LINGUISTIC SELF-DEFENCE GUIDE AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Linguistic Self-Defence Guide Against Antisemitism

Manipulation is a form of abuse. However, many of us lack sufficient self-defence training to recognise and resist it. In fact, most of the times, we do not even notice that we are manipulated and deceived.

Within Get the Trolls Out, our monitors have detected about 200 antisemitic media incidents in 5 European countries (Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary and the United Kingdom). Anti-Jewish hatred is spread through manipulation, through a tricky language mostly, which can effectively influence people.

Relying on examples of antisemitism uncovered by our monitors, our *Linguistic Self-Defense Guide Against Antisemitism* teaches you the most common hidden linguistic mechanisms that you can come across in antisemitic speech. Here are a number of tricks to look out for in order to protect yourself and avoid falling victim to manipulation.

Our expert

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Us & Them

"Watch out for personal pronouns!"

To avoid repeating names all the time, we often refer to people by a special group of words, called **personal pronouns** in linguistics. Some of them — like "I", "you", "she", or "him" — refer to a person. Other pronouns — like "we", "us", "they", or "them" — are used in place of people. Since there is nothing unusual about using personal pronouns, normally we do not pay attention to the whole thing at all. Yet, this also means that we may overlook cases when personal pronouns are used in tricky ways.

On a BBC Radio London programme, for example, a phone-in caller "Andy from St Margaret" began his comment by stating: "They are trying to control us more, and more, and more." Andy used two personal pronouns: "they" and "us". Both are plural, they refer to groups of people. Though Andy was reluctant to admit this, **he used "they" in place of Jewish people, while "us" stood for Britons** in his statement.

When we hear or read that someone refers to groups, communities, or cultures by plural personal pronouns and says offensive remarks about them, we should be cautious. As this case shows, plural personal pronouns can be deceptive:

1) By using the pronouns "they" and "us" Andy indicated that Jews and Britons are completely different people. In this way, he **subtly excluded British Jews from the national community** of Britons.

2) By separating "they" ("the Jews") from "us" ("the Britons"), Andy could **arbitrarily attribute different traits and behaviour** to the two groups. In this particular case, the plural personal pronouns formed the background to describe Jews as aggressive and power-hungry people who victimize Britons. Such negative clichés of Jews could evoke or fuel in the audience an irrational fear of Jewish people.

3) If we refer to a group of people by the plural personal pronouns "they" or "them", we can **create the impression that everyone who belongs to that group is the same**. Accordingly, in case we claim that "they" are responsible for some bad deeds and/or characterised by very unlikable traits, we will, intentionally or unintentionally, indicate that this applies to the whole group. For example, Andy implied that all Jews are aggressive and power-hungry. Get the Trolls Out monitors have also detected a Greek blog post in which the author attacked Jewish people in a similar fashion: "They destroyed the universe." Even if such statements have nothing common with reality, they can covertly influence our thinking, for instance, through plural personal pronouns.

4) By using the plural personal pronoun "they" — instead of speaking directly about Jewish people, Andy created ambiguity. This **made antisemitism in his statement less salient**, protecting the speaker and misleading the listener at the same time.

5) Ambiguity could also trigger an irrational fear of Jews in the listeners through **covertly strengthening the existing negative clichés** of Jewish influence and revengefulness. By using a personal pronoun ("they") instead of a noun ("Jews"), the speaker implied that the people in-question ("the Jews") are so powerful and dangerous that it was better for him not even mentioning their name.

Groups, national communities, cultures are characterized by inner diversity. Those who spread hate and discrimination want you to believe the opposite. Don't let them trick you.

Soros & Rothschild

Two family names come up frequently in Get the Trolls Out media monitoring: Soros and Rothschild. By referring to these, some speakers use an old rhetorical trick which allows them to voice anti-Jewish hatred and deny antisemitism at the same time.

This figure of speech is what rhetoricians in ancient Greece called *synecdoche*. Even if you have not heard of this trope before, it is very likely that you encounter and use it frequently in your daily life. *Synecdoche* makes it possible for us to **talk about the whole by referring only to a part of it**. For example, instead of "*a person*" (the whole), you can talk about "*a face*" (the part): "*She saw many familiar faces at the concert.*" Similarly, instead of "*a car*" or *"a motorcycle"* (the whole), you can refer to "*wheels"* (the parts). Or, instead of a "*glass of wine*" (the whole), you can simply say *"a glass"* (the part).

Although normally there is nothing special about using synecdoches, this trope can be misused. In antisemitic speech, for instance, synecdoche is a popular tool for manipulation. One among all: the reference to George Soros and members of the Rothschild family.

George Soros is a billionaire businessman. Members of the Rothschild family are also among the world's wealthiest people. It is widely known that both Soros and the Rothschilds are of Jewish decent. Of course, their Jewish background does not automatically make antisemitic any criticism towards the business and other public activities of Soros and the Rothschilds. However, being affluent and influential individuals, the **references to Soros and the Rothschilds can be misused**. First of all, they may strengthen the clichés that all Jews are rich and powerful. Additionally, in antisemitic speech, Soros and the Rothschilds most often play the role of the part

which stands for the whole (Jews in general). In this way, the references to Soros and the Rothschilds can function as synecdoches and reinforce different anti-Jewish stereotypes.

In Greece, a book has been published with the title "*The Jewish-Zionist vampire Soros is thirsty for Greek blood."* In this case, the synecdoche is combined with a ritual murder charge, a histori-cally developed stereotypical accusation against Jews. Furthermore, the Greek far-right newspaper Elefteri Ora, last December published an article with the headline: "Rothschild snatched our money". Here, the reference to Rothschild reinforced the **clichés of Jewish business-mindedness** and fraudulence.

Another example comes from the UK: in November 2016, the Green Party's foreign affairs spokesperson said in an interview: *"There are British oil companies such as Genel Energy, run by Nathaniel Rothschild, one of George Osborne's friends, who are making money, who are buying oil from ISIS, who are putting money into the pot, allowing ISIS therefore to fuel their evil across the world."* In this false accusation, **Nathaniel Rothschild stood for Jews in general**, and the synecdoche supported the antisemitic cliché that Jews are criminal world conspirators.

This antisemitic stereotype is particularly often evoked by synecdoches which involve George Soros. Since the businessman provides significant financial support to political causes and civil society initiatives, the references to Soros often help evoke images of the rich and power-hungry Jew who engages in clandestine conspiratorial activities to manipulate, exploit, undermine, and destroy innocent communities. A recent mainstream Hungarian newspaper article, for example, argued that George Soros "*took advantage of the good faith and nativity of the European Union*" to bring migrants to the EU.

If you say "face", "wheels" or "glass", people will perfectly understand that you actually mean "a person", "a car", or "a glass of wine". If you say "Soros" and "Rothschild" and evoke antisemitic clichés, it will be similarly clear for many that you are actually talking about Jews in general. However, in such cases, the synecdoche **protects from accusations of antisemitism** as speakers can claim that they are not talking about Jews in general, but about Soros and Rothschild in particular.

Victim-Abuser Reversal

Antisemitism discriminates against people simply because they are Jews or perceived as Jews. However, the idea of victimising a group of people just because of their ethnic, religious or cultural background may sound too overtly racist to many. Therefore, in antisemitic speech, manipulative rhetorical devices are used to "justify" the loathing of Jews. One common deceptive rhetorical vehicle is the victim-abuser reversal. It creates the false impression that the real victims of antisemitism, Jewish people, are actually not victims but abusers.

A recent incident from the UK may highlight how the victim-abuser reversal works. In November 2015, pro-Hitler posters were plastered over a university campus in Birmingham. The posters featured Adolf Hitler, claiming that he "was right". A student drew attention to this antisemitic incident on Twitter and, in response; she received a number of offensive messages.

One tweet read: "I'm dismayed (not surprised) that Jews always play the victims and never try to end their parasitism on others."

This statement contains at least four victim-abuser reversals:

1. The tweet states that "Jews always play the role of the victims". This indicates that Jews are phoney, fraudulent, and manipulative people, aiming to mislead and emotionally abuse others. Although it was the Twitter user who actually attacked Jews, this form of reversal deceitfully assigned the role of the abuser

to Jewish people.

2. There are two adverbials of frequency in the tweet: "always" and "never". The first, "always", puts the victim-abuser reversal into historical context. By saying "Jews always play the victims", the Twitter user suggests that Jewish people have never actually been victimised throughout the history. This includes the denial of the victimhood of those millions of Jews who were systematically killed by the Nazis, especially that the tweet came in response to the appearance of pro-Hitler posters.

3. By saying that Jews "never try to end their parasitism on others", the speaker reverses the victim-abuser roles another time. Adverb "never" supports the portrayal of Jews as perpetual victimisers.

4. By replying this way, the tweet also hurts all those who feel offended by the pro-Hitler posters. The victim-abuser reversal shifts the attention from the real issue (the concrete antisemitic incident) to a manipulative antisemitic claim ("Jews are abusers"). In other words, the reversal falsely implies that what matters is not anti-Jewish aggression but Jewish aggression.

It is virtually impossible to think of any existing antisemitic cliché that would not build on the victim-abuser reversal: "Jews are ritual murderers of Christians"; "Jews trick and cheat others"; "Jews control the media to brainwash people"; "Jews sponsor and organise harmful underground activities to undermine the peace and prosperity of nations". Antisemites even accuse Jews of racism, although antisemitism itself is a form of racism. "Once again, the vicious and deeply ingrained hate of the Jews against the white race is clear." The previous quote from a French blog on "White Europe", detected by Get the Trolls Out monitors, is an example of a victim-racist abuser reversal.

In antisemitic speech Jews are always presented as abusers who victimise others. However, the construction of Jews as abusers by antisemites is manipulative, it actually victimises Jews. By suggesting that Jewish people are dangerous, harmful and evil, the victim-abuser reversal gives justification for verbal and physical aggression against Jews.

Meaning Without Saying

It is possible to say things without actually saying them. On such occasions, messages are only suggested, conveyed — or, as British scholar Paul Grice called this form of communication —, *implicated* instead of being directly expressed.

A large part of our everyday communication consists of implications. Most of the time, we easily code and decode implications. If I say to my mother that *"I'm thirsty"*, she will understand that I would like to have a glass of water. If we organise a party and I tell my friends that *"Jane talks too much",* they will know that I do not want to invite Jane to the party.

Politicians and the media use implications too. A newspaper headline which informs you that the American president will skip a visit to a country, may implicate that the relationship of the US and that particular country has declined in recent times.

Importantly, implications can be misused both in private and public speech. Through implications, speakers may — intentionally or unintentionally — voice unpleasant, controversial, derogatory, and abusive messages with impunity. The mechanism is simple: as it is very difficult to hold someone responsible for unsaid words, implications allow speakers to transmit messages that they would not or would only reluctantly say explicitly.

This is the main reason why implications are frequent in antisemitic speech too. If anti-Jewish hatred is spread through implications instead of explicit statements, speakers can evade responsibility.

On a recent BBC Radio London programme, for example, a phone-in caller said: *"80% of corporate America, of the media, is owned by Jews".* It is not so much the literal but rather the implicated meaning of the statement what matters in this case. By claiming that Jewish people are predominant among media entrepreneurs in the US, the caller evoked an antisemitic cliché, namely that Jews control and censor information and manipulate the public this way. In this case the implication may seem obvious; nevertheless, since the cliché was implicated and not directly expressed, it could be difficult to call the speaker to account for his words.

In antisemitic speech, implications are also widely used to spread anti-Jewish conspiracy theories. In these instances, the decoding of the implication is typically supported by such questions: *"don't you find it strange/isn't it surprising that…?".* A number of incidents detected by monitors of Get the Trolls Out exemplify this form of manipulation.

In France, following the terror attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015, an article was published by a non-mainstream local website, a self-proclaimed provider of "alternative" information. Evoking anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, the piece, which attracted more than 4000 views, accused Israel and Zionism of manipulating French politics. The author concluded the article by asking: *"How come Jews were informed on the morning of 13 November about the imminent attacks?"* This ending can be easily mistaken for a question. However, it is important to notice that instead of asking something, the author of the piece actually makes an arbitrary, false claim: *"Jews were informed on the morning of the 13 November about the imminent attacks".*

Presenting an allegation in the form of a question, the author creates the false impression that his or her arbitrary, false claim is true. Additionally, this claim is an implication which evokes antisemitic clichés. The implicated message is that Jews are "evil", "cynical", "world-conspirators". Though the claim conveys these stereotypes in itself, the question format also urges the readers to decode the implicated message.

Another similar example comes from Greece. Panos Leliatsos, former member of the Independent Greeks party, posted the following message on Facebook after the Paris terror attacks: *"Three months ago, the leading Rabbi of Jerusalem was calling French Jews to leave the country. 9000 Jews left [France] to go to Israel. Is this telling you something?"* In this case, a question follows an allegation. The question is

used to reinforce the decoding of the antisemitic clichés evoked by the claim. The implication is that Jews engage in secret, harmful, conspiratorial activities and do not care about the life of non-Jews.

Oftentimes, it is not the literal but the implicated meaning of a statement that contains the "real" message. While it is relatively easy to decode implications, it is difficult to detect them as they are, by definition, invisible. This makes implications powerful vehicles in antisemitic and other manipulative discourses.

Downplaying & Denying the Holocaust

Although our knowledge of the genocide of six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators is based on historical evidence, in antisemitic speech, the Holocaust is often downplayed and denied. Here we review the most common forms of manipulation that are used to minimise or deny the Holocaust[1].

1. Some speakers downplay the genocide of Jews by using an inappropriate, informal vocabulary when referring to it. In March 2016, for example, the British Labour Party expelled one of its members for publishing antisemitic articles on the internet. Among other things, the politician doubted whether the extermination of six million Jews should concern the public. He questioned the *"guilt tripping over the Holocaust"*. In this case the informal language also indicates that the speaker does not take the subject seriously but rather belittles it. *"Guilt tripping"* is an informal phrase that people normally use in connection with private issues. It is fine to talk about *"guilt-tripping"* if we forget to call a friend. However, talking about *"guilt-tripping"* in the context of a genocide, the systematic murder of millions of people, is highly inappropriate and abusive.

2. Referring to the Holocaust in the context of other genocides may improve the public understanding of a genocide, an act "committed with intend to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group". However, in some cases, speakers use such comparisons to pursue a very different goal – to downplay the mass murder of six million Jews. For example, in the UK, a phone-in caller in a

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[1] "Because the original meaning of the word Holocaust is "sacrificial offering", there are objections to its use. The murder of the Jews was not an offering. Therefore, both in Israel and Jewish circles outside of Israel, people usually prefer to speak of the Shoah. Derived from Hebrew, this word means "annihilation" or "annihilating whirlwind" and was already used during the war years to refer to the (annihilation) extermination of the Jewish people by the Nazis in Poland." (Overcoming Antisemitism - Handbook for Educators - CEJI 2012).

radio programme said: *"There have been many Holocausts…"* By referring to the genocide of Jews in plural *("Holocausts"),* the caller's purpose was to belittle the mass murder.

3. Other times, a subtype of the victim-abuser reversal, what we can call *genocide reversal* is used to downplay the Holocaust. On such occasions, Jews who were actually victims of a genocide are falsely accused of mass murder. Nearly 50,000 Greek Jews were killed in Nazi death camps. Nevertheless, in January 2016, the Greek far-right newspaper Elefteri Ora framed a historic event, the rebellion of diaspora Jews in the Roman empire that involved atrocities against Romans and Greeks, as a genocide. In a manipulative fashion, the newspaper talked about the *"great massacre of Greeks by Jews"* on its front page.

4. Another typical form of victim-abuser reversal is when speakers argue that people are overwhelmed by the discussions on the Holocaust. The former Lord Mayor of Bradford, England, for example, retweeted an image that featured the words: *"Your school system only tells you about Anne Frank and the 6 million Zionists that were killed by Hitler…"* The tweet evoked antisemitic clichés of Jewish privilege and manipulation. This way, the tweet presented as victims the students who learn about the Holocaust in history classes rather than the six million Jewish people who were exterminated in death camps (and whom the tweet deceitfully identified as "Zionists"). This manipulative shift trivialised the Holocaust.

5. When the performance of far-right, fascist, Nazi political figures of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s is discussed in positive terms, without any reference to the Holocaust, this constitutes an implicit form of genocide relativisation. Although it is not directly expressed, in such cases the implication is that the mass murder of Jews has no — or only a little — significance. For example, member of the Hungarian far-right party Jobbik described Gyula Gömbös — leader of an extremist, antisemite Hungarian organisation in the 1920s and Prime Minister of Hungary between 1932 and 1936 — as a *"statesman"* in a Facebook post. Although Gyula Gömbös died in 1936, he played a crucial political role in spreading antisemitism in Hungary in the decades that preceded the Holocaust. By calling him a *"statesman",* the politician ignored this background and therefore downplayed the genocide.

If the instances above minimise the importance of the mass murder of Jews, there are also cases of people who deny the genocide. This is usually done through superlative, exaggerated statements, as the next two examples show:

13

1. A Twitter user in the UK denied the Holocaust saying: *"No one is able to show us at Auschwitz or anywhere else even one of these chemical slaughterhouses."* This person aimed to stress that the genocide of Jews is an absolute lie. In the tweet, the two indefinite pronouns (*"no one"* and *"anywhere")* are tools of enhancement. The tweet denies the historical fact that the Nazis used gas chambers in the concentration camps to murder Jews. The pronouns reinforce this lie by falsely suggesting that no person has ever seen the gas chambers and that there is no place where they could be seen.

2. A political activist in Belgium [referred](#) to *"hoax gas-chambers built in Hollywood in 1946 with Steven Spielberg's approval stamp".* This statement denies the Holocaust four times. By referring to *"hoax gas chambers",* the author suggests that the existence of the gas chambers is a lie fabricated to manipulate people. The date, *"in 1946"* implies that the gas chambers could not exist as they were built after World War Two. The references to *"Hollywood"* and *"Stephen Spielberg"* suggest that the Holocaust is fiction and not fact.

A diverse rhetorical arsenal can support the downplay or the denial of the genocide of six million Jews. All of these are tools of discursive abuse and contribute to the spread of disinformation and hatred.

[1]"Because the original meaning of the word Holocaust is "sacrificial offering", there are objections to its use. The murder of the Jews was not an offering. Therefore, both in Israel and Jewish circles outside of Israel, people usually prefer to speak of the Shoah. Derived from Hebrew, this word means "annihilation" or "annihilating whirlwind" and was already used during the war years to refer to the (annihilation) extermination of the Jewish people by the Nazis in Poland." (Overcoming Antisemitism - Handbook for Educators - CEJI 2012).

Manipulation through Human Rights

In antisemitic speech, human rights values are represented in a manipulative fashion. Speakers who spread anti-Jewish hatred, routinely misuse the arguments of those institutions and individuals who respect and protect human rights. By misrepresenting the claims of real human rights defenders, antisemites aim to create the false impression that Jews violate the basic liberties of non-Jews. This form of victim-abuser reversal is employed by speakers to "justify" antisemitism.

After World War Two, the genocide of Jews and other victims - including Roma people, homosexuals, disabled people and political prisoners - by the Nazis and their collaborators put human rights at the heart of global policy making. In 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, the principles advocated by the UN and other organisations have been twisted by antisemites to reinforce old forms of manipulation.

As the incidents detected by monitors of Get the Trolls Out show, in today's antisemitic speech Jews are frequently constructed as human rights abusers. For instance, speakers typically accuse Jews of depriving non-Jews of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This form of manipulation builds upon the old antisemitic cliché that Jews own and control media outlets to brainwash populations.

The old stereotype of Jewish media dominance was evoked in a recent Facebook post by a French speaker: *"In a democracy, information is meant to be free and pluralistic. In reality, the most important media outlets are entirely in the hands of Jews, and this in practically all domains."* Assigning the role of the human rights abuser to Jewish people, this Facebook message suggested that Jews undermine democracy and the freedom of the press in France.

Indicating the pervasiveness of antisemitic stereotypes, the cliché of Jewish media dominance recurs in new guises as well. Since the emergence of the World Wide

15

Web, antisemites argue that Jews control not only the mainstream media but also the key services on the internet. In November 2015, a French blog on "white Europe" claimed, for example, that Wikipedia is *"edited by Jews for promoting their tribal interest."* The same blog also talked about the *"Jews of Google"* who *"censor"* information.

Antisemites also demand freedom of speech, presenting themselves this way as victims who are deprived of a fundamental right. Although on such occasions, the speakers simply refer to "freedom of speech, they are actually arguing for the "freedom of hate speech". This particular form of victim-abuser reversal is often reinforced by the complaint that speakers are stigmatised as racist and antisemitic if they practice "the freedom" of derogatory, offensive speech, or deny or downplay the Holocaust.

For example, the above-mentioned Facebook post on France continued with this false accusation: *"In the Jewish world vision, the goy (goyim plural) is the non-Jew. He is considered a beast. According to the Talmud itself, by far the most influential sacred text in Judaism, he is concerned less than a dog. His only vocation is thus to serve his Jewish master without ever having to complain. Otherwise, he passes as "racist", "Antisemite" and the Jews will do everything to make him suffer the consequences."*

In antisemitic speech the right to freedom of opinion and expression is misused to advocate verbal abuse and discrimination. Therefore, when it comes to antisemitic discourses, one should not take demands for freedom of opinion and expression at face value.

'The Jew' & 'A Jew'

In antisemitic speech, you can often hear the words "the Jew" or "a Jew". Although it may seem so, in this way speakers do not refer to individuals alone. In antisemitic discourses, the references to "the Jew" or "a Jew" are references to all Jewish people. This particular form of synecdoche (use the *part* to refer to the *whole*) is also known in linguistics as the "collective singular". It is employed to manipulate people into believing stereotypes about Jewish people.

Synecdoches are widespread in antisemitic and in other forms of racist and discriminatory speech. These tropes allow speakers to talk about groups by referring to their particular members. Speakers can mean Jewry in general ("the whole"), but refer only to one person ("the part"), identifying her or him as "a Jew" or "the Jew". If such references are combined with anti-Jewish clichés, the synecdoche is used to justify and spread antisemitism.

Normally, the choice between the indefinite ("*a*" and "*an*") and the definite (*"the"*) article is of primary importance. While indefinite articles refer to entities in general, the definite article indicates that we talk about one particular thing. However, in antisemitic speech, the indefinite and the definite article in front of the word "Jew" express the same meaning. In antisemitic discourses the references to "the *Jew"* or "a *Jew"* suggest that Jewish people constitute a homogenous group of which members are fraudulent, immoral, destructive, and dangerous.

Aiming to spread anti-Jewish hatred in Hungary, the extremist website *Kuruc.info*, for example, frequently refers to "the Jew" or "a Jew" in its headlines and articles. In September 2015, Kuruc.info claimed that the French satirical outlet *Charlie Hebdo "is making fun"* of the tragedy of the toddler who drowned in the sea while his family was trying to escape from Syria to Greece. The Hungarian outlet also added: *"of course a Jew can do anything"*. In this case, the reference to "a Jew" (and *Charlie*

Hebdo, which *Kuruc.info* identified as a Jewish publication) stood for Jews in general, and evoked the antisemitic stereotypes of Jewish cynicism, cruelty, and privilege.

In February 2016, *Kuruc.info* identified the American actor and TV producer Lena Dunham as "*a degenerated Jew of the many*". On this occasion, the outlet made it explicit that it used a synecdoche. Indeed, the derogatory, abusive reference to Dunham included all Jewish people.

Another example comes from Greece. In September 2015, the nationalistic blog Antipliroforisi published an image on its Facebook page which featured several antisemitic caricatures, asking: *"Who controls the world?"* The answer to this question was: "*The eternal Jew.*" This particular synecdoche, "the eternal Jew", has historical connotations. It played a central role in the Nazi propaganda: in 1937 an exhibition was organized and in 1940 a film was produced under the title "The eternal Jew" ("Der ewige Jude") by the Nazis. Talking about "the *Jew*" and "a *Jew*" anti-semites can argue that Jews are evil *because* they are Jews. The figure of "*the eternal Jew*" gives emphasis to this racist and hostile claim in a powerful way, by indicating that Jewish evilness is timeless.

In antisemitic discourses, the references to *"a Jew"* or "*the Jew*" are dangerous tools of manipulation. Creating the false impression that Jews are immoral and threatening by nature, these "collective singulars" call for verbal and physical violence against Jewish people.

The Israel Synecdoche

In antisemitic speech, the references to well-known, affluent and powerful individuals who are Jewish or thought to be Jewish, convey negative and abusive messages concerning Jewry. Speakers also identify individuals as "a Jew" or "the Jew" to attack Jewish people.

When doing this, speakers use the rhetorical tool of synecdoche which allows them to refer to "the part" while meaning "the whole". However, not only individuals can stand for Jews in antisemitic speech. Speakers also commonly replace Jewry as a whole with the state of Israel to foster anti-Jewish hatred.

Any country can be criticized for its domestic or foreign policies. Nevertheless, in the case of Israel, a state of which majority of population is Jewish, the real purpose of the criticism of the country can also be the spread of antisemitism. This happens when instead of meaningful critique, anti-Jewish clichés are evoked in the context of the Jewish state.

As monitors of Get the trolls out unveiled, Israel has recently been falsely associated with terrorism by political figures and the media in Europe. Although speakers referred to Israel in the detected texts, they were actually speaking about Jews. Instead of the legitimate criticism of Israel, the false accusations merely expressed and triggered hostile feelings towards Jewish people.

In Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary and the UK, these false accusations primarily evoked the stereotype of Jewish world conspiracy:

On 15 November 2015, the nationalistic Anemos Anatropis.blogspot in Greece published an article, asking: "What is so hard to understand, after all? That the Zionist State is behind the Islamic State?"

A day after the suicide bombings in Belgium, an activist of the British Labour Party said on Facebook: *"How many more attacks have to take place before the world fully understand that ISIS is run by Israel?"*

Oftentimes, the stereotype of Jewish world conspiracy was accompanied by other antisemitic clichés as well:

During a civil council committee hearing on 16 November 2015, the representative of Hungary's ruling Fidesz party and the mayor of the Hungarian city Szentgotthárd said about the terrorist attacks in France: *"What happened in Paris is clear evidence that certain business circles, dare I say business circles which are likely backed by the Jewish state, are trying to pit Christian Europe against Islam."* In this statement, besides Jewish world conspiracy, the Hungarian mayor also evoked the clichés of Jewish business-mindedness and cruelty.

In France, a blog on "white Europe" argued that "*An Israeli rabbi says that the attacks of Paris are a revenge for Holocaust.*" In this case, the false accusation reinforced the stereotypes of Jewish world conspiracy and revengefulness at the same time.

On 20 December 2015, the former member of the Belgian parliament, Laurent Louis posted this message on Facebook: *"The more ISIS cuts heads and the more that Israel enlarges its hold on the region. ISIS keeps going for Israel and its Zionist allies."* In this Facebook post, the reference to Israel, besides the stereotype of Jewish world conspiracy, also evoked the myth of Jewish bloodthirstiness that dates back to the Middle Ages.

Replacing Jewry with Israel, speakers can simultaneously voice and deny antisemitism. They may claim that they are speaking about Israel and not about Jews. Nevertheless, it is pivotal for listeners and readers not to be misled and distinguish between the actual criticism of Israel and the antisemitic representation of the country.

Derogatory & Abusive Labels

The way we identify others has important implications. In antisemitic speech, references are made to Jewish people in a derogatory and abusive fashion. The list of discriminatory labelling is almost endless. In this article we introduce the most common, but rhetorically tricky labelling strategies.

Inappropriately informal terms

Speakers can offend others by referring to them in inappropriately casual terms. In December 2015, for instance, on a radio programme in the UK, a phone-in caller referred to orthodox Jews as "*those guys with the hats and the curly hair.*" On this occasion, instead of identifying orthodox Jews in proper religious terms, the speaker used an inappropriate, informal term ("*guys*") and referred to the way he perceived them, thus reducing them to one particular oversimplified appearance. The informal language use served the purpose of desecration. It represented orthodox Jews and the religion of Judaism in a disrespectful, belittling and stereotyped manner.

Metonymies

Another example comes still from the UK. In February 2016, the co-chair of the Oxford University Labour Club, Alex Chalmers, resigned from his position after claiming that antisemitism is widespread among members of the club. In a Facebook post, Chalmers gave examples of antisemitic behaviour he witnessed in the club.

This included "*throwing around the term 'Zio' (a term for Jews usually confined to websites run by the Ku Klux Klan) with casual abandon.*"

The label "*Zio*" is the short form of "*Zionist*". In antisemitic speech both "*Zionist*" and "*Zio*" function as metonymies. When speakers use this rhetorical trope, they can refer to entities by the name of another entity that is closely related to it. In the news, for example, references are frequently made to the "White House" for the American President or to "Beijing" for the Chinese government. In everyday speech, the term "*Zionist*" refers to a person who supports the development of an independent Jewish state in Israel. Yet, in antisemitic discourses, the phrases "*Zionist*" and "*Zio*" covertly identify Jews and make it possible for speakers to present their anti-Jewish hatred as a legitimate criticism of Zionism.

Abbreviations

The short form "*Zio*" has specific derogatory connotations as well. In everyday language, abbreviations can express casualty and informality. However, in antisemitic and other forms of racist speech the informal character of short forms is routinely misused. As in the case of the term "*Zio*", in discriminatory discourses, short forms indicate disrespect. Here, the intention of the speakers is to demolish the dignity of the referred people.

Metaphors

As a recent incident in Greece demonstrates, metonymies are not the only tropes that can be used for derogatory and abusive labelling. In January 2016, a Greek political activist falsely claimed in a blog post that Jewish people are fleeing from the United States and Europe to move to Israel after creating national conflicts and supporting terrorism. Evoking the antisemitic clichés of Jewish world conspiracy, cynicism and cowardice the author of the piece said: "*Those rats are deserting the sinking ship.*" In this case, the blog writer used a metaphor to refer to Jewish people. The rhetorical trope of metaphor allows speakers to describe one particular entity in terms of another. Although metaphors are inherent elements of communication, in some cases, the usage of this trope has dangerous implications. By referring to Jewish people as "*rats*", the writer suggested that Jews are not humans and aimed

to evoke physical disgust with them in the readers. The Nazis and other genocidal regimes frequently labelled their victims as animals that are associated with dirt, disease, and food distraction. Through such metaphors these regimes called for mass killing, presenting the horror of genocide in rational terms, as a necessary "pesticide".

Stay alert and be careful when someone speaks about Jewish or other people by referring to them in different terms. Distorted references can hurt the feelings of the people they identify as well as foster discrimination and physical abuse against them.

Faking Heroism

Although there is nothing heroic about fuelling hate and discrimination, many are lured into antisemitism because it is falsely represented by its spreaders as extreme courageousness. In antisemitic speech, Jewish people, who are actually attacked, are constructed as abusers, while the role of the victim is assigned to those who attack them. Oftentimes, the victim-abuser reversal is further reinforced by rhetorical tricks that create the false impression that non-Jews are not only victims of Jews but victims who heroically resist their abusers.

In antisemitic speech, the fake sense of heroism is commonly evoked by negative statements which contain the word "not" and voice rejections. In February 2016, in Greece, for example, an abbot, Elder Methodius of the Esfigmenou Monastery, gave speeches at two antisemitic rallies. First, in Athens, where he said: *"We [Greek people] don't need their [Jewish people] money... We don't need their money!"* Later on in the month, the abbot repeated the same claim at a demonstration in Thessaloniki: *"We don't accept Jewish money"*. In the latter case, the abbot meant that his monastery was not accepting money from the EU — which he identified as a Jewish institution — for restoration work.

In the case of negative statements, the trick is that speakers reject non-existent phenomena, however, due to the negative structure, it may seem so that they are talking about real issues. The Abbot's dramatic "refusals" for example conveyed the false impression that Jews were trying to buy Greek people in general and his monastic community in particular. Additionally, by "rejecting Jewish money", the abbot portrayed himself and non-Jewish Greek people as victim-heroes for whom moral values matter more than money, while he constructed Jews as business-minded oppressors.

At the rally in Thessaloniki, Abbott Methodius also argued: *"We are not animals, we are human beings that God made us free. We are not slaves of the Jews."* In this case, because of the negative structures, the audience could be manipulated into believing a wide range of arbitrary claims, including that Jews treat Greek people as animals and enslave them. Even if these arguments have nothing in common with reality, the negative structure reinforces them in a powerful way.

In January 2016, the parliamentary representative of the extremist, far-right Golden Dawn party urged Greek people *"not [to] be afraid to say the word "Jewish".* They are our greatest enemy." In this case, the negative structure implied that Jews victimise Greek people by threatening them. In addition, by encouraging Greeks not to be afraid to pronounce the word "Jewish", the politician presented antisemitic speech as a heroic act.

In November 2015, the representative of Hungary's ruling Fidesz party and the mayor of the Hungarian city Szentgotthárd also constructed an antisemitic utterance as heroism. The Hungarian politician commented on the terrorist attacks in France this way: *"What happened in Paris is clear evidence that certain business circles, dare I say business circles which are likely backed by the Jewish state, are trying to pit Christian Europe against Islam."* On this occasion, instead of a negative structure, the phrase "dare I say" indicated that the speaker is doing something "courageous" by articulating antisemitic clichés.

The deceitfully created role of the victim-hero is a key component that attracts people in antisemitism. Do not be misled by this construction. The fake heroism evoked by antisemitic speech boosts racism and discrimination.

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