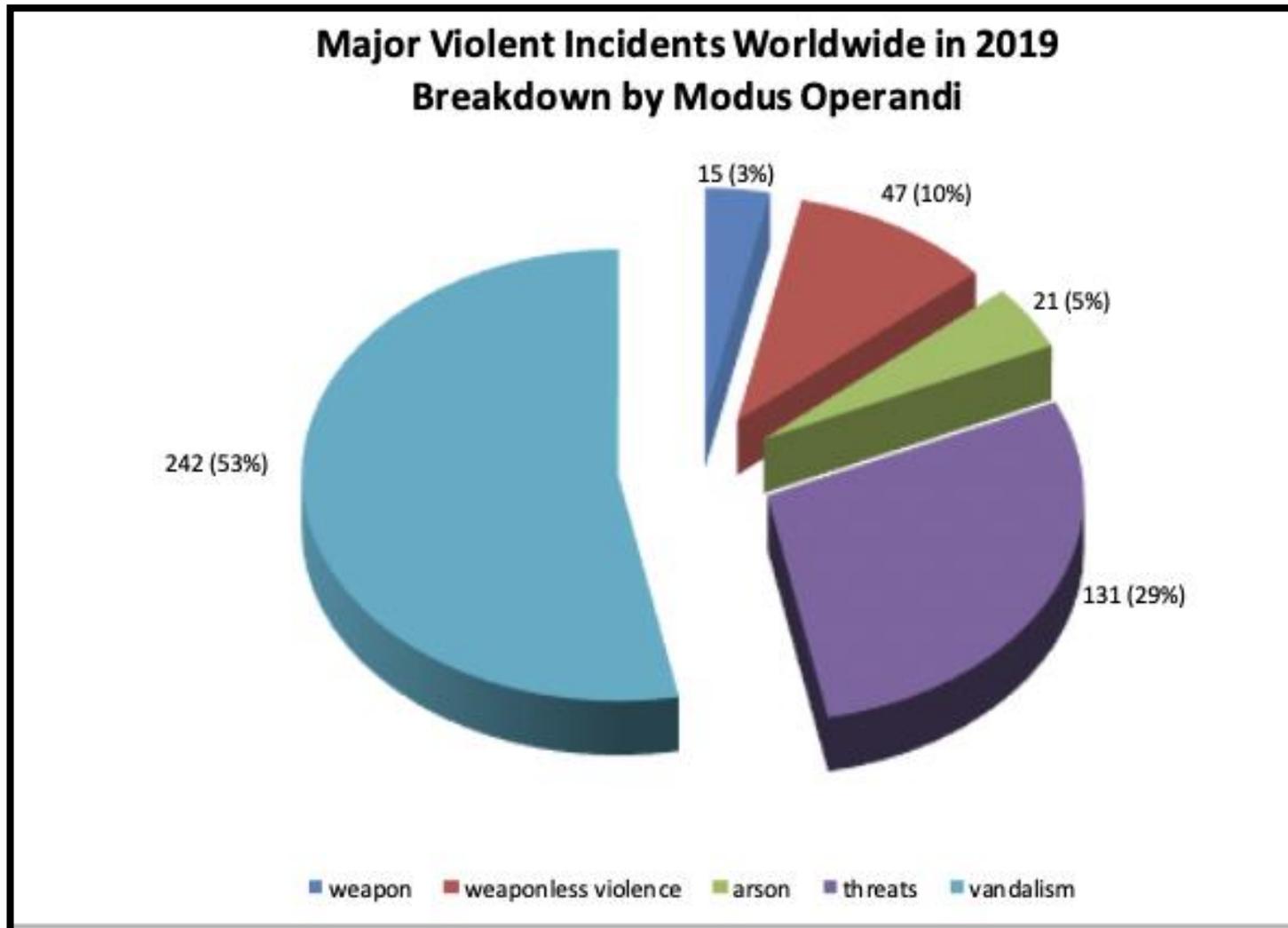
Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

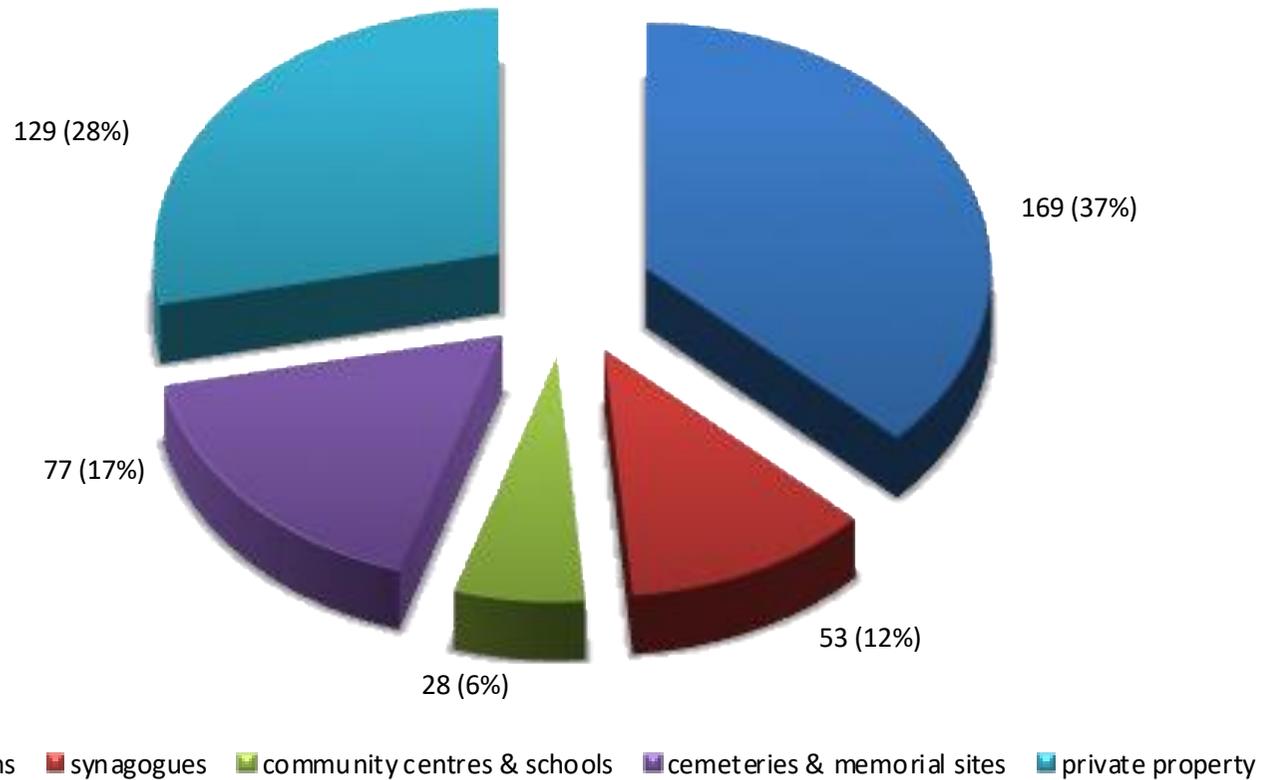
Antisemitism - Major Violent Incidents Worldwide 1989-2019

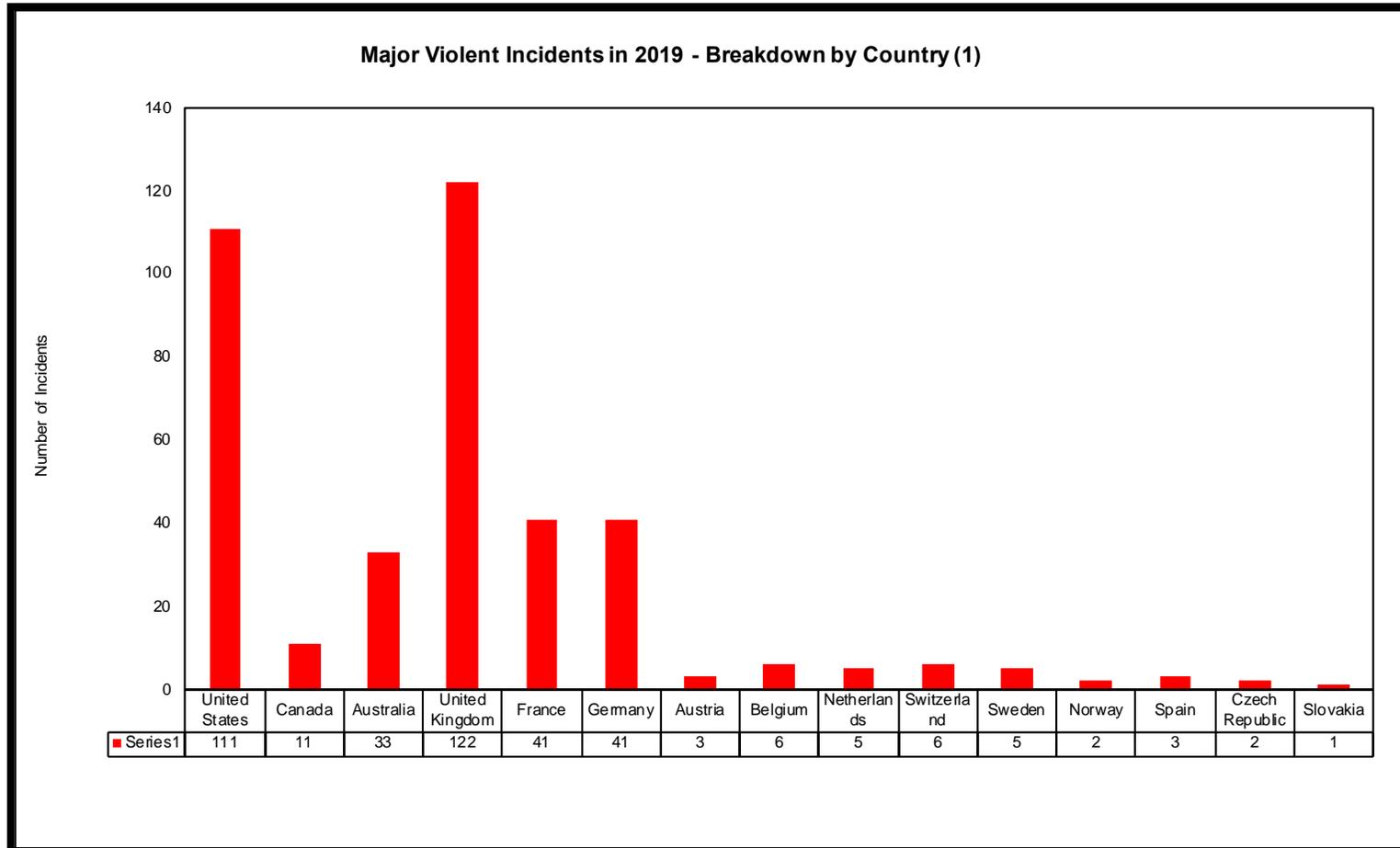


⁴³⁵ Statistics – **Dr. Haim Fireberg (2020)**. The graphs in this section refer to acts of violence, vandalism and desecration acts perpetrated directly against Jewish individuals, synagogues and community centers and against Jewish private property worldwide during 2019. The figures are based on the Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism (usually accumulated from open sources and contributor special reports) and reports of the Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism. It should be emphasized that the graphs reflect only **major violent incidents** (such as arson, weapon attacks, weaponless attacks, serious threats, and vandalism or desecration).



Major Violent Incidents Worldwide in 2019 Breakdown by Target





Major Violent Incidents in 2019 - Breakdown by Country (2)

