

CONSPIRATORIAL ANTISEMITISM

**A Cause
for Concern**

**ANTIRASISTISK
SENER**

*This report has been written by John Færseth on commission from
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INTRODUCTION

While parts of this report deal with older strands of antisemitism, it should not be seen as a chronological presentation of the history of modern antisemitism. Rather it should be viewed as an attempt at presenting strands, actors and concepts that are still around alongside newer ones. Or which, while currently dormant, might be prone to reappear later. An example of this is how the long-forgotten James Mason and his newsletter SIEGE gained new notoriety after 2017, or how the idea of the Jew as a symbol of a despised modernity keeps reoccurring.

The focus of this report is the Western antisemitic tradition in Europe and the United States. It makes no attempt at covering Islamic or Arab antisemitism except where it intersects with European and American strands. This is not an omission, simply an acknowledgement of the fact that it is a different tradition which this author lacks the cultural and linguistic knowledge to cover. It is my sincere hope that it will be the subject of another report at a later stage.

1. A CONSPIRATORIAL TRADITION

Antisemitism is a tradition which views the Jew as a threatening Other – powerful, well-organized, omnipresent and evil. As such, it will almost inevitably function within a conspiratorial worldview.

In the following, I will use Michael Barkun's definition of conspiracy theories. According to Barkun, a conspiracy belief is the notion that an organization of individuals or groups was or is acting covertly to achieve some malevolent end. It implies a universe guided by design rather than randomness. Barkun sets up three principles that are usually found in a conspiracy theory:

- Nothing happens by accident; everything occurs because it is willed.
- Nothing is as it seems; appearances deceive and the appearance of innocence of a group is no guarantee of such innocence.
- Everything is connected; patterns and connections are there for those who know where to look.¹

Conspiracy theories and antisemitism are intimately connected and intertwined. As stated by Norman Cohn, the Jew has often been viewed as endowed with uncanny, sinister powers,² as well as adversaries of mainstream Christian and to a lesser degree Islamic society. As adversaries, they are natural suspects when something goes wrong – be it a war, a financial crisis or, more recently, a refugee crisis. According to Cohn, this has over the centuries led to legalized discrimination, expulsions, pogroms and massacres and reinforced Jewish separateness and “different-ness”.

One may also refer to Bernard Harrison, who distinguishes between social and political antisemitism. According to Harrison, social antisemitism deals with stereotypes like the greedy Jewish businessman. While these stereotypes may be used malevolently, they may also be material for more or less innocent jokes, just like the miserly Scot, the drunken Irishman or the overly neat, organized and humourless German. The point, according to Harrison, is that while potentially offensive this kind of stereotypes rarely perceives Jews or any other group as a threat to the established order.

On the other hand, political antisemitism perceives Jews as a collective danger to society or even to entire ethnic groups. To paraphrase Harrison, Jews here become a depraved people that is dedicated to destructive activity aimed at the overthrow or corruption of non-Jewish society. The Jewish people is distinguished from all other peoples by the assumed conspiratorial nature of Jewish culture or even biological inheritance, and the assumption that membership of this people essentially makes one a member of a conspiracy. Jews thus constitute a permanent, collective threat to the well-being of any nation which harbors them.³

Secondly, antisemitism has been so intertwined with conspiracy culture and conspiracy theories for centuries that they are for all practical means difficult to separate entirely. Indeed, one can argue like Jovan Byford and others, that a lot of the tropes that are commonly used by conspiracy theorists today were themselves originally borrowed from antisemitic literature. Examples hereof are the existence of a shadow government, the role of media in controlling public opinion and the assumed goal of establishing a one world government – often referred to as New World Order – NOW. Irrespective of whether the role of Jews as the main antagonists might be replaced with Illuminati, freemasons, lizard people or even extra-terrestrial creatures.⁴

2. A SHORT HISTORY OF ANTISEMITIC CONSPIRACY THEORIES

This part of the document is not an attempt at writing the definite history of antisemitism, nor indeed a chronological presentation of the history of modern antisemitism. Rather, it is an attempt at presenting important strands, actors and concepts that still play a role in antisemitic conspiracy culture more or less in the order they first appeared. Some of these may have gone underground for a time before reappearing, as is the case with James Mason and his newsletter SIEGE, who both gained new notoriety after 2017.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and 20th-Century Antisemitism

While the trope of the existence of a Jewish conspiracy or network conducting an underground war against Christendom has been around at least since High Medieval Times, it found its most famous and influential expression in the fraudulent *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The work, which appears to be produced in Russia or by Russian secret police around 1902–3, purports to be a secret Jewish plan for world domination. The Protocols purport to be a summary of a meeting of Jewish leaders, sometimes said to be the first Zionist conference which took place in Basel in 1897. It lays out plan for achieving world dominance through securing control over the banks, politics, the media and the war industries and use this to start wars and revolutions and eventually seizing power in the following chaos.⁵

The narrative of the Protocols combines antisemitism and anti-modernity: They are written at the time of the triumph of modernity, in the form of urbanisation, the rise of new class constellations, and the rise of industrial and financial capitalism and new ideologues, who are all identified with the Jew as a symbol.⁶

The Protocols found their way to the West after the Russian revolution in 1917, which was itself used as “proof” by many that the protocols were right, by envisioning the revolution as a Jewish plot. In Germany they aided to shape the antisemitism of National Socialism and later formed part of the ideological background for the Holocaust. Indeed, one German edition was prepared by Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg. In the United States they formed the basis for a series of newspaper articles by industrial tycoon Henry Ford that were later published as *The International Jew*.

While building upon already existing conspiratorial tropes and assertions, the Protocols can be seen as having formed the blueprint for later conspiracy theories about Jewish power. As stated above, they also formed the blueprint for modern conspiracy theories in general, particularly the brand Michael Barkun has referred to as “superconspiracy theories”.⁷ This is the idea of super-powerful cabals that are able to control business, media and politics, and who will eventually impose a one-world state or NWO (short for *New World Order*). These theories are to be found on thousands of webpages and YouTube videos today.

Modern editions of the Protocols include one by former Ku Klux Klan leader and Louisiana state representative David Duke.⁸ The Protocols have also been republished by Christian conspiracy theorist Texe Marrs,⁹ and by conspiracy theory luminaries Milton William Cooper¹⁰ and David Icke.¹¹ However, the last two have tried to divest themselves of antisemitism by claiming that the Protocols are really about the secret society Illuminati and extra-terrestrial lizard people respectively. Icke’s version was again quoted by the well-known author Alice Walker.

Following the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” also found their way to the Middle East where they were printed and distributed as facts by the governments of Syria, Egypt and eventually Iran following the 1978 Islamic revolution. They have also been used as material for TV documentaries. The Protocols are also promoted by the Palestinian Islamist organization Hamas.

What might be a recent way to avoid accusations of antisemitism, is to claim that the Protocols should be read as literature, and that while not a real document they still tell a profound truth about Jews and/or modern finance capitalism. Examples of this include former KKK leader David Duke, Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung who has repeatedly made this claim since 2012, and the mysterious Swedish-Russian-Israeli writer Israel Shamir who despite being of presumed Jewish origin has a long history of antisemitic statements.

Early Post-WWII Far Right Antisemitism and the Rise of Holocaust denial

As the Nazi industrial-scale mass murders became common knowledge after World War II, public debate as well as the majority opinion both in Europe and the United States for a long time became “anti-antisemitic”. This meant that the utterance of what had been previously acceptable prejudices about Jews became taboo for several decades, which it still mostly is.

The consequences of this can be said to be manifold: On one hand, the word “Jews” can be replaced with euphemisms like “Zionists”, “neo-conservatives” and “globalists”, which in some instances have made others unwittingly repeat antisemitic hate speech because they have not recognized the euphemisms, or to attack Jewish individuals in ways reminiscent of traditional antisemitic terms as has been the case with businessman and philanthrope George Soros. On the other hand, open antisemitism has itself become a signifier of radicalism and of presenting oneself as a dedicated “revolutionary”, in addition to functioning as a way to give coherence and meaning to the world.¹² This has been the case with several far-right and neo-Nazi groups since the 1960s, and is presently the case with the Scandinavian Nordic Resistance Movement and groups and individuals associated with the so-called SIEGE subculture.

Holocaust denial, sometimes referred to as “Holocaust revisionism”, can also be viewed as a way to deal with this taboo by attempting to soften it. The goal is to remove the stigma of the Holocaust from Nazi Germany and National Socialism, and thus make possible their rehabilitation as well as, most importantly, create a new opening for antisemitic discourse in the public space. Casting doubt upon the reality of the Holocaust is also a way of slandering Jews even more, since it often implies the existence of a mighty “Holocaust industry” willing and able to make up stories of horrible atrocities including the murder of six million Jews to further Jewish goals. These goals might include blackmailing Germany and other culprits for reparations, secure support for the state of Israel and even securing the hegemony of an anti-racist discourse that helps breaking down previous homogenous nations with the help of mass migration and multiculturalism.

Holocaust denial can be said to have four core elements:

- The claim that the number of Jews killed was in fact far less than six million.
- The claim that Jews were not subject to systematic murder like gas chambers, but died from disease and malnutrition, particularly in the later part of the war when the German infrastructure crumbled under Allied bombing.
- The claim that there were no plans or intentions to mass murder Jews from the Nazi leaders.
- The claim that the “holocaust myth” is the product of a hidden conspiracy.

Whether stated explicitly or implicitly, this last element can be said to tie the discourse together.

Other claims include that the Jews used “wartime propaganda” to push the United States into the war, and later to extort money and support for Israel from the world.

Holocaust denial may co-exist with another “revisionist” claim, namely that whatever persecution of Jews that actually did occur in Nazi Germany was in reality a reaction and defence against a Jewish “declaration of war” on Germany, made by Jewish leaders soon after Hitler came to power. This claim is based on an article in the newspaper *The Daily Express* from March 23 1933 which again refers to a declaration by a group of Jewish leaders outside Germany, who asked for a boycott of German goods after Adolf Hitler had become chancellor on January 30. Hitler already had a long story of anti-Jewish agitation, and several attacks on Jewish businesses and individuals by Nazi stormtroopers had already taken place.

The first attempts at denying or minimizing the Nazi mass murders started soon after the end of World War II. In France, Maurice Bardeche and Paul Rassinier tried to challenge established history already in the late 1940s. In Scandinavia, there were attempts at genocide denial from veteran members of Vidkun Quisling’s party *Nasjonal Samling* from 1949–50, as well as from Swedish Nazi sympathizers soon after the war. And from 1953 on the Norwegian poet Alf Larsen published a series of aphorisms where he claimed that the extent of the murders had been exaggerated and that they were caused by the Nazis having adopted a “Jewish mentality”.

Holocaust denial grew in importance in the 1970s, while also being given a more intellectual and scientific varnish. One of the major forces was the Institute for Historical Review, founded in 1978 by the American neo-Nazi Willis Carto, himself a disciple of another influential neo-Nazi, Francis Parker Yockey. Yockey was a former military attorney who saw the United States as controlled by Jewish power. According to Yockey, this had made the United States into “a materialist desert” and a tool of Zionism.

Over the years the Institute for Historical Review has attempted to present itself as a legitimate historical research institution devoted to “revisionism”, meaning the attempt to cast doubt upon and eventually erase the memory of the Holocaust. It has sponsored conferences and publications. Lecturers have included British “historian” David Irving, German-Canadian Ernst Zundel and French Robert Faurisson, as well as neo-Nazi and KKK leader David Duke. It appears to have lost much of its influence in the 2000s. In 2009 its director Mark Weber declared that disproving the Holocaust was a lost struggle and that European Jews had indeed been singled out for terrible treatment which had cost the lives of millions. According to Weber, attempts at “revisionism” had probably damaged rather than helped “the real world struggle against Jewish-Zionist power”.¹³

Modern proponents of Holocaust denial include neo-Nazi groups like the influential Scandinavian organization *Nordic Resistance Movement* who has built itself a name among the international far right, and Nikolaos Michaloliakos, founder of the Greek *Golden Dawn* party who managed to gather 7% of the votes in the 2012 and 2015 parliamentary elections.¹⁴ Others include the Israeli-born jazz musician and author Gilad Atzmon and the conspiracy theorist David Icke.¹⁵ Holocaust denial is also present on the far-right Wikipedia “alternative” *Metapedia*, founded in 2006 by the Swedish neo-Nazi publisher Anders Lagerström,¹⁶ as well as on the webpage *The Daily Stormer* which is considered part of the alt-right movement.¹⁷

According to a 2019 report by the British organization *Hope Not Hate*, Holocaust denial is regularly present in the alt-right scene, with Holocaust denier literature being sold at conferences.¹⁸

The Radical Right of the 1970s, 80s and 90s

Another source for modern far-right extremism, antisemitism and general conspiracy culture has been the US radical right in its incarnation from the 1960s to mid-1990s. The radical right combined anti-communism, white racism and anti-authoritarianism in the form of extolling the perceived traditional American frontier values of self-reliance and small communities, and spewing hatred towards the federal government in Washington and the “bankers” said to be controlling it. It is an American tradition that cannot really be conflated with European fascism although there are several overlaps.

The Radical Right is often seen as a reaction to the political and social climate of the 1950s and subsequent decades, particularly the Civil Rights movement, the 1960s counterculture and later the farmer crisis of the 1970s. It can be viewed and as an outgrowth of the “paranoid style of American politics”, described by Richard Hofstadter as characterized by a fear of authorities, international organizations and the possibility of foreign powers controlling US politics, and a similar fear of minorities and newly-arrived immigrants who – it was believed – threatened to unravel the entire fabric of society.¹⁹ This is a tradition that also manifested in the 19th century anti-Catholic Know-Nothing movement, in McCarthyism and the John Birch Society and in more recent times, in the form of the Tea Party Movement of the early 2010s, which was not least directed against the first African-American president Barack Obama.

Well-known manifestations of the Radical Right include the American militia movement, the religion known as Christian Identity, which sees white Anglo-Saxons as the true descendants of the Biblical Israelites,²⁰ and the Sovereign Citizen movement. It is also one of the most important sources of modern conspiracy culture, a culture that has expanded both in America and over the world with the coming of the internet.²¹

The militia movement, Sovereign Citizens and Christian Identity all have common sources in the preaching and organizational activity of the bizarre pastor William Potter Gale (1917–1988). Despite being of more or less entirely Jewish ancestry, a fact he managed to hide, Gale was an antisemite who believed that the federal government used “Communist” methods to force states to desegregate. This was a result of the same government having been taken over by Jewish bankers through the Federal Reserve system.²²

According to Gale, the federal government held almost no legal power over citizens. Birth certificates, car registry numbers and other official papers were all illegitimate ways of imposing “ownership” over free (white) men and women.

Similar ideas about government are held by Sovereign Citizens up to this day, although the racist elements seem to have been largely forgotten by many; indeed, the movement seems to have welcomed African-Americans for at least two decades. However, they still believe that the entire federal government is an illegal entity where “citizens” are actually held as slaves or accessories for an enormous state debt to international bankers. Antisemitism is also very present, although often under euphemisms like “bankers” or “globalists”.

The movement has spread to Europe, particularly to Germany where the Reichsbürger movement who refuses to recognize the Federal Republic of Germany has become more visible with the Covid-19 protests. Several such groups are known to have antisemitic content on their websites.²³ Even in Scandinavia several of the few instances (known as “freemen”) have linked to antisemitic propaganda.²⁴

The militia movement believes itself to be guardians of the American constitution, particularly the 2nd amendment guaranteeing citizens the right to bear arms, against the threat of totalitarian takeover – a takeover often but not always seen as controlled by international organizations like the United States or international banks (a code word for Jews). While

becoming more or less dormant in the 1990s, the militia movement has experienced a massive resurgence since the election of Barack Obama in 2008. Both the sovereign citizen and militia movements were originally closely tied to the Christian Identity religion, which sees Anglo-Saxons as descendants of the lost tribes of Israel and thus God's chosen people while Jews are seen as frauds or even literal children of the devil.

William Pierce, *The Turner Diaries* and ZOG

One of the main contributions of the 1970s to modern antisemitism is the idea of ZOG. This is shorthand for "Zionist Occupation Government", a conspiracy theory that like Francis Parker Yockey claims that the US government is controlled by Jewish interests. It seems to have grown out of American anti-Communism in the 1960s, after the end of McCarthyism which had looked for hidden Communist infiltration as the hidden hand behind various political developments. The term itself seems to stem from the racist Christian Identity religion.²⁵

The idea of ZOG plays a very important role in William Luther Pierce's novel *The Turner Diaries*, which deals with a coming "racial revolution" where Jews, liberals and members of other "races" are eventually executed and exterminated. This is again a reaction against how a Jewish elite has made it a hate crime for whites to defend themselves when attacked by African-Americans and other minorities. Pierce (1933–2002) was a Physics professor who founded the organization National Alliance in 1974, hailing Adolf Hitler as "the greatest man of the 20th century". Over the last years, he has been one of the sources of inspiration for young terrorists who want to provoke a "racial war".

Inspiration from the ZOG conspiracy are readily visible both among neo-Nazis like the Nordic Resistance Movement, who believe the United States has been made to fight Israel's wars, and the Greek Golden Dawn party. It is also present in the alt-right, where Jews are seen as promoting immigration and multiculturalism.

James Mason and SIEGE

James Mason (born 1952) was forgotten for many years before resurfacing in 2019. Mason has been a self-declared national socialist since he joined the American Nazi Party of George Lincoln Rockwell at the age of 14. From 1980 to 1986 he edited the newsletter SIEGE on behalf of the National Socialist Liberation Front (NSLF).

Mason sees the entire political system in the USA and European countries including the American government and constitution as controlled by Jews. It is therefore an enemy of the white "race", and has to be completely overthrown – reforms or "purification" are not possible as it has been corrupted from the very beginning. Inspired by figures like Charles Manson, Russian nihilist Sergey Nechayev and the 1970s German left wing extremist group Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF), Mason believes that the best way to accomplish this overthrowal is through supporting all acts of terror and violence that will make the system strike back, including leftist and Islamist terror. This, combined with retaliation from the system, will eventually produce a "racial" war that will bring about its collapse and overthrowal.

As stated above, Mason was considered a forgotten figure until 2019. This year, however, he resurfaced as an ideologue for a new group, Atomwaffen Division, and for a new brood of young far-right extremists who believe in so-called accelerationism.

The 1970s and 1980s also saw several other openly Neo-Nazi American groups who would become important sources of inspiration also for later generations. Some of these resorted to violence and murder of Jewish individuals, like The Order (also known as Bruder Schweigen).²⁶

3. MODERN FAR-RIGHT ANTI-SEMITIC GROUPS AND ENVIRONMENTS

The Alt-right and the White Ethnostate

The movement known as the alt-right started in the 2000s. It should be specified that it is not a “movement” in the sense of an organization with leadership and statutes, but started on the internet as a combination of ironic-transgressive “Swastika posters”, “troll” culture centred around webpages like 4chan and a general backlash against the perceived liberal hegemony, particularly regarding feminism. While originally taking the form of irreverent trolling and internet memes, it took a nastier turn with the “Gamergate” controversy where female gaming writers were attacked for trying to destroy what was perceived to have started as a male subculture. It was eventually associated, at least in the public mind, by an even darker strain led by more radical ideologues.²⁷ The alt-right reached its pinnacle of fame, at least until now, in 2016–17, when the election of Donald Trump was hailed as a victory and a pathway into mainstream success. However, the good times ended with the Charlottesville riots where alt-righters marched, shouting antisemitic slogans and eventually killed a young protestor.

If the alt-right has an ideology, it can probably be said to be driven by the fear of demographic changes, particularly in the USA where whites are expected to no longer be the absolute majority in a few decades. A common solution to the problem of demography is the establishment of a white “ethnostate”, followed by voluntary migration or ethnic cleansing of other groups.

Besides the fear of demographic changes, anti-feminism plays an important role as manifested in the “Gamergate” scandal and the Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW) movement. Many also seem to be highly opposed to LGBTQ-persons and their believed detrimental effects on culture.

4chan and Chan Culture

The webpage 4chan was launched in 2003. It can be compared to a never-ending discussion or comment field with little rules or moderation although both do exist. Most posters are anonymous, and the majority of posts consists of pictures, memes and similar material. Most users seem to be young males. Here it is important to note that racism and extremism only constitute a small part of what goes on on this and similar webpages, and that they have been a breeding ground for several influential internet-based subcultures including “bronies” (adult fans of the cartoon *My Little Pony*) and the *Anonymous* hacker collective. According to a recent report, there might have been a concerted effort from one or more moderators to turn 4chan into an area for the far right between 2012 and 2015.²⁸

Due to crackdowns from the owners on some of the content, it has been supplemented and to some extent replaced by even more “free” sites like 8chan and Endchan.

4chan and its successors has been important for the development of the alt-right and the Siege culture, as well as for the proliferation of conspiracy theories, white supremacy and antisemitism. It has recently achieved new fame as a place to post manifestos after mass shootings, as well as being the birthplace of the Qanon conspiracy theory.²⁹

Sources: Identitarianism and the European New Right

Two movements that have inspired the alt-right and are likely to continue to have influence even after the apparent decline of the alt-right are the French and European New Right (Nouvelle Droite) and the Identitarian movements.

The New Right grew out of the French think-tank GRECE in the late 1960s. It sees itself as an attempt at countering “cultural homogenization” and the lack of roots and connection to traditions in the modern world. Among other things, it is against the mixing of “races” and cultures, instead emphasizing “ethnopluralism”, where different peoples and cultures are at least in name considered of equal value, but should live apart.

The New Right and, later identitarianism and the alt-right, wishes to change politics through influencing elites and slowly changing culture and discourse, a process referred to as “metapolitics” inspired by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. Most ideologues of the New Right have shown little interest in antisemitism. Indeed, one prominent ideologue, Guillaume Faye has gone from being antisemitic in his younger days to praising Judaism as a “healthier” religion than Christianity due to its ethnic identity and perceived lack of “Christian” guilt complexes.

They view the United States as the main symbol of globalisation and cultural homogenization, and therefore the main enemy. On the other hand, there is only a short step from this to alleging that the US is controlled by Jews.³⁰

The identitarian movement has adopted many of the ideas of the New Right, but has a more action-centred approach including occupations of mosques and attempts at stopping refugee boats from reaching Europe, an operation known as “Defend Europe”. While in many ways similar to the New Right, it has a younger and more activist profile. At least in Europe, it is mostly concerned with Muslim immigration than antisemitism.

American Identitarians like the organization Identity Evropa are closer to neo-Nazism, focusing on white supremacy and antisemitism. The group frequently uses the “triple parentheses” and claims that Jews control Hollywood and the Federal government. It wishes to expel Jews from the United States.

As stated above, antisemitism plays an important role in the worldview of many alt-righters. Jews are viewed as responsible for migration and thus for demographic changes, an idea that can also be found in neo-Nazi groups like the Nordic Resistance Movement. Indeed, a slogan that was heard during the Charlottesville riots in August 2016 was “You will not replace us”, soon changed into “Jews will not replace us”. Similarly, a slogan or meme sometimes used by NRM supporters is “I support open borders – for Israel”.

An example of how Jews can be blamed for the perceived problems of the modern world is an interview with Barbara Spectre from the think tank Paideia from 2010. In the interview, Spectre stated that Europe is currently going through a transformation into multiculturalism and will not remain “the monolithic societies they once were in the last century”. According to Spectre, Jews can and will play a role as facilitators of this transformation due to their long experiences with living as a minority. The interview has since been used to prove that multiculturalism is part of a Jewish agenda to weaken traditional European and American identities (while keeping Israel ethnically pure).

Some Important Exponents of the Alt-right:

Richard Spencer

Richard Spencer is a white supremacist whose goal is to establish a white ethnostate in parts of North America. He is the president of the think-tank National Policy Institute, which claims to be working for the interests of white people. Spencer organized the “Unite the right” rally in Charlottesville, VA and is known to sport Nazi propaganda and for making a Nazi salute at the NPI conference in 2016. Spencer seems at the moment to be more or less out of the game. In 2017, he started Altright Corporation with Daniel Friberg and Jason Jorjani from the Swedish identitarian publishing house Arktos Media. Later that same year, Henrik Palmgren from the Swedish web-TV and radio Red Ice Creations joined Altright Corporation. Both Friberg and Jorjani have later resigned and distanced themselves. Altright Corporation still runs the website altright.com.

Kevin MacDonald

Kevin MacDonald is a retired psychology professor at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). He is mostly known for his theory about Judaism as a “group evolutionary strategy” promoting endogamy, evolutionary selection for high intelligence and enmity towards other groups. The latter makes them a destructive influence on the “host society”. According to MacDonald, Jews have pressed for higher immigration from other continents to the United States in order to weaken the white population. Like the Nazis, Kevin MacDonald believes the negative influence of Jews to be connected to “blood” or genetics.

In the 2010s MacDonald became an important voice in the alt-right movement. He has been a frequent speaker at conferences, including alongside Holocaust deniers, and is a contributor to various websites and publications. MacDonald is the editor of the web page The Occidental Observer, which he says covers “white identity, white interests, and the culture of the West”.

Daniel Friberg and Arktos Media

While not personally a purveyor of antisemitism, Swedish Daniel Friberg has for a decade ran Arktos Media, which is regarded as one of the most important voices in the alt-right and identitarian scene. It has published books and held conferences. While there are no clear antisemitic books advertised on the company’s website, there are several articles referring to the Anti-Defamation League as “Zionist smear-mongering” as well as accusing Jewish organization of promoting immigration while Israel keeps its borders shut, as well as articles supporting Russia, Iran and others against the US-led “Globalist-Zionist-Salafist coalition”.

Henrik Palmgren and Red Ice Creations

Founded in 2002, Red Ice Creations spent its first ten years as a traditional conspiracy website dealing with topics like UFOs, the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Illuminati. In 2012 it changed to promoting white nationalism, including the “white genocide” conspiracy theory. Jews are blamed for the presumed decline and replacement of the white “race”, for the turbulence in the Middle East following the Arab spring, and for funding the Islamic State. Red Ice is based in Stockholm and is run by the married couple Henrik Palmgren and Lana Lokteff. Palmgren was present in Charlottesville in 2017 with Richard Spencer, Daniel Friberg and others.

Greg Johnson and Counter-Currents

Greg Johnson (born 1953) has been active in the far right since 2000 and has to some extent become a rival both to Richard Spencer and to Arktos. He has criticized Spencer’s antics as damaging the movement, as well as been accused of trying to take over Arktos Media.

Since 2010 he has been in charge of Counter-Currents, which combines an online magazine with several podcasts and a book publishing house. The name “Counter-Currents” comes from Johnson’s cyclical view of history, which is adapted from the Italian occult fascist Julius Evola

and the “esoteric hitlerite” Savitri Devi (known for her combining of racist and antisemitic ideas with Hindu mysticism). While we according to Johnson are currently living in a “dark age” similar to the Kali Yuga of Hinduism, there are “counter-currents” running against the spirit of the age which can help in establishing a new intellectual hegemony where liberalism and Christianity are replaced with “a new moral hierarchy” emphasizing strength and excellence.

Antisemitism forms an important part of Johnson’s thinking, and can probably be called its cornerstone. Indeed, Johnson has claimed that he converted from neo-Conservatism to white Nationalism after reading about Adolf Hitler’s debates with Jewish socialists in Vienna and studying the “Black Notebooks” of German philosopher Martin Heidegger. Other sources of inspiration include the French New Right, William Pierce, Julius Evola and Savitri Devi. Like the European New Right, he believes that the right should attempt to change culture and discourse through “metapolitics”.

Johnson wants to create a white ethnostate in parts of North America, which is to be brought about not through violence but through cultural changes. The establishment of such an ethnostate should then be followed by an “orderly” ethnic cleansing where African-Americans will establish their own ethnostate in the American South while non-white immigrants and their descendants will leave or be deported to their original “homelands”. Jews should be expelled to Israel.

Johnson believes that Hitler acted in self-defence against Jewish aggression. He is not a Holocaust denier despite acknowledging such denial as a potential tool. He believes it is necessary to break “Jewish power” over the destinies of white people.

Tomislav Sunic

Tomislav “Tom” Sunic is a Croatian-born former academic and author. He is a “White nationalist” who believes that white people of European descent should organise and identify on the basis of “race” instead of traditional nationalities. Sunic believes that the West is being killed by egalitarianism and cosmopolitanism, which has its roots in Jewish and Christian monotheism and has been furthered by Marxism. He also believes that there exists a “cultural taboo” in today’s Western world which prevents discussing Jews and Jewish power. Sunic has contributed to Kevin MacDonald’s webpage *Occidental Observer*, and spoken several times to Holocaust deniers, neo-Confederates and other representatives of the far right.

Frodi Midjord and Scandza Forum

The Norway-registered association Scandza Forum has run several conferences in Scandinavia since May 2017, with an increasingly antisemitic profile. Topics include demographic changes, “white genocide”, biologically based “racial” differences and Jews as responsible for weakening national cultures.

Scandza Forum is headed by Swedish-Faeroese Frodi Midjord. Midjord was formerly one of two hosts in the podcast *Me ne frego* together with Swedish Holocaust denier Jonas de Geer. He is currently making another podcast, *Guide to Kulchur*, which is hosted on Greg Johnson’s site Counter-Currents.

Scandza Forum seems to be closely connected to Counter-Currents, with Greg Johnson taking part in most conferences as well as the conferences being promoted on the Counter-Currents website. Other lecturers have included Kevin MacDonald, Tomislav Sunic, Mike Enoch from the website *The Daily Shoah* and the Danish islamophobe Rasmus Paludan. Conferences like this are important for networking and for giving an intellectual veneer to ideas commonly associated with street brawlers. According to the website EXPO, Scandinavia has become a popular place to conduct the conferences because Scandinavians are viewed as

simultaneously racially pure and under the yoke of “cultural Marxist” ideas like feminism and multiculturalism.³¹ Scandza Forum might be one of the most successful and important meeting and networking places for antisemites and far-rightists at the moment.³²

Andrew Anglin and The Daily Stormer

The Daily Stormer was founded in 2013 by Andrew Anglin, a former 9/11 truther. It is located in the terrain where the alt-right intersects with neo-Nazism. Calling himself an “American Nationalist”, he believes that America was founded on antisemitic and racist principles. The webpage has a section called “The Jewish Problem” where Jews are accused of being behind all sorts of societal ills. Anglin also lauds Hitler and promotes Holocaust denial.³³

Mike Enoch and The Daily Shoah

Mike Enoch (real name Michael Isaac Peinovich) is an American blogger and radio host. He runs the podcast “The Daily Shoah” and is usually regarded as the inventor of the “triple parenthesis” ((())) used to identify persons of Jewish descent. He took part in the “Unite the right” demonstration in Charlottesville and has been a frequent speaker at Scandza Forum. He is also known for referring to Black people as “animals” and “savages”.

Siege Culture

The so-called “Siege” culture has gained notoriety since 2019. It is dominated by very young people, often in their teens. Unlike the identitarian and alt-right movements, it does not aspire to respectability, instead wallowing in plans for “race war”, guerrilla warfare and terror tactics against the Jewish-controlled authorities. Its open antisemitism can be seen as a signifier of the same revolutionary attitude; indeed, many believe in what is called accelerationism where acts of violence are good in themselves if they help bringing down the system. One of the most prominent accelerationist group has been the Boogaloo Bois.³⁴

The nickname “Siege” comes from the writings of James Mason, who has become an important ideologue. While the Internet has been a common way of radicalization, some have not been content to fantasize but have committed crimes including terrorism.

Iron March

The internet forum Iron March was founded in 2008 by the Russian Alisher Mukhitdinov, better known as Alexander Slavros. Like other parts of the Siege subculture, it lacks the attempts at sophistication and intellectualism which the alt-right has strived towards. It is associated with extremist groups like Atomwaffen Division, but had members from Golden Dawn, the Nordic Resistance Movement and the Italian group Casa Pound. While Iron March closed in 2017, its content has subsequently been leaked.

Many users seem to have embraced a mystical fascism/racialism inspired by the “esoteric Hitlerist” Savitri Devi and traditionalist Julius Evola. Modern society and culture are viewed as fallen and degenerate, as opposed to a primordial tradition. There seems to be some uncertainty about Muslims and whether they should be considered enemies or potential allies. Many posters seem to respect “traditional” Islam against modernity, which is the true enemy.

The motto of Iron March was “Gas the kikes, race war now, 1488 boots on the ground!”. The numbers 1488 refer to the 14 words of neo-Nazi ideologue David Lane (1938–2007), “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children.” Lane was a member of the group The Order, who did paramilitary training to overthrow “ZOG” and liberate the white people from perceived Jewish power. He spent his last 23 years in prison for involvement in the killing of Jewish radio host Alan Berg.

The idea of the “Jew” as a representative of despised modernity is prominent on *Iron March*. Many posts refer to Jews as being behind modernity, liberalism, “degeneracy” as well as

“cultural Marxism”. Others refer to common tropes like “the Zio-capitalist regime”. Jews are also said to control YouTube, and to have organized the Arab Spring and thus set the refugee crisis in motion.

Atomwaffen Division

The group Atomwaffen Division announced its foundation on the Iron March forum in 2015. Inspired by James Mason and others, it advocates the destruction of the United States government through acts of terror including destroying infrastructure. It hails occult fascists and Nazis like Savitri Devi and idolizes Osama Bin Laden and the Islamic State due to their dedication and “culture of martyrdom and insurgency”. Further, it has ties to Satanic groups like the Order of Nine Angles. The group has spread to Europe, where a branch based in the Baltic states is known as Feuerkrieg Division. Its UK branch is known as Sonnenkrieg Division.

Members of Atomwaffen Division have attempted to train with the Ukrainian Azov Battalion.

Telegram channels associated with the group are full of hatred of Jews. Indeed, antisemitism is central to the worldview of Atomwaffen Division. Jews are believed to control what is referred to as “The System”, which needs to be brought down, and to be enemies of the white “race” despite posing as white themselves. There are instances of people associated with the network who have been gathering and sharing information about individuals of Jewish descent who behave “Jew-like”, thus reinforcing existing prejudices and potentially putting these people in danger.

Solo Terrorists and “Saints”

The most dangerous and disturbing feature of this new right-wing extremist culture springs out of its cult of action and violence. The last years have seen several attacks by self-radicalized “solo terrorists” with connections or inspiration from this political environment, on mosques and in at least four cases synagogues. The attackers have in several instances posted self-written manifestos online, usually on 8chan, and share many ideological elements with Siege culture including a belief in terrorism as a way to start a “race war” and bring down the System and a fascination for James Mason, William Pierce and others.³⁵ The idea of solo terrorism seems to be derived from neo-Nazi Louis Beam who invented the concept of “Leaderless resistance”.

The manifestos are intended to inspire others, an approach which risks creating a “relay race” of terror where others pick up the baton. These murderous inspirators have sometimes been referred to as “saints”. While their victims have often been Muslims and in one instance the terrorist’s own adopted step-sister, it is very noticeable that they have spoken mostly about Jews and their responsibility for trying to destroy the white “race” with immigration, multiculturalism and breakdown of traditional gender roles in court.³⁶

Other Far-right Antisemitic Groups

The Nordic Resistance Movement has already been referred to above. While limited to Scandinavia, it has received plenty of attention elsewhere both as a danger (it is listed as a terrorist group in the United States) and an inspiration (it is often referred to in a positive manner in fora connected to Atomwaffen Division and the Siege subculture, as well as by alt-right ideologue Matthew Heimbach).³⁷ While several leading figures left last year to form a new group called Nordisk Styrke (Nordic Strength), it has by no means disappeared.

The main inspiration seems to be from the 1980s Neo-Nazi terrorist group *The Order*, also known as the *Brüder Schweigen* (whose leader David Lane coined the so-called 14 words “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”) and the interwar era Romanian Iron Guard.

Like in other Neo-Nazi groups, antisemitism plays an important role in the worldview of the NRM, who even distance themselves from the anti-immigrant and anti-Islam far right, and warns its members against getting involved with this since it will make them pay less attention to “the real enemy”.³⁸

Jews are said to control US foreign policy, the EU and most governments. Interestingly, another important enemy to the NRM is “the gay lobby”, which is said to be a Jewish tool to foster sexual decadence and confusion as part of a plan to weaken family structures and possibly reduce the number of white European births. Thus, the organization has arranged several protests against the mentioned “gay lobby”.

Golden Dawn

Golden Dawn (Greek: *Λαϊκός Σύνδεσμος – Χρυσή Αυγή*) is a far-right Greek political party whose general secretary and leading members of parliament were recently found guilty of leading a criminal organisation, with a number of other leading members convicted of participation.

The party uses symbols reminiscent of Nazi Germany and have praised Nazi leaders. Despite this, it managed to get around 7% of votes both in 2012 and 2015.

Golden Dawn has used rhetoric about ZOG and promoted Holocaust denial. It has also accused the United States of waging wars on behalf of Jewish interests to weaken enemies of Israel, and plunge countries into chaos to further their takeover.

4. ANTISEMITISM AND CONSPIRACY CULTURE

The environment commonly referred to as conspiracy culture is somewhat difficult both to define clearly and to separate from other kinds of antisemitism. First of all, since the time of Jewish emancipation and even further back, antisemitism has itself often functioned as a conspiracy theory, as it speaks of mighty Jewish cabals running politics, media and business, spreading decadence and destroying white European and American culture and having power as its goal. Second, as stated above, one of the roots of the kind of conspiracy theories referred to by Michael Barkun as “superconspiracies”, lie in the antisemitic “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” and similar antisemitic literature. As stated by Jovan Byford, conspiracy theories can be said to constitute a kind of narrative tradition where new events are interpreted in the light of older theories. Therefore, conspiracy theorists will often end up replicating traditional antisemitic tropes, even though old Jews are replaced by “Illuminati” or “power elites”. This might again eventually lead them to embrace antisemitism.

A textbook case is the British author and lecturer David Icke. Icke, a former sports commentator, has written several books arguing that the world is secretly run by a cabal of interrelated families of royals, businesspeople and politicians who are actually shape-changing reptiles or lizard-human hybrids. While Icke has repeatedly denied that this is a coded reference to Jews, his books have included several antisemitic tropes including references to the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” and claims that Jews were behind the Atlantic slave trade, fascism and the Holocaust and even modern-day far right groups. Icke has also suggested that the Holocaust may not have happened.³⁹

We can also observe how the internet radio Red Ice Creations went from conspiracy theories about UFOs, the 9/11 terror attacks and Illuminati into embracing “white genocide” and the belief that Jews are behind the population shifts in modern Europe and America. Indeed, antisemitism has even been present in the bizarre teachings of ZetaTalk, which claims to be a transmission from the Zeta Reticuli solar system, as well as other representatives of the UFO culture.⁴⁰

A not uncommon motive among antisemitic conspiracy theorists is the idea of “false Jews”, where one can deny being antisemitic by claiming that the enemies who control politics and finance are “Zionists” or “Khazars”, descendants of a Turkish people who converted to Judaism in the 9th century, and thus not representative of Jews in general. The preoccupation with the Khazars seem again to be borrowed from the racist Christian Identity religion. In the same way, the word “Zionists” as used by conspiracy theorists often has little to do with the usual definition (the need for a Jewish state in historical Palestine), but is closely related to the concept of ZOG.⁴¹ Other euphemisms used include “bankers”, “globalists” or “neoconservatives”.

Recently, Jews have also been accused of being behind the spread of the Corona virus, which is not too surprising given the historical association between Jews and disease, which goes back to the days of the Black Death. The accusations include having created the virus, or made up stories about a non-existing virus, in order to crash the economy to take over businesses and push dangerous and/or expensive vaccines. Among the culprits are George Soros.⁴²

Antisemitism is also present in the growing Qanon phenomenon where Donald Trump is viewed as a saviour figure fighting against Satanists and paedophiles in the American “deep state” and the Democratic Party. Soros are among those accused of being part of this network, together with the Rothschild family who for more than a century have been used as symbols for the conspiratorial stereotype of the mighty Jewish banker.

Some have also pointed to the similarities between the idea found in Qanon of powerful elites harvesting chemicals from the brains of children to gain power and/or get high, to the old “blood libel” legend, where Jews have been accused of killing and using of Jews using blood of Christian children for magical and/or religious purposes.

“Cultural Marxism”

A common conspiratorial trope on parts of the right is “the cultural Marxist” – academics and journalists with a leftist agenda trying to break down traditional values, often in the name of multiculturalism. While these are not necessarily being identified as Jewish, there is often an antisemitic element present.

Like the conspiracy theories about George Soros, the modern idea of the cultural Marxist appears to have originated in the Lyndon LaRouche movement. It has, however, a precedent in the idea of Kulturbolschewismus of Nazi Germany – a supposed plot to spread sexual, political and other revolutions throughout Weimar Germany as part of a plot to destroy the nation from within.⁴³

George Soros as Bogeyman

George Soros (born 1930) is a Hungarian-born billionaire whose support for humanitarian and liberal causes have made him a bogeyman in many areas: Among the radical right, neo-Nazis, conspiracy theorists like Alex Jones⁴⁴ and even conservative commentator Bill O’Reilly.

The reasons for the demonization of Soros include his support for liberal causes and civil society, who have enraged leaders like Hungarian strongman PM Viktor Orbán and Poland’s Jaroslaw Kaczynski,⁴⁵ as well as the governments of Russia and Macedonia. Soros has also been accused of funding refugees in order to “flood” Europe and the United States, and of being behind the Black Lives Matter movement. His hidden motives are said to be to destroy national cultures and impose a global governance.

Ironically, Soros’ enemies include Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu.⁴⁶ Still, there are too many elements of the common tropes of “the international Jew” and “the Jewish banker” present in the demonization of Soros to deny its antisemitic content. The conspiracy theories about Soros also seem to have originated in the neo-fascist LaRouche movement, named for its founder and absolute leader Lyndon LaRouche (1922–2019). LaRouche believed that the world was ruled by a cabal of “Venetian bankers” headed by the British royal family. LaRouche usually hid his antisemitism behind euphemisms like “global elites” and “oligarchs”. He is also reported to have claimed that only 1,5 million died in the Holocaust, mostly by hard labour.

The George Soros conspiracy theories seem to have originated in an article written by LaRouche collaborator F. William Engdahl in 1996 and published in the movement’s weekly newspaper *Executive Intelligence Review*. It should be noted that Engdahl is today a frequent contributor to Russian propaganda media like RT (formerly Russia Today).

In his native Hungary, these conspiracy theories have been utilized by the authorities in their struggle against Soros-funded Central European University, with Viktor Orbán using antisemitic slurs like “someone who speculates with money” and “internationalist” about Soros.⁴⁷

5. OTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF ANTISEMITISM

The North American Black separatist movement is a reaction to centuries of white racism and supremacy. To counter this, Black separatists want to form separate institutions or even a separate Black nation. Most forms of Black separatism are strongly anti-white, antisemitic and anti LGBTQ.⁴⁸

One of the best-known representants is the new religious group Nation of Islam, who has little to do with mainstream or traditional Islam. It sells book claiming that Jews were responsible for the transatlantic slave trade. Its leader Louis Farakhan has blamed Jews for using their claimed control over Hollywood to “seed the American people and the people of the world and bringing (them) down in moral strength” through promoting homosexuality. He has also frequently spoken of “the so-called Jew” in a manner reminiscent of Christian Identity, arguing that the real Israelites were black North Africans, and of secret Jewish control of financial and political institutions. Nation of Islam also has a history dialogue with white supremacists and separatists.

Although mostly an American phenomenon, the organization apparently has a European headquarter located in the UK.⁴⁹

There also seem to be tendencies towards antisemitism in parts of the Traditionalist movement in the Catholic church. This movement is highly critical to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), which among many things “acquitted” Jews of responsibility for the killing of Jesus Christ. Some have chosen to break completely with the church, becoming so-called sedevacantists (literally “empty seat”, i.e., not recognizing the recent Popes as legitimate), while others have remained. The movement has seen an upsurge in the reign of Pope Francis, due to his support for refugees and tolerance towards LGBT persons, which is seen as the real reason for the many abuse scandals in the church. Some of these groups, like the Society of St. Pius X and Catholic Family News (CFN), believe the reforms to be the result of a “Jewish-Masonic plot”. The artist Giovanni Gasparro who shocked many in 2020 with a painting honouring the old Blood Libel legend also appears to have connections to a Traditionalist group.⁵⁰

Finally, there is the issue of antisemitic conspiracy theories in the Middle East and the Islamic world. While not a topic for this report, conspiracy theories about Jews and Zionism have been spread on a large scale in the Middle East since first being imported from Europe in the late 1800s. It should be noted that the first Arabic translation of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion was published in the 1920s by local Christians. Since World War II and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, antisemitic conspiracy literature has been distributed in large numbers by Islamists, secular nationalists and leftists. The organization Hamas even cited the Protocols in their 1988 charter. Antisemitic conspiracy narratives were also quoted by terrorist Osama Bin Laden after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, claiming that Jews controlled American politics, the economy and the mass media.

In the last couple of years, anti-Jewish attitudes within Muslim communities in Europe have also received public attention. Antisemitic attitudes appear to be significantly higher than among non-Muslims, although the majority of European Muslims do not share such attitudes. There have also been several attacks on Jews and Jewish property by Islamic extremists.⁵¹

6. EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE: NORMALIZATION AND UTILIZATION OF ANTISEMITIC CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Two Central European countries, Hungary and Poland, have experienced a slide towards nationalist authoritarianism in the last ten years. Both countries score among the highest in antisemitic attitudes in Europe, something which the ruling parties have used politically to gain or remain in power.

On one hand, there are few physical attacks on Jews or Jewish properties in Hungary, although there have been instances where swastikas have been painted on synagogues. The national-conservative FIDESZ government also prides itself in being a friend of Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu. Like in much of Eastern Europe, antisemitic attitudes can seemingly coexist with a strong support for Israel.⁵²

On the other hand, surveys show that one third of Hungarians hold antisemitic views, based on questions like “do you think Jewish people have too much influence in the media or in the financial world?”.

Government-sanctioned historians have worked to rewrite history to make Hungary an innocent victim of Nazi Germany, instead of its ally up until 1944. Wartime figures who cooperated with Germany have also been recast as anti-Communist heroes. In the same manner, Hungarian complicity in the Holocaust is downplayed.

One such historian has even declared the 1941 deportation of Jewish people “a police action against aliens”. And as stated above, there is also a strong undercurrent in the campaign against financier George Soros (himself a Holocaust survivor) who is portrayed as Hungary’s No. 1 enemy.

Hungary’s second largest party, the right-nationalist Jobbik, has a history of antiziganism and antisemitism. The latter includes blaming Israel for the fall of the Hungarian currency and comparing Hungarians to the Palestinians since both are said to be victims of Jewish conquest attempts. Some politicians have also spoken of the Roma people as a “biological weapon” of the same Israeli occupation. It should however be noted that over the last two years Jobbik has increasingly renounced its racist, antisemitic and extremist past and moved towards the center. Time will show if this is a permanent feature.⁵³

While not connected to either the government nor Jobbik, it should be added that the far-right Wikipedia alternative Metapedia had over 147 600 articles in Hungarian in 2018, more than twice as many as in the second largest language, German.⁵⁴

While Jews have a 1000-year long history in Poland and constituted around 10 per cent of the Polish population before World War II, the Holocaust and subsequent migration reduced the number to about 2–8000 individuals.⁵⁵ While antisemitism also has a long history, antisemitism in modern Poland is therefore largely a case of antisemitism without Jews, as well as being concerned with history and the politics of memory.

One issue here is the stereotype of the “Jewish communist” which can be traced to the interwar era and continued to exist after the war, despite the fact that Jews only constituted a small part of the leadership of the post-war Communist party and the fact that the authorities engaged in aggressive anti-Zionist propaganda from the 1960s on. Similar stereotypes are seen

in Ukraine, where pamphlets about the Soviet Union as a Jewish project and even as a Jewish revenge upon gentiles for centuries of persecution can be sold openly on Kiev's main street.

Another is coming to terms with the role of Poles in the Holocaust. While great progress was made in the early 2000s after the publishing of the book *Neighbours*, it has been rolled back in the later years with the PiS authorities attempting to block debate through laws. Similar problems are present as seen above, in Hungary as well as in Romania, the Baltic States, Ukraine and other parts of Eastern Europe, particularly in areas with a difficult war history, where Nazi collaborators are also known as freedom fighters against Soviet occupation, like Ukrainian Stepan Bandera and the OUN/UPA organization or the Estonian anti-Soviet partisans.

Some Polish antisemitism seems to be connected to Catholic religiosity and traditions going back to the Middle Ages, although in a modern form where Jews are also associated with modernity and modern values. The radio station Radio Maryja, which is also a political and social movement, has for the last 28 years been the single most powerful disseminator of antisemitic rhetoric in Poland. The station is headed by the ultra-conservative priest Father Tadeusz Rydzyk. In 2017 Radio Maryja was the seventh most popular radio station in Poland. According to the New York Times it is also the most important or even single source of news for many older Poles. Its message can be said to be that there is nothing but destructive nihilism outside the church, and much of its content is of a conspiratorial nature claiming that traditional values are threatened by LGBTQ activists and "neo-Marxists" controlling universities.

Since 2018 Poland has seen a new wave of antisemitic statements connected to the issue of Jewish claims to compensation for property confiscated by the Nazi and later by the Communist authorities. Far right politicians have claimed that if the property is returned, it will mean a total Jewish takeover of politics and society in general, and ethnic Poles will become slaves in their own country. A leading exponent of this have been the party Konfederacja (Confederacy) and its leader Janusz Korwin-Mikke, who has also made several other antisemitic statements. Many supporters seem to be young men, which goes against the previously held notion that antisemitism was mostly a phenomenon among elder people that would eventually disappear. The Polish internet also has a heavy antisemitic content with YouTube being the most important channel for spreading the message.

Like in Hungary, the ruling national-conservative PiS party has utilized antisemitic feelings politically. Like in Hungary, George Soros has been blamed for the migration crisis, also in government-controlled media. In the election campaign in 2020, the opposition candidate Rafał Trzaskowski was accused of working for "a powerful foreign lobby" and "rich groups who want to rule the world". At some point an old quote from an interview where Trzaskowski declared that he believed in the God of Spinoza was used against him with claims that the god of a Jewish philosopher was incompatible with Catholicism. The issue of land claims was also used to attack Trzaskowski with claims that he was "working for Jewish interests".⁵⁶

7. ANTISEMITISM AND ANTI-ZIONISM IN WESTERN EUROPE: A COMPLICATED MATTER

In the 1970s antisemitism was a marginal phenomenon in Western Europe, mostly existing in fringe milieus on the far right. While it is disputed, many authors speak of an increase in the last two or three decades where ideas that would earlier have been deemed antisemitic have become publicly more acceptable.⁵⁷

The 21st century has seen an increasing number of attacks upon Jews and Jewish property in Europe. The majority of attacks seem to have been committed by Islamists, such as the shots fired against the synagogue in Oslo in 2006 and the lethal attack on the synagogue in Copenhagen in 2015, while others have been committed by far-righters. Aside from major, but isolated events like the 2019 Halle shooting, most far right violence seems to have occurred in Central and Eastern Europe.⁵⁸

It has been claimed by Henrik Bachner that we have seen a shift where the state of Israel and the plight of the Palestinians have become a central focal point for latent and open antisemitism. On the one hand, it must be made clear at the outset that criticism of Israel or Israeli policies is not inherently antisemitic. On the contrary, under international law there is legitimate reason to criticise Israeli policies towards Palestinians. If it were antisemitic to criticize Israeli policies, it would make a large number of Israeli citizens antisemites, not to mention various branches of the United Nations. It should be noted that Norwegian data show that over half of those who are even displaying radically negative attitudes to Israel do *not* display antisemitic attitudes.⁵⁹

At the same time, within the broad and complex movement for Palestinians rights, problematic elements of old antisemitic tropes do exist, including stereotypes of Jewish control over media, politics and economy, a Jewish conspiracy to dominate world affairs, accusation against Jews of being more loyal to Israel than to their country of residence, or attempts at holding Jews collectively responsible for the actions of Israel.

To cite Bachner, given the long history of anti-Jewish sentiments in Europe it would be unlikely if this did not affect attitudes to a Jewish state.⁶⁰ Indeed, Norwegian data also show that a majority of those who indeed have antisemitic attitudes (approximately 10 percent of the majority population) also have negative attitudes to Israel. On the extreme right, this can be exemplified by the propaganda of the strongly antisemitic Nordic Resistance Movement, whose website contains a large number of articles on Israel of a conspiratorial nature and a form of support of Palestinians that most Palestinians would prefer to be without.

It should be noted that actual attacks on Jews or even explicit antisemitic statements from leftists are comparably rare, although they do occur. A clear case is the Norwegian-born sociologist Johan Galtung, often viewed as the father of peace and conflict studies. At least since 2011, Galtung has made several statements often viewed as antisemitic, including suggesting a link between Israeli intelligence and the mass murder at Utøya and Oslo 22.7.2010, calling the terrorist Anders Behring Breivik “an artificial Jew” since he was initiated into Freemasonry, and later quoting an article by neo-Nazi William Pierce to show that most of the world’s media is controlled by six Jewish families. For this, he won the praise of Kevin MacDonald.⁶¹ Galtung has later recommended the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” as “a guide to our world” and claimed that Jews bear part of the responsibility for the Nazi persecutions by “declaring war on Germany” in 1933.⁶²

Other instances are more muddled, like the 2018–2020 row over perceived antisemitism in the UK labour party. More particular, there is a history of antisemitic statements from Labour politicians, like in 2003 when veteran Labour party MP Tam Dalyell declared that PM Tony Blair was unduly influenced by “a cabal of Jewish advisers” in his Middle East policy. Other MPs have spoken of “Israel’s long tentacles” and “right wing Jewish millionaires” influencing British politics.⁶³

2019–20 saw a string of high-profile suspensions over alleged antisemitic comments, and accusations that then Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was failing to take the issue seriously enough, as well as himself having supported antisemitic statements, including a mural in London.⁶⁴ Corbyn was later suspended from the party due to his reactions to a report by the UK Equalities and Human Rights Commission which found that the party had broken the law in its handling of antisemitism complaints.⁶⁵

The Role of Jewish Voices in Anti-Zionist Antisemitism

While many Jewish voices who have come out for the rights of the Palestinians are sincere leftists of Jewish origin or intellectuals believing that Zionism is a betrayal of Jewish humanism, others have crossed over into antisemitism despite their ethnic origins. Examples are Israeli-born jazz musician and author Gilad Atzmon, who has come very close to Holocaust denial, the Swedish-Russian-Israeli Israel Shamir, and American-born self-proclaimed Orthodox Christian monk “brother” Nathaniel Kapner.⁶⁶

A common trope here seems to be that Jews need to utterly abandon Judaism in order to free themselves from Jewish exclusivity, seen to be behind both Israeli policy towards Palestinians and perceived Jewish desire to dominate “despised” Gentiles in the West for their own ends, thus accepting old stereotypes as truth.

Others again are Orthodox Jews who view a secular Jewish state as an abomination in religious terms, like the group Neturei Karta, whose opposition to the state of Israel have led them to take part in antisemitic conferences in Iran and elsewhere.

Conspiracy Theories and the War in Syria

While not a feature of the mainstream left, there is a worrying trend of fringe leftists supporting the Syrian regime and its Russian backers, including denying gas attacks upon civilians. Some of this is based upon Russian propaganda, using well-known conspiracy theorists like Patrick Henningsen from the webpage 21stcenturywire, Vanessa Beeley and Eva Bartlett. All of these have a history of antisemitism before being picked up by Russian media like RT (formerly Russia Today). Henningsen has appeared on the alt-right podcast Red Ice Creations to claim that the Islamic State was an Israeli-made fake and its leader al-Bagdadi a paid actor. Vanessa Beeley, who has appeared with French antisemitic comedian Dieudonné M’Bala M’Bala and is known for calling her opponents “Zionist agents” or “most probably an Ashkenazi Jew”. Eva Bartlett has claimed that Assad’s Islamist opponents are financed by Jewish money.

Fringe leftist support for Syria is often connected to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the Syrian opposition and its Western backers become tools to destroy the Syrian state as an enemy of Israel.

In France there has also been elements of antisemitic conspiracy theories among the anti-elite Yellow Vest protesters. While the Yellow Vests protest movement is in no way antisemitic in itself, it has antisemites in its ranks. Demonstrators have been seen making the Quenelle

(an upside-down Hitler greeting invented by antisemitic comedian Dieudonné M'bala M'bala to mock Holocaust survivors), and a study shows that 31% of people who identify as Yellow Vest supporters believe the US government was involved in 9/11 and 50% believe in the existence of a “global Zionist conspiracy”.⁶⁷

There is little doubt that the many attacks on Jewish targets have made Jews insecure in Europe, perhaps particularly in France where many have accused French authorities of not doing enough to stop such attacks. The result has been a huge number of French Jews leaving France for Israel. There are also many examples from other countries of Jewish insecurity, including concealing their identities under some circumstances.⁶⁸

8. CONCLUSIONS

There are several worrying trends regarding antisemitism in the current world. Underlying them is an upsurge in conspiracy theories, which appears to have become explosive in 2020 with conspiracy theories surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, 5G radiation and the bizarre Qanon phenomenon centred around Donald Trump. Antisemitism is present in all of these.

It should be noted that it is uncertain whether this actually means that more people than before believe in conspiracy theories, or whether it is simply a case of increased visibility and attention from mainstream media. If this is indeed a “real” increase in conspiracy belief, it is not likely to decrease in the current situation.

Given the role of antisemitism in conspiracy culture, we must unfortunately assume that this will also mean an increase and hardening of antisemitic conspiracy theories – if not in the general population, then at least among those prone to believe in these theories, and possibly a further normalization of these. As seen above, antisemitic is already present among the French Yellow Vests, as well as among German anti-Covid protesters. It is likely that it will become more prominent also among parts of the American militia movement that is currently on the march again.

We are also likely to see a continuation of antisemitic statements being excused as criticism of Israel.

As for physical dangers, these could come from several directions. One is from Muslim minorities, particularly in Europe. Another is self-radicalized, far-right “lone wolves” connected with “Siege” culture.

Acts of terror are highly valued in this culture and can almost appear like a relay race where one terror act leads to others picking up the baton. Given the role of antisemitism in the subculture where several terrorists have spoken more of Jews than Muslims in court, it is unfortunately not unlikely that a hypothetical new attack will be against Jewish targets. And, of course, we should not utterly close out the possibility of a different kind of lone wolf, namely conspiracy theorists with no real ideology in the traditional sense but filled with a desire to act and – in his or her own mind – set the world straight.

Finally, there is at least the possibility of terror from someone with a background from more traditional far-right organisations. Here we should particularly be on the lookout for people who have taken part in the conflicts in Ukraine on either side, and possibly also Syria. There are also several instances of Western far-rightists who have travelled to Russia for paramilitary training.

Attacks, conspiracy theories and increased visibility of antisemitism are bound to make Jewish life more uneasy although it should not yet be compared to the 1930s.

Finally, there is the issue of antisemitism as a problem not only for Jews. Increase in conspiracy belief is a danger to democracy no matter the ethnicity of the perceived culprits. Not least therefore, we should continuously be on the watch for the appearance of such theories.

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