REDESCRIPTIONS
Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory

What Parliamentary Rhetoric Tells Us About Changing Democratic Culture: Antisemitism in Austrian Parliamentary Debate as a Threat to Democracy

RESEARCH

HUP HELSINKI UNIVERSITY PRESS

KARIN BISCHOF
MARION LÖFFLER
*Author affiliations can be found in the back matter of this article

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:
Karin Bischof
Danube University Krems, AT
karin.bischof@donau-uni.ac.at

ABSTRACT

The article aims to tease out the relationship between, on the one hand, changing rhetorical strategies for dealing with 'post-war-tabooed' antisemitism in the Austrian parliament and, on the other, shifts in *democratic culture* – that is, the expression of democratic equality in the publicly sayable. Starting from the theoretical assumptions that parliament symbolises democracy *tout court* and that parliamentarism is a 'rhetorical condition of democracy' (Kari Palonen), we seek to explore the nexus between parliamentary rhetoric and democracy in depth. We do so, *first,* by identifying the successive postwar rhetorical strategies for dealing with antisemitism in their (historical) political context and, *second,* by delineating how those strategies mark shifting boundaries of the sayable in relation to antisemitism in Austrian postwar parliamentary rhetoric. *Third*, we show how those strategies and shifts signify transformations of Austrian democratic culture and democracy and that this process has a gendered dimension. Methodologically, we draw on a multidisciplinary mix of qualitative approaches, combining discourse and rhetoric analysis, specialised approaches to the analysis of parliamentary debate, and Conceptual History.

KEYWORDS:
antisemitism; democracy; political culture; parliamentarism; parliamentary rhetoric; debate; gender; right wing populism

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Bischof, Karin and Marion Löffler. 2023. "What Parliamentary Rhetoric Tells Us About Changing Democratic Culture: Antisemitism in Austrian Parliamentary Debate as a Threat to Democracy." *Redescriptions: Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 26(2): 141–159. DOI: https://doi.org/10.33134/rds.397

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

INTRODUCTION

'Any form of glorification of Nazism is an intolerable attack on our democracy and our free society' (Tempfer 2022), stated Austria's Minister of Justice, Alma Zadic, at a press conference announcing a reform of the country's anti-Nazi laws. This reform forms part of the 'National Strategy against Antisemitism', introduced in January 2021. In the course of a session of the Austrian National Council (parliament) on March 24, 2021, in which this strategy was discussed, all the parties manifested their firm determination to support Jewish life in Austria and to combat antisemitism. This carries forward a process of excluding antisemitic rhetoric from the publicly sayable, a process that has also come to be regarded as symbolic of the state of democratic culture in Austria. This apparently self-evident link between democracy and the struggle against antisemitism can only be understood in the light of the Nazi past and has been established gradually and selectively, leading to persisting ambivalences in the treatment of antisemitism in parliament. The very fact that a strengthening of the anti-Nazi laws and stepped-up protection of Jewish life appear necessary bears witness to a new rise in antisemitism, including among politicians and members of parliament. The simultaneous condemnation and use of antisemitic rhetoric by politicians, however, points to a strategy for handling antisemitism in political discourse.

The aim of this article is to discuss how changing rhetorical strategies towards antisemitism in Austrian parliamentarism indicate a qualitative change in democracy and democratic culture. The paper presents findings derived from our research into parliamentary debate and antisemitism, in which we introduced a novel conception of parliamentary rhetoric and democratic change.[1] In our theory-driven conceptualization of (liberal) representative democracy, we assume that the parliament functions as a symbolic centre, symbolising democracy *tout court*. This identification has recently been vindicated by media coverage of riots targeting parliaments or Member of Parliament (MP)s such as the Brazil Congress and the United States Capitol attack of January 2023 and 2021 or the attack on the German Reichstag building in August 2020, which were described by international media as an 'assault on democracy' (Euronews 2021, 2023; Serhan 2023) and an 'attack on the heart of democracy' (ARD 2020), respectively. Our concept of parliament builds on this symbolic centrality in democratic culture by drawing out the significance of its debates for constructing meaning in parliamentary democracy. We define democratic culture as the expression of democratic equality in the publicly sayable. Because of its symbolic centrality, parliamentary rhetoric plays a decisive role in the drawing of the boundaries of the publicly sayable. Within this perspective, the essential significance of parliamentary rhetoric renders the talking versus working parliament distinction (Weber 1980, 854) irrelevant. By combining research on political culture and parliamentarism with democracy theory (see Bayley 2004; Dörner 2003; Habermas 1992; Palonen 2016), our approach identifies a nexus between parliamentary rhetoric and democracy that allows us to investigate democratic change via an analysis of rhetorical strategies in parliamentary debates.

1 This paper is based on research conducted in the framework of the project 'Antisemitism as a political strategy and the development of democracy: the case of the Austrian Parliament 1945–2008,' which was funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (project no. P26365-G22) and conducted at the University of Vienna under the direction of Eva Kreisky with the collaboration of Karin Bischof, Marion Löffler and Nicolas Bechter. For this article, we have also taken into account the more recent legislative periods until 2020. Parts of this paper have been previously published in German (see Bischof & Löffler 2022).

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

In our approach, following Kari Palonen (2009), we theorise parliamentarism as a 'rhetorical condition of democracy.' The rhetorical epistemology (*pro et contra*) is institutionalised not only in parliamentary procedure and the corresponding rhetorical political culture (ibid. 11), but also in other democratic institutions and their procedures (ibid., 10). Parliamentarism is thus a way of generating specific political knowledge through debate, which is a conflictual process intrinsic to democracy and – we add – at the same time has the potential to stabilise or de-stabilise democracy and democratic culture. This application of our understanding of the parliamentary rhetoric and democracy nexus allows us to view (de)democratising agendas of parliamentary rhetoric as the flip side of institutional change. Consequently, we argue that long-term changes in rhetorical features and strategies in plenary debates indicate democratic changes and can thus function as a benchmark for democratic transformation.

In order to investigate the nexus between parliamentary rhetoric and democratic political culture, we developed a multidisciplinary mix of approaches to the analysis of plenary debates, with a focus on the historical and political context. Our analyses combine, among others, Ruth Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach as developed in her Critical Discourse Analysis framework (see Wodak & Krzyzanowski 2008) as well as specialised literature on parliamentary debate that highlights the specific features of the use of parliamentary language: that is, specific dialogue conventions and competitive interaction in the plenary setting including affective dimensions (see Ilie 2018), debate genres (Palonen 2010), the various ways (e.g. 'multiple addressing' and 'staging') in which parliamentary language is used to address voters outside parliament (see Burkhardt 2003) – 'speaking out of the window' as Max Weber puts it – and the philosophy of rhetoric (see Hetzel 2011) to provide a theoretical view of the struggle over meanings in rhetoric. In addition, we build on Conceptual History (see Koselleck 2010) and Analysis of Metaphors (see Bischof 2015).

In our research on parliamentary debates in Austria, we investigated two dimensions of democratic change as expressed in rhetoric and debate: (1) understandings of democracy, the *demos* (see Bischof 2018, 2022), and representative claims; and (2) shifts in the boundaries of the publicly sayable in partisan struggles over meaning in parliament (Bischof & Löffler 2022; Löffler 2017a). In this article, we focus on the latter, that is, we examine the shifting boundaries of the sayable as regards antisemitism and strategies for dealing with it in parliamentary rhetoric after 1945 on the one hand and trends of democratic transformation on the other. Pluralism and gender are pivotal to our concept of democracy, drawing on the notion of equality in the Rancièrean sense of keeping open the boundaries of the demos (Löffler 2018; Rancière 2002).

In Austria, political antisemitism developed during the final decades of the Habsburg monarchy (1861–1918). During the First Austrian Republic (1918–1933), it was frequently employed in public discourse and was hardly considered un-democratic. In parliamentary discourse, antisemitism served as a general interpretive frame for the complex modern world and could thus become an almost universal political strategy. Any political issue could easily be associated with antisemitism in parliamentary rhetoric in order to delegitimate political opponents (see Falter & Stachowitsch 2017), often in intersection with a gender discourse. This draws heavily on the depiction of Jewishness and Jews in political discourse as ambivalent in the sense of being disloyal, of 'not belonging to either side' and being too cowardly to fight for either side (see Bischof 2018), thus posing a threat to a 'manly' German nation (Falter & Stachowitsch 2017, 162). Questioning the very identity-forming bivalent distinction of friend and enemy, of a national(ist) 'we' and 'other' makes this ambivalence a

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

particularly existential threat (see Holz 2001), which is marked by effemination. Hence, the intersection of nationalism, antisemitism and sexism (see Stögner 2014) not only facilitates the alleged democratic claim of parliamentarians to represent the true (i.e., non-Jewish) people, it also attributes a gendered meaning to those claims. Connecting to long-established European narratives of cultural decline (see Ifversen 1997), these constructions of internal others are presented as undermining a 'manly' nationalist 'self' by weakening and effeminating it from within, leading, in the worst case, to its final downfall (see, e.g. Oswald Spengler c.f. Ifversen ibid.). After the Holocaust and World War II, antisemitism, although still common in everyday language and employed in extra-parliamentary discourse (Reiter 2001), fell under a public 'taboo' (Reisigl & Wodak 2001), so that it was no longer usable as a universal political strategy in the Second Austrian Republic. However, despite the process of tabooing, antisemitic rhetoric did not simply disappear from political discourse but gradually descended into latency (Bergmann & Erb 1991, 275; Holz 2001).

Members of the National Council themselves have increasingly come to use the way they deal with the Nazi past and especially with antisemitic attitudes as a benchmark for the state of democracy. We wanted to know what happens in plenary debates when antisemitic rhetoric ceases to be part of the publicly 'sayable.' Consequently, we analysed rhetorical shifts in the strategies for dealing with (latent) antisemitism and sought to identify the shifts in democratic political culture reflected in these strategies.

In order to empirically capture the nexus of (coded) antisemitism and democratic culture in parliamentary rhetoric, we have developed and applied a mixed method that combines discourse analysis (CDA and DHA following Ruth Wodak 2011) with specific approaches to parliamentary rhetoric drawn from political science, linguistics and philosophy of history (political linguistics, parliamentary rhetoric and conceptual history, and following especially Burkhardt 2003; Ilie 2018; Koselleck 2010; Palonen 2009). These approaches form the basis of a category system that, in addition to topics, argumentation and self- and other-presentation in context, also includes dialogue conventions and such typical parliamentary debating strategies as multiple addressing, theatricality, competitive interaction and debate genres, as well as the use made of historical terms and concepts (e.g. demos, democracy). The corpus comprises a total of 1,432 debates between 1945 and 2020, 157 (partial) analyses were conducted using the category system.

In analyses of plenary debates, we found a range of rhetorical approaches to dealing with antisemitism, which we grouped into four main rhetorical strategies:

1. The strategy of antisemitism as rhetorical cement for a coalition consensus
2. Strategies of denial and trivialisation of antisemitism
3. Strategies for re-evaluating antisemitism and instrumental 'philosemitism'
4. Strategies of accusations of antisemitism and aggressive defence against these accusations

In the following pages, we present these strategies in the political context in which they were developed. The aim of this paper is to discuss their relevance to the current state of democratic culture in Austria and then relate this to broader trends of democratic change.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

THE POST-WAR YEARS AND THE VICTIM THESIS: ANTISEMITISM AS RHETORICAL CEMENT FOR A COALITION CONSENSUS

The effectiveness of what we have described as the 'tabooing' of antisemitism in the public political sphere in the post-war period in Austria (Reisigl & Wodak 2001) developed only gradually. In the first phase, from 1945 until around the mid-1950s, the language of debate was still characterised by clearly recognisable antisemitic stereotyping. This becomes visible in the relatively frequent thematization of so-called 'emigrants' – a euphemistic term for Jewish Nazi expellees. At the time, 'emigrants' was easily understood as a swear word by large sections of society (Embacher 2001) and thus can be analysed as 'coded antisemitism' (see Wodak 2011). These 'emigrants' were portrayed as cowardly and/or privileged or intentionally causing harm and incapable of loving their homeland (Bischof 2017, 193ff.). They were accused of having 'fled like cowards' ('feige geflüchtet,' Prinke, ÖVP, NR, 15.12.1954, 2708)[2] instead of 'staying at home like the manly women and men [...]' ('wie die mannhaften Frauen und Männer [...] zu Hause zu bleiben,' Koref, SPÖ, NR, 7.12.1950, 1431); they were portrayed as 'Allied citizens' ('alliierte Staatsbürger,' Fischer, KPÖ, NR, 15.3.1950, 480) and capitalists who had stubbornly insisted on restitution claims that had been denied to the 'Austrian bombed out victims' (ibid.); they were accused of having 'stripped off Austrian citizenship [...] like a snake's skin' ('die österreichische Staatsbürgerschaft [...] abgestreift [...] wie eine Schlangenhaut,' Stüber, WdU, NR, 16.2.1955, 2823).

The list could be continued; three essential mechanisms are revealed in them: First, they illustrate a mode of dealing with the National Socialist legacy in Austria after 1945 that was to be formative for a long time in the Second Republic, namely the perpetrator–victim reversal, which was essentially fostered by the myth of Austria as the first victim of Nazi Germany in the (selectively received) Moscow Declaration (Uhl 2011). Second, they illustrate a mode of inclusion and exclusion employed across party lines in which two groups were counterposed to each other until around 1955 – the 'people who stayed here' and the 'emigrants.' Attributing 'unmanliness' to those who had to flee to save their lives and juxtaposing them to the 'manly' we-group (of those who stayed) illustrates a pivotal point of intersection. A deeper analysis reveals that the underlying Schmittian concept of 'demos' and the political, which draws on a friend/enemy distinction, is itself intrinsically gendered (see Bischof 2018). Third, antisemitic prejudice against 'emigrants' are an expression of post-war antisemitism, involving the projective discharge of guilt with the aim of deflecting blame on the few survivors, the Jews who were expelled all over the world (Reiter 2001, 339). Although it avoids mentioning 'Jews' or 'Jewishness,' this trope nevertheless represents an explicit manifestation of post-war antisemitism. On the one hand, there was a growing awareness in the post-war years that antisemitism was not opportune in the official political sphere in relations with foreign countries and the Allied Council that controlled the Austrian government. On the other hand, antisemitism was still common within the political elite (Knight 1988).

2 We cite the parliamentary protocols as follows: Name of MP, party affiliation, National Council, date, page number.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

A closer look at the course of the debates and a deeper contextualisation of such antisemitic statements shows that the repeated references to the distinction between 'those who stayed here' and the 'emigrants' also had a political-strategic significance. The increasing consolidation of this new line of divide played an important role in bridging, at least temporarily, the enmity between the political camps, now represented by the ÖVP and the SPÖ, which was still alive after the violent conflicts of the interwar period, with the help of a narrative focused on joint reconstruction work.

The budget debate of December 15, 1954 illustrates both the narrative and its fractures. For example, Ferdinanda Flossmann, SPÖ (2705) speaks of the 'calm construction work' ('ruhige Aufbauarbeit') and the associated 'proud balance sheet' ('stolze Bilanz'). Rudolf Reisetbauer, ÖVP (2709f.) praises the 'inner satisfaction' ('innere Genugtuung') inspired by the economic progress of the 'fatherland' and the joint success of the government ('not only the ÖVP did that. We all did that together') ('das hat nicht nur die ÖVP gemacht. Das haben wir alle zusammen gemacht'), as well as the 'honest cooperation for the good of the people' ('ehrliche Zusammenarbeit zum Wohle des Volkes'). The breaking point appears when a Communist MP is accused of 'poisoning the well' with 'class struggle' ('Brunnenvergiftung' durch 'Klassenkampf'). It deepens when the accusation of not seeing the 'existence and prosperity of the whole' ('Bestehen und Gedeihen des Ganzen') is linked to the phrase 'emigrants are always wrong' ('Emigranten haben immer Unrecht,' ibid., 2708). It finally expands into a fracture, this time within the Social Democrats, when the Social Democratic émigré Karl Czernetz counters. The attacks by the ÖVP MPs are focused on him and continue in subsequent debates. The ÖVP MP Altenburger (NR, 16.12. 1955, 4242), for example, declares Czernetz to be an enemy not only of the ÖVP but of the coalition's reconstruction work, of the country, and of peace as a whole, and accuses him of 'digging up graves' ('Gräber aufreißen'). He pleads with the SPÖ, 'if you want to preserve the common ground […] of all […], then get rid of the spirit of MP Czernetz' ('wenn Sie die Gemeinsamkeit […] aller wahren wollen […], dann hinweg mit dem Geist des Abg. Czernetz,' ibid., 4242) and makes this appeal to the SPÖ chairman Bruno Pittermann: 'If you want to work with us in the long run, then prepare your people for this.' ('Wenn Sie auf die Dauer mit uns zusammenarbeiten wollen, dann stellen Sie Ihre Leute darauf ein.' Ibid.) The wish is also openly formulated: 'Mr. Czernetz, better that you had not come back […] you came back when we had partly built up […] and we will not let this building-up be disturbed in the form […] that we now let the class forms reappear.' ('Herr Abg. Czernetz, wären Sie lieber nicht zurückgekommen […] Sie sind zurückgekommen, als wir zum Teil aufgebaut hatten […] und wir lassen uns diesen Aufbau nicht in der Form stören, […] dass wir nunmehr die Klassenformen wieder auftauchen lassen.') (Altenburger, ÖVP, NR, 16.12.1955, 4238)

These massive attacks on Karl Czernetz are to be understood as both attacks on the left in the SPÖ and antisemitic. In the informal structures of the forming social partnership, the antisemitic code 'emigrant' was within the boundaries of the sayable and, like anti-communism, provided the cement between the formerly hostile parties (see Bischof 2018). Thus, the depicted strategy of using coded antisemitism as a cement can be seen as integral to the development of democratic culture in this phase and the postwar grand coalition's formation of a consensual model of democracy.

COALITION CRISIS AND SPÖ GOVERNMENT: STRATEGIES OF DENIAL AND TRIVIALISATION OF ANTISEMITISM

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

Within the post-war context of Allied occupation and the emerging Cold War constellation, statements like 'the public' and 'abroad' ('das Ausland') 'should not get a false picture of Austria' form part of the standard repertoire in plenary debates in which Nazism and antisemitism are or become topical. After the State Treaty and the withdrawal of the Allied troops in 1955, the concern about Austria's international reputation remains. High-profile antisemitic scandals increased the intensity of this concern on the part of the major parliamentary parties, the ÖVP and SPÖ. The so-called 'Schiller-Kommers' of colour-wearing fraternities[3] in 1959 turned into a major neo-Nazi event; in 1960 and 1961, Jewish cemeteries were desecrated; and in 1965, there was the scandal of Prof. Taras Borodajkewycz, who made antisemitic remarks in front of applauding students. During a demonstration against Borodajkewycz, the resistance fighter Ernst Kirchweger was brutally beaten and died of his injuries. For fear of painting a supposedly false picture of Austria as a fascist and antisemitic society, parliamentary debate on these events was kept to a minimum. While antisemitic incidents were addressed rather cautiously in parliament, legal measures, such as those to protect the symbols of the Republic, were passed to counteract undemocratic, that is, National Socialist and fascist, developments. In response to antisemitic incidents, a ban on incitement to hatred ('Verhetzung') was proposed by the then Minister of Justice, Christian Broda (SPÖ).

In this period, downplaying proves to be the preferred political strategy when antisemitism becomes publicly visible. This was the case, for example, in 1975 in the so-called Kreisky–Peter–Wiesenthal affair. Instead of addressing the SS past of Friedrich Peter (FPÖ), the then Federal Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (SPÖ) diverted public attention towards the exposer Simon Wiesenthal (Pelinka 2020, 94). In so doing, Kreisky, who did not want to be reduced to his Jewish origin, fostered antisemitic prejudices and made criticism of Israel with antisemitic connotations acceptable (Peham 2019, 28). Whether Kreisky played the role of the 'exonerating Jew' ('Entlastungsjude') for the Austrians is disputed (cf. Reiter 2001, 278; Stögner 2009), but in the conflict with Wiesenthal, he took on the role of the 'public antisemite' ('öffentlicher Antisemit'). The members of the National Council could therefore largely do without antisemitic strategies. In stark contrast to the public scandals, there are no antisemitic incidents in the plenum of the National Council during the entire period of the SPÖ's sole government from 1970 to 1983, apart from one exception that exemplifies the parliamentary strategy of denial.

In the session of February 15, 1972 (1879, 1882), during question time, when Kreisky (SPÖ) was answering, there were 'quiet remarks' ('leise Bemerkungen') as well as 'continuing unrest among the ÖVP' ('anhaltende Unruhe bei der ÖVP'). For seemingly inexplicable reasons, Kreisky is outraged by an interjection, and SPÖ parliamentary faction leader Leopold Gratz even demands an adjournment of the session (Kreisky, SPÖ, NR, 15.02.1972, 1882; Gratz, SPÖ, ibid., 1884). The session is finally resumed with

3 Colour-wearing student fraternities are right-wing, German nationalist, male-only organisations that wear colourful uniforms and swords used for ritualised fights. They claim to be maintaining a tradition dating back to the Revolution of 1848. 'Schiller-Kommers' is an annual festive gathering of the colour-wearing fraternities in honour of the poet Friedrich Schiller, who is idolised as a pioneer of German nationalism.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

a half-hearted apology by Hanns Koren, the ÖVP faction leader (ibid.).[4] As can be seen from the press coverage, two ÖVP MPs had repeatedly shouted 'Jud' when Kreisky mentioned the names of contractors on a building project. The antisemitic content of the interjections consisted of an insinuation that Kreisky had unfairly favoured his Jewish '(racial) comrades.' The fact that this was understood by all present becomes clear, on the one hand, in Kreisky's reaction, who immediately pointed out that he had not known the contractors beforehand, and, on the other hand, in the apparently consensual decision not to include the interjections in the stenographic minutes of the meeting. Since several reactions from SPÖ MPs were noted and the press also reported on it, the omission of the interjections cannot be attributed to poor audibility but must have been intentionally ignored. This represents an intensification of the strategy of denial. It turns parliamentary debate into an object of self-censorship with the aim of polishing up Austria's democratic image vis-à-vis the (international) public.

WALDHEIM AND THE REVISION OF THE VICTIM THESIS: STRATEGIES OF RE-EVALUATING ANTISEMITISM AND INSTRUMENTAL 'PHILOSEMITISM'

The previous example of the concerted (and unusual) decision not to record antisemitic interjections in the minutes shows the use of downplaying and denial by both major parties as strategies for dealing with antisemitism. One might have expected the matter to have become part of the party-political conflict, especially since, in the government constellation of the time, the SPÖ and ÖVP faced each other as government and opposition. However, the concern to avoid a 'false image abroad' was obviously stronger than party-political calculations. This was to change in the course of the 1980s. The first attempts to question the post-war pact between the major parties, the SPÖ and ÖVP, 'not to accuse each other about the Nazis' (in their ranks) ('sich die Nazis nicht gegenseitig vorzuwerfen') (Toth 2010, 272) can be observed in the so-called Frischenschlager-Reder handshake affair in 1985 (ibid., 170).[5]

However, the grand-coalition pact of silence was only truly broken during the 1986 presidential election, in which the SPÖ made an issue of the Nazi past of the candidate nominated by the ÖVP, Kurt Waldheim. The consequence of the Waldheim debate, or rather of Waldheim's own actions, was that the 'stopper was pulled out of the bottle' that 'contained the spirit of the Austrian past' (der 'Stöpsel aus der Flasche' gezogen wurde, 'in der sich der Geist der österreichischen Vergangenheit befand') (Helene Maimann 1988, quoted in Uhl 2011, 196). The wave of antisemitic hostility and conspiracy narratives purveyed by the media and embedded in a sharpened perpetrator–victim reversal, which flared up during the Waldheim debate (Wodak & Pelinka 2002) and which has been explored in depth in several studies (see, ibid.; Mitten 1992; Wodak et al. 1990), elicited a civil society and media counter-discourse. Waldheim was able to win the election, among other things with the slogan, 'Now

---

4 An analysis of the debate can be found in the dissertation thesis by Nicolas Bechter (2017).

5 Walter Reder, convicted of Nazi war crimes in Italy, was handed over to Austria, and the FPÖ foreign minister of the SPÖ-FPÖ coalition, Friedhelm Frischenschlager, greeted him with a handshake upon his arrival at the airport. The effort to bring about the return and repatriation of Reder had been strongly supported by both major parties, ÖVP and SPÖ (Toth 2010).

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

more than ever' ('Jetzt erst recht'); however, the debates he had unleashed led in the medium and long term to a revision of the so-called victim thesis, that is, the official self-portrayal of Austria as the first victim of Nazi Germany.

In 1991, Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky (SPÖ, NR, 08.07.1991, 3282) distanced himself from the victim narrative in parliament and declared the 'joint responsibility' ('Mitverantwortung') of the 'citizens of this country' ('Bürger dieses Landes') for National Socialist crimes. This correction and the accompanying narrowing of the boundaries of the sayable was marked by Vranitzky's speech in the 'symbolic centre,' parliament. This was preceded by an increased questioning of Austrian remembrance policy and the problematisation of antisemitism in parliamentary debates in the wake of the Waldheim scandal – and thus a change in the culture of debate. In contrast to earlier problematisations of antisemitic allusions and trivialisations of Nazism (e.g. in relation to Taras Borodejkiewycz, the 1959 Schiller Kommers, or the Frischenschlager–Reder handshake), which hardly ever found their way into parliament, the Waldheim causa was now frequently raised there.[6] Moreover, the critical references to Waldheim went beyond the focus on a supposedly false 'image of Austria abroad' or the concrete problem of Austria's isolation in foreign policy (emphasised especially by the FPÖ, but also by individuals from the SPÖ, which had been involved in a coalition with the ÖVP again since the end of 1986 and after Waldheim's election). Largely due to the entry of the Greens into parliament in 1986, the Waldheim causa was now repeatedly discussed in terms of a politics of the past, democratization and linguistic sensitisation, including in relation to the underlying antisemitism. Thus, Green Party MPs such as Karl Smolle, Freda Meißner-Blau, Peter Pilz, Walter Geyer, Herbert Fux and Andreas Wabl repeatedly demanded that the Causa Waldheim be seen as a problem not only in connection with the harm done to Austria's image abroad, but also because of a failed policy towards the past expressed in the mantra of 'fulfilling one's duty' (by joining the Nazi militia, the SA), a misguided minority policy, a lack of democratisation and a failure to take an anti-fascist stance. Green Party MPs reproached, for example, Michael Graff (MP of the ÖVP) for his antisemitic utterances in extra-parliamentarian political discourse. Examples were his reference to 'the dishonourable fellows of the Jewish World Congress' ('ehrlose Gesellen des jüdischen Weltkongresses') for example, or to the 'henchmen of the Jewish World Congress in Israel' ('Handlanger des jüdischen Weltkongresses in Israel') or the use of the phrase 'blood traces of Jewish terror' ('Blutspuren des jüdischen Terrors') (NR, Pilz, Greens, 15.5.1987, 2039). However, there is little trace in parliamentary rhetoric of the blatant antisemitism evident in public and media discourse during the 'Waldheim scandal.' Although in the 1986–1990 legislative period Waldheim is referred to quite often, the use of coded antisemitism (see Wodak 2011) is exceptional. 'East coast,' a frequently used 'code' in public debate at that time (see Wodak et al. 1990), is not used in an affirmative way. Exceptionally, however, the name 'Brofman,' president of the Jewish World Congress, is mentioned two times in a way that involves antisemitic allusions. Bronfman was accused of defamation (taz 1987), and in parliament he was repeatedly blamed for denouncing the 'whole Austrian people.' 'Bronfman' served as a reference point for victim–perpetrator reversals (see Staudinger, ÖVP, NR, 23.3.1988, 6438; Steiner, ÖVP, NR, 14.5.1987, 1982). Like in the case of the Green Parties' reproaching of Michael Graff for his blatant antisemitism, their criticism of

6 In the legislative period 1986–1990 there were about 45 references to Waldheim in plenary debates.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

the antisemitic coding of 'Bronfman' resulted, in turn, in denunciations of the Green MPs as (left-wing) 'fascists' (Schwimmer, ÖVP, NR, 14.5.1987, 2039). Such accusations were uttered by MPs from the ÖVP, FPÖ and SPÖ:

> We reject the insult to the memory of our Austrians in the First and Second World Wars. *(Deputy Dr Pilz: 'So the Jews are once again the fascists!' – interjection: 'Rubbish!' – persistent heckling).* 'Herr Dr Pilz, you are the fascist! I say here that you are the fascist! [...] 'Herr Dr Pilz, what has it come to when one can no longer defend oneself against accusations without being accused of being an anti-Semite.
>
> (Wir wehren uns gegen die Schändung des Andenkens unserer Österreicher des Ersten und des Zweiten Weltkrieges. *(Abg. Dr. Pilz: Also die Juden sind heute wieder die Faschisten! – Ruf: Aber geh! – Anhaltende Zwischenrufe.)* Herr Dr. Pilz! Sie sind der Faschist! Ich bezeichne Sie hier als den Faschisten! [...] Herr Dr. Pilz! Weit sind wir gekommen, wenn man sich nicht mehr gegen Beschuldigungen zur Wehr setzen kann, ohne daß man beschuldigt wird, Antisemit zu sein. (NR, Staudinger, ÖVP, 23.3.1988, 6438)

At the same time, however, another strategy for dealing with antisemitism becomes apparent. The antisemitic hostility expressed during the Waldheim debate brought accusations of antisemitism, especially within the ÖVP, from 'abroad.' The fact that at least some MPs countered this with ostentatiously positive references to (former) 'Jewish fellow citizens' and spoke of their patriotism and attachment to their homeland, sometimes with caricatural exaggeration, can also be read as repair work on the 'image of Austria abroad.' For example, Walter Schwimmer (ÖVP, NR 01.06.1995, 79f.; Schwimmer, ÖVP, NR, 23.3.1988, 6422), tells of exuberantly patriotic Jewish expellees, e.g. a woman 'who in the subtropical climate of Eilat walked the whole day at home and out of the house in an Austrian dirndl, who touchingly looked after every Austrian in need in Eilat, drug-addicted youths who were picked up, sent to prison [...] ('die im subtropischen Klima von Eilat den ganzen Tag zu Hause und außer Haus im österreichischen Dirndl ging, die sich rührend um jeden Österreicher in Not in Eilat gekümmert hat, um drogensüchtige Jugendliche, die aufgegriffen wurden, ins Gefängnis kamen'), and all this despite the fact that her brother had been shot by a Nazi neighbour's son in Vienna. Here, the antisemitic stereotypes of the immediate post-war period are simply turned into their opposite, an assumed inability to love one's homeland becomes a completely self-forgetting love of one's homeland, but the basic antisemitic structure still remains recognisable. Such idealisations are used to avoid accusations of antisemitism and to emphasise the user's democratic mindset. The 'Waldheim Scandal' brought about, for the first time, intensified demands for democratisation, particularly in relation to antisemitic coding and the politics of the past. This resulted in an official revision of the 'victim thesis' in a parliamentary speech by the chancellor, and thus a further narrowing of the boundaries of the sayable as regards antisemitism and a change of democratic political rhetoric and culture. Simultaneously, a new strategy appeared in the form of instrumental 'philosemitism,' which allowed for the subtle perpetuation of the antisemitic structure while meeting the demands of the new linguistic sensitisation.

THE ERA OF RIGHT-WING POPULISM: STRATEGIES OF THE ACCUSATION OF ANTISEMITISM AND AGGRESSIVE DEFENCE AGAINST THESE ACCUSATIONS

Accusations of antisemitism can be defended against by a counter-accusation of incitement to hatred ('Verhetzung'), but also by the assertion that the opponent is using a 'Nazi and fascism cudgel' ('Nazi- und Faschismuskeule') to silence critics. In contrast to strategies of downplaying and denial, which seek to banish antisemitic attitudes from public discourse by declaring them non-existent, these strategies serve to expose an allegedly antisemitic and fascist mindset.

Both the accusation of incitement and the 'Nazi cudgel' defence impute undemocratic behaviour and shadow the accusation of antisemitism. This has to do with the connotative link between antisemitism and National Socialism as a counter-model to the democratic self-image of the parliament. The accusation of incitement subliminally refers to Nazi propaganda and thus denounces a style of politics as undemocratic but also as criminal, since incitement to hatred is a criminal offence. The reference to Nazi terminology is also to be understood as an accusation of criminal or at least undemocratic behaviour against the background of the Prohibition Act (Verbotsgesetz).[7] The claim that such criticism functions rhetorically as a 'Nazi or fascist cudgel' turns the accusation back against the critics. The metaphorical cudgel is said to shut down legitimate debate, so that speakers who accuse others of using the Nazi cudgel are claiming that their own NS or antisemitic utterances should be a legitimate part of democratic debate.

Strategies of accusations of antisemitism and the Nazi cudgel defence have a politically polarising effect. Consequently, in parliament, they are the perfect means for opposition factions to attack the government. In the Austrian National Council, however, this has only happened once, during the Second Republic's first one-party government (1966–1970). The oppositional SPÖ demanded a reform of the criminal law, and especially a ban on incitement to hatred, and used this demand as a subtle attack against the ruling ÖVP. In the 1966 election campaign, Alois Scheibenreif (ÖVP), a member of the National Council, had called the then Foreign Minister Kreisky (SPÖ) a 'sow Jew' ('Saujud').[8] On the part of some SPÖ MPs, this was interpreted as deep-seated antisemitism and an expression of undemocratic sentiments within the ÖVP. Accordingly, the demand for a ban on incitement was intended to challenge the ÖVP government and force a comprehensive commitment to democratic values through linking democracy with the fight against antisemitism.

In the following years, almost no incitement accusations were voiced in parliament. It was only from 1990 onwards that the number increased, accompanied by the emergence of references to the Nazi or fascism cudgel. The use of these ideologically polarising strategies correlates with a shift in the parliamentary balance of power, marked on the one hand by the FPÖ's shift to the right when Jörg Haider took over as party chair and on the other by the appearance of the Green Party as a new

---

7 The Prohibition Act of 1947 contains a number of provisions aimed at combating the resurgence of National Socialist activities by means of law.

8 Scheibenreif later had to apologise publicly for this, but remained in office (cf., Peham, 2019, 26).

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

(parliamentary) actor, carrying civil society debates directly into parliament.[9] These debates were shaped by the new social sensitisation to antisemitic prejudices and the absence of a reckoning with the country's Nazi past in the wake of the Waldheim presidency from 1986 to 1992, which not only constituted a 'culmination of antisemitic traditions in the ÖVP' (Peham 2019, 26) but also a kind of field test for right-wing populist political strategies. The use of antisemitic allusions and Nazi vocabulary, a strategy particularly employed by FPÖ leader Haider, had proven to be sufficiently provocative to mobilise voters. However, with the exception of individual MPs, it was not so much the established parties that felt provoked, but rather civil society actors and representatives of the Greens. Accordingly, in the 1990s, most accusations of incitement came from the Greens and were primarily directed against the FPÖ, which in turn used aggressive defensive strategies against the Greens. As both parties were in opposition, accusations of antisemitism and aggressive defences against such accusations established themselves as an oppositional pattern in the Austrian National Council.

In 1999, the ÖVP formed a coalition with the FPÖ that was so controversial that it triggered diplomatic sanctions by the other EU states. The controversial status of the FPÖ's participation in government was also reflected in an increase in the number of incitement accusations in the National Council. The previous pattern of mutual accusations of incitement by the Greens and the FPÖ shifts significantly. Now it is the governing parties FPÖ and ÖVP that use this strategy to attack the opposition, especially the SPÖ as the alleged mastermind behind the international sanctions. During the continuation of the ÖVP and the FPÖ coalition government (2002–2006), talk of incitement disappears from plenary debates and only reappears, in the previous intra-opposition pattern, under a new coalition government between the SPÖ and the ÖVP (2007–2017).

Parallel to the reversal of the accusation of incitement, the talk of the Nazi and fascism cudgel becomes established in parliament. The first example occurs in a plenary debate in 1997; the most recent case to date is from the Stenographic Minutes of the National Council of July 2, 2019, and is an interjection by Herbert Kickl (FPÖ). Here, it is MPs from the FPÖ and the BZÖ, but also from Team STRONACH and occasionally from the ÖVP, who use the Nazi cudgel metaphor. For example, Andreas Khol, then chairman of the ÖVP parliamentary group, uses the accusation to denounce the sanctions against the ÖVP-FPÖ government:

> 'Any centre-right government will, with reference to fundamental European values, immediately be struck by the fascism cudgel, when communists and socialists are replaced by parties of the centre and right.'
>
> ('Jede Mitte-Rechts-Regierung sollte unter Berufung auf europäische Grundwerte sofort mit der Faschismuskeule erschlagen werden, wenn Kommunisten und Sozialisten durch Parteien der Mitte und der Rechten ersetzt werden.') (Khol, ÖVP, NR, 31.01.2001, 63)

In this quote, it becomes clear that Khol wants to delegitimize left-wing critics. The fascism cudgel is denounced as the preferred weapon of the left against a democratically legitimate right. This assertion makes it unnecessary to deal with the

9 The Liberal Forum (LiF) was founded in 1994 by FPÖ National Council members who defined themselves as liberal in opposition to the party's nationalist turn. See https://www.parlament.gv.at/WWER/NR/MandateNr1945/.

arguments of the opponents, who are accused of refusing to debate while one's own behaviour is de-thematised. As a rhetorical strategy, talk of the Nazi cudgel signals ideological polarisation and a departure from consensual politics. As a strategy for dealing with antisemitism, the association with undemocratic attitudes is maintained, but antisemitism is assumed to exist only among the others.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS: CODED ANTISEMITISM, DENUNCIATIONS OF THE 'NAZI CUDGEL' AND OSTENTATIOUS LOVE OF ISRAEL AS A POLYVALENT STRATEGY

In December 2017, the ÖVP established a coalition government with the FPÖ again, which broke up in discord in May 2019 (see Löffler 2020). The period of this government witnessed an unusually high number of public antisemitic statements, Nazi references and symbols, which attracted intense media attention. In almost all cases, the culprits were officials from the FPÖ, which routinely dismissed these outbreaks as (insignificant) 'individual cases.' A summary in the daily paper *Der Standard* (April 23, 2019) identified 51 such individual cases in the FPÖ between November 2017 and April 2019 involving antisemitic content, Nazi terminology or symbolism and contacts with far-right extremists,[10] including contacts between FPÖ officials and members of the Identitarian Movement Austria (Identitäre Bewegegung Österreich – IBÖ), the call by an FPÖ provincial councillor for the registration of all purchasers of kosher meat (ibid.), discovery of texts mocking Holocaust survivors in the song books of a student fraternity to which a former FPÖ leading candidate, now Deputy Governor of Lower Austria, belongs (ibid.). In light of this upsurge of overt antisemitism, as reported in the media, and its consistent trivialisation by the government parties, it would appear that antisemitism is here being partially 'de-tabooed.' In this connection, Ruth Wodak has talked about 'normalising the previously unsayable and unacceptable' in mainstream discourse (Wodak 2019, 207). The following exemplary analysis seeks to establish whether such a process is also apparent in parliamentary debates.

'SILBERSTEIN SENDS HIS REGARDS!'

Tal Silberstein is an Israeli political advisor who was employed by the SPÖ in the 2017 election campaign and who launched a negative campaign against the ÖVP using fabricated Facebook sites (Bauer 2017), in which far-right positions were attributed to the ÖVP, whose electoral campaign was in fact very strongly marked by fearmongering and scapegoating (Wodak 2019, 202). Referring to this, the ÖVP leader, Sebastian Kurz stated that the upcoming general elections were also a referendum on 'whether we want Silbersteins in Austria' (Weißensteiner 2017). Former Green member and representative Peter Pilz called for making 'this republic Silberstein-free' (ibid.). The name Silberstein became a metonym for such negative campaigning, which, in the light of the long Austrian antisemitic tradition of games with Jewish names is highly problematic (Ruth Wodak cited in Weißensteiner 2017) and also gives the impression that negative campaigning is a Jewish practice imported from Israel (Rabinovici 2017). An analysis of the plenary debates shows that the name Silberstein, connoted as

10 A total of 65 'individual cases' are listed. 53 of them involve antisemitic and Nazi references (51 by FPÖ officials and 2 by SPÖ members). The other 12 contain exclusively anti-Muslim, racist, sexist or homophobic content, without antisemitic or Nazi references.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

Jewish-Israeli, became a code used as a weapon against the supposed Nazi cudgel. In the debate on a vote of no confidence in FPÖ interior minister Herbert Kickl, who has been responsible for many 'individual cases,' non-party MP Martha Bißmann referred to yet another such case in which a young member of a student fraternity had been shown giving a Hitler salute (Bißman, without party, NR, 30.1.2019, 163). FPÖ MP Walter Rosenkranz came to the interior minister's defence:

> Let me correct the record: this photo comes from a video in which one can clearly see that this young man has waved. (*laughter from the SPÖ*)
>
> In response to your laughter: waving is a movement, while the Hitler salute is a stiff, outstretched arm – just so you know. But it serves your attempts at defamation. Tal Silberstein sends his regards! (*Applause from the FPÖ and ÖVP members*)
>
> Ich berichtige tatsächlich: Dieses Foto ist aus einem Video herausgenommen worden, in dem man eindeutig sieht, dass dieser junge Mann gewunken hat. (*Heiterkeit bei der SPÖ*)
>
> Zu Ihrem Gelächter: Winken ist eine Bewegung, und der Hitlergruß ist ein starrer, aus- gestreckter Arm – nur damit Sie es wissen. Aber es dient Ihren Diffamierungsversuchen. Tal Silberstein lässt grüßen! (*Beifall bei der FPÖ und bei Abgeordneten der ÖVP*) (Rosenkranz, FPÖ, 30.01.2019, 164)

In this example, the thematization of antisemitic individual cases in the FPÖ is recast via the 'Silberstein' code as defamation. At the same time, 'Silberstein' can be understood both as a strategy for coding antisemitism and as a strategy for aggressively confronting well-founded accusations of antisemitism and so for effecting a perpetrator-victim reversal. One finds very few antisemitic codes in parliamentary debates beyond the end of the 1950s (see 'emigrants') and even at the time of the Waldheim debate, which saw a rise in the use of antisemitic codes in political discourse (see Wodak et al. 1990). 'East Coast' for instance, was applied in parliament only in isolated cases and in a critically distanced way. In the 2017–2019 period, however, 'Silberstein' was mentioned in a total of 16 debates in the National Council, from which it can be inferred that it was also interpreted antisemitically by many who heard it.[11] The fact that under the ÖVP-FPÖ government, the use of an antisemitic code became so common in parliamentary debates is evidence that in this period, the boundaries of the sayable in relation to antisemitism were expanded not only in public political discourse but also in parliament.

CONCLUSION

In light of our thesis that parliament functions as the symbolic centre of democracy and that the treatment of antisemitism and the Nazi past indicates the current state of democratic culture, we observe a shift in the boundaries of the sayable over time, which simultaneously signifies democratic change: In the first phase after 1945, antisemitic coding is still employed quite often in parliament. Stereotyping of 'emigrants' is functional for the development of the Austrian model of consensual

11 There were 22 references to Silberstein in this period; 3 were critically distanced, while another three referred to factual matters and are not – or not only – examples of coding.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

democracy by providing cement for the formerly hostile political camps. From the late 1950s onwards, the boundaries of the sayable are drawn ever tighter, bringing about, in the first instance, a strategy of denial and concerted restriction of antisemitism in parliamentary debate in order to maintain the democratic self-portrayal of parliament to the (international) public. The blatant antisemitism that flared up in public discourse during the Waldheim scandal in the mid-1980s was barely mirrored in parliamentary speech, with the exception of two plenary debates in which victim-perpetrator reversal was attached to the name 'Bronfman.' Controversial disputes over Waldheim, Austria's 'victim myth,' and antisemitism in public discourse paved the way for linguistic sensitisation to antisemitic codes and an understanding of democracy and democratic political culture that encompassed a more reflective policy of the past. In parliamentary debate, the linguistic sensitisation turned MPs attention to aggressive language use, which was often criticised as incitement to hatred. On the other hand, the awareness of antisemitism as a threat to democracy facilitated the rhetorical strategy of the 'Nazi and fascism cudgel' that was applied to counter such criticism. These strategies kept coded antisemitism in check. Many years after the Waldheim scandal, however, during the turquoise-blue coalition (2017–2019), coded antisemitism found its way back into parliamentary debates to a significant extent, particularly the code 'Silberstein.' 'Silberstein' was referred to in order to neutralise any form of criticism of the numerous antisemitic 'single cases' in the FPÖ. In describing such criticism as the use of a 'Nazi cudgel' or 'Fascism cudgel,' which allegedly aims at silencing free speech, it seeks to delegitimise criticism of right-wing populist and extremist language and behaviour ('individual cases'), while in return accusing those who criticised overt antisemitism of being 'fascists' and undemocratic. Thus, antisemitism is defended by reference to democratic standards of 'free speech.' The revival of antisemitic coding in parliamentary rhetoric and its employment as a 'weapon' against the 'Nazi cudgel' has been accompanied by another rhetorical strategy for the treatment of antisemitism, namely an ostentatious repudiation of and distancing from it. Here ÖVP and FPÖ set new standards, for example when FPÖ chairman Heinz Christian Strache visited Yad Vashem in a student fraternity cap (headgear which, as part of the uniform of the far-right student associations, can also be read as a symbol of antisemitism) rather than a kippa (see Embacher, Preitschopf & Edtmaier 2019; Wodak 2019) or when Chancellor Sebastian Kurz repeatedly stressed his friendship for Benjamin Netanyahu. This dual or polyvalent strategy of right-wing populism (antisemitic coding plus use of Nazi cudgel plus ostentatious idealisation of selected Jewish fellow citizens), which is a form of 'calculated ambivalence'[12] (see Engel & Wodak 2013), has continued to be apparent beyond the end of the coalition in 2019. To what extent this trend has become weaker or stronger after the demise of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition government awaits further detailed investigation. The National Strategy Against Antisemitism referred to at the beginning can be seen as an attempt to counter the above-described trend, but also as a means for distracting attention from further antisemitic 'individual cases.' Recent research shows that the intrinsically gendered claims of a 'true and manly' people, which characterised antisemitic stereotyping in parliamentary discourse until the late 1950s, reappear in contemporary right-wing populist and extremist rhetoric. A 'picture of decay' regarding LGBTIQ* rights and feminism (see Ajanovic, Mayer & Sauer 2018, 644) but also regarding 'Jewish globalism' and Islam is pivotal here. Thereby, claims for democratic

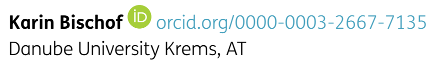
12 The concept of 'Calculated Ambivalence' captures a political strategy that sends out different, contradictory signals in order to amplify the electoral basis (Engel & Wodak 2013).

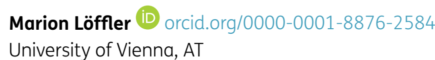
equality are framed as an existential 'cultural threat.' There are several indications that such gendered narratives, which clearly promote agendas of de-democratisation, have also been present in parliamentary debate in recent years (ibid.; Löffler 2017b). To what extent they can be found there and how different constructions of the other intersect is another desideratum in democracy research.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS


Karin Bischof orcid.org/0000-0003-2667-7135
Danube University Krems, AT


Marion Löffler orcid.org/0000-0001-8876-2584
University of Vienna, AT

REFERENCES

Ajanovic, Edma, Stefanie Mayer, and Birgit Sauer. 2018. "Constructing 'the People': An Intersectional Analysis of Right-Wing Concepts of Democracy and Citizenship in Austria." *Journal of Language and Politics* 17(5): 636–54. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.18013.may

ARD. 2020. "Nach Corona-Protesten in Berlin. Kritik an Ausschreitungen auf Reichstagstreppe." *tagesschau*, August 30. Accessed October 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vf2jcDV7Rj0.

Bauer, Gernot. 2017. "SPÖ-Berater Silberstein organisierte rechte Facebook-Seite gegen Kurz." *profil*, September 30. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.profil.at/oesterreich/wahrheit-kurz-spoe-8342070. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17116/profmed201720230-32

Bayley, Paul. 2004. "Introduction." In *Discourse Approaches to Politics, Society, and Culture*, edited by Paul Bayley, 1–44. Philadelphia: John Benjamins. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/dapsac.10.01bay

Bechter, Nicolas. 2017. "Das Parlamentsplenum als Gegenstand politikwissenschaftlicher Forschung. Untersuchungen am Bespiel von Antisemitismus im österreichischen Nationalrat." PhD diss., Universität Wien.

Bergmann, Wolfgang, and Rainer Erb. 1991. *Antisemitismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Ergebnisse der empirischen Forschung 1946–1989*. Opladen: Leske & Budrich. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-322-91415-6

Bischof, Karin. 2015. *Global Player EU? Eine ideologiekritische Metaphernanalyse*. Bielefeld: Transcript. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783839431153

Bischof, Karin. 2017. "'Emigranten' und die Konstruktion des österreichischen Demos in Parlamentsdebatten nach 1945." In *Bilderbuch-Heimkehr? Remigration im Kontext*, edited by Katharina Prager and Wolfgang Straub, 191–202. Wuppertal: Arco.

Bischof, Karin. 2018. "Austrian Postwar Democratic Consensus and Anti-Semitism: Rhetorical Strategies, Exclusionary Patterns and Constructions of the 'Demos' in Parliamentary Debates." *Journal of Language and Politics* 17(5): 676–95. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.18033.bis

Bischof, Karin. 2022. *Demos- und Wir-Konstruktionen und die Transformation der Demokratie: Intersektionale Analysen*. Baden-Baden: Nomos. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5771/9783748933960

Bischof, Karin, and Marion Löffler. 2022. "Antisemitismus als politische Strategie. Plenumsdebatten im österreichischen Nationalrat nach 1945." In *Antisemitismus in Österreich nach 1945*, edited by Christina Hainzl and Marc Grimm, 43–61. Leipzig: Hentrich & Hentrich.

Burkhardt, Armin. 2003. *Das Parlament und seine Sprache: Studien zu Theorie und Geschichte parlamentarischer Kommunikation*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110914092

Dörner, Andreas. 2003. "Politische Kulturforschung." In *Politikwissenschaft. Ein Grundkurs*, edited by Herfried Münkler. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

Embacher, Helga. 2001. "Eine Heimkehr gibt es nicht? Remigration nach Osterreich." In *Jüdische Emigration zwischen Assimilation und Verfolgung, Akkulturation und Jüdischer Identität*, edited by Klaus-Dieter Krohn, In Exilforschung, 187–209. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783112422861-011

Embacher, Helga, Alexandra Preitschopf, and Bernadette Edtmaier. 2019. *Antisemitismus in Europa. Fallbeispiele eines globalen Phänomens im 21. Jahrhundert*. Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7767/9783205232681

Engel, Jakob, and Ruth Wodak. 2013. "'Calculated Ambivalence' and Holocaust Denial in Austria." In *Analysing Fascist Discourse: European Fascism in Talk and Text*, edited by Ruth Wodak and John E. Richardson, 73–96. New York, London: Routledge.

Euronews. 2021. "'Attack on Democracy': European Leaders Express Shock at Storming of US Capitol." *Euronews*, January 7. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.euronews.com/2021/01/07/attack-on-democracy-european-leaders-express-shock-at-storming-of-us-capitol.

Euronews. 2023. "Attack on Democracy: How Does Brazil's Political Violence Compare with the US?" *Euronews*, January 14. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.euronews.com/2023/01/09/attack-on-democracy-how-does-brazils-political-violence-compare-with-the-us.

Falter, Matthias, and Saskia Stachowitsch. 2017. "Antisemitismus und jüdische Politik im Parlament." In *Jüdische Identitäten und antisemitische Politiken im österreichischen Parlament 1861–1933*, edited by Saskia Stachowitsch and Eva Kreisky, 93–208. Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7767/9783205205906-006

Habermas, Jürgen. 1992. *Faktizität und Geltung. Beiträge zur Diskurstheorie des Rechts und des demokratischen Rechtsstaats*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Hetzel, Andreas. 2011. "Die Wirksamkeit der Rede. Zur Aktualität klassischer Rhetorik für die moderne Sprachphilosophie." Bielefeld: transcript.

Holz, Klaus. 2001. *Nationaler Antisemitismus. Wissenssoziologie einer Weltanschauung*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition.

Ifversen, Jan. 1997. "The Meaning of European Civilization. A Historical-Conceptual Approach." Working Paper no. 52-97. University of Aarhus Centre for Cultural Research, Aarhus.

Ilie, Cornelia. 2018. "Pragmatics vs. Rhetoric. Political Discourse Ant the Pragmatics-Rhetoric Interface." In *Pragmatics and Its Interfaces*, edited by Cornelia Ilie and Neal R. Norrick, 85–119. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.294.05ili

Knight, Robert. 1988. "*Ich bin dafür, die Sache in die Länge zu ziehen.*" *Wortprotokolle der österreichischen Bundesregierung von 1945–52 über die Entschädigung der Juden*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum-Verl.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 2010. *Begriffsgeschichten. Studien zur Semantik und Pragmatik der politischen und sozialen Sprache*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Löffler, Marion. 2017a. "Maskulinismus: Der ganz normale ‚Gender-Wahnsinn." In *Dauerkämpfe. Feministische Zeitdiagnosen und Strategien*, edited by Brigitte Bargetz, Eva Kreisky and Gundula Ludwig, 185–94. Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus.

Löffler, Marion. 2017b. "Restitution: Wiedergutmachung übersetzt in die Sprachen der Alliierten. Antisemitische Konnotationen einer Begriffsdebatte." In *Bilderbuch-Heimkehr? Remigration im Kontext*, edited by Katharina Prager and Wolfgang Straub, 203–16. Wuppertal: Arco.

Löffler, Marion. 2018. "Jacques Rancière in Parliament: Practising Democracy in Plenary Debates." *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 38: 34–48. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/02606755.2018.1428397

Löffler, Marion. 2020. "Populist Attraction: The Symbolic Uses of Masculinities in the Austrian General Election Campaign 2017." *NORMA* 15(1): 10–25. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/18902138.2020.1715118

Mitten, Richard. 1992. *The Politics of Antisemitic Prejudice. The Waldheim Phenomenon in Austria*. San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press.

Palonen, Kari. 2009. "Parliamentarism as a Rhetorical Condition of Democracy." *Redescriptions. Yearbook of Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 13(1): 7–13. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7227/R.13.1.1

Palonen, Kari. 2010. "Begriffsdebatten und Debattenbegriffe: Das parlamentarische Paradigma des Begriffsstreits und –wandels." *Zeitschrift für Politische Theorie* 1(2): 155–72.

Palonen, Kari. 2016. "Vote as the last speech act in parliamentary debate." *Paper presented at ECPR General Conference*, Prague, September 8 2016.

Peham, Andreas. 2019. "Antisemitismus in Österreich: ein (unvollständiger) Überblick." Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.antisemitismus2018.at/antisemitismus-in-oesterreich-ein-unvollstandiger-uberblick/.

Pelinka, Anton. 2020. "Austrian Politics: 1918 to 2019." *Antisemitism Studies* 4(1): 82–107. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2979/antistud.4.1.04

Rabinovici, Doron. 2017. "Sei doch kein Silberstein … Über Unterschiede zwischen einem steirischen Parteitag und einer jüdischen Festtagsgesellschaft, über das eigentliche Debakel dieser Republik und darüber, wer aufzeigt, wenn heute wieder die Silbersteins aufgerufen werden." *Wina. Das jüdische Stadtmagazin*, November. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.wina-magazin.at/sei-doch-kein-silberstein/.

Reisigl, Martin, and Ruth Wodak. 2001. *Discourse and Discrimination. Rhetorics of Racism and Antisemitism*. London, New York: Routledge.

Reiter, Margit. 2001. *Unter Antisemitismus-Verdacht. Die österreichische Linke und Israel nach der Shoah*. Innsbruck, Wien, München: Studienverlag.

Serhan, Yasmeen. 2023. "What Brazil's Failed Coup Means for the Future of Its Democracy." *Time*, January 8. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://time.com/6245795/brazil-bolsonaro-lula-trump-insurrection/.

Stögner, Karin. 2009. "Bruno Kreisky." In *Kreisky – Haider. Bruchlinien österreichischer Identitäten*, edited by Anton Pelinka, Hubert Sickinger and Karin Stögner, 25–110. Wien: Braumüller.

Stögner, Karin. 2014. *Antisemitismus und Sexismus*. Vol. 3. *Interdisziplinäre Antisemitismusforschung*. Baden-Baden: Nomos. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845257389

taz. 1987. "Waldheim-Klage genehmigt." *taz. die tageszeitung*, May 20. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://taz.de.

Tempfer, Petra. 2022. "Null Toleranz bei NS-Wiederbetätigung." *Wiener Zeitung*, November 14. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.tagblatt-wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/politik/oesterreich/2167760-Null-Toleranz-bei-NS-Wiederbetaetigung.html.

Toth, Barbara. 2010. "Der Handschlag. Die Affäre Frischenschlager-Reder." Dissertation, Universität Wien.

Uhl, Heidemarie. 2011. "Of Heroes and Victims: World War II in Austrian Memory." *Austrian History Yearbook* 42:185–200. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0067237811000117

Weber, Max. 1980. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriß der verstehenden Soziologie*. Edited by Johannes Winckelmann. 5th rev. ed. Tübingen: Mohr.

Weißensteiner, Nina. 2017. "Causa Silberstein: Wodak warnt vor 'Spiel mit jüdischen Namen'." *Der Standard*, October 10. Accessed October 20, 2023. https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000065749579/causa-silberstein-expertin-wodak-warnt-vor-gefaehrlichem-spiel-mit-juedischen.

Wodak, Ruth. 2011. "Suppression of the Nazi Past, Coded Languages, and Discourses of Silence: Applying the Discourse-Historical Approach to Post-War Anti-Semitism in Austria." In *Political Languages in the Age of Extremes*, edited by Willibald Steinmetz, 351–79. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wodak, Ruth. 2019. "Entering the 'Post-Shame Era': The Rise of Illiberal Democracy, Populism and Neo-Authoritarianism in Europe." *Global Discourse: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Current Affairs* 9(1):195–213. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1332/204378919X15470487645420

Wodak, Ruth, and Anton Pelinka. 2002. "Introduction: From Waldheim to Haider." In *The Haider Phenomenon in Austria*, edited by Ruth Wodak and Anton Pelinka, vii–ix. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.

Wodak, Ruth, and Michał Krzyżanowski, eds. 2008. *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-04798-4

Wodak, Ruth, Johanna Pelikan, Peter Nowak, Helmut Gruber, Rudolf De Cillia, and Richard Mitten. 1990. *"Wir sind alle unschuldige Täter!" Diskurshistorische Studien zum Nachkriegsantisemitismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

DOI: 10.33134/rds.397

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
Bischof, Karin and Marion Löffler. 2023. "What Parliamentary Rhetoric Tells Us About Changing Democratic Culture: Antisemitism in Austrian Parliamentary Debate as a Threat to Democracy." *Redescriptions: Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory* 26(2): 141–159. DOI: https://doi.org/10.33134/rds.397

Submitted: 10 February 2023
Accepted: 28 October 2023
Published: 06 December 2023

COPYRIGHT:
© 2023 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

Redescriptions: Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Helsinki University Press.

HUP HELSINKI UNIVERSITY PRESS
VERTAISARVIOITU KOLLEGIALT GRANSKAD PEER-REVIEWED www.tsv.fi/tunnus