Anti-Semitism Among Islamists in Germany

Translated by Jennifer S. Bryson, Ph.D.
Visiting Fellow, Hudson Institute

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Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz Öffentlichkeitsarbeit
Merianstraße 100
50765 Cologne
Germany
www.verfassungsschutz.de

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Hudson Institute
1201 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20004

P: 202.974.2400
info@hudson.org
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Cover: Egyptian protesters step on an Israeli flag during a demonstration against the U.S. president’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, on December 7, 2017. (Mohamed Al-Shahed/AFP/Getty Images)
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Due to Germany’s historical experience with Nazism, anti-Semitic behavior has long been associated with right-wing extremism. Up until the end of the 20th century, it hardly occurred to anyone that anti-Semitism could also have another background and other motivations.

It was not until the turn of the century that awareness emerged that anti-Semitism is not just a characteristic unique to the far-right milieu. Alongside “everyday anti-Semitism,” which is widespread at the center of society socially and politically, one also sees indications of anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism on the far-left.

**FIGURE 1. EXTENT OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST, NEAR EAST, AND NORTH AFRICA**

Percentage of Adults in the Middle East and North Africa Who Answered “Probably True” to a Number of Anti-Semitic Stereotypes

Source: Global survey conducted by the Anti Defamation League in 2013 and 2014. global100.adl.org
ZIONISM

The term Zionism derives from Zion, the name of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. In the 19th century, Zionism signified the political aspiration to establish a nation-state for all Jews. Since the official founding of the State of Israel in 1948, Zionism has been understood to refer to all efforts to maintain and expand this state. Consequently, statements and actions rejecting or endangering the existence of the state of Israel are termed anti-Zionist.

In Islamism, however, anti-Semitic views are more pronounced. Religious, territorial, and/or political motives are bound together in an anti-Semitic view of the world. The view of “the Jew as the enemy” forms a central pillar in the thinking underlying all Islamist factions.

Recognizing this becomes particularly important when considered against the backdrop of the influx of more than 1 million Muslims into the Federal Republic of Germany from 2014 to 2017. Very many of these people come from countries in which anti-Semitic attitudes have been so common for centuries that children grow up with this as a matter of course [see Figure 1].

However, one cannot conclude from this fact that every Muslim refugee is a conscious anti-Semite. Yet in the event of failed integration, the anti-Semitic orientation of many refugees could serve as a starting point for Islamist radicalization. For those whom Islamists attempt to win-over, (latent) anti-Semitic stereotypes, conveyed through socialization in the regions of their origins, are already familiar and thus increase the probability that in the end also other Islamist arguments will be accepted as “truth.”

During a demonstration at the Brandenburg Gate in December 2017 it became strikingly clear that this scenario is more than just a theory. Throughout the event protesting the decision of the U.S. President to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, there were multiple anti-Semitic incidents:

- Signs called for the outright elimination of the state of Israel
- Chants included, among others, “Khaybar, Khaybar, hey Jews, Muhammad’s army’s coming back for you!” - an allusion to the military conquest of a Jewish oasis by Prophet Muhammed in the year 628
- An Israeli flag was burned

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that these outrageous acts were by people who had not previously had any discernible relationship to an Islamist organization. These incidents at the Brandenburg Gate illustrate the attraction that anti-Semitic agitation can have on those who are outside Islamist organizations and the dangers this poses for peaceful, tolerant co-existence in Germany.

To counter a wider spread of Islamist anti-Semitism among the Muslim population living in Germany, to start with as wide a public as possible needs to be made aware of this issue. Especially those who have professional contact with Muslims with an immigrant background or refugees need to be prepared for the potential presence of such thinking. These include, among others, teachers, social workers, police, as well as staff at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and the corresponding regional offices. So too staff at charitable organizations and volunteers involved in integration projects may encounter anti-Semitic thinking. This monograph, which was prepared by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), i.e. the domestic intelligence service of Germany, in collaboration with the authorities in the states of Bavaria, Hesse, and North Rhine-Westphalia, is intended to contribute to this.

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2. TERMINOLOGY

To help the reader be able to recognize Islamist anti-Semitism, first the central terms “Islamism” and “anti-Semitism” will be defined more precisely.

2.1 What is Anti-Semitism?

The term “anti-Semitism” is understood to mean political, social, racial, or religiously based hostility to Jews. The term “anti-Semitic” includes all statements and conduct directed against one or more Jews as Jews or against a Jewish community on the basis of their identity.

It is irrelevant whether such a Jewish community is organized inside or outside the state of Israel.

Anti-Semitism can be categorized in various ways. The following six forms are frequently identified:

- Religious anti-Semitism

The oldest form is religious anti-Semitism, which refers to the Jewish religion. It “develops out of the absolutization of one’s own concept of religion, which in turn is connected with general rejection and defamation of all other forms
of belief.”

Whereas in Christianity the Jews are the ones to whom the death of Jesus is attributed, in Islam the accusation that the Jews did not recognize Muhammad as the new Prophet is the source of religious discrimination.

• Social anti-Semitism

Social anti-Semitism originates in the role of Jews as social outsiders, who since the Middle Ages in Europe often had to and still have to specialize in business and financial services. The myth of control of international finance by Jews grew later out of the business success of some Jewish individuals and families.

• Political anti-Semitism

The notion of a global, secret conspiracy of Jewry, aiming to control the politics of all states and direct them to serve Jewish interests, is the basis of political anti-Semitism. In order to realize these plans, Jews are often assumed to have superior intellectual and social abilities, however these abilities are perceived to be thoroughly negative.

• Racist anti-Semitism

Racist anti-Semitism is significantly more recent than the first three variants. Since the last quarter of the 19th century, the representatives of this have sought to define alleged biological deficiencies of a Jewish race and prove its harmful influence upon other, “higher-order” human races. Racist anti-Semitism formed the ideological foundation for the murder of European Jews by the Nazis.

• Secondary anti-Semitism

Secondary anti-Semitism is distinguished by the attempt to defame memory of the Holocaust or to question its historical existence. In particular, political actors in the Near and Middle East try to dispute the right of the State of Israel, whose founding has a direct connection to the genocide of European Jews, to exist by denying the Holocaust.

• Anti-Zionism

Anti-Zionism, lastly, aims for the complete elimination of the State of Israel. Israel’s existence is viewed as a fundamental evil in global politics and is declared to be a threat to peace. In this, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is portrayed as a Jewish “war of elimination” against the Palestinians. Because anti-Semitic statements in Germany may be punished as incitement, advocates of anti-Zionism argue in part that their propaganda is directly solely against the State of Israel, not, however, against Jewry per se. They say that anti-Zionism is therefore not anti-Semitic. Given that Israel is the only Jewish state in the world and that annihilation of it would inescapably result in the death and expulsion of millions of Jews, it turns out that this line of argument is just a ruse to conceal the actual thrust of anti-Zionism.

Legitimate Criticism or Anti-Zionism?

In order to be able to distinguish anti-Zionism clearly from legitimate criticism of the policies of the State of Israel, in 2005 a working group of the EU-Parliament developed a guideline. According to this guideline, it is not acceptable criticism of the State of Israel, but rather anti-Semitism, when, for example, Israel’s right to exist is denied, when double standards are applied (i.e. when a different standard of conduct is expected of Israel than of other democratic states), when symbols with a connection to traditional anti-Semitism are used to describe Israel or its people (such as the charge of the murder of Jesus or the myth of ritual murder), when Jews are held collectively responsible for the actions of the State of Israel, or when Israeli policies are compared to Nazi policies.


3 Tânia Puschnerat Feindbilder und Radikalisierungsprozesse. Elemente und Instrumente im politischen Extremismus (Berlin: Bundesministerium des Innern, 2005)
The six forms of anti-Semitism described here are seldom used in isolation or to the exclusion of each other. Anti-Semitic propaganda commonly uses a mix of religious, social, political, and secondary arguments and varies these depending on the topic and the audience.

2.2 What is Islamism?

The term “Islam” denotes the religion, the practice of which is protected by the Constitution and its guarantee of religious freedom. In contrast, the term “Islamism” describes a form of political extremism [see Figure 2]. Islamism aims at the partial or complete nullification of the free, democratic system of the Federal Republic of Germany. Islamism is based on the conviction that Islam is not only a personal, private “matter,” but rather also determines or at least partially regulates social life and the political order. Islamism demands the establishment of an order that is according to “God’s will,” and thus “true” and authoritative system, that stands above human-made systems. The goal of all Islamists is to establish this “God-willed” order in Arab and other Muslim as well as in western states. Anti-Semitism is, inter alia, a fundamental ideological element of Islamism.

In their interpretation of Islam, Islamists are at odds with the Constitution’s basic principles of popular sovereignty, separation of state and religion, freedom of expression, and universal equality. For this reason, Islamist organizations in Germany are under observation from domestic intelligence service.
The overarching term “Islamism” groups together various forms which, however, differ, sometimes significantly, in regard to their ideological underpinnings and geographic orientation, as well as strategies and resources. Legalistic trends, such as the Millî Görüş movement, attempt to exert political and social influence to establish a system that conforms to their interpretation of Islam. They reject violence as a means to establish their demands.

The followers of Islamist-terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah, whose goal is destruction of the State of Israel, are focused on their own regions. This is primarily where they use terrorist violence. In Western states such as Germany, on the other hand, they try to foster support for their agendas through political and social engagement. Jihadist groups, such as the Islamic State and al-Qaeda, in their fight to establish a theocracy, view terrorist violence as an indispensable means to oppose “unbelievers” and supposedly corrupt regimes. Their terrorist agenda is global and is a threat to all states at an international level.
3. ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIST ANTI-SEMITISM

In Islam, it is reported that Muhammad tried to convert three Jewish tribes to his way of belief. When these efforts failed, there were armed conflicts which ended in the defeat of these tribes. These events form the background of the passages in the Quran which are critical of Jews. The basic allegation is that the Jews broke their covenant with God and with Muslims when they did not recognize Muhammad as God’s chosen Prophet. The accusation is made that the Jews also cheated in their financial transactions. These Quran passages, which are taken out of their historical context and interpreted literally again and again up to the present day, form the basis in Islam for hostility to Jews, which constitutes “an integral part of how Muslims understand themselves.”

Nonetheless, for many centuries Jews were able to live in security in Islamic lands, especially compared to Christian central Europe. In Islamic lands, anti-Semitic riots or pogroms happened relatively rarely. It has only been since the mid-19th century that European anti-Semitism spread more and more also in the Islamic world.

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Photo: Meeting between Adolf Hitler and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, on November 28, 1941, at the Reich Chancellory in Berlin. (Keystone/Getty Images)

Since the 1920s, a noticeable increase in violent conflicts between Jews and Muslims has been detectable, as many European Jews emigrated to Palestine and there came into economic and political competition with the local Arab population. Starting from this time, anti-Semitic attitudes also took on greater significance among organized Islamists.

Especially the Mufti\(^5\) of Jerusalem, Mohammed Amin el-Husseini, cultivated close contact with German Nazis and in radio broadcasts openly agitated against Jews. Arabic translations of European anti-Jewish texts expanded their circulation and resonated greatly also among followers of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (MB).

The founding of the State of Israel in 1948, with armed victory in its war of independence over the allied Arab states of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq, was the culmination of the escalation. The war led to the flight and expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Muslim Palestinians, resulting in a major strain on the Israeli-Palestinian relationship to this day. Also, in other Arab states, this military defeat led to a significant expansion of anti-Semitic attitudes in broad swaths of the population. The only possible explanation for the unexpected defeat by this small and supposedly weak country came in the form of a “global Jewish conspiracy,” as portrayed in the anti-Semitic screed *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The reprint of the Arabic translation of this text, promoted by the Egyptian government, eventually led to its mass distribution in Arabic-speaking lands.

### The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

This book first appeared at the beginning of the 20th century in czarist Russia and is presumed to have been composed by the czarist secret police. The work is purely fictional. It purports to record a secret gathering of Jewish representatives during which Jews supposedly developed a strategy to attain world domination.

The essay *Our Struggle with the Jews*, published in 1950 by Sayyid Qutb, was an “ideological milestone” for Islamist anti-Semitism. Qutb was from Egypt and already in his lifetime he was considered one of the most important theoreticians of the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood. In this essay he combined the European anti-Semitic stereotype, the conspiracy theories of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and anti-Jewish Quran passages into a cohesive whole and thus developed the ideological basis for an Islamist anti-Semitism.

By adapting traditional European anti-Semitism and shaping it to conform to the religious, social, and cultural particularities of the Arab world, Qutb created a new Islamist form of anti-Semitism. The European roots of Islamist anti-Semitism ensure that to the present-day anti-Semites from far flung realms of society can relate to it. An example of this can be seen in the partial cooperation between far-right extremist and Islamist Holocaust deniers.\(^6\) In the same context, one also sees far-left extremist support for Hamas.\(^7\)

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\(^5\) A Mufti is an Islamic jurist.


\(^7\) Cf. for example the pro-Hamas articles on the website of “Anti-imperialist Camp” at www.antiimperialista.org (“Antiimperialistisches Lager, accessed September 23, 2018, www.antiimperialista.org/de”)
4. ANTI-SEMITIC STEREOTYPES IN ISLAMISM

The anti-Semitism developed by Qutb is a formative element of all Islamist organizations. As a consequence, one finds the same or at least comparable narratives about Jews in all Islamist ideologies. The core idea throughout is the starting point that Jews secretly pursue world domination or that they already have mastered this and thereby control global politics and the world economy. The fictional basis for this world domination conspiracy theory, used also by Qutb, lies in the previously mentioned Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Islamists frequently refer to the following elements and motifs:

- **Control Over Financial and Economic Systems by Jews**

  The alleged Jewish conspirators supposedly want to make the rest of the world dependent on them through deliberately-caused economic crises as well as artificial shortages of funds. This assertion takes up the image of the “greedy Jew,” present since the Middle Ages, and carries it over into the modern day.

Photo: A banner reading “today the Israeli pig will sacrilege al-Aqsa mosque,” during a demonstration by students of Cairo University on March 10, 2005. (AFP/Getty Images)
• Incitement of Wars and Conflicts by Jews
According to The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, Jewish conspirators instigate wars and conflicts around the world, in order to play population groups and nations off each other to wear them down. This accusation is taken up for example in the 1987 Hamas Charter, as is the accusation that Jews started the First and Second World Wars. The (successfully implemented) goal of the Jews was supposedly to make themselves rich off these wars and thereby lay the financial groundwork for their domination of the world:

“In fact, they were behind the First World War, through which [they] achieved the abolishment of the Islamic Caliphate, made a profit and took over many of the sources of wealth. [...] They were also behind the Second World War, in which they made immense profits by buying and selling military equipment [...]”

• The Eternal Struggle between Muslims and Jews
Especially along the Salafi and jihadist spectrum there is a fairly consistent division of the world into believers and non-believers. In this view of the world, Jews are portrayed as part of, and often as the leaders of, the unbelievers. Allegedly they aim systematically to fight and destroy Islam.

The main ideological basis for this is the work of Qutb, in which the supposedly global conflict is portrayed in dramatic imagery. Qutb relies on a Hadith and the prediction of an End Times battle between Jews and Muslims. In jihadist, but also in other Islamist texts and propaganda materials, it is especially this End Times depiction of the Hadith that is drawn on again and again.

• Jewish Activity Aided by Secret Agents and Secret Organizations
According to allegations in The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, part of the Jewish effort to take over the world includes fostering social conflicts and tension with the help of secret organizations and secret agents. This accusation is also taken up by many Islamist organizations.

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5. REJECTION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL BY ISLAMIST ORGANIZATIONS

Along the spectrum of Islamists, there are organizations for which the fight against the existence of the State of Israel is portrayed as the essential goal. These include Palestinian Hamas and Lebanese Hezbollah. Both groups fight the Israeli militarily and use terrorism, and in their propaganda, they call again and again for the complete destruction of Israel. A common slogan in their propaganda is: “Palestine will be free, from the river to the sea!” This refers to the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, making clear that there is no room for the State of Israel and that it thus has no right to exist.

For other Islamist groups, the State of Israel is not the primary enemy, but it is nevertheless a primary object of hostility. They perceive the Middle East conflict more as part of a fundamental global struggle between Muslims and the rest of the world (believers versus unbelievers). The
statement of the Islamist terrorist who murdered several people in a kosher supermarket in Paris in January 2015 is characteristic of this. When asked why he chose that store, he responded:

“The Jews! Because of the oppression, especially of the Islamic State, but overall. This is for all regions where Muslims are oppressed. Palestine is one of them!”

Common to all Islamist organizations is that, whether in their rhetoric or the substance [of their propaganda], they hardly distinguish between the State of Israel and the Jewish people. In this way, centuries-old anti-Semitic stereotypes are often transferred to the current State of Israel. A particularly widespread examples is the myth of so-called ritual murder, which has its origins in the Christian Middle Ages. Supposedly the Jews baked unleavened bread (matzo) with the blood of Christian children to prepare for the Passover feast. Especially after the Gaza war in 2014, the story of child murder by the Jews became a focal point in anti-Israel agitation, since during this many civilians, including children, were killed in Israeli attacks. In this context the slogan “child murder Israel” was used at many demonstrations and excessive portrayal of dead children was seen in anti-Israeli propaganda materials.

10 “Das sagte der Geiselnehmer von Paris am Telefon,” Focus Online, last modified October 1, 2015, https://www.focus.de/politik/ausland/coulibalys-gespraech

11 At Passover, the Jews remember the flight of their people out of Egypt.
6. THE ANTI-SEMITISM OF ISLAMIST ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS

Islamist organizations and movements are presented below. The ways they convey their anti-Semitism in Germany are shown using examples.

6.1 The Muslim Brotherhood (MB)

Founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna, MB is the oldest and most influential Sunni\textsuperscript{12} Islamist movement. It claims to be present to varying degrees in more than 70 countries. In these countries the MB tries with its missionizing (dawa) to convert the majority of the society over to its conservative understanding of Islam. Its declared long-term goal is the establishment of Islamist political systems based on Sharia.

Qutb’s essay, Our Fight with the Jews, shapes the anti-Semitic posture of the MB to this day. For example, in a May 2017 press release the official MB leadership declared that active resistance against Israel and support of Hamas are justified until “the entire Islamic land is freed from Zionist occupiers.”\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12} About 85 percent of Muslims worldwide are Sunni. For them, the successor of Muhammad does not have to be his direct descendant, but rather needs to possess particular political, religious, and military abilities. About 12-15 percent of Muslims are Shiite. They are the majority of the population in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, and Azerbaijan. The Shia recognize Ali, the cousin and son-in-

Sharia

Sharia is understood today to mean “Islamic law,” i.e. the rules, duties, and prohibitions, which are binding for individuals or the community of the Believers. This ranges from ritual regulations (e.g., the ablution before prayer) to criminal law and even rules of public administration. Sharia forms the basis for religiously informed jurisprudence in more than 50 Islamic countries. The European Court of Human Rights, on the other hand, ruled that Sharia is “incompatible with the fundamental principles of democracy”.

In Germany the “German Muslim Community” (formerly “Islamic Community in Germany”) is the most important and centralized organization for MB followers. One of its primary goals is to position itself in Germany as a respectable, moderate counterpart for politicians, government officials, and social organizations. In order not to jeopardize this goal, officials of the organization avoid anti-Semitic statements. Yet in spite of this, it can be demonstrated that now and again there are anti-Semitic remarks by individual MB followers in Germany. For example, in September 2017 a board member of an Islamic congregation in northern Germany, who was close to the MB, posted a video on his private Facebook page in which a children’s group sang an Arabic song, and in the song Jews are vilified and the children are called to wage jihad against Israel.

In December 2017 the imam of a congregation close to the MB in east Germany gave a sermon, which ended with the following prayer: “We pray for Jerusalem to be the Muslims’ capital and that it be liberated from the hands of the Jews!”

6.2 Hamas

Hamas was founded in the Gaza Strip at the beginning of the first Intifada (uprising) by the Palestinians in 1987. It considers itself to be the Palestinian arm of the MB. Its goal is to establish a Palestinian Islamic state in the whole area between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan, which would mean the eradication of the State of Israel. For this, Hamas agitates not only politically, but also carries out violence against Israeli institutions and facilities. Hamas uses religious, nationalist, and territorial motivations in its arguments for this.

The anti-Semitic underpinning of Hamas was evident already in its founding charter. For example, it is stated in this: “The Jews’ Nazism includes [brutal behavior towards Palestinian] women and children and terrifies the entire [population]. They battle against [the Palestinians’] making a living, extort their money and trample their honor.” In addition, the Jews supposedly brought international media under their control and established “secret organizations and scattered them all over the globe to destroy other societies and realize the interests of Zionism.”

Although the “new” Hamas Charter published in spring 2017 forgoes the classical forms of anti-Semitic propaganda found in the original Charter, it contains clearly anti-Israeli passages. On top of this, there is still a call for violence.

Hamas has so far not engaged in violence in Germany. The organization primarily seeks to recruit new followers from among the Palestinian population living here and to raise funds through donations. However, it also spreads its anti-Semitic and anti-Israeli thinking in Germany. For example, at a Hamas-organized demonstration in November 2015, followers and sympathizers of Hamas shouted chants such as “Mass murderer Israel,” “Terror state Israel,” and “Child murderer Israel.”

14 The clearly anti-Semitic orientation of the text is evident not least of all in the fact that the authors deliberately use the word “Jews” instead of the possible alternatives of “Israelis” or “Zionists.”

6.3 Hezbollah

The Shiite group Hezbollah was founded in 1982 during the Lebanese Civil War at the initiative of the leader of the Iranian revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini. It initially operated as a guerilla movement against the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon. After the end of the occupation in 1985, Hezbollah began a violent fight, including acts of terrorism, against Israel. Inspired by the ideological and religious model of Iran, the organization also propagated the “Islamic revolution” and the worldwide spread of Islam.

Similar to Hamas, Hezbollah also combines its arguments against the State of Israel with anti-Semitic statements encompassing hatred of all Jews. With references to the Quran, Jews are often portrayed as devious and dangerous opponents of Islam. This is particularly clear in the content of the Arabic language Hezbollah affiliated television station Al-Manar TV, on which there are open calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. As a result, on October 29, 2008 the German Ministry of the Interior banned the operations of Al-Manar TV in Germany. Since then broadcast of the transmission of this station has been banned in all public buildings (hotels, cafes, restaurants, clubs, etc.). However, since Al-Manar TV is broadcast via an Egyptian satellite, its anti-Semitic content can still be received on private televisions.

Anti-Semitic incidents occur regularly at the annual al-Quds Day demonstrations in which Hezbollah activists and sympathizers participate.

In July 2017 several people raised a Hezbollah flag in Berlin. When police officers stopped this, one of the people shouted, “These fucking Jews are allowed to kill our children and we can’t even raise our flag! Filthy fucking Jews!”

Hezbollah also spreads anti-Semitic ideas on social media. In particular, various speeches of the General Secretary of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah are available online and they contain extensive anti-Semitic statements. In December 2017 one titled “Write in Blood, Death for Israel” was shared online.

6.4 Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT)

HT was founded in 1953 in Jerusalem by Taqiaddin al-Nabhani. His main work, The System of Islam (Nizam al-Islam), forms to this day the ideological foundation of the organization.

The goal of HT is to unify the community of all Muslims into a worldwide caliphate under Islamic law. For HT, Islam and democracy cannot be reconciled. It therefore rejects secular forms of governance and calls Muslims to fight them.

Until it was banned in public, HT promoted its anti-Semitic positions and called in pamphlets, its own newspaper, and online for a struggle to annihilate Israel. The State of Israel is supposedly “a crime against humanity,” which deserves to be obliterated. The Jews were called “the lowest of God’s creation on earth.” Due to the group’s aggressive statements and the orientation of their ideology against inter-cultural understanding, the German Ministry of the Interior banned HT from activity in Germany in 2003. Since this time, HT no longer appears in public.

However, those affiliated with HT remain active underground and especially on social media. It tries to spread the radical ideology of HT and its anti-Semitic thinking among the youth, especially among those who have come to Germany as refugees.

16 Since 1979, Al-Quds Day has been observed on the last Friday of Ramadan. In Iran and Lebanon it is a state holiday. It was initiated by Ayatollah Khomeini as a reminder that all Muslims have a moral obligation to liberate Jerusalem from the “Zionist occupiers.” In Germany, each year on Al-Quds Day there are demonstrations with hundreds of participants, organized mostly by followers of Hezbollah. Anti-Semitic incidents regularly occur throughout Germany in connection with Al-Quds Day.


6.5 The Millî Görüs Movement

For the political-religious movement founded by Turkish politician Necmettin Erbakan, the phrases Millî Görüs (“National View”) and „Adil Düzen“ (“Just Order”) are of central importance. “Just,” according to them, is the system founded on “divine revelation.” In contrast systems founded by humans are “invalid.” These “invalid” systems must be replaced with a “just system,” based solely on Islamic principles, rather than following human, and thus “arbitrary,” rules. As its main goal, the Millî Görüs movement calls for establishment of “a new greater Turkey” as well as an Islamic social order. The quest for the latter is not only for Turkey, but rather worldwide, which is why they reject western democracies.

The Millî Görüs movement would like to reach its goals without using violence. Anti-Semitic statements, however, have been an integral part of the movement since its founding. Already in the text *Just Economic Order*, written by Erbakan, the claim emerges that “Zionists” controlled “imperialism” and exploited all of humanity with the help of the capitalist interest-based economy.19

Further anti-Semitic statements continue to the present in print publications associated with the Millî Görüs movement, especially in the daily newspaper Millî Gazette. An example of the way they see themselves as anti-Semitic appears in an August 2015 column titled, “Writing for the Millî Gazette means resisting the global domination of Zionist ideology!”

Also, members of the Millî Görüs movement affiliated party „Saadet Partisi“ (SP), which has had a presence in Germany since 2013, use anti-Semitic statements again and again.

For example, in October 2015 a member of SP posted a photo with the title, “How Zionism works...” The picture shows an octopus, wearing a black hat with a white Star of David, with a map. One of the tentacles is grabbing some Muslim women on the Arabian Peninsula, and another digs under the ground and reemerges on the territory of Turkey holding a sign reading, “PKK.”20

In July 2017, an association in eastern Westphalia belonging to the Millî Görüs movement posted the following lines on Facebook quoting the poet Necip Fażıl Kısakürek: “Collapse Israel. I want to see your debris. I spit in the face of those who call you their land.”

6.6 Islamic State (IS)

Founded at the end of 2003, still as part of the Al-Qaeda network,21 IS took on a central role in 2013 in the Syrian civil war and conquered territory in northern Iraq in 2014. On June 24, 2014 IS declared establishment of a “caliphate.” This attracted thousands of jihadists from around the world. In the name of “true” Islam, IS subjugated the people of Syria and northern Iraq and carried out many terrorist attacks in western countries. In spite of nearly total military defeat in 2017, IS, as well as individual perpetrators and small groups inspired or led by IS, continues to pose a serious threat.

IS also seeks to destroy the State of Israel and the entire Jewish people. IS makes this clear again and again through its propaganda outlets. So, for example in the second edition of the IS magazine Dabiq, one reads: “It is only a matter of time before it [i.e. IS] reaches Palestine, to fight to the death the barbaric Jews and those of them who hide behind the “Gharqad” tree, the Jews’ tree.”

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20 The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) was founded by Abdullah Öcalan in Turkey in 1978. Its original goal was the establishment of an independent, socialist-oriented Kurdish state. On November 22, 1993 the Federal Minister of the Interior issued a ban on PKK activity in the Federal Republic, after there had been several waves of PKK violent incidents in Germany.

21 The terrorist network Al-Qaeda, founded by Osama Bin Laden, carried out the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. In spite of the killing of Bin Laden in 2011 and competition from IS, Al-Qaeda continues to carry out “major” headline-grabbing attacks. In addition, al-Qaeda, just like IS, calls on individual perpetrators or small groups to carry out attacks without consultation and formal affiliation with the organization.
In 2016, when IS expanded its reach to the Sinai Peninsula, this was portrayed in a series of propaganda videos as a step toward the “liberation of Jerusalem.” “Israel” and “Jew” are an inseparable unity in the way they are portrayed as enemies and this appears to jihadist groups as ideally suited for mobilizing recruits. This is why they are constantly present in jihadist propaganda.

6.7 Salafism
Salafism derives from the Arabic word “salafiyya” and can be freely translated as “orientation to the pious forebears.” The term “salaf” means “forebear.”

Salafists maintain that their thought and actions are based solely on the literal understanding of the Quran and Sunna as well as the example of the companions of the Prophet and the first three generations after him. They therefore reject not only democratic systems, but also the later historical development of Islam and its interpretation through Muslim schools of jurisprudence. Salafists assert a claim to exclusivity, seeing themselves as the only “true” believers. Their extreme thinking often leads their followers to radicalization and acceptance of violence against alleged non-believers. As a result the transitions between political and jihadist Salafism are fluid.

Salafism sees itself as a conscious counter-model to western society, which can be seen in the Salafis’ clothing as well as their language. At the same time, it is also a product local

western society. With Salafism the first “domestic Islamism” emerged, formed primarily by the Salafists living here, and in contrast to the “established” Islamist organizations, it does not need to take into account traditions from the respective countries of origin. This explains, among other things, the high level of attractiveness and its growing number of followers in Germany. At present it is estimated there are more than 11,000 people involved in Salafism [in Germany].

Among Salafis in Germany, Jews as well as the State of Israel are, alongside apostates from Islam, Shiites, and atheists, are among the most important enemies. This manifests itself especially on the internet, where anti-Semitic propaganda is spread on websites and Facebook as well as in WhatsApp groups. For example, the “Islamic Audio” association, banned by the Ministry of the Interior in 2013, published multiple images and texts online, such as “Nazi & Israel: same shit, different asshole.” Another example is the post by a Salafi group with a picture of Adolf Hitler and the caption, “There will be a time when you will curse me for every living Jew because I didn’t kill them all.”

Salafi preachers moderate themselves in public and generally avoid anti-Semitic statements that could have legal consequences. Nevertheless, repeatedly there are exceptions, like for example the statements of a traveling preacher at a Berlin mosque in the summer of 2014, “Oh God, bring the Zionist Jews to account; they can do nothing against you. Kill them all and leave no one left!”

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23 Almost every person, who in recent years left Germany to participate in support of IS for its jihad, is determined to have previously been in direct contact with Salafis.


25 As of June 2018.
7. CONCLUSION: THE SPREAD OF ISLAMIST ANTI-SEMITISM IN GERMANY

In order to get an idea of the extent and forms of anti-Semitic propaganda and incidents among Islamists in Germany, since the end of 2015 the BfV has tracked anti-Semitic incidents with an apparent Islamist background, which become known to federal and state intelligence services in the course of their work. A prerequisite for registration of an incident is, for one thing, that people or facilities recognized as belonging to the Jewish community are harmed. Another is that the originator of the incident represents Islamist thought and that this was decisive in bringing about the incident.

The tracking of these occurrences demonstrates that anti-Semitic incidents in Germany with an Islamist background are not uncommon. For the period from January to December 2017 alone, more than 100 occurrences have been recorded, ranging from anti-Zionist sermons to anti-Semitic graffiti to verbal and physical attacks on individuals. This is probably just the proverbial “tip of the iceberg.”

Photo: A young defendant hides his face behind a folder as he waits for the opening of his trial at the district court in Berlin on June 19, 2018. The Syrian migrant faces the court for assaulting two men wearing kippa skullcaps. (STEFANIE LOOS/AFP/Getty Images)
So far, violent events have been recorded only to a limited extent. However, even individual cases show that the ideological radicalization of people and the incitement to hatred and violence through anti-Semitic ideas form the breeding ground for escalations to violence.

It is also noteworthy, that numerous incidents have been caused by individuals, who have so far had no evidence of a connection to organized Islamism. For example, in April 2016 a woman in Berlin was approached by two men of Arab origin about her necklace pendant in the shape of the land of Israel. The two men cursed her say, among other things, “You fucking Jews! You are the scum of the earth.” In December 2017, a Jewish high school student was attacked by two Arab classmates who said, “You are child murderers, someone should cut off your heads!” Likewise, in December 2017, two strangers attacked a synagogue in North Rhine-Westphalia insulting the staff there saying, “Al-Quds belongs the us! Get out of here, you sons of bitches!”

Such incidents suggest that anti-Semitic ideas spread by Islamists are increasingly found among Muslims in society outside organized Islamist organizations. It remains to be seen whether this is a stable phenomenon, or perhaps a rising trend.

Regardless of how one looks at it, it nevertheless is noteworthy that anti-Semitic ideas spread by Islamist groups and individuals already pose a considerable challenge to peaceful and tolerant coexistence in Germany today. Active engagement with such ideas will be of increasing importance in the coming years. This applies not least of all to efforts for successful integration of Muslim immigrants and refugees.