

## **IHRA DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM<sup>1</sup>**

[For the sake of clarity, we gave the definition section labels. See next page for further clarifications.]

1.0 “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

2.0 To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

3.0 Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

3.1 Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

3.1.1 Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

3.1.2 Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

3.1.3 Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.

3.1.4 Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

3.1.5 Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

3.1.6 Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

3.1.7 Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.

3.1.8 Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

3.1.9 Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.

3.1.10 Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

3.1.11 Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

4.0 Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries). 5.0 Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property — such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries — are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.] 6.0 Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/working-definition-antisemitism>

## INFERENCES OF THE IHRA WORKING DEFINITION

In order to apply the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism to the annotation of a dataset of tweets some parts require extrapolation. However, we strove to stay within the original meaning of the definition and refrained from adding any new concepts. The definition includes references, such as “classic antisemitism” and “stereotypical allegations about Jews.” We made such references explicit by listing prominent stereotypes and images that are considered to be such stereotypes. We spell out explicitly what we believe is implicitly in the text. Any inferences should not be understood as changing the content of the definition.

The very first paragraph (1.0) notes that non-Jewish individuals can also become victims of antisemitism. We infer from section 5.0 that this is the case if they are perceived to be Jewish or linked to Jews. Additionally, we infer from section 3.1.2 that rhetoric can be antisemitic even if no specific Jewish individual or communal institution is targeted, but rather, the target is an abstract Jewish collective.

Section 3.1 lists 11 examples of contemporary forms of antisemitism. The IHRA has made it clear in additional statements that the examples are part of the definition.<sup>2</sup>

The example of Holocaust denial (3.14) includes denying the scope and the intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people. Denying the scope of the Holocaust means denying that close to six million Jews were murdered for being Jews. The IHRA also adopted a “Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion.” It is in accordance with its definition of antisemitism and further exemplifies that Holocaust denial “may include publicly denying or calling into doubt the use of principal mechanisms of destruction (such as gas chambers, mass shooting, starvation and torture)” and also “blaming the Jews for either exaggerating or creating the Shoah for political or financial gain as if the Shoah itself was the result of a conspiracy plotted by the Jews.”<sup>3</sup>

3.1.7 mentions denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination. Taking into account the next example, 3.1.8, “Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation” we include the denial of Israel’s right to exist in its geographical region. However, the second part of 3.1.7, “claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor” does not mean that all accusations of racism against Israel are antisemitic. It means that claiming that a State of Israel as per se racist (or an Apartheid state) is an example of denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination and is therefore antisemitic.

The Working Definition mentions “mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such” and “classic stereotypes” without listing them explicitly. Below you find a composite of allegations and stereotypes that have become part of that repertoire. We compiled them by looking at descriptions that other scholars (Lipton 2014; Nirenberg 2013; Poliakov 2003b; 2003a; 2003c; 2003d; Rosenfeld 2013; 2015; Wistrich 2010; Perry and Schweitzer 2008; Livak 2010) have identified as prominent antisemitic stereotypes in the past 2000 years.

Antisemitic allegations and stereotypes can be made by characterizing “the Jews” or by ascribing certain physical traits to them. Accusations of wrongdoing on the part of Jews also form part of the rich history of antisemitic stereotypes, as well as certain tropes. They can also be shown in the demonization of things and individuals that are thought of as being representative of Jews or Jewish beliefs. Certain beliefs, usually religious in nature, advocate for the punishment of Jews and also belong to the antisemitic tradition. Endorsing Nazism, Holocaust denial, or Israel-related forms of antisemitism are newer phenomena that are addressed explicitly and with examples in the working definition.

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<sup>2</sup> A statement from July 19, 2018, on the IHRA website says: The Working Definition, including its examples, was reviewed and decided upon unanimously during the IHRA's Bucharest plenary in May 2016.” <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/working-definition-antisemitism> A separate declaration was issued by UK delegates to the IHRA, August 7, 2018, due to a political debate about only partial adoption of the definition by the British Labor party. It included the following statement: “Any ‘modified’ version of the IHRA definition that does not include all of its 11 examples is no longer the IHRA definition.”

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/statement-experts-uk-delegation-ihra-working-definition-antisemitism>.

<sup>3</sup> The “Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion” was adopted by the IHRA’s 31 member countries in October 2013, <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-holocaust-denial-and-distortion>.

Supposed **"Jewish character"** is portrayed as stingy; greedy; immensely rich; being good with money; exploitative; corrupt; amoral; perverted; ruthless; cruel; heartless; anti-national/cosmopolitan; treacherous; disloyal; fraudulent; dishonest; untrustworthy; hypocrites; materialist; swank; work-shy; uncreative; intelligent; possess superhuman powers; arrogant; stubborn; culturally backwards; superstitious; ridiculous; dishonorable; hyper-sexual; ritually unclean; tribal; clannish; secretive; racist; men: effeminate and also lecherous; women: femme-fatal.

Supposed **"Jewish physical stereotypes"** are hooked noses; pointed beards; big ears; a weak or hunched frame; a dark complexion; hooves; horns; a tail and a goatee; unruly red or black hair; goggled eyes; blinded eyes; tired eyes; large lips; and an odor.

**Antisemitic imagery** can be found in depictions of Jews as the "wandering Jew"; demonic figures; lavishly rich capitalists; money/gold hoarding; hooked-nosed communists; heartless merchants; parasites and vile creatures such as beasts; octopi; snakes; rats; germs; and blood sucking entities.

Supposed **"Jewish crimes"** include the charge of deicide/ killing Jesus; being in league with the devil; seeking to destroy non-Jewish civilizations; working with alleged conspiratorial groups thriving for world power, such as Rothschilds, Freemasons, Illuminati, Jewish lobby, Zionist Lobby, Zionist Neocons, ZOG (Zionist Occupied Government); waging a (proxy) war against Islam/ Christianity; luring Christians/ Muslims away from Christianity/ Islam; profanation of Christian symbols; host desecration; practicing witchcraft; usury; profiteering; exploiting non-Jews; running transnational, allegedly "Jewish companies" in the interest of the Jews such as McDonalds, Starbucks, Coca Cola, Facebook; using blood from non-Jews for ritual purposes; killing or mutilating children for ritual purposes; adoring false gods and idols, such as the Golden Calf and Moloch; rejecting truth and being blind to the truth; perverting scripture; sticking to the letters but not the spirit of religious texts; falsifying scripture; having tried to murder the prophet Mohammed; well poisoning; causing epidemics, such as Black Death and AIDS; being responsible for the slave trade; poisoning non-Jews; aspiring to control the world secretly; secretly controlling world finance, country governments, media, Hollywood; orchestrating wars, revolutions, disasters (such as 9/11 and the subsequent wars in the Middle East); undermining culture and morals, especially concerning sexuality; degrading culture, music, science; degenerating race purity; undermining and betraying their countries of residence; inventing the Holocaust or exaggerating the Holocaust for material gain; being responsible for Christianity and the power of the church, for oligarchies, financial speculation, exploitation, capitalism, modernity, communism, bolshevism, liberalism, democracy, urbanization, Americanization, and globalization.

**Demonization** of things associated with Jews or of individuals seen as representative of Jews include the demonization of synagogues, Judaism, the Talmud, Kabbalah; the Judaization of enemies (using "Jew" as an insult); and the demonization of prominent Jews, such George Soros, Ariel Sharon, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Abraham Foxman as Jews.

**Nonvisual memes or recurrent phraseology** that are part of an antisemitic repertoire in different historical and cultural contexts include "Jews are the children/ spawn of Satan; synagogue of Satan; God has (eternally) cursed the Jews; Judaism (Jewish alleged choseness) is racist; Jews don't have a home country and cannot be a nation; Jews have no culture; Crypto Jews (converted Jews or their offspring remain Jewish and secretly act in the 'Jewish interest'); 'Jewish spirit' in science, music, culture is harmful to non-Jews; use of the terms 'Jewish terror' or 'Zydokumuna' for purges under communism; Jewish soldiers in WW1/ WW2 were traitors; all pro-Jewish or pro-Israeli organizations are funded/ operated by the Mossad; Jews are descendants of monkeys and pigs; Jews should never be taken as friends; Jews are the eternal enemies of Islam and Muslims. Muslims will kill the Jews at the end of time; reference to the battle of Khaybar; synagogues should be set on fire; Jews killed or sold out their own prophets/the son of God; Jews try to evade taxes/ Jews don't pay taxes; Hitler let some Jews live so that the world would know why he exterminated Jews; 'International Zionism' prevents a critical discussion about the Holocaust."

**Calls for punishment or justification of Jewish suffering** have also been part of an antisemitic discourse, mostly in religious contexts, such as "Jewish suffering is punishment by God; Humiliation and misery of Jews is proof of the truth of Christianity/Islam. Misery of Jews is proof of truth of Christianity.; Jews should be burnt as a form of punishment; Persecution of Jews under Hitler was punishment by God."

**Holocaust denial** is described in the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism. The more detailed IHRA Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion is used as additional guidance.

**Endorsing Nazism** today means endorsing the systematic killings of Jews by the Nazis (and their helpers). It is often done by the affirmative use of pro-Nazi memes and symbols.

**Manifestations of antisemitism related to Israel** are described in the Working Definition, including examples.

Additional, frequently used antisemitic concepts include "Jews crucify or ritually kill Palestinians" and the use of terms such as "Zionist Entity" to describe the State of Israel, which is a refusal to acknowledge the existence of Israel and thus a form of denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination. The following claims are "comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis" (example 3.1.10 in the working definition): equating Israeli politicians with Nazi leaders, such as Netanyahu = Hitler; claims that Israel engages in genocide/ "a Holocaust" against the Palestinian people; claims that the situation in the Gaza Strip is similar to the situation in the Warsaw Ghetto; using Nazi vocabulary to describe and denounce actions by the Israeli state, such as claims that Israel wages a war of extermination against the Palestinians.

Most **symbols that have an antisemitic connotation** are positive references to Nazism or to the Holocaust, such as the swastika or other Nazi or Nazi-predecessor flags, the Hitler salute, emblems of Nazi organizations such as the SS, Nazi slogans such as "Blut und Ehre" (blood and honor), or numbers representing "Heil Hitler" (88), "Adolf Hitler" (18). Positive references to the Holocaust used to manifest endorsement for the killing of Jews include symbols representing Zyklon B gas, including hissing noises, or references to ovens that were used to burn the people who were gassed (including pictures taken from these ovens).

The ADL Hate Symbols Database provides an extensive list of symbols used by hate groups, mostly white supremacists and Neo-Nazis.<sup>4</sup> This list helps us to contextualize tweets. We consider all symbols with positive references to Nazism antisemitic because they implicitly endorse the murder of Jews. Symbols by extremist Christian and Muslim groups are not as extensively documented (Ostovar 2017).<sup>5</sup> Some Jihadist groups, such as Hamas or Houthi,<sup>6</sup> are known for their antisemitism and lethally targeting victims as Jews. Endorsing the aforementioned groups is treated as a context suggesting antisemitism, but is annotated as antisemitic only when there are other references in the tweets to Jews, Judaism, or Israel that make an antisemitic reading of it likely.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resource-knowledge-base/hate-symbols>

<sup>5</sup> The Combating Terrorism Center at West Point has published an extensive list of Jihadist imagery with the Militant Imagery Project.

<sup>6</sup> The inscription of the Houthi flag reads (in Arabic): "God is the Greatest, Death to America, Death to Israel, Curse on the Jews, Victory to Islam."