

Contemporary Antisemitism in the Political Discourse in Germany

Germans did not invent Antisemitism but Auschwitz is a German invention, which is why Antisemitism in Germany is different from Antisemitism anywhere else (MacShane, 2008, p. 34).

—Ignatz Bubis¹

In the year 2020, 75 years after the gates of Auschwitz were finally opened, and the world stood still in shock at the sights and scale of horror and death of the German so-called “Final Solution of the Jewish Question,” Jew-hatred seems to be again dangerously rising in Germany. In his speech given on the occasion of the Fifth World Holocaust Forum on January 23, 2020 in Jerusalem, German president Walter Steinmeier referred to this disturbing development:

The spirits of evil are emerging in a new guise . . . I wish I could say that we Germans have learned from history once and for all. But I cannot say that when hatred is spreading. I cannot say that when Jewish children are spat on in the schoolyard. I cannot say that when crude antisemitism is cloaked in supposed criticism of Israeli policy. I cannot say that when only a thick wooden door prevents a right-wing terrorist from causing a bloodbath in a synagogue in the city of Halle on Yom Kippur . . . the perpetrators are not the same. But it is the same evil (Landau, 2020).

We thank Ms. Julia Marie Wittorf for her assistance and contribution to the research and writing of this section.

Also the German minister of foreign affairs, Heiko Maas, expressed a similar concern a few days later, when referring to his fears regarding the possibility of Jews leaving Germany due to the recent rise in antisemitism:

almost every second Jew in Germany has already thought about leaving the country. It hurts even more . . . the fact that people of the Jewish faith no longer feel at home with us is a nightmare—and a shame, seventy-five years after the liberation of Auschwitz (Maas, 2020).

The concerns expressed by Steinmeier and Maas are substantial and alarming. High numbers of antisemitic attacks were recorded in 2019–2020 in Germany,² extending across the entire political spectrum. From the extreme far right to mainstream parties, as well as to the far left—antisemitism seems to be flourishing in all political realms. Moreover, the mass demonstrations against the Covid-19 measures throughout Germany in 2020 have served as fertile ground for spreading antisemitic statements, signs, and conspiracy theories, hence having contributed to the rise of antisemitism throughout the country (ZDF, 2020; Kern, 2021).³

Background

In the aftermath of World War II and after realizing the horrific dimensions of the Holocaust, only a small number of Jews who had survived the years of Nazi persecution and extermination chose to remain in Germany, with the majority of survivors of the once glorious German-Jewish community not returning to Germany. Toward the end of the 1980s, however, the community began to grow when a significant number of Jews arrived from the former Soviet Union (1989). After the reunification of Germany in 1990, the small Jewish community in former East Germany (GDR) also became part of the larger German-Jewish community in the Federal German Republic (FRG). Today, the Jewish council (Der Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland) is the official representative of German Jewry (World Jewish Congress, n.d.b).

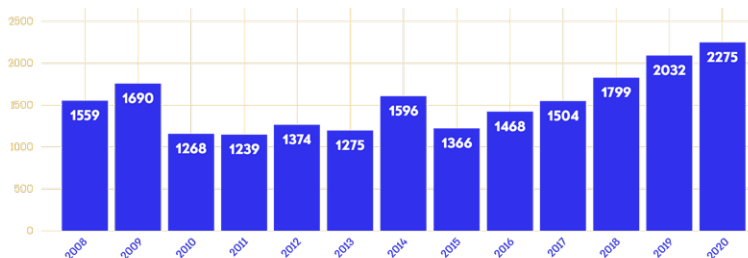
The number of Jews living in Germany currently is estimated to be more than 118,000 (DellaPergola & Staetsky, 2020, p. 14), with the largest communities in Berlin (more than 10,000), Munich (9,500), and Frankfurt (7,000). The Jewish community in Germany is the fourth largest in Europe (after France, Britain, and Russia) and the eighth-largest in the world. Most

of the Jews in Germany today are not descendants of the original community that existed before World War II but rather immigrants from the former Soviet Union as well as Eastern European Jews who arrived in the German Republic after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Their arrival helped to revive what was left of the historic community, which had lost almost all its members during the Holocaust. Today, in cities like Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, Potsdam, or Schwerin, more than half of the Jews are native Russian speakers. It is important to note that there are also several thousand Israeli Jews living in Germany today (World Jewish Congress, n.d.b).

Despite their being an extremely small part of the population in Germany (0.14% out of a total population of more than 83 million), antisemitic attacks against Jews in Germany dramatically have increased. According to a report by the German government (see Figure 1), 2,275 antisemitic incidents were reported in 2020 (DW, 2021). In addition, recent findings show that even though the German police was able to identify 1,367 suspects, only five of them were arrested (Jansen, 2021).

The Federal Ministry of the Interior (Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat, 2020), referring to data from 2019, reported a total 2,032 antisemitic incidents in the country (see Figure 1). This is an increase of 13% compared to 2018 when only 1,799 antisemitic incidents were reported. Moreover, from 2017 to 2018, antisemitic incidents had increased by 20%. German criminologists argue that the real numbers are ten times higher than reported (Avrahami, 2020).

Figure 1. Overview of Antisemitic Incidents in Germany, 2008–2020



Note. Adapted from the Federal Ministry of the Interior, „Übersicht „Hasskriminalität“: Entwicklung der Fallzahlen 2001–2019; DW, “Germany sees spike in anti-semitic crimes—reports,” 2021.

Moreover, official reports show that in the year 2019, around 85% of the antisemitic incidents in Germany were perpetrated by people identifying with the far right, 8% adhering to a foreign ideology, 4% having a religious background, 3% from an unidentified background, and 0% from the radical left (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2020a, p. 17). Interestingly enough and contradicting the numbers provided by the police on radical left antisemitic incidents, the report of the Federal Association of Antisemitism Research and Information Centers (RIAS, 2020) indicated that 13 or 1.5% of the antisemitic cases in Berlin had originated with the radical left in 2019, compared to 44 cases reported in 2018 (RIAS, 2020, p. 26). Moreover, 9.8% of antisemitic incidents in Berlin reflected anti-Israel sentiment (p. 6), totaling 86 cases (p. 26); according to the same report, these cases pose the second biggest threat against Jews in Germany. Thus, reporting of antisemitic incidents by the official establishments, the different definitions used, and the criteria of recording and handling these incidents tend to be inconsistent and problematic.

The last general public opinion poll on antisemitism conducted in Germany by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in 2019 sought to examine to what extent Germans agree with 11 antisemitic statements or stereotypes (see Figure 2). For example, it found that about 49% of respondents agreed with the statement that “Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the country in which they live,” 27% expressed sympathy with the statement that “Jews have too much power in the business world economy,” and 42% agreed with the statement that “Jews still talk too much about what happened in the Holocaust” (Anti-Defamation League, 2019).

Figure 2. ADL Poll on Antisemitism in Germany



Note. From ADL, *ADL Global 100: An Index of Anti-semitism, Germany*, 2019.

The German intelligence and security mechanisms monitor right-wing antisemitism and cyber-hate discourse (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2020a). According to the 2019 report of the RIAS (2020), antisemitic attacks in the past year were attributed mainly to extreme right-wing terrorists. A total of 1,253 incidents, most of them by right-winger extremists, were reported in four federal states—Berlin, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Schleswig-Holstein (Hänel, 2020). Furthermore, according to Germany's Intelligence Agency (BND) and the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV) [Office for the Protection of the Constitution], 32,080 right-wing extremists were identified in 2019, of which 13,000 represent a "violent-oriented" threat (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2020b, p. 53). This total number of right-wing extremists rose considerably compared to 2018, when only 24,100 right-wing extremists were identified (Edmund, 2020; Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2020a).

Today right-wing extremist activity is considered Germany's biggest and immediate threat to its national security (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2020a; Bundeskriminalamt, 2020; Wissmann, 2019). Germany's interior minister, Horst Seehofer, referred to these latest findings of the BfV, stating that "over 90% of antisemitic incidents can be traced back to right-wing extremism. And, therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say this is the biggest security policy concern in our country" (Edmund, 2020). For many, the

most dramatic “wake-up call” was the antisemitic attack in a synagogue in the former East German city of Halle on October 9, 2019, on Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of atonement. Only a wooden door prevented the right-wing terrorist from entering the synagogue and massacring the Jewish crowd praying inside. According to the 2020 annual report on antisemitism by the Kantor Center, this attack “has become a landmark in the antisemitic activity in Germany that embodies all the present problems” (Kantor Center, 2020, p. 5).⁴ When referring to attacks committed by the far right, it is also important to consider that incidents like the terror attack in Halle also provide fertile ground for further attacks against Jews. According to the RIAS report, solidarity with the perpetrator of an attack is often expressed, contributing to an increase in the number of attacks against Jews (RIAS, 2020).⁵

Antisemitism, however, is not limited to only far-right circles but it also occurs within far-left circles. Potential left-wing extremists in 2019 numbered 33,500 and 32,000 in 2018, having increased by 4% in both 2018 and 2019 (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2020b). Tom David Uhlig, a researcher from Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb) [Federal Agency for Civic Education] has stated that even though antisemitism is not an integral part of left-wing worldviews, it constantly accompanies the left-wing political movements. He argued that this phenomenon particularly appears as part of three main political positions: “criticism of capitalism,” “anti-imperialism,” and “politics of the past” (Uhlig, 2020). According to Uhlig’s argument, these positions have been characterized mainly by anti-Israel activism, such as the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS), which was defined recently by the German parliament as an antisemitic movement; the “militant Islamist milieu”; the “left-wing spectrum”; and also by the “political middle ground” (Hänel, 2020). According to the recent BfV report, 6,449 crimes motivated by left-wing extremism were recorded in 2019, having increased from 4,622 cases in 2018. More than 900 of the crimes were violent in nature. The report also stated that almost 650 incidents of Islamic terror committed against Jews had been identified in 2019 (Edmund, 2020).

Legislation Against Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial

After World War II, the National Socialist Party of Germany (NSDAP) was regarded as a “criminal organization” and became illegal. Bazylar (n.d.) has stated that “as part of efforts to overcome its Nazi past, Germany has

criminalized denial of the Holocaust and also banned the use of insignia related to Hitler's regime and [...] written materials or images promoting the Nazi message." Section 130 of the German Penal Code strictly bans "denial" or "playing down of the genocide committed under the National Socialist regime (§ 130.3)," including through the "dissemination of publications" (§ 130.4). According to Bazylar (n.d.), this section "includes public denial or gross trivialization of international crimes, especially genocide/the Holocaust." Moreover, in 1994, Holocaust denial became a criminal offense under a general anti-incitement law. According to this law, "incitement, denial, approval of Nazism, trivialization or approval, in public or in an assembly, of actions of the National Socialist regime, is a criminal offense. The 1994 amendment increased the penalty to up to five years imprisonment. It also extended the ban on Nazi symbols and anything that might resemble Nazi slogans" (Bazylar n.d.).

More recently, in May 2020, the Bundestag decided to define the BDS movement as antisemitic. "The resolution, which mentioned 'growing unease' in the German-Jewish community as antisemitism has increased, was brought to Parliament by Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Christian Democratic Union party and its Social Democratic coalition partner, as well as the liberal party and the Greens" (Bennhold, 2019).

In recent years, without denying the Holocaust, there has been a considerable rise in the phenomenon of questioning the number of victims who were murdered, relativizing the severity of the atrocities, and trivializing the Holocaust and crimes of National Socialism itself, also known as Holocaust revisionism (Hänel, 2020). To fight against this phenomenon, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance established a working definition of Holocaust denial (IHRA, 2016). In addition, due to the latest rise in antisemitic incidents and acts of terror across the country, the German government appointed a special commissioner for antisemitism to address the problem more seriously.

Antisemitism in the Political Discourse

When trying to assess the current scope of antisemitism in Germany, it is important to remember that antisemitic attacks do not occur in a total void. Social, historical, educational, and political contexts play a decisive role in

this phenomenon. Knowledge about the Holocaust within today's Germany has severely declined:

High school students, and 40% of Germans between the ages 18 to 40 know little or have even never heard about it [the Holocaust]; between a quarter to a third of the Germans surveyed held antisemitic beliefs and stereotypes; and Israel-related antisemitism, mainly originating from Muslim students and staff, is already becoming normalized among school students and teachers. Young teachers cannot cope; WWII keeps slipping away from the memory of the post-war third generation; family biographies play a smaller role; and children from immigrant families adopt different historical narratives (Kantor Center, 2020, p. 13).

Antisemitism today is not an isolated act of extremists alone; rather the political discourse constantly “triggers” and “nurtures” antisemitism, which serves as a tool in promoting political agendas and strategies. Heiko Beyer (2017), a researcher at the Federal Agency for Civic Education, expressed this notion when referring to the main antisemitic scandals that occurred in the German political discourse in recent years:

Both the defense against guilt and perpetrator-victim reversal of secondary anti-Semitism as well as anti-Zionism's criticism of Israel, which has become a fundamental anti-Semitism, *can be found in almost all social classes today* [emphasis added]. This can not only be shown by means of surveys . . . but also the—very different but broad—debates such as those about the then deputy federal chairman of the FDP Jürgen Möllemann (2002), the CDU member of the Bundestag Martin Hohmann (2003), the Left Party member of the Bundestag Inge Höger (2010), the SPD chairman Sigmar Gabriel (2012), the chairman of the AfD Thuringia Björn Höcke (2017) and the discussions about the statements by Jakob Augstein (2012) and Günter Grass (2012) point to such argumentation patterns in large parts of society.⁶

Antisemitism in the Far Right

When analyzing the rise of this phenomenon on the right, one must closely examine the rhetoric and activity “on the ground” as manifested by members of Germany’s far-right populist party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD). The AfD was founded in 2013 as an anti-EU party. In the first two years after its establishment, the party attempted to maintain a more “neoliberal right-conservative position and distance itself from neo-Nazi movements across Germany” (Salzborn, 2020, p. 121), by focusing mainly on economic issues. However, Salzborn has argued that this radically changed following the party’s split in 2015. From 2015 onward, “the AfD has positioned itself as openly antisemitic and racist” (Salzborn, 2020, p. 121). Today the AfD is mainly characterized by its racist, anti-migrant,⁷ “völkisch-nationalist” positions (Salzborn, 2018, pp. 74–75), as well as its anti-EU stance. In addition, its members reject the idea of parliamentarianism and representative democracy. According to the latest publications, and for the first time in German postwar history, the German domestic intelligence agency (BfV) even decided to place the the AfD under surveillance (Bennhold, 2021).

Researchers have not seriously addressed the role of antisemitism within the AfD and its attitude to the Nazi past, according to Salzborn (2018). In part, this may be due to the AfD’s political strategy of hiding its antisemitic roots by regarding Israel as its strategic ally in the fight against what they refer to as “the Islamic threat” and its wish to block migration into the country. With Israel and the Jewish community by its side, it was thought that no one could claim the party was antisemitic. However, this idea was doomed to fail. Salzborn (2018) has argued that “antisemitism has been gradually taking hold in the AfD . . . the AfD is shifting from a party of antisemites to an antisemitic party” (p. 75). According to Salzborn, this transformation has been gradual. First, the party and its leadership ranks became more tolerant of antisemitic positions. Then, they began denying antisemitism, together with false attempts to ban problematic party figures who had increasing tolerance for antisemitic positions (Salzborn, 2018).

The AfD manifests its antisemitic discourse in several ways. First, it uses terms taken from the Nazi era, such as *Volksgemeinschaft*⁸ (Fuchs, 2020). Salzborn (2018) has argued that

The *Gemeinschaft* [...] is conceptually opposite to the *Gesellschaft* (society), namely a form of association that is open, plural, accepting of contradictions, and ultimately voluntary. In contrast, the *Volksgemeinschaft* stands only for coercion, one that is repressive and totalitarian towards both the included and the excluded (pp. 76–77).

Another characteristic is the use of “victimhood” rhetoric. According to Salzborn (2018), this is the “desire” (p. 79) to express Nazi positions without being called a far-right extremist. This phenomenon takes place in a country where most citizens have not even begun to explore the question of their own grandparents’ “complicity in the Nazi regime” (p. 97). The “victim discourse” expressed by many AfD members is, in other words, the attempt to revise the past and to rewrite it in a way that would be more “convenient” to accept. This is done by reversing the “perpetrators” and the “victims.” According to Salzborn, when the Nazi past is revised, there are no more perpetrators—only victims. In this way, the blame for the Holocaust and the atrocities of World War II falls fully on Hitler and therefore the “German people” (p. 81) are no longer responsible. Salzborn has explained how this psychological process works:

It was not that Germans did something, but that something was done *to them* [emphasis added], in a rhetorical trick achieved by separating Hitler—as the personal embodiment of evil and Nazism—from his people, so that guilt can be expatriated and denied. In Gauland’s worldview it seems that there are no perpetrators, except Hitler and perhaps a few leading Nazis (p. 82).⁹

Antisemitic Discourse in the AfD—Selected Examples

In recent years, the AfD has been linked to several antisemitic incidents. One of the most memorable antisemitic cases was the “Gedeon affair” in 2016. Wolfgang Gedeon, a former AfD member, stated that “the Zionist influence is manifesting itself in a limiting of free speech” (Salzborn, 2018, p. 86), implying that Zionism has a more sinister role as a conspiracy or as a source of power exuding influence on Germany. Associated with several antisemitic scandals, Gedeon was quoted as saying:

Just as Islam is the external foe, the Talmudic ghetto Jews were the internal foe of the Christian Occident . . . As the political center of power shifted during the twentieth century from Europe to the U.S., Judaism, in its secular Zionist form, became a decisively powerful and influential factor in Western politics . . . The previous internal foe of the Occident is now a dominating power in the West, and the previous external foe of the Occident namely Islam, has overrun the borders through mass migration and penetrated deeply into Western societies, and is reshaping them in many ways (Salzborn, 2018, p. 86; Bender & Soldt, 2016).

Moreover, he has been responsible for antisemitic slogans such as the so-called “enslavement of humanity within a messianic empire of the Jews,” “Judaizing the Christian religion,” and “Zionizing the politics of the West,” and more (Saure & Maegel, 2016).

AfD party members also attempted to stop the state from funding memorial sites that related to the Nazi era, such as former concentration camps, with the goal of creating a new “culture of remembrance” (Salzburg, 2018, p. 82).¹⁰ In 2017, Björn Höcke, an AfD parliamentary leader in Thuringia’s states assembly and leader of the “Der Flügel” faction in the party, spoke in Dresden at an event of the AfD youth organization (see Figure 3). He argued that the bombing of Dresden should be regarded as a “war crime” and added that a “turnaround in remembrance policy” should be applied and regarded the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe as a “memorial of shame” in Germany, “planted . . . in the heart of its capital” (Salzburg, 2018, p. 83).

Figure 3. Member of AfD Condemns World War II Monument



Note. Germany: AfD's Höcke condemns Berlin's WWII monument as "memorial of shame," YouTube, January 17, 2017.

Moreover, in a recent tweet, Höcke was quoted as saying, "The resettlement program of the globalists must be ended immediately. In addition, it must now be clarified how many people were able to buy access to German social security in this way" (Höcke, 2020). It should be noted that the term "globalist" is often used as a slur for Jews (see Figure 4). Here the context fits the extreme right and antisemitic belief, according to which Jews "use their power to swamp Europe with refugees."¹¹

Figure 4. Antisemitic Tweet by Björn Höcke



Note. The image reads: “Resettlement Program—Corruption, Fraud and Smuggling at the UNHCR. From Björn Höcke [@BjoernHoecke], Twitter, January 14, 2020.

In addition to Höcke’s statements, Alexander Gauland, leader of the AfD in the Bundestag, repeated the same arguments in a speech in September 2017:

We have the right to be proud of the achievements of German soldiers from two world wars . . . There is no longer a need to reproach us with for these 12 years. They no longer pertain to our identity. This is why we also have the right to take back not only our country, but also our past. (Salzborn, 2018, p. 84; Faz.net, 2017).

Two years later, Gauland was recorded as saying that: “The real power is becoming more and more invisible and uncontrollable. The globalist octopus

has no interest in peoples and nations” (Friedensdemo Watch, 2019, see August 18, 2019; Figure 5).

Figure 5. Alexander Gauland, leader of the AfD



Note. From Friedensdemo Watch, 2019, Antisemitism in the AfD using the example of Alexander Gauland.

Another member of the party, Herold Peters-Hartmann, AfD district chairman of Würzburg, was quoted in an interview in February 2020 (see Figure 6) as saying: “We have a problem here. We have a really big problem here in Germany . . . We have another bloc that has a lot of influence. Economically, culturally. These are the people of the Jewish bloc—the people of the Jewish faith” (MuslimTvDe, 2020).

Figure 6. Member of AfD States that Jewish Bloc is a Problem



Note. Herold Peters-Hartmann, AfD district chairman of Würzburg, in interview stating that the Jewish bloc is a problem. From MuslimTvDe, The Islamophobia of the AfD, YouTube, February 26, 2020.

Antisemitism in the Discourse of the Far Left

Antisemitic discourse can also be found in the rhetoric of the far-left political parties in Germany. The basic assumption expressed by the far left is the notion of an “imaginary of power” which has been attributed to the Jews, Zionism, and Israel according to Moishe Postone, a pioneer in researching antisemitism (Thomas, 2010). In an interview, Postone explained that

The Jews are seen as constituting an immensely powerful, abstract, intangible global form of power that dominates the world. There is nothing similar to this idea at the heart of other forms of racism. Racism rarely, to the best of my knowledge, constitutes a whole system that seeks to explain the world. Anti-semitism is a primitive critique of the world, of capitalist modernity. *The reason I regard it as being particularly dangerous for the left is precisely because anti-semitism has a pseudo-emancipatory dimension that other forms of racism rarely have* [emphasis added] (Thomas, 2010).

Historian Jeffrey Herf added his interpretation of the anti-Zionist aspect of antisemitism, which is regarded as part of the left political circles:

Communist anti-Zionism was an ideological offensive against the State of Israel whose advocates insisted that the accusation that they were motivated by antisemitism was an imperialist or Zionist trick to defuse legitimate criticism of Israel's policies toward the Arabs and the Palestinians (Herf, 2017, pp. 130–131).

These ideological characteristics can be found also among some members of the German far-left party, Die Linke. The party was founded in 2007 as a result of a fusion between two parties: the successor of the Eastern German Communist Party (SED) and the Election Alternative for Social Justice (WASG), a group of social democrats and labor unionists whose origins were in the Social Democratic Party (SPD; Voigt, 2013, p. 335). Die Linke has become a “major player in German politics and has a strong influence on the European left in general,” according to Voigt (p. 335). He has argued that there are several explanations for the hatred of Israel among the members of this party. One of the main explanations is “anti-imperialism” (pp. 335–336). According to this view, “the world and society are split into two opposing groups: one group wants peace and the other group wants to pursue imperialism” (p. 339). Voigt has stated that “there is an exploiting First World and an exploited Third World,” which

inevitably leads to the personification of social relations, which makes it easy to pinpoint the persons responsible for exploitation and oppression. This encourages all those who refuse to use knowledge and rationality to understand the complex world we live in to entertain wild conspiracy theories. On the basis of old, deeply entrenched prejudices, Jews are perceived as those pulling the strings, while Israel is seen as the spearhead of Western imperialism in the Middle East and as an artificial state that is a foreign object in the organic body of Arab societies (p. 339).

Another important characteristic of the German radical left is the conceptual collaboration with Islamist groups. Voigt has argued that both share an “anti-imperialist ideology, a deep hatred of Israel and the United States, and a dystopian yearning for a simple, premodern world. Both ideologies also reject globalization and financial capital as a symbol of the exploitative capitalist society. Both tend to simplify the complexity of the modern world

into a clear-cut, black and white paradigm without shades of gray” (Voigt, 2013, p. 342).

Antisemitic Discourse in Die Linke

Die Linke politicians have both supported or promoted several incidents of virulent anti-Israel sentiment that has devolved into overt antisemitism. In January 2020, Annette Groth, a BDS activist and former member of Die Linke, joined BDS Berlin, Palestine Speaks, and the German branch of Jewish Voice for Peace and made a speech protesting the “criminalization” of the BDS movement (Publicsolidarity, 2020; Reuters, 2010; Freedom Flotilla Coalition, 2018). During her speech, she spoke against Israel, touching on classic antisemitic tropes when she claimed that “no other country imprisons as many children as Israel.”¹²

In addition, Heike Hänsel, vice-chairperson of Die Linke, (see Figure 7) hosted and moderated a webinar on the topic of Israeli annexation plans (Hänsel, 2020). One of the invited speakers was Mustafa Barghouti, a key member of the Palestinian BDS National Committee (see BDS National Committee, 2010). Despite being a German public official, Hänsel did not stop or react to antisemitic statements made by Barghouti during the webinar. Barghouti claimed that Israel created a system of “224 Ghetto stands in the Westbank and one big Ghetto stand in Gaza” (Hänsel, 2020, 13:30), thereby comparing Israel to Nazi Germany and perpetuating the reversal of the victim into the perpetrator described above to a German audience by exporting it to the Palestinian narrative.¹³

Figure 7. Member of Die Linke Hosting Webinar about Israeli Annexation



Israeli Annexation Plans for the West Bank

 **Heike Hänsel** was live.
July 21 · 🌐

Israeli Annexation Plans for the West Bank

Guests

- Dr Mustafa Barghouti [المستطفي البرعوثي](#), politician, former Palestinian presidential candidate
- Wesam Ahmad, Business- and Human Rights Coordinator, Al-Haq Organization [مؤسسة الحق](#)
- Aida Touma-Sliman, Member of the Knesset, Joint List, Hadash ([@https://www.facebook.com/aidatumal/](https://www.facebook.com/aidatumal/))
- Gaby Lasky, Meretz, lawyer and human rights activist (<https://www.facebook.com/GabyLaskyKnesset/>)
- Avrum Burg, former speaker of the Knesset (tbc)

Note. From H. Hänsel, Israeli Annexation Plans for West Bank [Video], Facebook, 2020.