6 Antisemitism in East and West Germany

Three decades after the wall: a comparative longitudinal study considering age-period-cohort effects

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Introduction

About three decades ago, international politics and the world press looked with serious concern at the events in unified Germany. The shocking and cruel pictures of outbreaks of violence and arson attacks on foreigners and refugees or the assault on the synagogue in the town of Lübeck in 1994 went around the world. But also recently, there have been hostile attacks toward Jews, such as the one at the synagogue in the town of Halle in 2019, which almost ended in a catastrophe. In 2022, the German authorities recorded a new all-time high of attacks and discriminative actions against Jews (see RIAS, 2022), indicating that antisemitism is a lasting momentous societal problem becoming increasingly visible again, not only in the form of hate crimes but also ideologically, for instance, during the coronavirus pandemic (e.g., Gunz & Schaller, 2022).

The unification of the two German states in 1990 was partly not welcomed worldwide but also accompanied by fears of a too powerful and nationalistic Germany (Rödder, 2009, pp. 156ff.). Therefore, when the German Democratic Republic (GDR) joined the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), two surveys were immediately conducted to examine whether the concerns about authoritarian and antisemitic attitudes among the Germans were justified—especially regarding the population in the East. Consistently, both studies showed a much lower prevalence of antisemitism in the East compared to the West including cohort differences (Wittenberg et al., 1991; Jodice, 1991), a result confirmed by surveys up to 1996. Later studies showed a gradual convergence of antisemitic attitudes in East and West Germany, whereby clear cohort differences were also evident. Another central example of fluctuations of antisemitic attitudes is the increase during the Second Intifada (2000–2005). Within this period, antisemitism rose sharply but settled back to its lower level before this event after a few years. Also here, differences have been detected depending on age groups.

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Nevertheless, all these studies cover only annual spotlights or relatively short period changes of antisemitic attitudes. The reasons for the different trends depend on not only life-cycle effects, societal or political events but also system effects stemming from different socialization processes in East and West Germany, which have been extremely diverse and complex. Furthermore, all these effects of age (life cycle), period, and cohort (socialization) are frequently interrelated.

Further striking problems for long-term empirical research are the different survey instruments used, a lack of proof for measurement equivalence, and inconsistent generation typologies, especially regarding the divided postwar Germany. Therefore, our study is to be seen as a first short overview of the possibilities and problems in the empirical analysis of antisemitic attitudes in a long-term perspective. The basic guiding question of this study is how the mentioned temporal differences between East and West come about and to what extent age-period-cohort effects (APC) play a role here. To the best of our knowledge, studies on long-term trends in the development of antisemitic attitudes applying comparable modeling approaches have not yet been conducted (e.g., Smith & Schapiro, 2019). Therefore, this study aims to fill an existing research gap and investigates the following research questions:

1. Can APC effects on antisemitism approval be disentangled empirically?
2. Do APC effects differ regarding the approval of classical and secondary antisemitism?
3. Do model results show different effect patterns regarding the approval of antisemitism among generations socialized in East or West Germany?

To deal with these questions, we first define the two forms of antisemitism under the scope of our study: classical and secondary antisemitism. Afterward, considerations on possible APC effects are presented, which might be responsible for attitude changes and temporary fluctuations. We then give an overview of antisemitism research in unified Germany from the 1990s until today. The theoretical section closes with the explicit formulation of general hypotheses. They serve as a principal orientation for the interpretations of our empirical analyses.

In the empirical section, we first elucidate our databases and the operationalizations, necessary data preprocessing, preliminary tests on survey mode effects as well as the analysis strategy. Next, we will start with a short descriptive overview of antisemitic attitudes in East and West Germany based on data from 19 representative surveys during the period from 1991 to 2021. Thereupon, we present APC analyses which allow to investigate possible effect patterns with respect to different temporal dimensions. Additionally, robustness tests are done by integrating a set of control variables. We close this study with a short summary and critical questions regarding further empirical research and limitations of our study.

Theoretical section

Forms of antisemitism

In the following, the latent attitude constructs considered here are briefly defined. The focus of our study is to examine the two basic forms of antisemitic attitudes in Germany, that is, classical and secondary antisemitism (for other facets of antisemitic attitudes, e.g., Israel-focused antisemitism vs. a critical attitude toward Israel, see Heyder et al., 2005; Bergmann, 2021).

Classical antisemitism as an attitude is defined as social prejudice against Jews based on traditional derogatory stereotypes and therefore attributed negative characteristics (Bergmann & Erb, 1991). Over the course of centuries of Jew-hatred, various functionally instrumental images conveying hostility to Jews have interwoven into myths that serve to promote social and political discrimination against Jews, their expulsion or, in the extreme, murder and genocide. Examples of such myths include the images of the murderer of Christ (a clerical myth), the avaricious Jewish usurer, and the Jewish world conspiracy (secular myths).

In the scientific literature, secondary antisemitism is treated as a specific form of antisemitism that was able to develop because of—and not despite—the Holocaust (Bergmann & Erb, 1991, 1986). It is characterized by the relativization and sometimes even denial of the Nazis' crimes against the European Jews (*Auschwitzlüge*) and by the demand for a line to be drawn (*Schlussstrich*) under that chapter of German history (Heyder et al., 2005; Bergmann & Erb, 1991). This relativization of German crimes is generally accompanied by a reversal of victim and perpetrator, which is in turn based on classical antisemitic stereotypes following an argumentation that by virtue of their worldwide power (world conspiracy; *Weltverschwörung*), the Jews were exploiting their victim status (shrewdness; *Gerissenheit*) to gain financial and political advantage (greed for money; *Geldgier*). Secondary antisemitism embodies the uncomfortable and unresolved issue of guilt, which sets a fundamental barrier to the desire for an untainted and positive German identity (Haury, 2001).

Life cycle, period, and cohort effects on attitudes

Regarding these two forms of antisemitism, observed temporary fluctuations or steadiness over time are often associated with actual age in a narrower or broader sense. Scrutinized as an important criterion for attitudinal development, three basic effects are distinguished in relation to this type of influence: life cycle, period, and cohort effects (Mayer & Huinink, 1990; Glenn, 1977).

Life-cycle effects

Those attitudinal changes related to the aging process itself and specific to individuals are life-cycle effects. Recently discussed theoretical assumptions

pose that individuals' attitudes are both rooted in early imprinting through biological make-up and dispositions as well as changed by their personal experience through life course transitions. Furthermore, individuals' attitudes are subject to fluctuations influenced by temporary environmental factors, while also being shaped by their past biographical experiences when they adapt their attitudes, values, and beliefs (Lersch, 2023). For instance, an empirical study in eight European countries found a positive relationship between increasing life age and growing antisemitic and other racist attitudes (see Zick et al., 2011).

Period effects

Those effects generated by external influences related to a specific time period that affect all age groups at the same time but at different ages are called period effects (Glenn, 1977, p. 11). The age difference is based on the age-specific effect and evaluation of current social events and conditions such as social, political, and economic developments and ideological shifts. For example, this is valid for the system change experiences in East and West Germany in the 1990s, which had different consequences for different cohorts. In addition, there is a specific period effect, which is called epochal effect. Here, such events are age-invariant across several age groups and thus have a homogeneous effect on a society as a whole (Bengtson & Cutler, 1976; Fogt, 1982).

Cohort effects

These effects are caused by influences related to the membership of a birth cohort. Cohort effects are due to the fact that similar birth groups "experienced a certain common period in time or experienced a certain event" (Mayer & Huinink, 1990, p. 445; Ryder, 1965, p. 845). Mannheim (1928) understands the term generation in this sense. According to this, the specific social experiences up to adolescence and their processing are decisive for attitude formations (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2018). In principle, however, events occurring during life after adolescence can also be cohort-constituting.

All these basic effects are responsible for attitudinal and ideological differences (regarding the distinction between ideologies, prejudicial attitudes, and stereotypes, see Heyder et al., 2022). In our case, they are crucial for changes in antisemitic attitudes in the East and West German population and corresponding cohorts over time. Of course, several individual-level factors and the respective period of socialization, historical events, and societal as well as political developments are also highly relevant for such effects (for a historical comprehensive overview of antisemitism in Germany, see Longerich, 2021).

Antisemitism research in unified Germany

In the following, we will give a short overview of antisemitism research in Germany and discuss the state of research for potential life cycle, period, and cohort effects. Several studies have analyzed the development of antisemitic attitudes in West and East Germany based on the respective available empirical survey data. Some start with the surveys from 1991 onward but only included studies up to the early 2000s (Wittenberg & Schmidt, 2004; Leibold & Kühnel, 2009), others only started there and range until 2022 (Group-Focused-Enmity [GFE] and right-wing extremism, cf. Zick & Küpper, 2021; and the Leipzig Study on Authoritarianism [LAS], cf. Decker et al., 2022), while still others only offered a comparison of two points in time (Bergmann & Münch, 2012). None of them used statistical methods to disentangle age, period, and cohort effects, but they did contain different theoretical explanations why antisemitism varies over time.

Leibold and Kühnel's study (1991 to 2008) shows consistently higher agreement with antisemitic items among West German respondents for classical antisemitism, with a convergence between East and West Germans over time. The parallel development of antisemitic attitudes in East and West Germany, however, does not show a consistent decline, but rather a decline until the late 1990s was followed by a renewed increase from 2002 onward, only to continue to decrease after 2006 until 2020. At the same time, patterns of antisemitic attitudes in East and West Germans continue to converge (Leibold & Kühnel, 2009). For secondary antisemitic attitudes, a different developmental trajectory emerges for the years 2003 to 2008. Approval not only is significantly higher among East and West Germans compared to classical antisemitism but also shows a growing gap between East and West. Like classical antisemitism, secondary antisemitism also shows a decreasing trend during this period (Leibold & Kühnel, 2009). Of interest for our study is the influence of age and education (as an indicator for different socialization experiences) on the correlations between nationalist and classical antisemitic attitudes. While the bivariate correlations from 1991 to 2008 are consistently significantly higher for West Germans, this effect almost disappears when the variables of age and education are included. While differences in education make an impact on the influence of nationalism on antisemitism among East and West Germans in the same way, the age effect is much more pronounced in the West (Leibold & Kühnel, 2009).

Wittenberg and Schmidt (2004) refer to four studies from the years 1994, 1996, 1998, and 2002 to examine the development of antisemitic attitudes among West and East Germans. First, they compare two items (influence of Jews on world events; instrumentalization of the Holocaust for the benefit of Jews living today), and second, they constructed an antisemitism index from the sum of the affirmation of anti-Jewish affective expressions in the respective studies. For Germany as a whole, they found an almost linear decline in antisemitic attitudes over this period (from 19.1% to 11.3%). This development

runs parallel for East and West, although the gap between East and West Germans remains large (7% to 14.2%). However, for the indicator "instrumentalization of the Holocaust," they note an agreement almost twice as high among East Germans compared to the West in this period. For Germany as a whole, they found a continuous increase in antisemitic attitudes with age, whereby the influence of age was greater among West Germans for all age groups. For 1996 and 2006, Bergmann and Münch (2012) also found differences between the population of the former GDR and that of West Germany on the basis of the General German Social Surveys (GGSS): "First, antisemitic attitudes are still less widespread among [East Germans], second, due to the more homogeneous social and educational structure in the GDR, age as well as educational and professional careers had less influence on attitudes toward Jews" (p. 331). In East Germany, too, the oldest generation (survey 1996: born in 1936 and older; survey 2006: born in 1961 and older) showed the largest proportion of anti-Jewish attitudes, albeit at a lower level than the same generation in the West. This difference could be due to the influence of the anti-fascist policies of the GDR on the older generation, but, as some authors have recently pointed out, they could also be due to the fact that there were already "substantial differences in economic structures, political preferences, cultural traits and gender roles between what later became East and West Germany" in the period before 1945: the working-class share was higher in the East, and the people were politically more often left-wing oriented (Becker et al., 2020, pp. 144–151). While attitudes in this generation remained stable from 1996 to 2006, they increased most significantly in the youngest cohort and were even higher than in the same West German age group. While the anti-fascist orientation of the GDR still lingered in the older generations, it lost influence in the youngest postunification cohort, which was predominantly socialized in Germany after 1990 (Bergmann & Münch, 2012, p. 337; for a discussion about the formation of generations in the GDR, see Schüle et al., 2006).

The GFE and LAS (Zick et al., 2019; Decker & Brähler, 2020) have found a slow decline in classical antisemitic attitudes for the German population from 2006 onward, with a clear break starting in 2014. The LAS reveals an interesting pattern regarding East–West differences: While East Germans show substantially lower approval in 2002, which doubles by 2012 and exceeds the approval rate of West Germans for the first time, only to fall back to the declining West level in 2022. Moreover, the age structure does not show a continuous increase with age but rather higher approval rates among the group of 31- to 60-year-olds compared to the youngest and oldest age groups. The highest approval ratings are found in the 35- to 45-year-old age group, whose members spent their childhood and adolescence at the time of unification (Wende). Decker et al. (2020) attribute a massive increase in antisemitic attitudes among East Germans in the years 2008 to 2012 to the financial and economic crisis.

The Group-Focused-Enmity (GFE) studies showed a decline in antisemitic attitudes for classical antisemitism over the entire period from 2006 to 2018, but this did not occur continuously. From 2002 onward, there was

a noticeable increase, only to remain at a level of 8–9% between 2006 and 2014, before the significant decline to 5.8% in 2016 (2018/19: 5.1%; 4.9% West, 5.6% East). The age distribution shows a decrease for the population across all age groups (Zick et al., 2019).

As previously stated, the empirical overlap of the age and cohort concepts makes it difficult to differentiate between the two effects. Some authors argue that due to different socialization experiences, cohort and period effects are far more likely to explain increasing agreement in older age groups than life-cycle effects. Using the GGSS 1996, Heyder and Schmidt (2002) confirmed the overall trend of increasing mean values across the age groups for four antisemitism items, with West German respondents consistently showing higher mean values compared to the East Germans, with one exception in which the East German age group up to 21 years has (more than) matched that of the West Germans. Overall, the mean values of East and West German adolescents show smaller differences in three of the four antisemitism items than in the following higher age groups, indicating an approximation between East and West. The authors also see the socialization-theoretical assumption as confirmed "that older people are fundamentally more antisemitic—both in East and West Germany for respondents aged 50 and over" (2002, p. 121), "because younger respondents are significantly less antisemitic than older respondents due to, among other things, the liberal political climate of recent decades as well as the influence of school as a socialization instance" (p. 122).

This theoretical assumption of cohort effects, that is the replacement of older cohorts with younger ones, rather than natural aging is also supported by the findings of Zick et al. (2017), who found that in 2002, the oldest cohort (65+) was still significantly more antisemitic than the younger cohorts. This cohort effect has faded over the years. In regression analyses, the age variable is partly no longer significant; sometimes it still shows significant minor effects. The East–West difference is also negligible for a more precise characterization of antisemitism for all three facets (classical, secondary, and so-called anti-Israel antisemitism). Although people from the new federal states generally show somewhat less clear agreement with antisemitic statements in these surveys, the differences in the mean values were overall not statistically significant. These results indicate an approximation of the amount of antisemitism in the old and new federal states.

General hypotheses

Based on these theoretical considerations and previous empirical results, we will test the following general hypotheses:

H1 (life-cycle hypothesis): The older the respondents, the higher the degree of antisemitic attitudes.

H2a (cohort hypothesis): Younger generations express less antisemitic attitudes in comparison to older generations.

H2b (cohort hypothesis): In East and West Germany, antisemitic attitudes differ less among the younger generations socialized in united Germany in comparison to generations exposed to the different political systems in their formative years.

H3 (period hypothesis): Historical and political events as well as ideological shifts have an influence on the degree of antisemitic attitudes among all age groups at the same time.

H4 (conceptualization hypothesis): The prevalence of classical and secondary antisemitism varies differently over time with respect to East/West Germany as well as age groups.

In addition, regarding our robustness tests using control variables, we formulate:

H5 (robustness hypothesis): Compared to the pure model, the covariate models yield only slightly different patterns with respect to life cycle, period, and cohort effects.

Empirical section

Data and operationalizations

After an extensive investigation of accessible representative data fielded across the whole country, we identified two items that were surveyed over three decades from 1991 to 2021 and, therefore, are eligible for a repeated cross-sectional analysis. One question is tapping into the dimension of classical and the other of secondary antisemitism. While the item wording varies to some extent, the core message is identical (for a new generalized antisemitism scale, see Allington et al., 2022). In total, we have 18 data points for classical and 16 for secondary antisemitism available with varying time intervals in between (see Table 6.2. and Appendix 6.1).

Unfortunately, the survey from 1991 has inconclusive values for respondent age, and this is why we use this data only for descriptive analyses. Each survey was drawn from a representative sample of the German population aged 13, 16, or 18 years and older and conducted with pen-and-paper personal interviews (PAPI), computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI), computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI), computer-assisted web interviews (CAWI), or in a combination of these methods following a multimode design. A comprehensive overview of all data used in this study, the time of data collection, item wording, response scales or codes, and respective univariate statistics can be found in Appendix 6.1. Later, we present our central dependent variables (DV) with the question wordings that have been chosen most often in the conducted surveys (item wording variations in parentheses):

Classical antisemitism: *Jews have too much influence in Germany (. . . in the world).*

Secondary antisemitism: *Today, many Jews try to take advantage of the past of the Third Reich (. . . and make the Germans pay for it).*

Table 6.1 A generation typology approach and respective sample characteristics.

Generation	*Birth years*	*Frequency (%)*	*Cases (n)*	*Observed periods*	*Observed age*
Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)					
(1) Lost generation	1887–1938	14.0	5,720	1992–2021	54–90
(2) WWII generation	1939–1945	10.5	4,312	1992–2021	47–82
(3) Postwar generation	1946–1964	37.1	15,204	1992–2021	28–75
(4) Generation X	1965–1982	29.3	12,018	1992–2021	18–56
(5) Generation Y	1983–1994	7.9	3,224	2002–2021	18–38
(6) Generation Z	1995–2003	1.3	519	2016–2021	18–26
German Democratic Republic (GDR)					
(1) Lost generation	1887–1938	14.7	5,708	1992–2021	54–90
(2) WWII generation	1939–1945	10.9	4,226	1992–2021	47–82
(3) Postwar generation	1946–1970	50.6	19,649	1992–2021	22–75
(4) Youth during unification	1971–1980	13.3	5,162	1992–2021	18–50
(5) Child during unification	1981–1989	7.7	2,985	2002–2021	18–40
(6) Postunification generation	1990–1994	1.9	731	2008–2021	18–31
(7) Generation Z	1995–2003	1.0	378	2016–2021	18–26

Note: Calculations are based on a pooled dataset of all representative data utilized in this study; the reported generation characteristics rely on a selected sample with valid values on at least one of the two dependent variables.

Regarding cohort classification, we follow Mannheim's (1928) conceptualization and rely on the work of Ahbe and Gries (2006; see also Kubiak & Weinel, 2016) for East Germany, whereas the classification provided by Klimczuk (2015) is considered as a suitable benchmark for West Germany. In accordance, our generation typology approach accounts for the time before, during, and after the division of Germany and is characterized as shown in Table 6.1. However, it should be noted that these (among others) generation approaches have been derived from a theoretical perspective and that they lack supportive empirical evidence. Nonetheless they can serve as an indication of whether effects undergo changes during presumed generational transitions.

Data preprocessing and preliminary analyses

As mentioned earlier, we faced the challenge presented by the fact that the surveyed questions on antisemitism are quite heterogeneous. Nowadays, several quantitative techniques for cross-survey data harmonization exist (e.g., Singh, 2021), but considering the scope of this contribution, we decided not to walk this path in preparing the data. Instead, to make the survey measures comparable, we initially recoded the central dependent variables (DV) into a consistent format which summarize item responses into a categorical

variable with the four categories: "fully disagree," "tend to disagree," "tend to agree," and "fully agree."

Therefore, where four answer codes were possible, no further transformation was adjusted. For five-point scales, we set the middle category (3) to missing and matched the other responses into the categorical format. Regarding seven-point scales, we decided to specify the outermost scale points as full disagreement respectively agreement, and the intermediate scale points 2–3 as well as 5–6 were specified as tend to disagree respectively tend to agree. Again, the middle scale point (4) was treated as an indifferent response and was set to missing. Other coding approaches would certainly be possible, but we argue that it makes more sense to harmonize content-coherent and only code full agreement versus disagreement as one category, even though this leads to smaller sample sizes within the categories.

When present, design weights were adjusted to account for the oversampling in the Eastern federal states. Furthermore, considering the sampled data with unalike age thresholds, we decided to exclude outliers to avoid biased estimation due to extreme skewness in the age distribution. In Table 6.2, the valid *n* after case selection and relative frequencies for the combined agreement categories are presented for each data point.

Of course, this pragmatic approach of data linking has drawbacks and entails a loss of information in the database that we use for our models. Nevertheless, we are predominantly interested in the approval of antisemitism over time and therefore selected the outlined standardization approach for a first exploration as presented in this study. Moreover, cross-survey measurement invariance (MI) is still not given in empirical terms when keeping in mind that we transformed the data from a theoretically driven perspective (e.g., Millsap, 2011). However, Heyder et al. (2022) carried out extensive analyses of various forms of MI and found for classical antisemitism that at least metric MI is supported by the data (within and between individuals). Furthermore, we conducted correlational analyses and discovered a moderate association between the items, suggesting that discriminant validity can be assumed. This finding aligns with previous studies with comparable survey measurements (see Heyder et al., 2005; Imhoff, 2010).

In addition, we initially conducted analyses to account for mode effects resulting from different interview techniques and the use of varying response scales (see Rothgeb et al., 2007; Tourangeau & Smith, 1996). Thus, we found that the likelihood of antisemitism approval is lower in surveys with interviewers involved (e.g., CAPI) compared to self-administered interview modes (CAWI). We interpret these findings as indicative for social desirability bias, wherein participants tend to avoid presenting themselves negatively in surveys related to sensitive topics (e.g., Groves et al., 2004; Krumpal, 2013). Moreover, the analyses revealed that surveys employing different response scales bias the approval of antisemitism items to some degree. When compared to a four-point response scale, the five-point and seven-point scales

Table 6.2 Classical and secondary antisemitic attitudes from 1991 to 2021.

Surveys and modes		*Jodice 1991 (PAPI)*	*Emnid 1992 (PAPI)*	*Falter et al. 1994 (PAPI)*	*GGSS 1996 (PAPI)*	*Forsa/Die Woche 1998 (CATI)*	*GFE 2002 (CATI)*	*GFE 2003 (CATI)*	*GFE 2004 (CATI)*	*GFE 2005 (CATI)*	*GFE 2006 (CATI)*	*GFE 2007 (CATI)*	*GFE 2008 (CATI)*	*GFE 2009 (CATI)*	*GFE 2010 (CATI)*	*GFE 2011 (CATI)*	*GGSS 2012 (CAPI)*	*GGSS 2016 (CAPI)*	*GGSS 2018 (CAPI)*	*GGSS 2021 (CAWI)*
Agreement to classical antisemitism: Jews have too much influence in Germany (. . . in the world).																				
Sample size		1,513	–	3,052	2,716	1,594	2,884	2,832	2,897	1,908	1,938	1,894	1,937	1,926	1,954	1,939	2,650	2,600	2,630	2,600
Full	*T*	10.8	–	5.1	11.0	10.5	5.4	7.9	7.7	7.5	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.5	5.2	4.4	9.7	9.3	4.4	3.0
	W	12.7	–	5.8	12.1	11.2	5.4	7.7	7.9	7.4	4.9	4.6	4.7	4.6	5.2	4.3	9.8	8.7	4.4	2.7
	E	3.8	–	2.5	6.2	6.6	5.9	9.2	6.8	8.5	3.2	3.6	3.9	3.8	4.7	5.3	8.9	11.8	4.4	5.1
Partial	*T*	26.2	–	15.7	21.4	16.4	12.6	13.2	11.5	10.5	7.3	10.1	8.2	8.4	8.5	8.9	19.3	20.9	8.6	12.2
	W	28.9	–	17.6	22.9	16.2	13.4	13.9	12.0	11.1	7.1	10.1	8.2	8.4	8.4	8.9	19.6	21.0	8.5	12.3
	E	16.1		8.0	14.5	17.4	8.5	9.8	9.0	7.7	8.7	10.0	8.5	8.5	8.9	8.7	17.9	20.3	9.2	11.6

(*Continued*)

Table 6.2 (Continued)

Surveys and modes		*Jodice 1991 (PAPI)*	*Emnid 1992 (PAPI)*	*Falter et al. 1994 (PAPI)*	*GGSS 1996 (PAPI)*	*Forsa/Die Woche 1998 (CATI)*	*GFE 2002 (CATI)*	*GFE 2003 (CATI)*	*GFE 2004 (CATI)*	*GFE 2005 (CATI)*	*GFE 2006 (CATI)*	*GFE 2007 (CATI)*	*GFE 2008 (CATI)*	*GFE 2009 (CATI)*	*GFE 2010 (CATI)*	*GFE 2011 (CATI)*	*GGSS 2012 (CAPI)*	*GGSS 2016 (CAPI)*	*GGSS 2018 (CAPI)*	*GGSS 2021 (CAWI)*
Agreement to secondary antisemitism: Today, many Jews try to take advantage of the past of the Third Reich (. . . and make the Germans pay for it).																				
Sample size		–	2,855	–	2,712	1,616	2,912	2,859	2,873	1,905	1,929	957	1,912	1,899	1,916	1,922	2,671	2,667	–	2,577
Full	*T*	–	16.5	–	26.4	24.3	17.2	20.1	16.8	17.5	14.6	11.1	11.9	11.4	11.7	11.7	21.8	17.9	–	9.7
	W	–	20.1	–	28.2	25.0	17.4	20.3	17.0	17.7	14.9	10.9	12.0	12.0	11.7	11.9	22.0	17.4	–	9.3
	E	–	8.5	–	18.3	21.5	16.2	19.2	15.9	16.2	12.9	12.1	11.2	8.4	11.7	10.2	20.6	20.1	–	12.0
Partial	*T*	–	39.1	–	31.7	27.2	27.5	29.2	25.5	22.3	22.2	17.3	22.1	22.4	22.8	23.2	33.1	31.3	–	21.8
	W	–	41.5	–	32.0	26.1	28.0	30.3	26.4	22.9	22.3	17.3	22.5	22.8	22.6	23.6	32.9	31.0	–	21.8
	E	–	35.1	–	30.2	29.5	24.9	23.6	21.1	18.8	21.8	17.6	19.7	20.2	23.9	20.8	34.1	32.9	–	22.1

Notes: The survey labels entail either the respective principle investigators, the polling institute, or the survey programs as well as the year of data sampling; in case the data is published, data references can be found in the online Appendix 6.1; Rounded percentages; T = Total sample, W = West German sample, E = East German sample, PAPI = paper and pencil interview, CATI = computer assisted telephone interview, CAPI = computer assisted personal interview, computer assisted web interview.

elevate the likelihood of choosing agreement-based scale options significantly. Taken together, while life cycle and cohort effect patterns are quite robust, those traced back to time period are considerably subject to systematic measurement bias. Given these circumstances, we interpret all findings with caution and address the implications more detailed in the course of the interpretation.

Not only the surveyed forms of antisemitism and underlying questions vary considerably but also measures of sociodemographics and other well-known explanatory factors for outgroup derogation and antisemitic attitudes. To account for at least a minimal set of impacting correlates (IVs) of antisemitism as robustness tests, we were able to reasonably harmonize and include respondents' educational level (trichotomous), sex (dichotomous), household income (five categories), left-right-placement as ideological component (trichotomous), and perceived economic outlook (dichotomous) in our study.

Analysis strategy

First, we begin with a short overview based on univariate frequencies of the standardized agreement categories. Strictly speaking, only the results of the GFE surveys (2002–2011) can be compared with confidence here, as the sampling as well as measurements are identical. Nevertheless, fundamental tendencies can be recognized over the long period of time, although interpretations must remain speculative to some extent.

Second, we present model-based APC analyses within the repeated cross-sectional data setting to analyze temporal trends more profoundly. Recently, there have been substantial developments in statistical APC modeling making this approach more and more applicable also for research in the broader field of social science (e.g., Yang & Land, 2013; Fosse & Winship, 2019; Bell, 2020a). A major challenge for estimation is the identification problem accompanying APC analyses; that is, the difficulty is to isolate the effects of age, period, and birth cohorts on a given outcome with regard to the multicollinearity of these three factors (e.g., Fu, 2018; Bell, 2020b). Nonetheless, there have been methodological advancements and a wide range of applications to overcome the identification problem by introducing certain model constraints. Due to these consequential assumptions, empirical findings should always be interpreted carefully (see Bell, 2020a). We will not elaborate on the statistical details in depth but concentrate on the chosen modeling strategy for analyzing APC structures in the following.

In the given context, we applied generalized additive regression models (GAM) based on different subsamples (full sample vs. East/West Germany separately). Unlike linear models, which assume the relationship between the dependent and independent variables to be in a linear relationship, GAMs use an additive function (Wood, 2017). However, the implementation of GAMs offers a wide range of generalized ridge regression with multiple smoothing parameter estimation making this modeling approach applicable

to cross-sectional data with unequal intervals of sampling (see Wood, 2017; Gascoigne & Smith, 2021). The flexibility of this estimation procedure allows us to investigate nonlinear APC effect structures (pure models) and to account for additional covariates in the model structure for robustness tests (covariate models). More precisely, we use semiparametric additive logistic regressions to model the four categories of the standardized DVs as binary outcomes, a strategy comparable to a multinomial modeling approach (see Weigert et al., 2021, for a detailed outline of the underlying method).

In GAMs, the number of knots (i.e., the basis dimension) affects the model performance and the ability to estimate nonlinear relationships considerably. Therefore, to determine the appropriate number of knots for our data and respective model solutions, we used generalized cross-validation (GCV) in combination with a visual inspection of the model plot results. Additionally, to evaluate the model performance, we refer to the area under the curve (AUC) values (Japkowicz & Shah, 2011). These values range from.63 up to.68 including covariates (models "tend to agree") and.65 to.73 (models "fully agree") for the DV classical antisemitism, and from.57 to.62 including covariates (models "tend to agree") and.60 to.74 (models "fully agree") for the DV secondary antisemitism. Considering AUC scores close to 1 as implications for models providing good predictions, it can be concluded that the models for classical antisemitism as well as the category "fully agree" demonstrate a better fit to the data.

Finally, as an outcome, we obtain marginal effects from each model interpreted as odds ratios (OR). An OR of 1 indicates no association between the independent variable (e.g., birth cohort) and the respondents' choice of response categories. OR values greater than 1 indicate a higher probability, while results lower than 1 indicate a lower probability of choosing a category compared to the reference (Hosmer et al., 2013).

For presentation and interpretation of the model results, we use visualizations containing the plotted OR for the specific APC dimensions. In these plots, we included only the predictions for both agreement categories of classical and secondary antisemitism allowing us to draw direct comparisons of effect patterns in order to keep it simple. Furthermore, we have embedded vertical lines in the plots representing certain generation thresholds, which we typologized according to the decisive socialization periods in West and East Germany.

The data preprocessing, linking, and all statistical analyses were carried out with the open-source software R (R Core Team, 2022), using the three packages, mgcv (Wood, 2022), ggplot2 (Wickham et al., 2023), and APC tools (Bauer et al., 2023), which combines GAM estimation (mgcv) with plotting (ggplot2) and provides code examples (see also the GitHub repository from Weigert et al., 2020).

Descriptive findings

For a short introductory empirical overview, we will only discuss particularly striking findings here and begin with a very astonishing result for the whole

German sample (see Table 6.2). The approval rate of classical antisemitism in 2016 fell from 30% to 13% in 2018 (sum of fully and partially agree responses). One reason for this is a possible survey method effect (see, e.g., Rothgeb et al., 2007) linked to a different response categorization in the GGSS 2018 that included an explicit "neither/nor" category and thus may have led to a response shift. This finding will also show up in the model-based APC analyses.

On the background and in contrast to this example, the higher level of agreements to classical antisemitic statements in the period 2002 to 2005 (2002: 18%; 2003: 21%; 2004: 19%; 2005: 18%) in comparison to the decrease in 2006 (12%) is much more plausible (here, with identical item formulations and rating scales). During the Second Intifada (2000–2005), politics and, especially, the media were preoccupied with the bloody events that were currently taking place with thousands of attacks, warlike military conflicts, and murdered people. In Germany, this was intensively reported on in the media, partially on a daily basis (see Jäger & Jäger, 2003; Heyder et al., 2005). Events like these can be interpreted in the sense of period and/or epochal effects.

Age-period-cohort models

All these descriptive findings vary considerably in relation to age groups in East and West Germany. In the following, we will discuss this in a more differentiated way within the context of further findings based on the results of the APC models as shown in Figure 6.1. A detailed overview of the central model results (e.g., minimum/maximum OR for certain models) can be found in Appendix 6.2. In the following, we will also refer to the cohort typology outlined in Table 6.1.

Life-cycle effects

The models show a systematic pattern for antisemitic attitudes regarding life age effects, which supports our life-cycle hypothesis (H1). Consistently for both forms and regardless of East or West Germany, the chance for agreement choices decreases continuously under an age in the mid-50s while it increases in the life phase afterward. Overall, the association is more strongly pronounced for full in comparison to partial agreement. Moreover, we found some differences in the approval tendencies between classical and secondary antisemitism; that is, the likelihood for agreements over the lifespan shows stronger divergence with respect to secondary whereas the maximum age effects in early or late adulthood are stronger for classical antisemitism.

Cohort effects

Considering generational dynamics in antisemitic attitudes, first, we found that the maximum respective minimum cohort effects in our models as well

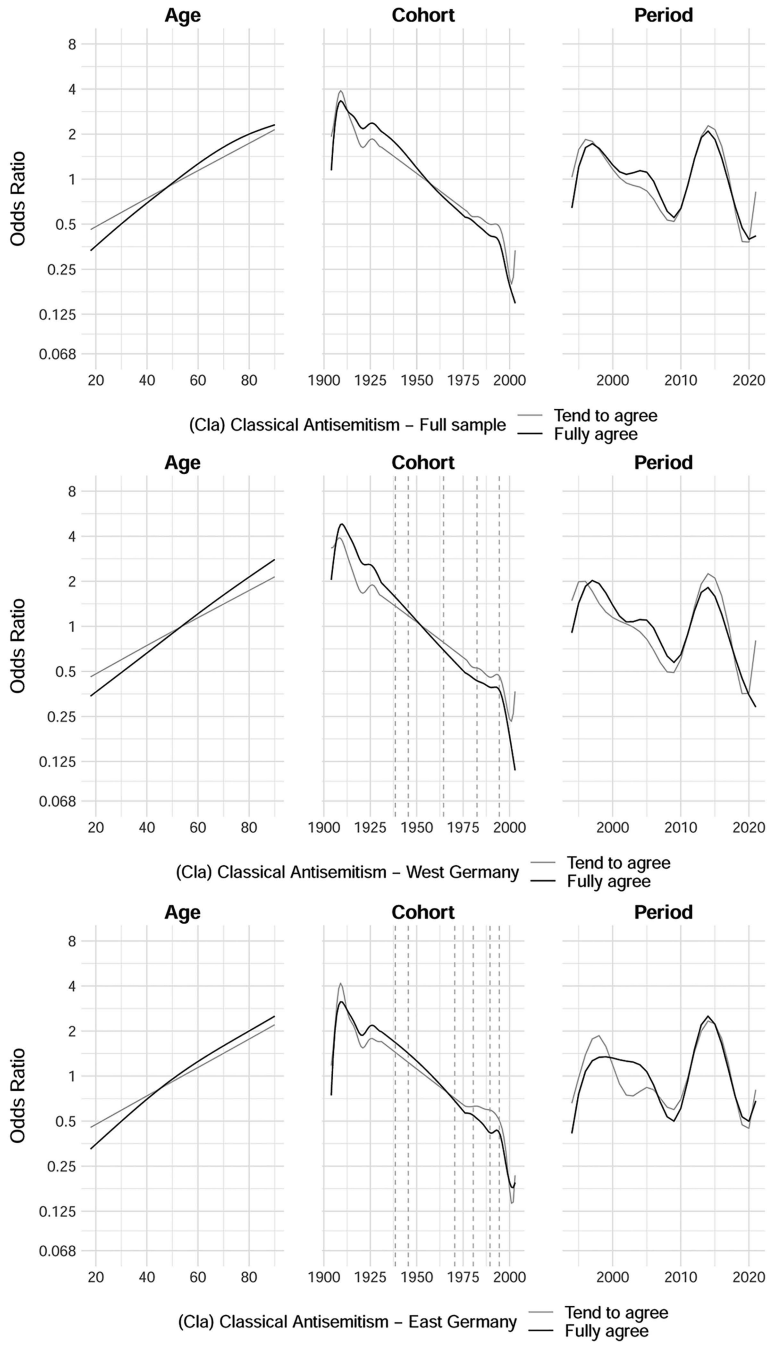

Figure 6.1 Plots for the pure APC models (fully and tend to agree responses).

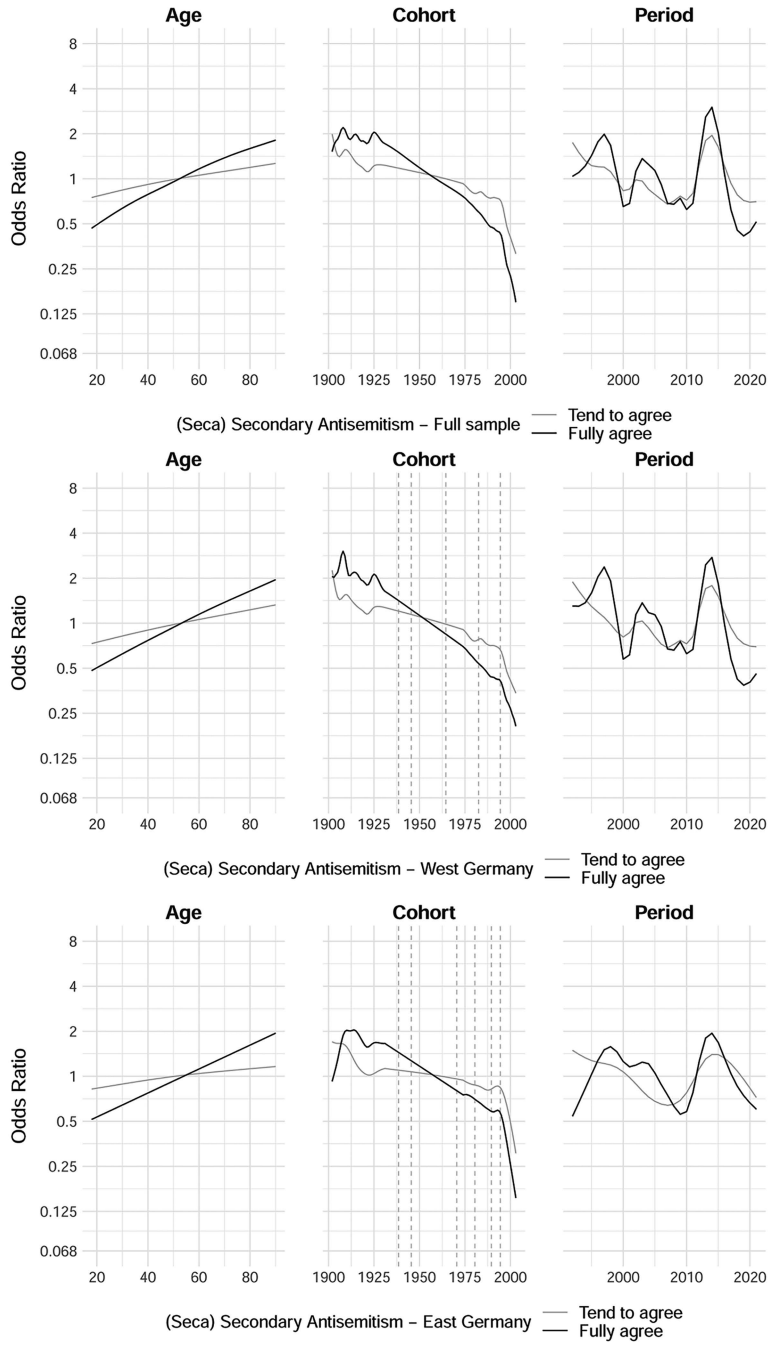

Figure 6.1 (Continued)

as the trajectories are more pronounced for classical than for secondary antisemitism. Furthermore, the effect patterns highlight that younger generations have on average a lower likelihood for agreement choices compared to the older generations born before the German division, supporting our first cohort hypothesis (H2a). Likewise, we found no systematic effect variations for individuals of the lost generation as well as the WWII generation between East and West Germany, for which a positive association with agreement choices is present, thus lending support for the second cohort hypothesis as well (H2b).

Additionally, regarding East–West differences, the cohort-dependent shift from a positive to a negative association occurs comparatively later in the Eastern postwar generation compared to the West, particularly for complete agreement. The results reveal also that negative associations with agreements to antisemitic statements are more present in the younger West cohorts (Generations X and Y) compared to the East cohorts (youth or childhood during unification).

In other words, the generational downward trend of agreement probability slows down more in the East among generations that intensively experienced the German unification in comparison to Generation Y in West Germany. Noteworthy, these patterns level for Generation Z, born in unified Germany, where observed effects seem to align in both parts of the country. However, an important difference between the two forms of antisemitism is that the effect pattern of partial agreement differs noticeably from full agreement for secondary antisemitism. Comparatively, in terms of cohort-related negative or positive associations, partial agreement is less pronounced.

Period effects

As previously mentioned, mode biases are especially noteworthy when examining period effects. Hence, in Appendices 6.3 and 6.4, we provide additional figures for models with mode covariates compared to the pure models. Bearing this in mind, the probability of approval reaches a peak in the late 1990s and early 2000s in the case of classical antisemitism. Following this peak, the likelihood gradually decreases. However, around 2015, a reversal in this trend occurs. This resurgence of approval probability is notably more pronounced in Eastern compared to Western Germany, making it a crucial point of distinction. Interestingly, the rise in the likelihood of approval around 2015 is not observed regarding secondary antisemitism. Contradictory to the descriptive results, the models show rather a consistent decline since the turn of the millennium.

Given these findings, some implications concerning our period (H3) and conceptualization hypotheses (H4) can be derived. In principle, the influence of historical and political events as well as ideological shifts on antisemitic attitudes can be observed but underlying causes must remain elusive to some extent. However, caution is warranted when interpreting period effects,

especially in APC analyses relying on cross-sectional data with varying time intervals and collection methods. Furthermore, period effects are additionally influenced by other confounding factors as will be demonstrated in the next section, meaning that the pure period effect seems to be underestimated until 2011 and overestimated from 2012 onward compared to covariate models (see Figure 6.2).

APC models with covariates

Considering the scope limitations of this chapter, we will only briefly address the impact of confounding factors in the sense of a robustness test. A detailed overview of the model results can be found in Appendix 6.5. In general, either no significant relations were found, or findings are predominantly in line with the pertinent research stating that antisemitism may depend, for instance, on sociodemographic or socioeconomic factors. That is, the probability of approval of classical and secondary antisemitism is increased when respondents ideologically self-position themselves as center or right-wing compared to left and are male and is decreased when respondents have higher education compared to low, relatively more household income, and a rather good than a poor economic outlook. These findings reveal most consistently in the full agreement models.

To gain an impression of how these confounding variables affect the APC structures discussed earlier, we refer to the comparison plots (pure vs. covariate) for the full agreement models as shown in Figure 6.2. In these models, smoother effect patterns are obtained, and the maximum APC effects are less pronounced when controlled for third variable effects. Although the findings basically point in the same direction, we found also some remarkable differences lending only limited support for our robustness hypothesis (H5).

Thus, the APC effects are overall more robust for classical antisemitism with one major exception regarding cohort effects. If accounting (mainly) for socioeconomic individual characteristics, it is shown that the downward trend of the likelihood for agreement stops within Generation Y (birth years 1983–1994), while it then again flips over for Generation Z (birth years 1995–2003) in the West into an enlarging negative association. Moreover, the negative association does not become more pronounced for the Generation Z in the East but decreases again. Nevertheless, an overall negative association for younger cohorts is still evident. Comparatively, larger influence of the control variables is present for secondary antisemitism, particularly regarding the period effects. Here, the maximum effects as well as the amplitude shape, with prominent peaks, diminish noticeably.

Summary, limitations, and discussion

This study aims to get some empirical grip on the massive problems of the comparability of several representative surveys over a period of 30 years

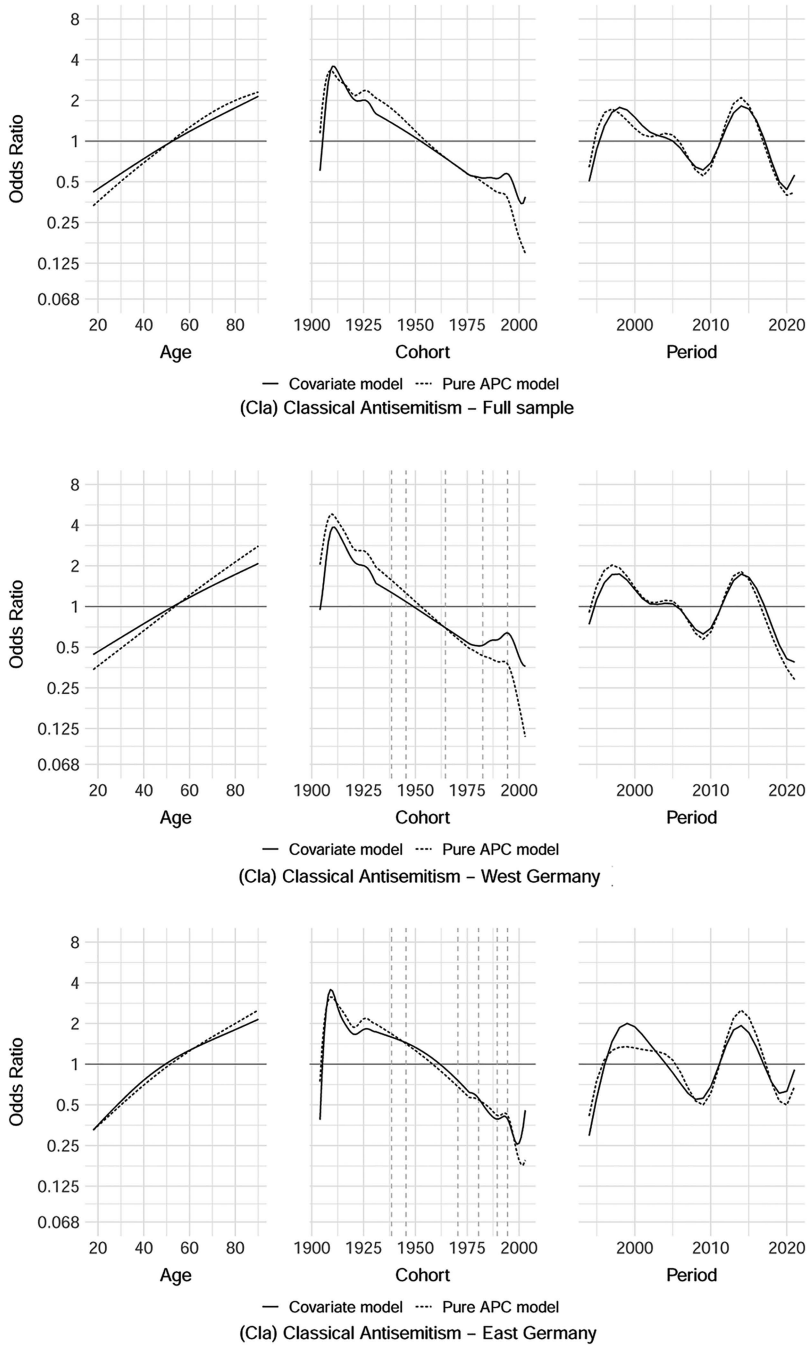

Figure 6.2 Plots for the pure versus covariate APC models (only fully agree responses).

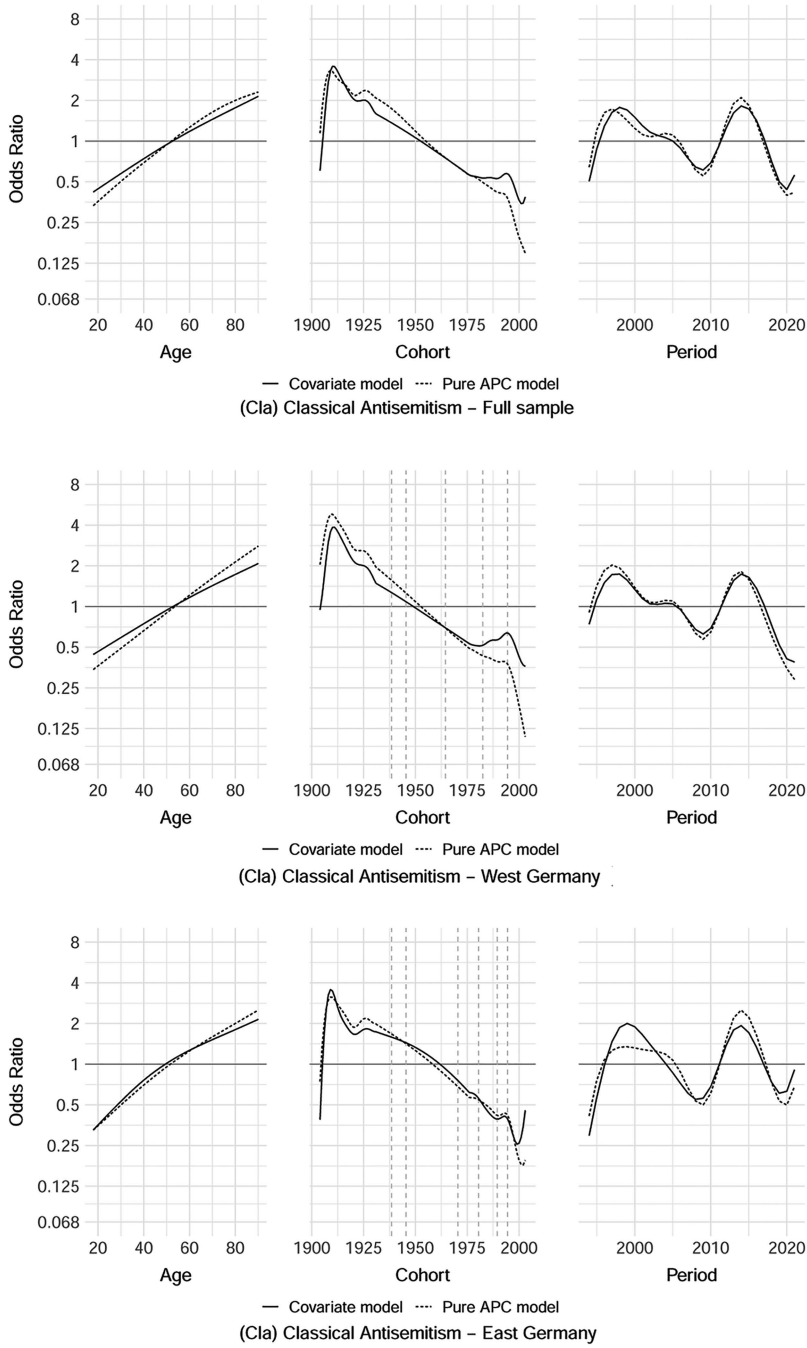

Figure 6.2 (Continued)

measuring antisemitic attitudes. To this end, we applied age-period-cohort analyses (APC) with flexible generalized additive regression model estimation (GAM), a method that of course cannot solve all the problems but is able to provide some systematic empirical insights regarding classical and secondary antisemitism over such a long investigation period. Against the background of the state of antisemitism research in unified Germany and theoretical considerations about APC effects, we formulated six general hypotheses that served as an orientation for the interpretations of our empirical results.

Summarizing the central findings, we were able to show that APC effects indeed play a decisive role in the attitudinal development and distribution of antisemitic attitudes in Germany. In a nutshell, the probability patterns for complete and partial agreement are similar in most cases for classical but not for secondary antisemitism. Empirical support was found for the hypothesis proposing that the probability of agreement choices corresponds with life-cycle transitions (H1). Thus, our analyses largely support earlier findings; however, more pronounced effects related to life age in the Eastern part (Leibold & Kühnel, 2009; Wittenberg & Schmidt, 2004) are not unequivocal in our models, if at all most likely for full agreement on classical antisemitism. Moreover, younger generations have, on average, a lower probability of agreement compared to the older generations (H2a), for which the effect patterns also seem to be more aligned regardless of the part of the country they are from (H2b). With respect to period effects, we are somewhat more cautious with concrete inferences drawn from the model-based analyses, although some plausible effect patterns appeared (H3). Considering the results from the pure as well as covariate models, we interpret our findings as an indication that the approval of classical and secondary antisemitism varies over time (H4) but not in a completely dissociated way. This underlines that both forms are conceptually as well as empirically distinct and should be analyzed separately to avoid potentially overlooking important differences and possible consequences.

We also made an effort to answer the question whether socialization imprints stemming from the German division have had an influence on antisemitism approval (H2b). Hence, we highlighted the special role of the three transformation generations in East Germany and, according to our findings, clearly show that their generational disposition expresses itself through a different pattern of antisemitic attitudes. This might be additionally interwoven with short-term political or societal (period) effects and thus promote stronger antisemitism in East Germany. For example, this experienced socialization can lead to greater vulnerability during the episode of post-transformation, financial and euro crisis, or greater perception of fear or threat. Consequently, for a comprehensive understanding of antisemitism in unified Germany, the specific socialization background in the West or East of the country should be considered whenever possible to avoid obfuscating inferences. Overall, our results extend earlier findings, for instance, those of Bergmann and Münch (2012). The anti-fascist orientation of the GDR not only lost its influence within the postunification generation but also for all

three East German generations that were impacted by the German unification. It is therefore not surprising that Decker and Brähler (2020) found the highest approval rates especially within these three transitional generations in their study.

Of course, and as already intermittently addressed, our study is subject to several limitations that should be taken into consideration regarding the conclusiveness of all these findings. In general, the aforementioned strong relation of age and cohort effects is often hard to separate, not only theoretically (Mayer & Huinink, 1990; Ryder, 1965) but also empirically. Despite this, we cannot rule out biased results due to several methodological issues (i.e., different survey measures, data linking) or mode (sampling process) as well as housing effects (i.e., different polling institutes).

In addition, although we applied suitable statistical modeling, the data consist of unequal time intervals, which is especially relevant for the estimation of period effects. In this context, it has also been demonstrated that especially these effects are biased due to different survey methods, which highlights the importance of taking them into account. For example, we found that the observed rise in antisemitic attitudes from 2011 can be partially attributed to the use of different response scales in the utilized data (2011: four-point scale, 2012: seven-point scale).

Moreover, we were not able to account for other important explanations discussed in the research literature on antisemitism (i.e., social psychological concepts). All in all, these obvious and further limitations root especially, but not only, in the heterogeneous data. For example, if we had multiple items (with same wording) available for each dimension of antisemitism, then it would have been possible to consider latent measurement models within the framework of structural equation modeling and to investigate measurement invariance as a precondition for substantive theory-related assessments.

We were unable, although not only due to the lack of space, to go into detail about the diverse reasons for the identified trends and fluctuations. We have addressed some possible influential factors, such as certain events that were temporarily in the focus of the media coverage and therefore in political and public discourse (e.g., the Second Intifada from 2000–2005, the global financial crisis 2008/09; the refugee crisis 2015/2016, or the COVID-19 pandemic). Obviously, outgroup derogation and antisemitism can be mobilized during times of crisis, and this phenomenon is indeed not limited to periods of high influx as in the mid-2010s. Also recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed a concerning relation between conspiracy beliefs and the emergence of antisemitism (see RIAS, 2020; Gunz & Schaller, 2022; Chapelan et al., 2023). Such societal developments are evident in the West, but especially in some East German federal states (see Anstötz & Westle, 2021; Decker et al., 2022; Decker et al., 2023).

Methodologically, solid inferences regarding the reasons for attitudinal changes must, strictly speaking, remain speculative anyway. Among other things, this would require additional surveys that can show whether the respondents have dealt with these issues at all. For example, did they indeed

follow the media coverage, and if so, how intensively? Therefore, our study must also end with the well-known conclusion, provisionally: Further (intensive) research is recommended.

Unfortunately, we could only access available data, otherwise we might have arrived at more robust results. We take this as an opportunity and close our chapter with some thoughts on the issue of free data availability and opportunities for reuse. For whatever reason, several research projects act as if they are isolated, and the culture of data sharing in the research domain is, carefully spoken, improvable. There are several, quite often good reasons why surveys were and are conducted in their own way, and the gathered data remains often unpublished (i.e., comparability of measurements over time, funding, particular media attention for sensitive topics, and so on). Basically, the FAIR principles (Wilkinson et al., 2016), which put specific emphasis on the findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability of data, could function as a guide to enhance synergies in empirical research on antisemitism and maybe, more importantly, over the borders of specialized, often small research teams. In the German case, a traditional outstanding example is the GGSS surveys since 1980—accessible to all researchers and documented in detail for reuse. Hopefully, the open science philosophy will prevail among more researchers in the future. They should not continue to sit on their valuable eggs like the hens do.

Authors' note

We thank the editors and the reviewers of this article for their fruitful comments.

Appendixes mentioned in this chapter and additional supporting materials are freely available at www.routledge.com/9781032547763.

The presented analysis is based on 19 different surveys. The studies "General German Social Survey" (ZA5276/ZA5280), "Study on Antisemitism in Germany" (ZA3074), "Political Attitudes, Political Participation and Voting Behavior in Reunified Germany" (ZA4301), and "Attitudes towards Jews and other Minorities" (ZA2418) are archived and released for academic research and teaching at GESIS—Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (www.gesis.org). The surveys "Group-Focused Enmity" (GFE) were financed by a consortium of foundations headed by the Volkswagen Stiftung (ZA4391/ZA5568—ZA5576) and are archived at GESIS—Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (www.gesis.org). They are only released for academic research and teaching after the data depositor's written authorization. For this purpose, the Data Archive users provide detailed information on their analysis intention and study specifications, and written permission is granted by Data Archive. Requests to access these datasets should be directed to info@gesis.org. The two older data sources (Jodice, 1991; Emnid, 1992) were never archived or published. However, enquiries about this data set can be directed to the corresponding author.

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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