

A large crowd of people is gathered for a protest. Many individuals are holding Israeli flags. Several banners are visible, including one that reads 'ENGLISH DEFENCE LEAGUE' with a cross symbol and another that says 'We Demand a Vote for the Building of Mosques in Britain'. Other banners contain anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim rhetoric, such as 'FREE GILAD SHALIT', 'TORBAY', 'DESTROY BRITAIN', and 'NO RELIGIOUS SHOOTING'. The scene is set in an urban environment with buildings in the background.

The New Philosemitism: Exploring a Changing Relationship Between Jews and the Far-Right

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Executive Summary

About this Report

- This report views emerging cooperation and changing attitudes of the populist radical right towards Jews as a new wave of Philosemitism.
- This new wave of Philosemitism is not a genuine and sincere positioning, but a strategic tool used by the far-right in order to present itself as liberal and mainstream, gain support and engage in a 'divide and conquer' tactic among minority communities.

Far-right Reframings of Jewishness

- A shift from antisemitism to philosemitism has originated from a fundamental re-imagining of Jewishness, where Jews and Judaism are understood through far-right framings in order to legitimise existing ideologies. For example, by seeing Jews as European, pro-Israel and anti-Muslim, the far-right allows itself to align philosemitism to its own interests.
- In this way, deliberately positive sentiments of Jews based on stereotypes are rooted in the same processes as antisemitism, whereby the two phenomena are two sides of the same coin.
- Strategies of 'Collective Action Framing' are used to impose a Christian-derived framing of Jewishness onto Jewish people
 - 'Frame Extension', in the case of the radical right's understanding of Israel as a European frontier against the Arab world, is used to expand far-right ideology beyond its primary interests in order to appeal to a wider audience.
 - 'Frame Bridging' sees Jews as anti-Muslim and therefore an ally in the war against Muslims.
 - 'Frame Transformation' has generated a shift from ethnic to cultural nationalism.

Towards a New Wave of Philosemitism

- A new era of far-right relations with Jews has emerged in a specific political context, where the growth of identity-based politics has generated a new notion of nationhood, based on the concept of a shared culture, which includes Jews as part of an imagined Judeo-Christian civilisation.
- As collective consciousness of the Holocaust emerged towards the end of the 20th century, it has been necessary for the radical right to attempt to distance itself from historical antisemitism and

avoid association with Nazi and neo-Nazi elements in order to achieve relevance. Four coping mechanisms can be identified: guilt comparison, victim reversal, Holocaust revisionism, and erasure.

- Processes of reciprocal radicalisation – shared understandings of Israel as European, anti-Muslim and militaristic between the far-right and the far-left and Islamist ideologies – have resulted in the entrenching of pro-Israel narratives into the far-right.

Exploring Jewish Support for the Philosemitic Far-Right

- An increase in support among Jewish communities for the far-right can be shown, despite the continued existence of antisemitic sentiments alongside philosemitism. Jewish ‘wings’ of far-right parties are used to deflect accusations of racism, where far-right individuals point to their Jewish supporters as evidence for supposed liberalism.
- Jewish support for far-right groups is a result of processes of collective identity, where the reasons behind Jewish individuals’ far-right ideology is often the same as that of the wider population.
- ‘Identity Saliency’ processes account for the ways in which Jewish people prioritise some aspects of their identity over others. For example, many populist radical right groups’ strong and vocal support for the Israeli government leads some Jewish individuals to place pro-Israel collective identities higher in identity saliency hierarchies.
- Strategic decision-making and rational choices made by far-right Jews are in themselves a result of collective identity processes and existing ideological positionings.
- Although there is continued antisemitism in these parties, Jewish people choose to lend their support not *despite*, but *because of* their collective identity.

The Impact of Far-Right Philosemitism

- Populist radical right parties, individuals and ideologies have achieved mainstreaming by using Jewish people as a shield against accusations of racism. This buffer has permitted the election of many such parties to legislative bodies and the implementation of far-right policies under the guise of liberalism.
- Anti-Muslim sentiment has therefore been popularised, facilitated by the cloak of legitimacy which the far-right believes pro-Jewish and pro-Israel measures provide it.
- Support for far-right groups and ideologies has not only begun to drive a wedge between communities, but within them as well.

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Abbreviations

AfD	<i>Alternative für Deutschland</i> (Alternative for Germany)
CRIF	<i>Conseil Représentatif des Institutions juives de France</i> (Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions)
EDL	English Defence League
FPÖ	<i>Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs</i> (Freedom Party of Austria)
FvD	<i>Forum voor Democratie</i> (Forum for Democracy [Netherlands])
ÖVP	<i>Österreichische Volkspartei</i> (Austrian People's Party)
PVV	<i>Partij voor de Vrijheid</i> (Party for Freedom [Netherlands])
UKIP	United Kingdom Independence Party
VVD	<i>Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie</i> (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy [Netherlands])

Introduction

Q: Which is preferable – the antisemite or the philosemite?

A: The antisemite. At least he isn't lying.¹

Often, the most cynical and light-hearted of jokes told by Jewish people reveal the true reality of the Jewish experience. The above is no exception, successfully highlighting the suspicion and tension felt towards those who promote philosemitism. With significant levels of Jewish persecution still in living memory, Jewish communities in Europe continue to struggle against sustained racism, scapegoating and stereotyping. However, in the post-war period, favourability towards Jews has risen both within and outside the political mainstream, generating some unlikely friendships. From the turn of the 21st century, a curious new wave of philosemitism has taken root among those who are often considered to be the enemy of Jews: the far-right.

While pro-Jewish sentiments in Western Europe have their roots in early modern Christian and republican values, Daniel Cohen pinpoints the 'point of departure' of a philosemitic Europe as 1945, with 'the return of a dramatically small number of Jewish survivors to their country of origin'.² Due to the growing consciousness from the 1970s of Holocaust experiences and the collapse of European communism in the 1990s, philosemitic sentiments have 'migrated closer to the mainstream of European societies', even in some cases in post-communist countries.³ Against this backdrop, far-right philosemitic sentiments have become a defining feature of contemporary populist radical right discourse.

Definitional Debates

This study of philosemitism will focus on the contemporary populist radical right. The term *radical right* is intentionally broad to order to include all far-right elements that engage in democratic institutions but oppose liberal democracy.⁴ This research will largely not examine the anti-democratic far-right, included in the definitional term *extreme right*, which includes neo-Nazi and fascist elements and is therefore still dominated by antisemitic ideologies.⁵ Both the radical and the extreme right fall under a larger definitional bracket, the *far-right*, which seeks to unite all right-of-centre ideologies that fall outside traditional mainstream political discourse. *Populism* is best defined by Cas Mudde as an 'ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups', pitting 'the pure people' against a 'corrupt elite'.⁶ While recognising the

1 Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe, *Philosemitism in History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1.

2 Daniel Cohen, "Towards a History of 'Philosemitic' Europe Since 1945", *Europe Now*, 2 November 2017.

<https://www.europenowjournal.org/2017/11/01/towards-a-history-of-philosemitic-europe-since-1945/>

3 Ibid.

4 Mark Sedgwick, *Key Thinkers of the Radical Right: Behind the New Threat to Liberal Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Cas Mudde, *The Far-Right Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019).

5 Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49.

6 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 7.

subjective application of such terms, often used as insults rather than technical definitions, this research will endeavour to contribute to responsible and accurate deployments of political terminologies.

Geographically, this study will be limited to Western Europe. While each country presents its unique political culture, trends across these countries will be identified. In Eastern Europe, post-Communist states often present a different political reality, with unashamed antisemitism still prevailing in mainstream political discourse.⁷ In North America, philosemitism is influenced by a stronger focus on religious Christian morals and a Jewish population three times the size of all countries in this study combined.⁸ Given such unique political cultures, both these regions are worthy of further analysis separately and will not be included in this discussion. The countries that will be examined include the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands, due to the prevalence of populist radical right groups in these states.

Literature Review

While literature surrounding antisemitism is diverse and rich, analyses of favourable attitudes towards Jewish people are sparse.⁹ Since the turn of the 21st century, scholarship has boomed in discussion of a 'new antisemitism' that blurs the lines between anti-Zionism and traditional Jew-hatred. In the United Kingdom, yearly reports of antisemitism, until 2016, peaked in times of conflict in Israel, indicating a link between antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiments.¹⁰ CRIF's vice-president pinpoints this turn to the second Palestinian intifada in 2000, when European Jews were blamed for the actions of the Israeli government.¹¹ This literature often takes passionate and partisan stances, leaving little room for recognition of positive perceptions of Jews. Such an overwhelming focus on Jew-hatred has omitted study of its close relative, philosemitism. Therefore, in line with literature promoting 'the new antisemitism', this thesis will identify 'the new philosemitism'.

A definitional debate exists around the term 'philosemitism' and its deployment. Coined in the 1880s in Germany as an antonym to antisemitism, in its purest form it is defined as a love for Jews, or positive feelings towards Jewish beliefs, practices and people.¹² 'Semite', first coined as a racial term for Jews in 19th-century Germany, is often an unspecific and unhelpful expression.¹³ Despite discrepancies between its root and contemporary definitions, it has nonetheless been popularised by its insertion into the term 'antisemitism'. While 'philosemitism' is similarly tainted by this inaccuracy, it is entrenched in our language and therefore remains the most useful linguistic term to denote such attitudes towards Jews.¹⁴

7 Ildikó Barna and Anikó Félix, "Modern Antisemitism in the Visegrád Countries", *Tom Lantos Institute*. <https://archiva.jpr.org.uk/download?id=3495>

8 Sergio Della Pergola, "World Jewish Population, 2019", *American Jewish Year Book 2019*, 263–353. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40371-3_8

9 Karp and Sutcliffe, *Philosemitism in History*, 3.

10 Community Security Trust, "Antisemitic Incidents Report 2019". <https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/9/0/IncidentsReport2019.pdf>

11 Amanda Taub, "France's Far Right, Once Known for Anti-Semitism, Courts Jews", *The New York Times*, 5 April 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/05/world/europe/france-jews-marine-le-pen-national-front-anti-semitism.html?auth=login-facebook>

12 Evelien Gans, "Philosemitism? Ambivalences regarding Israel" in *The Holocaust, Israel and the "Jew": Histories of Antisemitism in Postwar Dutch Society*, edited by Remco Ensel and Evelien Gans (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 154.

Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz, *Antisemitism and Philosemitism in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries: Representing Jews, Jewishness and Modern Culture* (Newark: U Delaware Press, 2008), 8.

13 Dave Rich, "What's in a hyphen? How an innocuous mark justified antisemitism", *Haaretz*, 6 November 2008. Reposted to CanalBlog <http://mamamare.canalblog.com/archives/2008/11/06/11263907.html>

14 Karp and Sutcliffe, *Philosemitism in History*, 2.

However, the sincerity of philosemitic sentiments is widely questioned by scholars, to the extent that these debates are inherent to our understanding of the terminology. This dispute is divided broadly in to two camps: first, Adam Sutcliffe and Jonathan Karp lead those who understand philosemitism as genuine support for Jewish people, claiming that those who assume suspicion are 'one-sided and prejudicial'.¹⁵ They point to how idealisations of Jews have positively impacted Jewish people and have often been induced by Jewish people themselves.¹⁶ However, the intentions of those who propagate Jewish stereotypes, even for positive uses, are not relevant to the debate on the outcomes of philosemitic actions.

A second camp understands philosemitism to be rooted in the same myths and stereotypes as antisemitism, which essentialises Jews under assumptions placed on them by other communities.¹⁷ These scholars see antisemitism and philosemitism as two sides of the same coin, with Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz highlighting their intersecting nature and processes.¹⁸

In this way, the definition of the term has come to invoke suspicion. Whereas different iterations of philosemitic sentiment – from evangelical Zionism to perceptions of Jews as wealthy – may push and pull the definitional debate in different ways, far-right philosemitism stands firmly in the camp that approaches the topic with caution. As will be discussed in the first chapter, far-right philosemitism is a strategic tool used by far-right groups to whitewash racism and is based on carefully chosen perceptions on Jews, not realities.

Various other definitional terms exist surrounding the topic of philosemitism. David Wertheim chooses to refrain from this definitional debate, instead defining 'the Jew as legitimation', in which Jewish people serve 'as the legitimation of non-Jewish ideas, values, decisions and exploits'.¹⁹ This framework is useful for understanding the ideological roots of such sentiments, discussed in the first chapter of this research, but remains too narrow for analysis of the complete functions of philosemitism.

In recognition of the subjectivity of terminologies, Zygmunt Bauman originated the objective term 'allosemitism' as the root of both antisemitism and philosemitism, defined as an understanding of Jewish people as intrinsically different.²⁰ Furthermore, while some scholars have begun to name this new far-right rhetoric as 'anti-antisemitism', such a terminology defines groups in relation to their position on Jew-hatred, rather than Jews and Judaism as a people, culture and religion, and therefore would provide an unhelpfully narrow framework for analysis.²¹

15 Matti Bunzl, "Between Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Some Thoughts on the New Europe", *American Ethnologist* vol. 32, no. 4 (2005): 499–508. <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.2005.32.4.499>

16 Karp and Sutcliffe, *Philosemitism in History*, 1.

17 Lassner and Trubowitz, *Antisemitism and Philosemitism*.

Gans, "Philosemitism? Ambivalences regarding Israel".

Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (United States: Alfred A Knopf, 1996).

18 Lassner and Trubowitz, *Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, 8.

19 David Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation: Jewish–Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism* (New York: Nature America Incorporated, 2017), 2.

20 Zygmund Bauman, "Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern" in *Modernity, Culture and "the Jew"*, edited by Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

21 Jonathan Judaken, *Jean-Paul Sartre and the Jewish Question: Anti-Antisemitism and the Politics of the French Intellectual* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).

Ivan Kalmar, "Islamophobia and anti-antisemitism: the case of Hungary and the 'Soros plot'", *Patterns of Prejudice* vol. 54, no. 1–2 (2020): 182–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2019.1705014>

The central thesis of this research is that a new and distinct wave of philosemitism has emerged, located in groups on the far-right. Given the specific and destructive targeting of Jewish people by far-right ideologies throughout the 20th century, this is an astonishing and abrupt turn that demands attention. Through examination of this phenomenon, contributions will be made to the definitional debate by revealing the insincere nature of far-right philosemitism.

The specific nature of this philosemitism will be explored in the initial chapter, which will consider collective action frames to show how a turn to philosemitism has been facilitated by a reframing of Jewishness. This demonstrates how far-right philosemitism hinges on a perception of Jews that fits in existing far-right ideologies, rather than as an expression of genuine support.

The second chapter will examine the conditions that have produced this phenomenon, situating it within broader social and political trends. In this way, its unique and distinct nature, and therefore the need to study it as a separate wave, will be demonstrated.

Thirdly, the ways in which Jewish communities have welcomed such narratives will be discussed. While many antisemitic elements still exist within parties that profess publicly to support Jews, the narratives of Jewish people who now support far-right parties should be examined. This will allow conclusions to be drawn on the ways in which far-right philosemitic ideologies have pervaded Jewish communities.

A final chapter will consider the impacts of a new wave of far-right antisemitism, highlighting the urgency of promoting understanding of philosemitism on the far-right. By presenting as mainstream and shrugging off unpopular historical antisemitism, populist radical right parties have begun to achieve electoral success. While the majority of research focuses on the role of rising Islamophobia in this process, this research will consider how philosemitism has driven these outcomes.²²

²² Farid Hafez, "From Anti-Semitism to Islamophobia: The European Far Right's Strategic Shift", *Discover Society*, 1 June 2015. <https://discoversociety.org/2015/07/01/from-anti-semitism-to-islamophobia-the-european-far-rights-strategic-shift/>

Chapter 1

Far-Right Reframings of Jewishness

A new wave of philosemitism has emerged due to an evolution in broader far-right ideology, with shifts from ethnic to cultural nationalism removing historical hatred of certain groups. The new far-right's approach to Jewish people and Judaism is now actively supportive. This shift has emerged from a fundamental reframing of Jewishness, from racialisation in the early to mid-20th century, to a nation that must be defended. Of course, Judaism and the manner in which it is practiced remains largely unchanged and therefore a change in support derives from imaginings imposed onto Jewish people by non-Jews.

Far-right movements have achieved this shift through reframing Jewishness. In social movements, 'frames help to render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organise experience and guide action'.²³ By viewing the world through existing ideological frameworks, framings are 'intended to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilise antagonists'.²⁴ Framings both originate from a stereotyping of events or groups and, in their usage, generate further stereotypes.

This application of stereotypes of Jews is a feature of philosemitism. Wieviorka's definition of philosemitism as 'a love of non-Jews for a Judaism that is somewhat imaginary' correctly highlights how the version of Judaism that is supported is merely a construction imposed onto Jews by the far-right.²⁵ This philosemitic construction is engrained with stereotyping, assumptions and myths.²⁶ Given that only a gradual difference exists between 'idealisation and zealotry', the same processes that generate a love of Jews also generate a hatred of Jews.²⁷ Through this lens, far-right imaginings of Jewishness have been built with the purpose of justifying existing ideologies.

This chapter will consider Robert Benford and David Snow's strategic processes of social movement framing to analyse three aspects of the far-right's framing of Jewishness.²⁸ First, the radical right's support for Israel as a European frontier against Muslims will be discussed as frame extension, where the social movement framing has expanded beyond its primary interests in order to appeal to a wider audience. Second, the far-right's framing of Jews as part

23 Robert Benford and David Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment", *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 614. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.611>

24 David Snow and Robert Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization" in *From Structure to Action: Social Movement Participation Across Cultures* by Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi and Sidney Tarrow (Greenwich: JAI Press, 1988), 198.

25 Michel Wieviorka, "A New Antisemitism?", *Jewish Political Studies Review* vol. 29, no. 3 (2018): 43. www.jstor.org/stable/26500686

26 Lassner and Tubowitz, *Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, 7.

27 Gans, "Philosemitism? Ambivalences regarding Israel", 157.

28 Snow and Benford, "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization", 198.

of a war against Muslims will be analysed through the lens of frame bridging. Third, frame transformation from ethnic to cultural nationalism will be discussed.

By demonstrating how the radical right have reframed Jewishness in these three ways, it will be shown how the radical right's use of framing theory has used stereotypical imaginings of Jewishness in order to present it as supportive of Jews. This will contribute to the existing school of thought that sees philosemitism and antisemitism as two sides of the same coin in which both positive and negative perceptions of Jews are based on stereotypes.

Israel as the European Frontier

Far-right narratives have constructed an image of the Jewish State as the last European frontier against its Arab neighbours. They have achieved this through a process of frame extension, where social movement framing has expanded beyond its primary interests 'to include issues and concerns that are presumed to be of importance to potential adherents'.²⁹ A central thesis of radical right ideology is the Eurabian conspiracy theory, which imagines an invading Muslim force attempting to overthrow a Christian Europe.³⁰ This framing has been expanded to include Israel as a Western nation, which should thus be defended, placing Israel on the front line against a Muslim Middle East. Through this expansion of ideology, the far-right hopes to gain the sympathies and votes of pro-Israel and Jewish communities.

Geert Wilders exemplifies this framing with his comments that Israel is 'the West's first line of defence' against Islam.³¹ For Wilders, given that 'the Jihad against Israel isn't against Israel only' but 'against the whole West', Israel's position as a target of Islamist extremism earns it unique status among Western culture.³² Similarly, when asked why he supports Israel, former EDL spokesperson Trevor Kelway responded with 'Israel is on the front line of Islamic extremism and jihad'.³³

Both comments reframe Zionism away from Jewish framings as a national liberation movement or steeped in religious instruction. Instead, pro-Israel positions, a relatively new innovation of far-right ideology, are presented as inherent to Eurabian thinking.³⁴ It is significant that during this time, Israel has exclusively been governed by increasingly right-wing governments led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Far-right pro-Israel sentiment has emerged as Israel takes increasingly tough measures on security, including multiple operations in Gaza and reductions of Palestinian civil liberties, including the Nation State Law and settlement expansion in the West Bank. Given that it is the construction of Israel as a victim of Islam that has earned it support from the radical right, support for Israel is not only a consequence of but conditional upon its conflict with Arab nations. It could be the case that far-right support for Zionism hinges on the

29 Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 625.

30 Matt Carr, "You are now entering Eurabia", *Race and Class* vol. 48, no. 1 (July 2006): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396806066636>

Benjamin Lee, "A Day in the 'Swamp': Understanding Discourse in the Online Counter-Jihad Nebula", *Democracy and Security* vol. 11, no. 10 (September 2015): 259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2015.1067612>

31 Michael Colborne, "Rise of a New Far-right: The European 'Philosemites' Using Jews to Battle Muslims", *Haaretz*, 21 October 2017. <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/europe/premium-the-european-philosemites-using-jews-to-battle-muslims-1.5459112>

32 Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation*, 280.

33 Trevor Kelway in Baron Bodissey, "An Interview with Trevor Kelway", *Gates of Vienna*, 3 April 2010. <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.com/search?q=trevor+kelway>

34 Cas Mudde in Michael Colborne, "Rise of a New Far-right".

Israeli government acting as the far-right would wish: as a European frontier against the Arab world. If and when a left-wing government is elected to the Knesset, any decrease in far-right support for Israel would be revealing.

By redefining Zionism as an inherently anti-Muslim ideology, which sees a Europeanised idealisation of Israel defend itself from its Muslim neighbours, the European radical right has been able to claim support for Zionism and Israel. While Adam Sutcliffe and Jonathan Karp propose that pro-Israel positions could be a 'reflection of genuine sympathy for Jewish victimisation', reducing Zionism to nothing more than a reaction to persecution supports merely the consequences of Zionism, rather than recognising the complex ideologies that inform it.³⁵ Far-right support for Israel as a realisation of anti-Muslim sentiments is a clear example of framing extension and demonstrates one way in which far-right philosemitism uses stereotypes to achieve its aims.

Your Enemy's Enemy is Your Friend

A second way in which far-right groups have reframed Jewish people is as a victim of an allegedly invading Muslim force. Seeing all Muslims as part of a monolithic violent jihadist movement, populist radical right ideology envisions a dichotomous war of cultures, where communities are either proponents of jihadism or victims of it.³⁶ This conspiracy theory is 'the defining prejudice' of current radical right thinking, with all other positions constructed around it.³⁷ Through the understanding that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend', far-right figures have reached out to diverse communities that they perceive to be victims of Islamist ultra-conservatism and who 'share historical angst'.³⁸

Framing Jews as fellow victims of an antagonistic Muslim force is an example of frame bridging, defined as 'the linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected framings'.³⁹ In this scenario, while there is evidence both that antisemitism is rising and that there is an increasing Muslim population in Europe, it cannot be proven that these two circumstances are interrelated.⁴⁰

As early as 1999, politicians from the FPÖ were proclaiming that among their 'Jewish friends, there is outrage about the high degree of Islamic presence'.⁴¹ In this scenario, it is not Muslim antisemitism that supposedly harms Jews, but the mere presence of expanding Muslim communities. While some researchers have suggested that the use of 'friends' could be sign of genuine friendship, it is clear that to the FPÖ, support for Jewish people depends precariously on its political and social compasses.⁴² Similarly, Trevor Kelway of the EDL uses the 'problems of Islamic extremism' that 'are experienced by many communities' as a defence against accusations of racism.⁴³

35 Karp and Sutcliffe, *Philosemitism in History*, 1.

36 Liz Fekete "The Muslim Conspiracy and the Oslo Massacre", *Institute of Race Relations* vol. 55, no. 3 (December 2011): 35–6. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396811425984>

37 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 28.

38 Nigel Copsey, "The English Defence League: Challenging Our Country and Our Values of Social Inclusion, Fairness and Equality", *Faith Matters* (November 2010), 5. <https://www.faith-matters.org/resources/publicationsreports/201-the-english-defence-league-challenging-our-country-and-our-values-of-social-in>

39 Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 624.

40 Pew Research Center, "Europe's Growing Muslim Population" (2017). <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/>
Community Security Trust, "Antisemitic Incidents Report 2019". <https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/9/0/IncidentsReport2019.pdf>

41 Bunzl, "Between Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia", 506.

42 Ibid.

43 Kelway in Bodissey, "An Interview with Trevor Kelway".

Kelway uses ‘the Jews as legitimisation’, where claims of support for Jews as a victim are used to legitimise existing anti-Muslim prejudices.⁴⁴ Marine Le Pen further exemplified this with her declaration in an interview that the Front National ‘is without a doubt the best shield to protect [Jews] against the one true enemy, Islamic fundamentalism’.⁴⁵

Concerns about antisemitic ideologies within some Muslim communities are often raised by Jewish people. For instance, levels of antisemitism have been polled to be ‘consistently higher among the Muslim population of Great Britain than among the population in general’.⁴⁶ Similarly, recent polling by the Henry Jackson Society found that significant numbers of Muslim respondents agreed with certain antisemitic statements presented to them.⁴⁷ In this vein, young Jewish people have reported that one third of cases of antisemitic violence they have experienced were committed by ‘someone with a Muslim extremist view’.⁴⁸ However, assertions on the universality of antisemitism among the Muslim population cannot be made. For example, one poll run by Jewish Policy Research found that a majority (60%) of British Muslims disagreed with, or are neutral on, antisemitic statements that were presented to them as part of a survey.⁴⁹ There is therefore no certainty on how pervasive antisemitism is among Muslim communities. However, even if such polling were to show that antisemitism is higher among Muslim populations, radical right framings of an inherently antisemitic monolithic Muslim community would still be statistically false. Despite this, Jewish radical right figures have manipulated statistics in order to promote anti-Muslim sentiments. For example, Dimitri Schulz, one of the founders of the AfD’s Jewish division, declares that ‘Jew-hatred’ is ‘inseparable’ from Islam.⁵⁰

Little data exists on Jewish attitudes towards other communities; researchers and far-right ideologues alike will struggle to conclude whether Islamophobia is more prevalent in Jewish communities than the wider population. More relevant, however, is the conclusion that Islamophobia is not, as the radical right would imagine, a core tenet of Judaism, just as antisemitism is not inherent to Islam. Framing both communities as inherently intolerant of the other essentialises both, whether that community is seen as the enemy or not. While negative framings of Muslims are clearly built on a weak stereotype of the attitudes of the community, the same can be said for positive attitudes of the far-right towards Jews.

Framing Jewishness within Judeo-Christian Values

A third way in which the far-right have adopted philosemitic positions is through framing Judaism as part of a Western Judeo-Christian culture. This is frame transformation, where ‘changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones’ has moved from placing Jews in the out-group to understanding Jewishness as a European

44 Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation*.

45 Taub, “France’s Far Right, Once Known for Anti-Semitism, Courts Jews”.

46 Daniel Staetsky, “Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain”, *Institute for Jewish Policy Research* (September 2017). <https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/7/4/JPR.2017.Antisemitism%20in%20contemporary%20Great%20Britain.pdf>

47 Rakib Ehsan, “Muslim Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Great Britain”, *Henry Jackson Society* (2019). <https://henryjacksonsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/HJS-British-Muslim-Anti-Semitism-Report-web-1.pdf>

48 European Union, “Young Jewish Europeans: perceptions and experiences of antisemitism” (2019), 8. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-young-jewish-europeans_en.pdf

49 Staetsky, “Antisemitism in contemporary Great Britain”, 6.

50 Guy Chazan, “The Jews who are signing up to Germany’s far-right AfD”, *Financial Times*, 5 October 2018. <https://www.ft.com/content/d851b646-c7d6-11e8-ba8f-ee390057b8c9>

culture, thereby including Jews in the in-group.⁵¹ Such transformations are part of a broader shift from ethnic to cultural nationalism, where 'the nation and its citizens are defined primarily in terms of a shared culture and history', rather than the racialised understandings of Jews that characterised the far-right for much of the 20th century⁵². For cultural nationalists, the primary aim is 'to revive what they regard as a distinctive and primordial collective personality which has a name, unique origins, history, culture, homeland and social and political practices'.⁵³

Amanda Klueveld describes Judeo-Christian culture as an 'instrument in a toolbox of political rhetoric that appeals to a secular search for an identity, or even for Europe's soul'.⁵⁴ It is rarely defined by far-right politicians, but those who invoke it seem to agree what it constitutes and that it is under threat.⁵⁵ The European far-right has attempted to tie Judeo-Christian culture to Western values intrinsically by presenting the former as an enlightened European ideology that embraces modernity and progress, thereby placing Islamic teachings as antithetical ideologies that should be combatted.⁵⁶ For example, in response to the Paris terrorist attacks of January 2015, Nigel Farage, a UKIP MEP, proclaimed that such values were under attack from Islamist extremism, calling for courage 'in standing up for our Judeo-Christian culture'.⁵⁷ Geert Wilders has similarly called for immigrants to adopt 'the best culture there is' in order to 'preserve our own Judeo-Christian civilisation' and defend 'freedom and democracy'.⁵⁸

Judeo-Christian culture has also been used by Marine Le Pen as a secular concept, dismissive of religious customs, to serve as ideological backing for attempts to ban the Muslim hijab and the Jewish skullcap in 2014, as well as to oppose ritual slaughter by both religions. In this sense, far-right understandings of a Judeo-Christian culture seek to reframe Jewishness as a secular, historical identity, rather than a practicing religion.

Furthermore, by attempting to tie Jewishness to Europeanness, a secular Western Judeo-Christian culture fundamentally misunderstands Jewish ethnography, which varies greatly across Western Europe. In Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and the UK, a majority of Jews are Ashkenazi and can trace their roots through Eastern or Central Europe. The French Jewish population, meanwhile, is majority Sephardi or Mizrahi who fled from French colonial outposts in Algeria or Tunisia due to rising antisemitism in the late 20th century.⁵⁹ In Israel too, only 36% of the Jewish population can trace its roots through Central or Eastern Europe⁶⁰. Beyond Europe, diverse expressions of Judaism are tied to cultures across Africa, Asia

51 Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements", 625.

52 Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens and Hans Brun, "A Neo-Nationalist Network: The English Defence League and Europe's Counter-Jihad Movement", *The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence* (2013), 1. <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ICSR-Report-A-Neo-Nationalist-Network-The-English-Defence-League-and-Europe%E2%80%99s-Counter-Jihad-Movement.pdf>

53 John Hutchinson, "Re-Interpreting Cultural Nationalism", *Australian Journal of Political & History* vol. 45, no. 3, (December 2002); 241. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8497.00072>

54 Amanda Klueveld, "Secular, Superior and Desperately Searching for its Soul: The Confusing Political-Cultural Reference to a Judeo-Christian Europe in the Twenty-First Century" in *Is there a Judeo-Christian Tradition? A European Perspective*, edited by Emmanuel Nathan and Anya Topolski (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 241.

55 *Ibid.*, 260.

56 Boris Groys, *Art Power* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 172.

57 BBC News, "UKIP's Nigel Farage urges 'Judeo-Christian' defence after Paris attacks", 12 January 2015. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-30776186>

58 Klueveld, "Secular, Superior and Desperately Searching for its Soul", 260.

59 Della Pergola, "Jews in the European Community", 35–7.

60 Jewish Virtual Library, "Vital Statistics: Latest Population Statistics for Israel", 2020. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/latest-population-statistics-for-israel>

and the rest of the globe. Jewishness is certainly not exclusively rooted in European or Christian cultures, and far-right attempts to define it as such are not only exclusionary to non-European Jewish cultures, but evidence of support for a perception of Jews, rather than for Jewish people as they live.

Furthermore, an element of palingenesis that is present in Judeo-Christian celebrations of the European Enlightenment highlights some contributions of Jewish people to European culture, but ignores a long history of Christian persecution of Jews and religious differences that were a source of conflict for centuries.⁶¹ This inconsistency demonstrates how two different aspects of far-right ideology – the defence of a European identity that is centred around historical narratives, and the inclusion of Jews in this identity – are antithetical without recognition of the role of Christian Europe in Jewish pre-Holocaust persecution.

In these ways, far-right attitudes towards Jews have undergone a process of frame transformation, where a move from biological to cultural nationalism has generated philosemitic sentiment. However, support for Jewish people within Judeo-Christian framing is dependent on secularism, Europeanism and erasure of a historical culture that persecuted Jewish people. It is due to the fact that philosemitism rests on a profile of Jewishness assigned by the far-right that support for Jewish people can be seen not as genuine but as conditional and circumstantial.

Conclusions

This chapter has used strategies of collective action framing to demonstrate how a new wave of far-right movements and populist radical right parties have adopted philosemitic positions by reframing Jewishness.

Groups have used three strategic processes to achieve this. First, frame extension has been used to place existing ideologies onto different issues that are important to a target group of supporters. In this manner, Israel has been reframed as a European frontier against Islam, in line with existing Eurabian ideologies, in order to attempt to gain support of Jewish communities. Far-right support for Israel is not ideologically derived from Jewish religious teachings or liberation movements, but stems from this framing.

Second, frame bridging has been utilised to create a causal link between rising Muslim populations and rising antisemitism. By framing Jews as victims and Muslims as a monolithic, violent mass, far-right ideology has drawn inaccurate conclusions on the origins of antisemitism. However, it is this framing that permits the far-right to advance an Islamophobic agenda while presenting itself as supporting victims of racism.

Third, frame transformation has facilitated an ideological move towards cultural nationalism, whereby Jews are brought into the in-group via constructions of Judeo-Christian culture. However, this process

⁶¹ Gerald Sloyan, "Christian Persecution of Jews over the Centuries", *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*. <https://www.ushmm.org/research/about-the-mandel-center/initiatives/ethics-religion-holocaust/articles-and-resources/christian-persecution-of-jews-over-the-centuries/christian-persecution-of-jews-over-the-centuries>

has fundamentally reframed Judaism as a secular and European culture, both of which are stereotypes on which both inclusion and exclusion depend.

Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz have noted how in the case of philosemitism, 'instead of originating in Jewish sources, messages about what is good for the Jews often encode Jewish character and fate dictated by Christianity as the ultimate arbiter of the good'.⁶² As demonstrated above, this is certainly true for far-right philosemitism, where framing has imposed onto Jewish people a Christian-derived framework of Jewishness. Far-right philosemitism stems not from a love of Jews as Jews, but from far-right ideological constructions and tools that have been used to gain support and present itself as a moderate force. Furthermore, far-right philosemitism derives from many of the same methodologies of stereotyping and essentialising that lead to antisemitism. Given that the far-right's understanding of Jewishness is not genuine, it must follow that the far-right's support for Jews cannot be either.

Far-right philosemitic sentiments are based on the assumption that the ultimate goal of Jewish people is to be viewed more positively than the wider population. However, in many cases, the aim of Jewish communities is normalisation, to be seen in the same light as other groups rather than intentional favourability.⁶³ As will be discussed in chapter four, the elevated idealisations and expectations of Jewish people explored in this chapter often lead to increased anti-Jewish sentiments. Such complexities, which constitute far-right framings of Jewishness, are a 'striking reminder of the precariousness and the malleability of the relationship between philosemitism and antisemitism'.⁶⁴

⁶² Lassner and Trubowitz, *Antisemitism and Philosemitism*, 7.

⁶³ Karp and Sutcliffe, *Philosemitism in History*, 1.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

Chapter 2

Towards a 'New Wave' of Philosemitism

Having discussed the specific aspects of how a 'new philosemitism' manifests and the ideologies that inform it, this chapter will turn to the conditions that have given rise to this phenomenon. Unique sociopolitical environments, emerging towards the end of the 20th century, have impacted the directions of far-right movements. These contexts prove the necessity of defining and studying far-right philosemitism as a distinct wave. Three wider political trends will be discussed, with reference to how these trends have helped form philosemitic tendencies. The emergence of philosemitism on the far-right will be viewed through the lens of existing sociological theories and identified patterns of ideological development, in order to understand philosemitism in the context of late 20th and early 21st century political directions of travel.

First, it will be shown how the emergence of identity-based politics has altered far-right discourses and the way in which they generate support. These conditions gave rise to the strategic inclusion of Jews in a new notion of nationhood, founded in the emerging political trends of the late 20th century.

Second, in this context, Holocaust memory has been politicised and moulded to the movement's needs. With the increasing emergence of Holocaust testimonies in the 1970s, the far-right has been forced to adopt different attitudes towards Jews in order to stay mainstream and relevant. Four coping mechanisms will be analysed: guilt comparison, victim reversal, revisionism and erasure. These wider contexts have generated a new philosemitic language about the Holocaust among the new far-right.

Third, narratives of the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts will be used as an example of reciprocal radicalisation processes, where far-left and Islamist anti-Israel ideologies have forced the new far-right further into the pro-Israel camp. Both sides denote Israel in three common ways (European, anti-Muslim and militaristic), using shared narratives to achieve different goals.

These three trends have influenced a unique wave of philosemitism, which is dependent on its political environment and therefore distinct from previous philosemitic discourses.

Political Trends towards Identity Politics

A new far-right philosemitism has emerged over the past four decades, rooted in wider global trends towards identity politics. This section will discuss the emergence of such discourses, how they shaped the new far-right, and consequently how this shaped the new philosemitism.

The World Values Survey of 1990–91 demonstrated a postmodern shift towards ‘greater tolerance for ethnic, sexual and political differences’.⁶⁵ Impacted by globalisation, emerging technologies, a shift away from organised religion and the increasing role of the women’s movement, a growing body of evidence on shifting trends led a 1998 European Commission working paper to conclude that ‘we can no longer discuss political futures without also discussing questions of meaning, spirituality, and cultural identity’.⁶⁶ A number of academics have linked these changes in values and priorities to the sociocultural effects of globalisation in the post-industrial era, which sparked a new sense of self-protectionism in the context of national identity crises.⁶⁷ This backlash ‘generated demands for self-affirmation, self-defence and self-assurance’, where national identity filled the hole left by globalisation’s erosion of links between the citizen and the state, especially among those who were left behind by the shift from traditional to financial industries.⁶⁸ These emerging cultural norms were integral to the ways in which key issues of immigration, nationhood and belonging would be discussed across the subsequent few decades.⁶⁹

Subsequently, the Nouvelle Droite school of thought, which had emerged in 1968, began to develop far-right ideology in the context of a global identity crisis, which became ‘instrumental in modernising classic far-right thinking’.⁷⁰ Alain de Benoist, a key figure of the movement, was able to utilise mainstream and left-wing identity-centric rhetoric to pioneer new exclusionary ideologies, such as ethnopluralism, the idea that ethnic groups should be kept separate ‘in order to preserve their unique norms, cultures, and characteristics’.⁷¹ This movement’s central message, that Islam is a threat to liberal democracy, accelerated throughout the 1990s due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and can be found in party politics as far back as 1991, in the Dutch VVD.⁷²

Radical right groups began to attempt to rid themselves of the antisemitism that defined the far-right for much of the 20th century, building on the Nouvelle Droite’s new concept of nationhood, based on the cultural rather than the pseudo-biological. This allowed parties to appeal to a new audience, who did not consider themselves to be racists or extremists but sympathised with many of the radical right’s softer rhetoric on immigration and national identity.⁷³ Antonis Ellinas presents the theory that, while initially a rise in national identity politics across the spectrum put these issues on the mainstream electorate’s agenda and radicalised publics, when the mainstream parties later ‘retracted the nationalist card’, it was the far-right who continued

65 European Commission, “Civilisations and Governance: Seminar organised by the forward studies unit of the European Commission and the World Academy of Arts and Sciences” (1998), 14.

66 *Ibid.*, 22.

67 Antonis Ellinas, *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 6. Roland Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

68 Ellinas, *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe*, 6–22.

Piero Ignazi, “The silent counter-revolution: Hypothesis on the emergence of Extreme Right-Wing parties in Europe”, *European Journal of Political Research* vol. 22, no. 1 (1992): 3–34. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1992.tb00303.x>

Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe*.

Hans-Georg Betz, *Radical Right-wing populism in Western Europe* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1994).

69 José Pedro Zúquete, “The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?”, *Journal of Political Ideologies* vol. 13, no. 3 (October 2008): 334. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569310802377019>

70 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 54.

71 Tore Bjørgo and Jacob Aasland Ravndal, “Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, Patterns and Responses”, *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism* (September 2019), 4. https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19624?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

72 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 16.

Farid Hafez, “Shifting Borders: Islamophobia as common ground for building pan-European right-wing unity”, *Patterns of Prejudice* vol. 48, no. 5 (2014): 482. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0031322X.2014.965877>

73 *Ibid.*, 4.

to represent these issues and subsequently gained support.⁷⁴ This theory explains the initial mainstream breakthrough of the far-right in the context of identity politics in recent decades.

Broad trends that emerged towards the end of the 20th century were accelerated by a number of watershed global events and created the socioeconomic conditions in which these narratives thrived. In 2008, the global financial crash saw a rise in unemployment and a depression of living standards throughout the West. In these circumstances, a 'zero-sum mind-set' in conservative nationalists 'sought stronger recourse to nativist arguments', compounding identity politics trends and spurring populism.⁷⁵

Secondly, political attitudes were impacted by the rise of Islamist jihadist groups that routinely attacked Western targets, including the 9/11 attack in the United States, the 2004 Madrid bombings and the 7/7 London transport bombings, in addition to the emergence of Islamic State and a wave of Western homegrown radicalisation and foreign fighters.⁷⁶ Widespread media coverage and the high casualty nature of attacks have heightened public perceptions of insecurity and increased suspicion of Muslim communities. A subsequent wave of displaced peoples, coupled with mainstream 'narratives of alleged absorption capacity combined with dubious empirical data' further entrenched cultural protectionism, xenophobia and nativism.⁷⁷ From the ideological building blocks of the 20th century, these events saw a shift from rhetoric that identified Muslim immigrants as a threat to European culture, to a more sinister Islamophobia that presented 'Muslim' as synonymous for 'terrorist' and 'violent'.⁷⁸

Throughout the development and subsequent popularisation of these discourses, the turn towards philosemitism and the emergence of a new right have been co-dependent. Rejections of antisemitism have been a strategic tool used by the far-right to gain support in a new political environment. Nouvelle Droite philosopher Guillaume Faye recognised that a new right-wing European identity must reform its 'chronic anti-Judaism' and re-centre its focus on 'the third world and Muslims'.⁷⁹ Mirroring this sentiment, FPÖ leader Heinz-Christian Strache said to his predecessor Jörg Haider that 'if the Jews accept us, then we won't have any problems', confirming the strategic importance of philosemitic positions.⁸⁰ Not only does this demonstrate recognition of the changing political climate, it ironically plays on antisemitic tropes of Jews, power and political influence. The new philosemitism is therefore defined by these discourses of national identity that emerged across the political spectrum from 1990s.

⁷⁴ Antonis Ellinas, *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe*, 8.

⁷⁵ Aristotle Kallis, "Far-Right 'Contagion' or a Failing 'Mainstream'? How Dangerous Ideas Cross Borders and Blur Boundaries", *Democracy and Security* vol. 9, no. 3 (2013): 230. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2013.792251> Kalmar, "Islamophobia and anti-antisemitism", 183.

Manuel Funke, Moritz Schularick and Christoph Trebesch, "The political aftermath of financial crises: Going to extremes", *VoxEU CEPR*, 21 November 2015. <https://voxeu.org/article/political-aftermath-financial-crises-going-extremes>

⁷⁶ Julia Ebner, *The Rage: The Vicious Circle of Islamist and Far-Right Extremes* (Great Britain: I. B. Tauris, 2017), 81.

⁷⁷ Kallis, "Far-Right 'Contagion' or a Failing 'Mainstream'?", 230.

⁷⁸ Zúquete, "The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?", 322.

⁷⁹ Guillaume Faye, *La Nouvelle Question Juive* (Paris: Les Editions du Lore, 2007), 240–44.

⁸⁰ Hafez, "Shifting borders", 488.

The Politicisation of Holocaust Remembrance

Treblinka historian Samuel Moyn highlights an observation by French Jew Renée Winegarten, that ‘guilt and complicity’ form ‘the shaky foundations on which that ill-fated phenomenon, philosemitism, rests’.⁸¹ Holocaust memories and revisionisms have informed a new wave of philosemitism from a new far-right that seeks to distance itself from its predecessors. Since the 1970s, survivor testimonies have emerged and Holocaust-centric memories of the Second World War have given rise to a new philosemitism in Western Europe, ‘at the risk of creating an “imaginary Jew” devoid of any historicity other than that of Auschwitz’.⁸² This section will demonstrate how a new wave of philosemitism is rooted in the era of Holocaust remembrance by considering how the new far-right have interpreted 20th century histories.

The German term *aufrechnung*, translated as ‘guilt comparison’ or ‘addition’, is used to denote crass comparisons of the magnitude of Jewish genocide to losses on the German side, in order to equate war crimes of other countries to those of the Nazis.⁸³ For example, the post-war expulsion of Germans from Eastern territories or the murder of Nazis by Soviet forces are used in this way by the far-right, constructing narratives of history that absolve culpability from the far-right.⁸⁴ AfD functionaries have often compared the Holocaust to the 1945 bombing of Dresden, in order to diminish historical guilt.⁸⁵ In this way, the contemporary far-right is permitted to claim support for Jews while failing to accept culpability for the histories from which its parties originate.

Political scientist Peter Widmann contends that a strategy of ‘victim reversal’ is present in far-right narratives, which argues that Islam and National Socialism embody similar values and commit similar crimes.⁸⁶ This tactic allows them to ‘construe Muslims as genocidal’ and the ‘principal enemies of Jews’, thereby placing Europeans as victims and allies, and Muslims as ‘Islamofascists’.⁸⁷ Examples of this are widespread across regions formerly under Nazi occupation, such as Marine Le Pen’s equivalence between Muslims praying in French streets and the Nazi invasion of France.⁸⁸ Similarly, a German far-right activist’s claim that ‘the *Kristallnacht* will return, but this time Christians and Jews will be driven through the streets persecuted and killed by Islamists’ demonstrates how such ideologues have placed themselves as the victims of the crimes that their predecessors committed.⁸⁹

In a shift from narratives of victimhood, FPÖ MEP and intellectual figure Andreas Mölzer once detailed the ‘difficult relationship with Judaism ... looking at our 150-year-old history’. He commented that ‘of course there was antisemitism in the nineteenth century. Today, however, we live in the twenty-first century’.⁹⁰ Instead of admitting Austrian culpability in the Holocaust, this curious omission

81 Samuel Moyn (2005) in Daniel Cohen, “Towards a History of ‘Philosemitic’ Europe Since 1945”, *Europe Now*, 2 November 2017. <https://www.europenowjournal.org/2017/11/01/towards-a-history-of-philosemitic-europe-since-1945/>

82 Ibid.

83 Cas Mudde, *The Ideology of the Extreme Right* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 72.

84 Ibid., 71.

85 Guy Chazan, “The Jews who are signing up to Germany’s far-right AfD”.

86 Peder Widmann in Hafez, “Shifting borders”, 485.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

89 Hafez, “From Anti-Semitism to Islamophobia”.

90 Hafez, “Shifting borders”, 489.

of 20th-century antisemitism instead ignores the issue, creating an uncomfortable tension. Mölzer mirrors Marine Le Pen's declaration that 'there is no antisemitism in Europe' as it 'disappeared after World War Two'.⁹¹ This narrative permits far-right parties to absolve themselves from the uncomfortable responsibility of Holocaust memorialisation.

Alternatively, some radical right figures have made no pretence at distancing themselves from their parties' roots. Notorious examples include the AfD leader Alexander Gauland announcing that the Nazis were 'just a piece of bird shit' in more than a thousand years of German history, demonstrating an unwavering nationalism and belittling Jewish experiences.⁹² In the same year, Björn Höcke, Gauland's colleague in the state of Thuringia, said that Germans were 'the only people in the world who planted a memorial of shame in the heart of their capital', viewing Holocaust memorialisation as a misplaced admission of guilt.⁹³ Former FPÖ leader Heinz-Christian Strache's close ties with neo-Nazis at university and the Waffen SS past of his grandfather are well known, highlighting the not-too-distant history of contemporary far-right parties.⁹⁴ Although his predecessor, Jörg Haider, signed a preamble upon entering government in 2000 admitting Austria's culpability in the 'horrendous crimes of the National Socialist regime', the first leader of his own party was a former SS officer, which continues to cast doubt on the sincerity of such declarations.⁹⁵ While Vlaams Belang leader Filip Dewinter has attempted to distance his party from its neo-Nazi roots, he has never taken responsibility for his party's historical crimes, demonstrating merely a cosmetic move away from antisemitism.⁹⁶

This section has shown how strategies of *aufrechnung*, victim reversal, revisionism and outright denial have informed far-right philosemitic attitudes towards Jews. The specific conditions created by issues of Holocaust remembrance have contributed to half-truths and revisionist narratives that generate an uneasy series of contradictions. This lends itself to an understanding of philosemitism that cannot take support for Jews at face value and prioritises the erasure of far-right guilt over the memorialisation of genocide. With the passage of time and Holocaust education moving from first-hand testimony to second-hand memory, far-right strategies of revisionism and victim reversal will have opportunities to further gain traction. Over the coming decades, the manner in which mainstream society opposes such attitudes and promotes responsible Holocaust education will be a challenge of increasing magnitude.

91 Ibid., 487.

92 Chazan, "The Jews who are signing up to Germany's far-right AfD".

93 BBC News, "German fury at AfD Höcke's Holocaust memorial remark", 18 January 2017. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-38661621>

94 Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation*, 287.

95 Davide Lerner, "Italy's Far-right Leader Salvini Visiting Israel to 'Whitewash' Record, Critics Say", *Haaretz*, 10 December 2018. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-criticism-mounts-ahead-of-italian-far-right-leader-salvini-s-visit-to-israel-1.6727064>

Colborne, "Rise of a New Far-right".

96 Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation*, 287.

Reciprocal Radicalisation within Discourses on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

A further political environment that has created the conditions in which far-right philosemitism had flourished is the polarised discourse in European politics surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First defined by Roger Eatwell in relation to rising extremism in far-right and Islamist communities, reciprocal radicalisation – or cumulative extremism – refers to ‘the way in which one form of extremism can feed off and magnify other forms’.⁹⁷ In this social process, both sides exhibit a ‘paradoxical mixture of competition and cooperation’, often consuming the same conspiracy theories and using basic principles of victimisation and demonisation as their starting points.⁹⁸

Since the original realisation of a socialist national liberation movement in 1948, support for Israel and Zionism among the European left has gradually declined. From the expansion of Israeli territory in the 1967 war, to the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982, to the post-peace process era of the 21st century defined by operations in Gaza and settlement expansion, the conditions for a process of reciprocal radicalisation have been reinforced.⁹⁹ In an era in which social media has polarised and over-simplified the conflict, extremist narratives thrive and ‘rage has replaced reason and is reinforced with echo chambers’.¹⁰⁰ Notably, both sides of such conversations assume, based on their perceptions of Jewishness, either that all diaspora Jews are personally responsible for the conflict or that they support it. This section argues that a process of reciprocal radicalisation is taking place within conversations on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in which far-right and far-left or Islamist structures and narratives have fuelled each other, subsequently strengthening far-right pro-Israel ideologies. Three main themes will be used to demonstrate this process: Westernism and colonisation, anti-Muslim sentiments, and militarism and violence.

The far-right concept of Judeo-Christian culture has adopted Israel as a European nation. Geert Wilders declared that ‘we in the West are all Israel’ and that Jerusalem is ‘the cradle of the Judeo-Christian tradition’, demonstrating that perceived Israeli Westernism is vital to his view of a European Israel under attack from a violent Islamic Middle East.¹⁰¹ This narrative is reciprocated by far-left and Islamist ideologies, who see Israel’s Europeanness as evidence of its colonialism and lack of legitimacy. Designating Israel as a ‘European settler-colonial entity’ is but one example of this.¹⁰² The commonality of this ideology both on the far-left and far-right has driven reciprocal radicalisation.

Secondly, various competing extremist groups see Israel as an embodiment of anti-Muslim values. Chapter one demonstrated how these narratives exist on the far-right, but they are also present on the far-left. Far-left academic David Miller theorises that one of the ‘five pillars of Islamophobia’ is the ‘Zionist movement (parts of)’, including charities, funders, political parties and the Israeli government.¹⁰³

97 Roger Eatwell, “Community Cohesion and Cumulative Extremism in Contemporary Britain”, *The Political Quarterly* vol. 77, no. 2 (2006): 205. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923X.2006.00763.x>

98 Ebner, *The Rage*, 140.

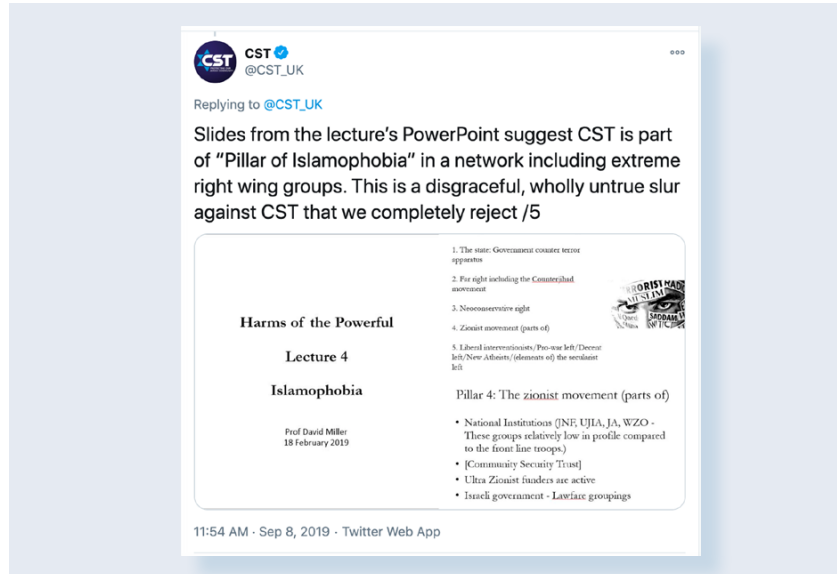
99 Wieviorka, “A New Antisemitism?”.
Cohen, “Towards a History of “Philosemitic” Europe Since 1945”.

100 Ebner, *The Rage*, 140.

101 Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation*, 280–1.

102 Asa Winstanley, “Europe’s Islamophobes and Israel: The Right Alliance”, *AsaWinstanley.com*, 9 January 2012. <https://www.asawinstanley.com/2012/01/europes-islamophobes-and-israel/>

103 CST, “CST Twitter Post”, Twitter, 8 September 2019, 11:54am. https://twitter.com/CST_UK/status/1170651496763068416



Although Islamophobic and anti-Arab sentiments from some Israeli politicians are well documented, using such examples to argue that Zionism therefore is, and has always been, an embodiment of Islamophobia is a reductive and extremist framing. This theory, both celebrated in far-right circles and condemned in far-left ones, is a further example of reciprocal radicalisation.

Glorification of militarism is apparent on both Israeli- and Palestinian-supporting sides. A photo of Stephen Yaxley-Lennon stood on an Israeli tank with a gun, overlooking the Israel–Syria border was recognised and internalised accordingly by Islamists, who shared the picture on the Islamist Telegram channel ‘Contestants of Jihad’.¹⁰⁴



Conversely, anti-Israel protesters in London chanted in Arabic ‘remember the battle of Khaybar, the army of Muhammad is returning’, and two days later in English ‘victory to the intifada’.¹⁰⁵ Calls for violence on both sides are reciprocally justified, and so fierce support

¹⁰⁴ Ebner, *The Rage*, 140.

¹⁰⁵ Campaign Against Antisemitism, “Demonstrators in London call for the murder of Jews”, Youtube, 10 December 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEG9EhfpwSI&feature=emb_logo

for each side spirals. Accusations of militarism are used to strengthen narratives of victimisation: while Israelis are forced to defend themselves from Palestinian terrorist attacks, Palestinians have no choice but to rise up violently against their occupiers. In particular, a far-right tendency for glorification of militarism, exemplified by Yaxley-Lennon in his picture, is usurped by left-wing narratives as proof of violence and oppression.

Through analysing the narratives of Israel as European, anti-Muslim and militaristic, which are common from the far-right, far-left and Islamists, the conditions for reciprocal radicalisation processes have been demonstrated. Current geopolitical events, as well as methods of communications based on emerging technologies, have given rise to unique circumstance in which these processes can flourish. This cycle of cumulative extremism has pushed the far-right further into pro-Israel sentiments, as a reaction to far-left and Islamist narratives, which has given rise to and subsequently strengthened far-right philosemitism.

Conclusions

In the backdrop of three emerging political trends – the emergence of cultural nationalism in the context of rising identity politics, the politicisation of Holocaust remembrance, and the spiralling post-Oslo Accords Israeli-Palestinian conflict – a new phenomenon, a contemporary philosemitic wave, has been consolidated. Rooted in a turn away from an unfashionable antisemitism, far-right philosemitism has struggled to achieve consistency in the way it faces up to Holocaust guilt and complicity.

These conclusions are important for the study of philosemitism through time, as they prove the need for the analysis of far-right philosemitism as a distinct wave. Due to the context in which far-right philosemitism operates and the events by which it has been influenced, it is incomparable to other typologies of philosemitism.

Furthermore, this study of the conditions from which it arose contributes to conversations among researchers on the motivations and goals of philosemitism. This account is in line with those who argue that philosemitism is a strategic mindset, rooted in insincere posturing and contradictory ideology, rather than genuine sympathy for Jews. Supported by the co-existence of antisemitism, anti-antisemitism and pro-Israel sentiments within the same parties, far-right leaders in formerly Nazi-occupied countries simultaneously claim to combat antisemitism, oppose an Islam that is supposedly comparable to Nazism, and fail to acknowledge fully the crimes of the Holocaust. In this scenario, anyone who claims that far-right philosemitism is a genuine expression of support for Jews must only be witnessing a portion of the discourse surrounding Jews and Israel.

Chapter 3

Exploring Jewish Support for the Philosemitic Far-Right

With the emergence of philosemitic positions among populist radical right parties, Jewish party divisions have been established within the EDL, AfD and Front National, among others. This analysis will consider how and in what ways some Jewish people support the far-right. As populist radical right parties in Western Europe are not monolithic, with each influenced by the history and political culture of their countries of origin, there is no monolithic reaction from the local Jewish community. However, trends can be evidenced across Western Europe and common sociological processes will be identified.

The few existing statistics show Jewish support for far-right groups to be low. At the founding of the AfD's Jewish Division, nineteen people were present; although the EDL Jewish Division's Facebook page quickly attracted nearly 500 fans, it is thought that of the few dozen members, only a few are Jewish.¹⁰⁶ Electorally too, support remains low. At the height of the UKIP's electoral success, it attracted only 11.6% of Jewish voters.¹⁰⁷ Although UKIP was seen as a single-issue party, it embodies many populist radical right narratives on Islam and immigration, and is therefore the closest equivalent party in the UK for which electoral data exists. At the French 2012 presidential election, three years before Marine Le Pen expelled her father from the party due to racist attitudes, Jewish communities voted in a similar fashion, with 14% choosing the Front National, up 10% from her father's attempt ten years prior.¹⁰⁸

However, across Western Europe, local organised Jewish communities have largely condemned far-right philosemites and sought to distance themselves. The CRIF urged French Jews not to vote for the Front National, stating that they do not know of any rabbis or community leaders who support the far-right party.¹⁰⁹ In Germany, Jewish institutions have called the AfD a 'danger to Jewish life in Germany', and in the United Kingdom, the Board of Deputies of British Jews has denounced the EDL and Jewish individuals that have met with them.¹¹⁰

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- 106 Sigal Samuel, "Why a Small Jewish Group Is Supporting a German Party With Anti-Semitic Ties", *The Atlantic*, 7 October 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/10/jews-far-right-alternative-for-germany/571663/>
Lara Trubowitz, *Civil Antisemitism, Modernism and British Culture 1902–1939*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 185.
Marcus Dysch, "EDL picks new Jewish Division leader", *The Jewish Chronicle*, 8 September 2011. <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/edl-picks-new-jewish-division-leader-1.27399>
- 107 Ben Clements, "The British Election Study 2015: Religious affiliation and attitudes", *British Religion in Numbers*, 17 October 2014. <http://www.brin.ac.uk/the-british-election-study-2015-religious-affiliation-and-attitudes/>
- 108 Robert Zaretsky, "Meet the French Jews Who Love Marine Le Pen and Her Far Right Party", *Forward*, 10 May 2016. <https://forward.com/opinion/340090/meet-the-french-jews-who-love-marine-le-pen-and-her-far-right-party/>
- 109 Taub, "France's Far Right, Once Known for Anti-Semitism, Courts Jews"
Wall Street Journal, "French Election: Young, Jewish Parisian Defends Le Pen", Youtube, 8 May 2017, 3:20. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6mhgFKQX1s>
- 110 Chazan, "The Jews who are signing up to Germany's far-right AfD"
Jenni Frazer, "War of Words after ex-EDL leader speaks at secretive Manchester event", *Jewish News*, 5 July 2017. <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/war-of-words-after-ex-edl-leader-speaks-at-secretive-manchester-event/>

Some Israeli politicians have taken a similar stance, with President Reuven Rivlin affirming that such ideologies remain ‘absolutely incompatible’ with Israel’s principles.¹¹¹

This chapter will consider the ways in which Jewish people support the populist radical right through the lens of collective identity and social movement theory. While acknowledging the breadth of collective identity theories, a focus will be placed on sociological processes. First, examining a collective identity that has built up among far-right Jews will lead to an explanation of how Jewish people have justified support, despite existing antisemitism among populist radical right parties. Secondly, the concept of identity salience will be used to rationalise how Jewish people have prioritised some tenets of Jewish identity over others, explaining why they have come to support the far-right. Thirdly, the role of collective identity in strategic decision-making among far-right Jews will be discussed.

Towards an Understanding of a Jewish Far-Right Collective Identity

Collective identity, defined as ‘an individual’s cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution’, refers to a communal, rather than mutual, identity.¹¹² Theories that ‘identification with a collectivity enhances the probability of movement participation on behalf of that collectivity’ are widely supported sociologically.¹¹³

Collective action framings, used by groups to set in-group/out-group boundaries, are particularly strong in populist groups, such as the radical right, which defines itself as an oppressed mass struggling against a corrupt liberal elite. This framing makes the study of collective identity particularly relevant to populist groups. Furthermore, a driving force of collective identity is especially strong among movements that are ‘particularly greedy in terms of time, resources and energy commanded from participants’, including those that have ‘utopian’ goals, such as many politically extremist movements.¹¹⁴

Among the populist radical right, philosemitic sentiments have opened the door for Jewish engagement and kickstarted a Jewish far-right collective identity. In many ways, the ideologies and processes that lead Jewish people to support far-right groups are much the same as for the wider public: a rejection of globalism, a turn towards ethnonationalism, or a suspicion of Muslim communities in the context of a perceived refugee crisis. Yair Netanyahu, the son of the Israeli prime minister, exemplifies this with his support of far-right ideologies that are unrelated to Judaism. He has commented on Twitter that ‘liberals’ are ‘crazy’, that the ‘Schengen zone is dead and soon

111 Noa Landau, “Israel’s President to CNN: Fighting anti-Semitism Alongside Neo-fascists is ‘Absolutely Impossible’”, *Haaretz*, 29 November 2018. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium-rivlin-fighting-anti-semitism-alongside-neo-fascists-is-absolutely-impossible-1.6700658>

112 Francesca Polletta and James Jasper, “Collective Identity and Social Movements”, *Annual Review of Sociology* vol. 27 (2001): 284. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.27.1.283>

113 *Ibid.*
Sheldon Stryker and Peter Burke, “The Past, Present and Future of an Identity Theory”, *Social Psychology Quarterly* vol. 63, no. 4 (December 2000): 284–97. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2695840>
David Snow, “Identity Dilemma, Discursive Fields, Identity Work and Mobilisation: Clarifying the Identity-Movement Nexus” in *The Future of Social Movement Research: Dynamics, Mechanisms and Processes*, edited by Jaqueline van Stekelenburg, Conny Roggeband and Bert Klendermans (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

114 *Ibid.*, 270.



your evil globalist organisation will be too', and has even declared that 'It's all about George Soros!', indulging in a common far-right antisemitic trope.¹¹⁵

However, given the historical legacies of far-right antisemitism, and the anti-Jewish sentiments and conspiracy theories still present to this day, Jewish people have more to consider when lending their support to these parties.

While many populist radical right parties present as philosemitic, it is clear that antisemitic elements have survived. Traditional antisemitic tropes accusing Jews of using power or money to manipulate global events currently focus on American Jewish philanthropist George Soros and are employed by the philosemitic far-right including in the Lega Nord, Front National and PVV.¹¹⁶ Holocaust revisionist narratives are present in formerly Nazi-occupied countries, such as Marine Le Pen's denial of the French government's role in the 1942 Vélodrome d'Hiver roundup of French Jews, which attracted strong criticism from the local Jewish community.¹¹⁷ Even those parties new enough not to have had involvement in the Holocaust are influenced by their national histories in this way. Andreas Kalbitz, AfD lead candidate for Brandenburg in the 2019 European elections, was a

115 Yair Netanyahu (@YairNetanyahu), "Tweet from Yair Netanyahu", Twitter, 20 May 2019, 10:16pm. <https://twitter.com/YairNetanyahu/status/1130583030962237440?s=20>

Yair Netanyahu (@YairNetanyahu), "Tweet from Yair Netanyahu", Twitter, 28 April 2020, 9:48am. <https://twitter.com/yairnetanyahu/status/1255056296384040960?lang=en>

116 Toby Greene, "Why the Netanyahus Are Embracing 'Christian Europe'", *Haaretz*, 13 May 2020. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium-why-the-netanyahus-are-embracing-christian-europe-1.8840596>
Georgi Gotev, "National MEP blames Soros for EU migration crisis", *Euractiv*, 2 June 2016. <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/nationalist-mep-blames-soros-for-eu-migration-crisis/1003518/>
Harm Ede Botje and Mischa Cohen, "How George Soros became the favourite enemy of dictators and internet trolls", *VN*, 11 December 2018. <https://www.vn.nl/how-george-soros-became-the-favorite-enemy-of-dictators-and-internet-trolls/>

117 UEJF, "L'UEJF Dénonce le révisionnisme de Marine le Pen", *Union des Étudiants Juifs de France*, 9 April 2017. <https://uejf.org/2017/04/09/uejf-denonce-le-revisionnisme-de-marine-le-pen/>

former member of the neo-Nazi NPD and now is a leading figure of the party's Völkisch wing, which uses Nazi-era terminology to express its ultra-nationalism.¹¹⁸ While these individuals may not represent the majority ideology of the party, the leadership is either unable or lacks the political will to confront them. These few examples by no means illustrate entire movements, but begin to demonstrate the tensions present in such parties. The study of collective identity processes plays a significant role in accounting for these tensions, as the 'instrumental calculation' of individual political support 'often depends on the collective identities that are widely associated with particular strategies, tactics, organisational forms, and even deliberate logics'.¹¹⁹

In this way, it is a collective identity with far-right figures, groups and disparate masses that has driven Jewish people to continue to support such ideologies, despite the proliferation of antisemitic attitudes. Rather than taking a rational choice approach, which would have argued that such individuals weigh up a cost-benefit analysis for participation, a collective identity approach argues that these logics are in themselves steeped in sociological processes.¹²⁰ Therefore this study argues that Jewish people support far-right groups not despite, but because of, their identity.

Competing Identities and Identity Salience

David Snow presents that 'citizens everywhere are carriers of multiple identities', both personal and social, which take a relative prominence in relation to each other in an 'identity salience hierarchy'.¹²¹ Variable levels of commitment to different competing identities are impacted by instrumental, moral and relational factors.¹²²

For far-right Jews, pro-Israel sentiments have achieved salience over other aspects of Jewish identity, such as protecting Jewish ritual slaughter, which is often opposed by populist radical right parties.¹²³ Such salience is particularly exemplified by Israeli politicians and the Israeli government. Matteo Salvini's visit to Israel in December 2018 saw him welcomed by Benjamin Netanyahu as 'a great friend of Israel'.¹²⁴ The Italian Jewish community remains largely divided over support for Salvini, with one side highlighting his friendship with the Israeli government and the other citing his far-right, anti-immigration and isolationist policies, as well as his refusal to distance himself from the neo-fascist groups that support him.¹²⁵ Salvini's response to the historical legacies of Italian fascism and Nazi collaboration are also murky and he is often accused of drawing on Mussolini's language and mocking wartime anti-fascist legacies.¹²⁶ The Israeli government's readiness to embrace Salvini is demonstrative of its willingness to accept obfuscation around collaboration with neo-fascists in order to prioritise pro-Israel sentiments. While supporters of such policies

118 Maik Baumgärtner, Giorgos Christedes, Matthias Gebauer, Ann-Katrin Müller and Christop Schult, "Leading German Populist has Extremist Background", *Spiegel*, 30 August 2019. <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/leading-afd-pol-in-brandenburg-has-extremist-background-a-1284477.html>

119 Polletta and Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements", 292.

120 *Ibid.*

121 Sheldon Stryker, *Symbolic Interactionism* (Benjamin Cummings Publishing Company, 1980).
Snow, "Identity Dilemma, Discursive Fields, Identity Work and Mobilisation", 266–8.

122 *Ibid.*, 269.

123 Raphael Ahrem, "Crusading against Muslims rituals and rites, Dutch populist alienated the Jews", *The Times of Israel*, 27 August 2012. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/crusading-against-muslim-rituals-and-rites-geert-wilders-alienates-the-jews/>

124 AP, "Nentanyahu hails Italy's Salvini as 'great friend of Israel'", *Associated Press*, 12 December 2018. <https://apnews.com/article/d4fc90ecaab24660bb359ab1c686d3ff>

125 Lerner, "Italy's Far-right Leader Salvini Visiting Israel to 'Whitewash' Record, Critics Say".

126 *Ibid.*

may consider it realpolitik in an international environment where Israel has increasingly few allies, this merely justifies rather than denies its ideological prioritisations.

Even if realpolitik did explain the Israeli government's actions, it does not do so for civil society. In the UK, the EDL Jewish Division's former leader Roberta Moore declared her organisation's 'unwavering support of the State of Israel', even as she resigned due to EDL's refusal to distance itself from its more radical and neo-Nazi members.¹²⁷ Similarly, Wolfgang Fuhl, co-founder of the AfD's Jewish group, stated his aim as 'campaigning for fairer media coverage of Israel'.¹²⁸ Yair Netanyahu's tweet wished good luck to Orbán, Farage, Salvini and Wilders for the 2019 European elections, lauding them as the 'true friends of Israel'.¹²⁹



These statements promote a re-prioritisation of the tenets of Jewish identity and support a theory of identity salience processes among far-right Jews. Given that 'the development and expression of collective identity are often triggered by contentious encounters among conflicting groups', a perception of Israel under attack, both physically in the Middle East and metaphorically among European 'liberal' discourses, has strengthened pro-Israel collective identity.¹³⁰

This process is also true for Jewish collective perceptions of rising antisemitism from Muslim populations, leading to a strengthening of anti-Muslim sentiments and tying anti-antisemitism to populist radical right identities. In the context of high-profile Islamist antisemitic attacks in Europe, such as in Brussels, Toulouse and Paris, concerns have risen about antisemitism among Europe's rising refugee population from the Middle East.¹³¹ This is a consequence of far-right collective action framings infiltrating the Jewish community in the same way as the wider population, where Islamist antisemitism is over-emphasised by media sources and migration is presented as a security threat.¹³² As pollster Jérôme Forquet affirms, fear of Islamist antisemitism drives some Jewish individuals towards the right, which is then exploited by far-right parties.¹³³ This has led some Jews to refocus their efforts in combatting antisemitism away from fighting the far-right to allying with them in opposition to Muslim communities. It is these perceptions of where the threat against Jews originates, rather than the statistical reality, which drives Jewish support for the populist radical right. To this effect, Dimitri Schulz launched Jews for the AfD by claiming that 'Jew-hatred' is 'inseparable' from Islam, the EDL Jewish Division saw its group as 'important in the larger struggle against radical Islam', and Michael Thooris of the Union of

127 Dysch, "EDL picks new Jewish Division Leader".

128 Chazan, "The Jews who are signing up to Germany's far-right AfD".

129 Yair Netanyahu (@YairNetanyahu), "Tweet from Yair Netanyahu", Twitter, 20 May 2019, 6:02pm. <https://twitter.com/YairNetanyahu/status/1130519170012123136>

130 Snow, "Identity Dilemma, Discursive Fields, Identity Work and Mobilisation", 267.

131 Chazan, "The Jews who are signing up to Germany's far-right AfD".

132 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 4.

133 Zaretsky, "Meet the French Jews Who Love Marine Le Pen and Her Far Right Party".

French Jewish Patriots proclaimed that the Front National is ‘the only political party that actually offers to fight against insecurity, the rise of radical Islamism’.¹³⁴

Both examples – of pro-Israel sentiments achieving identity salience and shared anti-Muslim sentiments strengthening collective identities ties between Jews and the far-right – demonstrate how collective identity has driven some Jewish people towards supporting far-right movements.

Collective Identity Influences on Strategic Choices

Collective identity processes that are present among far-right Jews influence not only ideological positions but political strategies. In attempting to explain this phenomenon, pure strategic choice models omit the possibility that these strategies are in themselves influenced by belief, identity and moral values.¹³⁵

Such political strategies are well exemplified by Israeli settler spokesperson and strategist David Ha’ivri, who sees a combination of far-right philosemitism and a mutual suspicion of Muslim communities as an opportunity for collaboration in opposing more radical and antisemitic elements of the far-right:

‘If these European leaders – with their ties to antisemitic groups and their past – come around and declare that Israel has a right to exist securely in all of the areas under our control, and that Europe has a moral responsibility because of the crimes of their past, then I believe that we should accept their friendship... No skinhead cares what [Anti-Defamation League Chairman] Abe Foxman has to say, but if Filip Dewinter and Heinz-Christian Strache make these statements they will have real impact. For that reason, I am considering appearing with them in their countries for pro-Israel rallies. I think that it is worth the risk of being defamed by Haaretz and the like if we can cause a shift in the European nationalist movements, moving them away from their traditional Jew-hatred and bringing them closer to appreciation of Zionism. I don’t think that I am naive to feel that this is a revolutionary opportunity.’¹³⁶

Ha’ivri’s ‘strategy’ has radical right ideological underpinnings and is based on a belief that if neo-Nazis can be turned away from antisemitism, however unlikely that is, they would be worthy partners and should be supported in other policy platforms. Ha’ivri, a former Kach member and supporter of the Kahanist movement, was reportedly arrested in Israel for celebrating the death of Yitzhak Rabin and jailed for desecrating a mosque.¹³⁷ Such a strategic decision to align with Europe’s far-right has only been made due to existing extremist and far-right ideologies. The tactical partnership

¹³⁴ Chazan, “The Jews who are signing up to Germany’s far-right AfD”.

Dysch, “EDL picks new Jewish Division Leader”.

Taub, “France’s Far Right, Once Known for Anti-Semitism, Courts Jews”.

¹³⁵ Polletta and Jasper, “Collective Identity and Social Movements”, 284.

¹³⁶ David Ha’ivri in Hafez, “Shifting borders”, 485.

¹³⁷ Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Texas Congressman and the Israeli Fascist”, *The Atlantic*, 1 August 2011. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/08/the-texas-congressman-and-the-israeli-fascist/242848/>

he describes is not one between the far-right and the Jewish people, but between the far-right in Europe and the far-right in Israel, designed to gain European support for the settlement project and oppose Palestinian statehood. It is therefore clearly the case that Ha'ivri's collective identities as a settler and far-right ideologue have driven his strategic mindset.

In a second, very different example, collective identities can be shown to impact strategic choices from Jewish communal leadership. Existing tensions between antisemitism and philosemitism are well exemplified by the response to Austrian chancellor Sebastian Kurz's coalition government with the FPÖ. Despite the far-right party having been founded by Nazi collaborators and then-leader Strache's well-documented neo-Nazi past, the coalition government was widely praised by the Jewish community for its work combatting antisemitism during its presidency of the European Commission.¹³⁸ Netanyahu also commended Kurz for fighting antisemitism from the 'extreme left and radical Islamic pockets'.¹³⁹ While the Austrian Jewish community boycotted the FPÖ, they nonetheless continued to work with its coalition partners, the governing ÖVP.¹⁴⁰

These strategic choices are evidence of the pervasiveness of some populist radical right framings in moderate politics. That Jewish communities and the Israeli government were still willing to work with the Austrian administration who brought the FPÖ into power is not just a strategic choice but an identity-based one; a choice to tolerate ideologically antisemitism from some sources in order to combat it from others. In this way, among far-right Jews, 'collective identities are already embedded in strategies, tactics, claims, organisational forms, and deliberative styles, and they influence how such options can be used'.¹⁴¹

Conclusions

This chapter has shown a hierarchy of competing collective identities among some Jewish individuals, explaining the ways in which they have come to support parties that have a history of antisemitic attitudes, despite contemporary philosemitism. Identity salience explains how Jewish far-right supporters have prioritised pro-Israel or anti-Muslim identities over other tenets of their Jewish values. Even supposedly strategic choices made by the Jewish far-right are underpinned by ideological stances.

Beyond analysis of how and why far-right attitudes take hold among Jewish communities, quantitative research is vital to achieve an evidenced understanding of the extent to which such attempts have been successful. While attitudes towards Jewish people are well polled across Europe, attitudes from Jewish people about popular issues are rarely measured outside the large and organised communities in

138 Wertheim, *The Jew as Legitimation*, 287.

WJC, "WJC President Lauder thanks Austrian Chancellor Kurz for his commitment in the fight against anti-Semitism", *World Jewish Congress*, 5 September 2018. <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/wjc-president-lauder-thanks-austrian-chancellor-kurz-for-his-commitment-in-the-fight-against-anti-semitism-9-2-2018>

139 Landau, "Israel's President to CNN".

140 Liam Hoare, "Austrian Jews plan to echo Israel's boycott of far-right coalition ministers", *The Jewish Chronicle*, 21 December 2017. <https://www.thejc.com/news/world/austrian-jews-plan-to-echo-israel-s-boycott-of-far-right-coalition-ministers-1.450719>

141 Polletta and Jasper, "Collective Identity and Social Movements", *Annual Review of Sociology* vol. 27 (2001): 284. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.27.1.283>

France and the United Kingdom. More polling and data are needed to measure the extent to which these attitudes have taken hold in Jewish communities.

This approach's attempt to provide a broad overview of the attitudes and drivers for far-right support among Jewish people across Europe is valuable in its unique analysis of themes. It is also limited by this breadth, which does not compare and contrast the differing drivers in various countries. Once again, polling is necessary to conclude definitively how prevalent these attitudes are in individual states, subsequently permitting inter-state analysis. Such a study may find that differences stem from the relative sizes and therefore the insularity of local Jewish communities, as well as national political cultures, including the extent of a given country's involvement in the Holocaust and the manner in which contemporary politicians have accepted responsibility for these actions.

Such conclusions on the ways in which populist radical right movements appeal to Jewish people will be vital for countering extremism. Namely, an understanding of how social movement processes have impacted far-right radicalisation beyond rational choice theory will contribute to policy proposals and counter-radicalisation programmes that focus on socialisation rather than ideological drivers. Mainstream movements should attempt to address the often legitimate grievances that Jewish people face, such as an alleged rise in Islamist antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiments, providing communities with productive outlets and promoting solutions that seek to bring communities together rather than polarise them.

Chapter 4

The Impacts of a Philosemitic Far-Right

Understanding far-right philosemitism as a distinct wave is vital for assessing its social and political impacts, which reach far beyond the far-right milieu. The level of acceptability awarded to the new far-right and its narratives by Jewish communities and others is increasingly evidenced. As such, this new phenomenon impacts not just a fringe but across the political spectrum.

This chapter will consider the impact of a new wave of philosemitism on three groups: the far-right, Muslims, and Jewish communities. First, the ways in which the far-right has broken into mainstream politics, and how philosemitism has aided this process, will be assessed. It will be demonstrated how populist radical right parties have gained legitimacy and achieved a larger platform for expansion. However, it is not just the parties themselves, but the ideologies they promote, that have gained popularity in mainstream politics.

Secondly, this mainstreaming has sparked rising suspicion of Muslim communities, anti-Muslim hate crimes and Islamophobic narratives elsewhere. Although pro-Jewish sentiments have not directly been the cause of Islamophobia, they have contributed to the promotion of a broad ideology that targets Muslim populations and has acted as a shield against accusations of racism.

Finally, this study will take the unique step of analysing how an uncomfortable pro-Jewish agenda may have impacted Jewish communities. While any reduction in antisemitism is positive, a friendship that is often inauthentic can also generate negative consequences. Jewish communities have begun to splinter along these political lines and often face accusations of collaboration with the far-right, leading to further antisemitism.

The Mainstreaming of the Far-Right

There is broad academic consensus that in Western Europe, the far-right no longer sits on a 'fanatical fringe' but has encroached into mainstream politics.¹⁴² Largely as a product of the adoption of new policy positions in the context of cross-spectrum debate on national identity, the far-right has entered mainstream discourse, legitimising its claims and fortifying its policy positions.¹⁴³ While some of the far-right's softer ideologies, such as theories of decadence and cultural decline,

142 Roger Griffin, *Terrorist's Creed: Fanatical violence and the human need for meaning* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
Carr, "You are now entering Eurabia", 2.

143 Joe Mulhall, "Modernising and Mainstreaming: The Contemporary British Far-Right", *HOPE Not Hate*, 19 July 2019, <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/2019/07/19/modernising-and-mainstreaming-the-contemporary-british-far-right/>

are increasingly being adopted by the conservative mainstream, the propagators of such ideologies have also gained media attention and the opportunity to publicise their views even more widely.¹⁴⁴ The increasing political clashes on issues of identity not only extend the boundaries of the political tent, but redefine what constitutes 'acceptable' political behaviour.¹⁴⁵ Because of this, distinctions between far-right and moderate behaviours have become 'hopelessly muddled'.¹⁴⁶ This analysis will acknowledge these difficulties but, beyond attempting to impose a subjective stance on where this line should sit, will discuss how this situation has arisen with relation to philosemitism.

Cas Mudde views the post-war far-right in four waves: the immediate post-war neo-fascist wave, the emergence of far-right populism in 1960s and '70s, the growth of fringe populist radical right parties from 1980 to 2000 and the mainstreaming of these previously periphery parties in the 21st century.¹⁴⁷ He specifically notes that the contrast between the third and fourth waves is not one of ideology, but the changing role they play in popular politics. This section will consider the role that philosemitism has played in this evolution and its consequences.

A transition from antisemitism to philosemitism has played a significant role in how the far-right has achieved space within the moderate political spectrum. Whereas it has already been well researched how the adoption of anti-Muslim platforms has aided this process, the role of philosemitism is often neglected. Farid Hafez comments that ridding themselves of the 'historical stench of antisemitism' allows parties to become more acceptable to a broader electorate who do not consider themselves as racist but do have concerns with radical Muslims.¹⁴⁸ Given that the European experience of fascism is so intrinsically tied to antisemitism, to the electorate's untrained eye, it may seem impossible that a philosemitic party is far-right or racist, and therefore radical right parties' attempts to cover antisemitism at a surface level may achieve success. However, Hafez's focus on the role of Islamophobia in these processes neglects the fact that while many sectors of the far-right propagate anti-Muslim ideologies, it is largely only the philosemitic elements that have achieved mainstreaming. It is not only Islamophobic platforms that attract the conservative mainstream, but philosemitic positions, which are broadly 'hard to disagree with'.¹⁴⁹

The impacts of this process of mainstreaming are varied. First, the process clearly provides populist radical right parties with opportunities to win votes and gain power. Examples of this exist from the Austrian 2017–2019 coalition government to Marine Le Pen's place in the second round of the 2017 French presidential election to the AfD being the first far-right party to win seats in the German federal government since the war. This 'semblance of legitimacy' means that they are less likely to face civic resistance and their narratives are increasingly unchallenged.¹⁵⁰

144 Zúquete, "The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?", 338. Ellinas, *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe*, 28.

145 *Ibid.*

146 Zúquete, "The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?", 332.

147 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*.

148 Hafez, "Shifting borders", 483.

149 Zúquete, "The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?", 332.

150 Benjamin Lee, "Why we fight: Understanding the counter-jihad movement", *Religion Compass* vol. 10, no. 10 (2016): 30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12208>
Ellinas, *The Media and the Far Right in Western Europe*, 30.
CREST, "CREST Primer: The Counter Jihad Primer", 3 November 2013. <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/counter-jihad-movement/>

Michel Thooris, a Jewish member of the Front National central committee, confirmed that a tactic of using philosemitism to dispel broader accusations of racism was 'undeniable'.¹⁵¹ This is blatantly exemplified by Dutch FvD leader Thierry Baudet, who has appeared publicly wearing a traditional Jewish kippah, or Annabel Nanninga, who responds to criticisms of antisemitic jokes by affirming her support for Israel and Dutch Jews.¹⁵² Furthermore, the shedding of unfashionable antisemitism has improved transnational cooperation of parties across Western Europe, thereby allowing for 'more forward-looking agendas and more promising electoral strategies'.¹⁵³

Political legitimacy also aids group fundraising, making far-right organisations such as the EDL 'a more plausible funding option for private donors, giving it a more sophisticated veneer and helping it shed the image of a violent street movement'.¹⁵⁴ Specifically in the context of philosemitism, Jewish and pro-Israel philanthropists have begun to contribute financially to radical right projects. For example, the American-based think-tank Middle East Forum has funded protests supporting Stephen Yaxley-Lennon in London and is alleged to have paid his legal fees.¹⁵⁵

However, these groups have influenced policy and decision-making even when not in power.¹⁵⁶ Cas Mudde details how 'mainstream politicians are no longer just paying lip service to populist right policies, they are actually introducing stricter policies on immigration, integration and terrorism themselves'.¹⁵⁷ For example, popular framings of a 'refugee crisis' as a national security issue, rather than social justice or international aid, is demonstrative of a mainstream conversation, the tendency of which is to treat refugees and Muslims with suspicion rather than empathy, a direct influence of far-right ideologies.¹⁵⁸

Therefore, a turn to philosemitism has been a strategic decision from populist radical right parties to rebrand as moderate and to popularise their ideologies across the Western European political spectrum. Philosemitism's role in the turn from a counter-culture to an established political narrative is part of a broader far-right adoption of liberal Western values as a form of opposing perceived Islamic ultra-conservatism and countering accusations of extremism.¹⁵⁹ While this section has analysed the unique role of philosemitism in this process, other policy platforms that claim to defend LGBTQ+ individuals, Sikh communities and other perceived victims of Islam have also been a conduit to mainstreaming.

Islamophobia on the Rise

The popularisation of both anti-Muslim and pro-Jewish sentiments runs counter to existing analysis on the functions of racism. Edward Said's seminal book *Orientalism* saw antisemitism and Islamophobia as interconnected and closely related, and because

151 Taub, "France's Far Right, Once Known for Anti-Semitism, Courts Jews".

152 Nicolaas Barr, "The New Dutch Far Right", *Jewish Currents*, 2 July 2020. <https://jewishcurrents.org/the-new-dutch-far-right/>

153 Hafez, "Shifting borders", 499.

154 Meleagrou-Hitchens and Brun, "A Neo-Nationalist Network", 16.

155 Eric Cortellessa, "Why are US 'pro-Israel' groups boosting a far-right, anti-Muslim UK extremist?" *The Times of Israel*, 24 January 2019. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/why-are-us-pro-israel-groups-boosting-a-far-right-anti-muslim-uk-extremist/>

156 Zúquete, "The European extreme-right and Islam: New directions?", 332.

157 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 22.

158 Ibid., 4.

159 Meleagrou-Hitchens and Brun, "A Neo-Nationalist Network", 34.

of this, researchers have suggested that they 'should be conceived within a single frame of analysis and action'.¹⁶⁰ While this may be true for the more traditional ethnonationalist areas of the far-right that were still dominant at the time of Said's publication, as has already been discussed, philosemitism has developed to the point that on certain sections of the far-right, Islamophobia and antisemitism can no longer be said to function in the same manner. It is important to understand the rise of Islamophobia as a distinct phenomenon and to study it as such, without tying it to the experiences of other racisms.

Datasets and literature from across Western Europe demonstrate the presence of negative perceptions of Islam and immigration. Pew Research Centre's datasets from 2016 show that in most Western European countries, a majority of those surveyed believed that refugees would increase the terrorist threat and that Muslims did not want to integrate.¹⁶¹ Significant percentages of Western European populations see Muslims as violent or fanatical, or perceive Muslims in a negative light.¹⁶² In Germany, evidence suggests that over half of Germans see Islam as incompatible with Western or German values, and these numbers are increasing.¹⁶³ With the rise in Muslim refugees to Germany, attacks on refugee homes increased fivefold from 2014 to 2015.¹⁶⁴ Rises in anti-Muslim hate crime in the aftermath of Islamist terrorist attacks, such as a 700% increase in the aftermath of the 2017 Manchester Arena attack, suggest that Muslim communities are scapegoated for the actions of a few violent extremists.¹⁶⁵

In an environment that is increasingly suspicious of Muslim communities, a rise in Islamist attacks in Western Europe has thrown Muslims even more into the limelight and has 'functioned as a catalyst' for rising negative perceptions.¹⁶⁶ By painting Muslims as ultra-conservatives who oppress Jews, LGBTQ+ individuals and other minorities, the populist radical right has 'rearticulated Islamophobia as anti-racism and attempted to normalise it as the natural perspective of those committed to liberal freedom'.¹⁶⁷ A specific targeting of Muslim antisemitism is instrumental in morally justifying how 'soft' far-right groups are on tackling antisemitism within their own communities and serves to prop up anti-immigration policies under the guise of protecting Jewish people. With such ideologies emerging in mainstream politics, anti-Muslim expressions have often gone unpunished, further aiding a veneer of acceptability.¹⁶⁸

160 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (UK: Penguin, 1978), 28.

David Feldman, "Islamophobia and Antisemitism" in *Islamophobia: Still a challenge for us all*, edited by Farah Elahi and Omar Khan (Runnymede Trust, 2018): 78. <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Islamophobia%20Report%202018%20FINAL.pdf>

161 Richard Wike, Bruce Stokes and Katie Simmons, "Europeans Fear Wave of Refugees Will Mean More Terrorism, Fewer Jobs", Pew Research Center, 2016. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2016/07/11/europeans-fear-wave-of-refugees-will-mean-more-terrorism-fewer-jobs/>

162 Engy Abdelkader, "A Comparative Analysis of European Islamophobia: France, UK, Germany, Netherlands, and Sweden", *Journal of Islamic and Near Eastern Law* vol. 16, no. 1 (2017): 33-4. <https://escholarship.org/content/qt870099f4/qt870099f4.pdf>

163 Infratest dimap in Matt Broomfield, "Majority of Germans think Islam does not 'belong' in their country", *The Independent*, 13 May 2016.

164 WRD and ARD in Elizabeth Schumacher, "Report, Five times more attack on refugee homes in Germany in 2015", *DW*, 29 January 2016. <https://www.dw.com/en/report-five-times-more-attacks-on-refugee-homes-in-germany-in-2015/a-19011109>

165 Tell MAMA, "Normalising Hatred: Tell MAMA Annual report 2018", *Faith Matters* (2019): 55. https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Tell%20MAMA%20Annual%20Report%202018%20_%20Normalising%20Hate.pdf

166 Mudde, *The Far-Right Today*, 4. Lee, "A Day in the 'Swamp'", 252.

167 George Kassimeris and Leonie Jackson, "The Ideology and Discourse of the English Defence League: 'Not Racist, Not Violent, Just No Longer Silent'", *The British Journal of Politics in International Relations* vol. 17, no. 1 (February 2015): 172-3. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2F1467-856X.12036>

168 Tell MAMA, "Normalising Hatred", 56.

National mainstream conversations on ‘Muslim grooming gangs’ in the UK exemplify how far-right anti-Muslim framings have been popularised and gained traction. A focus on the ethnicity and religion of the offenders attempts to portray their crimes as inherent to Islam, or immigrants, whipping up hostility.¹⁶⁹ In 2017, Labour MP Sarah Champion wrote that ‘ethnic heritage’ was ‘the common denominator’ of Muslim offenders who groomed white British victims, seemingly placing blame on their identity rather than their actions.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, then-Home Secretary Sajid Javid claimed it would be ‘wrong to ignore’ the ethnicity of the ‘sick Asian paedophiles’, once again focusing on their heritage.¹⁷¹ While both mainstream politicians were heavily criticised, and Champion resigned from the Shadow front bench, their actions highlight the salience of far-right anti-Muslim narratives in mainstream politics.

Despite not specifically calling for anti-Muslim violence, these ideologies ‘give license’ to such actions, a process by which they provide ‘adherents with a license to entertain extremist perspectives that are otherwise seen as taboo by the surrounding cultural environment’.¹⁷² No more so is this true than in the case of Anders Breivik, who in 2011 killed 77 people in a terrorist attack in Norway, designed to punish a liberal elite for their complicity in the ‘Islamisation’ of Europe. In his manifesto, Breivik curiously exhibits some pro-Israel and philosemitic elements, proclaiming ‘So let us fight together with Israel, with our Zionist brothers against all anti-Zionists, against all cultural Marxists/multiculturalists’.¹⁷³ This demonstrates that it was, in part, these Islamophobic and philosemitic ideologies that gave him license to violence.

It is clear that through a process of mainstreaming, the same ideologies that have driven philosemitism have also contributed to rising Islamophobia. The legitimacy that philosemitism lends to populist radical right movements has been usurped by politicians who claim that they cannot be racist as they support Jewish communities. However, it is the manner in which the far-right has developed its own brand of philosemitism that has sparked rising Islamophobia, rather than the mere existence of philosemitism in any form.

Jewish Communal Polarisation

One impact of philosemitism that has been omitted from research is that of the impact on the Jewish community itself. Dutch Holocaust survivor Saul van Messel summarised his suspicion of the post-war wave of philosemitism in his short poem ‘Philosemite’:

*‘Worse than hate which can offend;
Friendship against which I cannot defend’*¹⁷⁴

169 Ella Cockbain and Waqas Tufail, “Failing victims, fuelling hate: challenging the harms of the ‘Muslim grooming gangs’ narrative”, *Race & Class* vol. 61, no. 3 (January 2020): 9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396819895727>

170 Sarah Champion, “British Pakistani Men ARE Raping and Exploiting White Girls... and its time we faced up to it”, *The Sun*, 10 August 2017. <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4218648/british-pakistani-men-raping-exploiting-white-girls/>

171 BBC News, “‘Wrong to ignore’ ethnicity of grooming gangs – Javid”, 26 December 2018. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-46684638>

172 Aristotle Kallis, *Genocide and Fascism: The Eliminationist Drive in Fascist Europe* (London: Routledge, 2008). Paul Jackson, “The License to Hate: Peder Jensen’s Fascist Rhetoric in Anders Breivik’s Manifesto 2083: A European Declaration of Independence”, *Democracy and Security* vol. 9, no. 3 (2013): 252. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2013.802986>

173 Anders Breivik, “2083: A European Declaration of Independence” (22 July 2011), 1166. <https://publicintelligence.net/anders-behring-breiviks-complete-manifesto-2083-a-european-declaration-of-independence/>

174 Gans, “Philosemitism? Ambivalences regarding Israel”, 154. Cohen, “Towards a History of ‘Philosemitic’ Europe Since 1945”.

This section will consider three ways in which this supposed 'friendship' has impacted Jewish communities: first, the ways in which far-left antisemitism has been influenced by far-right philosemitism; second, the consequences of inter-community political polarisation; and third, the impact of a reduction of antisemitism from areas of the far-right.

The difficulties that pro-Israel communities have had in disassociating themselves from far-right claims of support have been twisted by far-left anti-Israel activists, who use this as proof that any association with Israel is evidence of far-right ideology. For example, far-left journalist Asa Winstanley uses what he describes as a 'flagrant love-in between Israel and US President Donald Trump' and 'Prime Minister Netanyahu's courting of far-right governments in Europe and beyond' as evidence that the Zionist movement is 'predicated on white supremacism' and should therefore be opposed.¹⁷⁵

Similarly, far-left former Labour activist Peter Willsman commented that a cross-political and cross-communal group of rabbis who raised concerns about left-wing antisemitism were 'Trump fanatics'.¹⁷⁶ Some Jewish people's support for Trump and, indeed, Trump's participation in certain aspects of far-right philosemitism have thus been used to homogenise the Jewish community as far-right and thereby justify antisemitism as merely anti-fascism. In these ways, Jewish people have become a political football in far-left and far-right ideological battles over nationhood and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. With both extremes defining themselves by their opposition to the other, far-right philosemitism and pro-Israel sentiments may have generated increased far-left antisemitism and anti-Israelism in a process of reciprocal radicalisation.

Figures from across the spectrum of Jewish communities have often warned of 'polarisation within the community' sparked by both 'vicious and impoverished' discourse around Israel.¹⁷⁷ Along both religious and political lines, whereas 'Judaism once united the Jews ... now it divides them'.¹⁷⁸ The absorption of populist radical right framings and ideologies into the far-right of the Jewish community is likely to become another ideological battle line that increasingly fractures Jewish community cohesion and dissuades participation in organised Jewish life. If Jewish representative organisations attempt to draw red lines on 'acceptable' discourses concerning the far-right, discussions around where these lines should be will likely present a challenge.

Despite the insincerity of philosemitism, a turn away from traditional antisemitism by parts of the far-right signifies a positive step in combating extreme right neo-Nazi ideology. The EDL's philosemitism has led it to be labelled as 'the antithesis of White Nationalism', a 'ZOG front' and 'traitors to our country' on the Stormfront forum.¹⁷⁹

175 Asa Winstanley, "Zionism relies on white supremacism", *Middle East Monitor*, 10 December 2019. <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20191220-zionism-relies-on-white-supremacism/>

176 Lee Harpin, "Bombshell tape shows Jeremy Corbyn ally blamed 'Jewish Trump fanatics' for inventing Labour antisemitism", *The Jewish Chronicle*, 30 July 2018. <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/bombshell-recording-proves-corbyn-ally-blamed-jewish-trump-fanatics-for-false-antisemitism-clai-1.467802>

177 Mick Davis in "British Jewry and Israel – how is the relationship evolving? A Symposium", *Fathom Journal* (2018), 6. <https://fathomjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/British-Jewry-symposium-PDF-2.pdf>

178 Geoffrey Alderman, *Modern British Jewry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 409–10.

179 The Provands Lordship, "Re: EDL time to take over", *Stormfront*, 28 August 2010, 5:21pm. <https://www.stormfront.org/forum/t737297/>

The Provands Lordship, "EDL Scum", *Stormfront*, 20 May 2010, 12:59pm.

<https://www.stormfront.org/forum/t710074/>

Deadend, "Re: EDL Scum", *Stormfront*, 20 May 2010 7:12pm. <https://www.stormfront.org/forum/t710074/>

05-20-2010, 03:11 PM #8

Germania Magna
Account Inactive
Join Date: Feb 2009
Location: one of 170 billion galaxies in the observable universe, third planet from one of this galaxy's 400 billion suns - our galaxy is a swastika and we are part of it
Posts: 2,344

Re: EDL Scum.

When will they learn that no one was ever "saved" by worshipping the Jew?

Evidently the EDL is funded and directed by a Zionist Jew called Alan Lake.

The purpose of the EDL is to support Zionist Jews, to attack Islam on their behalf and to promote multiculturalism. (Prove me wrong!)

This is why the British ZOG state is so tolerant of the EDL. The state would outlaw any demonstration against "extremist Judaism" and the "dangers" that is presents to the world (Zionism) as "anti-Semitism" but demos against "extremist Islam" are just fine.

Also the EDL helps ZOG to increase support for the ZOG imperialist "war on terror", which is a war for the hegemony of ZOG.



05-20-2010, 12:59 PM #1

The Provands
Lordship
Forum Member

Join Date: Jul 2009
Location: A Dear Green Place.
Posts: 4,470

EDL Scum.

I watched the BBC 3 documentary last night on the EDL.

No one who watched that garbage last night could even remotely give these scum a general nod in the way of British Nationalism.

I have heard it all before about the EDL, but last nights footage, albeit through a Jewish medium, affirms all that we have suspected, it is a ZOG front to dazzle Kosher "Nationalist" dafties.

A Paki polluter from Glasgow (shamelessly wearing a Rangers flag), a race-mixer (happy to parade his Niglet), a Sikh spokesman and a Jigaboo in an all-white track-suit (incase we would miss him) were ambassadors. 😊

The white "football" element were a drunken, feckin shambles.

"Engerland", "Engerland".

The Khazars must be laughing up their sleeves.

Last edited by The Provands Lordship; 05-20-2010 at 02:34 PM.

05-20-2010, 07:12 PM #14

deadend
Account Disabled by Request
Join Date: Feb 2007
Location: Barnsley UK
Posts: 367

Re: EDL Scum.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Little Englander**
*I'd like to hear why you think they aren't. I'm not advocating waving them about with the Union Flag, but they are vital in what they symbolise. **Germania Magna's** post explains it all nicely.*

At least the EDL have outed themselves with this documentary. Most of us had our suspicions anyway, but it's good to have them confirmed. Bunch of fakes.

The EDL is funded by a jew, thats enough for me, they are traitors to our country.

In some respects, the EDL is perceived to have defended Jews and Israel against more extreme elements of the far-right. For example, EDL members publicly burned a swastika in 2009 as a publicity stunt designed to exhibit anti-fascism and to aid perceptions of the group as mainstream but also to demonstrate support for the Jewish community against the Nazis.¹⁸⁰ Although moderation of far-right language and values has generated negative consequences, the creation of an ideological space in between the moderate and the extreme right may have prevented its adherents from falling even further into more radical, extremist and potentially violent ideologies. However, despite radical right groups ideologically defending Jews against the extreme right, this research has also proven that 'philosemitism has never hindered the persistence or renewal of antisemitism'.¹⁸¹

The impacts of a new philosemitism from a group that has historically persecuted Jewish people will be felt across the religious and political spectrum. Accusations of friendships between Jewish people and members of the far-right have sparked antisemitic conspiracy theories from other extremist groups. Jewish communities are already struggling to find consensus on this new quasi-friendship, which will further splinter communal unity. Despite these negative consequences, it cannot be ignored that, in some respects, the new far-right is defending Jewish people from neo-Nazis. It will be an uncomfortable reckoning if Jewish establishments choose to accept some positive actions from their one-time oppressors, and the ways in which these debates are held internally will be definitive for the future of inter-community relations.

Conclusions

The new far-right's use of philosemitism as a strategic tool for appearing moderate and thereby infiltrating mainstream politics has so far achieved some success. Not only have populist radical right parties polled well across Western Europe, in some cases gaining political power, their framings and ideologies have appeared throughout the political mainstream. Philosemitism has aided the far-right in impacting policies, gaining legitimacy, improving fundraising and reducing opposition.

A significant impact of the mainstreaming process has been the increase of anti-Muslim sentiments, conspiracy theories and hate crimes. Although pro-Jewish sentiments have not been the direct cause of anti-Muslim outcomes, they have aided their adherents in presenting as non-racists and defenders of liberal values.

For Jewish communities, the consequences of far-right philosemitism are mixed. Whereas a break from traditional far-right antisemitism should be welcomed, a philosemitic wave with dubious intentions leaves community responses divided. This presents yet another challenge for Jewish communal leadership in an increasingly polarised and populist political landscape. As has already been seen, some Jewish people's support for far-right philosemitism has generated new narratives for far-left antisemitism, which has homogenised all Jewish people as far-right and been used to delegitimise and oppose Zionism.

¹⁸⁰ Shutterstock, "English Defence League make video with black members to show they are not racist, Luton, Britain", 21 September 2009. <https://www.shutterstock.com/editorial/image-editorial/english-defence-league-make-video-with-black-members-to-show-they-are-not-racist-luton-britain-21-sep-2009-1010566m>

¹⁸¹ Cohen, "Towards a History of "Philosemitic" Europe Since 1945".

This unique set of impacts generated from far-right philosemitism demonstrate the importance of understanding this phenomenon as a distinct wave. With a new vision of far-right ideologies designed to overcome previous criticisms, mainstream politics and minority communities have been slow to rise to this new challenge. The new far-right has successfully disguised itself as a defender of a liberal Europe, and European Muslim communities have already begun to feel the consequences. More information, awareness and courage is needed from mainstream political leaders in order to educate themselves and their constituents, and reveal the invasion of the far-right into popular politics for what it is. If mainstream society continues to see the far-right only as it was in the 20th century and refuses to adapt to new presentations of these ideologies, it will fail to recognise racism where it arises and be unable to challenge it effectively.

Conclusions

As academia and wider research has developed the terminologies and mechanisms for understanding 'a new antisemitism', centred around the blurring of lines between anti-Zionism and antisemitism, 'a new philosemitism', its co-dependent, has lacked analysis. Despite minimal existing research on favourable attitudes towards Jews, this study has presented an in-depth analysis of philosemitism on the far-right, a topic that is often discussed informally but as of yet has received little academic attention. Applying analyses of different iterations of philosemitism to the far-right and examining the processes that have generated philosemitism through the lens of existing social movement theories has generated a unique exploration of this phenomenon.

This thesis contributes to a small body of literature that disputes the legitimacy of philosemitism and views such sentiments with suspicion. Throughout this research, it has been shown how philosemitic ideologies are based on perceptions of Jews and framings of Jewishness from the far-right. It is clear from these conclusions that philosemitism on the far-right is not genuine support for Jews or Israel, but a strategic tool to gain legitimacy and win support.

First, it was shown how the populist radical right's use of collective action framings has enabled it to support Jewish people not as Jews, but using a perception of Jewishness assigned onto Jewish people. Framings of Jewish people as anti-Muslim, viewing Israel as a brave final frontier against the Muslim world, and defining Judaism within an imagined Judeo-Christian culture have led the far-right to develop an understanding of Jewishness that fits into existing ideologies. These are the shaky foundations of far-right philosemitism.

Secondly, this thesis argued for an understanding of far-right philosemitism as a distinct wave of philosemitism by analysing its origins and the conditions under which it emerged in order to prove differentiation. In a time of an identity crisis in a post-industrial and globalised society, new far-right movements developed a European identity based on cultural nationalism. With the financial crash exposing cracks in the political establishment and the globalisation of Islamist terrorism generating not only fear but huge displacement of peoples, Muslims instead of Jews became the new victims of the far-right. Politicised understandings of Holocaust remembrance have generated a political culture in previously Nazi-occupied countries that views far-right antisemitism as a taboo, leading to a re-strategising of hatreds that favoured Jews. A fraught Israeli-Palestinian debate has seen far-right ideologies pushed further into the pro-Israel camp in a process of cumulative extremism.

Thirdly, the ways in which collective identity processes have led to philosemitic radical right parties gaining some support among Jewish people was analysed. Pro-Israel sentiments and rhetoric that call out antisemitism among Muslim populations have proved popular among a growing Jewish far-right, who value support for these issues above other collective identities they may have. Although Jewish institutions have strongly opposed such groups, they are yet to tackle the root

causes of their support bases within the Jewish community, a task that demands attention and courage.

Finally, the impacts of a new philosemitism were explored, demonstrating the importance of understanding the conditions that generated them. A mainstreaming not just of parties but of ideologies has impacted policies, leadership and national conversations. Rising Islamophobia is clearly evidenced, but Jewish communities have felt both positive and negative impacts.

Limitations and Areas for Further Research

Limitations to this approach arise from its qualitative nature. Due to limited polling of attitudes towards Jews in Western European countries aside from the UK and France, and the distinct lack of quantitative research on attitudes within Jewish communities anywhere in Europe, this analysis has been able to measure what attitudes exist, and how they operate, but not how pervasive they are. Further research is necessary in this area to quantitatively measure attitudes and track their change over time. For example, polling Jewish attitudes towards Muslims over time would permit the analysis of spikes and troughs in relation to key events, such as Islamist terrorist attacks, and would better inform understandings of the drivers of Jewish support for the far-right.

Furthermore, the breadth of this study has permitted conclusions based on identified trends but presents a base level of understanding of the drivers of far-right philosemitism and its supporters rather than an in-depth analysis of each theme or country in which it operates. While the examples used have been taken as representative of common ideologies, they should not be understood as definitive conclusions on each attitude. A further and more specific analysis would achieve depth of understanding of each individual theme.

As specified in the introduction to this thesis, the extreme right is largely omitted from discussions on philosemitism, as such ideologies largely continue to proliferate antisemitism. A comparative analysis of the ideological differentiations between the extreme and radical right with regard to Jews would be valuable for understanding drivers of philosemitism and the extent to which philosemitism is present on the extreme right, if at all.

A final point for further research is that of Jewish extremists. As populist radical right ideologies increasingly give license to violence, such as in the case of Anders Breivik, and Jewish people increasingly engage in such ideological standpoints, the question of the far-right tipping point from rhetoric to action will come to be asked about Jewish activists. Examples have already begun to emerge in the Jewish Defence League in the United States and broader Kahanist activities. Whether the processes and motivators that lead white supremacists to commit violent acts are the same as those for Jewish people remains to be seen.

Research on this topic will be vital to understanding the continuing rise of the populist radical right across Europe, and informing counter campaigns. As the populist radical right has increasing success in pitting Muslims and Jews against each other, the abilities of both communities to overcome such framings, debunk stereotypes and educate one another will prove definitive for the future success – or failure – of the Western European populist radical right.



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