ANTISEMITISM IN THE DIGITAL AGE

ONLINE ANTISEMITIC HATE, HOLOCAUST DENIAL, CONSPIRACY IDEOLOGIES AND TERRORISM IN EUROPE

A Collaborative Research Report by

AMADEU ANTONIO STIFTUNG

HOPE HATE CHARITABLE TRUST

EXPO

Edited by Joe Mulhall

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ORGANISATIONAL BIOGRAPHIES

THE AMADEU ANTONIO FOUNDATION

The Amadeu Antonio Foundation is one of Germany's foremost independent nongovernmental organizations working to strengthen democratic civic society and eliminate neo-Nazism, far right extremism, antisemitism, racism and other forms of bigotry and hate in Germany. Since its founding in 1998, the Foundation has funded more than 1,400 projects and campaigns in pursuit of this goal. It brings direct support to victims of hate-based violence, and promotes alternative youth cultures and community networks to weaken the social structures that intolerance and racism need to survive. Furthermore the Foundation engages with hate and other forms of group-focused enmity online while promoting the development of a democratic digital civil society.

EXPO FOUNDATION

Expo Foundation is an anti-racist organisation based in Sweden working towards a vision of a society where racist ideas lack influence. The foundation works for an open, democratic society by counteracting racist organisations and ideas. The work consists of monitoring, journalistic investigation and education aiming to raise people's ability to challenge racist ideas, myths and conspiracy theories.

HOPE NOT HATE

Established in 1992, HOPE not hate Charitable Trust uses research, education and public engagement to challenge mistrust and racism, and helps to build communities that are inclusive, celebrate shared identities and are resilient to hate. The charity monitors far-right extremism and produces in-depth analysis of the threat of the politics of hate in the UK and abroad. We also specialise in related policy work, which draws on our research and our extensive data mapping, community engagement and training as well as a national Education Unit.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Gregory Davis is a researcher at HOPE not hate, specialising in the radical populist right, conspiracy theory and far-right use of social media. He co-authored *QAnon in the UK* report for HOPE not hate , released in October 2020.

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Patrik Hermansson is a researcher at HOPE not hate specialising in transnational extreme right networks, terrorism and digital research. In 2017 he spent a year undercover in the British and American far-right and is co-author of *The International Alt-Right: Fascism for the 21st Century?* (Routledge) released in 2020.

David Lawrence is a researcher at HOPE not hate, specialising in conspiracy ideologies, the radical populist right, the alt-right and eco-fascism. He is co-author of *The International Alt-Right: Fascism for the 21st Century?* (Routledge) released in 2020.

Joe Mulhall is Head of Research at HOPE not hate. He is a historian of postwar and contemporary fascism and completed his PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London. He has published extensively both academically and journalistically and appears regularly in the international news media and gives talks around the world about his research. In 2020 he published two books, *British Fascism After the Holocaust: From the Birth of Denial to the Notting Hill Riots 1939-1958* (Routledge) and the co-authored T*he International Alt-Right: Fascism for the 21st Century?* (Routledge). His latest book is *Drums in the Distance: Journeys Into The Global Far Right* (Icon Books).

Simone Rafael studied art history and journalism in Berlin. She worked as a journalist for several media in Germany before joining the Amadeu Antonio Foundation in 2002. She invented several digital projects for a democratic society and against far-right extremism, racism and anti-Semitism. Since 2009 she is editor-in-chief of the online magazine www.belltower.news – Network for the digital civil society. In addition, she leads the digital team of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, develops ideas against far-right extremism and hate speech on the Internet in the form of campaigns, argumentation training and project work and advises organizations, politics, media and civil society on dealing with far-right extremism, racism and anti-Semitism online.

Veronika Kracher studied sociology and literature studies in Frankfurt am Main and Mainz. She has been working as a journalist and public speaker since 2015 and is one of Germany's leading experts on the "incel" subculture. Her book "Incels – history, language and ideology of an online cult" was published in November 2020. Since 2021, she's part of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation's research and monitoring team, analysing online phenomena of the far right. The focus of her work is the intersection of antifeminism and anti-Semitism, online radicalization and far-right gender ideologies.

Theresa Lehmann studied political science and pedagogy. She joined the Amadeu Antonio foundation in 2015. Since then she has worked on the topic of online hate, empowering young people and disseminators to learn counter strategies and acquiring media competence. With the project "debate" she helped developing a digital social work approach (digital streetwork). This year she is head of a new youth educational project called "Demokratiktok". The project's aim is to build up political education influencers dealing with the topics of Hate Speech and disinformation/misinformation on TikTok.

Eva Kappl studies history and political science. She took part in a voluntary youth program by the Amadeu Antonio foundation developing digital counter strategies against far-right extremism, racism and antisemitism in 2015/2016. After gaining further experiences in youth work and social media communication, she joined the foundation again this year as a media educator. Being a TikTok political influencer herself, she is developing new approaches of political education with "Demokratiktok".

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The most worrying finding of this report is that we found antisemitism on every platform we explored. While the amount of different types of antisemitism varies between platforms, it remains possible to locate all forms and extremes of antisemitism on all platforms. Despite a decade of discussion and policy changes there is no platform currently available where antisemitism and hate speech more generally is not *easily* found.

- While all forms of antisemitism can be found on all platforms, the amount of overt and extreme antisemitism on a platform is closely linked to the amount of moderation and the strictness of the platform's terms of use. Unsurprisingly, the laxer the polices and the lighter the moderation, the more extreme antisemitism can be found in greater quantities.

- On the more mainstream and larger platforms where overtly extreme antisemitism is more robustly acted against, conspiratorial antisemitism remains a huge problem. Some of the major social media platforms have been absolutely central to the creation and spread of conspiracy ideology content, much of which is antisemitic.

- The major platforms that have taken a more robust approach to tackling antisemitism in recent years still have a long way to go. We found that some major platforms have become increasingly successful at removing antisemitic *organisations*, but still struggle to remove antisemitic content that emanates from decentralised and non-formalised movements.

- Many antisemites change the tone, style and content of their antisemitism depending on the platform they are using to try and stay within the moderation line. For this reason, platforms that fail to adopt a holistic approach to moderation that takes into account off-platform behaviour, have more antisemites on them.

- We found that the nature of online spaces can and has changed the nature and tone of antisemitism. Much of the antisemitism we found mimics and reflects the style and tone of the online space in which it is being articulated. This has resulted in some of the traditional pseudo-academic antisemitism and Holocaust denial losing ground to more mocking and internet-friendly forms of denial.

INTRODUCTION

JOE MULHALL

IN CHAIM A. Kaplan's diary, documenting his time in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, he wrote 'If you want to know the character of any nation, ask the Jews.' By this he meant that the experiences of the Jewish community can act as a signifier of a country's tolerance and openness or sadly more often, lack thereof. While making no comparison to the unique historical tragedy that was the Holocaust, it is similarly true that one signifier of the health of the internet and social media platforms more specifically is the experience of Jewish people on them.

Antisemitism is often called the oldest hatred due to its history dating back thousands of years. Across the millennia the core prejudice and hatred has remained constant but the form and lexicon of antisemitism has often changed and updated to reach new audiences in each new century and for each new generation. The same is true of the digital age. The internet and social media platforms have not created antisemitism but it has effected its nature and the means by which it is developing and is disseminated.

This report, a collaboration between the Amadeu Antonio Foundation in Germany, Expo Foundation in Sweden and HOPE not hate in the UK, sets out to explore the state of antisemitism online in Europe. Bringing together experts from around Europe it offers an extensive survey of online antisemitism across a variety of online spaces. It sets out to explore two core questions: How is antisemitism being affected by the internet and how do different online spaces effect the nature of the antisemitism found within them?

Over the centuries the Jewish people have been blamed for every historical tragedy and crisis ranging from the death of Jesus, the poisoning of wells, the ritual murder of children through to the Atlantic slave trade and the 9/11 attacks. Perhaps unsurprisingly, during the current global pandemic it is once again Jews that some conspiracy theorists are blaming. The supposedly secret hand of Jewish power has been identified as the cause of COVID-19 by antisemites around the world. This report explains this latest update to the ancient antisemitic conspiracy theory with a focus on the role that various social media platforms played in its development and dissemination.

Conversely, if antisemites blame Jews for tragedies they didn't commit, they also deny tragedies experienced by Jews themselves, foremost being the denial of the Holocaust. While Holocaust denial has existed since the 1940s this report explains how the tone of contemporary denial is changing to reflect the style and culture of the online spaces in which it is being articulated. There was a time when antisemites dedicated their entire lives to disproving the Holocaust through pseudo-academic books and articles, but increasingly today, in the digital age, younger deniers seek to dismiss it, ridicule and mock it or even semi-ironically celebrate it.

At the core of this report is an expansive exploration of antisemitism across nine social media platforms or websites. These include mainstream and extremely large platforms like Facebook and YouTube, as well as alternative platforms like Parler and 4chan's /pol/ board, which are mainly used by those with far-right sympathies. We define social media platforms broadly and include YouTube, Reddit and 4chan / pol/, as these allow not just the dissemination of content but interactions between users, and thus can be considered social. Here we set out to understand how the moderation polices, algorithms and terms of services of different online spaces affected the nature of the antisemitism we found on them.

The most worrying finding of this report is that we found antisemitism on every platform we explored. While the amount of different types of antisemitism varies between platforms, it remains possible to locate all forms and extremes of antisemitism on all platforms. Despite a decade of discussion and policy changes and years of work by expert NGOs there is no platform currently available where antisemitism and hate speech more generally is not *easily* found. While all forms of antisemitism can be found on all platforms, the amount of overt and extreme antisemitism on a platform is closely linked to the amount of moderation and the strictness of the platform's terms of use. Unsurprisingly, the laxer the polices and the lighter the moderation, the more extreme antisemitism can be found in greater quantities. In short, tech companies have the ability to effect the amount and extremeness

of antisemitism on their platform and many of them are completely failing to address the issue.

The findings of this extensive report should act as a reminder of the adaptability and irradicability of antisemitism. It also further proves that major tech platforms have created online spaces where antisemitism has been allowed to flourish with tragic and long-lasting effects, not least terrorism against Jewish communities. However, the findings of this report should also offer some hope. It finds that tech companies can and have taken steps which significantly minimises the amount and severity of the antisemitism on their platforms. Clearly, much more needs to be done and with the increasing growth of online

platforms actively designed to host, defend and disseminate hate speech such as antisemitism, effective legislation is required to tackle this problem effectively.

Antisemitism has lasted thousands of years and changed countless times to survive new and different environments. If the horrifying revelations of the Holocaust did not bring an end to antisemitism then it seems unlikely anything will. However, the way we can minimise the deadly and dangerous effects of this ancient prejudice is by fighting it wherever it is found, both offline and online, and we hope that this report contributes to the understanding of the problem and offers some solutions.

THE REPORT IN NUMBERS

At least
120 groups
and channels on Telegram have shared the Christchurch shooter's manifesto

4chan /pol/ features the
most antisemitic slurs of any platform
showcased in the report.

In March 2020, Google searches in the UK for "New World Order"
reached their highest level for 15 years.

Content posted with the hashtags #rothschildfamily, #synagogueofsatan and #soros was viewed
25.1 million times
on TikTok in half a year.

A Telegram channel that promotes the New World Order conspiracy theory,

grew by 90,000 followers

since its inception in February 2021.
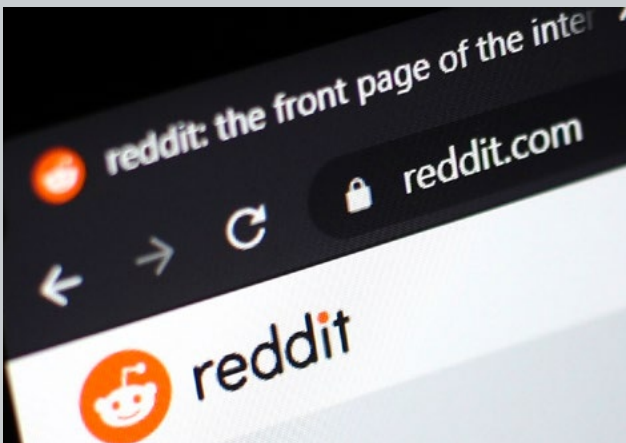
A Reddit forum dedicated to conspiracy theories grew by

500,000 users

between February and November 2020.

On Instagram, there are

millions of results

for hashtags relating to the New World Order and the Illuminati, the majority of which sincerely promote these conspiracy theories.

CONSPIRACY IDEOLOGIES, COVID-19 AND ANTISEMITISM

Piers Corbyn.
13th June 2020

THE LAST TWO YEARS has seen the world gripped by the tragic spread of COVID-19. In the face of such widespread devastation there have been remarkable moments of collaboration and hope but also fear, confusion and of course, death. One side effect of the pandemic it that is has enabled a sprawling, multi-faceted web of conspiracy ideologies to grow exponentially around the globe, opening new pathways towards antisemitism and Holocaust denial.

Early in 2020, the pandemic and ensuing government counter-measures around the world catalysed the spread of numerous conspiratorial notions, which broadly share an anti-lockdown, "anti-elite" and anti-vaccine agenda, disseminated by a combination of newly-formed and longstanding organisations, campaigns, outlets and online spaces. Such networks have spread falsities across social media platforms, leaflets and on city streets that variously link COVID-19 to the rollout of 5G technology, to a Chinese bioweapon attack, or allege it to be a smokescreen for the imposition of totalitarian controls. As scientists raced to develop a life-saving vaccine, claims spread that it was in fact a guise for Bill Gates and other alleged conspirators to microchip or poison those who received the injection. The pandemic has also revived interest in longstanding conspiracy traditions such as the New World Order, and increased the reach of QAnon, a movement which baselessly alleges that President Trump is engaged in a covert war against a global Satanic paedophile elite.[1]

While conspiracy thinking fuels extremism of all kinds, in particular it can function as a slip road towards antisemitism and Holocaust denial, especially as far-right activists are actively attempting to exploit these networks. While conspiracy ideologies have always formed part of the social and political backdrop, the recent fever pitch has posed challenges to social cohesion and a heightened threat to Jewish people and other minoritised communities.

CONTRIBUTING CONDITIONS

The COVID-19 crisis has engendered the ideal conditions for the spread of conspiracy ideologies: an unseen killer, massive economic instability, unprecedented new governmental powers, and, initially, rapidly changing official advice.[2] Social distancing measures in many European countries separated communities, leading to isolation and an increased dependence on social media. Conspiracy theories can provide a framework for understanding bewildering events, as well as providing scapegoats.

It is, however, important to highlight that trust in institutions had already begun to erode in a number of European and Anglophone countries.[3]

This unease has proved fertile ground for opportunistic populists who have relentlessly exploited fears about "traitors" and "globalists" within political, legal and media institutions. An instinctive hostility towards traditional gatekeepers is fundamental to conspiracy thinking, which, like populism, employs a binary worldview that divides societies between corrupt elites and the pure people.[4] Unsurprisingly, polling has indicated that the most conspiratorially-minded individuals are those that distrust the state and political system the most.[5]

This pre-pandemic landscape has enabled far right and conspiratorial networks to flourish and to become entrenched on all major social media platforms. These networks have, in turn, facilitated the spread of COVID-19 conspiracy ideologies at a remarkable speed.

ANTISEMITISM AS A CONSPIRACY TRADITION

Belief in a sinister conspiracy necessitates a belief in sinister conspirators, and while the identity of these alleged conspirators varies according to the theorist and theory, for centuries Jewish people in particular have been blamed for an enormous variety of upheavals and calamities. As Danny Stone of the Antisemitism Policy Trust explains, "Anti-Jewish racism is not static. Over millennia, it has evolved and adapted to societal circumstances", including numerous historical contagions; "It was therefore sadly inevitable that Jews would be blamed in some circles for COVID-19."[6]

Jew-hatred has such deep roots within conspiracy ideologies that antisemitic tropes are rarely far removed from a diverse array of conspiratorial notions, including many surrounding COVID-19. Indeed, such tropes pervade the genre to the extent that, for some, the role of the supposed Jewish conspirators is implicitly understood and does not need to be identified by name. Conspiracy ideologies are malleable, and adherents can choose to minimise certain aspects, such as antisemitism, in order to maximise its appeal to the uninitiated. Many individuals may ignorantly regurgitate antisemitic tropes unaware that they are racist, or turn a blind eye and deny such charges as a smear.

Regardless of the motivation, COVID-19 conspiracists with huge followings have frequently moved into strongly antisemitic territory. The world-famous British theorist David Icke, for example, has drawn from the notorious anti-Jewish forgery, The *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, and Kate Shemirani, among the most prominent UK anti-vaccine figures, has supported the Committee of 300 theory, which has historically been used to spread the idea of Jewish world control.[7] Piers Corbyn, another

British anti-vaccine figurehead, has rubbed shoulders with Holocaust deniers at conspiracist events.[8] Such figures were well-known within the pre-pandemic British conspiracy scene, but have used COVID-19 as a springboard to achieve a new prominence, thus also extending the reach of the antisemitism that they trade in.

TRIVIALISATION OF THE HOLOCAUST

Ironically, the open or latent antisemitism of many conspiracy ideologists often exists alongside their self-identification as anti-racists and anti-fascists. This is brought into focus by the use of Holocaust imagery by COVID-deniers to liken their own perceived plight to that of Jews in Nazi-occupied territories; for example, both Shemirani and Piers Corbyn have likened the NHS vaccination efforts to Auschwitz-Birkenau.[9] [10] Especially offensive is the adoption of yellow Star of David badges by anti-vaccine activists in France, Germany, the UK, the US and elsewhere, which, as the Anti-Defamation League has argued, "minimizes and trivializes the experience of survivors and victims of the Holocaust".[11] As pointed out by Dan Stone, Director of the Holocaust Research Institute at Royal Holloway University, despite the commonplace antisemitism within conspiracy milieus, "the simplistic notion of Jews as a kind of 'ultimate victim' leads to the easy appropriation of Jewish suffering as a powerful metaphor by anyone who wants to advertise their victim status".[12]

In Germany, these motifs are particularly popular in the very country of the perpetrators of National Socialism, whose pandemic-denying descendants frame themselves as the "Jews of today" in an attempt to distance themselves from the events of the Holocaust. As early as March 2020, the Halle-based neo-Nazi activist and online agitator Sven Liebich was selling yellow Stars of David reading "unvaccinated" via his online store, "Politaufkleber", to wear at COVID-denial demonstrations. The motif has also been spread on social media, including on profile pictures.[13] In Germany, it is a crime to deny the Holocaust and, in severe cases, trivialising the Holocaust can also be prosecuted. In July 2021, Bavaria was the first state in Germany which made 'unvaccinated' stars punishable as Holocaust trivialization.[14]

Another example of inaccurate historical co-option is the equation of COVID-deniers with resistance fighters under National Socialism. One example of questionable prominence is a young demonstrator in November 2020 in Hanover, who introduced herself on stage:

> Yes, hello, I'm Jana from Kassel, and I feel like Sophie Scholl. I've been active in the resistance here for months, going to demonstrations, writing leaflets. I'm 22 years old, just like Sophie Scholl before she fell victim to the Nazis.

The Scholl siblings and other members of the White Rose resistance group distributed leaflets against the Nazi regime, were arrested in 1943, sentenced to death by the Nazi People's Court and murdered by guillotine. 'Jana from Kassel', as she has become known, has become an Internet meme.[15] In the UK, the 'White Rose' moniker has also been adopted by a large anti-lockdown, anti-vaccine propaganda campaign, somewhat ironic as the group appears to have adopted its modus operandi from a virulently antisemitic Nazi propaganda engine known as the Hundred Handers.[16]

THE ROLE OF THE INTERNET

The internet and especially social media play an immense and radicalising role as a popular distribution media of antisemitism in the pandemic. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, conspiracy ideologists of various beliefs had their place of exchange in the online world. Forums, websites, social media channels and video platforms not only allowed them to network within their own scene, but also to disseminate propaganda materials and antisemitic narratives. Never before were the *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* so easily accessible as on the internet – a 20th century forgery that was supposed to prove a Jewish World Conspiracy, already notorious before the Nazi regime and still shared widely by antisemites today.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the whole world was shaken by the sense of uncertainty and lack of planning. Nobody had experienced a global, life-threatening pandemic before. Neither politics nor science had an ad hoc answer to this crisis. From the outset people around the world sought additional information online, and quite a few left the world of journalistic and scientific facts and turned to conspiracy-spreading 'alternative media', social media channels or listened to 'alternative doctors' on YouTube, who had a much clearer and simplistic message to proclaim. They offered supposed causes, supposed culprits and supposed solutions. The supposed solutions often turned out to be dangerous misinformation and the 'culprits', in barely veiled language and in modernised but ultimately age-old prejudices, often ended up being the Jews.

Nevertheless, for many people, the belief in conspiracy narratives was a way to overcome the feeling of helplessness. For some, it was a chance to rise above the mass of "sleeping sheep" as the supposed "persons with special knowledge", to feel like chosen ones in a moment of social isolation and stagnation.[17] Telegram in particular

rapidly developed into a hub for social media content of this kind – a messenger network with limited moderation, without social taboos and without counter-speech. Content posted on YouTube, Facebook, blogs and websites was shared and discussed in groups and channels. At the same time, other groups and channels emerged that organised protest movements against protection measures, or hatestorms against political opponents, media or democratic politicians.

Social networks like Facebook, Twitter or YouTube or search engines like Google succeeded relatively quickly in at least labelling potentially life-threatening medical misinformation and offering reliable sources on COVID-19 instead, but their dealing with the potentially democracy-destabilising hate disinformation during the pandemic was not so effective. Many antisemitic narratives, hashtags, memes, videos, and groups that emerged during the pandemic remain on some platforms. Here they are not only easily accessible to broad segments of the population, but are often also algorithmically amplified and so are aggressively made available to others through the logic of social networks.

Social networks have therefore taken on the function of conveying antisemitic stereotypes to younger user groups. Social media users can come across huge quantities of posts on all platforms implying, or directly stating, that Jews use the virus as a weapon as part of plans for world domination. They might read that Jews use or invented the virus to enrich themselves because they could sell an antidote or carry out forced vaccinations with harmful substances or to inject microchips for mind control and to establish a fascist 'New World Order' or 'One World Government' through anti-COVID-19 measures. The role of YouTube's 'Recommended' feed in the radicalisation of far-right extremists has already been highlighted by other researchers,[18] and the same mechanisms

apply to COVID-19 disinformation with antisemitic connotations. Those who followed a YouTube channel of the pandemic denier movement 'Querdenken' in Germany, for example, were delivered content from the wider anti-democratic movement directly into their recommended feeds including: thought leaders of the movement; political parties that also deny COVID-19; demo reports on 'alternative media' disinformation channels; musicians who contributed songs to pandemic denial; the extreme far right; Holocaust deniers and neo-Nazis who use the scene to spread their ideology. Antisemitic theories about the New World Order or the Great Reset bring together and unite a variety of pandemic denying groups. They often first met online and got to know each other before they descended on inner cities together, some of them attacking journalists, police officers – or Jews.[19]

SPREAD OF ANTISEMITIC CONSPIRACY IDEOLOGIES DURING THE PANDEMIC IN EUROPE

In France, there were street protests with around 100,000 participants in July 2021 against the "pass sanitaire", using slogans such as "dictatorship"or "orchestrated pandemic so that laboratories can make money". Comparisons with the resistance against National Socialism are popular in the French conspiracy ideology milieu: for example, an attendee of the demonstration in Paris told a France 24 reporter: "We're members of the Resistance; you've only just got to look at what happened under Vichy – one minute different people have different rights, the next…"[20] COVID-19 disinformation also finds a large online audience in France, with the spurious documentary "Hold Up" receiving 2.5 million views in just 3 days on YouTube.[21] The "documentary" claims that COVID-19 was invented by political elites as part of a conspiracy to bring about a "New World Order", a classical antisemitic narrative.[22] According to a France 24-report, QAnon-affiliated disinformation sites such as DéQodeurs and FranceSoir are also very popular.[23] Particularly popular conspiracy narratives with antisemitic content in online anti-mask groups were that 5G waves are responsible for the Pandemic or that a microchip would be inserted via the vaccine programme.[24]

Vaccine scepticism is widespread in **Poland**, where polling conducted in March 2021 found that just 56% considered it likely or very likely that they would accept the vaccine, significantly below the EU average.[25] Some claim to feel insecure about vaccination due to the government's non-transparent COVID-19 policies, while associations such as STOP NOP (Stop Adverse Vaccination Reactions) question the very existence of the pandemic. The founder of the television station "Independent Television (NTV)" from Wroclaw,

which has 300,000 subscribers and a larger following online, spreads conspiracy narratives such as: "The pandemic is an instrument with which the powerful elites of this world seek to control our brains", suggesting that vaccination would involve implanting microchips under the skin.[26] Zagorski also dreams of a "tribunal of the people" that will denounce today's decision-makers, saying "we are now making a tribunal like the one in Nuremberg!" – so here again is a Nazi analogy equating democratic governments with Nazi criminals. The German lawyer and announced "Chancellor candidate" for the pandemic-denying Die Basis party, Rainer Fuellmich is seen by some as a star of the "resistance movement" in Poland, along with the German pandemic-denying medical doctor Bodo Schiffmann.[27]

A Royal Society Open Science poll released in October 2020[28] showed that 18% of the population in **Ireland** and **Spain** believe the pandemic is part of a conspiracy to enforce global vaccination, compared to 13% in the **UK**. The 5G conspiracy, which blames the COVID-19 pandemic on radiation from 5G masts, was adhered to by 16% of the population in **Spain**, compared to 12% in **Ireland** and 8% in the **UK** [29]- this narrative does not always have antisemitic components, but can often act as a gateway to more explicit antisemitism when placed into a broader superconspiracy narrative.

A survey from **Austria** on the veracity of COVID-19 conspiracy theories in the summer of 2020 showed that 51% of the population believed there was at least some truth in the statement: "Secret societies and elites are taking advantage of the crisis and want to establish an authoritarian world order", and 38.1% said the same for "Bill Gates wants to implant microchips in people with vaccinations and thus control them."[30]

In **Switzerland**, the cardiologist and conspiracy theorist Thomas Binder has insisted that "world coup terrorists" seek to control governments and force vaccination on people.[31] Prior to the pandemic and his eventual suspension from Twitter in March 2021, Binder had made a number of strongly antisemitic statements, such as suggesting that the USA and Saudia Arabia were controlled by "Zionist terrorists".[32]

In the **Netherlands**, 5G conspiracy narratives in particular initially spread and led to attacks on mobile phone masts and antenna cables – violence that is now considered as terrorist attacks.[33] There has also been violence at street protests, an escalation that was attributed by Dr Friso Wielenga to disinformation and the prevalence of anti-elite rhetoric from the country's right-wing populist movements.[34]

In **Italy**, the arch-Catholic radio station "Radio Maria", among others, spreads conspiracy myths to an audience of millions. The station's director,

Father Livio Fanzaga, has described the pandemic on air as "a criminal project driven by the world's elites...to create a world without God" to its 1.5 million daily listeners.[35]

In the **Balkans**, surveys show that around three quarters of the population believe in conspiracy narratives related to the COVID-19 pandemic. One reason for this, they say, is low trust in the government, mistrust of the vaccine – and the widespread dissemination of conspiracy myths, ranging from a virus bred to wipe out humanity to the creation of the world through implanted microchips. In countries such as **Serbia**, some doctors have spoken out publicly against vaccination and the number of people fully vaccinated in **Serbia, Romania** and **Bulgaria** is less than 50%.[36]

In **Albania**, COVID-19 and anti-vaccine conspiracy ideologies are spread by prominent actors such as Alfred Cako, former publisher and MP candidate, through the country's major TV station ABC News. Cako promulgates lies that COVID-19 is an invention to reduce the world's population, masterminded by Bill Gates, or that the company that produces the vaccine Moderna would be owned by US financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. This video has been viewed 800,000 times on YouTube in the last 6 months, including over 1,500 comments containing conspiracy ideology. Besides this prominent video, however, Cako has appeared dozens of times on the main broadcaster since the start of the pandemic, and also hosts a weekly talk show on the TV channel 'Top Channel'. Analysis by the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) showed that Albanian media outlets posted over 700 videos containing Cako's anti-vaccine views to Facebook by Albanian media outlets between March 2020 and August 2021, gaining a combined 2.9 million views. Cako claims that the COVID-19 vaccines are a project of the Illuminati (an often used cipher for Jews) and contain microchips for mind control. The reason for his airtime is commercial interest, which the Albanian TV stations prefer to social responsibility. The broadcasters insist that they only want to show all sides of the debate, including "alternative voices". Albania has among the lowest vaccination rates in the Balkans.[37]

In **Romania**, protests against COVID-19 restrictions and vaccines have also seen Nazi comparisons, with some protestors appropriating the yellow Star of David badges and warning of a "vaccine genocide". Surveys show that older Romanians are particularly prone to conspiracy theories, a phenomenon that sociologist Cătălin Stoica sees as a legacy of the communist dictatorship: back then, more than 30 years ago, all media were censored and "rumours and conspiracy theories became important sources of information."[38] A

central player in the social networks is the young right-wing populist party AUR, whose conspiracy ideological videos often go viral.[39]

In **Greece**, denying the pandemic and spreading conspiracy narratives has been a punishable offence since August 2020. A cyber crime unit of the Greek police also monitors the internet for this purpose. Among the cases prosecuted is a parents' initiative protesting against the compulsory masks for school children.[40] Citizen Protection Minister Michalis Chrysochoidis argues: "We will take all legal measures to ensure that public health is not threatened by misinformation or conspiracy theories circulating on the internet." The state, he adds, will not allow the creation of "breeding grounds for public health through socially irresponsible behaviour." Demonstrations therefore take place on specific issues, such as protests against the closure of bars and nightclubs – and protesters wear face masks.[41]

In **Hungary**, antisemitic conspiracy ideologies are a matter of state policy. For Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, the embodiment of the antisemitic bogeyman of global Jewish power is the Hungarian-born US philanthropist and billionaire George Soros. The government puts antisemitic agitation against Soros on billboards or broadcasts it on television, and government figures spread the word that Soros is orchestrating mass Muslim immigration into the EU in order to destabilise it. This allegation appears to have taken root; a survey in 2018 showed that more than half of the Hungarian population agreed with the statement: "George Soros wants to bring refugees to Europe."[42] During the pandemic, Orbán explained on the radio that George Soros was behind the international criticism of Hungary's authoritarian pandemic measures, describing him as the "grand master" of "Brussels bureaucrats."[43]

Sweden, like other countries, saw heightened levels of conspiracy theory and antisemitic content on social media during the pandemic. This pandemic-related antisemitic rhetoric became a standing element in the activism of the Swedish "anti-lockdown" or "Freedom" network, which strongly objected to public health policies and proposals aimed at curtailing the spread of COVID-19. The Freedom network, which emerged and coalesced on social media and continues primarily to operate there, but which began organising public protests in the autumn of 2020 (mobilising some 600 participants at their biggest rally to date), has a rhetoric dominated by conspiracy theories which in turn exhibit some antisemitic features. In addition to alleging a nebulous "globalist", "elite" conspiracy said to be orchestrating a "genocide" and "crimes against humanity" by means of vaccines and other public health policies, the organisers have

put out official statements likening their network and its sympathisers to the victims of the Holocaust, using "Yellow Star" imagery to equate so-called "vaccine passports" to anti-Jewish persecution in the Third Reich. Yellow Stars have also been publicly worn by anti-lockdown activists in the street.[44] In the network generally, comparisons between the current historical moment and the German Nazi regime and World War II are common, as is rhetoric calling for "new Nuremberg Trials" to punish the alleged architects of the conspiracy. One of the network's key organisers has railed against "the Rothschilds", a typical antisemitic fixation, on her YouTube channel.[45] The network has attracted the attention and support of a variety of right-wing extremists, including Nazi activists, who have interacted with the network's activists on social media and attended its street protests.[46] The network's leaders, when faced with extremist participation and blatantly anti-Jewish rhetoric, have failed to denounce it.[47]

FAR-RIGHT RECRUITMENT FROM THE CONSPIRACY SCENE

The risk of radicalisation into Jew-hatred and Holocaust denial is particularly acute as conscious antisemites are actively making inroads into conspiratorial networks. For example, over the past year we have witnessed individuals encountering Holocaust denial, often via (ostensibly) unrelated conspiracy ideology Facebook groups, and appearing to accept it with little pushback.[48] It is often unclear whether those promoting this denial are recent converts or dedicated far-right activists, but the swell of support for conspiracy ideologies has clearly opened potential avenues for far-right recruitment, and many far-right actors have adopted a more explicitly conspiratorial rhetoric in order to exploit this.

For example, in the UK, Nick Griffin, former leader of the British National Party (BNP), claimed the virus was a hoax concocted by an "Anglo-Zionist financial elite" in order to crash the economy and install authoritarian measures. Patriotic Alternative, the largest fascist group in the UK, has also sought to steer anti-vaccine fears and anti-lockdown sentiment towards antisemitism. Others on the far-right have pointed blame towards the Chinese, or Muslim and immigrant communities.[49] For example, former English Defence League leader Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson) has made anti-lockdown, anti-vaccine and anti-chinese politics a central plank of his rhetoric.

In the German-speaking world, the parts of the far-right scene who present themselves as intellectual (e.g. the 'Identitarian Movement') have for years spread the conspiracy narrative of a 'Great Replacement' ('Der große Austausch'). According to this narrative, "secretive, scheming elites" – a dog whistle for Jewish people – are pulling the strings to exchange "resistant people" with citizens who are easier to govern. Some believe this happens through planned migration and/or birth control, in some versions driven by feminism – but many imagine "the Jews" behind it. The Great Replacement ideology played a central role in the manifestos of the 2019 Christchurch and Halle shooters. This narrative has been successfully transposed to the broad spectrum of COVID-deniers, where ostensible population exchange is seen as yet more proof of the sinister machinations of the Deep State. The radical-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), for example, has adopted this position to appeal to pandemic deniers.

This risk of radicalisation has heightened after sweeping bans on mainstream platforms have encouraged many conspiratorial networks to migrate to alternatives, such as the video hosting site Bitchute, the Twitter clone Gab and the messaging app Telegram. While these bans will inhibit the spread of toxic ideas to new audiences, such platforms have entrenched far-right extremist subcultures. Trapped in bubbles practically free from moderation and in close proximity to extremists, the risk of conspiracy movements cross-pollinating with explicitly racist politics has increased. A clear example of far-right infiltration occurred in January in the UK, when – inspired by Italian anti-lockdown activists – a 'Great Reopening' campaign emerged in the UK, encouraging businesses to open their businesses in breach of lockdown regulations. The campaign was organised via dozens of coordinated Telegram channels and groups, boasting many thousands of members. However, it was also supported by the fascist Patriotic Alternative (PA), which observed "a perfect opportunity for PA supporters and activists throughout the country to demonstrate

some leadership and help coordinate the local groups in their own area." PA activists and other fascists duly spammed Telegram groups associated with the venture with antisemitic content. The Great Reopening campaign in the UK was, predictably, a flop, but was noteworthy for the speed of its growth and the ease with which far-right activists penetrated its networks.

CONCLUSION

For now, the temperature remains high but even as lockdown measures ease across Europe, many conspiracy theorists and networks that have thrived during the pandemic are unlikely to simply relinquish causes to which they have given considerable emotional, and sometimes material, investment. The economic and social fallout of the pandemic remains are still not completely clear but anxieties induced by economic hardship can be exploited by extremist actors.

This is concerning. During the pandemic it became clear that old antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories are still alive in Europe. Even when social taboos might cause some to hold back, the dog whistles of conspiracy ideologies can be readily used to convey them anyway.

This can have severe consequences for Jews in Europe. For example, in Germany in 2020, the Federal Association of Departments for Research and Information on Antisemitism (RIAS) documented a total of 1,909 antisemitic incidents, including 1 case of extreme violence, 39 assaults, 167 cases of damage or desecration of property, 96 threats, 1,449 cases of abusive behavior (including 340 assemblies), and 157 antisemitic mass mailings.[50] By comparison, in 2019, it had been 881 antisemitic incidents,[51] representing a significant and worrying increase.

While it is difficult to know exactly what circumstances cause conspiracy theorists to act on their beliefs, in extreme cases it has become clear that such false notions can motivate disruption and violence. The EU's counter-terrorism chief has expressed concern about the potential of "new forms" of conspiracy theory-driven terrorism in the wake of the pandemic.[52] COVID-19 has enabled a rebranding and a resurgence of an ancient prejudice, with a very real offline impact.

SUPERCONSPIRACIES:
QANON AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

A QAnon flag alongside Reichsburger flags, Berlin, 29 August 2020. Photo:: Amadeu Antonio Stiftung

AN IMPORTANT bridge between COVID-19 conspiracy theories and antisemitism are ideologies that provide overarching explanations for smaller alleged deceptions. For example, the need for anti-5G campaigners to explain why telecom companies, healthcare providers and authorities are conspiring to expose the population to supposedly dangerous radiation has driven attention towards "superconspiracies", which, as described by Michael Barkun, link multiple conspiracies together hierarchically, with "a distant but all-powerful force manipulating lesser conspiratorial actors" at the top of the pyramid.[53] In particular, the longstanding New World Order (NWO) tradition and the relatively recent QAnon movement have received considerable boosts from the pandemic, introducing new audiences to the antisemitic themes imbedded within them.

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

The NWO tradition has numerous permutations, but broadly alleges that a secret global elite is controlling world events and intends to enslave humanity, often aiming to institute an authoritarian world government, currency and religion and, in some cases, radically reduce the global population to a more governable size. Variants steeped in Protestant fundamentalism draw on the Book of Revelations, alleging that as we approach the 'end times' the Antichrist or 'the Beast' will return to rule the Earth. Such theories often focus on microchips and vaccinations as the 'mark of the beast', an identifier for those that have submitted to the Antichrist.[54]

Antisemitic tropes are integral to the theory, with early exponents often asserting that Jews were part of the Antichrist's plan to rule the world. One particular influence is the aforementioned *Protocols,* which outlines a fiendish plan by Jewish leaders to instigate insurrections and wars, guide economies through control of the banks, and brainwash populations through the infiltration of the media and political parties. Whilst many theorists now seek distance from the discredited document, *The Protocols* has had an enduring influence on many conspiracy traditions, including the NWO.[55] The centrality of monetary institutions in the NWO also chimes with long-established antisemitic tropes about Jewish greed and financial control.

The anti-globalism, technophobia, and religious inflections of the NWO theory have resonated during the pandemic, with lockdown and tracing apps viewed as early steps towards total control, and the contagion chiming with literalist Biblical readings concerning plagues as divine judgment. The notion that the pandemic is a guise for population reduction also fits neatly into the NWO paradigm. NWO Facebook groups grew rapidly in the early days of the pandemic, enabling people to share information on how the complex web of supposed "revelations" fit together.[56] According to Google Trends, in March 2020, UK searches for "New World Order" reached their highest level for 15 years.

"Stand Up For The Children" march on Oxford Street, London, 5 September 2020. Copyright: HOPE not hate

Meanwhile, HOPE not hate's April 2020 polling showed that a remarkable 21% of people claimed to agree with the statement "Coronavirus has been intentionally released as part of a "depopulation" plan (Agenda 21) orchestrated by the UN or New World Order".[57] By September 2020, that figure sat at a considerable 17%.[58]

A linked theory that has achieved a high degree of popularity amongst COVID-deniers worldwide is 'the Great Reset', a new variation of an old motif. This conspiracy narrative originated with the 50th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), a meeting of high-profile business and political leaders, held in June 2020 in Davos. The participants attempted to devise a plan for rebuilding society and the economy in a sustainable way following the COVID-19 pandemic, which they dubbed "the Great Reset". In the conspiracy world, many regarded this as yet another move by shady, hostile "elites" – a dog whistle for Jews – to subjugate the planet by taking control of the world economy, and manipulating medical data with the aim of population control. The notion has achieved a wide spread; research from the BBC released in June 2021 found that the term "Great Reset" had received "more than eight million interactions on Facebook and been shared almost two million times on Twitter" since the launch of the initiative.[59] Demonstrators have carried signs railing against the Great Reset at protests across Europe.[60]

QANON

Great Reset narratives have also fed into QAnon, a relatively recent phenomenon originating on the 4chan message board in October 2017.[61] QAnon blends pre-existing conspiratorial narratives (many of them adopted from the NWO tradition) with a hyper-partisan pro-Trump message, casting the now former-President as a messianic figure set to overthrow an alleged elite Satanic paedophile cabal.

A strong sinew of antisemitism runs through QAnon, with George Soros and the Rothschild family identified as key 'puppet masters' of the conspiracy; Soros and the Rothschilds have both long been common targets for conspiratorial antisemitism, with the latter having been smeared as sinister global financiers for 200 years. A popular subsidiary theme alleges that 'adrenochrome' is at the heart of the conspiracy, a mythical drug allegedly harvested by the cabal from the blood of children, echoing the ancient antisemitic blood libel myth. HOPE not hate's monitoring of English-speaking QAnon-aligned Facebook groups found that they were often riddled with overt theories of Jewish control, including references to *The Protocols*.[62, 63]

Across Europe, QAnon was an extremely niche phenomenon prior to the pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures, which sparked a boom of QAnon content on social media, flooding into many anti-vaccine and COVID-denial online spaces. A July 2020 report by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue (ISD) found that global membership of QAnon Facebook groups increased by 120% in March 2020, and that between 23-25 March, posts on Twitter containing keywords relating both to COVID-19 and to QAnon increased by 422%.[64]

The blending of QAnon with COVID-denial helped the theory expand beyond its US-focus, and the sense of community, the participative character and the integration of local players into existing conspiracy narratives have made QAnon attractive to non-American anti-democratic movements all over Europe. The spread of QAnon narratives has been particularly significant in anti-EU, Islamophobic, populist-right and far-right groups in Europe, enriching the antisemitic and anti-establishment narratives of the ideology with their own anti-government and anti-lockdown narratives.

The largest QAnon community among non-English speaking nations currently exists in **Germany**. By analysing groups on the messaging app Telegram, experts estimate at least 150,000 German followers.[65] The majority of the far-right and conspiracist Reichsbürger movement has put its own conspiracy narratives under the Q banner, claiming that the Federal Republic of Germany is an illegal state and not sovereign, which is why the "German Reich" from pre-Nazi times allegedly still exists. Reichsbürger combines Q flags with 'Reich' flags in black, white and red at large demonstrations in Germany. The adrenochrome narrative has become particularly popular in Germany, especially after the famous German pop singer Xavier Naidoo wept in a YouTube video for the children supposedly kept in cellars for sinister elites to drink their blood.[66] The associated hashtags #savethechildren, #saveourchildren or, in German, #Händewegvonunserenkinder (keep your hands off our children) remain popular within the pandemic denier scene today. The narrative has radicalised many groups such as "Eltern stehen auf" (Parents Stand Up), but these parents are often unaware of the narrative's inherent antisemitism.

In the **UK**, the incorporation of domestic issues, such as current and historic child abuse investigations in media and political institutions, gave the theory credibility and relevance to Brits, and by September, HOPE not hate's UK-wide polling found that 5.7% claimed to support the theory, a significant, albeit still marginal, figure.[67] Following the passing of the Trump presidency

and the initial shock of the pandemic, further polling in February 2021 found support for QAnon had slumped to 3.2%, although broader conspiratorial tropes that tally with the QAnon worldview remain much more widely supported.[68] Notably, QAnon seeped into the UK's small but active right-wing populist street movements, which broadly share its celebration of Trump, its conspiratorial anti-elitism and similarly invoke threats towards children, both real and imagined. Significantly, in early 2021 prominent anti-Muslim activist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (AKA Tommy Robinson) began to appropriate QAnon terminology as it began to take hold among sections of his supporters.

In **France**, sections of the populist Yellow Vest movement, which is critical of the government, have chimed with the rhetoric and narratives of QAnon, such as the notion of the 'Deep State' which supposedly holds the true reins of political power. "Yellow Vests against Pedocriminality" groups have been founded, as well as groups that want to combat the 'New World Order'.

In **Italy**, QAnon has taken a particular hold among anti-vaxxers, with Telegram growing to 20,000 members; acolytes attack Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and praise the far-right politician Matteo Salvini (League Party). Nationalism is also a topic under the guise of "liberating Italy from the EU".

In the **Netherlands**, Islamophobic accounts that sympathise with Geert Wilders use elements of the QAnon narrative and compel their followers to act: "Doing nothing is no longer an option."[69] In addition, one of the most important European QAnon influencers, Janet Ossebaard, is Dutch; her film "Fall of the Cabal", which went viral in March 2020, significantly blended QAnon motifs and European conspiracy stories for the first time.

In **Hungary**, the QAnon movement has strong connection to antisemitism, resonating with followers of conspiracy notions revolving around adrenochrome, the Illuminati, Satanism, the 'Deep State' and a hatred of George Soros.[70] In August 2020, the Canadian researcher Marc-André Argentino investigated European Q-groups in social networks. Only in **Estonia**, **Montenegro** and **Albania** did he find none.[71]

As outlined elsewhere in this report, QAnon has become particularly widespread on Telegram, considered by extremism researchers Jordan Wildon and Marc-Andre Argentino to be easily "the largest active extremist community" on the platform in research released in July 2021.[72] Some QAnon influencers and supporters have become more overtly antisemitic since arriving on Telegram, in part due to the influence of pre-existing far-right extremist subcultures.

QAnon sign at the "Unite for Freedom" anti-lockdown rally in Trafalgar Square, London, 29 August 2020. Copyright: HOPE not hate

One especially notable example is GhostEzra, an overtly antisemitic QAnon influencer who, with 330,000 subscribers on the platform, runs what has been dubbed the "largest antisemitic internet forum" in the world.[73] GhostEzra blends COVID-19 conspiracy theories into his anti-Jewish outpourings, for example promoting the notion that "Zionists" are poisoning populations through vaccines.

President Biden's January 2021 inauguration was a key moment for QAnon internationally, leaving many supporters grappling with the failure of Trump to topple the supposed cabal. Whilst many followers are resolutely keeping the faith, some opportunistic far-right activists in the US and Europe have launched coordinated efforts to convert disillusioned QAnon followers to an even more anti-democratic and antisemitic worldview. For example, in the UK, hard-line antisemites infiltrated British QAnon groups online to spread three key messages: QAnon is a hoax, Jews are to blame for everything, and there is "no political solution" to society's ills. "QAnon is a mossad psyop [psychological operation] to lead people astray", wrote one Nazi. "Its always the Js [Jews]." Similar tactics have been used by extremists in other European countries and the United States.

Moments of communal crisis have traditionally proven to be boon periods of antisemites, and there is a deep cultural wellspring of Jewish betrayal narratives for the modern European far right to draw upon. QAnon adherents who feel betrayed by the failure of Q's 'plan' will not necessarily renounce the latent antisemitism that underpins it, and some will seek new explicatory narratives and scapegoats through which this disappointment can be framed.

CASE STUDY: PATH OF RADICALISATION INTO ANTISEMITISM

One interesting case study in Germany is a prominent and successful vegan chef, Attila Hildmann, who, during the pandemic, transformed into a tireless Telegram-influencer, an obsessive hater of democracy and a fervent antisemite and Nazi. He radicalised quite typically for someone who was ostensibly unpolitical pre-pandemic, moving from a social media influencer who "is just asking some questions" to spewing hate and inciting violence on a daily basis within the space of a year.

In March 2020, Hildmann began taking an interest in protests against measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19. In May 2020, he personally registered car parades, demonstrations and rallies in Berlin. In June 2020, Hildmann set up his own Telegram channel, which quickly gained 50,000 followers. By November 2020, that number was up to 119,000. After fluctuations, the channel reached its highest following in February 2021 with over 120,000 subscribers.

According to Hildmann, "media" like Russian internet TV station *RT Deutsch*, a known purveyor of disinformation, "woke him up".[74] Hildmann quickly began networking with other prominent pandemic deniers and conspiracy fans, the internet started to refer to Hildmann as "Avocadolf" or "Hirsehitler" (Millet Hitler), before even Hildmann himself realised that he indeed had the same initials as a certain Adolf Hitler.

Hildmann started posting Wikipedia articles about conspiracy ideologies and antisemitic narratives several times a day, still seeking his world view. From criticism against COVID-19 prevention measures, to calls for demonstrations, to posing with weapons, Hildmann quickly moved on to conspiracy ideologies. Hildmann began with the far-right Reichsbürger ideology of a non-sovereign Germany without a legitimate constitution, adding the Kaiserreich flag colours black-white-red to his Telegram channel name. He then became increasingly interested in conspiracy ideologies with antisemitic components. Beginning in the summer of 2020, antisemitic dog whistles grew in importance on his channel. Hildmann developed in real-time a hatred of everything Jewish, and expressed it through references and insinuations, such as misinformation and lies that talk about the Rothschilds or George Soros instead of "the Jews", but nonetheless contain antisemitic motifs such as "string pullers", "secretly acting elites" or "child murders" that are behind the "Great Replacement" or the "Great Reset". Hildmann increasingly wrote about Illuminati and Freemasons, Cultural Marxists and Satanists – further stand-ins for Jews, illustrated with memes and caricatures reminiscent of the National Socialist propaganda rag *Der Stürmer*.

But even more, he regularly started posting death threats against politicians and activists he received as Jews or acting for Jews. He asked his followers to attack these people online, but also offline and his fans sprang into action. In October 2020, after Hildmann described the Pergamon Altar on Berlin's Museum Island as a "throne of Satan" that had to be destroyed, there were acid attacks on the altar and 70 other works of art in the Pergamon Museum.[75] Hildmann himself continued to radicalise further, posting calls for murder and violence, slander and insults against perceived enemies or using banned symbols or Holocaust denial.

In January 2021 Hildmann left for Turkey, hiding there from German state prosecution who now tried to get hold of him.[76] In Turkey, even more socially isolated than before, Hildmann stopped using ciphers for his hatred of Jews and became open about his veneration for Adolf Hitler's murderous antisemitism. He announced to his fans that he is now a "proud real Nazi" and called for resistance against the "Jewish Republic Germany", regularly quoting Hitler and Goebbels. Holocaust trivialisation and denial are also a firm part of his repertoire. Almost every post is directed against "Jews", the "Jewish FRG" (Federal Republic of Germany) or even "Jewish faggots", combining antisemitism with an equally deep-seated homophobia. This shift made him lose some fans, but others continue, some even posting photos of swastikas made out of jars of Hildmann's vegan bolognese, or extremely explicit antisemitic memes and graphics in the style of the far-right terrorist group AtomWaffen Division. Still Hildmann has faced no legal consequences, but he is deplatformed now on all big social media outlets except Telegram, where he still reaches around 80.000 people in August 2021 – many of them are in Germany and ready to act. In September 2021 Hildmann lost a lot of his Telegram channels due to an overtake by hacker collective "Anonymous" – a close trusted person had handed over passwords for the accounts because he felt Hildmann became to dangerous. On the next day, Attila Hildmann reopened new channels. He reaches approximately 24.000 people.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF HOLOCAUST DENIAL IN THE DIGITAL AGE

JOE MULHALL AND HOPE NOT HATE COLLEAGUES

Auschwitz
concentration camp
Photo: Xiquinho

FOR AS LONG as there have been reports of Nazi crimes there have been people determined to deny and undermine them. The Nazis themselves were the first deniers, seeking to destroy the evidence of their crimes and deny them to the world.

For most people the notion that the Holocaust was an enormous hoax is nonsensical. How is it possible to see the newsreels from barbed wire-encircled camps with emaciated and withered bodies in piles or mass graves and not be filled with horror and sympathy? With such definitive evidence how can one still not believe? How do some people remain unmoved by the horrifying revelations of the Holocaust? How after news of Belsen, Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec, Buchenwald and Chełmno do so many still not believe?

It is likely that many who deny the Holocaust publicly think differently in private. They do so as biased revisionism and denial was or is politically expedient and vital to their attempts to rehabilitate the doctrine with which they identify, namely fascism. Nazi atrocities have of course become inextricably linked to the doctrine of fascism, and any attempt to relaunch the ideology requires either the separation of one from the other or denial that the atrocities had happened at all.

Holocaust deniers have traditionally relied on a number of arguments to try and disprove the Holocaust. These include: Hitler and the Nazis were not responsible for the outbreak of the Second World War; there was no Nazi plan for genocide; that all evidence of extermination camps is faked; that gas chambers were erected *after* the war; that *Zyklon B*, the gas used to murder Jews, was merely a delousing agent; that Jews and others who died in concentration camps died from diseases like typhus; that the Holocaust was invented to force Germany to pay for the establishment of the state of Israel; that the Holocaust is a Jewish conspiracy.[77]

These arguments have all been around since the end of the Holocaust itself but, in the digital age, there has been a shift in the nature of Holocaust denial and the ease with which it can be accessed that has given some deniers a sense of optimism. As an article on the neo-Nazi website The Daily Stormer from October 2020 put it:

> There is no way to allow people to openly discuss the Holocaust and also have them come to the conclusion that it actually happened. You could do that before the internet, when the only way for people to spread information was through newsletters mailed to their mailboxes that they had to sign up for. In the modern age, anyone who tries to talk about the Holocaust is going to get spammed with facts that ultimately prove that [it did not happen].[78]

This recognition by the far right that the internet has created opportunities for them to spread their Holocaust denial is deeply worrying. However, before exploring how far-right denial has been changed by the online spaces in which it is now spread, it is necessary to explore denial propagated by individuals and groups beyond the far right.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HOLOCAUST DENIAL

Today the Holocaust is not only denied by the far right but also by people from across the political spectrum and by people of all races and religions. In addition to the far right, the most likely places to find contemporary Holocaust denial is from the far left of the political spectrum and from within Muslim communities around the world.

DENIAL BY THE LEFT WING AND WITHIN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

Left wing motivations for denial and diminishment are often different to the extreme right, driven not by a will to resurrect fascism but often the result of a fundamentally left-wing reading of history, rooted in class, materialist logic and an opposition to imperialism. Outright denial of the Holocaust remains extremely rare on the left, as a belief in egalitarianism and a history of opposition to racism and fascism do not easily fit with the denial of the Nazis' planned extermination of the Jews. More prevalent is the diminishment of the Holocaust, relativising it or excusing denial, deniers and antisemitism in the interest of alternative political objectives. For small elements of the more ideologically dogmatic far left, the fact that the Holocaust was perpetrated by people from all class backgrounds sits uneasily with their own worldview; it cannot be explained in totality by materialist logic. How can the working classes of Europe simultaneously be victims of fascist oppression and often perpetrators of the Holocaust? Fascism is something "practiced upon the working class", rather than practiced by it according to them.

Another form of Holocaust denial that emanates from within left-wing politics is what is often called 'false equivalency', namely the false comparison of the oppressive actions of the Israeli government against the Palestinians with the mechanised extermination plan of the Nazis against the Jews. This form of Holocaust revisionism or diminishment is also propagated by Holocaust deniers in the Muslim world and diaspora. Middle Eastern denial was born independently from its European counterparts, developing not as a means to

resurrect fascism but rather as a means to undermine the creation and development of a Jewish State in the region. A core tenet of this type of denial is the idea that the Holocaust has either been completely manufactured, or at least extensively exaggerated, with a view to legitimising Israel and creating an ideological bulwark and justification for the Zionist project. In addition to depicting the Holocaust as a hoax manufactured as a means of justification for a Jewish state, there is the tactic of diminishing the historical uniqueness of the Holocaust via relativisation. Another device used, again as a means to delegitimise Israel, is to exaggerate the occurrence of collaboration between Zionists and the Nazis during the 1930s.

THE RISE AND FALL OF TRADITIONAL FAR-RIGHT DENIAL

However, while Holocaust denial is propagated by people across the political spectrum and from all religious and ethnic backgrounds, it has often been the fascist and far-right Holocaust deniers at the forefront of the development and propagation of denial. Throughout the postwar period a number of major figures dominated the Holocaust denial scene; David Irving, Ernst Zündel, Fred Leuchter and Robert Faurisson amongst others. This group sought academic credibility and mainstream acceptance through the publication of pseudo-academic and pseudo-scientific books as a way to spread their denial theories. Many within this scene used bogus academic titles, scientific status and false descriptions to gain recognition and to give their views respectability and credibility. At its peak some of these deniers sold worryingly large numbers of books and filled large lecture theatres around the world.

However, the traditional far-right Holocaust denial movement slowed down significantly in the second decade of the 2000s. The ageing movement struggled to rejuvenate itself while many of its most prominent activists have become less active due to old age or have passed away. Among these are Tony Hancock in 2012, the founder of the Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust (CODOH), Bradley Smith in 2016, Ernst Zündel in 2017 and Robert Faurisson in 2018. Even those organisations that remain, such as the US based Institute for Historical Review (IHR), no longer hold the sway they once did. The exceptions to this are the conferences organised by the Iranian government and marches and events in Eastern Europe.

With the birth of the internet the traditional Holocaust deniers were fast adopters, quickly understanding the potential to reach new and bigger audiences than before. Modern technology especially has had a profound impact, not just on the ability of the denial community to spread their ideas, but more fundamentally on the idea of, and motivation for, Holocaust denial itself. Recognising the internet's potential for reaching people at an unprecedented scale, deniers have had some success in gaining a wider audience. In an attempt to stay relevant, some organisations and individuals from the traditional scene have modified their rhetoric in a struggle to stay up-to-date with an increasingly online and digitally literate far right.

However, generally, the traditional denial community that migrated online has struggled to take full advantage of the emergence of newer platforms and the traditional movement as a whole seems to have remained largely outside of social media. As a great deal of far-right content has flourished on social media, one would expect Holocaust denial ideas to spread just as easily online. The issue for traditional deniers, however, is that their material has not translated well into this new arena. The web has democratised denial output, making the expressions of openly violent and extreme antisemitism accessible alongside "serious" denial tomes and videos of lengthy "scholarly" presentations. Social media algorithms often favour the most sensationalistic content, which has encouraged a shift in the tone of denial messages online away from longform pseudo-scientific argumentation.

HOLOCAUST DENIAL IN THE DIGITAL AGE

While the decline of the traditional scene is welcome, a newer form of Holocaust denial has emerged in the digital age that reflects the nature of the toxic online environments from which it has emerged. In many ways, the message is the same – that the Holocaust did not happen – but the tone of the message and the way in which it is disseminated has changed.

In 1946, French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre published *Anti-Semite & Jew*, in which he explored, in particular, the causes of antisemitism, at a time when the historical, political and moral significance of the Holocaust was not lost to many. Discussing the way in which antisemitism, like all forms of hate, is a matter of placing one's faith in a hateful passion, borne of insecurity and which necessitates the rejection of reason, Sartre gives a warning to those who fall for the knowing irrationality of the antisemite:

> Never believe that [they] are completely unaware of the absurdity of their replies. They know that their remarks are frivolous, open to challenge. But they are amusing themselves, for it is their adversary who is obliged to use words responsibly, since he believes in words. The anti-Semites have the right to play.

They even like to play with discourse for, by giving ridiculous reasons, they discredit the seriousness of their interlocutors. They delight in acting in bad faith, since they seek not to persuade by sound argument but to intimidate and disconcert. If you press them too closely, they will abruptly fall silent, loftily indicating by some phrase that the time for argument is past.[79]

For much of the contemporary far right who have grown up with an internet culture that has cultivated an extreme, contrarian attitude against liberal conventions and social taboos – this event of unique and tremendous historical, moral and political significance has become a mere object of their once "trolling" ridicule and now, increasingly, hateful vitriol, and its main victims – the Jewish people – their fundamental target. Yet, in their casualised, throw-away engagement with the Holocaust, there is also an indication – evidenced, not least, by their overall detachment from the traditional denial community (even online) – that they have less interest in giving the "ridiculous reasons" Sartre suggests an antisemite might try to offer. These simultaneous deniers and celebrators of the Holocaust have little interest in attempting to feign "seriousness" as many traditional deniers did (which is not to suggest that this was anything but a thin veil for antisemitism). Rather, this generation truly "delight[s] in acting in bad faith".

In a sense, therefore, denial as it exists for many who have emerged from the young online far right today is a full embrace of the flagrant and abhorrent unseriousness which has always been part of the denial of the Holocaust. And if this emerging group moves readily between denial and celebration, therefore, we must also now fight – in addition to sincere denial of the event – just as hard the belief Sartre suggests the antisemite relies on: the right to "play" with a memory of such grave importance.

TROLLING

In the past decade we have seen the emergence of far-right groups, networks and movements that are primarily focused on the internet. Movements such as the so-called alt-right, for example, emerged on social media and in modern forums, such as Reddit and, especially, the /pol/ discussion board on 4chan, the latter of which is particularly akin to a social network in its frenetic stream of content. Within these online spaces, an existing online behaviour, trolling – the act of being deliberately offensive or provocative with the aim of provoking a hostile, negative or outraged reaction, often with the stated aim of 'merely' engaging in humorous ridicule –

An antisemitic variant of the "Pepe the frog" meme

developed a distinctly extreme, antagonistic and taboo-breaking style. Whilst not entirely new – the similar notion of 'flaming' others online predates trolling, and USENET groups dedicated to flaming Jews and many other groups existed well before the likes of 4chan – the particular style of trolling found in these modern online spaces has aided the normalisation of extreme antisemitism, including with regard to the Holocaust, and is now documented to have catalysed many towards accepting far-right beliefs.

Notably, Andrew Anglin, founder of the alt-right neo-Nazi site The Daily Stormer, who has stated that he is "at heart a troll", has claimed that it was through 4chan in 2010 that he "got into Hitler". Similarly, Mike Peinovich (AKA Mike Enoch), host of 'The Daily Shoah' podcast and founder of the alt-right website TheRightStuff.biz highlights this when describing his site's origins:

we started trolling, that's how we started The Right Stuff, that's where it came from. Literally, we wanted to bother liberals... We loved to trigger them. We loved to go in and just hit them on all their points and through this sort of opposition to that we actually developed some kind of coherent worldview, and

Alt-right neo-nazi site The Daily Stormer

that worldview centred around race politics

Stories like this, where ridicule gives way to the acceptance of extreme ideas, are prevalent across those areas of the contemporary far right which have emerged online.

MOCKING AND 'HUMOUR'

A style guide for contributors to The Daily Stormer, leaked in December 2017, reveals how this route has become weaponised by the far right. The "prime directive" of the site, the guide details, is to "Always Blame the Jews for Everything", not for the purposes of building a movement but with a view to insidiously spreading "the message of nationalism and anti-Semitism to the masses." Citing a propaganda doctrine from *Mein Kampf* as inspiration, Anglin explained that:

> The goal is to continually repeat the same points, over and over and over and over again. The reader is at first drawn in by curiosity or the naughty humor, and is slowly awakened to reality by repeatedly reading the same points.

The "naughty humor" referred to is openly stated by Anglin as a means to normalise extreme antisemitism and "the acceptance of violence" by readers, whilst avoiding the legal repercussions of actually promoting violence. He admits that this tone "is obviously a ploy" as he does "actually want to gas kikes". This tone is likewise employed in the site's regular Holocaust denial, much of which covers the recent actions of traditional deniers and links to videos expressing their views (as well as in their occasional interviews with deniers, including Nicholas Kollerstrom in 2013). Indeed, there is evidence that the site's forum has allowed for some interaction between the traditional denial community and those newer to such attitudes.

Users have shared links to traditional Holocaust denial literature on the forum's "Online Library"

and expressed their support for traditional deniers. Following the death of Ernst Zündel in 2017, a user called '7x13_28 Stereotypical Badger' stated in a forum thread that "I am heartened by what he did for all of us, and the correspondence he and I shared 2008-2009". Recognising the changing dynamics of communicating denial in the social media age, a thread entitled "How would you debunk the Holocaust in 140 characters or less?", was started by a user named 'Hadding' in July 2017. The same user stated in the thread in December 2017 that they had "just finished an article for CODOH" and that "The article has been reviewed by [established denier] Germar Rudolf; so, it's good. Maybe somebody would like to use this as material for memes".

Similarly, a February 2018 article on The Daily Stormer epitomises the clashing of the old and new visions of Holocaust deniers. The article addressed the criminal investigation of denier Michèle Renouf after claims she made at a neo-Nazi rally in Dresden, Germany that same month. The article ends with an embedded video of denier Fred Leuchter speaking at a Holocaust "revisionist" conference in the early 1990s. Leuchter, who claimed to be an engineer though he had no relevant qualifications, declared in the speech that:

> I am an engineer and a scientist, not a revisionist […] but because of what I have seen […] I have a responsibility to the truth […] because of this responsibility I am calling for […] an international commission of scientists, historians and scholars

Including content from these traditional deniers and their pretensions to seriousness would give the reader the impression that The Daily Stormer takes a similar approach to Holocaust denial. Yet, the site's leaked style guide focuses on the importance of "lulz" (i.e. on being humorous) and discourages writers from using an intellectual tone (no "college words", it declares). The article on Renouf itself is entitled "Germany: British Woman Investigated for Denying Kooky Fake Shower Room Hoax". Despite recent crackdowns

by tech companies, modern search algorithms and social media have unquestionably had a long-term effect on the accessibility of offensive, hateful and false information available to users online, much of which is often embedded within, or at least slowly normalised by, taboo-subverting internet 'humour'.

In addition to a shift in tone towards a more mocking or comical style is the emergence of a more celebratory stance on the Holocaust, sometime born out of this 'trolling' culture. Some antisemitic engagement with the Holocaust by the young far right online today is celebratory, or at least casual and (ostensibly) for the purposes of juvenile, subversive 'humour'. Whilst some will still have descended down the path to celebrating this horrific event through straightforward radicalisation by extreme, traditional antisemitic ideologies, others have taken the more unconventional route of coming to believe the extreme politics they first were attracted to as a taboo and engaged with for subversive, 'humourous' effect.

HISTORICISATION

Another factor influencing the readiness of some young far-right activists to deny, mock or celebrate the Holocaust is the historicisation of the event. For many young deniers, the Holocaust feels like a removed and distant historical event in a way that would seem impossible to postwar generations. Some younger users who engage antisemitically with the Holocaust, potentially lack not just a sense of the event's moral significance, but moreover a declining sense of its historical and continued political significance and uniqueness. The result is a situation wherein the young who engage antisemitically with the Holocaust may *use* their awareness of the event's significance for others, and their own disinterestedness towards it, to switch between denial, belief and all stages in between depending on the degree to which they wish to attack others, more or less with regard to who they are (in the case of Jewish people) or for their sensibilities (in the case of the mainstream liberal-left). Demonstrating these shifts, the aforementioned Peinovich tweeted on the UK's Holocaust Memorial Day in 2018 that:

> Even if you think it happened despite lack of any real evidence, you should disregard the holocaust. It is used as a propaganda tool and moral blackmail against whites that want to stand up for their own interests. No more. #HolocaustMemorialDay

On the same day he also tweeted:

> Here's the thing Jews. Real or fake, I don't give a fuck about the holocaust,

> mmmkay. #HolocaustMemorialDay

Rather than previous generations of the far right that often obsessed over the Holocaust, there is a growing group who argue that the best approach is simply to ignore it. For example, an article from The Daily Stormer in April 2021 argued:

> We're headed towards a century since the supposed Holocaust allegedly took place. The war ended 76 years ago. So rather than "did it happen?", it seems we should be asking "why are we still talking about this all the time?"[80]

Here we see a perfect storm emerge where something that for some young people holds little significance but also allows for maximum offence to be caused through its denial, ridicule or celebration.

CONCLUSION

There was a time when far-right antisemites dedicated their entire lives to disproving the Holocaust, increasingly today, in the digital age, younger far-right activists seek to dismiss it, ridicule and mock it or semi-ironically celebrate it. This shift can perhaps be explained by the wider democratisation of online debate, which has reduced the need for Holocaust denial to seek academic credibility, but also to the growing distance in time between the present and the horrors of the Holocaust. As collective memory of the Holocaust fades and the number of living survivors grows ever smaller, antisemites may no longer perceive the need to deny its existence and can now focus their efforts on relativising, diminishing or mocking it instead.

CASE STUDIES OF ANTISEMITISM ON SOCIAL MEDIA

OVERVIEW

PATRIK HERMANSSON, HOPE NOT HATE

THE FOLLOWING case studies examine nine different online platforms and the presence of antisemitism on them. These include mainstream and extremely large platforms like Facebook and YouTube, as well as alternative platforms like Parler and 4chan's /pol/ board, which are mainly used by those with far-right sympathies.

We define social media platforms broadly and include YouTube, Reddit and 4chan /pol/, as these allow not just the dissemination of content but interactions between users, and thus can be considered social. The platforms have been selected based on the size of their user bases as well as their importance to online antisemitism as understood by the authors of this report. We also aimed to explore as wide a variety of platforms as possible, in order to compare and to better understand how different mediums influence the expression of antisemitism. For practical reasons

we have therefore excluded sites that are similar in their functionality, for example including Parler but not Gab.

The goal of this analysis is to examine how antisemitism presents itself across different platforms: which types of antisemitism are predominant on them, which platform functions are used most actively to propagate antisemitic ideas. The aim is not to accurately quantify and compare antisemitism across the internet, rather the goal is to provide an up-to-date and accurate picture over how antisemitism is expressed and what tactics are used to spread antisemitism on these different platforms.

The case studies find a range of types of antisemitism, the most prominent being conspiratorial antisemitism, which is found across every single platform. We also find large amounts
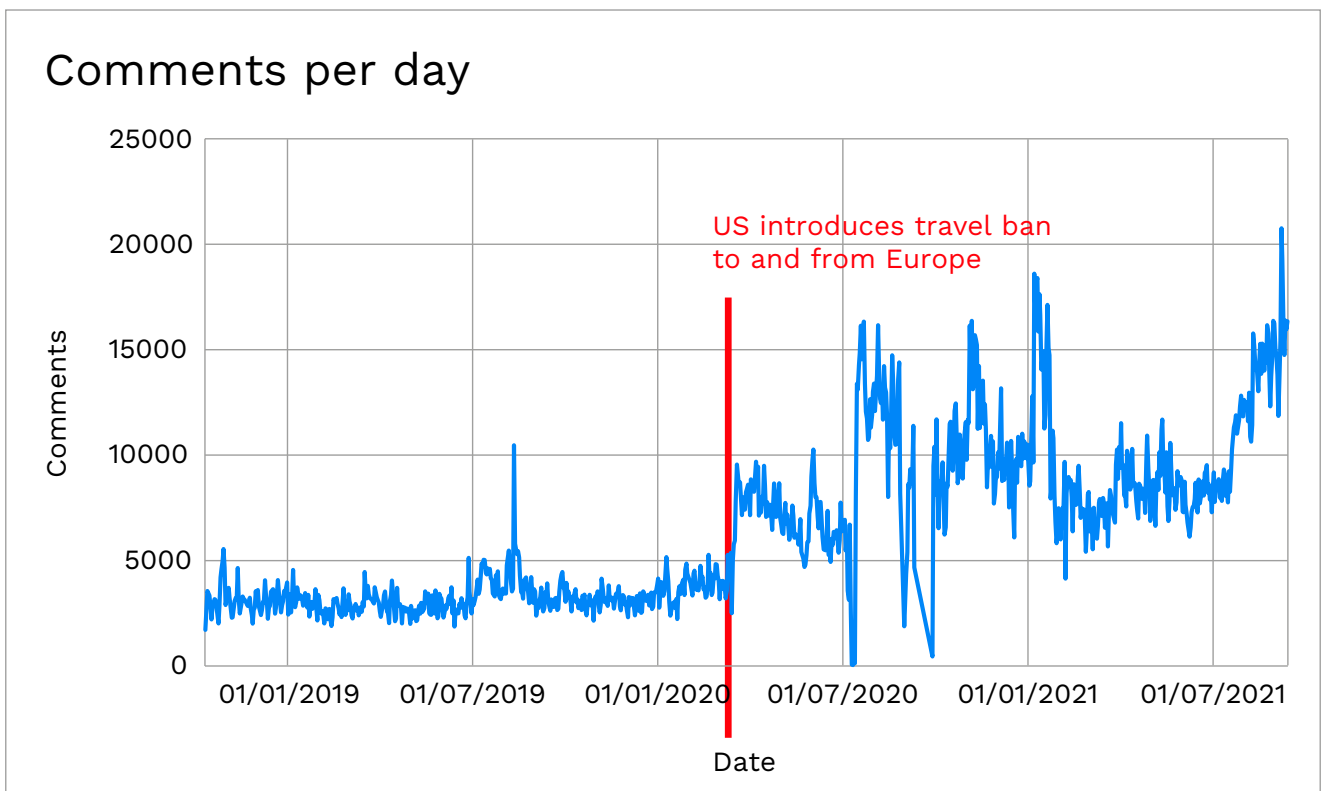
The subreddit grew significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Starting with approximately 1.1 million users in February 2020, by November it had reached 1.6 million. Activity on the forum rose significantly after travel bans were introduced in Europe and the US.

of Holocaust denial, trivialisation of the Holocaust and extreme anti-Zionism on both mainstream and niche platforms. More extreme, genocidal and directly violent antisemitic content is most prominently, but not exclusively, found on more niche communities on platforms like Telegram, Parler and 4chan /pol/. These ideas are expressed in a variety of ways, including pseudo-scientific arguments around race and historical events, and on the other hand as transgressive 'jokes'.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Conspiratorial antisemitism is one of the forms of antisemitism that our case studies identify as the most prominent across all platforms in this report. Both mainstream platforms, such as Facebook, and largely unmoderated forums, such as 4chan /pol/ and Telegram, are awash with antisemitic conspiracy theories tied to the common thesis such as supposed Jewish influence over governments and world politics (often referred to as 'ZOG' for "Zionist Occupied Government" and related ideas, such as the 'Deep State').

On mainstream platforms we found that antisemitic conspiracy theories make up the largest proportion of antisemitism that was identified. A likely explanation is that, as opposed to more explicit antisemitism (which in many cases constitutes a criminal offence), conspiratorial antisemitism is often less easy to recognise as hate, and is therefore more prevalent on more heavily moderated platforms like Facebook and YouTube.

During the last years conspiracy theory communities online have grown. Reddit offers a dedicated subreddit to conspiracy theories called r/conspiracy which has been active since 2008, and is dedicated to discussion of any and all forms of conspiracy theory. In the following case study we find that users in the forum often talk of antisemitic conspiracy theories related to Jewish families and individuals such as the Rothschilds and George Soros, to which they ascribe vast and malign influence over world politics and finance. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is also a frequent topic of discussion that could have contributed to attracting new members to the forum.

Antisemitic conspiracy theories are spread through text, video and images which makes quantification difficult. However, we can gauge the spread of individual pieces of influential media and on what platforms they are most commonly found. Several different videos are, at the time of writing, spread regularly in conspiracy theory groups and channels as well as in far-right contexts.

EUROPA: The Last Battle is currently one of the most shared antisemitic conspiracy theory films. It is a 12-hour long "documentary" from 2017 detailing the supposedly undue influence of Jews in Europe. It was produced by a Swedish far-right activist who has associated with the Nazi street group, the Nordic Resistance Movement. The film is, however, now spread widely in antisemitic and conspiracy theory groups and therefore highlights the issue of how conspiracy theories can be a route into more extreme far-right sympathies. Uploads of the film have been blocked and moderated on YouTube and Facebook, but links to the video on other sites can still be shared. On the far-right video sharing site BitChute it has received over 900,000 views as of September 2021.

Using Crowdtangle, Facebook's social media insight tool, to gather statistics on the number of shares of *EUROPA* shows that Instagram is one of the most important sources of traffic to the video. This highlights how even a primarily mobile social media platform focused on sharing visual content can be an effective tool to spread conspiracy theories and far-right propaganda. Across posts on public profiles on Instagram, links to the video have received over 8,000 'likes' and 37,000 views. However, among far-right and conspiracy theory channels on Telegram, the link to the Bitchute video has been shared at least 594 times, with the most viewed post having 221,000 views. The film has also been cut up in hour-long pieces and been uploaded to a dedicated Telegram channel.

CODED LANGUAGE

Coded language is another practice that our case studies identify across the multiple platforms in this report. The tactic is simple, aiming to avoid moderation and detection by an automated algorithm by modifying spelling or changing antisemitic vocuabularly. It can involve introducing explicit coded language, such as using the word 'skypes' to refer to Jews (as promoted by a far-right campaign in 2016) or using words that are spelled differently but sound similar, for example using 'juice' to mean 'Jews'. Simpler versions might just replace individual letters with an asterix. On TikTok, our case study identifies emoji combinations as a form of coded language. While simple in nature and easily recognisable if you are attuned to far-right campaigns of the moment, ever-changing vocabulary means that antisemitic coded language presents difficulties for moderation at scale.

Coded language was most often found on mainstream and moderated platforms, including Facebook, Reddit and Twitter. The explanation is likely that these larger platforms are more proficient in removing antisemitic language and that it can result in bans, whereas 4chan /pol/ and Telegram does not punish users who engage in explicit antisemitism.

Coding language also goes beyond the purely practical goal of avoiding moderation. It also functions as far-right jargon that signifies belonging to the movement, meaning that individuals even on largely unmoderated platforms might occasionally use it as well, especially language that is connected to far-right campaigns, like the word 'skypes'.

By its nature coded language is difficult to quantify, as it explicitly attempts to avoid automated ways of categorising it as antisemitism. Keyword search and even more sophisticated text categorisation methods are therefore often insufficient.

ADVOCATING FOR TERRORISM

Largely unmoderated platforms like Telegram and 4chan /pol/, and to a somewhat lesser degree Parler, are home to some of the most extreme antisemitism on any of the platforms studied in this report. Telegram and 4chan /pol/ have both facilitated far-right terrorist subcultures, of which antisemitism is a core component.

4chan /pol/ and previously its counterpart on 8chan, alongside other similar imageboards, have been used to pre-announce terror acts and spread terror manifestos and letters ahead of the attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand and Halle, Germany. These manifestos paint progressives, media, minorities as the enemies of the 'white race' and they are filled with antisemitic ideas

and conspiracy theories. Especially concerning is the often direct encouragement and support terrorism received on these forums. On Telegram and 4chan /pol/ there is a subculture that cheerleads for and deifies terrorists, and regards mass murder not only as a means to revolution and retribution, but as a form of entertainment. This is the audience to which these gunmen addressed their sprees, and enables budding far-right activists to radicalise and network, and allows new groupings to coalesce.

After the attacks, live-streamed videos and images of the attackers as well as victims and the manifestos spread rapidly across far-right channels on all platforms studied in this report. However, while moderated platforms like Facebook and YouTube eventually managed to remove most references to the material, they continue to circulate on Telegram and similarly unmoderated forums.

120 GROUPS AND CHANNELS ON TELEGRAM HAVE SHARED THE CHRISTCHURCH SHOOTER'S MANIFESTO, WHICH HE ENTITLED "THE GREAT REPLACEMENT". ADDITIONALLY IT HAS BEEN SHARED IN TRANSLATED AND MODIFIED VERSIONS.

Posts per day 4chan /pol/
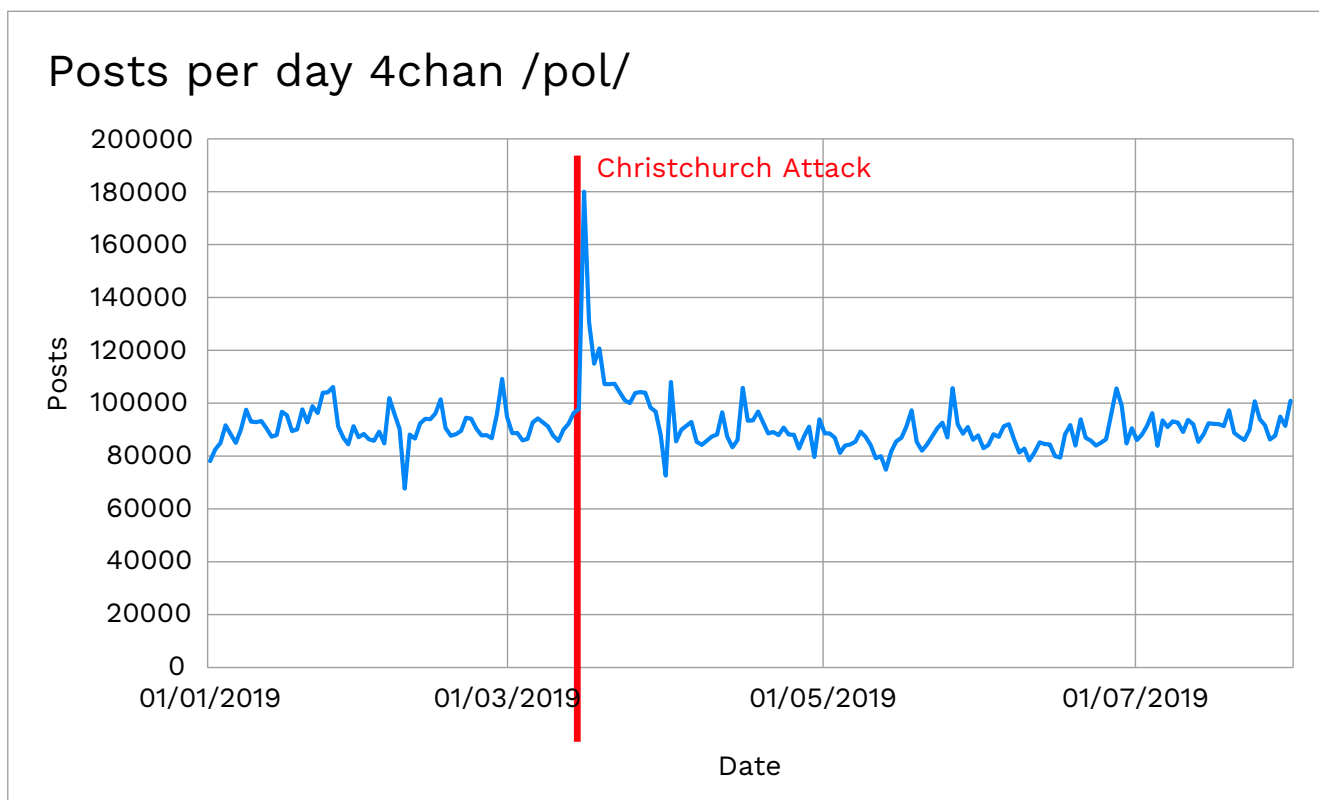
TRIGGER EVENTS

The previous section on the growing conspiracy communities during the pandemic, across the platforms examined for this report, demonstrates the role of news events in influencing online discussions. A more extreme form of this phenomenon is the role of terrorism and attacks on minority communities in outbursts of antisemitism online.

Looking closer at antisemitic attacks, we find that these trigger events cause a rise in antisemitic content in the far-right communities on 4chan / pol/. The forum is consistently an antisemitic platform; based on keyword matching of antisemitic terminology we find that, on average, 5.5% of all posts contained antisemitic slurs. This number might not sound high, but considering that many posts on /pol/ are simply images or contain very little text, it is considerable and higher than any other platform studied for this report. The number also likely underestimates the amount of antisemitism on the forum as there are other, less common, terms also used and antisemitism can be expressed in conspiratorial ideas without directly mentioning Jewish people, or through images and videos which we have not analysed for this report. Moreover, many posts contain other forms of racism.

2019 saw the most deadly far-right terror attack since the Oslo attack in 2011. In March a far-right activist published a screed which railied against Muslims and was filled with extreme antisemitic conspiracy theories, and then killed 51 people in two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. Activity on /pol/ spiked by 84% on the day of the attack and remained elevated for several days. Although the attack was aimed at two mosques, antisemitic language similarly rose to its highest level of 2019.

It should be noted that relative amounts of antisemitism compared to the total amount of posts on the forum remained within the average. These observations speak to the fact that / pol/ has provided a forum for the expression of antisemitic ideas and that terror attacks, as well as other prominent news events, provide topics to discuss even if its only partially connected to Jews or antisemitism. When there is more to discuss on the site, generally, more antisemitism will be expressed because antisemitic language is part of its culture and its members find ways to draw connections between news events and the existing vast repertoire of antisemitic tropes and conspiracy theories.

Though the amount of antisemitism expressed is deeply worrying, part of the explanation for why it does not rise (in relative terms) even more could also be that the boards are already so saturated with antisemitic content that it might not be possible to increase significantly above its current level. However, it is important to underline that the type of antisemitism being expressed could still vary over time and take on a more violent nature after terror attacks, as indicated in the previous section.

CONCLUSION

All social media platforms in the following case studies display almost all kinds of antisemitism, ranging from conspiracy theories to calls for direct violence. However, different sorts of antisemitic language are present to different degrees and are expressed through a variety of mediums and tone, in a more coded manner or more overt. In other words, the platforms play different roles in spreading antisemitism. Users have adapted their discourse in relation to the moderation practices, anonymity and the functions of the different platforms. The following case studies look closer at the role of comment functions, recommendations systems, humoristic images, short video clips and many other ways in which antisemitism is perpetuated today. Together they demonstrate the malleability of antisemitic discourse and the creativity of those that seek to spread its ideas.
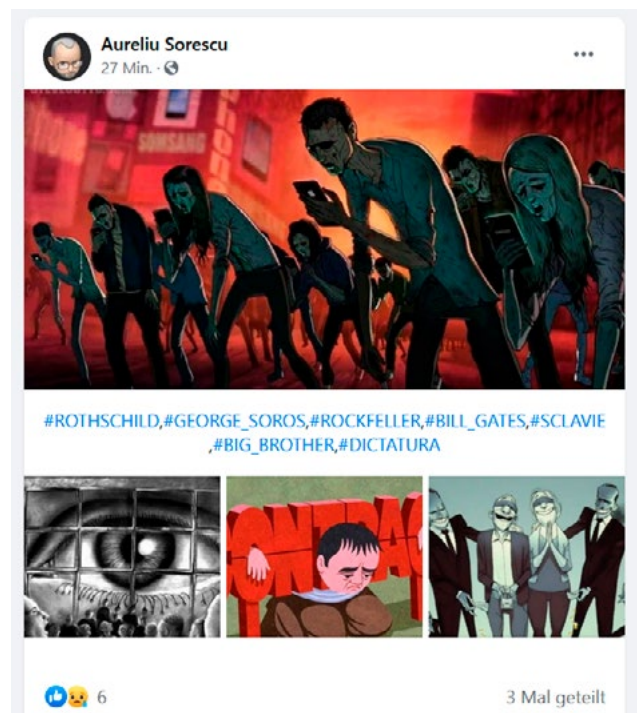
FACEBOOK

SIMONE RAFAEL, AMADEU ANTONIO FOUNDATION

FACEBOOK INC. is a US company headquartered in Menlo Park, California. The company owns the social network Facebook, the video and photo sharing app Instagram, the messenger WhatsApp, and Oculus VR, a manufacturer of virtual reality hardware. This section focuses on Facebook as a social network, which is designed for networking with friends, acquaintances, colleagues and like-interested people. In Europe, Facebook has a subsidiary in Dublin, Ireland, which means that European users enter into a contract with this company that falls under EU law and legislation. In 2021, Facebook had 420 million users in Europe[81] (2.9 billion worldwide[82]) and 309 million daily active members in Europe.[83] There is evidence that in some regions, Facebook is becoming a platform for middle-aged people. In Germany, for example, 75% of people aged 30 to 39 use Facebook, but only 32% of people aged 16 to 19.[84]

On Facebook, people network directly with each other, but they can also subscribe to pages or profiles and join public or private groups, so there are different forms of publicity on the platform. Although Facebook emphasises personal interactions, the platform is also used a lot for professional accounts, as a media information source and by parties and institutions. Facebook has repeatedly tried to restrict this non-private content. In August 2021, Facebook claimed that a test run in Canada, Brazil, Indonesia and parts of the US had shown that users would like to see less political content in their news feed. Currently, the share of political content in the news feed in the US is about 6%,[85] but that would still be considered too much. Further testing will now be enrolled in Costa Rica, Sweden, Spain and Ireland.[86] In practical terms, the company points out, this means that less political content will be shown in the news feed – which will also apply to journalistic media content. This could be a problem, because a reduction of reliable, professional news contributions in the news feed will help disinformation to spread. Facebook is also not transparent about their criteria for classifying political content. Undoubtedly Facebook is able to enforce such subdivisions: the company earns its money with advertising for selected targeted audiences, a practice for which it has repeatedly come under criticism. Examples include the Cambridge Analytica scandal, with its micro-targeting of the Trump-supporting company (2018),[87] and the fact that until 2017 the company allowed advertisers to select antisemites as a target group, i.e. those who had specified "Jew haters", "How to burn Jews" or "Why Jews ruin the world" as "interests".[88]

HATE SPEECH AND RADICALISATION ON FACEBOOK

Facebook started in 2004 with a first-amendment 'free speech' approach that allowed virtually all expressions of opinion on the platform, even though there were already community guidelines that theoretically prohibited calls for violence and discrimination on platform. However, these guidelines were not properly implemented at the time. Since then, the platform has not only grown continuously, but also worked on its community standards,[89] which vary from country to country in the worldwide network, in accordance with different legal situations and social standards. As a result, calls for violence[90] and hate speech[91] are forbidden on the platform, as are dangerous organisations, which also includes hate organisations.[92]

Facebook used this policy to remove far-right terrorist groups from the platform, but have also applied it to a wider array of far-right organisations, including Generation Identity, thus depriving the Europe-wide group of a great deal of reach and networking. One supporter of Generation Identity had been the Islamophobic attacker from Christchurch,[93] who referred positively to the far-right conspiracy narrations of the group. However, the policy changes came when the effect of Facebook as a radicalisation machine could no longer be dismissed.

In the most extreme case in 2017, unmoderated hatred against the Rohingya minority group in Myanmar, posted not only by ordinary users but by military accounts, led to real violence and displacement inflicted on the Rohingya.[94] After that, Facebook also introduced a global 'Oversight Board'[95] of experts to discuss new problematic content areas and make recommendations to the company.

Nevertheless, the sheer volume of content posted daily does not yet allow for the removal of hate content without reports from users. The work on community standards is an ongoing process. The definitions of dangerous organisations and protected groups need to be updated again and again. Practice shows that technical filtering systems, which are also used, can still be relatively easily outwitted. Facebook's moderation teams have become better staffed and better trained over the years, but still a lot of misjudgement occurs: for example, cases of monitoring accounts documenting antisemitic hate have been blocked, while the original antisemitic hate content is left standing.[96] On the other hand, the deplatforming of hate organisations in Germany shows results, as a study by the Institute for Democracy and Civil Society (IDZ) Jena 2020 states:

> Facebook has increasingly lost its role among hate actors as a central mobilisation platform through deplatforming. It is now used by most actors as an interface to share links or to comment on posts on other sites. On the other hand there are still many discussions and networking taking place in closed groups. [97]

Hate content on Facebook can be spread via text, images and videos, inscribed in group names and used as hashtags – although the latter play a less significant role on Facebook than on Twitter, Instagram or TikTok. However, as a network with mass impact and reach, most of the dissemination of discrimination and hate is found in the comment sections of pages with a high user numbers. Antisemites use Facebook strategically, for the dissemination and normalisation of their ideology.

ANTISEMITISM ON FACEBOOK

Linguistic research has pointed out that antisemitism unites different hate groups. Far-right, Islamist or left-wing antisemitism often uses similar and very traditional, classical antisemitic narrations and images (around 54% of antisemitism expressed on the internet uses classical narratives).[98] This can be easily observed in a general interest network like Facebook: classical antisemitism, conspiracy ideologies, post-Holocaust antisemitism and Israel-related antisemitism are spread by various extremist target groups, but also by 'average' users as well. Antisemitic stereotypes that collectively ascribe fictitious characteristics to Jews have been socially learned over 2000 years, and are inscribed in the culture of Europe. They are also constantly adapting to new circumstances – as, for example, the classical stereotype of well-poisoning was renewed at the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, claiming that Jews invented, or are using, the virus.[99]

Antisemitic stereotypes are enormously reinvigorated by their constant repetition and refreshment on social media. Long-term linguistic studies found a tripling of antisemitic comments from 2007 to 2017: the number of antisemitic comments on selected German media channels on Facebook increased from 7.5 to 30.1% of the whole volume of comments.[100]

On Facebook there are all forms of hostility towards Jews, from religiously based anti-Judaism, racist antisemitism, anti-modern antisemitism (which alleges that Jews are promoting 'modern' ideas like equality, democracy, liberalism or feminism), post-Holocaust antisemitism (that is antisemitism referring to the Holocaust, like Holocaust denial, or claiming that Jews today take advantage of the Holocaust and such), to Israel-related antisemitism.[101] Motifs of classical anti-Judaism remain central: Jews as foreigners, as usurers and money men, as vengeful and power-seeking people, as murderers, ritual and blood cult practitioners, land robbers, destroyers and conspirators.[102] However, the most widespread form of antisemitism online is Israel-related antisemitism, which in studies accounts for around 33.35% of total widespread antisemitism.[103]

Fantasies of extermination against Jews, Holocaust denial and antisemitic hatred can be found on neo-Nazi and Islamist Facebook pages, but also on pages simply titled "Fuck Israel". They can be found on the channels of pandemic denialist groups and conspiracy ideologues. However, antisemitism is particularly powerful and widespread in the comment sections of mainstream media pages on Facebook. This phenomenon is analysed below.

Practically, racist caricatures, photo montages and memes about alleged conspiracy connections are shared in groups and on private profiles. Manipulated facts and documents taken out of their historical context are shared to prove that the Holocaust is a "fairy tale of lies" – either as a "cult of guilt" (Schuldkult) to "keep the German people down" (neo-Nazis) or to deprive Jews of their victim status and show them as aggressors (Islamists). Jewish families are blamed for world events as a cipher for the Jewish people as a whole, often used synonymously with an imagined "Jewish world conspiracy". Insiders understand these dog whistles immediately, but insufficiently trained moderation teams often do not, so these contributions remain on the page.

QAnon sign at the "We Do Not Consent" anti-lockdown rally in Trafalgar Square, London, 26 September 2020.
Copyright: HOPE not hate

FACEBOOK'S COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

How does Facebook deal with antisemitic content, much of which explicitly violates the Community Guidelines? Since 2020, the community standards explicitly included in their examples that Jewish people should not be compared to rats, that the notion that Jewish people control the world or central organisations in the media, the economy or the government should not be propoagated, and that it is not allowed to deny or trivialise the Holocaust.[104]

There are no official figures from the company on antisemitism or deleted antisemitism on the platform. In Germany, for example, Facebook publishes so-called transparency reports, as the Network Enforcement Act (NetzDG) against hate speech requires them to do. However, the complaints and deletions are listed in the report according to criminal offences – and of course, you only get the number of reported cases, which are only cases where the community standards did not apply. Since antisemitism is not a criminal offence in Germany, but falls under various criminal offences,[105] the report unfortunately does not offer any transparency on antisemitic (or other forms of) hate content.[106]

So we can only look at experience and studies that explore the phenomenon through testing. The most recent study was published by the Center for Countering Digital Hatred (CCDH) in July 2021.[107] The researchers reported antisemitic posts on social networks in order to document the reactions. In a comparison of five major networks,[108] Facebook performed the worst. The posts reported included different forms of overt antisemitism: Holocaust denial, antisemitic conspiracy ideologies (New World Order, Great Reset, 9/11, Jews orchestrating the COVID-19 pandemic), Nazi symbols and white supremacy content, racist caricatures of Jews, references to the blood libel or calls for violence against Jews.

Antisemitic conspiracy ideologies remained the most "successful" on the platform: 89% of the reported posts remained on the platform. Only in 10.9% of the total reported posts did Facebook take any actions at all. 3.9% of posts were removed, 6.2% of accounts were closed (reaction leader YouTube reacted in 21% of reported examples). [109] Overall, reported calls for violence (30.7%), antisemitic cartoons (29.8%) and neo-Nazi content (29.3%) received the most reaction from the network, but also only in an average of 25% of reported cases.[110]

CCDH also reported antisemitic groups on Facebook through the classic reporting channels of the network. They reported 12 English and Spanish-language groups with a total of 37,530 members, which regularly or exclusively spread antisemitic hatred. None of the groups with names like "Exposing the New World Order", "George Soros: The Enemy within", "The Rothschild-Jesuit Conspiracy" or "Stand up and unite against the system" were blocked or removed.[111]

In contrast, Facebook's cooperation with selected civil society partner organisations has proven to be more effective. In Germany, for example, Facebook has been working for many years with the semi-governmental organisation Jugendschutz.net, which reports hate postings according to German youth protection standards. Accordingly, Jugendschutz.net publishes more encouraging figures in a publication on antisemitism online in 2019: when Jugendschutz.net as a trusted partner reported cases with their direct contact to the provider, 88% of the reported cases on Facebook were deleted or blocked for Germany, including sedition, Holocaust denial, racist depictions and depiction of symbols of unconstitutional organisations.[112] However, Jugendschutz.net also notes that much antisemitic content remained below the limits of a violation relevant to the protection of minors or punishable by law, and are accordingly often not deleted or hidden.

HOLOCAUST DENIAL ON FACEBOOK

In some European countries, such as Germany, Belgium and Italy, Holocaust denial is a criminal offence and has therefore been a cause for deletion on Facebook in these countries for many years. In other countries this only became the case in October 2020, despite numerous protests from victims' groups and historians.[113] It was only after the increase in Holocaust denial and trivialisation during the COVID-19 pandemic that Facebook announced that Holocaust denial would be deleted from the platform.[114] In January 2021, the political education update followed:

> Starting today, we will begin to connect people with authoritative information about the Holocaust. Anyone who searches on Facebook for terms associated with either the Holocaust or Holocaust denial, will see a message from Facebook encouraging them to connect with credible information about the Holocaust off Facebook. [115]

Educational hints are shown with every search, but it is not to difficult to find Holocaust denial on Facebook – and it sometimes still not removed even after reporting. A study by the Center for Countering Digital Hatred (CCDH), in which researchers reported antisemitic posts on networks to document reactions, found that six months after the announcement, 80% of reported posts containing Holocaust denial or trivialisation remained on the platform after being reported.[116] One case of outright Holocaust denial, spread by sharing an article from a well-known far-right website and with an antisemitic photo montage, was only given a 'clarification' label instead of removing the post. It thus reached 246,000 likes, shares and comments.[117] Often Holocaust denial still stays online if people do not use the word 'Holocaust', but instead uses phrases such as "the 6 million are also a lie". Also Holocaust trivialisation is often conveyed through memes and pictures, sometimes dubbed the 'lolocaust'.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many deniers used a yellow Star of David badge bearing the word "Unvaccinated" in their profile picture or in their feeds, claiming to be "the Jews of today" and so trivialising the Holocaust. This narration is still strong in COVID-denier groups on Facebook.


From the group "Ungeimpft und glücklich" (unvaccinated and happy). The sign says "unvaccinated and alive", referring to the system of markings for the prisoners in Nazi concentration camps with angles.

ANTISEMITISM IN COMMENT SECTIONS

A particular problem on Facebook, however, is the antisemitism in the comment sections of channels and pages of all kinds, which can become reservoirs of antisemitic hate speech. If unmoderated, these comments – whether with or without discriminatory intent – fuel the spread and normalisation of antisemitic ideas.

Antisemitic comments can be traced from hip-hop channels to climate change debates to
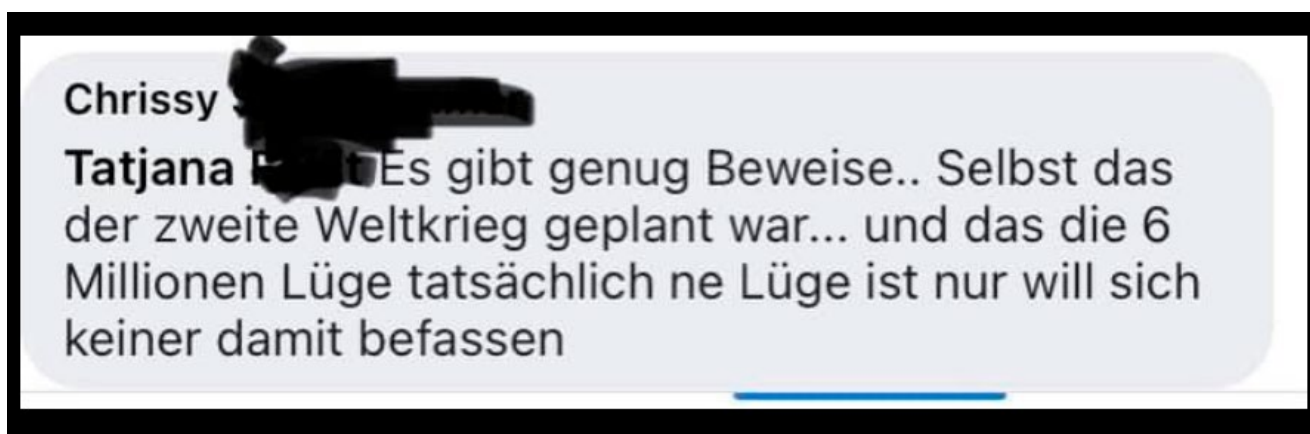
student support communities. They do occur without a specific context, but there are also clear 'trigger' topics such as Middle Eastern conflict, terrorist attacks, historical topics (especially World War II), and Jewish topics or expressions of solidarity with Jews that lead to a particularly high number of antisemitic comments. The authors are people from all milieus who consider themselves to belong to the 'middle' of society and would deny belonging to radical milieus.[118]

Antisemitism in Facebook comment sections looks partly, but not completely, different in different European countries, as the study 'Decoding Antisemitism' by the Alfred Landecker Foundation (August 2021) showed.[119] The study is an analysis of a selection of comments from Facebook profiles of leading media in Great Britain, France and Germany. It shows that in the UK, there are about twice as many antisemitic statements in the comment sections of the coverage of the Middle East conflict as in the other two countries (UK: 26.9% of the 1,500 comments analysed, Germany: 13.6%, France: 12.6%).[120] The situation was similar in the second study example, the coverage of the launch of the vaccination campaign in Israel: 17% of antisemitic comments in the Facebook comment sections of British media, 7.5 % in France and 3.4 % in Germany.[121]

In terms of content, however, the debates on Facebook varied only in nuances. In the UK, the main issues were Israel as evil (39.8%), Israel's sole guilt in the Middle East conflict (27.9%) and infanticide/child killers (8.1%). In France, the main issues were Israel as evil (46.8%), rejection of the Israeli people's right to self-determination (17.8%) and colonialism analogies (13.1%) as well as Nazi analogies (7.8%). In Germany, the topics were Israel as evil (41%), sole blame for the conflict (10.1%) and Jewish-Israeli influence on the media (8.2%). In all three countries, the demonising portrayal of Israel as the embodiment of evil was dominant.[122] The rejection of Israel's right to exist was expressed more frequently in the French and German commentaries than in the British. Instead, examples of Israel's supposed amorality dominated in the UK. Arguments of guilt defence and a supposed taboo against criticising Jews and Israel are quite exclusively German.[123] Most users showed their antisemitism openly, only rarely in code; many appear to have had the impression that they were not expressing problematic attitudes. Indecisive moderation, or lack thereof, reinforces this impression.

CONCLUSION

Facebook as a company is continuously working to revise its community standards to improve the removal of hate speech from the platform. Facebook's community standards often go beyond the legislation of several countries, which means that even more hate content is removed under community standards than are illegal by law.

Attention to the issue of digital violence on the platform has risen sharply in recent years – through civil society and academic research and demands, but also through legislative measures such as the Network Enforcement Act against hate speech (NetzDG) in Germany. The NetzDG demands a timely deletion of hate speech relevant under criminal law. If hate content is repeatedly not deleted within a defined span of time, severe fines are applied.

A productive step taken by Facebook is the now quite consistent deplatforming of hate organisations and organised hate actors. The cooperation and support of Facebook with scientific experts and NGOs working on discrimination, far-right extremism and misanthropy should also be positively highlighted. This increases the number of discriminatory messages deleted and improves the knowledge of the moderation teams.

Nevertheless, there is still a lot of antisemitic hatred present on the platform, and it is obvious that there are still a lot of measures that can be taken, starting with the more precise training of the moderation teams, which is apparently still particularly necessary for antisemitic conspiracy narrations, which are explicitly banned by the community standards but are often not deleted even when reported.

Antisemitic hashtags and keywords should be removed from suggestion algorithms in order to at least prevent their automated dissemination, of course knowing that antisemites are creative and that this would have to be updated regularly.

When it comes to antisemitism in the comment sections, it is not only Facebook that has a duty, but also the operators of large Facebook pages or groups, who must moderate more consistently. Here, an obligation to moderate groups, sites and channels from a certain number of members could be considered. Last but not least, groups or persons who have been reported several times for spreading antisemitic hate should be excluded from the platform.

INSTAGRAM

GREGORY DAVIS, HOPE NOT HATE

FOUNDED IN 2010 and swiftly purchased by Facebook in 2012, Instagram has an estimated 1.1 billion active users worldwide, making it by far the most popular dedicated photo sharing platform and the fourth most popular social media platform overall, surpassed only by Facebook, YouTube and Whatsapp.[124] In Europe, Instagram has an estimated 284 million users.

Instagram's user base is significantly younger than that of Facebook and Twitter, with almost 70% of their global users aged between 13-34,[125] while a survey by the Global Web Index found Instagram is the most popular platform among men and women aged 16-24 and among women aged 24-35.[126] The platform is fundamentally mainstream in terms of the most popular content, with popular celebrities and athletes garnering huge followings on the platform, as well as thriving beauty, fashion and wellness communities that centre around popular influencers who develop their celebrity brands on the platform itself.

However, like every other social media platform, Instagram has struggled to prevent the platform's misuse to spread hate, misinformation and conspiracy theories. While much of the criticism levelled at Instagram centres around its perceived role in promoting unhealthy body image and insecurities among its young, image-conscious user base, it has also been accused of failing to act on incitement to hatred and even terrorist recruitment that takes place on the platform.

INSTAGRAM'S FEATURES

Instagram was set up primarily as a way to share photos, with the ability to share short video clips being added in 2013. Users are able to write lengthy captions of up to 2,200 characters to their posts, but the format is still very much image-led, with the captions largely concealed as users scroll down their homescreens. Alongside standard photo and video sharing, Instagram also offers the ability to upload time-limited Stories, which self-delete after 24 hours, and stream live onto the platform. The Instagram Direct feature also allows users to send private messages and share posts with other users.

The two primary means by which users can discover new content on the platform are the use of hashtags and the Explore tab, a section of the site which presents users with algorithmic content recommendations. Users are encouraged to put descriptive hashtags in the captions of their posts, which allow users to search for content relevant to their interests. Instagram is able to disable hashtags so that they cannot be searched for and do not link to content when clicked upon, which they have done for certain well-known far-right and antisemitic jargon terms such as #HoloHoax and #14Words. However, this has not been applied with any rigour, and hashtags such as #BloodAndSoil or #WhiteGenocide still lead to thousands of results from far-right accounts.

The Explore tab is more complex in function, and has been the subject of considerable criticism for its role in promoting hateful and harmful content. It aims to present users with a tailored feed of new content from accounts that they do not follow based on their previous activity on the site, such as the accounts they follow already and posts they have liked or commented on.[127] Similarly, the 'Suggested for you' sidebar offers a list of accounts to consider following, again based on previous activity on the site.
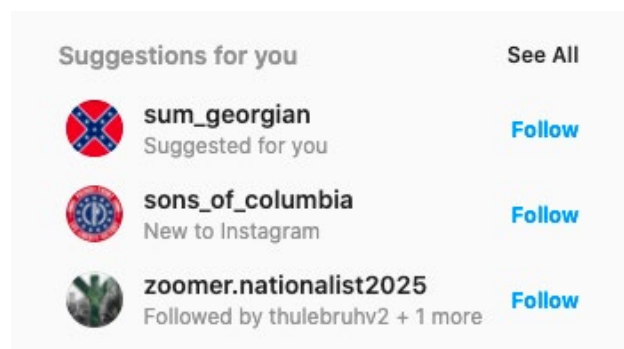
Far-right accounts suggested to the author by Instagram

While this functionality might be useful for many of Instagram's users, (e.g. for connecting a sports enthusiast with content related to their favourite teams), it can also play a disturbing role in guiding users down a rabbithole of political extremism. Users whose activity indicates an openness to one aspect of far-right ideology or bigotry can find themselves being recommended a stream of content from accounts that reinforce

that viewpoint and introduce the user to new and potentially more extreme strands of hateful ideology. It can also introduce people to far right content for the first time, if their non-political interests happen to overlap with those of far-right users.

CONSPIRATORIAL ANTISEMITISM

In August 2020, Facebook and Instagram announced[128] that they had updated their Community Standards guidelines to include a Tier 1 prohibition (representing the most serious violation of guidelines) of allegations of "Jewish people running the world or controlling major institutions such as media networks, the economy or the government".[129] Despite this, it is still easy to find antisemitic conspiracy content on the platform, even when it is clearly labelled as such by accompanying hashtags.

As an image-led platform, Instagram is well suited to host conspiracy material. Online conspiracy theorists on all social media platforms often rely on the use of lurid imagery and complex mis-infographics to illustrate convoluted conspiratorial narratives. In the case of antisemitic material, such posts often consist of diagrams purporting to reveal secret power structures in which Jewish individuals or families exert control over governments, economies and religious institutions.
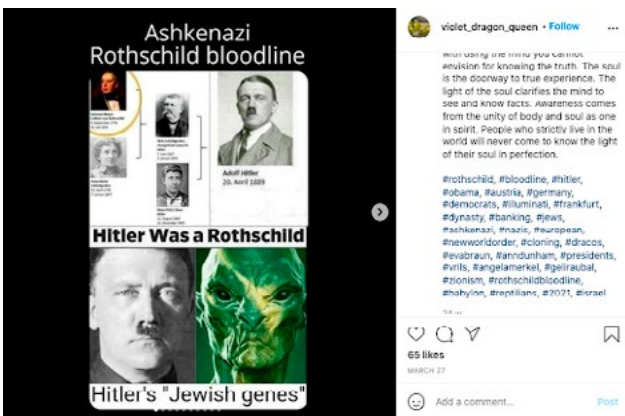
The huge quantity of conspiracy material present on Instagram can be seen clearly in hashtags such as #Illuminati and #NWO, both of which refer to a genre of conspiracy beliefs which describe a global shadow government which secretly controls all global events. There are millions of results for these and closely related hashtags, of which a minority are satirical but a clear majority are in sincere promotion of these conspiracy theories. The Illuminati and New World Order conspiracy theories are often strongly influenced by antisemitic tropes, whether implicitly or explicitly, and anyone who is drawn into researching these topics online is highly likely

to encounter antisemitic content on a regular basis, making their high prevalence on Instagram a worrying phenomenon whether the specific posts contain antisemitic content or not.

Hashtags that lead more directly to antisemitic content have fewer but still worrying numbers of posts, and remain active despite Instagram's ability to block the use of hashtags that lead to prohibited content. Hashtags that directly refer to antisemitic conspiracy jargon such as #JewWorldOrder, #TheGoyimKnow and #ProtocolsofZion lead to thousands of posts, many of which are either explicitly antisemitic in content or have been posted by accounts that commonly post on those lines.

A number of well-known antisemitic conspiracy theorist accounts remain on Instagram, many of whom have retained a presence on Instagram despite being removed from most other major platforms, including Instagram's parent company Facebook. The prominent British conspiracy theorist David Icke, among the most famous conspiracy theorists in the world, has retained his Instagram account as his last mainstream social media platform, boasting 243,000 followers. Also present on the platform is antisemitic author E. Michael Jones, who has been suspended from Twitter and YouTube for his persistent promotion of antisemitic conspiracy theories, as well as having some of his books removed from sale by Amazon. Both Icke and Jones' accounts are relatively inactive in recent months and the content they do post is much less controversial than that on other platforms, perhaps in an effort to prevent their removal, but both use them to signpost their activities elsewhere and thus contribute to the promotion of their antisemitic ideologies.

ISRAEL-RELATED ANTISEMITISM

Instagram also plays host to forms of antisemitism that are framed as anti-Zionism and hostility to Israel. This was particularly when conflict flares in the Middle East, such as in May 2021, when an outbreak of violence prompted a spike in the use antisemitic rhetoric and hashtags on the platform. There are more than 11,300 posts tagged with either #DeathToIsrael or #Death_to_Israel, thought it should be noted that users sometimes appropriate hashtags that they disagree with in order to provide a counter-narrative in that conversation.

On 11 and 16 May, two Arabic language accounts gained a combined 15,000 likes for posts captioned with the slogan "Khaybar, Khaybar, O Jews, the army of Muhammad will return", a chant which refers to a 7th century battle between the early Muslim community and Jewish tribes in the Arabian peninsula and thus frames the current conflict into the context of a wider historical animosity towards the Jewish people. On 17 May, a post from the Iraqi Shi'ite scholar Ali al-Toqani, who has over five million followers on the platform, threatened the destruction of the State of Israel, saying "I swear that the demise of Israel will be at the hands of an Iraqi, no matter how long the years take",[130] a sentiment which attracted more than 92,000 likes.

EXTREME RIGHT

Most worrying, particularly in light of Instagram's younger user base, is the use of Instagram for recruitment by the extreme right. Investigations by Patrik Hermansson of HOPE not hate have revealed the existence of two separate terror groups using Instagram as their primary means of propagandising and recruitment, both of which were run by teenagers and used the platform to target young people with deeply antisemitic propaganda imagery and expressions of violent racial hatred.

The British Hand[131] group and National Partisan Movement (NPM)[132] both used Telegram, the unmoderated and privacy-focussed messaging app, for what they hoped were private conversations between group members. However, their outreach and recruitment took place on Instagram, where they benefited from the algorithmic recommendations of the Discover tab. Instagram users who followed the account of one group member would soon be recommended the main group page, and initial conversations with new recruits would be had over Instagram messenger before moving over to Telegram. A member of the British Hand group described Instagram as their "luckiest area", while a senior figure in NPM described it as their "primary way" of recruiting new members.

On a post from their now-deleted account dedicated to recruitment, the NPM declared their intention to "secure white identity in Europe", but used hashtags intended to draw in a wide range of more mainstream right-wing users, such as #conservative, #patriotism and #republicans, alongside more accurate descriptors such as #NationalSocialist. These efforts to radicalise mainstream users and insert their narratives into wider conversations illustrate the danger that is presented by any extreme right presence on mainstream platforms, particularly in light of Instagram's popularity among the youngest internet users.
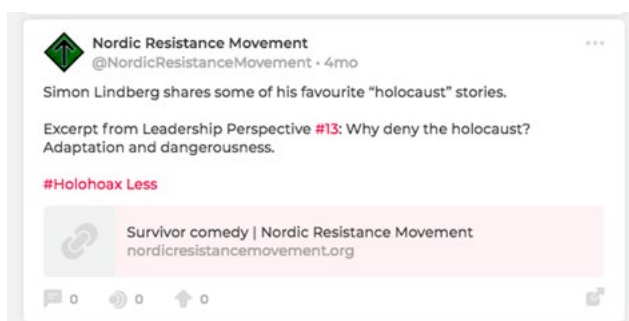
PARLER

MORGAN FINNSIÖ, EXPO FOUNDATION

PARLER, based in Nevada, US, was founded in 2018 by John Matze and Jared Thomson with the financial backing of co-founder and conservative megadonor Rebekah Mercer.[133]

Presenting itself as a 'free-speech alternative' to bigger social media platforms, and explicitly committed to a minimum of content moderation, Parler is notable for its overt political orientation and is often described as the platform of choice for many followers of former US President Donald J. Trump, Republican Party supporters, and American conservatives.[134] It has also been used by a number of British MPs and ministers of the Conservative Party.[135]

In 2020, as prominent US conservatives alleged that major social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook were censoring conservative users, Parler became an appealing alternative for many of their followers. After the 2020 US presidential election, and the rise of the baseless narrative that the election was 'stolen' – a discourse that increasingly became labeled as disinformation on major platforms – Parler saw an explosive surge of new users, spurred by public exhortations from conservative political leaders and influencers to join the platform.[136] Unlike the major platforms, Parler took little or no action to moderate extremist or disinformation content. The number of Parler users doubled to some 10 million in the month of November 2020, the company claimed.[137] By this time, Holocaust denial and other forms of antisemitism and racism could easily be found on Parler, and right-wing extremist actors, such as the violent nazi group Nordic Resistance Movement, were openly promoting their ideology on the platform.[138]

In the wake of the 6 January 2021 attack on the US Capitol by supporters of Trump, Parler came under increasing public scrutiny as evidence emerged suggesting that the platform had been used to incite, co-ordinate, plan and glorify the attack. Google suspended Parler from its Play Store on 8 January, citing activity on Parler as contributing to an "ongoing and urgent public safety threat",[139] and a day later Apple removed Parler from its App Store.[140] On 10 January, Amazon, calling Parler "a very real risk to public safety", suspended the platform from its cloud hosting service, effectively taking it offline.[141] At the time, Parler reportedly had 15 million registered user accounts.[142]

By February 2021, Parler had found a new web host and came back online. After reaching an agreement with Apple to moderate some of its content on the iOS version of its platform, though not on other versions, it was allowed back on to Apple's App Store in May.[143] Its former hosting partners, Google and Amazon, continue as of the writing of this report to deny service to Parler.[144]

In terms of functionality, Parler has a similar interface to the mainstream platform Twitter, allowing users to post messages including images and links; to promote, share and comment on the posts of other users; and to subscribe to other users so that their posts appear in a curated feed. An automated 'Hashtag Feed' suggests hashtags for users to explore, and a search function allows users to search for specific hashtags or account names.

ANTISEMITIC CONTENT ON PARLER

Antisemitic content, as well as other forms of racism, have been described by researchers as "flourishing" on Parler as a result of its policy of minimal moderation and because of the freedom of expression it offers to white supremacists, for whom anti-Jewish hatred and other forms of bigotry are a core ideological tenet and a prioritised form of communication.[145]

Parler's promise to its users of free expression "without fear of being 'deplatformed' for your views" implicitly encourages the hate speech that other platforms formally prohibit, and its long-standing tolerance of extremist accounts and of racist content has provided an implicit invitation to white supremacists who, by contrast, often deplore other more heavily moderated platforms as unwelcoming.

Because of Parler's limited functionality for search and navigation, it is difficult to systematically survey the forms of antisemitic content on Parler, but it is clear that a range of types is present, including highly explicit hate speech typical of white supremacy, radical Christian anti-Jewish rhetoric and conspiracy theories connected to QAnon or 'New World Order' theories. Some of the rhetoric is expressed directly in posts, ranging from slurs and simple text messages to elaborate antisemitic narratives; some is expressed in the form of hashtags, and some is linked to off-site.
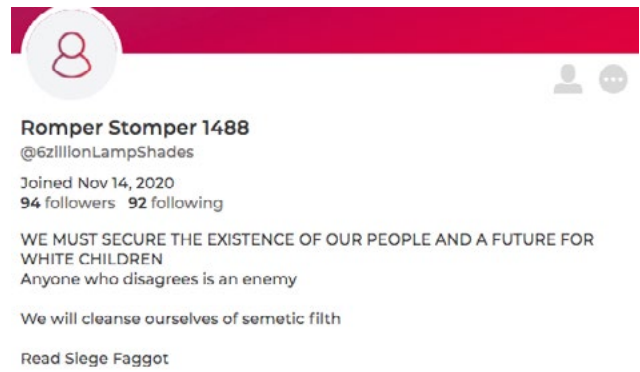
ACCOUNTS

Examples of antisemitic organisations on Parler include the violent Scandinavian Nazi group Nordic Resistance Movement, which has operated a registered account on the platform in their own name since June 28, 2020, and regularly posts Nazi propaganda with links to its website, which overflows with explicit antisemitic, racist and extremist content; the account has over 800 followers on Parler. The Proud Boys, a North American right-wing extremist group that has been classed as terrorist by the government of Canada, have an account on Parler with over 350,000 followers and a 'gold badge', signifying that Parler has verified the account. A variety of other well-known antisemitic and white supremacist groups and individuals also maintain accounts on Parler.[146] These range from the Franco-Swiss convicted Holocaust denier Alain Soral, to British neo-Nazi influencer Mark Collett, to the prominent conspiracy theorist David Icke (see chapter 'Conspiracy Ideologies, COVID-19 and Antisemitism'), who has more than 62,000 followers.

Nordic Resistance Movement
@NordicResistanceMovement
Joined Jun 28, 2020
836 followers 25 following

The Nordic Resistance Movement is a revolutionary National Socialist activist organisation and a registered political party. Visit us at https://nordicresistancemovement.org/

However, not all extremists on Parler are active beyond maintaining accounts with descriptions and links to their websites; after the events of 6 January, following which Parler was taken offline, all content on the platform was apparently removed, and many extremist accounts have yet to post anything new since Parler came back online, appearing to exist as little more than "backups" to their accounts on larger platforms; other extremist accounts, while active, post only relatively rarely.

The extremist movement QAnon, whose discourse overlaps significantly with antisemitic ideology, is highly active on Parler, with multiple accounts with tens of thousands of followers between them (see chapter 'Conspiracy Ideologies, COVID-19 and Antisemitism'). In addition, countless individual user accounts exist on Parler with names and descriptions explicitly expressing antisemitic ideology, using well-known Nazi shibboleths like '1488' ("We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children; Heil Hitler") or 'GTKRWN' ("Gas the Kikes, Race War Now!").

GOYM
@pstefan1488
Joined Nov 18, 2020
95 followers 84 following

romanian nationalist, jew hater and ready for war. 1488
#superstraight
https://gab.com/PATRIOTROMAN

Romper Stomper 1488
@6zillionLampShades
Joined Nov 14, 2020
94 followers 92 following

WE MUST SECURE THE EXISTENCE OF OUR PEOPLE AND A FUTURE FOR WHITE CHILDREN
Anyone who disagrees is an enemy

We will cleanse ourselves of semetic filth

Read Siege Faggot

HASHTAGS AND SEARCH

Parler's Hashtag Feed refreshes itself automatically and offers the user a variety of hashtags to explore. These include hashtags like #wwg1wga, a QAnon movement shibboleth ("Where we go one, we go all") and #electionfraud, and these lead to a variety of disinformation and conspiracy theory content concerning everything from the 9/11 attacks to COVID-19 vaccines. As this report has discussed in another chapter, such conspiracy theories often fuel and feed into antisemitic discourse.
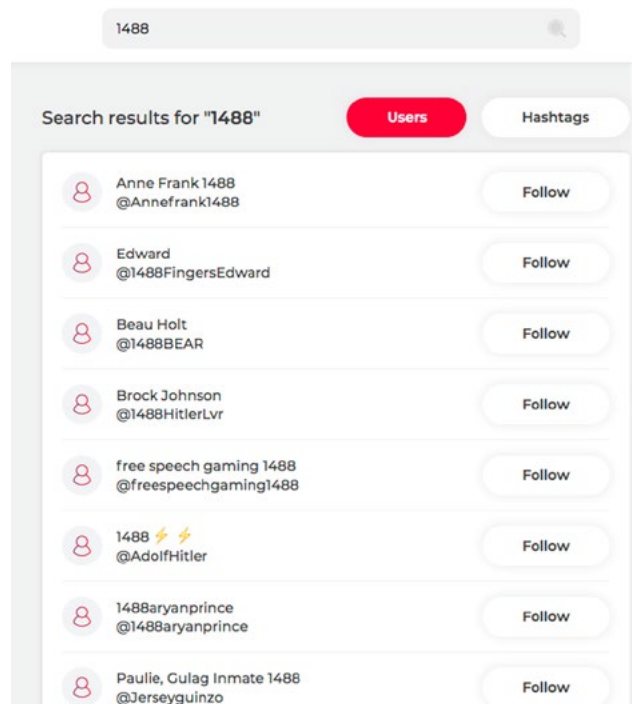
Entering the neutral search term "Jew" in Parler's search function yields a long list of suggested "related" hashtags, many of which are blatantly and viciously antisemitic (#jewdevilchristkillers, #jewbitch, #jewedgovernment, to name some of the less offensive hasthags), while entering the term "Holocaust" offers a variety of Holocaust denying, mocking or inciting hashtags (#HolocaustWasAHoax, #holocaustforrealthistime,

#holocaustneverhappened, #holocaustliesmatter, #holocaustbullshit, and so on). Even when the actual hashtag #holocaust is followed, antisemitic content appears amid the results.

Finally, entering explicitly antisemitic search terms such as 'JQ' ("Jewish Question") or 'GTKRWN' allows users to immediately connect with any user account whose name includes such a term or explore any matching or related hashtag. While some offensive hashtags appear to lead to little or no content, others, such as #holohoax, provides instant access to significant amounts of antisemitic content.
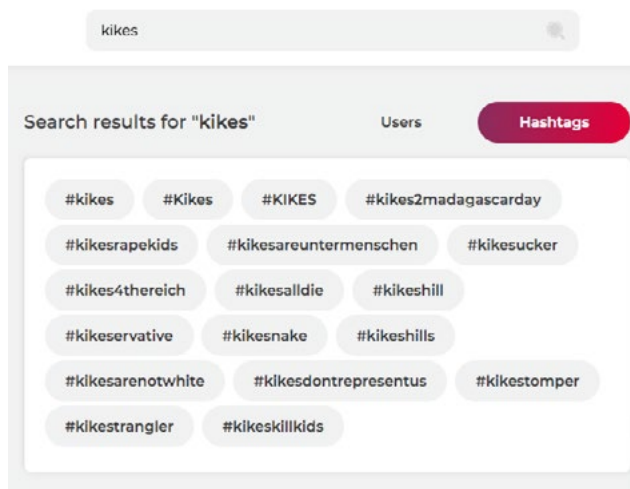
CONCLUSION

Parler tolerates and, by boasting of such tolerance, effectively invites antisemitic activity on its platform. The limited search engine on the platform means it is difficult to survey either the true quantity or full range of types of antisemitic content, but is sufficient to establish that both are considerable in extent. Among the types of antisemitic content on Parler, explicit white supremacist hate speech, traditional Holocaust denial as well as antisemitic conspiracy theories appear predominant, perhaps because the lack of content moderation means there is little need to couch antisemitism in "humour", memes or other more subtle forms of antisemitic discourse that have evolved on more moderated platforms. In addition, the platform provides fuel for antisemitic discourse by actively promoting conspiracist content and disinformation through its automated Hashtag Feed, which offers hashtags linking to QAnon discourse and other conspiracy theories that are closely intertwined with antisemitic ideology.

REDDIT

VERONIKA KRACHER, AMADEU ANTONIO FOUNDATION

REDDIT IS A social news aggregating, web content rating and discussion forum, founded in 2005. Reddit is one of the world's largest and most frequented social media platforms with around 430 million monthly users, known as 'redditors', and about 1.6 billion monthly visits.[147] According to a 2018 survey, about 74% of Reddit's user base is male.[148] Research released in July 2021 indicates that most desktop users come from the US (48.9 %) , whereas 28% came from Europe.[149] Usernames are characterized by the letter 'u' in front of the name; as in 'u/username'. One can access the entirety of the content posted by a user clicking on their username.

The website is structured in hundreds of thousands of boards, each dedicated to a specific topic, known as 'subreddits'. These are characterised and accessed by the letter 'r' in front of the subreddit name; for example the subreddit 'aww', which is dedicated to adorable and wholesome content, can be accessed via www.reddit.com/r/aww, and is referred to as 'r/aww' within the community. Of the roughly 138,000 active subreddits, the most frequented is r/announcement with around 80 million subscribers, with the next most popular subreddits having numbers around 30 million.[150] Users subscribe to subreddits of their liking and receive the content posted there on their 'front page', therefore filtering content to their own individual preferences; the algorithm also suggests similar subreddits as the ones already subscribed to. Users are able to publish their own content on the subreddits, or comment on the content of others, which can lead to lively discussions. Both postings and comments can be rated by the users, the process is called 'upvoting' or 'downvoting', users can also 'gift' each other 'awards' for especially interesting, entertaining or engaging content. The amount of upvotes and awards manifests itself in 'karma', indexing the popularity of one user's content. Despite not being a 'social network' in the traditional sense – the users are mostly anonymous – one can 'follow' other members if their postings are deemed interesting.

It can be said that Reddit has a quite passionate user base, identifying itself with the homepage and its customs. This has led to an unspoken set of rules about what is commonly liked and disliked on the homepage, as well as a common sense of superiority towards other social media networks which are deemed less intellectually or humoristically inclined than Reddit.

HATE SPEECH ON REDDIT

As a community with a user base that is both composed primarily of male users, sections of which hold a sense of intellectual superiority to other platforms, it is unsurprising that parts of Reddit have become toxic cesspools. Over the years, the platform has been the subject of several controversies regarding trolling, hate speech, misogyny, racism and antisemitism, and has become widely regarded as a platform that can lead to online radicalisation, especially during the Trump presidential campaign. Reddit became one of the most important communities for members of the alt-right and the manosphere, and, notably, the so-called "Redpill"[151] or Men's Rights Activist subreddits, which must be seen as a gateway to further radicalisation into the far right. Still, the Reddit staff continues to take down controversial subreddits,[152] with increased efforts in the aftermath of the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020, most notably r/The_Donald, an often misogynistic and racist board celebrating the former US president Donald Trump. Other subreddits, such as r/The_Redpill, are "quarantined,"[153] which means they receive a warning about harmful content and cannot appear on the front page: one has to especially search for them. The homepage specifically notes in its rules that "Vilifying, humiliating, harassing, promoting identity based attacks against, promoting hatred against, or threatening violence against marginalized or vulnerable groups" will lead to a ban.[154]

While most of the explicitly alt-right or fascist boards are taken down, it has to be noted that a concerning number of subreddits with an 'Anti-SJW' or anti-feminist stance are online ('social justice warrior' is a derogatory term for progressive activists). A most notorious example is r/KotakuInAction, which can be linked to the misogynistic Gamergate campaign (a starting point for the alt-right movement), which contains a lot of antisemitism hidden

in dog whistles, and the idea that Jews are responsible for feminism. Casual sexism is also shockingly rampant in popular meme subreddits. However, there is monitoring of, and activism against, hateful content on the page both by parts of the user base itself and by the Reddit staff. Despite a constant backlash by some users lamenting the 'death' of free speech on Reddit, the website continues to learn from past mistakes and continues to take action against harmful content. The subreddit being the most active in keeping the platform a safe space is /r/AgainstHateSubreddits.[155]

ANTISEMITIC CONTENT ON THE PLATFORM

Since the moderation rules against hate speech continue to be more vigorously enforced, users have to resort to 'dog whistles', i.e. coded language. Instead of openly attacking Jewish people, antisemitic rhetoric is disguised to evade moderation. Commonly used phrases are 'globalists', 'Deep State', 'Cultural Marxists', sometimes even 'ZOG', an abbrevation of the antisemitic conspiracy theory of an 'Zionist Occupied Government'. Antisemitic content on Reddit can be classified in four categories: openly antisemitic content, antisemtic dog whistles, antisemitism as 'edgy' transgression, i.e. in joke or meme form, and finally antisemitism as anti-Zionism.

OPEN ANTISEMITISM AND ANTISEMITIC CONSPIRACY THEORIES

It has to be emphasised that far-right subreddits are generally banned quickly, often as soon as they are mentioned in watchblogs, such as r/AgainstHateSubreddits. When they are taken down, there is still a documentation of the nature of these far-right subreddits in the r/AgainstHateSubreddits. However, subreddits with openly antisemitic content remain online. The subreddit /r/conspiracy,[156] created in 2008 and with 1.6 million subscribers, is very prone to open antisemitism, due to the nature of conspiracy ideologies. Users frequently discuss topics such as the 'Deep State'[157], a 'Zionist Occupied Government', and the Rockefellers[158]/Rothschilds[159]/George Soros[160] as masterminds behind certain events. Further conspiratorial antisemitic tropes can also be found, including: Jews as child murderers, Jews as masterminds behind Biden's government, Jewish-coded 'bankers' as society's 'biggest problem', and Jews owning the press.
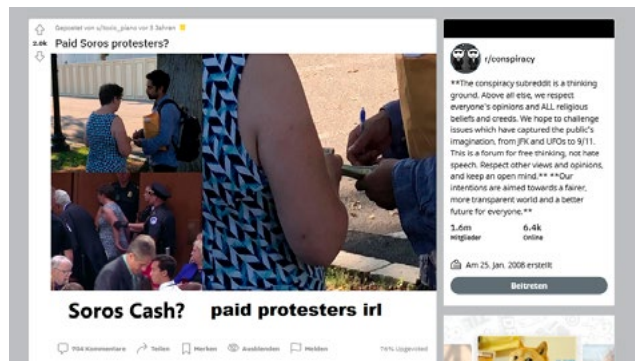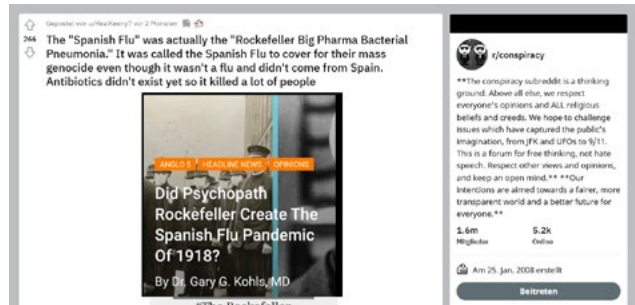

A similar subreddit is the QAnon board r/TruthLeaks,[161] with 13.7 thousand subscribers, which promotes the inherently antisemitic QAnon conspiracy ideology. Another conspiracy subreddit which frequently features antisemitism was the long-quarantined r/NoNewNormal, before being recently banned. r/AgainstHateSubreddit has compiled examples of antisemitic incidents on the board, including threads about the 'New World Order',[162] reproduction of neo-Nazi propaganda[163] or comparing measures against the COVID-19 pandemic to the Holocaust.[164]

Also worth mentioning is the subreddit r/israelexposed[165] with 22.2 thousand subscribers. This board claims to stand for 'peace' and 'justice', yet much of the content focuses on the constant demonisation of the state of Israel.

ANTISEMITIC DOG WHISTLES IN "CONSERVATIVE" SUBREDDITS

Whilst claiming to support the state of Israel, sections of the Republican party followers on Reddit have developed a tendency for antisemitic conspiracy theories, often linked with both anti-communist and anti-feminist ideologies.

Since r/The_Donald has been banned, the subreddit r/Conservative[166] can be seen as its successor. Founded in 2008, r/Conservative records 853,000 subscribers and over the years has become increasingly hostile towards any kind of progressive movements, or even the Democratic party. As the provided screenshots demonstrate, r/Conservative makes frequent use of antisemitic dog whistles, talking about 'Globalists' or 'Cultural Marxism'. Cultural Marxism is an ideologically-loaded term, in part popularised by far-right terrorist Anders Breivik, and has become a viral bogeyman within parts of the conservative right, as well as the extreme right. It describes the political and ideological influence by the Frankfurt School – communist Jews – within Western societies. The narrative claims that the emancipatory ideas of thinkers such as Herbert Marcuse are dominant in both academia and Hollywood, therefore spreading Marxism, feminism or anti-racism and attacking a white, bourgeois and patriarchal America. The idea of Jews controlling universities and the media is inherently antisemitic. Another antisemitic code that is frequently used on r/Conservative is the liberal philantrope and Holocaust survivor Georg Soros, the main actor in numerous conspiracy theories.
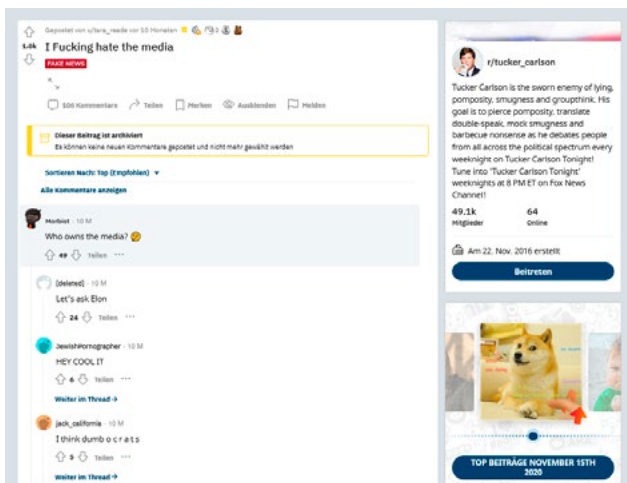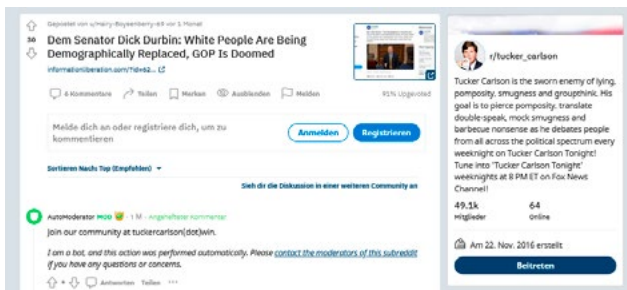
Another allegedly 'conservative' subreddit is r/ConservativesOnly,[167] which also reproduces antisemitic conspiracy theories regarding Soros, the Rothschilds or Rockefeller. This shows that some so-called 'conservatives' on the platform

have radicalised further towards the radical or extreme right. This becomes especially clear when analysing the subreddit of Fox News anchor Tucker Carlson, who frequently crosses the line into alt-right territory. r/TuckerCarlson is not quarantined, but set to 'private' – only subscribed users have access to the community.

Tropes reproduced on r/TuckerCarlson are, for example, the frequently antisemitic 'Great Replacement' theory[168] or controlling the media.[169] Another, even more shocking example is the board r/PaleoConservative. The community might be private, but as r/AgainstHateSubreddit has investigated, users of r/PaleoConservative have expressed support for far-right influencer Nick Fuentes. They are, as it is documented, openly admitting being fascist and antisemitic[170] and spouting antisemitic conspiracy theories such as Jews being responsible for 9/11 attacks.[171] In conclusion, it has to be said that many so-called 'conservative' platforms on Reddit are nothing more than alt-right hate groups.

ANTISEMITISM AS TRANSGRESSIVE 'JOKE' WITHIN MEME SUBREDDITS

When called out on their hate speech, members of the alt-right are quick to mockingly sneer that their hatred against minorities is not to be taken seriously and instead "just for the lulz". Therefore, it is no surprise that antisemitism is – alongside racism, queerphobia, misogyny, and violent anti-communism – rampant on certain meme subreddits. Most notorious transgressors are r/PoliticalCompassMemes[172], r/OffensiveJokes[173], the Middle Eastern meme subreddit r/2ME4U[174] and, to no one's surprise, r/4chan.[175] While so-called 'dark humour' is not antisemitic *per se,* one has to acknowledge that 'edgyness' and moral transgression have become an inherent part of 4chan-influenced meme culture. Making fun of antisemitism and its victims under the guise of 'free speech' is one of its core staples. The line between the need for political incorrectness and 'triggering normies' and actual antisemitic beliefs is basically non-existent: users are willing to reproduce the vilest forms of prejudice for shock value and do not care if others are harmed in the process. An example on r/OffensiveJokes is a picture of orthodox Jews opening garbage containers with the caption "When you drop a coin in a jewish territory" – the post is named 'muh shekels'.[176] Antisemitic or otherwise harmful content is not the norm on r/OffensiveJokes or r/2ME4U, but it is neither moderated nor criticised by its community. On r/2ME4U users can even glorify Adolf Hitler or 'joke' about murdering Israelis, as r/AgainstHateSubreddits has documented.[177]

Both the majority of users on r/PoliticalCompassMemes and r/4chan are less focused on merely 'edgy' humor, but actively pushing a reactionary agenda. r/4chan (1.2 million users), as the subreddit honouring the infamous imageboard, is also prone to reproducing harmful content. Examples provided are making fun of the victims of the Holocaust[178] or reproducing vile lies about the state of Israel.[179]

An even worse transgressor is the subreddit r/PoliticalCompassMemes, which has 499 thousand users. The subreddit is dedicated to the oversimplified depiction of political leanings on two axis: authoritarian and libertarian, as well as right-wing and left wing, resulting in the depiction of four political viewpoints: authoritarian left ('tankies' and Stalinists), libertarian left (anarchists), libertarian right (anarcho-capitalists) and authoritarian right (fascists). Many of the posts have the tendency to make fun of libertarian-left viewpoints, claiming them to be hypocritical, not radical enough, and reproduce both misogynistic and anti-queer imagery. Another critique against the subreddit is that it promotes the so-called 'horseshoe theory', claiming that socialism and fascism are "equally bad". The anti-communism, anti-feminist and anti-queer sentiments of the subreddit's userbase can be closely linked to overall far right, and therefore antisemitic leanings, the appropriation of neo-Nazi imagery and rhetoric is shockingly common. As r/AgainstHateSubreddits has pointed out, there is not only usage of Nazi symbols,[180] but also several instances of Holocaust revisionism and solidarity with neo-Nazis[181]and the outright celebration[182] of the genocide against Jewish people during World War II; one member even sports the user name u/GaZeJuden1488. Those are not unique incidents, but the manifestation of the overall ideology festering on r/PoliticalCompassMemes.

FURTHER NOTABLE INSTANCES OF ANTISEMITISM ON REDDIT

When talking about antisemitism on Reddit, one has to mention the pipeline of anti-feminist men's right's activism and 'anti-SJW' subreddits towards actual fascist content. Hatred against progressive, especially queer and feminist movements, almost always involves 'secondary antisemitism'. This expresses itself in hatred against 'Cultural Marxism' being the force behind the fights against patriarchal or racist oppression. With terms such as 'feminazi', which is frequently used among the 311 thousand subscribers of r/mensrights, users relativise the persecution of Jews under the Third Reich, equate feminists with Nazis, and compare themselves to Jews, which is, in consequence, post-Holocaust antisemitism. The so-called

'gender critical' movement, which focuses on the demonisation of transgender people, also employs structurally antisemitic talking points, such as having a powerful force pulling the strings behind the curtain and indoctrinating children.

CONCLUSION

Reddit is a large platform with a large and very diverse user base. Due to several political and public scandals that Reddit was involved in – most notably Gamergate and the rise of the alt-right – the site's staff is continuing to learn from past mistakes, trying to create Reddit as a safe space free from discrimination and hate speech. It is supported by parts of the community monitoring and reporting transgressive behaviour. Nonetheless, it has to be acknowledged that the fight especially against misogyny and queerphobia is still not taken seriously enough. Furthermore it has to be seen as evidence of incapacity that subreddits like r/Conspiracy or r/PoliticalCompassMemes, which openly display antisemitic content, are not taken down because they are not 'openly' fascist. Despite having become more aware of hate speech, the Reddit staff still has room to grow and learn regarding discriminatory content on their platform. Reddit is still seen as a platform for 'free speech', but hate speech and free speech are two different things. If antisemitic, racist, misogynistic or queerphobic content are not consistently fought, free speech is made impossible for marginalised users on the platform.

TELEGRAM

DAVID LAWRENCE, HOPE NOT HATE

THE MESSAGING app Telegram currently sits on the verge of the mainstream, surpassing 500 million monthly active users in January 2021,[183] a month in which it was also the most downloaded app across iOS and Android globally.[184] The app is popular in a number of European countries; in early 2021, Telegram reportedly scored as the fifth most popular app in the UK under the "social networking" category in the iOS App Store, the fourth most popular in Germany, and first in Russia.[185] According to Statista, as of July 2021 Telegram is the fifth most popular mobile messenger app globally based on the number of monthly active users.[186]

Despite its rising popularity, Telegram remains notable for both the sheer quantity and the stark extremes of antisemitism available through the app. Telegram's commitment to secrecy, its minimal moderation and relative ease-of-use has lowered the hurdle for engaging in antisemitism, and has enabled extremist networks to propagandise, network and organise. Whilst every shade of antisemitism is readily available on Telegram, it has most notably become a central hub for several antisemitism-inflected conspiracy movements, including QAnon, as well as the violence-promoting extreme right, and it is these subcultures on which the following sections will focus.
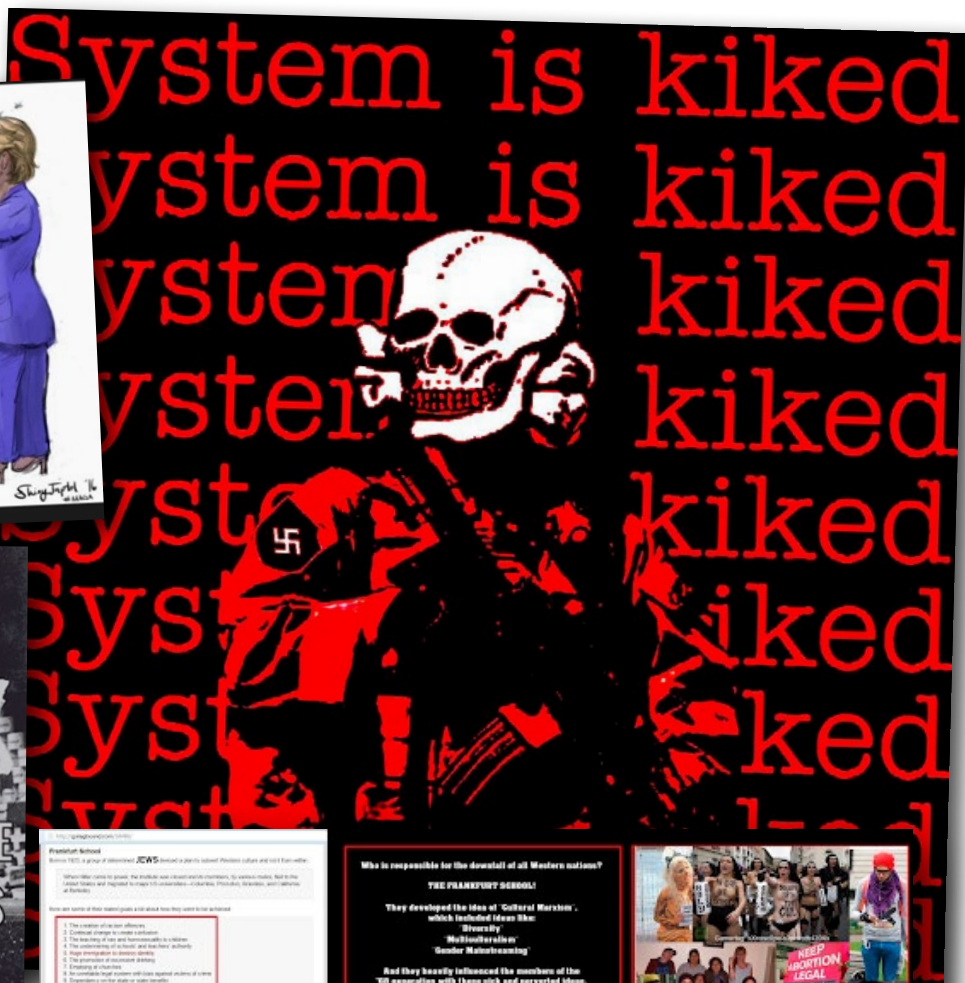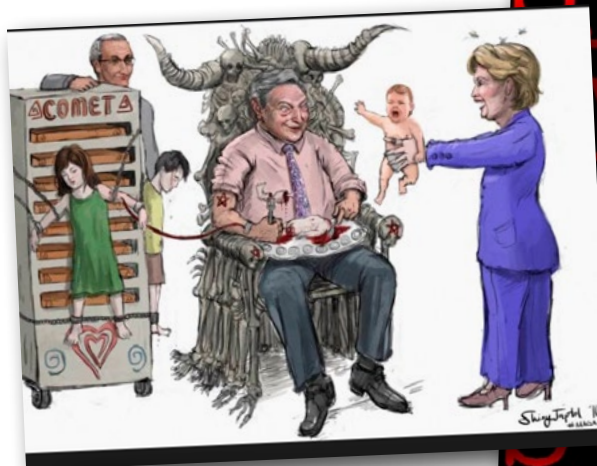
TELEGRAM'S FEATURES

Since its founding in 2013, Telegram has strongly emphasised privacy, with founder Pavel Durov once claiming that "our right for privacy is more important than our fear of bad things happening, like terrorism".[187] This attitude saw Telegram increasingly adopted by far-right elements across the globe in the 2010s, especially as major platforms took a more proactive stance against far right and pro-terror content. Following negative press over the jihadi networks, notably ISIS, using the software, in November 2019 Telegram collaborated with Europol to conduct a "coordinated action focused on the dissemination of online terrorist content".[188] The concrete outcomes of this action have been lacklustre, however, especially in terms of far-right terror content, which continues to proliferate across the platform.

As Professor Richard Rogers of the University of Amsterdam has explained, Telegram is a particularly useful tool for users who have been deplatformed from other social media as it is a "hybrid system", combining protected messaging with elements of social media, thereby reconciling "dual desires of protection and publicity".[189] While Telegram's one-way broadcast channels allows users to cultivate an audience and spread propaganda widely, akin to Twitter, its public and private group chats provide community and the possibility to organise, while direct messaging between users enables communication with greater privacy. Since October 2020, channels also have the option of hosting comment sections underneath specific posts.

Telegram hosts various media formats, meaning that antisemitism can be communicated through text posts, images, and large video, audio and PDF files. Many channels focus primarily on visual propaganda, for example memes, stylised posters, and clips of news footage, Holocaust denial documentaries and racist TikTok videos; others serve as archives for far-right texts, giving a wider reach to both obscure and classic antisemitic tracts, such as *Mein Kampf* or the notorious antisemitic forgery, *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. Within such spaces users can quickly become immersed in bubbles in which they receive constant streams of propaganda, meaning that Telegram is a powerful radicalisation tool.

For these reasons Telegram has proved attractive to both formal antisemitic organisations and the wider, non-organisational milieu. For example, it is the core platform of Patriotic Alternative (PA), the UK's most significant fascist group, which propagandises through regional branch channels and those of leading figures, while using private chat groups to organise actions and to build community through subgroups dedicated to specific interests (for example, gaming and fitness). However, most antisemitic channels and chat groups are not run by, or dedicated to, a specific organisation and take a broader approach, serving as feeds for all kinds of anti-Jewish content, heavily recycling and promoting posts from other channels. This cross-promotion of content means that through following links, users can be introduced to a wide variety of types of antisemitism.

CONSPIRATORIAL ANTISEMITISM

This capacity for radicalisation is particularly concerning as sweeping, if belated, bans on mainstream platforms have encouraged many of the conspiratorial networks that flourished during the COVID-19 pandemic to migrate to Telegram. As a result, in addition to the more traditional far-right content, much of the antisemitism on the platform is expressed in coded terms and interwoven with conspiratorial notions surrounding the pandemic, vaccines, an alleged 'Deep State' and supposed cabals of elite paedophiles.

One notable example is David Icke, among the most famous conspiracy ideologues in the English-speaking world, who now uses Telegram as one of his primary means of public outreach after being barred from most mainstream platforms in 2020 (although, with 40,000 subscribers as of September 2021, he has a much diminished audience). Whilst Icke strongly denies being antisemitic, Jewish individuals and organisations play a central role in many of the malevolent plots he describes, often using terms such as "Rothschild Zionist", "Khazarian Mafia" and "Sabbatean-Frankist" to allow plausible deniability, a tactic common among conspiratorial antisemites. Icke has continued such behaviours on Telegram, and in June 2021 he posted an audiobook version of the aforementioned *Protocols*, which outlines a Jewish plot to destroy the West. Icke's content is often picked up and promoted by other COVID-denying, anti-vaccine networks.

Many of the channels and groups that make up Telegram's conspiratorial milieu are more overtly antisemitic and explicitly identify Jews as the arch-conspirators in various malign plots.

Some such groups have considerable followings; for example, the channel 'Dismantling The Cabal' has grown to 90,000 subscribers since its founding in February 2021, and intersperses clips from anti-lockdown demonstrations and allusions to a New World Order with Holocaust denial and white nationalist propaganda. As is typical of conspiratorial antisemites, the channel communicates Jew-hatred, in part, through intricate diagrams positioning Jews at the top of conspiratorial pyramids, reading hidden meanings into the speech of Jewish figures and organisations, or posting images of Jewish individuals alongside influential historical figures, implying undue Jewish influence on world events. Such propaganda is designed to engender the sense that one is uncovering taboo information and unravelling a great secret, and there are countless other channels dedicated to highlighting a perceived Jewish conspiracy in similar ways.

Conspiratorial antisemitism on Telegram

Notably, Telegram is now a central hub for QAnon internationally, following the loose movement's exodus from more popular social media in the wake of the storming of the Capitol Building in January 2021. QAnon quickly achieved an extensive spread on the platform, establishing thousands of channels and groups in numerous languages. In research released in July 2021, extremism researchers Jordan Wildon and Marc-Andre Argentino surveyed a sample of 30 QAnon groups and found that 135,150 unique accounts had posted at least once, leading them to conclude that whilst there has been "a decline in QAnon activity on Telegram from its peak in early 2021, a healthy and active community still exists on the platform". In the eyes of Wildon and Argentino, the 135,150 active accounts in their sample alone make QAnon "the largest active extremist community on Telegram".[190]

As explored elsewhere in this report, a strong sinew of antisemitism has run through QAnon since the beginning of the movement, and sections of QAnon supporters have become more

overtly antisemitic since arriving on Telegram, likely due in part to cross-pollination with the pre-existing far-right extremist subcultures. Perhaps the clearest example is GhostEzra, among the most popular QAnon influencers on Telegram, whose channel was dubbed "the largest antisemitic internet forum" in the world by *Logically* in August 2021.[191] Like several QAnon figures, GhostEzra has found a far larger following on Telegram than on mainstream platforms; prior to his ban in January 2021, he had 26,000 followers on Twitter, and, at time of writing, has 330,000 Telegram subscribers. The GhostEzra channel shifted from coded antisemitism into open Jew-hatred in the Spring of 2021, spreading Holocaust denial and claiming that people who "identify as Jewish but are not actually even Jews" are "destroying the world" and are working towards "total world domination and control". Much of the antisemitism forwarded on the channel is inflected with Biblical references, for example using the term "Synagogue of Satan" interchangeably with "the global cabal". As is typical of many antisemites post-pandemic, he also blends COVID-19 conspiracy ideologies into his outpourings, for example claiming that "more human beings globally will die at the hands of the Zionist created vaccines than jews died during WWII". The sheer size of the channel means he has undoubtedly introduced Nazi-strength antisemitism to new audiences, and continues to do so without any apparent action from Telegram.

More human beings globally will die at the hands of the Zionist created vaccines than jews died during WWII. It is therefore accurate to say we are experiencing a real holocaust in real time. Yet, there will be many that continue to defend the Zionists. This is called insanity folks. It's like saying help kill us while we defend you. The irony of it all is, jews by percentage, will actually get the vaccine more than any other group.   👁 320.3K 21:12

A post from the GhostEzra channel

EXTREME FAR RIGHT

Above all other platforms covered in this report, Telegram is home to terror-promoting far-right networks in which a genocidal hatred of Jews is commonplace. Over the past three years, a series of relatively small, international terroristic channels and groups have emerged which preach a message of sabotage and guerrilla warfare in order to accelerate the collapse of the supposedly Jewish-controlled "system" and spark a race war, enabling the eradication of Jews and other enemies. Whilst this milieu is far smaller than the QAnon subculture, it is notable for its influence on the wider far right on the platform; for example, July 2020 research by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue found that 60% of the white supremacist channels in their sample

contained "support for terrorists and terrorist organisations".[192]

Propaganda from an extreme antisemitic channel

This scene is deeply concerning due to its violent potential, celebrating mass murder not only as a means to retribution and revolution, but as a form of entertainment. In addition to calls for "lone wolf" terrorist attacks, practical advice and bomb-making manuals are also often available in such spaces. This has offline impact; Telegram has extended the reach of several pre-existing terrorist organisations, such as the AtomWaffen Division, which has been linked to several murders. It has also played midwife to several new terrorist outfits which, whilst very small, have established cells across Europe, the US and Australasia. Some of these have threatened public officials and committed hate crimes, including the Feuerkrieg Division (FKD), which was launched in October 2018, formally disbanded in February 2020, and prohibited in the UK in July 2020. Telegram enables such groups to quickly coalesce and, if they become compromised, to disband and reform under different banners.

The antisemitism within this milieu is as extreme as it gets, with Jewish people portrayed as the enslavers and corrupters of white populations, targeted for violence. The 'Happy Merchant' meme, which depicts an antisemitic caricature of a Jewish man rubbing his hands together and smiling, is heavily used in antisemitic spaces on the platform, used as a shorthand for Jewish control and greed. Whilst this overtly anti-Jewish meme has wide use across platforms, it is especially commonplace on Telegram as it can be used freely without fear of banning. There are endless variations on this meme, and those celebrating the infliction of violence against the Happy Merchant by white men are prevalent

among Telegram's more extreme antisemitic channels and groups.

Propaganda including the 'Happy Merchant' meme

On such spaces, militant antisemitism is often communicated through "Terrorwave", a distinctive, menacing form of visual propaganda. Commonly rendered in red, white and back, the aesthetic typically incorporates images of historical fascists, terrorists or paramilitaries wearing skull masks, alongside far-right symbols and simplistic slogans. This propaganda often includes graphic depictions of violence against enemies, including Jews, who are typically portrayed using Nazi-era style antisemitic stereotypes, alongside slogans such as "KILL THE KIKES, SAVE THE WHITES". Such propaganda often constitutes direct calls for violence against Jews.

'Terrorwave' propaganda

CONCLUSION

Above perhaps all other platforms covered in this report, Telegram has provided a safe haven for antisemites deplatformed by other social media platforms, allowing conspiratorial networks to flourish and facilitating their slide into increasingly overt Jew-hatred. It has enabled the spread of an extreme, violence-promoting, anti-Jewish subculture that poses a legitimate threat to Jewish people alongside other minoritised communities. As the platform's popularity climbs, new audiences will be exposed to these entrenched anti-Jewish currents, but Telegram continues to fail to take appropriate action against the dangerous hate it hosts.

TIKTOK

THERESA LEHMANN, EVA KAPPL AND SIMONE RAFAEL, AMADEU ANTONIO FOUNDATION

TIKTOK IS A social network used for sharing (often self-made) video clips that can be accompanied by text, hashtags and music or sounds. In its country of origin, China, the app is also known as Douyin. TikTok's parent company, ByteDance Ltd., bought the sing-along app Musical.ly in November 2017 for around one billion US dollars and bundled the two services together under the TikTok brand. TikTok is the fastest growing social media app in the world within the last two years. In September 2020, official TikTok user figures for Europe were published for the first time, showing that more than 100 million people use TikTok in Europe at least once a month,[193] making the app more successful in Europe than in the US (30 million users in the same period, and 500 million users on Douyin in China). [194]

The users are very young compared to other social media networks; 69% of users are between 16 and 24 years old.[195] The short videos typical of the platform can reach millions of people around the world. Different languages play a subordinate role, as much of the content is communicated through facial expressions, gestures in combination with a song or an inserted emoji. Political content is also communicated through an interplay of short clips, filters, songs and acting elements.

POLITICAL TIKTOK

The short video format of TikTok is used in a similar way to the info tiles and stories on Instagram when addressing political issues or expressing solidarity. Because of the brevity of the format, political activism on TikTok has been dubbed 'copy-paste activism' by some political analysts and has been repeatedly criticised. However, this content can be particularly attractive to young people as an introduction to a topic, or as a first step in their politicisation. The short format is largely used for positioning oneself, leaving little or no room for a differentiated discussion of complex issues.

In addition, there is a strong personalisation. Creators who have a large number of followers enjoy a high degree of trust, which means that questions over the factuality of their contributions often recede into the background. A parasocial relationship is created through regular and seemingly personal contact. Such a relationship is a main component of 'following', i.e. following the output or everyday life of a person whom one likes because of his or her activities such as art, music, performance or appearance and charisma. Many political influencers also try to convince their viewers of their own position while adopting a personal, friendly approach. Reflective video consumption should scrutinise the role of creators, the video presentation and its emotional effects, but many everyday consumers do not engage in such reflection, making them vulnerable to manipulation or desinformation.

HATE SPEECH ON TIKTOK

What content appears in the personal feed on TikTok is dependent on an algorithm that takes a user's likes, shares and other information into account. Additionally, there is the often criticised and still intransparent moderation practice of the company. In 2020, leaks that provided insight into the workings of the algorithm revealed discriminatory practices. For example, the company instructed its moderators to hide posts by "ugly", poor or disabled users.[196]

Due to the algorithmic organisation of the platform's content, polarising, strongly emotionally-charged content is rewarded by the algorithm, even in the case of political content. Negative emotions and upsetting content in particular ensure a high response rate, leading to a longer time spent on the platform. Differentiation and objective, sober observation are no match for an angry rant or the portrayal of personal grief and sympathy.

When entering the European market, TikTok has tried to avoid the mistakes of other social networks in relation to hate speech and far-right extremism online. For example, openly far-right and neo-Nazi profiles are deleted more quickly and consistently on TikTok than elsewhere, or often have their reach restricted via shadowbans. This is because 'violent extremism' is explicitly prohibited on the platform. However, there are regional differences recognisable on the global platform: while German-language far-right accounts are found and deleted relatively quickly, English-language accounts including open symbolism, such with black suns in profile pictures, SS runes in

names or 'Fascist Victory' as a username, are easy to find – and not in small numbers.

The situation is even more difficult when considering misanthropic, dehumanising ideologies such as antisemitism. "Hateful behaviour", which includes antisemitism, is prohibited on the platform[197] and in October 2020 TikTok announced that it would tighten its community guidelines worldwide and take action against "white supremacy" and the "white genocide" ideology, and will delete "false information and offensive stereotypes about Jews, Muslims and other groups" including antisemitic misinformation about Jewish individuals or families.[198]

ANTISEMITISM ON THE PLATFORM

In autumn 2020, a TikTok spokesperson confirmed in the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, the consistent commitment against antisemitism on the platform. Nonetheless, antisemitism can still be found in many forms on TikTok, and the consistent enforcement of the Community Guidelines does not appear to have been particularly successful thus far.

According to a study by the Center for Countering Digital Hatred (CCDH), published in July 2021, TikTok only removed 5% of accounts that directly racially insulted Jewish users, for example by sending them messages denying the Holocaust, after they were reported.[199] The study also highlights the extreme reach that hate can achieve on TikTok; while 129 antisemitic posts on Facebook reached about 375,000 people in the study period, 119 posts on TikTok reached 2.1 million people. Of the 119 reported cases on

TikTok, 13.5% were deleted (22), in 5% of the cases the account was deleted (6) – that is, in 81.5% of the openly antisemitic posts nothing happened and they remained online.

DIRECT TARGETING OF JEWS

Classical antisemitism often appears on TikTok in casual form, as something which is 'acceptable' in everyday behaviour. In a video from Germany that became known through documentation in January 2021, a short clip from a YouTube video was showcased in which one of the two moderators puts a cake in the oven and the other one comments: "In the oven... say hello to Anne Frank for me". This clip was shared on TikTok with approving commentary and was not deleted after being reported.[200] The example stands for all kinds of supposed or claimed 'jokes' shared on the platform – 'jokes' about the Holocaust, Auschwitz concentration camp or Anne Frank as a prominent victim of Nazism's eliminatory antisemitism. Young people have visited gas chambers on memorial sites and filmed themselves making jokes there, which they have sent out to the world via TikTok, which particularly affects Holocaust survivors and their families.[201]

Access to classical and conspiratorial antisemitism often happens via hashtags. Content posted with the hashtags #rothschildfamily, #synagogueofsatan and #soros have been viewed 25.1 million times in half a year, according to TikTok's own analytics. More explicit hashtags, such as #holohaux or #killthejews, are at least banned on TikTok. The casual nature of the hatred is also important here: for example,
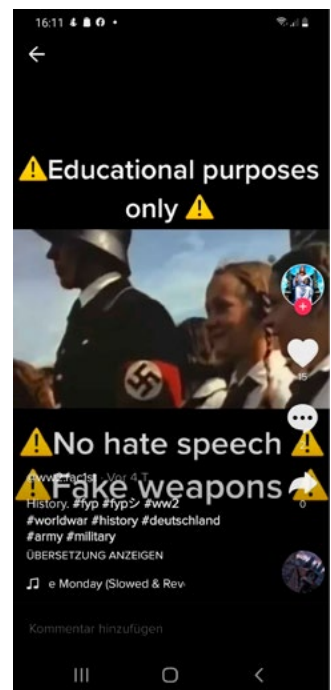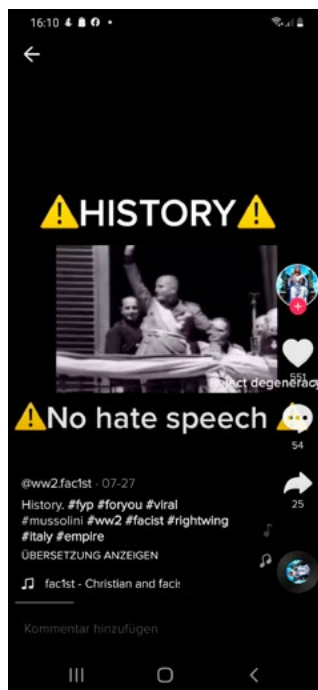
a football-savvy account with 528,000 followers announced highlights from a football match "Portugal vs #Israhell" (antisemitic compound of 'Israel' and 'hell').

TikTok trends such as the 'Holocaust Challenge' in the summer of 2020, in which users staged themselves as Jewish victims of the Shoah, are inappropriate in a different way. In short videos, mainly girls and young women with make-up bruises and supposedly "Jewish clothes" appear to sad violin music, miming their invented concentration camp stories into the camera, which are supplemented by text overlays, reporting from the afterlife about their supposed death during the Holocaust. Whilst many of the young users may have wanted to make an educational contribution to Holocaust rememberance, the action was perceived as "tasteless carnival" or even as mockery of the victims of the Holocaust.[202]

ISRAEL-RELATED ANTISEMITISM

Israel-related antisemitism in particular is very popular on TikTok, and can be disseminated widely without the disturbance of moderation. Under the claim of a 'TikTok Intifada', videos of attacks on Jews in Jerusalem were posted from around April 2021. In May 2021, the Middle East conflict between Israel and the Palestinians was also played out on TikTok, by users from all over the world. Here, we will examine this issue in more detail to clarify the mechanisms of spreading hate on TikTok.

Solidarity in the conflict was negotiated on platform, not unlike the question of one's favourite sports team. Creators worldwide processed their own positioning in numerous memes, songs, sketches and other typical forms of articulation on the platform. Based on anti-imperialist, post-colonial and Islamist argumentation patterns, an anti-Zionist sentiment emerged that sometimes crossed the line from legitimate criticism to antisemitism.

Many posts directly questioned Israel's right to existence which many argue is a form of antisemitism. The term 'Zionist' was marked as 'the enemy'- treated with double standards (harder standards than applies to other states), delegitimised (questioning Israel's right to exist) and demonised (Israel shown as incarnation of evil in the world). Antisemitic imagery and codes thus found a new space of reception.

Worryingly, a young generation interested in politics came into contact with numerous antisemitic narratives, learned them and spread them consciously or unconsciously. In addition to antisemitic hashtags like #fromtherivertothesea, a common Hamas slogan denying Israel's right to exist, Israel-related antisemitism has been spread through the use of emojis, songs, dances, filters and skits as codes. Often an antisemitic message in a post is only apparent and understandable when you analyse several of the layers.[203] Content creators can personify antisemitic caricatures, for example. Filters that seem unproblematic in themselves, such as "Running through Versailles" (discussed below) or a face distortion filter, can become an embodiment of antisemitic imagery through their thematic embedding. Whilst not originating on TikTok, such ideologically-tinged antisemitic narratives find a new, playful expression on TikTok and thus reaches younger generations. Differentiation and counter-speech, on the other hand, seldom occur and do not reach the view numbers of hate postings.

A wave of posts professed "solidarity with Palestine" – a completely acceptable sentiment – but often only used one-sided information, unclear sources and strong emotionalisation to immediately establish a strong friend-foe and good-evil binary in which Israel is a incorporation of (white) evil in the world. While important to state that there is absolutely nothing intrinsically antisemitic in passionate support for the Palestinian cause, much of this content homogenised and demonised Jewish people and Israel in a way that crossed the line into antisemitism.

During the conflict there was also a prevelance of anti-Jewish and antisemitic codes often using songs, images or narrations may not be explicitly antisemitic in their direct expression, but they frame the Middle East conflict in a simplified way that can lead to antisemitic aggression and violence.

One good example of content on Tik Tok that might not be obviously antisemitic to some but is once the context is understood are video snippets and clips of demonstrations posted and shared under the hashtag #KindermörderIsrael (Child killer Israel). The claim that Israeli soldiers kill children on purpose builds on the blood libel legend, an anti-Jewish narration that is still used after centuries, with the cipher of Israel/Jews as child murderers. The antisemitic hashtag #Covid1948 is also used on TikTok, equating the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 with the COVID-19 pandemic. This image reproduces old antisemitic depictions of Jews as a world-threatening virus.
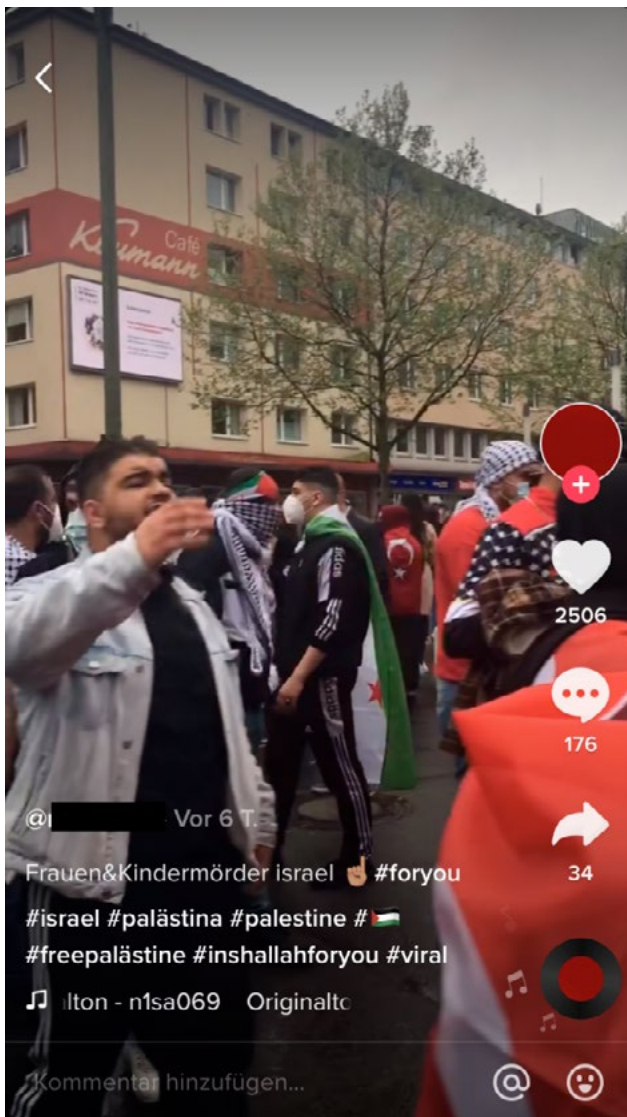
DISINFORMATION

Some content shared on Tik Tok, while not explicitly antisemitic in and of itself, spreads disinformation that results in some people reacting in an antisemitic way. This is especially true of false information during the Middle East conflict. One video, which gained widespread reach on numerous social media platforms, showed Israelis dancing at the Wailing Wall, with a fire in the background. In the videos, a connection was insinuated between these events and it is explained that Jewish settlers had celebrated the destruction of the Al Aqsa Mosque, a Muslim shrine. Despite it since being shown that this was not an accurate representation of these events TikTok has failed to act against this content.[204] There are also examples of emotive and harrowing footage of people suffering during other conflicts being presented as though it was happening in Palestine. This sort of misinformation can result in heightened levels of antisemitism.

Another narrative spread on Tik Tok is that Jews and Zionists supposedly control the media which is an articulation of the age-old antisemitic narration of powerful Jews pulling the strings in the background and influencing the media. This is popular in the form of sketches: a young woman parodies an editorial meeting of Western media in which she plays all the participants at the same time. She explains the supposed bias through anti-Muslim racism and pretends to be the editor-in-chief who overlooks Palestinian suffering and only wants to show Israel as a victim. The video of the little-known young woman had 17,000 likes within a few days and was viewed over 76,000 times. Variations and interpretations of this production were quickly found; the German offshoot of the Turkish state broadcaster TRT and the Islamist group 'Muslim interactive' also interpreted the editorial sketch for themselves. While criticism of the media's interpretation of the conflict is completely legitimate, some of the criticism insinuated disproportionate Jewish control which is antisemitic.

HATE SPEECH AGAINST JEWS

Another form of direct hate is the blaming of Jews in Europe for current events and suffering via hate comments and personal threats under their social media posts, often irrespective of the topic. Together with her grandson Dov Forman, 98-year-old Auschwitz survivor Lily Ebert educates people about the Holocaust on TikTok. Most recently, the two received large numbers of antisemitic and Holocaust-relating hate comments, including "Happy Holocaust" or "Peace be upon Hitlar" in private messages and under their video posts. "Hitler" is here written "Hitlar" in an intentional misspelling to avoid automatic keyword management bans of the posts. Other posts celebrate Hitler and accuse Israel of repeating Nazi history.

EMOJIS

Israel-related antisemitism is articulated at a low level in the use of emoji combinations, such as the shoe and the Israeli flag. Israel flags are also stepped on in videos – or on the Israeli flag emoji, thus linking two levels to express anti-Zionism. Shoes are seen as a symbol of dirt and impurity. In particular, showing the sole of the shoe is a sign of contempt and insult in the Arab-Muslim context. The hashtag of the Israeli flag and shoe emojis has been used 1.8 million times so far – not counting other arrangements such as "shoe Israel flag" (350,000). In Germany, the burning of foreign flags has been banned since 2020 – because Israel flags had been repeatedly burned at antisemitic demonstrations.[205] On TikTok, symbolic burning occurs through the combination of Israeli flag emoji and flame emoji.

SELF-MEMEFICATION AS ANTISEMITIC CARICATURE

A popular feature on TikTok is virtual reality filters in which users can take on roles. In May 2021, on the occasion of the "International Day of the Museum", TikTok published a filter that lets the user run through the Palace of Versailles as the embodiment of Marie Antoinette ("Versailles Run"). Users can create their own version of the meme using facial expressions, language, text and sound. The concept is simple: you run away from something and you can decide individually what you flee from. While the original idea was to show a walk through the palace, the princess looks rushed and as if she is running for her life. This was noticed by users of the filter and plays a role in the interpretation. One creator, for example, puts herself in the role of "Zionists". In the background, a version of Lady Gaga's "Lovegame" is playing. The composition of facial expressions, text and filter results in the embodiment of audacity. Among others, the ruler stands looking into space with narrowed eyes, the image caption says: "Zionists on their way to label anyone who is pro-Palestine an antisemite." Hashtag:

#MuseumMoment. This is how content that many would argue crosses the line into antisemitism, or at the very least seeks to significantly play down antisemitism, is playfully carried into non-political communities.

CONCLUSION

The many levels and layers through which antisemitism can be expressed on TikTok make it a complicated phenomenon to monitor. However, the company's moderation teams also seem to lack awareness, for example not banning openly antisemitic hashtags in order to at least minimise accessibility. Even when reported by users, the moderation on TikTok fails to address the increasing antisemitism, or acts half-heartedly instead of punishing antisemitism with warnings or banning of users. Videos that spread antisemitic disinformation are occasional referenced as "sensitive content", but these are not sufficient measures when considering the young and impressionable audience the platform is aiming at.
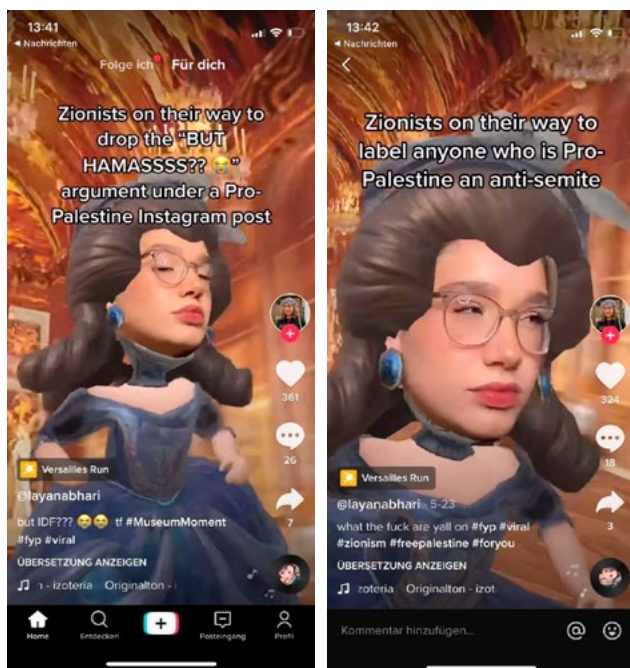
TWITTER

GREGORY DAVIS, HOPE NOT HATE

TWITTER was founded in 2006 as a 'micro-blogging' platform, designed to allow for short, SMS-style messages to be shared with a group of friends rather than between individuals.[206] With an estimated 397 million monthly users[207] worldwide, Twitter is among the smallest of the platforms highlighted in this report. Even within the US, Twitter's largest national market, the 23% of American adults who use Twitter are dwarfed by the 69% coverage achieved by Facebook. Coverage in Europe varies widely between countries: while around 30% of the population in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland use Twitter, this figure falls to 13% and 8% in France and Germany respectively.[208]

However, it plays an outsized role in public discourse due to its widespread adoption by politicians, media outlets and influential figures in public life. In particular, it provided a unique insight into the mind of President Trump prior to his suspension following the 6 January riot at the US Capitol building, and is much used by media outlets as a means of gathering live updates on, and reactions to, world events.

This outsized relevance to public life has accordingly come with greater scrutiny over Twitter's role, behaviour and influence in society than that applied to other, similar-sized platforms such as Reddit. The open nature of the platform, which by default resembles a vast single forum for conversation in which any user can contribute to another's conversations, distinguishes it from other platforms like Facebook and Reddit that promote the creation of separate communities and private groups based on affinity or shared interest. Whereas concerns have been raised over the latter platforms for the radicalising potential and echo-chamber qualities of their compartmentalised user groups, Twitter's public format conversely provides far greater opportunities for abusive trolling and the insertion of hateful ideology into mainstream conversation. The ease with which malicious trolls can identify and target potential victims is perhaps greater than on any other platform, while the options for users seeking to protect themselves from abuse are fewer and less effective.

PLATFORM FEATURES

Despite raising the character limit from 140 to 280 characters in November 2017,[209] Twitter has remained true to its original vision of short, SMS-style text posts, although users are able to link messages together to form a conversation thread, allowing for longer ideas to be expressed. Users can also add up to four images to each tweet, as well as video clips up to a maximum of 140 seconds in length.

Key to the user experience of Twitter is the use of hashtags and 'trending topics'. Hashtags allow users to locate and contribute tweets as part of a wider conversation; if sufficient numbers of people use a particular hashtag over a particular time period it may be featured in the 'Trending' sidebar and thus be seen by a far wider audience, although the list is not purely based on the number of tweets alone and users see different trending lists based on their location and perceived interests.[210]

Twitter's default setting is for all accounts to be 'open' – that is, that a user's tweets can be viewed and replied to by any other user. There are two main ways in which a user can limit their visibility to other users; firstly, any individual user can be blocked, which prevents that particular user from viewing or interacting with their tweets.[211] More drastically, a user can set their profile to 'protected' mode, which limits the visibility of their tweets to only the accounts that the user has accepted as followers,[212] in a fashion similar to the friend request feature on Facebook. While the latter feature provides far greater protection from abuse and trolling from unfamiliar accounts, it also severely limits the ability of an account to gain new followers and contribute to wider conversations on the platform. Users can also exchange private messages with one or more other users, with a choice of whether to allow messages from any other user or only from those whose accounts they follow.

One controversial feature of Twitter is the ease with which users can set up and manage multiple anonymous accounts simultaneously. Whereas Facebook asks users to create an account under their own name and has taken steps to prevent the use of multiple accounts, Twitter has no

similar restrictions and requires only a unique email address for each account.[213] While there are strong arguments in favour of online anonymity and the freedom of expression that it provides, this policy means that Twitter has a distinct issue with targeted abuse, with abusers able to create new accounts to continue a campaign of harassment within minutes of being blocked by another user or having a previous account suspended.

The forms of antisemitic content most visible on the platform can be broadly categorised into three categories: Conspiratorial antisemitism, Holocaust denial and Israel-related antisemitism.

CONSPIRATORIAL ANTISEMITISM

Like most major social media platforms, Twitter has been slow to address the proliferation of antisemitic conspiracy theories on the platform. Prior to his removal in November 2020 for COVID-19 misinformation, the veteran antisemitic conspiracy theorist David Icke had amassed more than 382,000 followers over his eleven years on the platform. Alongside his decades-long campaign of health misinformation, Icke used this platform to promote his thinly disguised antisemitic rhetoric, using coded terms such as 'Sabbatian-Frankist' to rehash classic tropes of Jewish global control.[214]
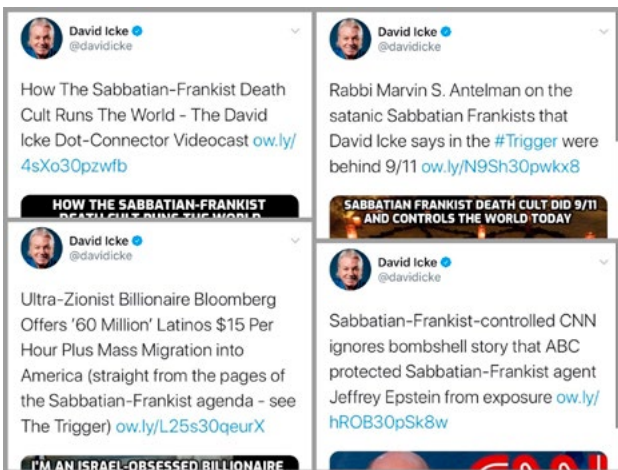
Twitter also played a pivotal role in the development and spread of the QAnon conspiracy theory,[215] which similarly places Jewish individuals and families at the heart of its nefarious central conspiracy. As an ideologically heterodox movement, the degree to which individual QAnon influencers embraced explicit antisemitism varied, but all embraced a narrative in which prominent Jewish business people such as George Soros and the Rothschild family played a key role in the supposed Satan-worshipping global cabal that was engaged in secret war with President Trump.

Despite the regular account suspensions of the more extreme promoters of the theory, many

returned to Twitter with new accounts within days or hours of their previous accounts' removal, sometimes amassing tens or even hundreds of thousands of followers on their ban-evasion accounts. These include the openly antisemitic user Craig Longley, who was banned under the username @IncarnatedET but managed to accrue 336,000 followers for his subsequent @InevitableET account.[216]

HOLOCAUST DENIAL AND TRIVIALISATION

Although some media outlets reported in October 2020 that Twitter had followed Facebook in prohibiting Holocaust denial,[217] its Hateful Conduct policies make no such restrictions, and the Holocaust is mentioned only in reference to a prohibition of "targeting individuals or groups with content that references forms of violence or violent events […] where the intent is to harass". So while bombarding another user with Holocaust denial materials might violate such a restriction, promoting them on the platform is not in itself an offence.

As such, Holocaust denial materials can easily be found posted to Twitter. Links to one particularly popular and extreme Holocaust denial propaganda documentary are frequently posted, with a single upload to the video-sharing platform Bitchute being shared 27 times in the first two weeks of September 2021 alone. More common is the use of mocking terms designed to deny and trivialise the Holocaust, with meme phrases such as "Six Gorillion" and "Muh Holocaust" frequently used in tweets and even the bios of antisemitic accounts.

ISRAEL-RELATED ANTISEMITISM

Along with other major platforms, Twitter saw an upsurge in antisemitism framed as hostility towards Israel and Zionism during the May 2021 outbreak of violence in the region. While much of the antisemitism posted in this period was coded by the use of terms like 'Zionist', some took on more extreme and explicit framing. The Anti-Defamation League reported that more

than 17,000 tweets containing variations of the phrase "Hitler was right" were posted between 7-14 May,[218] causing it to appear in the trending tab for some users. While such hashtags are always boosted by their use in tweets expressing outraged opposition, this event echoed a similar phenomenon during the 2014 Gaza conflict and thus illustrates the ways in which a spike in anti-Israel sentiment prompts the expression of more explicit forms of antisemitism.[219]

Twitter has long wrestled with its responsibilities regarding its use by politicians around the world, a notable example of which is the account of Ayatollah Khamenei of Iran. Khamenei has repeatedly used the platform to rail against Israel as a "malignant cancerous tumor" that must be "removed and eradicated",[220] a sentiment that Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey has dismissed as "sabre-rattling" and not in violation of the platform's policies when asked in October 2020.[221]

NOTABLE ANTISEMITES ON THE PLATFORM

Twitter has faced considerable criticism for failing to act against prominent antisemites on the platform, such as the lifelong antisemitic activist and former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke in America.[222] Duke's account was suspended in July 2020 after years of protest by anti-racism campaigners, having been active on the platform for almost eleven years. The stated reason for his removal was his sharing of an unspecified "harmful link", having updated its policies regarding links off-site content four months earlier,[223] but Duke had for many years used the platform to rail against the "Jewish-controlled enemy", using unequivocally antisemitic rhetoric.

Still present on the platform are figures like British fascist and Holocaust denier Nick Griffin and white nationalist alt-right figurehead Richard Spencer, both of whom use coded language and ironic insinuation to advance antisemitic ideas without making explicit statements that might prompt their removal from the platform. Another prominent antisemite on the platform is the Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, who has repeatedly used the platform to lambast "Satanic Jews".[224]

YOUTUBE
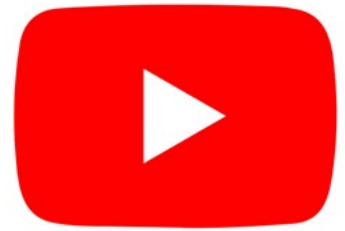
BASED IN California, US, YouTube was founded in 2005 and acquired by Google in 2006. Primarily used to publish and view user videos, YouTube currently claims to have over 2 billion active monthly users and to upload 500 hours of content every minute, with as many as 81% of US adults reporting that they use the website.[225] According to one 2019 estimate, 27% of views of videos on the platform that year were from European countries, a share as large as that of views from North America.[226] A major player in Europe's digital market, YouTube and its parent company Google have had several disputes with the European Union over regulation of copyright, antitrust and content moderation.

YouTube's prominence has attracted the attention of scholars, researchers and critics, including with regards to antisemitic and other racist content on the platform. In June, 2019, researchers found that "a significant number of channels on YouTube's platform [...] disseminate anti-Semitic and white supremacist content" in spite of steps taken by the company to prevent its platform being used for hate speech.[227] Compounding the issue of extremist content on YouTube is the question of whether, as critics have alleged, the platform functions in such a way that it amplifies the effect of extremist content and effectively radicalises its users. In 2020, a New Zealand Royal Commission of Inquiry concluded that the white supremacist behind the 2019 Christchurch terror attack had been radicalised by YouTube.[228] The phenomenon of YouTube radicalisation in general, and its mechanisms, remain a matter of contention among scholars.[229]

ANTISEMITIC VIDEO CONTENT ON YOUTUBE

In August, 2021, an NGO, Center for Countering Digital Hate, published findings showing that it had identified, during a six-week period, 52 examples of content with "clear, grotesque antisemitism" hosted on YouTube with an estimated total of more than 3,670,000 impressions, including five videos with over 800,000 views that deny aspects of the Holocaust or claim that Jews started World War II. The report noted that some of these videos had been hosted on YouTube for years and that the company failed to remove nearly 80% of the

antisemitic content in question, even though it violated the platform's community guidelines and even after it was reported using the tools provided by the company for that purpose.[230]

The sheer amount of content on YouTube makes it difficult to survey the scale of the presence of antisemitic content on the platforms or the range of its types, but a cursory investigation makes clear that, while many overt antisemitic search terms lead to few antisemitic results, antisemitic videos can nonetheless be found relatively quickly by those who look for them, such as videos implying that Jewish-American politicians are secretly disloyal to the United States; that Jews are 'false Jews' or 'the Synagogue of Satan'; that Jews are responsible for the 9/11 attacks, etc. Some such videos have been present on YouTube for as long as ten years; while some of these videos have mere thousands of views, others, such as "Marching to Zion | The Jews Exposed.", espousing radical Christian antisemitism, have closer to half a million, and are actively promoted by antisemites on other platforms such as the /pol/ board of 4chan (see the case study of /pol/ elsewhere in this report).

In general, YouTube does not appear to facilitate finding blatant or obviously antisemitic videos or incitement to violence, but videos in which antisemitic rhetoric has been couched inside other topics, for example theology, can nonetheless be found by looking for them.

Several accounts on YouTube are either dedicated to or operated directly by right-wing extremist and white supremacist organisations, such as the criminal Nazi group Golden Dawn of Greece, Forza Nuova of Italy, and Det Fria Sverige of Sweden.
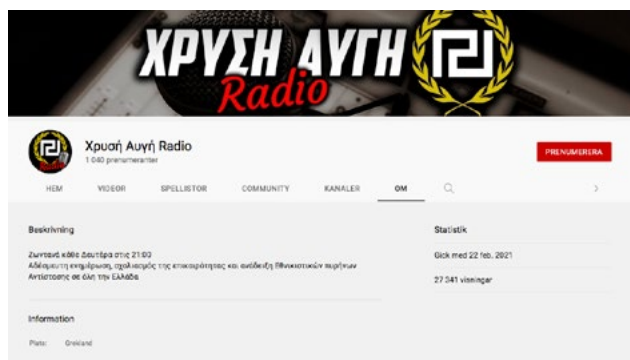
ANTISEMITIC COMMENTS

YouTube's content does not only consist of videos but also of written comment sections for each video, typically visible to all viewers, and unless specifically disabled, is available for all registered users to write comments in. Users may also 'like' or 'dislike' others' comments, just as they can the videos themselves. YouTube comments, often overlooked in discussions and studies of YouTube content, have a relatively high prevalence of antisemitic discourse, some of it couched in references to 4chan-style memes ("SHUT IT DOWN!"), some of it pointing readers to well-established conspiracy theories ("The Dancing Israelis"), some of it praising antisemitic speech or acts discussed in the videos, and

in some cases expressing cruelty and hatred by referencing the Holocaust ("That oven sure needs to be warmed up."), even if – as is the essential nature of any comment – it may only be understood or decoded in the context of what it is commenting on.
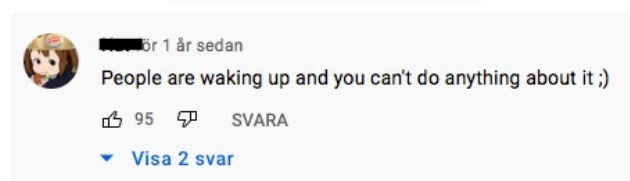
Comments on the video "Officials paint over 'Synagogue of Satan' hate speech graffiti on Yeshiva at unity rally"

In other words, a written comment may not, taken by itself and out of context, constitute clear hate speech or a violation of YouTube's rules, but in conjunction with the video the comment is paired with – which may in itself be a video that is neutral in content, but which often mentions Jews, such as a news report, a history lesson about World War II, or a discussion of antisemitism – it takes on explicit antisemitic meaning (such as the comment "Gold is heavy." beneath a video featuring an NBC News clip titled: "Watch: Bleachers Collapse During Jewish Festival in West Bank Synagogue"). The fact that such comments often obtain many 'likes' by other users – sometimes in the thousands – is evidence that their antisemitic significance is easily identifiable to those who wish to amplify it.
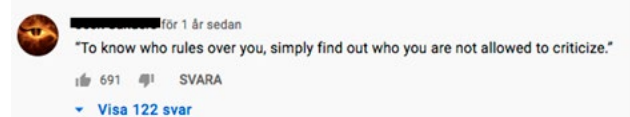
Comments on the video "Why Do People Hate Jews?"
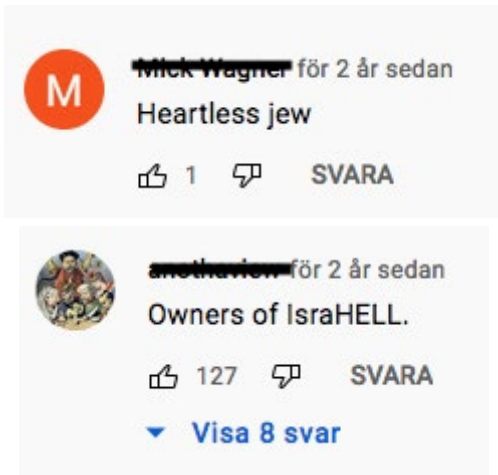
Comments on the video "Jacob Rothschild Seriously CREEPY Interview"

The practice of writing YouTube comments whose antisemitic significance is clear in the context of the video, but which may not as isolated texts run afoul of hate speech rules, is related to other insidious forms of antisemitic expression on the platform: embedding antisemitic references in user account names, in user account profile pictures, or in the 'about' sections of user account profile pages ('channels').

By means of such often-overlooked elements of the platform, antisemitism can be expressed by users even outside YouTube's primary sphere, that of videos and their comment sections. It also allows antisemitic users – or those susceptible to being radicalised by the ideology – to identify each other in comment sections, visit and subscribe to each other's videos and look up each other's uploaded content, which can then be engaged with, enabling networks of antisemitic content producers and consumers.
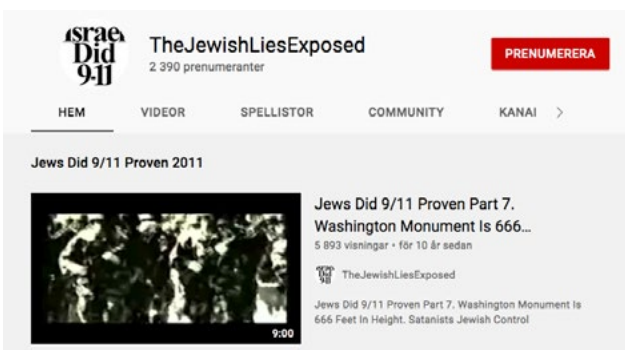
In addition to finished videos, YouTube allows users to stream live videos, accompanied by live real-time comment sections. Such 'live chats', like their non-live counterparts, have long been used to disseminate antisemitic and other racist and extremist messages.[231] Similarly, 'Super Chat', a feature allowing users to pay live streamers to have their comments highlighted, has been used by extremists to spread antisemitism on YouTube.[232] Over time, while the platform has made it more difficult to use live chats and Super Chats to publish comments that themselves constitute hate speech, users are still able to express flagrant antisemitism in live comment sections while posting even neutral messages, because their user account names and user profile pictures, both displayed when commenting, contain antisemitic references.
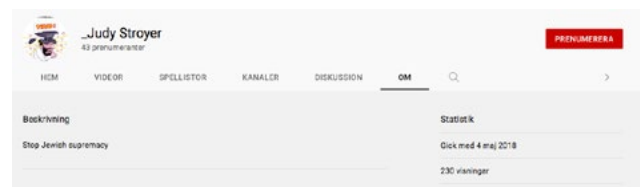
CONCLUSION

Antisemitic content on YouTube is prevalent and takes many forms, ranging from videos promoting antisemitic tropes and inciting suspicion or hatred towards Jews, to comments posted in videos' comment sections which may be either explicit or coded in shibboleths, or by the context of the video being commented on, to antisemitic references in user account names and user profile pictures, or in user profile page descriptions. Users disseminating antisemitism exploit every possible feature in the platform to spread their message and signal their ideology to like-minded users and network with them. Written comments appear to be the most prevalent form of antisemitic content, and express many types of antisemitism, ranging from Christian fundamentalist, to conspiracist, to grotesque mockery of the Holocaust in the form of memes and 'jokes'. In some cases, antisemitic content has remained public on the platform for years. Much of the antisemitic content must be considered in the context of antisemitic ideology, discourse, or where and when on the platform it is posted, in order to be identified. This context-sensitive style of communication, however, is no real impediment to the content's dissemination or the harm that it causes, because the meaning of the content is relatively easy to grasp. Rather, the style is likely a function of the intention on the part of those disseminating the content to evade immediate detection by automated content moderation systems, which may be programmed to target more explicit hate speech and unable to take context into account to the same extent as a human viewer.

4CHAN /POL/

MORGAN FINNSIÖ, EXPO

'/pol/ – Politically Incorrect' is a subsection ('board') of 4chan, a sprawling internet forum with anonymous users that, since its founding in 2003, has gained considerable notoriety for its permissive hosting of extreme content. The origins and development of two contemporary extremist and antisemitic phenomena, the white supremacist alt-right and the conspiracist QAnon movements, can be traced in part to online activity on 4chan, and to the /pol/ subsection in particular, which is "thought to be at the center of hate on the web".[233] In the words of US anti-hate group the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), /pol/ is "notorious for extremely high levels of hateful rhetoric, including racism, homophobia, Islamophobia, white supremacy and antisemitism".[234]

Launched by then-teenage student Christopher Poole in 2003, the website 4chan was acquired by Hiroyuki Nishimura in 2015. 4chan claims to have more than 20 million unique visitors per month and to host up to a million posts per day, with nearly half (47%) of its users in the United States, 7% in the United Kingdom and 4% in Germany, though since 4chan has been, as of 2018, split into two formal parts – one "safe for work" (4channel.org) and one not safe (4chan.org), in a bid to attract advertisers to the former – it is unclear whether these declared numbers apply to both parts or only one, and if so which. In August, 2021, the analytics service

SimilarWeb suggested, for 4chan.org, around 5% traffic from the UK and Germany respectively, and some 3% from France, with only 29% from the United States.
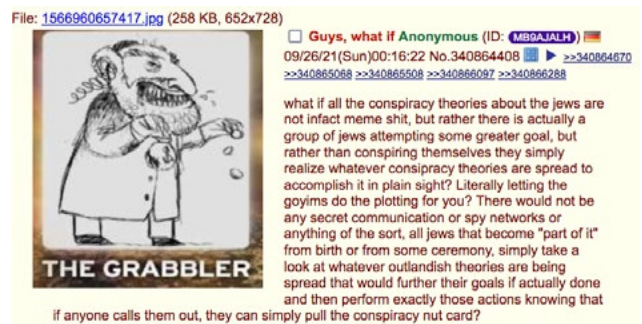
4chan uses an "image-based bulletin board" format; users are anonymised by default and, across a wide range of subsections – boards – dedicated to specific topics, either create new discussion threads or post replies in existing ones, often using both images and texts; it is also possible to include links and embed other media in posts, such as YouTube videos. A 2016 study found that the majority of links posted on the /pol/ subsection were links to YouTube, as well as evidence suggesting that /pol/ users systematically follow such links to post hateful content in YouTube video comment sections, a practice known as 'raiding'.[235] 4chan is noted for its 'ephemerality', meaning that content that is not engaged with is first archived, then automatically deleted after a few days. As a whole, while usually classed as a traditional internet forum or 'imageboard', 4chan has a sufficiently similar functionality to social media to merit inclusion in this report.

The subsection /pol/ was set up in 2011 and is nominally a board for the "discussion of news, world events, political issues, and other related topics". In reality, as suggested by the board's formal name "Politically Incorrect", threads posted on /pol/ have in common not so much a particular set of topics as a theme of transgressive polemics targeting various social phenomena or, more often than not, some particular social group.
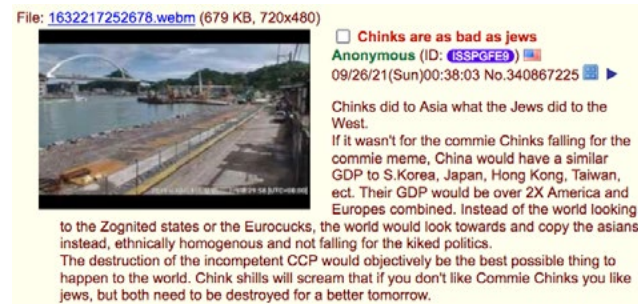
Indeed, /pol/ can be likened to a sewer overflowing with hate speech and bigotry, targeting every group imaginable but most usually women and minority groups, and especially Jews and people of colour.

4chan has attracted a great deal of journalistic and scholarly attention and has been the object of numerous studies. A recurring finding is that the nature of the content on parts of 4chan can be understood and partly explained using the framework of 'trolling' or 'meme culture'.[236] For example, activity on /pol/ can be read as part of an implicit game or competition of transgression among users; it may be speculated that transgressive content is posted ironically or 'semi-ironically', or with the aim or hope of provoking other users, or outside observers; or with the primary aim of contributing to an

'eccentric' subculture rather than to express sincere opinion; et cetera.

While such theories may be useful for understanding the motivations of 4chan users and, to some extent, for deciphering the culture that has evolved on such websites, the actual content speaks for itself. Posts on /pol/ feature a very high frequency of casual yet grotesque racism, sexism and every other form of bigotry and hate, including incitement to harm or kill members of minority groups.

In addition, when posting on /pol/, users, while anonymous as elsewhere on 4chan, are prompted to select a flag to display above their post, and are given the choice either to display the flag of the country they are geotagged to be in, or one of a number of political symbols, including flags labeled 'Confederate', 'Fascist', 'Nazi' and 'White Supremacist'. Reporting suggests that management decisions may have contributed to the prevalence of hate speech on /pol/, which, according to several estimates, increased significantly in recent years.[237] [238] [239]

ANTISEMITIC CONTENT ON /POL/

Antisemitic content on /pol/ is, alongside hate targeting African Americans, particularly pronounced. In accordance with the logic of antisemitic and white supremacist ideology, when Jews are mentioned on /pol/ they are typically painted as a threat and problem worse than any other; they are portrayed as the primary, most dangerous and most execrable of all groups, because they are understood, or explicitly said, to be the root cause of all evils; thus, all other forms of racism, while frequently expressed on /pol/, appear subordinate to antisemitism.

There is a relatively high frequency of content that is explicitly antisemitic, suggesting a culture or norm in which antisemitism is not simply normalised but implicitly encouraged. A 2020 research memo by the Swedish Defence Research Agency found that /pol/ had a several times greater proportion of content mentioning Jews than either Gab, Reddit or Twitter, and had the second-greatest proportion of content hostile towards or negatively stereotyping Jews.[240] A study by British anti-hate group Community Security Trust, published in the same year, found

that /pol/

> hosted at least 26 different threads that contained explicit calls for Jews to be killed and had the words "kill" and "Jews" in the title, all created in the twelve months following the October 2018 Pittsburgh synagogue attack (this total does not include threads titled in different ways, e.g. "Kill Kikes" or "Kill Jewish people").[241]

Mirroring a phenomenon found on other social media, /pol/ antisemitism appears liable to surge in response to specific real-world events. In May, 2021, the US anti-hate group ADL found elevated levels of anti-Jewish slurs and classical antisemitic rhetoric during the time of the armed conflict between Israel and Hamas in that month, the daily average of such posts increasing by 71%.[242]

The entire spectrum of types of antisemitic discourse appears on /pol/; put simply, on a given day, virtually every known form, theme, trope, conspiracy theory and slur of antisemitism (for reference, see the Glossary of Antisemitic Language contained in this report) can be found in the board's mass of posts, which renews itself continuously as more threads are posted and old threads are automatically deleted. Antisemitism appears in thread headlines, in images, in replies and in linked or embedded content. Sometimes the hate speech is simple (for example, a thread titled 'kill jews'; another titled 'Kill all Niggers or kill all Kikes?'), and sometimes it is elaborate (for example, lengthy screeds discussing the supposedly demonic influence of Jews on every aspect of society); sometimes it is posted in a

manner meant to be read as 'humorous' and sometimes with apparently sincere, deep-seated hatred. Images often take the form of caricatures, extreme tropes or grotesque mockery. In sum, it is simpler to state what kind of antisemitism is not found – namely none – than the kinds that are present on /pol/.
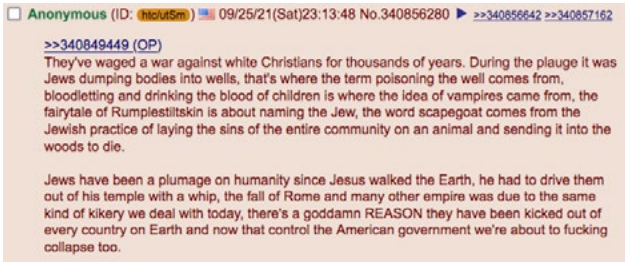
Certain /pol/ users, some of which explicitly identify as Nazis, are not content merely to post hate speech or express antisemitic opinions, but actively attempt to radicalise other users with an evangelising style of antisemitism, providing in-depth explanations of antisemitic ideology, linking to websites hosting white supremacist literature or to antisemitic YouTube videos.

CONCLUSION

It is fair to describe /pol/ as a cesspit of antisemitism and other forms of hate. Not only does it function as a gallery of every kind of antisemitic discourse, but the relatively high frequency of antisemitic content and the typically casual style in which it is expressed creates a normalising mechanism whereby antisemitism is effectively institutionalised, even promoted, as an element of the board's culture. Furthermore, white supremacists, Nazis and other antisemites using /pol/ are able to preach their hate with impunity and are actively attempting to radicalise other users. The extent to which such attempts are effective and successful is a matter for further research. Furthermore, scholarly findings suggesting that efforts are staged on /pol/ to create antisemitic content on other platforms, such as YouTube, in a systematic way, raises the question of whether 4chan acts a source of 'contagion' of hate speech elsewhere.

GLOSSARY OF ANTISEMITIC LANGUAGE

This glossary is intended to be a snapshot of antisemitic slurs and meme phrases that are commonly used in Anglophone online spaces. The list is not exhaustive, and has focussed on words and phrases that are in common use to the present day and thus are likely to be encountered by moderators of mainstream social media platforms.

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- Holohoax
- Muh Holocaust
- Shoah Business
- Annuddah Shoah
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CONSPIRATORIAL ANTISEMITISM
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- *Great replacement*
- *White genocide*
- *Cultural Marxism*
- *ZOG/Z.O.G.*

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- Khazars/Khazarian
- Sabbatean-Frankist
- Zio-
- Esau, Edomites and Amalekites
- Synagogue of Satan
- Fake Jews

EXPLICIT SLURS

KIKE/KYKE

Particularly common among the extreme right, this slur is of uncertain origin.

> **Mark A Rosenberg**
> @MarkARosenberg1
>
> @CocrystalPharma This company is full of self dealing Kikes , Christian and non Christian scum shit...There is no place in society for these low life pigs.
>
> 8:56 pm · 3 Sep 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

HEEB/HEBES

Abbreviation of Hebrews. Used primarily as a slur, but occasionally reclaimed by Jewish people as a lighthearted self-reference.

> **Melaninchon**
> @melaninchon
>
> Replying to @melaninchon @JoshMandelOhio and 2 others
>
> And I'll be damned if I vote another Heeb into office. Can't we find a goy to fill this spot?
>
> 6:04 pm · 8 May 2017 · Twitter for iPhone

YID/YIDDO

Abbreviation of Yiddish. The term is non-pejorative when used by Yiddish speakers, but often used as a slur by antisemites, particularly in the UK. Due to their historic association with the Jewish community, the London-based football team Tottenham Hotspur has acquired the nickname 'The Yids'.

> **national romantic** 🇳🇴
> @RationalNor
>
> Replying to @SethAbramson
>
> Keep the Lord's name out of this you filthy rat-faced yid
>
> 5:12 pm · 19 May 2020 · Twitter Web App

SHYLOCK

A reference to the name of the Jewish antagonist in *The Merchant of Venice*, Shylock is used as both an epithet for Jewish people and a verb for extortionate moneylending. This association of Jewish people and immoral financial practise is one of the oldest antisemitic tropes and is applied to Jewish people in the worlds of finance and politics. *The Merchant of Venice* was performed regularly in Nazi Germany and the accusations levelled at Shylock influenced antisemitic cariacatures until the present day, although many feel that the play itself was somewhat sympathetic to its main character.

> **Missouri Liberty**
> @MissouriLibert1
>
> Replying to @TrutherbotPyrat
>
> This is typical of a bearded Shylock extremist. Financially rape the Goy.
>
> 1:24 PM · Apr 2, 2020 · Twitter for Android

HOOKNOSE/D

This term refers to stereotypes around the facial features of Jewish people, who have long been caricatured as having large pointed noses (see *Happy Merchant*)

> **Ariosopher**
> @DavjdAriosopher
>
> Replying to @fearless12342 @USRebel1776 and @Zioinfiltration
>
> The hooknose opinion is not wanted or needed. Typically they need to mind their own business and not that of others.

CODED OR AMBIGUOUS SLURS

This section contains terms that are either codewords designed to avoid online content moderation, or phrases that are obscure in meaning to those outside of the far-right milieu but recognised widely within that community.

KITES

This term is used to indicate the word **Kikes** but without triggering automoderation of comments. Similar words exist for other slurs such as 'jogger' to replace 'nigger', as can be seen here:

MetalArmsOrtho
@orthoepictime

Because *cough* ahem

FUCK JOGGERS
FUCK JANNIES
FUCK KITES
FUCK FEDS
FUCK COMMIES

SKYPES

Similar to **Kites**, this term is used as a stand-in for the word **Kikes** to avoid automoderation. Created as part of a list of codewords that also included 'Google' for black people and 'Yahoos' for Latinos.

Petty Fink
@pettyfink

Replying to @LadyIld

Look at all those #Googles. I wonder how much the #Skypes are paying them.

6:53 am · 24 Jul 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

(((ECHOES)))

The triple parentheses are used to indicate that a person, institution or concept is Jewish in a coded manner. Commonly referred to as 'echoes', the term originated on alt-right blogs and remains very commonly used on extreme right blogs and social media. Due to search engines largely disregarding punctuation in search terms, it is an effective means of conveying antisemitic sentiment without risk of identification or moderation.

Mark Collett
March 3, 2018

Thank you to everyone who supported myself & Patrick Slattery in our debate on a certain (((question))), we utterly demolished our opponents & left Halsey English & Tom Luongo without anything substantive to say.
However less than 48 hours after our decisive victory, YouTube are already censoring the video. This does nothing other than prove my point.
To learn who rules over you, simply find out who you are not allowed to criticise!

Reggie Danger KGB
@mybodyGG

>yfw it's (((them))) putting fluoride in the water to dumb down the goyim

11:01 pm · 22 Sep 2016 · Twitter for Android

14/88

The number 88 is alphanumeric code for Heil Hitler, and can often be found in conjunction with 14, in reference to the neo-Nazi fourteen-word slogan *"We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children."* Another alphanumeric code used similarly is 18, which represents Hitler's initials, such as in the far-right terror group Combat 18.

Joe Hilton ▶ Mark Collett
October 3, 2012

Happy Birthday mate 14/88

Mark Collett
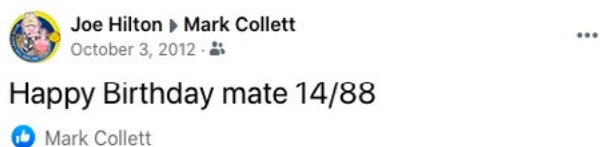
109/110

The number 109 refers to an apparent list of locations from which the Jewish people have been expelled through history, although it is often wrongly presented as though it represents 109 separate countries. The number 110 is therefore used as a statement of intent to expel the Jewish population of an additional country, usually the user's country of origin.

THE TRIBE

This term is frequently used by Jewish people as a lighthearted reference to their own community, but can also be misappropriated by antisemites, so context must be taken into account.

JEW-ISH OR JEWISH

Groups that deny the Levantine origin of modern Jewish populations, such as Christian Identity or extremist Black Hebrew Israelites, occasionally use a hyphenated version of the word Jewish, playing on the alternate usage of the '-ish' suffix to denote similarity as opposed to belonging.

FELLOW WHITE

This phrase, sometimes coupled with triple parentheses, is an adaptation of the "How do you do, fellow kids?" meme derived from a scene in the popular TV series 30 Rock. The implication is that Jewish people who self-identify as white are doing so in order to promote some kind of anti-white agenda, such as promoting liberal values on immigration or LGBTQ+ rights.

JOOZ/JOOOZ

These deliberate misspellings of 'Jews' are sometimes used by antisemites to evade moderation, but are used just as often by those who oppose antisemitism and use the phrases in derisory imitation of antisemitic attitudes.

THE JUICE

As above, this phrase is a deliberate misspelling of 'Jews' but is used more exclusively by antisemites.

> **Echoes of the Past!**
> @EchoesofthePas1
>
> What a message of "love" from the king of the "Juice"! Be a good goy and bend your knee to the one who came to erase all ethnicities and cultures of the world and convert everyone into lambs, will you? ;)

[THE] SMALL HATS

A reference to the kippah/yarmulke, used as a pejorative term for Jewish people.

> **Not A Globe.**
> @faking_space
>
> Replying to @eos_enemy
>
> All the past presidents and prime ministers are zionist shills.. until we do away with government, media & banks we will be forever controlled by the small hats
>
> 7:50 am · 28 Aug 2020 · Twitter for Android

NOSE/THE NOSE/ 👃

Referring to the common stereotype about the size or shape of Jewish people's noses, this term is also often used as a pun on the word "knows". The nose emoji can also be used to provide the same meaning.

> **anthony hollis**
> @anthonyhollis11
>
> Replying to @TianaTheFirst and @JesseKellyDC
>
> Doesn't matter who is in power...they are both O&O by ZOG...expose the nose
>
> 4:53 AM · Jul 1, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

> **Darth** @darthpepethe2nd · 5 Sep
> I've said it before but im REALLY tired of blacks. Just go away man
> 💬 3   🔁   ♡ 20   ⬆
>
> **CEO of eating foreskins**
> @williamHbiggoy
>
> Replying to @darthpepethe2nd
>
> They're a symptom@of the real problem... 👃

MEME PHRASES AND JARGON

DAY OF THE ROPE

A reference derived from the extreme white supremacist novel *The Turner Diaries*, this term refers to a future event in which "race traitors" will be lynched en masse. The 1978 novel has retained a strong cultural influence over the extreme right, particularly among terrorist groups.

> **the list**
> @thelist88
>
> Tbh if I were a jew I'd be super paranoid too. Tick tock day of the rope coming soon.
>
> 2:23 AM · Aug 16, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

SIEG HEIL / HAIL VICTORY

This slogan of Nazi Germany is still used widely among extreme antisemitic groups, in both the original German and its English translation.

> **IM/Beπd/O®EGON 🖥 🏴**
> @native_bend
>
> Replying to @RodStryker @solentgreenis and @POTUS
>
> We must finish what the Fuhrer started! We must end Jewish Supremacy, destroy the synagogue of Satan, and cast out the Zionist, communists, globalists, liberalism, and modernity! Hail Victory! ✋🏻 🏴
>
> 1:01 PM · May 26, 2018 · Twitter for Android

YOU WILL NOT REPLACE US / YWNRU

Famously chanted at the violent far-right Unite the Right protests in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017, this slogan refers to the Great Replacement/White Genocide conspiracy theory. Protestors also changed the words to "*Jews* will not replace us".

> **Baron Von Scaglians**
> @ViktorScags88
>
> Replying to @MikeSigner
>
> We will be back again and again. You cannot stop this movement. Until next time mikey #WeOwnCville #YWNRU
>
> 11:15 PM · Oct 9, 2017 · Twitter for Android

WOKE TO THE JQ / J-WOKE

'Woke to the JQ', and its abbreviated form 'J-Woke' is a vernacular term describing someone who holds antisemitic belief, i.e. that they have woken up to the **Jewish Question**. The term 'woke' is appropriated, with a degree of irony, from black American vernacular and widespread use in progressive political movements. It corresponds to the belief of many antisemites that society at large has been programmed or indoctrinated into a state of ignorance about the supposedly malign influence of Jewish individuals, and that one who is aware of it has therefore 'woken up'.

> **Potato**
> @drunkestpeasant
>
> Replying to @Know_More_News
>
> Trump is the most Zionist president we have ever had and he still managed to get a huge amount of support from people who are woke to the JQ
>
> I'm starting to believe Jews are geniuses.
>
> 2:31 AM · Aug 23, 2020 · Twitter for Android

> **Nim**
> @MonkeyPunchZ
>
> Replying to @westland_will
>
> This part of the same interview blew me away, was right at the beginning of getting j-woke for me
> youtu.be/IOk8s6KpZ1E
>
> 2:00 AM · Jan 6, 2019 · Twitter Web App

GTK

This term is the initialisation of 'Gas The Kikes', often used in conjunction with 'RWN' for 'Race War Now'. As might be expected, these terms are used only by the most extreme far right, such as the AtomWaffen Division and related Nazi groups.

> **Genocidal Billy**
> @GenocidalBilly
>
> was a libertarian a little over a year ago myself. Now I'm gtk;rwn
>
> 8:08 PM · Jul 20, 2016 · Twitter for iPhone

ELECTRIC JEW

Used to refer to supposed Jewish control over the media, 'Electric Jew' is a disparaging term for a TV set or other form of electronic media that supposedly has a malign influence on white people.

> **anhiersus1**
> @anhiersus1
>
> Replying to @jsolomonReports
>
> We on the right wing in the UK REFER TO TV AND PRESS AS THE ELECTRIC JEW.BECAUSE THEY DO THE WORK OF ZIONISTS AND THE EXTREME LEFT WING. THEY ARE STILL THE MOST POWERFUL INFLUENCE IN MODERN LIFE!

NOTICING/NOTICER

Far-right antisemites believe that Jewish people are entirely or disproportionately responsible for perceived social ills, ranging from liberal political activities, like promotion of migrants' rights and LGBTQ+ education, as well as criminal activity, like paedophilia or financial corruption. In certain contexts, 'noticing' is the term used to describe the act of noticing Jewish ethnicity of anyone perceived as engaging in these activities.

> **Mathais** @Mathais915 · 19 Aug
> Damn these jews stay mad
> 1   17
>
> **Fuj_Fujiyama**
> @FujFujiyama
>
> Replying to @Mathais915 @LevNovak and 2 others
>
> Too much noticing for the tribe's liking, they know their control is slipping.
>
> 8:57 pm · 19 Aug 2020 · Twitter for Android

NAMING THE JEW

This term is used by the extreme right as an accolade for those who are willing to explicitly identify and condemn Jewish people, rather than relying on antisemitic dog whistles and coded language. The implication is that antisemitism is widespread but that only a few are brave enough to talk about it openly. Sometimes written as 'Naming ((((Them))))' or with another slur replacing 'Jew'.

> **Bryan**
> @youth_soldier
>
> The chaos ends when people start naming the Jew in public
>
> 11:13 pm · 14 Aug 2020 · Twitter for iPad

EARLY LIFE SECTION

Related to **Noticing** (see above), this current meme on the far right refers to the 'Early Life' section of Wikipedia articles for notable people. This section commonly details the ethnic origin of the article's subject; for Jewish people the article will commonly say something like *"Born in Germany to Jewish parents"*, so is used by those who seek to identify those of Jewish origin.

Blake Banish
August 23 at 4:54 PM · 🌐

When a fellow white person says something subversive and they don't have an early life section on Wikipedia

LOXIST / LOXISM

This term refers to lox, a type of brined salmon preparation that is commonly associated with the Ashkenazi Jewish community in the US, and is used by far-right groups to denote the 'anti-white racism' that they accuse Jewish people of practising.

Rhyne
@Crypto_Relapse

Replying to @RadicalReality_

Yes, the loxist khazars entirely control American culture. Full-spectrum warfare via Kabbalah.

3:41 am · 8 Sep 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

HAPPY MERCHANT

This crude caricature has existed online since 2004 but remains among the most popular antisemitic memes today, and exists in endless variations created to promote different antisemitic tropes.

THE GOYIM KNOW. SHUT IT DOWN

This phrase is used in regard to supposed 'censorship' by Jewish individuals or organisations, such as when a prominent antisemite is removed from a social media platform. The implied meaning is that Jewish people are engaged in nefarious conspiracies, and will 'shut down' anyone who notices and seeks to draw attention to them.

Cory Eldridge
October 4, 2019 · 🌐

Oy vey shut it down the goyim know

⚠️

Your post goes against our Community Standards on hate speech

No one else can see your post.

We have these standards because we want discussions on Facebook to be respectful.

SHOAHED

This term refers to the removal of content and accounts from social media, usually for hate speech violations. This is tied to both mockery of the Holocaust and also the trope that all social media companies are controlled by Jewish people.
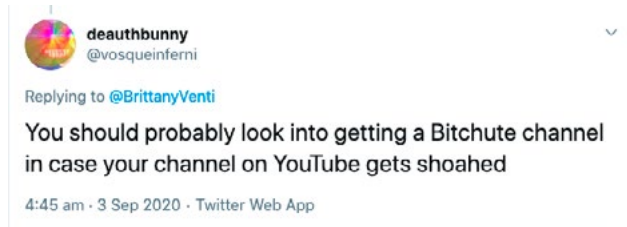
APPROPRIATED LANGUAGE

This section contains words that have been appropriated from Jewish language and culture by antisemites, and are offensive only when misused by antisemites.

GOY/GOYIM

Goy (pl Goyim) is a Hebrew word meaning non-Jewish person or nation. While the word is not in itself offensive, antisemitic groups present them as though they were slurs against non-Jews and promote the idea that the Jewish people as a whole hold non-Jews in contempt.

The phrase *"Good Goy"* is often used to denote a non-Jew who is manipulated into doing the bidding of a supposed Jewish conspiracy, and can be used in isolation to draw attention to the Jewish origin of any particular perceived social ill.

SHABBOS GOY

A shabbos goy is a non-Jewish person who assists a Jewish person by carrying out certain tasks for them on the Sabbath, when their religion might not permit them to carry it out themselves. However, in antisemitic circles a 'shabbos goy' is any non-Jew who is perceived as doing the bidding of the Jewish community or the State of Israel.
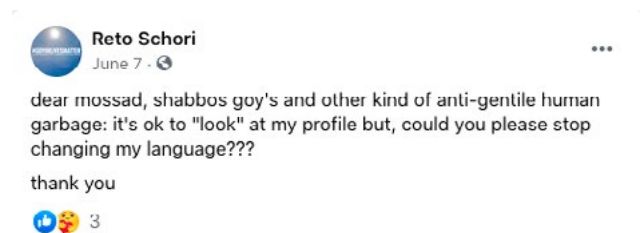
SHEKELS

A reference to the currency of both the ancient Israelites and the modern State of Israel, the word 'shekel' is often used by antisemites to invoke historic smears against the Jewish people of greed, financial misconduct or global economic control. In reference to non-Jews, phrases such as "took the shekel" are used to imply that they are bribed and thus controlled by Jewish people.

FAKE HEBREW/YIDDISH NAMES

Another means of mocking Jewish people is the adoption of fake names on alt-accounts that crudely mimic Jewish names. These frequently involve adding the name endings *-berg* or *-stein*, the forename *Schlomo* or references to antisemitic tropes.

OY VEY!

This exclamation is perhaps the most widely known Yiddish phrase among non-speakers, and is used widely by antisemites when crudely imitating Jewish people to promote antisemitic tropes or imply Jewish responsibility for a perceived social ill.

PILPUL

This Hebrew word roughly means "detailed analysis" and is used in religious contexts to describe complex analysis of scripture, but has been appropriated by antisemites to refer to supposedly dishonest propaganda from those who attempt to deny or rebut antisemitic lines of attack.

HOLOCAUST DENIAL

MUH HOLOCAUST

The word 'Muh' before a phrase is a corruption of the word 'my' and used to mock a perceived obsessive or misguided focus on a particular issue or subject. An example of this might be "But muh guns..." to mock someone who is perceived to be preoccupied with gun ownership rights at the expense of other issues. When used in reference to the Holocaust, it is therefore an implied mockery of Holocaust remembrance and what antisemites perceive as the Jewish preoccupation with the topic.

SHOAH BUSINESS

This phrase is an reference to the term 'show business' and is used to mock what Holocaust deniers see as the 'Holocaust Industry', the exploitation by Jewish people of false narratives about the Holocaust for financial and political gain.

ANUDDA SHOAH

Similar to 'Muh Holocaust', this phrase is a corruption of "Another Shoah", intended to mimic the accented speech of a Yiddish speaker, and in mockery of the idea that Jewish people are overly preoccupied with the Holocaust and make undue comparisons to current events in reference to it.

SIX TRILLION/GORILLION

This term is used to mock the number of Jewish lives taken in the Holocaust by those who deny the Holocaust. The use of the fictional number 'gorillion' is intended to suggest that the actual figure is itself an outlandish claim.

SIX MILLION

Similar to the six gorillion term above, the actual number of Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust can also be used out of context for the purposes of mockery.

HOLOHOAX

A compound word used to claim that the Holocaust is a hoax, and either did not occur as described, or at all.

> **Sami Söderlund**
> @SamiSoderlund
>
> Replying to @douglasmercer33
>
> And started from their own lies about holohoax & wars they created 🤔
>
> 7:47 PM · Sep 7, 2020 · Twitter for Android

CONSPIRATORIAL ANTISEMITISM

ZOG / Z.O.G.

An acronym for 'Zionist-Occupied Government', this term originated from the US-based Aryan Nations group and is largely used in the far-right and anti-government militia movements in the US, which hold that the US government is controlled by Jewish and Israeli influence and is illegitimate for that reason.

> **James Jackson**
> @Peace2Palestine
>
> Replying to @wisermann @ifamericansknew and 13 others
>
> The ZOG is out to destroy the 1st, 2nd and 4th amendment rights. Hell, the Zionists oppose the entire Bill of Rights. Eliminate Zionism and we can solve our problems together. #BDS
>
> 10:30 PM · Jan 25, 2019 · Twitter Web App

KALERGI PLAN / COUDENHOVE-KALERGI PLAN

A strain of the White Genocide conspiracy theory focusing on Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894 – 1972), an Austrian-Japanese politician and advocate of European integration. Conspiracy theories allege that Coudenhove-Kalergi laid the foundations of the European Union, and devised a long-term scheme to undermine the white race by encouraging immigration into Europe. The aim of this mythical plot is alleged to be the eventual eradication of the white race and, sometimes, the rule of a Jewish cabal over the continent.

> **CarissaBree**
> @carissabree
>
> The Kalergi Plan is the #NWO/Jewish World Order. In Kalergi's World, by his own admission, White's are to be blended out of the nation's while the Jew becomes 'spiritual nobility'. #KnowTheEnemy

GREAT REPLACEMENT

A far-right conspiracy theory alleging that immigration into Western countries poses an existential threat to white peoples and cultures. The theory is used to portray non-white migrants (and particularly Muslims, in Europe) as an invading force, and is often antisemitic as well, with Jews portrayed as the masterminds behind the plan.

> **DanielBreen22**
> @Breen22Daniel
> ···
>
> Replying to @prwhittle
>
> This is a huge gaslighting operation under way against ethnic Europeans by the Zionist media. It's all part of the great replacement.
>
> 10:02 PM · Mar 8, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

CULTURAL MARXISM

A conspiracy theory alleging that sinister, often Jewish left-wingers are embedded in cultural and political institutions, and are working to smuggle communism into Western culture, brainwash populations and undermine the West. Whilst the term is commonly used by the far right, it has also become increasingly mainstreamed in recent years, despite its antisemitic history.

> **Onepercent**
> @Adenoughofit
> ···
>
> Replying to @StirringTrouble
>
> Based on Judaism, called NWO, Freemasonry, Rothschild Zionism, Cultural Marxism. It exists and controls the global agenda.
>
> 8:54 AM · Nov 10, 2017 · Twitter for iPad

WHITE GENOCIDE

This term is used to describe a supposed genocide being perpetrated on white people by means of mass immigration and cultural suppression. The term encompasses racism, Islamophobia and often antisemitism, with Jewish people almost always cited as the orchestrators of the plot.

> **Holohoax Exposed**
> @HolohoaxExposed
> ···
>
> @netanyahu I'll stop being anti-Semitic when you kikes stop your white genocide! #HeilHitler
>
> 1:42 AM · Jun 16, 2013 · Mobile Web (M2)

RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & HISTORICAL REFERENCES

THE JEWISH QUESTION OR JQ

The Jewish Question, often abbreviated to JQ, originally referred to discussion of the status of Jewish people in European life, and some of those who wrote on the topic were arguing for greater civil rights for the Jewish population. However, since the Holocaust – which was presented as the 'final solution to the Jewish question' – the term is now used almost entirely with antisemitic intent, and its usage in a political context contains an implicit suggestion of oppression and violence against Jewish people.

> **Christopher Carpio Ram** created a poll.
> January 7 · 🌐
> ···
>
> The Conservative Party passes a law sometime in the future saying criticising the state of Israel and talking about the JQ in this country is considered hate speech under the guise to tackle the so-called rising antisemitism in this country. What will you do?

CHRIST KILLER

Related to the crucifixion of Jesus, this ancient slur places responsibility for Christ's death upon the Jewish people as a whole, and is still in common usage among sections of the far right today, particularly those who incorporate Christianity into their ideology.

> **Harolde | Very Political Shitposter**
> @alp10022
> ⌄
>
> Replying to @Isrl_Yido and @Nature_and_Race
>
> No, its because its their special little religion where they pretend to be "God's chosen" when infact they are Christ-killers that will burn in hell. Every Single One.
>
> 7:44 pm · 9 Sep 2020 · Twitter Web App

KHAZARS/KHAZARIAN

Refers to the 'Khazarian hypothesis', a discredited theory stating that Ashkenazi Jews are largely descended from the Khazar people of the Caucasus, who converted to Judaism in the 9th century.

The theory is promoted extensively by a diverse range of antisemitic movements to delegitimise Jewish links to the land of Israel and Biblical history. Christian Identity and extremist Black Hebrew Israelite groups, for example, have adopted this theory to promote the idea that the true descendants of the ancient Israelites are actually White Europeans or Black Americans respectively, while other antisemitic movements that hold Christianity as a key or constituent belief also use the theory to deny that modern Ashkenazi Jews have any links to the historical Israelites.
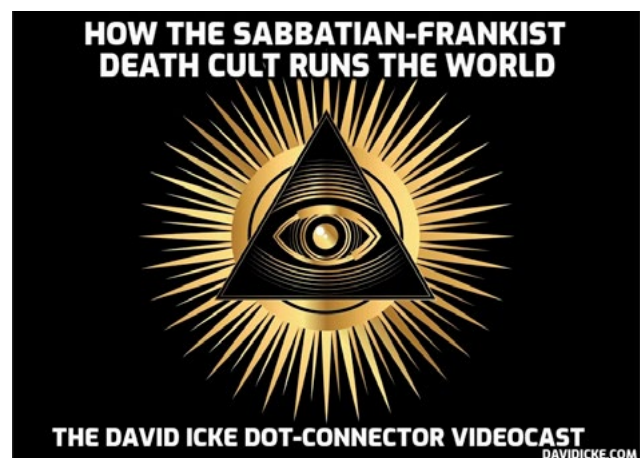

Måne Oden
August 14 at 8:37 AM · 🌐

Jacob Rothschild is the Leader of the Khazarian Mafia that Selects and Controls every President and major World Leader... ELECTIONS ARE FAKE !

PRESIDENTS DON'T HAVE POWER
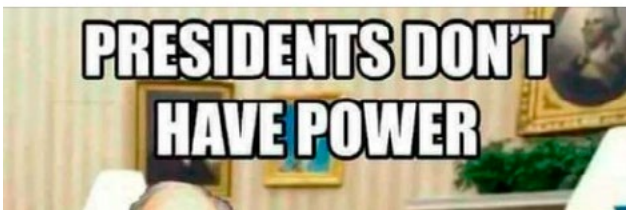
SABBATEAN/FRANKIST

The terms 'Sabbatean' (sometimes spelled Sabbatian) and 'Frankist' refer to two related sects of messianic Judaism that flourished in the 17th and 18th centuries, but no longer exist in any meaningful sense. The modern use of the terms, often compounded as Sabbatean-Frankist, has been popularised by conspiracy theorists such as David Icke, who allege the continued existence of the sects as a secretive religious cult that operates within Judaism but is a distinct entity. This provides a degree of plausible deniability when promoting classic antisemitic tropes, such as the blood libel myth and global control of media and politicians.

HOW THE SABBATIAN-FRANKIST DEATH CULT RUNS THE WORLD

THE DAVID ICKE DOT-CONNECTOR VIDEOCAST
DAVIDICKE.COM

ZIO-

The prefix Zio- is an abbreviation of Zionist and is often applied to terms in order to create antisemitic compound words, such as ZioNazi, ZioPig or ZioScum. While critique of Zionism is not in itself antisemitic, this formula is used almost exclusively in antisemitic contexts and serves to smear Jewish or Israeli people rather than the ideology of Zionism.

Unicorn Savant
@Ian_Flaming

Replying to @AffleckSW @nawagadj and 47 others

Zioscum are a blight on the planet. Just like Hitler's Nazis, they believe "the end justifies the means" and use that excuse to commit whatever vile crimes against humanity they like to make life impossible for Palestinians. Conversely, wiping out Zionism would be perfectly just.

ESAU, EDOMITES AND AMALEKITES

Esau is a Biblical character, the older son of the patriarch Isaac and brother of Jacob. The descendants of Esau, known as Edomites, were an enemy nation of the Israelites, and numerous Biblical verses exist that condemn the wickedness of the Edomite nations, in particular the Amalekites.

In the extremist Black Hebrew Israelite movement and, increasingly, in extreme right circles, these terms are used to describe the Jewish people, particularly Ashkenazim. Identifying themselves as the true descendants of the ancient Israelites, extremist Black Hebrew Israelite groups claim that the Jewish people are in fact descendants of the Biblical Edomites and have stolen the identity of the 'true Israelites' over time. This designation allows for the use of Biblical verses to condemn and promote violence against Jewish communities.

SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN

This term is derived from verses 2:9 and 3:9 of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament:

"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."   Revelation 2:9, KJV

Both verses are commonly understood by mainstream Christians to refer to specific Jewish congregations in Asia Minor that were in conflict with the nascent Christian church, but these verses have gained immense popularity amongst a diverse range of antisemitic ideologies.

Among other conspiracy-oriented groups, the term 'Synagogue of Satan' is used to denote either the entire modern Jewish population or in combination with more specific subsets of the Jewish people, such as supposed crypto-Jewish sects (see *Sabbatean-Frankist*) or the Ashkenazi population (see *Khazarian hypothesis*).

FAKE JEWS

This catchall term is used to describe either the entire modern Jewish population or specific subsets, and can be used in connection with any or all of the *Khazar, Sabbatean-Frankist, Edomite* and *Synagogue of Satan* concepts to delegitimise the Jewish people's connection to their history and/or the land of Israel.

KEY LEARNINGS FROM THIS PROJECT

LEARNINGS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY':

NGOS NEED TO DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW ANTISEMITISM SPREADS, AND ITS IMPACT.

While this report covers a huge amount of ground, the authors have become acutely aware of just how much more there is to explore. Some questions for further investigation include: how often do different kinds of antisemitic slurs occur – including in different languages? Which forms of antisemitism are usually detected by moderators – and which are not? What role do algorithms play in making hate accessible to more people – and how can this be stopped? Are there trigger topics – and how can we prepare when they occur?

We can and have described individual cases we encounter on platforms, but we could explore more if we had access to more data from the tech platforms, and unmoderated data in particular.

TO FIGHT HATE WE NEED MORE COMPARABLE DATA.

A major issue, as this project showed again, is access to comparable data. Data on Twitter and Reddit are already available, but with other platforms covered in this report it is very difficult to obtain useful large data sets. For example, the software Crowdtangle allows access to Facebook and Instagram information data from large pages/ groups, but it is already moderated, meaning we cannot compare it to Twitter, for example, from which we get unmoderated data. Proper data access for researchers is central to understanding and combating issues on these platforms, but at present it is almost impossible for an outsider to properly assess the true scale of the problem on Facebook and Instagram, and YouTube offers almost no access at all. If academic and NGO researchers are to properly understand the problems of hate online then we need much greater quantities, and higher quality, data from the platforms themselves. In lieu of that, data sharing between NGOs is a possible, albeit only partial, solution.

WE NEED MORE AND LARGER RESEARCHER AND NGO COALITIONS.

Due to the interconnected nature of the internet and the transnational nature of social media, hate content online is spread without boundaries, and so it is necessary to take an international approach to research and regulation. However, there remains language and cultural differences across geographical locations, meaning it is more necessary than ever to work collaboratively. This project benefited hugely from bringing together the expertise of three different NGOs, but the research would have been improved further by bringing in even more perspectives. We need broader coalitions of NGOs, researchers and networks from different parts of Europe to properly take into account differences across regions.

NGOS SHOULD PUSH FOR LEGISLATION.

This report found that after a decade of reform by tech platforms and huge amounts of invaluable work by NGOs, antisemitism is still easily found on all platforms. While it is important that NGOs continue to engage with tech platforms to share their expertise in the fight to reduce the problem, the time for regulation is overdue. NGO coalitions should seek and build alliances with lawmakers to ensure intelligent and consistent legislative activity over the long term. While national legislation will be useful, NGOs need to collaborate and share information across borders to ensure legislation is effective and lasting.

BETTER ASSESS THE SCALE OF ANTISEMITISM AND HATE ONLINE.

Researchers are currently limited in their ability to assess scales of antisemitism on and across social media platforms. Comprehensive, quantitative studies are key in achieving a deeper understanding of the scale of the problem, which can then be communicated with those who can affect change. This report has primarily used a qualitative approach and despite including individual data points, we have not been able to accurately compare amounts and types of antisemitism across platforms. Lack of access

to comparable data, as well as lack of technical capacity to detect antisemitic language at scale in text, image and video, means that this deeper understanding is out of reach for most researchers. NGOs and academics must develop more accurate, more scalable methods or different approaches to measuring kinds of antisemitism online. This is an issue that requires both methodological advances, but likely also more resources.

LEARNINGS FOR TECH COMPANIES

EXPLICITLY BAN ANTISEMITISM IN COMMUNITY GUIDELINES.

This is a step many, but not all, social media companies have already taken. While explicitly disallowing antisemitism in a platform's community guidelines does not mean that it will vanish from the platform, it is a useful first step to tackle the issue. This report finds that antisemites change the nature, style and extremeness of their antisemitism depending on the guidelines of the platform they are operating on. Specifically banning antisemitism, and other forms of racism, will allow for more robust enforcement against antisemites and result in less overt and extreme forms of antisemitism being seen by Jewish users of the platform, thereby reducing the harm they will experience as users.

THE PROHIBITION OF ANTISEMITISM MUST BE PLATFORM WIDE.

In addition to banning antisemitism in posts by users, it is necessary to ban it across all functions of the platform. In this report we found that some antisemitism evades moderation through hashtags, images and emojis, and that some users have antisemitic usernames or create antisemitic group names. Ensuring that this content is also moderated is key to reducing antisemitism on platforms.

MODERATORS NEED MORE TRAINING TO DEAL WITH CHANGING ANTISEMITISM.

This report finds that antisemitic language, narrations, pictures and symbols change rapidly and often, in part due to conscious efforts to evade bans and moderation. This creates difficulties for moderators. However, if the issue of antisemitism is to be tackled by platforms, they must constantly monitor for these changes and regularly train their moderators to recognise them.

To do this effectively requires more research internally, but also more engagement with expert NGOs and researchers. Support them, ask for their knowledge and input and pay them for their work. Listen especially to the victims of antisemitism who often have huge knowledge on the topic and they are empowered when their voices are heard. Of course this is not just true of antisemitism but for all kinds of group-focused enmity like racism, Islamophobia, anti-Roma hate, hate against refugees and migrants, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia, and disability discrimination.

DEPLATFORM ANTISEMITIC ACTORS.

Deplatforming is by no means a fix-all for antisemitism online, but it does contribute significantly to the fight against antisemitism. While individuals will invariably resurface on smaller platforms, removing them from a tech platform often reduces their reach and influence. This tactic should be used alongside the support of education by tech platforms to reduce the issue in the first place.

BETTER REPORTING SYSTEMS ARE REQUIRED.

It is important that platforms have reporting systems which are easy to find, easy to use and that provide users with the possibility to include the context of the piece of content which is reported. Hate is sometimes shown not only in the wording of one posting, but in a series of postings, or through the music or video combined with the text. Try to explain to the users as precisely as possible what you need, and allow them to tell you the same. If there are concerns that this may lead to an overwhelming mass of information, then invest in a trusted flagger system of approved actors, experts and NGOs like YouTube already does.

INSTALL GREATER PAGE MODERATION.

One powerful tool against antisemitism and online hate that remains seldom used is moderation. One possibility is to make moderation mandatory if a channel or group reaches a certain number of followers. If a user cannot, or will not, offer moderation all day and night, then they could have to keep the commentary section (partly) closed. A lot of media company pages or political party pages are rarely moderated on social media, allowing hate to spread unchecked.

Research has shown that antisemitic comments are far more present on the social media channels of large media companies than in other digital discourse – this suggests that people with an antisemitic agenda specifically seek out these channels to reach a broad audience. This creates a moderation responsibility for media companies that not every media company seems to see at the moment.[243]

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