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# Anti-Semitism within the Extreme Right and Islamists' Circles

Anti-Semitism has long been a part of the extreme Right and Islamist movements. However, while anti-Semitism is still virulent within both movements in Germany, today, anti-Semitism often takes indirect forms. In the case of the extreme Right, it is frequently embedded in revisionist positions on the Second World War. Islamists in Germany, on the other hand, voice anti-Semitic positions with references to Israel, anti-Jewish excerpts from Islamic scripture, and hostile attitudes towards Western societies in the context of an alleged “war against Islam.” Explicit anti-Semitic hate messages are often transmitted in music and the social media.

Cooperation between the two movements is marginal. However, as some examples show, similarities in anti-Semitic views can be found. Furthermore, Jewish communities face terrorist threats from radicals of the extreme Right and Islamists. The extreme Right and Islamists are not isolated from mainstream society; similar attitudes are widespread, and exist beyond the membership of organizations associated with extreme Right and Political Islam.

It comes to no surprise that anti-Semitism is deeply rooted both in the extreme Right and among Islamists. Both ideological movements have a long tradition of anti-Semitism, and it has been argued that anti-Semitism is an intrinsic part of the extreme Right and Islamism.<sup>1</sup>

Any examination comparing of anti-Semitism among the extreme Right and Islamists in Germany raise a number of questions. How is anti-Semitism manifested today among each, and what are the similarities and differences between them? How much influence do such groups have on mainstream society? The extreme Right and radical Islamists, by definition, operate on the fringes of society, however, the relationship between the margins and the mainstream is complicated. Although flagrant anti-Semitism is most notable on the extreme Right and among radical Islamists, anti-Semitic sentiment is manifested in all segments of society.

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<sup>1</sup> For anti-Semitism in Islamism see: Tibi, *Islamism and Islam*, 2012; Tibi, *From Sayyid Qutb to Hamasm*, 2010; Mallmann / Cüppers, *Nazi Palestine*, 2010; Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession*, 2010; Kiefer, *Antisemitismus in den islamischen Gesellschaften*, 2002; Müller, *Auf den Spuren von Nasser*. In: Benz / Wetzel (eds.), *Antisemitismus und radikaler Islamismus*, 2007. For antisemitism in the extreme Right see: Rensmann, *Against 'Globalism'*. In: Rensmann / Schops (eds.), *Politics and Resentment*, 2011; Pfahl-Traughber, *Antisemitismus im Rechtsextremismus*. In: Pfahl-Traughber / Fünfsinn (eds.), *Extremismus und Terrorismus*, 2011b.

Attitudes considered far Rightist are widespread in mainstream society. A survey published in 2012 found that 9 percent of the population in Germany adhere to a “closed extreme Right world view.” Many more agree with some extreme Right positions or worldviews or decline to reject them. In Germany, 32.8 percent agree with the statement “Reparations from Germany often do not benefit the victims, but rather a Holocaust-Industry by clever lawyers.” Only 42.4 percent completely reject that “actually, the Germans are superior to other nations by nature”; 17.8 percent agree. Only 55.6 percent of the general population rejects the statement “Jews always provoke conflicts with their ideas”; 19.5 percent agree.<sup>2</sup> The responses indicate that the boundaries between the mainstream and the extreme Right are not as clear-cut as one might think or wish.

Similarly, some Islamist views are widespread among Muslims. According to a 2006 survey, 36 percent of Muslims in Germany believe that there is a “natural conflict between being a devout Muslim and living in a modern society.”<sup>3</sup> A survey among young Muslims in Germany found that about 15 percent of seven-hundred and seventeen Muslims sampled between the ages of fourteen and thirty-two can be described as “very religious and strongly rejecting the West, leaning towards acceptance of violence.”<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, 9.4 percent of Muslims support introduction of corporal punishment in German as in Islamic religious law (*Shari'a*). Interestingly, many Muslims in Germany are party to authoritarian attitudes often attributed to the extreme Right: For example, 65.5 percent in 2005 agreed that “the state should control newspapers and television in order to guarantee morality and order.” About 6 percent justify violence and terrorism in the name of Islam.<sup>5</sup>

Although some extremist views are shared by larger populations, such views are not accepted in public discourse. It is largely left to extremist groups to voice flagrant anti-Semitism publicly. The extreme Right is responsible for most anti-Semitic crimes; between 90–95 percent of all anti-Semitic crimes reported and about 80 percent of the violent anti-Semitic incidents that take place in Germany are attributed to the extreme Right. Nevertheless, violent Islamists also pose a direct threat to Jews and non-violent Islamist groups voice anti-Semitic views that are used to justify attacks against Jews.

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<sup>2</sup> Author's translation. The statements in German read “Reparationsforderungen an Deutschland nützen oft gar nicht mehr den Opfern, sondern einer Holocaust-Industrie von findigen Anwälten;” “Eigentlich sind die Deutschen anderen Völkern von Natur aus überlegen;” and “Juden sorgen mit ihren Ideen immer für Unfrieden.” See: Decker / Kiess / Brähler, *Die Mitte Im Umbruch*, 2012, p. 29–30, 78.

<sup>3</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, *The Great Divide*, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Frindte / Boehnke / Kreikenbom / Wagner, *Lebenswelten junger Muslime*, 2012, p. 290.

<sup>5</sup> Brettfeld / Wetzels, *Muslime in Deutschland*, 2007, p. 141, 190, 177.

## The Extreme Right in Germany

Keeping the shortcomings of the term “extreme Right” in mind,<sup>6</sup> I use this term to describe a group of individuals and organizations that harbor persistent anti-Semitic, racist, xenophobic, authoritarian, and social-Darwinist beliefs, and attitudes of inequality. An extreme Rightist world view includes that a person’s “value” is determined by race and nation. Authoritarian views about the state and a “natural” social order of society and the world in general are also part and parcel of extreme Rightist world views. The organized extreme Right in Germany is opposed to democracy and poses a physical threat to those who in their eyes are not considered German – that is, foreigners or people of foreign origin and Jews. Political adversaries are also threatened. In 2012, the authorities registered 396 xenophobic violent crimes, 169 acts of violence against members of the Left and 36 anti-Semitic violent crimes by members of the extreme Right. The number of politically-motivated crimes that did not entail violence against individuals is much higher: 1,286 anti-Semitic crimes by the extreme Right, such as damage to property and hate speech were registered in 2012.

More than 22,000 individuals are affiliated with organizations of the extreme Right, almost half are considered violent.<sup>7</sup> While the organized and active extreme Right is relatively small, they operate in a social environment where extreme Right attitudes are no exception. Nine percent of the population in Germany – that is, an estimated seven million Germans – adhere to a “closed world view of the extreme Right.” One could label them ‘latent members of the extreme Right’ although they do not act upon their views. It is worth noting that at present, the percentage of persons with such attitudes varies between former East and West Germany; it is higher in the east (15.8 percent) than in the west of the country (7.3 percent). Contrary to common belief, this is a rather recent phenomenon, reflecting opposite trends in west and east: While the percentage has dropped slightly in the west over the past decade, it has been on the increase in the eastern parts of the country.<sup>8</sup>

The German authorities closely monitor the extreme Right. Over 200 organizations and about 22,000 individuals are classified as “extreme Right” by authorities. They include 6,000 party members of the Right-wing National Democratic Party of Germany or NPD (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands*); 1,000 party members of the *Bürgerbewegung pro NRW*; 6,000 neo-Nazis, and 7,500 indi-

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<sup>6</sup> Neugebauer, Extremismus – Rechtsextremismus – Linksextremismus. In: Schubarth / Stöss (eds.), *Rechtsextremismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Bundesministerium des Inneren, *Verfassungsschutzbericht 2012, 2013*.

<sup>8</sup> Decker / Kiess / Brähler, 2012.

viduals who are involved in local and sub-cultural activities of the extreme Right, notably in the music scene. In recent years, *Autonome Nationalisten* ('autonomous nationalists') have formed independent neo-Nazi groups who have developed innovative forms of activism, often copying from autonomous groups of the extreme Left.<sup>9</sup>

Some organizations encourage violence by openly arousing hatred, and even using violence themselves, while others (such as the NPD) try to avoid illegal activities and statements that could incite. A few (three since 2000) have formed armed terrorist groups. Between 2000 and 2006 three members of the National Socialist Underground or NSU (*Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*) were responsible for the murder in Germany of nine people of immigrant origin and one police officer. The group has also been accused of two bomb attacks and fourteen bank robberies, and of developing and selling an anti-Semitic Monopoly-style board game called "Pogromoly" that features death camps and gas chambers. The failure of German authorities to dismantle this terrorist organization has been widely criticized and a parliamentary investigation committee was established.<sup>10</sup> The NSU did not focus on terrorism against Jews, but a NSU member named Böhnhardt was convicted in 1997 and sentenced to more than two years in prison for an anti-Semitic act (hanging a mannequin with a Star of David painted on it from an overpass). Another terrorist group was the *Schutzgruppe* ('Protection Group') of the *Kameradschaft Süd* ('Comradeship South') in Munich. Both names refer to organizations of the National Socialist movement. In 2003, the *Schutzgruppe* planned a major bomb attack at the cornerstone laying ceremony of the Jewish cultural center in Munich. The third extreme Right terrorist group since 2000 was the *Freikorps Havelland* ('Free Corps Havelland'); Free Corps were paramilitary right wing organizations of ex-soldiers in the Weimar Republic – a group of eleven youth who were responsible for serious arson attacks in Brandenburg targeting snack bars run by people of migrant background.

Yet, the majority of the extreme Right activities are rallies, publications, and nurturing of a neo-Nazi musical subculture, although some entities do participate in democratic elections. Besides their propaganda value, political rallies form a core element in the extreme Right's operations, serving as a form of power projection, both internally and externally. In 2012, there were 95 neo-Nazi rallies and 167 in 2011. The rallies focused on charges of "state repression," targeting those perceived as political enemies, spreading anti-Islamic content and address-

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<sup>9</sup> Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2013, pp. 54–56; Bundesministerium des Inneren, Verfassungsschutzbericht 2011, 2012.

<sup>10</sup> The results and recommendations were published 22 August 2013. See <http://www.bundestag.de/bundestag/ausschuesse17/ua/2untersuchungsausschuss/> (accessed April 4, 2015).

ing social issues. An abiding theme has branding bombardment of German cities during the Second World War by the Allies as crimes against humanity perpetrated against innocent Germans. (In other years, “solidarity with Palestine” has also been a prominent issue, in part to paint Jews as victimizers.) Annual marches in recent years in Dresden and Magdeburg to commemorate carpet bombing of these cities serve as an important mobilization ploy for neo-Nazis. The demonstrations have attracted up to a thousand participants every year. In January 2013, however, there was a successful counter-demonstration of about 12,000 people in Magdeburg and the neo-Nazis were forced to relocate their march in the suburbs instead of the center of Magdeburg. The annual march in Dresden also faces large and successful counter-demonstrations, at least since 2010. Another major annual event in recent years is “National Anti-War Day” in Dortmund held in early September, organized by neo-Nazis as part of revisionist propaganda that denies German responsibility for the outbreak of the Second World War in regard to the German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 (a demonstration that has also sparked a ‘challenge’ from civil society).

The main publications of the extreme Right in Germany include the monthly NPD journal *Deutsche Stimme* (‘German Voice’), the *National-Zeitung* (‘National Paper’), and a number of major Right-wing websites. The largest online portal of the extreme Right *Altermedia.de* was forced to close down in September 2012 and now only operates via Twitter. Parallel to these, thousands of other neo-Nazi and extreme-Right websites are active, particularly regional news portals such as *MUPINFO* in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and websites run by local independent neo-Nazi groups who use the social media and video clips to disseminate neo-Nazi content.

Hate propaganda includes hate-infused lullabies for children as young as three. Music for older schoolchildren contains blatantly hate-filled messages; incitement to kill Jews is widespread.<sup>11</sup> According to the accounts of some experts working in schools, about a third of young people in Germany have listened to such music at least once.<sup>12</sup> In their efforts to disseminate hate music as a core element in extreme Rightist propaganda, activists even go so far as to distribute CDs outside schools. In music, the messages of the extreme Right are voiced more openly and aggressively than in other media.<sup>13</sup>

A number of extreme Right parties have had some success in local and regional elections. Currently – following the amalgamation of the NPD and the

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<sup>11</sup> Bundesministerium des Inneren, *Antisemitismus in Deutschland*, 2011a.

<sup>12</sup> Rafael, Interview with Hans Joachim Stockschräger, June 10, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Berliner Senatsverwaltung für Inneres und Sport and Abteilung Verfassungsschutz, *Rechts-extremistische Musik*, 2012.

German People's Union (*Deutsche Volksunion* or DVU) – the NPD constitutes the dominant party of the extreme Right in Germany. They hold approximately 300 seats in municipal councils across Germany (in all of the German Länder except Hamburg) and, in 2013, won 13 seats in regional parliaments in Saxony and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

What are the main themes 'marketed' by such groups? What role does anti-Semitism play? Anti-Semitism is only one of a number of themes promoted by the extreme Right and its anti-Semitic messages are muted to avoid legal action. In fact, the main issues of the extreme Right have shifted over the years. While it was primarily about asylum seekers in the 1990s, the extreme Right has always responded to burning political issues on the current agenda. Thus, in their propaganda, extreme Right organizations have come to focus on five main topics which they address and interlace with their own brand of xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism:

- revisionist issues, most prominently German victimhood during the Second World War
- migration, Islam, asylum seekers, multiculturalism
- repression by authorities (police persecution and the justice system)
- the alleged 'Jewish lobby' in the United States and Germany, and anti-Zionism
- poverty, social welfare policy, and related social issues

Anti-Semitism manifests itself in a number of forms. The most prominent is revisionist positions that diminish the Holocaust and German responsibility for the mass killings of Jews. Tropes that are often described as "secondary anti-Semitism" and Holocaust inversion (contextual reversals of victim and victimizer) are popular in the extreme Right (probably, in part, because such statements are generally not persecuted and can be paraded as 'legitimate' criticism). Nevertheless, often the line to Holocaust denial (a crime in Germany) is crossed.<sup>14</sup> Conspiracy theories of a 'Jewish lobby' in Germany and in the United States (political anti-Semitism) are often voiced in the context of the global crisis. Among some, anti-Zionism and "solidarity with the Palestinians" tends to boil-up parallel to periodic flare-ups in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While some factions regard

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<sup>14</sup> Member of Parliament in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Udo Pastörs (NPD) was convicted for defamation of victims of National Socialism and survivors in 2012 and 2013. He also used the Nazi-term *Judenrepublik* ('Jew Republic') to describe Germany in the context of the current global financial crisis. Extracts of his talk are documented at <http://daserste.ndr.de/panorama/aktuell/pastoersnpdhztzrede102.html> (accessed April 1, 2015).

this conflict as marginal,<sup>15</sup> for others anti-Zionism is an important component in their anti-imperialist and anti-American worldview.<sup>16</sup> Racist anti-Semitism, however, is less common today, even among neo-Nazis, and religious anti-Semitism is marginal.<sup>17</sup>

Campaigns against Muslims or against the alleged “Islamization of Germany” – for example, the NPD campaign in 2010 – do not necessarily lead to negative views of Muslim countries, let alone positive views about Israel. Udo Voigt, the NPD leader until 2011, explained: “The enmity against Islam in domestic politics does not exclude the appreciation of the Islamic world externally as the last bastion against the capitalization and Americanization of the world.”<sup>18</sup>

The extreme Right generally avoids blunt anti-Semitic statements in public and employs insinuations and innuendos which in the subtext are easily understood for their anti-Semitic intentions. Code words such as “Wall Street,” “the lobby,” “US-East Coast,” “high finance,” or “forces in the back” are understood as synonyms for “the Jews.”<sup>19</sup>

In recent official statements (that is, on the NPD website and in newspapers) the word ‘Aryan’ can hardly be found and anti-Semitism is coded, although easily detectable. Henrik Ostendorf, the former executive of the NPD journal *Deutsche Stimme*, provides an example of how messages are transmitted: Discussing the strategy of the extreme Right, between “change through participation” and attacks “against the system” (that is open opposition to democracy in Germany), Ostendorf said that the “national camp” should “be creative and even has to work with the devil if necessary, as long as he is not from Jerusalem.”<sup>20</sup> The NPD clearly

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**15** The president of the *Junge Nationaldemokraten* (the NPD youth organization), Michael Schäfer, stands for such a position that he elaborated in their main publication *Aktivist* (2/2012). A marginal group of “National Socialists for Israel” was founded in 2008 but it has not been active since. In their pamphlet Reinhard Heydrich was quoted “As a National Socialist I am a Zionist.” See: Beck, in: Zukunft, July 25, 2008. The marginal group of pro-Israeli Neonazi puts itself in the tradition of Nazis who supported Zionism to get rid of the Jews before they turned to the extermination of Jews.

**16** The Neonazi network “Freies Netz Hessen” campaigns against Israel with the slogan “Israel kills... and the world looks on,” using music, websites, social media, stickers, tags, and publicly displayed banners.

**17** Pfahl-Traughber, 2011b.

**18** Author’s translation, Voigt, Kommentar. Kriegsjahr, January 2010; quoted in: Pfeiffer, Islamfeindschaft als Kampagnenthema, 2012, p. 230.

**19** For a detailed report on symbols and signs used by the extreme Right and banned organizations see Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, Symbole und Zeichen der Rechtsextremisten, 2013.

**20** Author’s translation, Deutsche Stimme, Januar 2011, p. 3; quoted in Bundesministerium des Inneren, Verfassungsschutzbericht 2010, 2011b, p. 81.

works to overthrow democracy in Germany, while clarifying in the subtext that Jews and Israel are viewed as *the enemies par excellence*, worse than the devil.

Interestingly, the NPD has an official position on anti-Semitism. On its website we can read

Is the NPD an Anti-Semitic Party?

How is anti-Semitism defined? Criticism against Jewish pressure groups? We certainly have the right to criticize the loudmouth and the never-ending financial claims of the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Jews are not object to [sic. don't enjoy] a ban on criticism. We refuse to be blackmailed 60 years after the end of the war by the Holocaust-Industry, a term coined by the Jew Norman Finkelstein, to be politically patronized, and to be financially squeezed.

Anti-Semitism thus means criticism of Jews? Of course, one can also criticize Jews. The cult of guilt, which has been pursued by the Jewish side for 60 years and the eternal Jewish self-stylization as victims, does not have to be tolerated by any German. There must be an end to the psychological warfare by Jewish power groups against our people. In the end, it is clear that the Holocaust-Industry just wants to squeeze the Germans financially with moral pretenses again and again.<sup>21</sup>

The NPD does not openly endorse anti-Semitism in a way anti-Semites did prior and during the Second World War, but the party questions the definition of anti-Semitism by using anti-Semitic tropes. A number of keywords and insinuations about Jews, power, and money are employed as well as linguistic references to the Nazis, such as the Jewish 'loudmouth' (*Jüdische Großmäuligkeit*) – a term that often appears in Nazi propaganda. Using 'the Jew Norman Finkelstein' and his biased thesis of the 'Holocaust Industry' the accusation of anti-Semitism is presented as a form of 'blackmailing.' Particularly the second paragraph refers to popular anti-Semitic tropes and the demand for an end to the debate about German guilt (*Schlussstrich*). Thus, anti-Semitism is reproduced, albeit in thinly-veiled forms, in official positions of the NPD.<sup>22</sup>

More direct forms of anti-Semitism can be found on websites and publications by *Kameradschaften* and *Autonome Nationalisten* and on the German section of the international *National Journal* which states: "Almost all wars, particularly the two world wars, were initiated by the Hebrew power centers. We owe the exploitation of humanity and our impoverishment to the financial crisis-fraud to the same

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<sup>21</sup> Author's translation, <http://www.npd.de/html/1939/artikel/detail/2098/>.

<sup>22</sup> The same text was published in a NPD guidebook for NPD candidates and leaders. See: NPD Parteivorstand / Amt für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit (eds.), *Argumente für Kandidaten*, 2006.

people.” The *National Journal* advertises the anti-Semitic book *Judenfibel* in the same issue:

The “*Judenfibel*” shall contribute to recognizing the ‘program against humanity,’ so that the modern kings, today’s elite, will not dare to let themselves be sucked in for money and other benefits by the modern Esthers and Mordechais. If we resisted those people’s temptations and dropped out of such activities nobody would need to be afraid of the Jews and the world would become a happier place.<sup>23</sup>

The bluntest verbal forms of anti-Semitism, however, are to be found in music.<sup>24</sup> Band names such as *Aktion Reinhard* (‘Action Reinhard’), *Endlöser* (‘Endsolutioner’), *Terrorkorps* (‘Terror Corps’), and albums with titles such as *SA voran* (‘SA Go Ahead’) and *Juden sind hier unerwünscht* (‘Jews are not welcome here’) speak for themselves. They view the Holocaust in a positive light. The lyrics of one song by vocalist called Teja in his (banned) album *Rachezeit* (‘Time for Revenge’) are as follows:

You won’t be bothered by doubts any more.  
You will be part of the insurgence.  
We will shatter the Jew tyranny

and in another song:

Are Judas’ arts just mockery?  
Don’t give mercy.  
If you cannot raise the sword,  
so choke them without fear.”<sup>25</sup>

Others, such as the band *Zug um Zug* (‘Train by Train’ or ‘Step by Step’) refer to Israel in their explicit wish for the murder of Jews, using traditional anti-Semitic stereotypes.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Author’s translation, *National Journal*, January 1, 2013.

<sup>24</sup> For more examples of antisemitism and incitement to kill Jews in extreme Right music see: Pfahl-Traughber, 2011b, p. 141, 144.

<sup>25</sup> Author’s translation, the lyrics in German read: “Keine Zweifel werden dich noch stören. Bei dem Aufstand bist du dabei. Wir zerschlagen die Judentyranei.” and: “Sind Judas Künste nur Spott? Sind Judas Künste nur Spott? Gebt kein Pardon. Könnt ihr das Schwert nicht heben, so würgt sie ohne Scheu.” Liedermacher *Teja*, CD „Rachezeit“, quoted in: Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2012, p. 112.

<sup>26</sup> “Look at the crooked noses with greedy hands down there in the far country. They instigate wars and destroy the world, it’s all about money this pack. 2000 years ago we knew, the gallows is the just reward. And today it does not look different, I’ll say it clear, Judea out. Train by train

## Islamists in Germany

Islamists, by definition, strive for a society governed according to Islamic law.<sup>27</sup> In their view, laws should not be made by elected leaders, rather *Shari'a* law should rule.<sup>28</sup> Islamists therefore reject democracy although some Islamist organizations use democracy and elections in order to gain political power. Islamists, like the extreme Right, aim for a fundamental change in the political system. Yet, most Islamist organizations in Germany operate within a legal framework and reject the use of violence.

Anti-Semitism and a fundamental opposition to the Western world<sup>29</sup> is part and parcel of Islamist movements both historically and today, and in different parts of the world.<sup>30</sup> Islamist organizations in Germany are no exception.<sup>31</sup> We

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into the camp, train by train, total deportation. Train by train to hell. Train by train for a pure nation.” Author’s translation. The original text reads: “Seht ihr da unten im fernen Land, die krummen Nasen mit gieriger Hand. Sie zetteln Kriege an und zerstören die Welt, es geht diesem Pack nur ums Geld. Vor 2000 Jahren wusste man schon, der Galgen ist der gerechte Lohn. Und heute sieht es nicht anders aus, ich sage es deutlich, Judäa raus. Zug um Zug ab ins Lager, Zug um Zug totale Deportation. Zug um Zug ab in die Hölle. Zug um Zug für eine reine Nation.” Quoted in: Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2013, p. 126.

**27** Islamists do not acknowledge that interpretations of Islamic scripture are unavoidable if they are read and used today. Tarek Fatah argues that political Islam and building a society on Shari’a law is delusional and goes against Islamic teachings. See: Fatah, *Chasing a Mirage*, 2008.

**28** Armim Pfahl-Traughber distinguishes Islamism from Political Islam. The term “Political Islam” also includes political movements that seek guidance in Islam but fully accept democracy. See: Pfahl-Traughber, *Akteure des Islamismus*. In: Biskamp / Höfl (eds.), *Islam und Islamismus*, 2013, p. 67.

**29** A recurrent theme in Islamist writings and teachings is that the West *first and foremost* concerns itself with fighting Islam and destroying the Muslim identity. See: Shavit, *Islamism and the West*, 2013. This is often framed in religious terms, that is as a war between Christianity (and Judaism) and Islam. See: Jikeli, *Antisemitismus und Diskriminierungswahrnehmungen*, 2012a.

**30** See: Tibi, 2012; Pfahl-Traughber, *Antisemitismus im Islamismus*. In: Pfahl-Traughber / Fünfsinn (eds.), *Extremismus und Terrorismus*, 2011a; Wistrich, 2010; Mallmann / Cüppers, 2010; Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred*, 2007; Kepel / Milelli / Ghazaleh, *Al Qaeda in Its Own Words*, 2008; Farschid, *Antisemitismus im Islamismus*. In: Pfahl-Traughber (ed.), *Jahrbuch für Extremismus- und Terrorismusforschung 2009/2010*, 2010; Rensmann / Schoeps (eds.), *Feindbild Judentum*, 2008.2011 While anti-Semitism is voiced most openly by Islamists, anti-Semitism is endemic in almost all Muslim-majority countries. Surveys show that negative views of Jews are shared by well over 70 percent of the population in countries with Muslim majorities and by more than 90 percent in Muslim-Arab countries. Pew Global Attitudes Project, *Muslim-Western Tensions Persist*, 2011. These anti-Jewish attitudes are often embedded in negative views of the Western world in general, see: Friedman, in: *The New York Times*, November 28, 2009. Characteristics of contemporary antisemitism in Arab and Muslim-majority countries have been described as chimeric lies about Jews, such as making “the Jews” responsible for the attacks of September 11, 2001, the

find ample evidence of anti-Semitism in the history of Islamist organizations from their beginnings in the early twentieth century, in its ideology and in the writings of ideological leaders such as *Sayyid Qutb*, *Hassan al-Banna* ('Muslim Brotherhood'), *Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi* (*Jamaat-I Islami*, the 'Islamic Assembly' or 'Party'), and *Ruhollah Khomeini* (Iran). Anti-Semitism is also present in current publications and other activities. Islamist organizations are often internationally connected and Islamists in Germany are strongly influenced by foreign organizations. There are, however, also some specific developments particular to Germany and some dynamics that are singularly German.

Islamist movements, mostly by the Muslim Brotherhood, which is not considered radical, influence the majority of Islamic organizations in Europe.<sup>32</sup> Prominent leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood such as former Egyptian president Mohammed Morsi or Egyptian Islamic theologian Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who is also head of the European Council for Fatwa and Research, have made blatantly anti-Semitic statements in public.<sup>33</sup> What is the influence of such voices in Germany?

German authorities have numerated 42,550 persons in 2012 affiliated with Islamist organizations. The largest Islamist and second-largest Muslim organization in Germany<sup>34</sup> is the Islamic Community *Milli Görüş* or IGMG (*Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüş*) with over 300 mosques and local associations and 31,000 registered members in Germany, almost exclusively individuals of Turkish origin. An alleged representative body on a national level called the *Islamrat* is almost identical to

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phenomenon of Holocaust denial, and a revival of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," including the blood libel. See: Foxman, *Muslimischer Antisemitismus*. In: Rensmann / Schoeps (eds.), *Feindbild Judentum*, 2008; Wistrich, *Muslim Anti-Semitism*, 2002.

**31** See: Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2011a; Tibi, 2012; Jikeli, *European Muslim Antisemitism*, 2015.

**32** Rubin, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, 2010; Johnson, *A Mosque in Munich*, 2010; Maréchal, *The Muslim Brothers in Europe*, 2008; Jikeli, *Antisemitism Among European Muslims*. In: Rosenfeld (ed.), *Resurgend Antisemitism*, 2013; Jikeli, 2012a.

**33** Mohammed Morsi described Jews as descendants of apes and pigs in 2010 and Yusuf al-Qaradawi said on Al-Jazeera in 2009: "Throughout history, Allah has imposed upon the [Jews] people who would punish them for their corruption. The last punishment was carried out by Hitler. By means of all the things he did to them – even though they exaggerated this issue – he managed to put them in their place. This was divine punishment for them. Allah willing, the next time will be at the hand of the believers." Both is documented by the Middle East Media Research Institute. See: [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org).

**34** The largest Islamic organization in Germany, DITIB (*Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği*), is closely related to the Turkish government and traditionally secular. However, since Turkey is run by an Islamist government (and an antisemitic Prime Minister) since 2003, there have been some Islamist tendencies also within DITIB.

the IGMG. The organization is part of the international organization *Milli Görüş* (literally, “a national view”) founded by Necmettin Erbakan in Turkey in the 1960s, once the political mentor of Turkey’s Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. *Milli Görüş* ideology is rooted in a nationalistic form of Islamism that aspires to create a “Greater Turkey” under Islamic rule, loosely based on the borders of the former Ottoman Empire. The organization was and still is strongly influenced by Erbakan, despite his death in 2011. IGMG celebrated an “Erbakan Week” in February 2012 and IGMG leaders frequently cite and emulate Erbakan’s life and teachings.<sup>35</sup> Erbakan repeatedly and publicly voiced anti-Semitic views. He shared his views with German readers in an interview with the German daily *Die Welt* in 2010 – including charges that the world is run by “Zionist Imperialists” claiming “for five-thousand seven-hundred years Jews have ruled the world.” In the interview, he further expanded this canard with a number of additional Jewish conspiracy theories.<sup>36</sup>

IGMG publishes two magazines for a Turkish-German audience (in Turkish). A (brief) review of recent issues of the periodical supports the prognosis that the IGMG currently avoids blatant anti-Semitic statements. While Holocaust denial and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories are common in the Turkish-Dutch *Milli Görüş* publication *Doğuş*,<sup>37</sup> the IGMG in Germany seems to be more cautious in this respect. On the other hand, the Turkish *Milli Görüş* newspaper *Milli Gazete*, which publishes European editions printed in Germany, has repeatedly published crude anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.<sup>38</sup> The IGMG in Germany has strong links to radical groups such as the pro-Hamas organization IHH. Links have not been cut even after the latter was outlawed in Germany.<sup>39</sup> Signs of anti-Semitic ideology can also be found at book fairs in mosques associated with the IGMG where viciously anti-Semitic literature has been displayed.<sup>40</sup>

The second-largest Islamist organization in Germany is the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) which numbers 1,300 members all told, in different organizations. One of the main MB organizations is the Islamic Community in Germany (*Islamische Gemeinschaft in Deutschland* or IGD), founded in 1958 during a campaign to build

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35 There is no evidence for Werner Schiffauer’s thesis that the IGMG is now “post-Islamist” and that the younger generation dissociates itself from Erbakan’s ideology, see: Schiffauer, *Nach dem Islamismus*, 2010. Although Islamist statements were made more frequently and more openly before the mid-1990s Erbakan’s positions have not been questioned and the IGMG in Germany is still closely associated with the Turkish *Milli Görüş* movement, see: Pfahl-Traughber, 2013.

36 In this Interview, Erbakan also criticized Erdoğan and accused him for being “a cashier of Zionism.” Kálnoky, in: *Welt Online*, August 11, 2010.

37 Stremmelaar, *Dutch and Turkish Memories of Genocide*, 2013.

38 Pfahl-Traughber, 2011b, p. 124–125.

39 Am Orde / Beucker / Schmidt / Wiese, in: *Tageszeitung*, July 18, 2010.

40 Demirel, in: *DAVID*, June 2006.

the Freimann Mosque in Munich.<sup>41</sup> The different MB networks form an important part of the Muslim umbrella organization, the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (*Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland* or ZMD). The ZMD also includes the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (*Union der Türkisch-Islamischen Kulturvereine in Europa* or ATIP), a religious spin off of the extreme Right nationalist Turkish group Grey Wolves, with approximately 8,000 members and Iran-oriented Shiites of various origins.<sup>42</sup>

While these organizations and federations wield influence in many mosques, Islamist internet portals are able to reach out to Muslims at home. *Muslim-Markt* is one of the main Islamic portals in German, founded and operated by German Shiites of Turkish origin. It provides religious guidance, Islamic matchmaking, links to other Islamist organizations, news (including an online Muslim-TV channel), interviews (mostly with non-Muslim authors, Islamic scholars, and clerics), and publishes special supplement issues as well under banners such as “Palestine-Special” or “[The] US Crusade against the World.” Its positions are often closely-linked to those of the Iranian government.

Similar to the NPD, the *Muslim-Markt* banners a statement criticizing the definition of anti-Semitism.

Today, those who dare criticize Israel’s brutal and inhuman policies are labeled “anti-Semite[s].” The criticism is in most cases directed against the brutality of a regime of occupation and has nothing to do with racism. *Moreover, the Arabs for example are also Semites* [emphasis in the original], so Arabs can therefore hardly be antisemites. In addition, many Jewish prophets are highly respected and honored in the Holy Quran, such as Zacharias, John, David, Solomon, Moses, Aaron, and last-but-not-least Jesus and Mary who are descendents of the Jewish tribe of “Aali Imran.”

For the reasons mentioned we should not use the term “anti-Semitism” but *anti-Zionism* [emphasis in the original] to rightly denounce the oppression and the Zionist racial fanaticism. The man of Jewish faith Finkelstein has himself voiced criticism of Zionist financial practices and has to defend himself now against accusation of anti-Semitism [...].<sup>43</sup>

The statement includes the canard that Arabs cannot be anti-Semitic because they are “Semites” themselves (although there is no Semitic ethnicity, only Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Arabic). The editors use this and the fact that many Jewish prophets are also Muslim prophets (often in somewhat different ways), to imply that Muslims or Arabs cannot be anti-Semitic by nature.

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<sup>41</sup> Johnson, 2010.

<sup>42</sup> Dantschke, *Islam und Islamismus in Deutschland*, 2006.

<sup>43</sup> Author’s translation, emphasis in original, see: <http://www.muslim-markt.de/Palaestina-Spezial/diverse/verfaelschung/antisemitismus.htm> (accessed April 1, 2015).

In another editorial entry *Muslim-Markt* denounces anti-Semitism as a form of racism while charging that equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism is “one of the worst forms of anti-Semitism.”<sup>44</sup> The authors view accusations of anti-Semitism (misplaced and erroneous in their view) first and foremost in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel, however, is put in quotation marks (‘Israel’) suggesting there is no genuine polity of this nature and that this is an invented construct. Interestingly enough, the *Muslim-Markt*, just like the NPD, uses Finkelstein’s Jewish identity and his anti-Zionist positions as an alibi to justify its own anti-Semitic positions.<sup>45</sup>

The number of Salafists is small but growing, according to German authorities: 4,500 in 2012, up from 3,800 in 2011. Salafists adhere to literalist, strict, and puritanical interpretations of Islam often associated with Wahabism. In its aspiration to emulate the life of the first followers of Islam (the Salaf), Salafists believe religious rulings can and should be applied to the smallest details in life.<sup>46</sup> Most Salafists in Germany reject violence and their political and religious activism differs from so-called Jihadist Salafists who endorse violence. Political Salafists in Germany such as Ibrahim Abou-Nagie and the Muslim convert Pierre Vogel focus on ‘proselytizing Islam’ (*Dawa*); as a result, Salafism has gained a relatively high profile in Germany through public sermons, free dissemination of the Qur’an, seminars, and video messages. In 2012, the Salafist organization The Real Islam gained prominence when its members distributed hundreds of thousands of copies of the Qur’an in Germany. One of its leaders, Abu-Nagie maintains resolutely that Jews and Christians are damned and co-existence with them is not an option.<sup>47</sup>

No matter how rigid or intolerant their message may be, one must make a clear designation between these *legal* organizations and terror organizations such as Hamas (which has about 300 members in Germany), Hezbollah (about 950 members), the Kurdish–Iraqi Ansar-al-Islam, or the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan – all of them fiercely anti-Semitic. The latter publishes Jihadist propaganda also in German. A spin-off, the Islamic Jihad Union, also active in Germany, was

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<sup>44</sup> Author’s translation, see: [http://www.muslim-markt.de/Palaestina-Spezial/diverse/aufruf\\_gegen\\_antisemitismus.htm](http://www.muslim-markt.de/Palaestina-Spezial/diverse/aufruf_gegen_antisemitismus.htm) (accessed April 1, 2015).

<sup>45</sup> Emmanuele Ottolenghi notes: “In a world where antisemitism is unacceptable in social and political discourse, Israeli and/or Jewish intellectuals complying with the calls of Israel’s detractors and demonizers constitute an alibi for antisemitism.” See: Ottolenghi, *Antisemitism and the Centrality of the Jewish Alibi*. In: Rosenfeld (ed.), *Resurgent Antisemitism*, 2013.

<sup>46</sup> Salafism is, despite its backward ideology, attractive in the modern world, particularly because it provides simple rules and values. Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, *Salafistische Bestrebungen in Deutschland*, 2012.

<sup>47</sup> See interview with Abu-Nagie by Holger Schmidt, broadcast on radio SWR Info, May 24, 2012.

responsible for the terror attacks against the American and Israeli embassies in Uzbekistan in 2004. These organizations use Germany as a fundraising platform and as an area of retreat. Hezbollah has participated openly in a number of rallies in Germany, mostly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hamas operates indirectly in Germany – other organizations acting as proxies for Hamas to garner support for its needs and objectives. The Palestinian Return Center – an organization with close links to Hamas – organized a conference in 2011 in Wuppertal that attracted 3.000 participants. The Islamist Party of Liberation (*Hizb ut-Tahir*) which aspires to establish a global Islamic theocracy has been banned in Germany since 2003 due to its anti-Semitic propaganda, however, it still publishes material in German<sup>48</sup> and continues to stir-up hatred against Jews, Israel, and Americans.

The direct security threat from Islamists for Jewish institutions in Germany became evident in 2002, after German authorities foiled a terrorist attack targeting the Jewish community center in Berlin and Jewish restaurants in Düsseldorf. The attacks were planned by members of the Al-Queda affiliated terror cell ‘Unity of the Faithful’ (*El-Tawhid*). Since then, a number of radical Islamists have been arrested for similar plans against Jewish targets in Germany.<sup>49</sup> The first actual act of terrorism by radical Islamists on German soil was the killing of two American soldiers in March 2011. Others have been arrested and convicted for being member of foreign terrorist organizations; many of them are German citizens, including converts. German authorities closely monitor at least 235 radical Islamists who have received military training abroad or intend to do so. It can be assumed that this number has risen significantly with the ongoing civil war in Syria and Iraq with ISIS. Ideologically, radical Islamists see themselves at war with “Zionists” and “crusaders” – meaning Jews and the Western world.

Music is less important to Islamists in the dissemination of their ideology than to the extreme Right. A number of Islamist groups even reject listening to music for religious reasons. Nevertheless, a number of rappers, such as Deso Dogg (ex-rapper and Jihadist in Syria in 2013), Bushido, and Yasser & Ozman, both from Austria, present themselves as Muslims and disseminate Islamist and anti-Semitic messages. Yasser & Ozman released a video (in German) entitled *An alle Brüder* (‘To all Brothers’), with the following lyrics:

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<sup>48</sup> Hizb ut-Tahir publishes online in German at <http://www.kalifat.com/> (accessed April 1, 2015).

<sup>49</sup> DPA – Deutsche Presse Agentur, in: Die Zeit, December 11, 2012. For an overview of terrorist incidents against Jewish Diaspora communities worldwide and Israeli citizens abroad see: Community Security Trust, Terrorist Incidents, 2011.

The world in which we live is governed by Zionists [...]  
 Palestine, Afghanistan and then Iraq.  
 That is still not enough for them.  
 Now they want Iran.  
 The Saudis are watching [...]  
 The traitors are allied with Allah's major enemies [...]  
 Therefore, finally, to all Freemasons:  
 I get the eye into the crosshairs and pull the trigger [...]  
 I will die in Jihad.

Jihadist ideology is often disseminated in Internet forums and through social media (i.e. Jihadist groups rarely use their own website), albeit less openly since 2008 due to closer surveillance by secret services. Video clips are increasingly important and are released in many languages, including German (and also produced in Germany). Regional conflicts – such as in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq, and 'Palestine' – are portrayed as religious conflicts that pit Islam against Christianity and Judaism.<sup>50</sup> These views, however, are also shared by some 'ordinary' Muslims who are neither Jihadists nor organized in Islamist organizations.<sup>51</sup>

## Conclusion

The two movements – extreme Right and Islamists – in Germany include a variety of organizations with different aims and *modi operandi*. They share anti-Semitic ideology to different degrees and their anti-Semitism takes various forms. Only a few organization, focus mainly on anti-Semitism in word *and* deed, some posing a direct threat to Jewish communities in Germany. Despite their relatively small numbers, the threat from the extreme Right and Islamists against Jews is serious, including terrorist attacks. Most anti-Semitic crimes, including violent attacks, are committed by the extreme Right. Islamists are usually not involved in street violence against Jews, damage to property, and desecration of Jewish cemeteries. There are attacks against Jews by some young Muslims but these Muslims are usually not members of Islamist organizations, although at times they have been influenced by Islamist ideology.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Steinberg (ed.), *Jihadismus und Internet*, 2012.

<sup>51</sup> Jikeli, *Discrimination of European Muslims*. In: Soen / Shechory / Ben-David (eds.), *Minority Groups*, 2012.

<sup>52</sup> Jikeli, 2013; Arnold / Jikeli, *Judenhass und Gruppendruck*, 2008.

While open anti-Semitism and people who act upon extreme Rightist or radical Islamist ideology remain marginal in Germany, both ideologies find supporters in mainstream society and in mainstream Islam in Germany, respectively.

Neo-Nazi and Islamist anti-Semites rarely cooperate on an organizational level since ideological differences are far too great despite some similarities.<sup>53</sup> Both movements in Germany criticize the definition of anti-Semitism and some mobilize Jewish anti-Zionists to legitimize their own anti-Semitic positions.

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<sup>53</sup> Attempts for a closer cooperation have been made. In 2002, leaders of the extreme Right, Udo Voigt and Horst Mahler, visited a Hizb ut-Tahir conference about the imminent attack on Iraq. There are also a few links on an individual level. The convert and Jihadist, Robert Baum, convicted for terrorist charges, had apparently been rejected by the army some years earlier because he had uploaded extreme Rightist propaganda on the Internet.

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