Program on Extremism

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

AUGUST 2024

From Camps to Computers:

Inside the Black Hebrew Israelite Extremist
Ecosystem on Facebook

LUKE BAUMGARTNER

AUGUST 2024

From Camps to Computers:

Inside the Black Hebrew Israelite Extremist Ecosystem on Facebook

Luke Baumgartner

Program on Extremism

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Tracing its origins back to the 19th century, the Black Hebrew Israelite (BHI) movement is ideologically and organizationally highly fragmented. At its core, it believes that modern African Americans are descendants of the Israelites in the Bible's Old Testament, but some currents adopt variations of BHI ideology. While most adherents to the movement are peaceful, over the last few years, several individuals associated with BHI ideology participated in high-profile violent crimes targeting Jews in the United States, including the targeting of the JC Kosher Supermarket in Jersey City, New Jersey,[1] and a Hanukkah celebration in Monsey, New York, in December 2019.[2] While the attackers had little to no formal or institutional participation in the movement, their extremist interpretation of BHI's core beliefs contributed to their radicalization, mobilization to violence, and, ultimately, their target selection. Moreover, violent attacks by adherents of the BHI ideology stretch back as far as 1974, when Marcus Wayne Chenault, a student of Hananiah E. Israel, shot Alberta Williams King–the mother of slain civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr.[3]

In 2022, the Program on Extremism released a report–one of the first of its kind–analyzing BHI's ideology and relations to violence.[4] Despite its ample use of social media and track record of violence, little is known about how the broader BHI movement uses the internet to spread its message.

In light of this research gap, this report examined 180 Facebook pages with large followings close to the more extreme sections of the BHI movement, further evaluating their scope, reach, longevity, activity, geographic location, typology, and major narratives. This study finds that:

• Facebook pages are an especially popular way for extremist adherents of the BHI movement to reach a significant audience without being subject to content removal, takedowns, and strict service enforcement. Facebook's record of success has several discrepancies, especially regarding enforcement against broader antisemitic narratives beyond Holocaust denial and with lesser-known hate groups and movements.

• BHI extremist pages examined in this study are administrated across four continents and, on average, can maintain a presence on Facebook and avoid account removal for over five years, allowing them ample time and opportunity to accrue thousands of followers. The ability to establish a long-term presence on a major platform like Facebook increases the potential for audience engagement and opportunities to recruit and radicalize new members.

• BHI pages consistently publish a range of antisemitic content and narratives, the most common of which consistently refers to white Jews as "impostors," emphasize the connection between Jews and Satan and add a modern twist on traditional conspiracies of blood libel, arguing Jews are responsible for large-scale organ trafficking operations—among others.

- **While the number of BHI pages posting antisemitic content decreased after October 7, the overall popularity of these pages continued to increase. These contradictory changes signal an improvement in Facebook's ability to take down easily recognizable antisemitic content, such as Jews worship Satan, or recycled Nazi propaganda. Still, Facebook struggles to remove content that excludes explicit calls to violence or, alludes to conspiracies of blood libel or comparing Jews to rats, parasites, and others.**

- **The frequency, longevity, and large follower bases of BHI extremist pages that publish antisemitic and other hateful content targeting protected classes such as the LGBTQ+ community suggest gaps in Facebook's enforcement of its Community Standards, particularly its anti-hate speech and Dangerous Organizations and Individuals (DOI) policies.**

These findings suggest that antisemitic content congruent with extremist interpretations of the BHI ideology has a safe haven on Facebook—a social media platform with over 3 billion active monthly users.[5]

Introduction

The Black Hebrew Israelite (BHI) movement can trace its origins to independent 19th-century African-American preachers of the post-Civil War American South, and at its core, followers believe that modern African Americans are descendants of the Israelites in the Bible's Old Testament.[6] In the late 20th century, subsequent preachers claimed to receive divine revelations that African Americans were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.[7] Over the years, the movement underwent numerous organizational transformations and splits, which resulted in a complex array of new religious groups that adhere to the movement's central claim.[8] As such, some factions aligned themselves with Christianity, while others more closely identified with Judaism, observing Jewish holidays, dietary and ritual laws, and adopting the Hebrew language.[9] Over time, however, a handful of offshoots attained an extremist nature distinct from the movements' founders. These extremist fringes of the Black Hebrew Israelite (BHI) movement assert that African Americans are the true and literal descendants of the Biblical Israelites and that white Jews are imposters.

In the 1970s and 1980s, leaders from the One West Camp of New York City took their ideology a step further by bringing Hispanics and Native Americans into their orbit, asserting they were the descendants of the Tribe of Ephraim and Gad, respectively. Moreover, some BHI organizations designated as hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) espouse the belief that Caucasians and members of the LGBTQ community are "devils" worthy of death or slavery.[10]

The bedrock upon which BHI ideology lies is the belief that white Jews are not the descendants of Biblical Israelites but are instead usurpers or impostors who malevolently "stole" the rightful claim of lineage from African Americans.[11] From this central argument, BHI's more extremist cross-sections often contend that white Jews are engaged in a Satanic conspiracy for world domination and suppress the actual descendants of the Biblical Israelites through anti-Black racism, genocide, and other nefarious means.[12]

The extremist factions of the BHI movement came to the fore in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, which spawned numerous militant black nationalist/separatist organizations, groups, and historical manifestations. In New York City and other East Coast cities, BHI extremists created local groups called "camps" dedicated to teaching and promoting their ideological beliefs, primarily through street demonstrations.[13] To this day, BHI extremist camps continue to operate regular public preaching sessions in major cities across the country, confronting passers-by in New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere with vitriolic, antisemitic, homophobic, and other hateful messages.[14] While these street preaching sessions' geographic reach is no further than that of an amplified microphone, like other groups, BHI extremists have harnessed the power of the internet to expand their audiences and reach a larger number of potential adherents.

In the early 2010s, camps, leaders, ideological figures, and individual followers of BHI extremist groups established a presence on major social media platforms, potentially

connecting them to the platforms' billions of daily users worldwide.[15] BHI extremists' efforts to spread propaganda online were infamously aided in recent years by several celebrities and public figures, who wittingly or unwittingly shared the movement's ideology with their millions of followers.[16]

BHI extremism's online shift has had a profound impact on the nature and scope of violent attacks committed by its followers. Since 2019, the U.S. experienced an uptick in violence committed by individuals with a nexus to BHI extremism. In a trend similar to other types of domestic violent extremism in the U.S., the perpetrators were not always formal participants in any offline BHI group, church, camp, or other institution. Instead, their primary form of participation in the movement before the attack was on social media, where they interacted with other BHI extremist users, accessed ideological and propaganda material, and participated in a broader online community.[17] A notable example of this profile is David Anderson, a self-identified Black Hebrew Israelite responsible for a string of murders in New Jersey in December 2019, culminating in a shootout at the JC Kosher Supermarket in Jersey City, NJ.[18] Anderson's Facebook profile included a steady stream of repurposed BHI extremist propaganda and violent rants against Jews, echoing the BHI movement's central theological tenets.[19]

Despite the increased prevalence of online spaces and the threat from BHI violent extremism, there are few comprehensive efforts to study the online BHI extremist ecosystem and examine how the movement uses social media to further its goals. To this end, this report presents findings from a study of 180 BHI extremist Facebook pages that were active on the platform between March and April of 2023, assessing their reach, longevity, role in

the BHI online community, and their efforts to promote antisemitism and other hate speech on Facebook. Additionally, a subsequent analysis after the October 7, 2023, Hamas attacks in Israel re-evaluated the pages' reach, longevity, and promotion of antisemitic content. The findings further evaluate the implications of BHI online extremism for Facebook and other social media platforms' terms of service enforcement and content removal policies.

Methodology

This project aimed to capture a snapshot of the more extreme wings of the BHI movement on Facebook and answer several research questions related to the movement's online presence. These questions include:

- What narratives are prevalent?

- What is the average audience size, reach, longevity, location, and activity level of BHI extremist Facebook pages?

- How do different types of BHI extremist Facebook pages play a role in the broader online BHI extremist community?

- How frequently do BHI extremist Facebook pages post content that violates Facebook's Community Standards by promoting hateful speech, antisemitic content, or other content that violates the platform's Terms of Service?

- Is Facebook effectively enforcing its Community Standards against BHI extremist pages? Are there areas for potential improvement or policy development?

- How prevalent is antisemitic content on BHI extremist pages, and how has the BHI extremist landscape changed after the October 7 attacks by Hamas? What measures has Facebook implemented to combat the proliferation of such content?

Project researchers collected information on 180 BHI Facebook pages active on the platform to answer the research questions. The first collection round occurred between March 1,

2023, and April 15, 2023. To find these accounts, researchers used the Search function on Facebook, inputting keywords related to the movement and its ideology (e.g., "Black Hebrew Israelites," "Black Hebrews," the names of major groups, organizations, publications, and ideologues in the movement, etc.). They also accessed several pages through posts shared by already-collected pages. In our subsequent analysis, researchers utilized the same collection of Facebook pages, selection criteria, and variables applied to a timeline beginning on October 7, 2023, and extending to the date of secondary coding, which occurred from February 6, 2024, to February 21, 2024.[20]

Selection Criteria

This report examines only the extremist wings of the broader BHI movement, which, unlike other adherents of BHI religious beliefs, claim they are descendants of the Biblical Israelites, thereby denying all other claims of descendency, including those of white Jews. The assertion that white Jews are not related to the Biblical Israelites, therefore, becomes the foundation for other antisemitic conspiracy theories and narratives. To make this crucial distinction, researchers used two selection criteria to determine whether a particular page met the threshold for inclusion:

1. The page had to dedicate itself to promoting the core argument of the BHI movement–that African Americans are the "true" descendants of the Biblical Israelites

---

[20] In the secondary analysis, four of the 180 pages surveyed initially were unable to be located, either removed by Facebook or taken down by the page administrators.

2. The page had to publish antisemitic content.

For this project, antisemitic content involved crossing one of two thresholds. The report uses the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism as a baseline. The working definition views antisemitism as

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.[21]

Some examples of manifestations included in the IHRA's definition include promoting killing or harming Jews, collective scapegoating of Jews for social/political problems, denying the scope or intentionality of the Holocaust, and anti-Israel discourse that crosses the line from legitimate criticism to targeting Jews as people.[22]

In addition to these examples, for this project, researchers considered another type of content as meeting the definition of antisemitism: namely, the claim that white Jews are not descendants of the Biblical Israelites or that they are engaged in a conspiracy to claim descendency or deny that African Americans are descendants of the Israelites. This narrative is the litmus test that separates adherents of the BHI extremist fringe from the followers of the broader movement. Non-extremist BHI adherents, while claiming that they are descendants of the Israelites, do not deny that white Jews are also descended from the Israelites.[23] However, every page included in this study makes the core BHI extremist claim that African Americans are the "real Jews" and that white Jews are impostors.

Analysis Variables

Researchers coded pages that met these selection criteria using three categories of variables: core account variables (including the page's URL, date of creation, date of last post, category of page, page likes and followers, and reported location of account administrators), account typology, and several variables to assess antisemitic narratives and content. Core account variables are accessible from the main page, the page's "About" section, and Facebook's page Transparency feature.[24] These core variables were used to discern the scope, longevity, activity, and basic geographic location of the pages in the sample.

This report uses a schematic to evaluate the typology of each BHI page, assessing how the page's content, style, and structure contribute to the BHI online ecosystems. After preliminary investigative research, the authors of this study developed three typologies of BHI extremist Facebook pages: camps, conspiracists, and content creators.

Camp pages are the "official" social media accounts of major, offline BHI communities in the United States—known within BHI circles as "camps." BHI camps nationwide have created social media presences that promote offline activities and post ideological material from their key leaders, usually in video format. These offline activities often include street preaching sessions, charity events such as food and clothing drives, and worship services.

Conspiracist pages are also created and maintained by individual BHI adherents. However, their focus is less on promoting the core narratives of the BHI movement in a digestible format and more on weaving complicated, long-form versions of the conspiracy theories on which some wings of the

movement rely. These pages act as amateur historians, theologians, apologists, and Biblical scholars, selecting snippets from various sources to document, explain, and justify extremist worldviews. Conspiracist accounts are not only important because they provide the ideological underpinnings of the BHI movement for adherents but also because they are mainly responsible for engaging and interacting with other like-minded and opposing extremist groups in online conversations and debates.

Content creator pages, created and maintained by specific followers of the movement, are dedicated to creating informal content—mainly in image, photo, and visual "meme" formats—that represents the movement's ideology and presents it to both the broader BHI community and the individuals it seeks to recruit. Due to their content's digestibility, frequent commentaries on current events, and, often, their large follower bases, content creators sustain the online BHI ecosystem by amplifying the movement's core narratives.

Finally, the report utilized several binary variables to detail the types of antisemitic theories and narratives promoted by pages in the sample. These variables highlight when pages posted content that satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

- Promotes the claim that white Jews are impostors, they are not descendants of the Biblical Israelites, or that they have "stolen" their Jewish identity;

- Promotes the claim that white Jews are descendants of Satan, that they worship Satan, or are the "synagogue of Satan" referred to in the New Testament;

- Promotes the claim that white Jews are responsible for, started, or controlled the transatlantic slave trade;

- Includes Nazi propaganda or symbols or positively references or quotes the Nazi regime, its actions, or its leaders;

- Denies the facts, scope, mechanism, or intentionality of the Holocaust or accuses white Jews or the state of Israel of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust;

- Promotes antisemitic narratives or theories about the state of Israel, including by claiming that the State of Israel is a fundamentally racist endeavor, using symbols associated with classical antisemitism to characterize Israel, or comparing Israel and Israeli policy to the Nazi regime and; or

- Promotes other content that satisfies the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.

The report also noted occasions in which the pages in the sample appeared to violate other tenets of Facebook's Community Standards—the rules issued by the platform that "outline what is and what isn't allowed on the platform."[25] To determine whether accounts' published content meets the preceding descriptions, researchers reviewed text and image content on each page, including conducting keyword searches within each page for terms related to common antisemitic narratives.

Study Limitations

The study and its data depict a snapshot of BHI extremism online, as it exists in a particular format on a major online platform over a discrete period. This approach has several limitations. First, the report's findings do not track the movement's evolution on Facebook. While gathering basic information about a page's posts over its existence is possible, this report does not include a methodologically rigorous way to evaluate change over time. This limitation is especially relevant in the post-October 7 analysis, as Facebook does not provide data on likes and follower counts at particular points in time, making it difficult to identify concrete page traffic and popularity trends.

Moreover, the criteria for inclusion in the sample and many of the narrative and content variables were dependent on researcher reviews of text and image content published on each page at the time of coding. This method led to the exclusion of pages that focused predominantly on publishing videos–a popular medium among specific online figures and groups within the BHI extremist milieu–because of the time and resource constraints inherent in reviewing lengthy videos and live streams to determine their contents. The initial round of coding possibly excluded pages–especially newly created ones–that had not posted any BHI extremist content at the time of coding but may have done so afterward. However, the post-October 7 coding addresses this limitation. Finally, because the method is predicated on human review, there is always the potential for coder error and inter-coder unreliability in processing pages into the dataset.

This study also found that while the number of BHI pages posting antisemitic content decreased after October 7, the overall popularity of these pages continued to increase. These contradictory changes signal an improvement in Facebook's ability to take down easily recognizable antisemitic content, such as that which asserts "white Jews" are imposters, Jews worship Satan, or overt and recycled Nazi propaganda, while simultaneously struggling to moderate and remove content that excludes explicit calls to violence, yet still alludes to conspiracies of blood libel or comparing Jews to rats, parasites, and others.

Nevertheless, it is only one of several social media platforms and other digital communications technologies that online BHI extremist communities attempt to exploit.[26] On the Facebook pages themselves, researchers often found that the page administrators in question managed their presence on a litany of other platforms–from X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube accounts to their own WordPress websites, mobile applications, and fundraising pages. Platforms that support video content should be of particular interest, as they are an essential conduit for online radicalization.[27] Further research is necessary to evaluate the dynamics of the BHI online extremist ecosystem on these other platforms.

Data and Findings

This section explores data from the 180 BHI Facebook pages covered in this study, beginning with an evaluation of core account characteristics (page longevity, page type, likes and followers, and location of administrators). It then examines how these pages fit into the BHI online ecosystem and the types of narratives and content they were most prone to promote.

Overall, the data from this snapshot depict a thriving extremist online community, largely unaffected by content or account removals. Of the 180 BHI Facebook pages examined in the initial study, 176 remain on the platform, signaling the removal of four pages by either the page administrator or Facebook itself. The average BHI page in our study survived for years and accrued thousands of likes and followers–all while repeatedly posting content that would seem to violate Facebook's Community Standards. On the one hand, the longevity and durability of these pages yield a great deal of insight for research into the composition and prominent narratives of the movement's e-activists. On the other hand, this situation also points to critical gaps in their terms of service enforcement on the platform.

Core Account Information

Page Longevity and Activity

This study utilizes two metrics to examine page durability: 1) the number of days between the page's initial creation and its addition to the study central database and 2) the number of days between the page's initial creation and the date of its last post at the time of its addition to the database. The former is a measure of longevity, and the latter is a measure of duration of activity. Both have important implications for a page's impact; a recently-created account that frequently posts can quickly become a central node within an online community, but the content on a dormant account that remains on a platform can continue to reach and inspire members of the community.[28]

BHI pages in this study had both long and active lifespans. The accounts were created, on average, 2,048 days (approximately five years and seven months) before being added to the dataset. Created in September 2010, the oldest page in this dataset has remained active on the platform ever since. Compared to the figures on longevity, BHI pages in this study were active for an average of 1,758 days (approximately four years and ten months) between their creation and their last post. Evaluating these two figures in conjunction demonstrates that the pages in this study could remain on the platform and continue to publish content with little interference in the half-decade preceding this study.

According to other studies of online extremism, this level of longevity can yield several benefits for an online extremist ecosystem. The ability to establish a long-running presence on a major platform like Facebook correlates to an increased potential for audience engagement, increased chances to recruit and radicalize new members, and experiment with new features and technical affordances offered by the platform itself.[29] Moreover, it gives extremist groups online the ability to comment, interact, and exploit an extended history of real-world events that could be beneficial to their overall narrative and recruitment efforts.[30] For

instance, BHI pages in our study that were on Facebook for the past five years had the opportunity to comment on a litany of social, political, and religious issues during that time– the COVID-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, the unrest surrounding the 2020 U.S. Presidential election, and more recent comments by prominent public figures and celebrities in support of the BHI movement. By staying active on Facebook for several years without disruption, online BHI activists were able to use current events as a touchpoint to reach new audiences and followers and broaden the impact of their ideologies.

Page Category

Facebook allows page administrators to select from thousands of categories and apply up to three to their page.[31] Within the sample, BHI page administrators utilized 34 categories to apply to their pages. The three most popular categories were Religious Organization, Community, and Nonprofit Organization. It is possible that, like other extremist movements and even criminal groups that attempt to operate on Facebook while violating its terms of service, the administrators of these pages chose these specific categories because they believe it provides an air of legitimacy (and may inoculate them from takedowns). Despite this choice, no evidence shows a discrepancy of enforcement between different page types or any impact of selecting a particular page category on longevity and durability.

Likes and Followers

For Facebook pages, the number of likes and followers is a simple way to determine the extent of their reach. The distinction between likes and follows is mainly technical. When an account on Facebook "likes" a page, they

signify that they are supporting the page and that they want to see content from it; when they "follow" a page, they are only interested in seeing content from it.[32] Liking a page will automatically cause the user to Follow it, but not vice versa.[33]

At the time of initial coding, the 180 surveyed pages had an average of 4,820 likes and 5,827 followers across all typologies. In the subsequent analysis of 176 surveyed pages, the average increased to 5,330 and 6,606, respectively, representing a 10.5 percent increase in likes and a 13.3 percent increase in followers. However, the standard deviations of both likes and followers were substantially higher than the means, indicating that many of the pages in the sample do not tightly cluster around those figures. The statistics for the most-liked and most-followed pages are especially eye-catching. The page with the broadest reach in the sample had over 119,000 likes and 125,000 followers, and on average, the top ten most liked and followed pages had over 53,000 likes and 43,000 followers each.

The high rates of engagement and interaction that BHI Facebook pages enjoy are likely a direct function of their longevity. Without interruptions in the Terms of Service enforcement or other content moderation efforts, BHI accounts can continuously reach new accounts, pique their interests, and gather likes and follows. In turn, they can network by promoting other BHI pages to their followers or sharing their content, directing an even greater audience to other pages in the ecosystem. Over time, this dynamic becomes a snowball effect due to Facebook's search engine optimization (SEO) process. The algorithm for Facebook searches prioritizes likes and follow counts for pages, meaning that a page with a higher number of likes and follows is more likely to appear in the early results of a Facebook

search.[34] In turn, this means that accounts that search for BHI-related content and keywords are likely to find popular pages, like and follow them, and add to the cycle.[35]

Administrator Location

Facebook's page Transparency feature displays the country location of all accounts that administer a page if it can determine account location through the administrator's other activity on the platform.[36] This feature is not a wholly accurate indicator, as accounts can falsely claim to be operating in a particular location or not identify their location at all.[37] Nevertheless, the data on 126 identified administrators of the BHI pages in this study, in a broad sense, details the BHI movement's global spread, particularly to other countries in the Anglosphere. Once a U.S.-centric movement

with a handful of global offshoots (particularly in Israel, where communities of BHI adherents first appeared in the late 1960s), BHI ideologues and activists harness the power of social media to spread the ideology across borders.[38]

The majority (74 percent) of the identified BHI page administrators claim to operate from within the U.S. The remaining quarter, however, claims to hail from 14 different countries. Besides the U.S., the other countries with more than one identified administrator are almost all in the English-speaking world; they include the United Kingdom, Canada, Nigeria, Australia, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, and Australia. These locations match the observed presences of BHI adherents, groups, and organizations on the ground by security services and through open-source research alike.[39]

**Figure 1: Page Administrator Location**
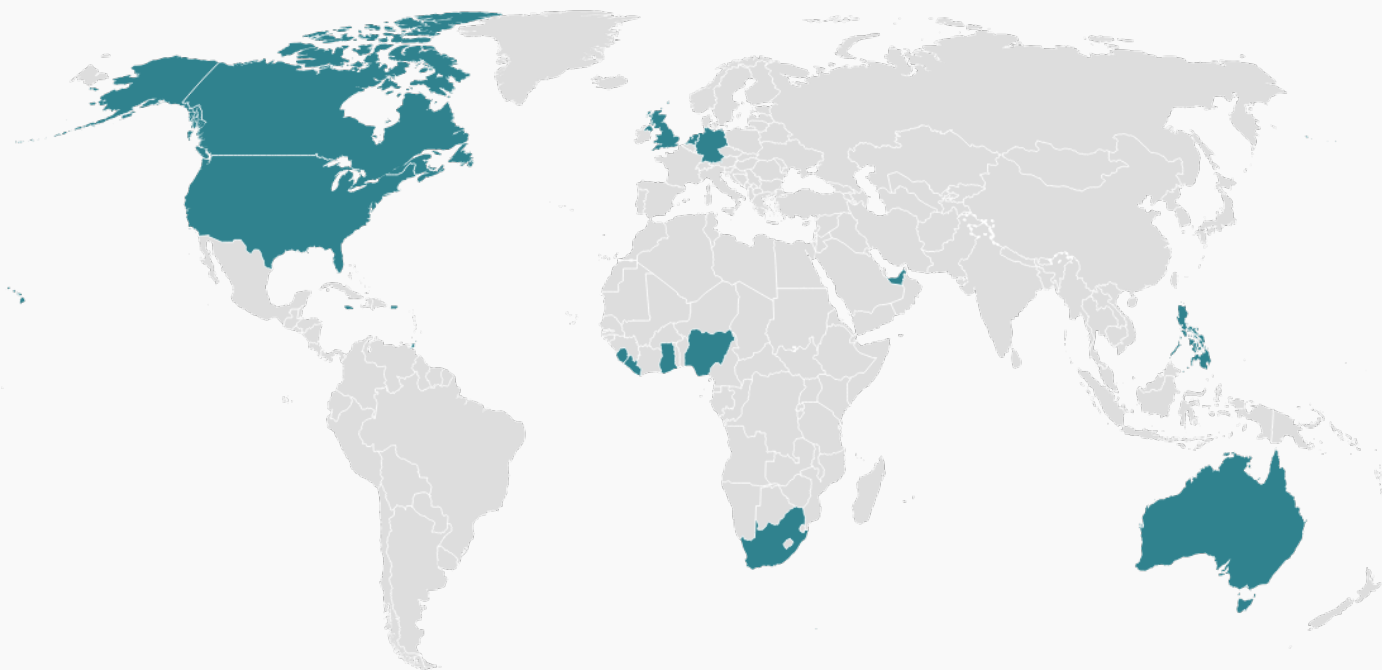
BHI Typologies

The three typologies of the BHI online account represented in the sample—camps, conspiracists, and content creators—each play a vital role in developing the online ecosystem. Because they create easily accessible, memetic interpretations of BHI ideology, content creators are often the first point of contact for uninitiated followers into the broader community and movement. Conspiracists help develop the full scope of conspiracies, narratives, and ideologies associated with the online ecosystem. They also often serve as a point of engagement between BHI extremists and their extremist and non-extremist adversaries. Camp accounts connect the online activities of the movement to their real-world presences—helping online adherents transform their online activism into offline mobilization.

Camps

Of the 180 collected Facebook pages, 97 (54 percent) are Camp accounts. Most of the Camp accounts in the sample have connections to the two largest nationwide BHI extremist groups: the Israelite School of Universal Practical Knowledge (ISUPK) and Israel United in Christ (IUIC).[40] Both of these organizations manage individual camps located throughout the U.S. and, increasingly, elsewhere in the world.[41] Each camp and the central organization has its own Facebook page, which posts propaganda, videos, and photos of their street preaching efforts and advertises local events. For instance, ISUPK accounts in the sample claim to represent the organization's camps in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Kentucky, Ohio, Massachusetts, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, Texas, and Washington, DC. There are also pages for chapters outside the U.S., including Mexico, Canada, and Trinidad

and Tobago. IUIC pages claim to represent camps in over 25 U.S. states and 15 countries. The numerous Facebook accounts representing local chapters of the ISUPK and the IUIC are, in large part, testaments to their legacy status as the world's largest BHI organizations.
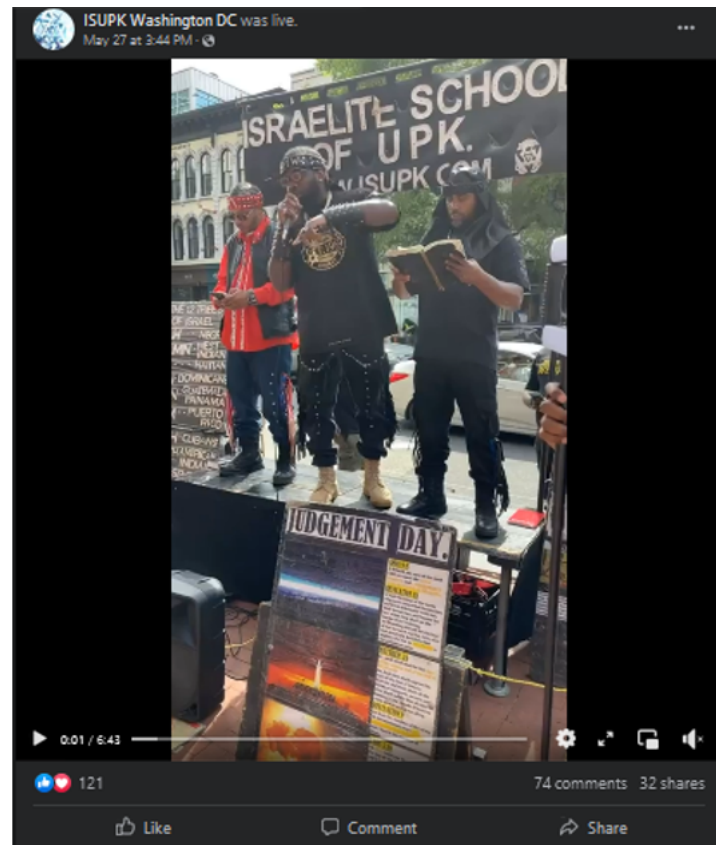
Figure 2: An ISUPK affiliated Facebook page livestreams a camp street preaching event in Washington, DC in May 2023.

Both are spinoffs of the arguable progenitor of the contemporary BHI's more extreme wings, the One West Camp (named for its original headquarters at One West 125th Street in Harlem, New York City).[42] During the mid-1990s, the leaders of the One West Camp predicted that the year 2000 would herald the coming of the Messiah, along with an apocalyptic race war.[43] When this prophecy did not come to fruition, the One West movement splintered into its constituent parts.[44] Using a slight alteration of the operating name of the

One West Camp (which during the 1990s referred to itself as "The Israeli School of Universal Practical Knowledge), the ISUPK, headquartered in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, became one of the group's largest factions.[45] The IUIC split from the Israelite Church of God and Jesus Christ, the successor organization of the One West Camp, in 2003.[46]

Despite their prevalence, evidence from the sample suggests that Camp accounts are not the primary drivers of engagement within the BHI online extremist ecosystem. On average, Camp accounts in the sample had 2,747 likes and 4,289 followers each; if the ISUPK and IUIC central organization's pages are removed, the average number of followers drops to 3,681. In the wake of October 7, Camp pages associated with the ISUPK, IUIC, and others experienced the highest increase in likes and followers; these averages increased by 22.1 and 32.4 percent, to 3,354 likes and 5,677 followers, respectively.

In comparison, the 29 Conspiracist and 54 Content Creator pages in the sample have nearly double the average followers, with each Conspiracist page retaining an average of 6,906 followers and Content Creators 8,010 followers. This popularity is possible because most Camp accounts focus on the activities of BHI groupings in a particular geographic location, which may not draw as broad of an audience as pages with a universal focus.

Figure 3: Example of antisemitic conspiracy theory propagated by a conspiracist page.

Camp page Likes and Followers

	Pre-10/7	Post-10/7	Change (Raw)	Change (%)
Average Likes	2,747	3,354	+ 607	+ 22.1
Average Followers	4,289	5,677	+ 1,388	+ 32.4

This difference also reflects a discrepancy in primary aims between the three typologies of BHI accounts. Unlike content creators and conspiracists, camps primarily use their online presence as a means to an end, directing individuals who find their content on social media to join the group's real-world activities. This goal is evident in the themes and type of content on a Camp account. Typically, Camp pages dedicate time and effort to showcasing, livestreaming, and demonstrating examples of the chapter's offline activities, including street preaching efforts, festivals and holidays, classes and seminars, and other gatherings of the local chapter.[47] There are limited attempts to propagandize or promote the group's ideology, except in long-form video content from the group's leaders.[48] The assumption is that individuals who access the content from Camp accounts are either already familiar with BHI ideology, or if they are interested, they can attend the camp's offline classes and lectures. In contrast, the other two typologies of BHI pages–content creators and conspiracists–solely focus on engaging the online space. While some will infrequently promote real-world activities, most of their content conducts an offline camp's evangelization and propagandizing work in a self-contained, online ecosystem.

Conspiracists

Conspiracists provide antisemitic content in long-form, publishing lengthy treatises that expound on the core narratives of the extremist wing of the BHI movement; they draw on various sources, including their cherry-picked explanations of historical texts and events, Biblical exegesis, conspiracy theories, and commentaries on current events. The diversity of individual interpretations of core BHI motifs lends itself to Conspiracist accounts that present competing versions of BHI ideology. The administrators of these pages can accumulate followers, create multiple linked social media presences, and develop their accounts into miniature online "camps" that promote unique variants of BHI ideology not seen in any of the mainstream institutional BHI extremist movements.

Conspiracist pages are the second-most popular typology behind Content Creators, with an average of 6,745 likes and 6,906 followers each before October 7. Interestingly, these pages experienced minimal increases in popularity during a time when antisemitic content widely proliferated on social media platforms. For instance, the average number of "likes" among Conspiracist pages decreased by three, or less than 0.01 percent. Similarly, the average number of "followers" on Conspiracist pages increased by 86, or 1.2 percent.

Conspiracist Page Likes and Followers				
	Pre-10/7	**Post-10/7**	**Change (Raw)**	**Change (%)**
Average Likes	6,745	6,742	- 3	- 0.01
Average Followers	6,906	6,992	+ 86	+ 1.2

One pertinent example of the role of conspiracists in the sample comes from a networked group of seven Facebook pages that all link back to a central website, share a single email address for their contact information, and claim to have administrators located in the U.S., Nigeria, and the United Arab Emirates.[49] The pages also share a convoluted presentation of the core BHI extremist ideology: that the word "Hebrew" is a corruption of the terms "Igbo," "Ibo," "Heebo," or "Ndi Igbo," used to refer to the Igbo ethnic group in modern-day Nigeria. The administrators claim that the Igbos are the true descendants of the Biblical Israelites and that white Europeans, acting under demonic influence, deliberately targeted the Igbo people for enslavement and brought them to the Americas. To cover up these crimes, white Europeans allegedly launched a conspiracy to claim that the Khazars, a medieval Central Asian people, were the descendants of the Biblical Israelites.[50]

The administrators of these pages use these basic tenets to propagate a range of conspiracy theories, antisemitic and otherwise, linked to this basic claim. Using narratives typically associated with classical antisemitism, they claim that a global conspiracy managed by the Jews and financed by the Rothschild family engineered international crises to gain power.[51] Among other historical events, they believe Jews intentionally caused the transatlantic slave trade, the U.S. Civil War, the Holocaust, the COVID-19 pandemic, the death of George Floyd, and the war in Ukraine as a pretext for further control over society and to subdue the genuine claimants of Israelite descent.

A page on their central website goes into even more detail about their views on the Holocaust, which the other Facebook pages they operate reposted.[52] Calling it "the hoax of the 20th century," the administrators claim the Holocaust is a myth invented by Jews to secure the support of the international community for the state of Israel's construction. Interestingly, the page (entitled "Holocaustianity") plagiarizes, word for word, a similar page from the website of Canadian neo-Nazi Brandon Martinez.[53] It also provides links to the publications of known Holocaust deniers, Frederick Toben, David Duke, Ernst Zundel, and David Cole.[54]

Content Creator

On average, Content Creator pages are the most popular of the three typologies, with 7,551 likes and 8,010 followers each. Content Creator pages often cover similar content in a shorter form that is more accessible to new entrants to the movement or the general public. Reflecting the contemporary social media landscape, many of these pages focus on publishing internet memes.[55] Short commentaries, GIFs, and Facebook Reels are also popular. This digestible content is part of why Content Creator pages have the highest likes and followers on average of any BHI account typology.

Six of the sample's top 10 most-followed Facebook pages belonged to content creators: the most popular account had over 90,000 likes and followers. The page, which had 90,000 followers and was still active on Facebook at the time of publication, is an instructive example of how BHI content creators operate on the platform. It was created in August 2011,

[49] Facebook page examined by the author. To avoid accidental dissemination of extremist propaganda, no names, URLs, or other searchable information about pages included in this study are listed in this report. The report also does not include links to extremist websites connected to the pages in the study.

making it one of the longest-running and longest-active accounts in the sample. Since its creation, the page has posted a steady stream of photo-based content incorporating many of the central narratives of extremist interpretations of the BHI movement. The administrator cites a substantial percentage of this content from and constantly links to the book "The North Atlantic Hidden Birthright," a BHI pseudohistory and Biblical interpretation written by the Michigan-based author Richard Calvin Poole.[56] Poole claims that African Americans are descendants of the lost Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh and that white Jews subsequently "stole" this Biblical heritage.[57]

Figure 4: A BHI content creator page reposts Nazi propaganda.

This content creator page follows a playbook similar to many of its counterparts, both within the BHI extremist movement and other extremist movements that operate similar accounts online. It intersperses vitriolic content targeting Jews, Black Christians, Black Muslims, the LGBTQ+ community, and others with

internet memes, inspirational content, and political commentary. On one occasion in January 2016, it posted a picture of a Nazi propaganda poster to substantiate the claim that "the genetic heritage of the Jew is traced to Oriental, Negro, Near Asian, and Hamitic peoples...hence the Jew is a bastard." In other contexts, online extremists use this tactic to reach individuals who inadvertently come across their less objectionable content and find the rest of their content, predisposing some readers to take a more neutral view towards the extremist narratives on the account.[58]

Content creator pages like these are the bedrock of the BHI online extremist ecosystem, condensing the ideologies and narratives of the movement into bite-sized content that is equally accessible to seasoned participants in the movement and the uninitiated alike. Because they share a greater range of content and accrue large followings, other accounts outside the movement are likelier to share photos or short text from a content creator's page. They are, therefore, in some cases, the first points of contact for individuals to the BHI movement online. As these new adherents delve into the BHI online ecosystem, the longer diatribes of conspiracists and the real-world participation offered by camp accounts are then accessible. Therefore, by acting in concert, these three typologies of BHI accounts help sustain the community online and contribute to its growth and spread. Despite the Content Creators' popularity and the antisemitic content they published, even after October 7, these pages experienced an average increase of 575 likes (or 7.6 percent) and 208 followers (2.6 percent).

Content Creator Page Likes and Followers

	Pre-10/7	Post-10/7	Change (Raw)	Change (%)
Average Likes	7,551	8,126	+ 575	+ 7.6
Average Followers	8,010	8,218	+ 208	+ 2.6

Antisemitic Content and Narratives

The extremist variant of BHI ideology distinguishes itself from its mainstream counterparts through its open embrace of antisemitism. Unlike other adherents of BHI religious beliefs, it is insufficient for BHI extremists to claim that they are descendants of the Biblical Israelites; they must deny all other claims of descendency, including those of white Jews. This fundamental idea–that white Jews are not related to the Biblical Israelites–becomes the foundation and underlying structure for a host of other antisemitic conspiracy theories and narratives. In the online space, the publication and dissemination of antisemitic content is a shibboleth that distinguishes the BHI extremist ecosystem from other BHI followers.

Because it was a criterion of inclusion for this study, every surveyed page included some published content that promoted the idea that white Jews are not descendants of the Biblical Israelites. While according to the IHRA definition, this claim is not *ipso facto* antisemitic, many of the pages claim that Jews conspire to harm humanity or "blame Jews for social ills within the black community.[59] For
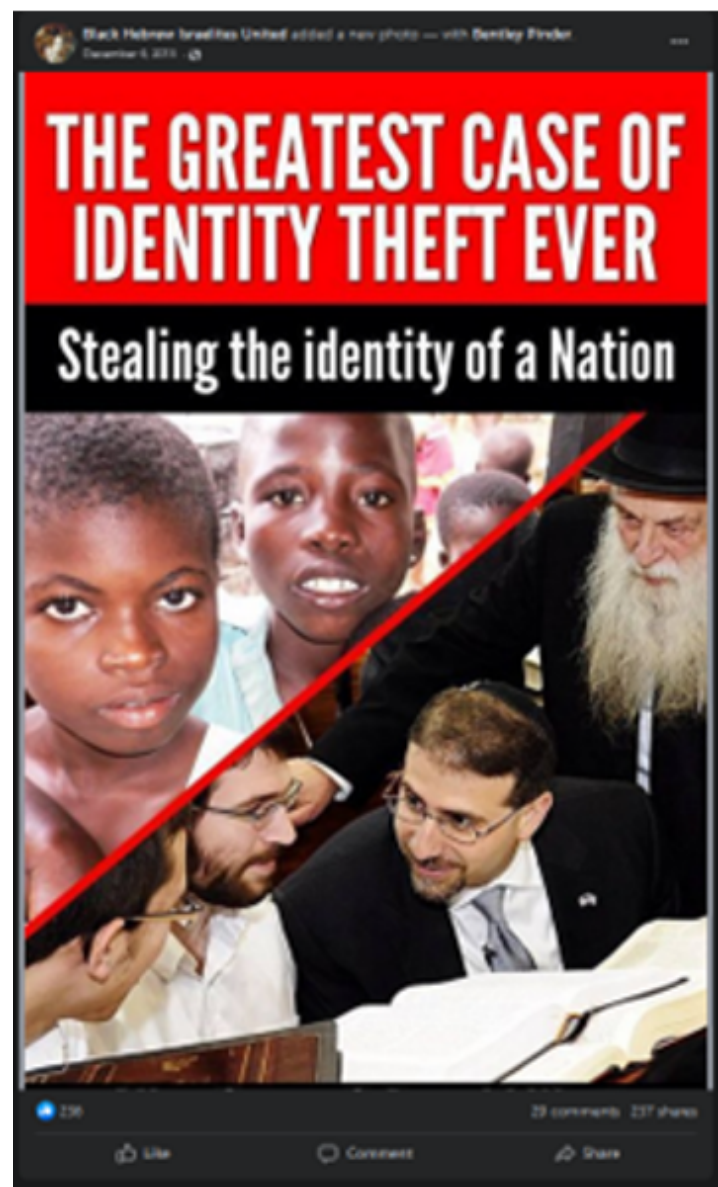
Figure 5: A BHI extremist meme promoting the theory that white Jews are impostors.

instance, BHI pages refer to white Jews as impostors, fake Jews (or, in their jargon, "Jew-ish"), pretenders, or identity thieves. Others offer quasi-historical or quasi-biblical theories for how this "theft" occurred. Popular conspiracy theories include the Khazar theory described above, as well as theories that white Jews are descendants of the biblical figures Esau (the son of Isaac and Jacob's twin brother, often referred to as "Edomites") or Japheth, the son of Noah.[60] In turn, many of the pages explain the perceived motivations behind Jews "stealing" Israelite identity, often using antisemitic conspiracy theories that suggest Jews are engaged in a conspiracy to gain worldwide power and control while subduing the "true" or "real" Israelites.

Figure 6: BHI extremist meme referring to Jews as the synagogue of Satan.

Beyond the central theory of BHI extremism, the study also measured the prevalence of other antisemitic narratives promoted by BHI pages. Four main antisemitic theories appeared in a significant percentage of the pages. First, 116

(or 64 percent) of the 180 surveyed pages promoted the idea that Jews worship or are direct descendants of Satan. The most common leitmotif that BHI extremists use to refer to this theory is the idea of the "Synagogue of Satan," a concept that appears in two verses of the Book of Revelation in the New Testament of the Bible.[61] page administrators juxtapose images of white Jews, particularly Hasidic Jews, with quotes from Revelation 2:9 and 3:9. Another common theory is that the Star of David, the most commonly recognized symbol of Judaism that appears on the Israeli flag, is instead the "Star of Remphan" or the "Star of Moloch," two ancient deities viewed as demonic by the Biblical Israelites and referenced in the New Testament's Book of Acts.[62] Others circulate quotes– usually forged or fabricated–from Jewish authors or religious sources in which they allude to devil worship. A frequently-circulated quote by BHI extremists claiming that Lucifer is the God of the Jews is (falsely) attributed to Harold Wallace Rosenthal, a Jewish aide to a U.S. Senator killed in a 1976 terrorist attack.[63] This fabricated quote initially appeared in the white supremacist propaganda pamphlet "The Hidden Tyranny."[64]

Twenty-two pages contained content that claimed that Jews started, were responsible for, controlled, or were disproportionately involved in the transatlantic slave trade. Interestingly, almost every example of this type of content that cited a historical source for these claims cited a single document: "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews, Volume 1," part of a multivolume series produced by the Nation of Islam's Historical Research Department in the early 1990s.[65] The series, cherrypicking from a variety of historical documents, statements, and records, argues that Jews controlled the transatlantic slave trade.[66] Since its publication, most historians

and the American Historical Association condemned the book; Holocaust scholar Deborah Lipstadt called it an "African American-oriented version" of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.[67] Despite the ideological disagreements and, in some cases, fierce vitriol between BHI extremists and the Nation of Islam, the former seemed to have no qualms with citing "The Secret Relationship" to prove Jewish responsibility for the slave trade. One especially popular meme circulated across several BHI extremist pages claims that "a Jew owned every slave ship in New Orleans" and lists the names of the ships and their purported owners. These figures were taken directly from the Nation of Islam's publication.[68]

A further 22 pages also engaged in Holocaust denialism or distortion, a type of content expressly forbidden on Facebook since 2020.[69]

Figure 7: Content on a BHI extremist page accusing Jews of controlling the transatlantic.

Figure 8: BHI extremist Holocaust denial content.

BHI extremist Holocaust revisionism on Facebook pages within the sample usually took one of three forms. The first form, most common across the pages within the sample, is a type of Holocaust trivialization. page administrators make weighted comparisons between the Holocaust and the transatlantic slave trade that minimize the importance, scope, or death toll from the Holocaust in an attempt to draw attention to the atrocities of the slave trade.[70] Some pages take this narrative one step further, using what scholars refer to as "Holocaust inversion" to suggest that purported "human rights abuses" committed by Jews are analogous to or worse than the Holocaust.[71] Finally, several pages engaged in direct denial of the "facts, scope, mechanisms, or intentionality" of the Holocaust.[72] These arguments follow the general tenets of, and often directly cite, arguments from white supremacist or neo-Nazi Holocaust revisionists: that forensic evidence to prove the Holocaust is lacking, that death tolls were deliberately exaggerated, and most prominently, that the alleged "invention" or distortion of the Holocaust was a Jewish plot to gain the sympathies of the world to grant them more power and/or secure the establishment and recognition of the State of Israel.[73]

Relatedly, 27 pages published antisemitic anti-Israel content. While not all criticisms of the State of Israel are antisemitic, the claims promoted by BHI extremist pages unquestionably fall under the definition.[74] Adherents of BHI extremism generally view the State of Israel as an illegitimate entity and the crowning feature of a Jewish conspiracy to establish global control and subvert the claims of African Americans to descendency from the Biblical Israelites. While some BHI anti-Israel content focuses on tropes that are common in other extremist groups' criticisms of Israel—such

as criticisms of its treatment of the Palestinian people, analogies between Israel and the Nazis, or claims that Israel or Israelis secretly control U.S. foreign policy–others are unique to the BHI extremist movement. Some BHI pages, particularly BHI conspiracists, are keen to unpack and delegitimize the claim that modern-day Israel is the location of the "land of Canaan" or the "Promised Land" of the Bible, arguing instead its location is in modern-day Africa.[75] Furthermore, the establishment of the State of Israel in the Middle East was simply a


Figure 9: Antisemitic anti-Israel content on a BHI extremist page.

pretext for the Jews and their allies to dominate the region for geostrategic reasons. In addition to this theory, BHI extremists also focus a great deal on the treatment of Jews of African origin, particularly Ethiopian Jews, within the State of Israel. Especially popular is the debunked theory that the State of Israel involuntarily sterilized Ethiopian Jewish women in the 1980s.[76]

These narratives are not the limit of antisemitic content on surveyed BHI extremist Facebook pages. Building on many of these core theories, BHI pages frequently promote a range of other antisemitic conspiracies and conjectures. Some of these additional antisemitic theories are relatively standard and associated closely with historical antisemitism. Pages make frequent references to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and the related New World Order conspiracy theory and also promote the idea of Jewish control of the media, political institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and international business, trade, and banking (mainly through the Rothschild family, a common discourse within surveyed pages).[77]

A handful of pages promulgated modern twists on the concept of blood libel, including one page that argued that Hasidic rabbis were responsible for a massive organ trafficking ring and another claiming that Jews steal children and grind up their bodies to use as meat in McDonald's hamburgers.[78] Several others argue that a Jewish conspiracy was responsible for a range of perceived social ills and atrocities, including the 19th-century genocide in the Belgian Congo Free State, the American Civil War, the 20th-century World Wars, and the creation of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Some pages argue that "Jewish puppetmasters" assassinated Martin Luther King, Jr., and created the Black Lives Matter movement as a diversion. For all of these

antisemitic claims, a common tactic used by BHI extremists is to use doctored or fabricated quotes, mainly from Jews themselves–which they claim validate the theories.
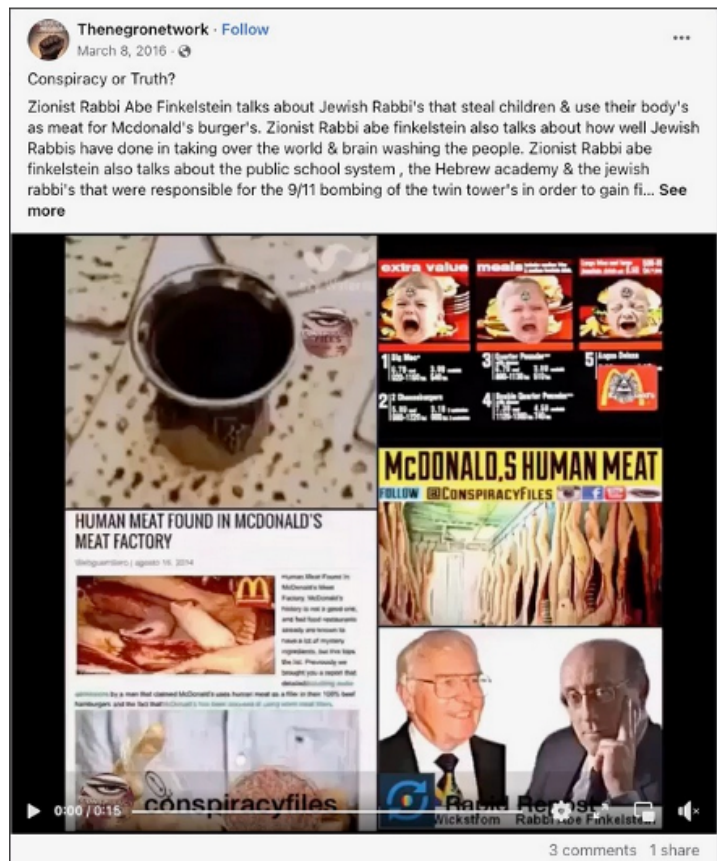
Figure 10: A BHI extremist page promoting the conspiracy theory that Jews kill children to make McDonald's hamburgers.

The conspiracism of extremist BHI pages extends beyond antisemitism into a range of other subject matters. A prevalent theory within the BHI extremist movement is that as part of its global genocidal project against the "real Israelites," white people have shifted to a strategy of attempting to forcibly depopulate the African American population through a plethora of means.[79] During the time of this study, and particularly after 2020, COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccine-related conspiracy theories became especially common. Page administrators discouraged their followers from receiving the vaccine, claiming that it was a

subterfuge for the sterilization of Black people in the U.S.[80] Page administrators also view the spread of LGBTQ+ identities, abortion, feminism, police killings of African Americans, and crime and poverty in African American communities as part of this deliberately orchestrated depopulation effort.[81] In some cases, the responsibility for pushing this "agenda" is directly or indirectly attributed to Jews, linking them to the antisemitic theories described above.

BHI extremist pages that promote antisemitism and other highly vitriolic conspiracy theories remain on the platform for years and tally up legions of followers. Although a minority of the surveyed pages promote some of the more repulsive antisemitic narratives in this study (in particular, Holocaust denialism, distortion, and trivialization), concerningly, the pages that promote more extreme content tend to have more significant followings. For instance, the 22 pages in the sample that published content denying the Holocaust had an average of nearly 10,500 followers; the ones that did not have an average of approximately 5,175–more than double. This figure has significant implications for Facebook and other social media companies' efforts to crack down on antisemitic content and other hate speech on their platforms.

Antisemitic Content and Narratives Post-October 7

As this section details, the narratives mentioned above are all in direct contravention of Facebook's Community Standards and should, at least in theory, be subject to terms of service enforcement against the pages that promote them. This assertion is especially true in the aftermath of the October 7, 2023, attacks by Hamas that killed some 1,200 Israeli civilians, police officers, and IDF soldiers. As the attack made shockwaves across the globe, antisemitic narratives proliferated on social media.

Our post-October 7 analysis finds that while the number of BHI pages posting antisemitic content is down across six out of seven categories previously outlined in this study, the overall popularity of these pages continues to increase. These contradictory changes arguably signal an improvement in Facebook's ability to take down easily recognizable antisemitic content, such as that which asserts "white Jews" are imposters, Jews worship Satan, or overt and recycled Nazi propaganda, while simultaneously struggling to moderate and remove content that excludes explicit calls to violence, yet still alludes to conspiracies of blood libel or comparing Jews to rats, parasites, and others.

In our subsequent analysis, researchers utilized the same collection of Facebook pages, selection criteria, and binary variables applied to a timeline beginning on October 7 and extending to the date of secondary coding, which occurred in February 2024. As done previously, researchers recorded the pages' likes, followers, and captured examples of antisemitic content, primarily in text and picture format. For this study, researchers categorized antisemitic content into one of seven variables along the BHI ecosystem's core themes: 1) white Jews are imposters (BHI_IMP); 2) Jews worship Satan (BHI_SS); 3) Jews were responsible for, controlled, or were disproportionately involved in the transatlantic slave trade (BHI_TST); 4) Holocaust denial or distortion (BHI_HOLO); 5) antisemitic anti-Israel content (BHI_ISR); 6) repurposed Nazi propaganda (BHI_NAZI); and 7) other content that promulgates modern twists on traditionally antisemitic conspiracy theories such as blood libel, Jewish control of world events, and Jewish complicity in a range of perceived social ills and atrocities (BHI_OTHERAS).

Findings

BHI Typologies

The three BHI online accounts represented in the study–camps, conspiracists, and content creators–all saw increases in the popularity of their pages. At the time of initial coding, the 180 surveyed pages had an average of 4,820 likes and 5,827 followers across all typologies. In the subsequent analysis of 176 surveyed pages, the average increased to 5,330 and 6,606, respectively, representing a 10.5 percent increase in likes and a 13.3 percent increase in followers.[82] Notably, our post-October 7 analysis revealed a marked decrease overall in the number of BHI pages posting antisemitic content across six of the seven categories, except for content defined as "other."

---

[82] In the secondary analysis, four of the 180 pages originally surveyed were unable to be located, either removed by Facebook or taken down by the page administrators. Notably, all four removed pages were previously categorized as "Content Creator."

Number of Pages Posting Antisemitic Content

Variable	Pre-10/7 (*n* = 180)	Post-10/7 (*n* = 176)	Change (%)
BHI_IMP	180[83]	56	- 68.1
BHI_SS	116	18	- 84.4
BHI_TST	23[84]	8	- 63.6
BHI_NAZI	8	5	- 38.0
BHI_HOLO	21	10	- 52.4
BHI_ISR	27[85]	9	- 65.4
BHI_OTHERAS	17	28	+ 64.7

Total BHI Pages Posting Antisemitic Content

Pre- vs. Post-October 7

---

[83] Four pages that posted IMP content was one of the four pages taken down, bringing the secondary total to 176. The percent change is calculated based on the number of pages posting IMP content at the time of secondary coding.

[84] One page that posted TST content was one of the four pages taken down, bringing the secondary total to 22. The percent change is calculated based on the number of pages posting TST content at the time of secondary coding.

[85] One page that posted ISR content was one of the four pages taken down, bringing the secondary total to 26. The percent change is calculated based on the number of pages posting TST content at the time of secondary coding.

Camps

Among the three typologies, the 97 Camp pages associated with the Israelite School of Universal Practical Knowledge (ISUPK), Israel United in Christ (IUIC), and others experienced the highest increase in likes and followers. Before October 7, Camp pages had an average of 2,746 likes and 4,289 followers. However, after October 7, these averages increased by 22.1 and 32.4 percent, to 3,354 likes and 5,677 followers, respectively.

Number of "Camp" Pages Posting Antisemitic Content (*n* = 97)

Variable	Pre-10/7	Post-10/7	Change (%)
BHI_IMP	97	42	- 56.7
BHI_SS	63	16	- 74.6
BHI_TST	3	4	+ 33.3
BHI_NAZI	1	4	+ 300.0
BHI_HOLO	2	7	+ 250.0
BHI_ISR	2	7	+ 250.0
BHI_OTHERAS	1	18	+ 1700.0

Camp Pages Posting Antisemitic Content
Pre- vs. Post-October 7
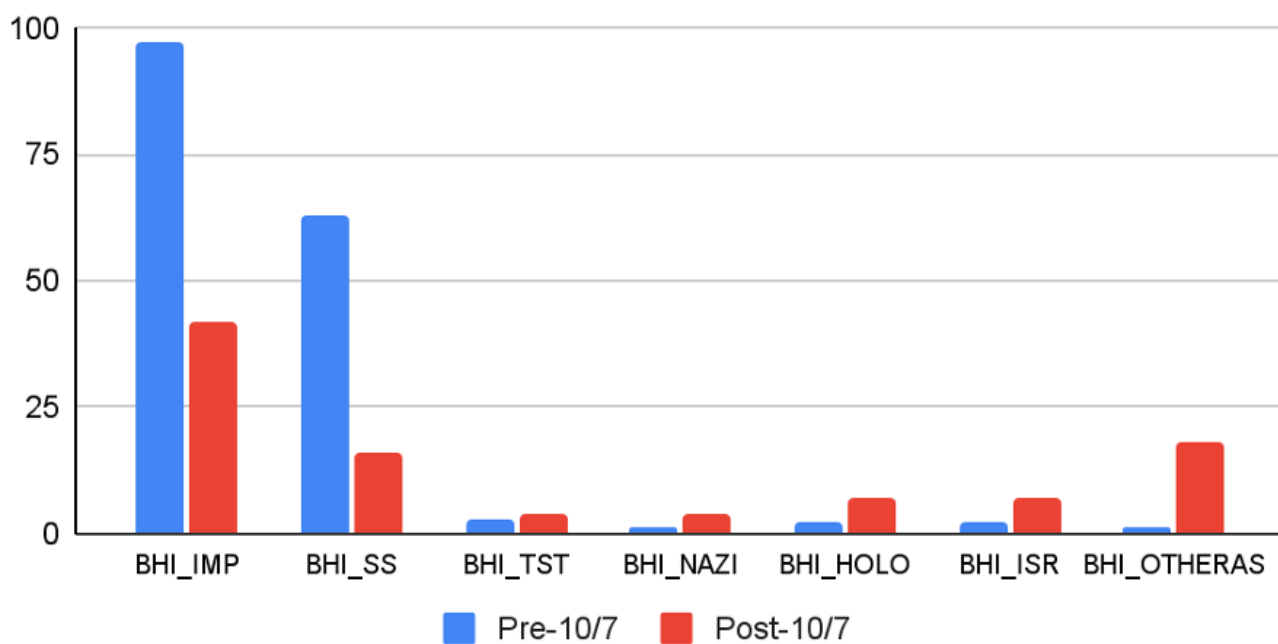
With regards to the type of content published by Camp pages, two out of seven categories decreased, with content referring to "white Jews" as imposters down by 56.7 percent, from 97 of 97 pages surveyed to 42 of 97. Furthermore, antisemitic content implying that Jews worship Satan decreased by 74.6 percent, from 63 of 97 pages to 16 of 97. However, antisemitic content across the remaining five categories increased by a substantial percentage but minimal raw numbers, except for antisemitic content that fit into "other" rather than the other six concretely defined categories. Images and posts in the "other" category most often promote the idea that Jews control the media and financial institutions, and are responsible for problems within the Black community.

Conspiracist

Among the 176 pages surveyed after October 7, pages categorized as "Conspiracist" experienced minimal increases in popularity. For instance, the average number of "likes" among Conspiracist pages decreased by three, or less than 0.01 percent. Similarly, the average number of "followers" on Conspiracist pages increased by 86, or 1.2 percent.

Antisemitic content among Conspiracist pages decreased across all categories, save for content coded as "Nazi," with the number of pages promoting this content and its associated narratives increasing from zero to one.[86] Conversely, content accusing Jews of Satan worship or castigating them as the Synagogue of Satan decreased by 96 percent, from 25 of 29 pages to only one of 29. In contrast to Camp pages, Conspiracist pages saw only a modest decrease in the prevalence of "other" antisemitic content, with nine of 29 pages at the time of initial coding and six of 29 pages at the time of subsequent coding.

Number of "Conspiracist" Pages Posting Antisemitic Content (n = 29)

Variable	Pre-10/7	Post-10/7	Change (%)
BHI_IMP	29	9	- 69.0
BHI_SS	25	1	- 96.0
BHI_TST	12	3	- 75.0
BHI_NAZI	0	1	UNDEFINED
BHI_HOLO	14	2	- 85.7
BHI_ISR	16	2	- 87.5
BHI_OTHERAS	9	6	- 33.3

---

[86] In the initial round of coding, there were no instances of explicit Nazi content among "Conspiracist" pages. In the subsequent round of coding, researchers recorded only one example of Nazi content.

Conspiracist Pages Posting Antisemitic Content
Pre- vs. Post-October 7

Pre-10/7   Post-10/7
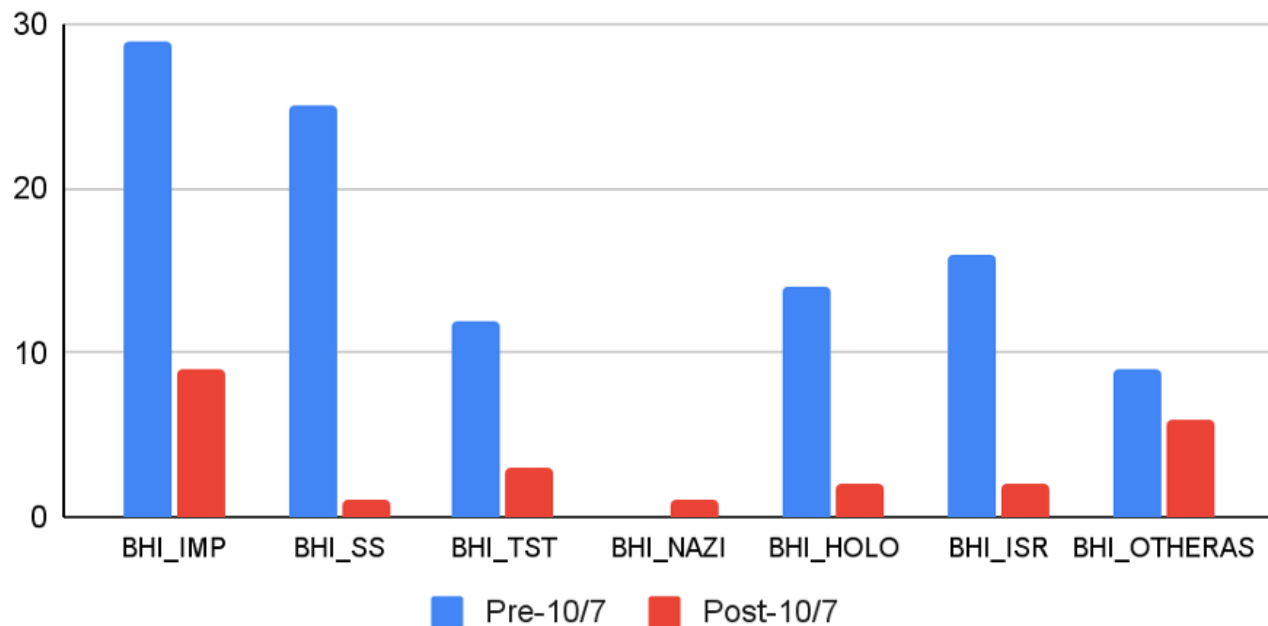
Content Creator pages

During our researchers' initial coding, 54 pages fell under the "Content Creator" typology, which covers similar content to Camp and Conspiracist pages–namely through memes, GIFs, and Facebook Reels. On average, Content Creator pages are the most popular of the three typologies, with 7,551 likes and 8,010 followers each. After October 7, these pages experienced an average increase of 575 likes (or 7.6 percent) and 208 followers (2.6 percent).

In the subsequent analysis, antisemitic content across all categories decreased, with no category experiencing less than a 40 percent change. Of note, four Content Creator pages could not be relocated either due to removal by Facebook or by the page's administrators, thus bringing the total number of Content Creator pages analyzed after October 7 to 50. The four removed pages averaged 646 likes and 665 followers each, considerably less than the

average of the remaining 50 pages, thus having minimal impact on post-October 7 data calculations.

Among Content Creator pages, two categories of antisemitic content experienced 100 percent decreases: "Nazi" and "anti-Israel." In addition, these pages saw significant decreases in the following categories: "Synagogue of Satan" (96.0 percent); "Imposter" (90.0 percent decrease); "Holocaust" (80.0 percent); and "Transatlantic Slave Trade" (71.4 percent). Like the Conspiracist typology, the number of Content Creator pages posting antisemitic content categorized as "Other" fell by only 42.9 percent, from seven of 50 pages to four of 50 pages–the least of the seven content categories. Compared to the aggregate of the 176 pages surveyed after October 7, only Camp pages displayed an increase in "Other" antisemitic content. Interestingly, Camp pages accounted for 64.2 percent of the 28 pages posting in the "Other" content category.

Number of "Conspiracist" Pages Posting Antisemitic Content (*n* = 97)

Variable	Pre-10/7	Post-10/7	Change (%)
BHI_IMP	50	5	- 90.0
BHI_SS	25	1	- 96.0
BHI_TST	7	2	- 71.4
BHI_NAZI	7	0	- 100.0
BHI_HOLO	5	1	- 80.0
BHI_ISR	8	0	- 100.0
BHI_OTHERAS	7	2	- 42.9

Content Creator Pages Posting Antisemitic Content

Pre- vs. Post-October 7
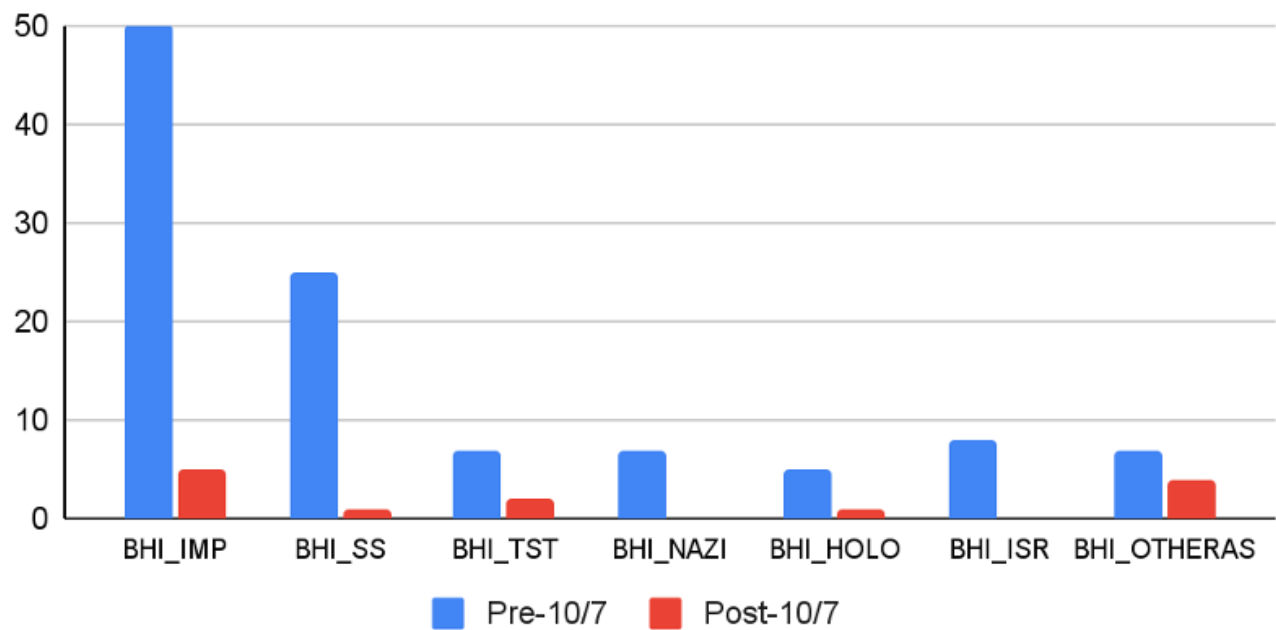
Analysis: Enforcing Facebook Community Standards Against Black Hebrew Israelite Extremists

The findings of this report, while covering only a limited subset of BHI extremist activity on Facebook, paint a picture of an active and thriving movement capable of propagating its ideology to a wide-reaching audience while surviving online for years. This success is despite pages associated with the BHI extremist wing brazenly and consistently posting content that would seem to violate Facebook's Community Standards. The juxtaposition between BHI extremists' constant posting of extreme and hateful content on Facebook and their longevity and reach on the platform suggests that there are possible lacunae in Facebook's terms of service enforcement.

Remedying these gaps, particularly in enforcement against antisemitic content, should be a significant priority for the platform. In October 2020, after years of criticism from anti-hate groups, Jewish community organizations, and Holocaust historians, Facebook reversed its longstanding policy and promised to ban content that "denies or distorts the Holocaust" from its platform.[87] In conjunction with the landmark 2020 decision, Facebook Vice President of Content Policy Monica Bickert said the platform would also ban "antisemitic stereotypes about the collective power of Jews that often depicts them running the world or its major institutions."[88]

The need for major social media platforms to remove antisemitic hate speech is not merely a Facebook internal policy goal. Recently, the White House's National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism called on social media companies to take a range of actions to more effectively police antisemitic content on their platforms, including modifying terms of service to ensure antisemitism is covered, de-ranking and de-listing antisemitic content in algorithmic searches, and most importantly, "permanently ban[ning] repeat offenders, both personal accounts and extremist websites."[89]

To their credit, since the imposition of Facebook's increased measures to tackle antisemitism on the platform, there has been significant progress in countering particular types of antisemitic narratives. This progress is particularly true concerning Holocaust denial content, which ranks fifth out of the six categories measured in our study in which antisemitic content decreased. The findings of this report and other investigations by watchdog groups prove that this especially pernicious form of content persists on Facebook.[90] However, according to some studies, Facebook has made significant strides in taking down Holocaust denial or distortion during the past several years. One study found that among major social media platforms, in 2022, Facebook was the most active platform in removing Holocaust denialism.[91] Additionally, when presented with the study's preliminary findings, Facebook officials acknowledged 'The report has prepared us to monitor and analyze content, and helped optimize our investigations.'

Nevertheless, Facebook's record of success has several discrepancies, especially regarding enforcement against broader antisemitic narratives beyond Holocaust denial and with lesser-known hate groups and movements. In this context, this study of the BHI online extremist ecosystem is especially revelatory because it sits at the locus of both enforcement concerns. The following analysis details the sections of Facebook's Community Standards that potentially apply to BHI extremists and why enforcement gaps seem to exist. It concludes with potential recommendations for Facebook content policy enforcement teams.

Facebook Community Standards and Black Hebrew Israelite Extremists

Facebook Community Standards present the terms of service for the use of the platform, coupled with explanations of types of content, behavior, or other activities prohibited on Facebook.[92] Community Standards offer a tier-based system for enforcement. For instance, content that fits the definition of a category sanctioned by Facebook is either removed in every circumstance (this type of content is usually labeled "do not post" in the Standards), removed in specific circumstances, or subject to another content moderation regime (such as a warning asking users if they want to see the content before accessing it).[93] Which "tier" of enforcement Facebook uses is highly dependent on its internal classifications and characterizations of various types of objectionable content.

Based on the content found in this study, three sections of Facebook Community Standards seem to be most applicable to BHI extremist content on Facebook pages. The first, most direct section covers hate speech. Facebook

claims that the platform "[doesn't] allow" hate speech, defined as "a direct attack against people — rather than concepts or institutions–based on what we call protected characteristics: race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, religious affiliation, caste, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, and serious disease."[94] The platform also prohibits "the use of harmful stereotypes, which we define as dehumanizing comparisons that have historically been used to attack, intimidate, or exclude specific groups, and that is often linked with offline violence."[95]

Facebook separates hate speech into three tiers, although it is unclear what bearing this has on enforcement decisions beyond Tier 1, which is content that is always subject to removal.[96] From this list, several types of content frequently observed in this study seem to fall under Tier 1 prohibited hate speech. This content includes "dehumanizing speech or imagery in the form of comparisons, generalizations, or unqualified behavioral statements," such as referring to Jews or other groups as animals, insects, subhumans, or collectively accusing Jews of being thieves or sexual predators, or apropos of most of the antisemitic content found in this study, "harmful stereotypes historically linked to intimidation, exclusion, or violence based on a protected characteristic, such as...Holocaust denial" or "claims that Jewish people control financial, political, or media institutions."[97]

Certain antisemitic narratives that were prominent throughout this study–such as Holocaust denial or distortion, content promoting the idea of a global Jewish conspiracy, generalizations of Jews as thieves or slave traders, or language that compares Jews to animals or claims they are subhuman–fall under Tier 1 hate speech guidelines. Still, there is little evidence of enforcement or removal.

Meanwhile, it is unclear where other antisemitic content promoted by BHI extremists–such as the idea that Jews worship Satan or "impostors"–falls within Facebook's schematic of hate speech. In general, it is difficult to determine whether improving Facebook's guidelines for hate speech would affect BHI extremist content. One underlying issue is that artificial intelligence has difficulty automatically detecting hate speech because of the complexity involved in making a judgment on content.[98] Because there is also a limit on how many human reviewers can be employed by the company, Facebook conducts hate speech removals mainly based on user complaints.[99] Therefore, even if Facebook modified the Community Standards to include core BHI narratives, without an increased public effort to monitor and report BHI extremism on Facebook, there would likely be very little material change.

Another policy option to enforce terms of service against BHI extremists comes in the form of Facebook's Dangerous Organizations and Individuals (DOI) policy.[100] Simply speaking, this is Facebook's policy against terrorist and violent extremist use of the platform: "Organizations or individuals that proclaim a violent mission or are engaged in violence [are not allowed] to have a presence on Facebook."[101] Like its hate speech policy, Facebook's DOI policy separates malevolent actors into three tiers. Tier 1 includes designated terrorist organizations, hate groups, criminal organizations, and their leaders and key personnel.

Users on Facebook are not allowed to praise, provide substantial support, or claim to represent Tier 1 organizations and individuals on the platform.[102] Tier 2 includes violent non-state actors (VNSAs), groups that "engage in violence against state or military actors but do

not...target civilians." It is forbidden to provide substantial support, claim to represent, or praise the violent activities of VNSAs using Facebook.[103] Finally, Tier 3 DOIs include those who repeatedly violate hate speech and/or DOI policy on the platform, including militarized social movements, "violence inducing conspiracy networks," and hate-banned entities.[104] According to the Community Standards, "pages, Communities, Events, and Profiles or other Facebook entities that are - or claim to be - maintained by, or on behalf of" Tier 3 entities, as well as their administrators, will be removed from the platform.[105]

The difficulty in determining which DOI tier is most applicable to BHI extremists online partially stems from the hierarchy mixing actor-based and content-based assessments of objectionable content.[106] Facebook deems some entities as harmful because they praise, promote, support, or claim to represent organizations or individuals that may not frequently engage in online activity but are highly active in conducting real-world violence.[107] Others are harmful solely based on their online content, especially if it is hateful or incites violence, even if those entities do not engage in any offline violence.[108] It is especially challenging to define BHI extremism under Facebook's DOI policy because the movement combines aspects of both actor-based and content-based classifications. It is an online movement based on an ideology that frequently promotes hate and harmful conspiracy theories on Facebook but has also inspired several of its followers to conduct violent extremist attacks in the U.S. and elsewhere. In addition, while not a stated limitation for Facebook terms of service enforcement, platform officials may be reluctant to apply certain classifications to a self-proclaimed religious group or religious belief.[109] While the First Amendment does not determine

Facebook's content removal policy, it animates many underlying policy decisions, given its American context and location of establishment and governance.[110]

With these limitations in mind, there are several potential classifications for the online BHI movement according to Facebook's DOI policy. The first designation category is Hateful Ideologies. Facebook considers an ideology or belief hateful when it is "inherently tied to violence and attempts to organize people around calls for violence or exclusion of others based on their protected characteristics."[111] Facebook currently names four ideologies– Nazism, white supremacy, white nationalism, and white separatism–as Hateful Ideologies; these are Tier 1 entities for which all praise, substantive support, or claims to represent these ideologies are subject to removal.[112] Any individual or organization that professes or glorifies a Hateful Ideology on Facebook and/or frequently and repeatedly violates Facebook's policy on hate speech, which is classified as a Hate Entity and is subject to the same enforcement guidelines.[113]

In Tier 3, two more designations could apply to BHI extremists online. However, the convoluted definitions and classifications in this tier make it challenging to determine which is appropriate. The first is a Violence-Inducing Conspiracy Network (VICN), an entity with a shared mission statement, sign, or symbol that promotes theories that "attribute violent or dehumanizing behavior to people or organizations that have been debunked by credible sources" and have inspired their followers to conduct acts of violence.[114] Most famously applied to the QAnon conspiracy theory, the VICN designation removes any pages, Communities, Events, and Profiles associated with the VICN.[115] There is also a Hate-Banned Entity designation, which is distinct from a Hateful Entity because they have not

"engaged in or explicitly advocated for violence" or "lack sufficient connections to previously designated organizations or figures."[116] The policy ramifications for a Hate-Banned Entity designation are also less severe: a user cannot claim to represent a Hate-Banned Entity but can praise it or use Facebook to provide support for it.[117]

The Community Standards' last section pertaining to online BHI extremist activity covers misinformation. Facebook notes that, unlike other types of harmful activity, "there is no way to articulate a comprehensive list of what is prohibited," as the information environment is highly dynamic.[118] Nevertheless, the section lists some general categories of misinformation that the platform bans, including misinformation that is likely to incite violence or cause offline physical harm, public health misinformation (including misinformation about vaccines, misinformation during public health emergencies, and misinformation about fake "miracle cures"), misinformation designed to interfere with democratic elections, and manipulated media (e.g., deepfakes or selectively edited videos).[119] During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, several BHI online extremist pages have engaged in trafficking misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccinations for other diseases, as well as deluding followers about the origin of certain diseases (particularly HIV/AIDS and Ebola).

In making recommendations about how these Community Standards are applied or altered to address BHI extremist activity on the platform, it is essential to consider which standards may be applicable, which types of activity meet the definitions, and whether it is prudent to apply or alter them. The decisions must carefully consider the intended end goal of a policy change. For instance, if the goal is to remove all

actors and content related to a particular extremist group from the platform, a different level of enforcement may be required than for a policy goal of limiting the longevity and reach of accounts. Other factors— such as the potential for widespread enforcement to push extremist movements to more obscure or protected platforms— also must be considered. In addition, no online extremist group is a monolith: the variety of actors and accounts on any platform may deserve multiple treatments coordinated with the level and different types of harm each poses. Finally, terms of service enforcement decision-making have ramifications for the broader anti-extremism policies of platforms. Ensuring the treatment of dangerous entities of various ideological persuasions according to the threat they represent rather than the nature of their ideology is also an important consideration.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the three considerations above–ensuring enforcement decisions directly tied to policy goals, balancing network disruption with platform migration, and decision-making equity–and on the findings of this report, this study offers the following recommendations for Facebook, particularly for its Dangerous Organizations and Individuals team.

Facebook should designate online actors and accounts associated with the extremist wings of the Black Hebrew Israelite movement as a Violence-Inducing Conspiracy Network (VICN). The extremist wing of the movement fits each of the definitional criteria for a VICN: it organizes under a common mission statement and common symbols, it "promotes theories that attribute violent or dehumanizing behavior to people or organizations that credible sources have debunked," and has links to inspiring

several acts of real-world terrorist violence.[120] Although Facebook could classify the movement as a Hate-Banned Entity, a VICN designation would entail a policy response more conducive to addressing the harm from the movement's online presence. A VICN designation would prohibit BHI extremists from using Facebook pages, Groups, Communities, and Events to spread their ideology. Furthermore, Facebook could de-rank BHI extremist content in searches. If enforced, this would severely limit the extensive longevity and follower counts of BHI extremist accounts on the platform.

Facebook may also consider designating specific BHI extremist institutional entities and ideologues with online presence as Hate Entities. The requisite criteria for designation as a Hate Entity is that the entity in question must be an organization or individual, making this an ineffective way to classify the BHI extremist movement as a whole. Throughout the movement, however, some key institutions and individuals could be subject to designation. Prominent camps, including the ISUPK and IUIC, have wide-reaching presences on Facebook and use the platform to promote "violence, threatening rhetoric, or dangerous forms of harassment targeting people based on their protected characteristics" and hate speech.[121] These institutions, as well as prominent individual figures within the BHI extremist movement, could be potential candidates for sanction under the Hate Entity classification. Because Hate Entities are a Tier 1 DOI subcategory, Facebook would–by its language–prohibit accounts that praise, provide substantial support to, or claim to represent BHI extremist institutions or individuals.

Facebook should revisit its definition of a Hateful Ideology and determine whether including BHI extremism as a Hateful Ideology

is warranted. Facebook currently defines a hateful ideology as "certain ideologies or beliefs that are inherently tied to violence and attempts to organize people around calls for violence or exclusion of others based on their protected characteristics."[122] The ideologies that the company publicly lists as fitting this definition are Nazism, white supremacy, white nationalism, and white separatism. Hateful Ideologies are Tier 1 entities, and any praise, substantial support, or representation of these ideologies is subject to removal from Facebook.

However, Facebook's definition and listed examples of Hateful Ideologies raise significant questions about how the platform makes decisions about inclusion. The most confusing aspect of this policy is what it means when it refers to an ideology as "Inherently tied to violence." No extremist ideology that exists today is only present in its violent form; all extremist ideologies, to some degree, have violent and non-violent iterations. Even the ideologies on Facebook's list have affiliated groups that do not directly endorse or perpetrate violence.[123] On the other hand, if it is simply the case that "inherently tied to violence" entails that an ideology has numerous historical iterations responsible for carrying out significant acts of violence, it is puzzling why only these four ideologies are publicly listed. One could make a strong case to include a range of non-white supremacist, white separatist, or white nationalist ideologies as Hateful Ideologies, especially those connected to religious terrorism.[124]]

With the current criteria held constant, Facebook should consider designating BHI

extremism as a Hateful Ideology. In turn, this would automatically designate any organization or individual that promotes BHI extremism as a Hate Entity. Compared to this report's other recommendations, designating BHI extremism as a Hateful Ideology would constitute the harshest measure, prohibiting any content related to the BHI extremist movement regardless of its type, content, or relationship to a known hate group or ideologue. A more tactical solution may be more manageable and politically feasible for Facebook policymakers. However, as it stands, there is a significant double standard in how Facebook addresses movements like BHI extremism versus their ideological counterparts in other extremist movements.

Consider the example of the Christian Identity movement, which makes a fundamentally similar claim to BHI extremists: that Jews are impostors and that the actual descendants of the Biblical Israelites are instead white Europeans.[125] Despite sharing a similar core narrative and a proclivity for spreading antisemitic vitriol and conspiracy theories, posting Christian Identity content is currently prohibited on Facebook because it is white supremacist, but posting BHI extremist content is permissible. This significantly affects the freedom of movement for these two groups on the platform. For instance, an organization described as "the dominant traditional [Christian Identity] group today" maintains an active Facebook page.[126] At the time of publication, it had been dormant since October 2021 and had 2,200 likes and followers apiece. As a point of comparison, the largest brick-and-mortar BHI extremist organization within the

---

[123] An organization like the Council of Conservative Citizens is an example of an entity that would fall clearly within the confines of a Hateful Ideology (e.g., white nationalism, white supremacism, and white separatism) but does not have a significant history of conducting or openly advocating for violence. "Council of Conservative Citizens (CofCC) / Conservative Citizens Foundation, Inc." n.d. Web page. Library of Congress.

[124] For example, Facebook could designate Salafi-jihadism or Kahanism as Hateful Ideologies.

sample has been continually active on the platform since 2015 and has over 55,000 followers and likes.

Facebook should revise its definitions of Tier 1 hate speech to more carefully include narratives associated with religious antisemitism. Currently, Facebook's Hate Speech policy only elucidates three types of antisemitic content that meet the threshold for automatic removal: Holocaust denial and distortion, promoting the conspiracy theory that Jews control financial, political, or media institutions, or referring to Jews as subhuman or nonhuman.[127] In conjunction, these types of content cover two of the three significant permutations of modern antisemitic thought: they apply to many kinds of political antisemitism (particularly the notions of a global Jewish conspiracy and Holocaust denialism) and racial antisemitism but leave religious antisemitism unaddressed. This type of antisemitism portrays Jews or the Jewish religion as inextricably linked to supernatural evil or assigns them responsibility for historical acts of evil with a religious connotation.[128] Religious antisemitism typically finds itself within the discursive confines of another Abrahamic faith; examples include the Christian argument that the Jews are collectively responsible for the execution of Jesus Christ or the Islamic claim that conflicts between the Jews of Medina and the early followers of the prophet Muhammad was a harbinger of the Jews' inherent treachery.[129]

Facebook should consider reviewing familiar narratives associated with religious antisemitism and assess whether any merit inclusion in its policy against hate speech. Imperative to this study, as well as a broader range of antisemitic and other hate speech, is that claiming that a religious group worships Satan or is involved in Satanic activities is currently not listed in Facebook's hate speech policy. While it is forbidden to argue that individual members of a protected group are "devils" or "demons," there is no explicit policy guidance to manage accusations that a religious or other socio-political group are devil worshipers.[130] A policy change to ban speech accusing protected groups of diabolical influence or religious tendencies would not only help remedy gaps in enforcement against BHI extremists but a range of other malevolent actors who use this same narrative approach to propagate hate and incite violence.[131]

Conclusion

In part through their use of the page feature, BHI extremists have established an extensive and longstanding network on Facebook. Several pages, including some of the largest and most active in the study, were established in the early 2010s, around the same time other groups of extremists began creating their presences on the platform. Facebook has since engaged in several enforcement campaigns to remove the online accounts and content of several other types of extremist ideologies, from Salafi-jihadists and white supremacists to militia groups and conspiracy theorists.[132] Disruption and displacement forced many of these groups to experiment with alternative social media platforms, improve their operational and communications security, and develop complex mechanisms for hiding their content from Facebook's moderators.[133] In this regard, Facebook's efforts have been widely successful, and communities like the jihadist or white supremacist online ecosystems that formerly existed on Facebook are shadows of their former selves.[134]

Meanwhile, the tactics, narratives, and reach of the online BHI extremist ecosystem have essentially frozen in amber. Because they can operate with impunity on Facebook, and the community is not incentivized for the community to experiment with alternative spaces, develop methods to side-step content removal protocols, or hide their narrative and ideology under buzzwords and euphemisms. As they did in 2010, 2015, and 2020, the pages active on Facebook today continue to promote unbridled antisemitism, blending the cornerstones of classical antisemitic ideology with their religious interpretation and spin.

Despite their constant and frequent violations of Facebook's Community Standards, the number, searchability, and follower counts of BHI extremist pages imply that the platform is not substantially enforcing its service terms against this community.

For researchers who study the BHI movement, the unchecked activity of BHI extremists on social media offers a critical window into the movement, its narratives, and its activity, especially concerning how it adapts to a modern media environment. Nevertheless, the demonstrable connection between the BHI extremists' online presence and significant offline harm, including the inspiration of violent extremist attacks, has substantial implications for the platform's content removal policy. As Facebook continues to grapple with ensuring that an ever-growing range of extremists cannot use the platform as a haven, case studies of groups like BHI extremists can test whether the mechanisms to enforce terms of service are extending to even the most niche or obscure extremist groups.

Notes

[1] Michael Gold, "Jersey City Shooting Was 'Domestic Terrorism,' Officials Say," The New York Times, December 12, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/12/nyregion/jersey-city-shooting-domestic-terrorism.html.

[2] Shayna Jacobs et al., "Hanukkah stabbing suspect searched 'why did Hitler hate the Jews,' prosecutors say," The Washington Post, December 31, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/12/30/monsey-stabbing-grafton-thomas-suspect/.

[3] Jay Smith, "'I Gave Marcus the Key,'" Dayton Daily News, July 3, 1974, accessed from https://www.newspapers.com/image/405255068/?clipping_id=24634518&fcfToken=eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiIsInR5cCI6IkpXVCJ9.eyJmcmVlLXZpZXctaWQiOjQwNTI1NTA2OCwiaWF0IjoxNzA5ODMwMTkzLCJleHAiOjE3MDk5MTY1OTN9.FH_uxBhREQIVDn1fIE6qXlyw2rOS_S9qoO_jO1_Jss4.

[4] "Contemporary Violent Extremism and the Black Hebrew Israelite Movement." 2022. Program on Extremism at George Washington University. September 2022. https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/ContemporaryViolentExtremism-BlackHebrewIsraeliteMovement090722.pdf.

[5] "Q4 2023 Earnings Call," Meta, February 1, 2024, https://s21.q4cdn.com/399680738/files/doc_financials/2023/q4/Earnings-Presentation-Q4-2023.pdf.

[6] Key, Andre E. 2014. "Toward a Typology of Black Hebrew Religious Thought and Practice." Journal of Africana Religions 2 (1): 31–66. https://doi.org/10.5325/jafrireli.2.1.0031.

[7] David J. Bleich, "Black Jews: A Halakhic Perspective," Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Though 15 (1/2): 48-79.

[8] Ibid.

[9] "Contemporary Black Hebrew Israelite Movement," 2022.

[10] Rachel Janik, "Suspects in Jersey City Attack 'Expressed Interest' In Black Hebrew Israelites, Authorities Say," Southern Poverty Law Center, December 12, 2019, https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/12/12/suspects-jersey-city-attack-expressed-interest-black-hebrew-israelites-authorities-say?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA6KWvBhAREiwAFPZM7pzoxVsFuKI7jJv4ovi-PoDw1ByJmnYxl64q6aLb1eK4yg58eOFT4RoCu98QAvD_BwE.

[11] "Contemporary Black Hebrew Israelite Movement," 2022.

[12] Ibid.

[13] "Racist Black Hebrew Israelites Becoming More Militant," 2008. Southern Poverty Law Center, August 29, 2008. https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2008/racist-black-hebrew-israelites-becoming-more-militant.

[14] "Extremist Sects Within the Black Hebrew Israelite Movement." 2020. Anti-Defamation League. August 7, 2020. https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/extremist-sects-within-black-hebrew-israelite-movement.

[15] Ibid.

[16] See for instance: Ganguli, Tania, and Sopan Deb. 2022. "What to Know About Irving's Antisemitic Movie Post and the Fallout." The New York Times, November 21, 2022, sec. Sports. https://www.nytimes.com/article/kyrie-irving-antisemitic.html; Esensten, Andrew.

2022. "'Black People Are Actually Jew[s]': The Historical Origins of Kanye West's Inflammatory Comments." *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, October 12, 2022. https://www.jta.org/2022/10/12/religion/black-people-are-actually-jews-the-historical-origins-of-kanye-wests-inflammatory-comments.

[17] GWUPOE, "Contemporary Violent Extremism and the Black Hebrew Israelite Movement."

[18] Barron, James, Michael Gold, and Ali Watkins. 2019. "Jersey City Shooting: Suspect in Attack Wrote Anti-Semitic Posts." *The New York Times*, December 12, 2019, sec. New York. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/11/nyregion/david-anderson-francine-graham-jersey-city.html.

[19] "Center on Extremism Uncovers More Disturbing Details of Jersey City Shooter's Extremist Ideology." 2019. Anti-Defamation League. December 17, 2019. https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/center-extremism-uncovers-more-disturbing-details-jersey-city-shooters-extremist.

[20] In the secondary analysis, four of the 180 pages surveyed initially were unable to be located, either removed by Facebook or taken down by the page administrators.

[21] "What Is Antisemitism?" n.d. International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Key, "Towards a Typology of Black Hebrew Israelite Thought and Practice"

[24] For more on the information included in Facebook's page Transparency feature, see "What Is the page Transparency Section." n.d.

Facebook Help Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://www.facebook.com/help/323314944866264.

[25] "Facebook Community Standards." n.d. Facebook Transparency Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://transparency.fb.com/policies/community-standards.

[26] Some additional examples are included in "Extreme Black Hebrew Israelite Movement." 2022. Simon Weisenthal Center. December 2022. https://www.wiesenthal.com/assets/pdf/black_hebrew_israelite_movement-12-2022.pdf

[27] Dan Byman, Spreading Hate: The Global Rise of White Supremacist Terrorism (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2022): 97.

[28] Wadhwa, Pooja, and M. P. S. Bhatia. 2016. "New Metrics for Dynamic Analysis of Online Radicalization." *Journal of Applied Security Research* 11 (2): 166–84. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361610.2016.1137203; Johnson, N. F., N. Velasquez, P. Manrique, R. Sear, R. Leahy, N. Johnson Restrepo, L. Illari, and Y. Lupu. 2020. "Hidden Order in Online Extremism and Its Disruption by Nudging Collective Chemistry." *ArXiv.Org*, August. https://arxiv.org/abs/2008.07701v1.

[29] Conway, Maura, Moign Khawaja, Suraj Lakhani, Jeremy Reffin, Andrew Robertson, and David Weir. 2019. "Disrupting Daesh: Measuring Takedown of Online Terrorist Material and Its Impacts." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 42 (1–2): 141–60. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1513984; Edwards, Charlie, and Luke Gribbon. 2013. "Pathways to Violent Extremism in the Digital Era." *The RUSI Journal* 158 (5): 40–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2013.847714; Alexander, Audrey. 2017. "Digital Decay: Tracing Change Over Time Among English-Language Islamic State Sympathizers on Twitter." Program on Extremism. https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/extremism.gwu.edu/files/DigitalDecayFinal_0.pdf.

[30] Weirman, Samantha, and Audrey Alexander. 2020. "Hyperlinked Sympathizers: URLs and the Islamic State." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 43 (3): 239–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1457204.

[31] "Best Practices to Choose a Category for Your page or Profile on Facebook." n.d. Meta Business Help Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://www.facebook.com/business/help/376650512904346.

[32] "What It Means When Someone Likes or Follows a page." n.d. Facebook Help Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://www.facebook.com/help/171378103323792

[33] Ibid.

[34] "What Shows up in Facebook Search Results?" n.d. Facebook Help Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://www.facebook.com/help/113625708804960/?helpref=related_articles.

[35] Neumann, Peter R. 2013. "Options and Strategies for Countering Online Radicalization in the United States." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 36 (6): 431–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2013.784568.

[36] Facebook Help Center, "What is the page Transparency Section"

[37] Ibid.

[38] Könighofer, Martina. 2008. The New Ship of Zion: Dynamic Diaspora Dimensions of the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem. LIT Verlag Münster.

[39] Interviews with European law enforcement and counter-extremism officials, March-April 2023.

[40] "Israelite School of Universal Practical Knowledge." n.d. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://israelite-school-of-universal-practical.business.site/?m=true&fbclid=IwAR0nqer7ollOCIN4Ut7OUMpOwul0eXFMI5MTIB6lEGK7iUt4hYYsd55GOcU ; "Israel United in Christ." n.d. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://israelunite.org/

[41] SPLC, "Racist Black Hebrew Israelites Becoming More Mllitant."

[42] Ibid.

[43] FBI, "Project Megiddo."

[44] SPLC, "Racist Black Hebrew Israelites Becoming More Militant."

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Simon Weisenthal Center, "Extreme Black Hebrew Israelite Movement."

[48] Ibid.

[49] Facebook page examined by the author. To avoid accidental dissemination of extremist propaganda, no names, URLs, or other searchable information about pages included in this study are listed in this report. The report also does not include links to extremist websites connected to the pages in the study.

[50] For more on the role of the Khazar descent theory in modern antisemitism, see Klier, John D. 2005. "The Myth of the Khazars and Intellectual Antisemitism in Russia, 1970s-1990s by Victor Shnirelman (Review)." *Slavonic and East European Review* 83 (4). https://doi.org/10.1353/see.2005.0066.

[51] For more on the role of the Rothschild conspiracy theory in modern antisemitism, see Allington, Daniel, and Tanvi Joshi. 2020. "'What Others Dare Not Say': An Antisemitic Conspiracy Fantasy and Its YouTube Audience." *Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism* 3 (1): 35–54. https://doi.org/10.26613/jca/3.1.42.

[52] Website page reviewed by the author.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid. For more information on the modern Holocaust denial movement and these authors, see Shermer, Michael, and Alex Grobman. 2009. *Denying History: Who Says the Holocaust Never Happened and Why Do They Say It?* Berkeley: University of California Press.

[55] See more broadly "Use of Memes by Violent Extremists." 2022. National Counterterrorism Center. July 13, 2022. https://www.dni.gov/files/NCTC/documents/jcat/firstresponderstoolbox/128S_-_First_Responders_Toolbox_-_Use_of_Memes_by_Violent_Extremists.pdf.

[56] Poole, Richard Calvin. 2011. *The North African Atlantic Hidden Birthright*. Edited by Stephanie Teamer. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

[57] Ibid.

[58] This phenomenon has been observed in several other violent extremist movements. See Miller-Idriss, Cynthia. 2022. *Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far-Right*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

[59] IHRA, "What is antisemitism"

[60] These views are outlined in Goldschmidt, Henry. 2006. "The Voices of Jacob on the Streets of Brooklyn: Black and Jewish Israelites in and around Crown Heights." *American Ethnologist* 33 (3): 378–96.

[61] Dentice, Diane. 2018. "The Synagogue of Satan: A Case Study in Antisemitism." *Psychology Research* 8 (1), 29-38.

[62] This argument is common to other types of religious antisemitism and is detailed in Brown, Michael L. 2021. *Christian Antisemitism: Confrontng the Lies in Today's Church*. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma Media.

[63] Bresky, Ben. 2019. "Forgotten Terrorist Attack Spurs Judeophobic Hoax." The Jerusalem Post. April 24, 2019. https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/forgotten-terrorist-attack-spurs-judeophobic-hoax-587222.

[64] Ibid.

[65] The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews. 1991. Vol. 1. Nation of Islam.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Streitfeld, David. 1995. "Experts Say Few Jews Held Slaves." *Washington Post*, February 15, 1995. https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1995/02/15/experts-say-few-jews-held-slaves/7d2a7a7e-f159-41b0-946c-df6de2dc4040/; Lipstadt, Deborah. 2011. "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion on the Contemporary American Scene: Historical Artifact or Current Threat?" In *The Paranoid Apocalypse A Hundred-Year Retrospective on The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, by Steven T. Katz, edited by Stephen Landes, 172–85. New York: New York University Press. https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9780814748923.003.0013.

[68] NOI, The Secret Relationship

[69] Bickert, Monica. 2020. "Removing Holocaust Denial Content." *Meta* (blog). October 12, 2020. https://about.fb.com/news/2020/10/removing-holocaust-denial-content/.

[70] Burzlaff, Jan. 2020. "The Holocaust and Slavery? Working Towards A Comparative History of Genocide and Mass Violence." *Journal of Genocide Research* 22 (3): 354–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2020.1718355.

[71] Klaff, Lesley. 2014. "Holocaust Inversion and Contemporary Antisemitism." *Fathom* 5 (January). http://fathomjournal.org/holocaust-inversion-and-contemporary-antisemitism/.

[72] IHRA, "What is antisemitism"

[73] Atkins, Stephen E. 2009. Holocaust Denial as an International Movement. Westport, CT: Praeger.

[74] IHRA, "What is antisemitism"

[75] Markowitz, Fran. 1996. "Israel as Africa, Africa as Israel: 'Divine Geography' in the Personal Narratives and Community Identity of the Black Hebrew Israelites." *Anthropological Quarterly* 69 (4): 193–205. https://doi.org/10.2307/3317528.

[76] Yaron, Lee. 2016. "No Evidence That Ethiopian-Israeli Women Were Forced to Take Birth-Control Shot, Comptroller Says." Haaretz. January 20, 2016. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2016-01-20/ty-article/.premium/comptroller-ethiopians-not-forced-into-birth-control/0000017f-dc79-df62-a9ff-dcffb5e80000.

[77] Wetzel, Juliane. 2011. "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion on the Internet: How Radical Political Groups Are Networked via Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories:" In *The Global Impact of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. London: Routledge.

[78] For more on the origin of this particular meme, see Nebieridze, Mariam. 2020. "Disinformation about McDonald's Refers to Satirical Blog and Fake Photos." Mythdetector.Ge. September 11, 2020. https://mythdetector.ge/en/disinformation-about-mcdonald-s-refers-to-satirical-blog-and-fake-photos/.

[79] Blaskiewicz, Robert. 2013. "The Big Pharma Conspiracy Theory." *Medical Writing* 22 (4): 259–61. https://doi.org/10.1179/2047480613Z.000000000142.

[80] Badur, Selim, Martin Ota, Serdar Öztürk, Richard Adegbola, and Anil Dutta. 2020. "Vaccine Confidence: The Keys to Restoring Trust." *Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics* 16 (5): 1007–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/21645515.2020.1740559.

[81] These arguments are similar to those offered by the Nation of Islam. "Nation of Islam." n.d. Anti-Defamation League. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://www.adl.org/resources/profile/nation-islam.

[82] In the secondary analysis, four of the 180 pages originally surveyed were unable to be located, either removed by Facebook or taken down by the page administrators. Notably, all four removed pages were previously categorized as "Content Creator."

[83] Four pages that posted IMP content was one of the four pages taken down, bringing the secondary total to 176. The percent change is calculated based on the number of pages posting IMP content at the time of secondary coding.

[84] One page that posted TST content was one of the four pages taken down, bringing the secondary total to 22. The percent change is calculated based on the number of pages posting TST content at the time of secondary coding.

[85] One page that posted ISR content was one of the four pages taken down, bringing the secondary total to 26. The percent change is calculated based on the number of pages posting TST content at the time of secondary coding.

[86] In the initial round of coding, there were no instances of explicit Nazi content among "Conspiracist" pages. In the subsequent round of coding, researchers recorded only one example of Nazi content.

[87] Bickert, "Removing Holocaust Denial Content."

[88] Ibid.

[89] "The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism." 2023. The White House, May 2023. https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/U.S.-National-Strategy-to-Counter-Antisemitism.pdf

[90] Shivaram, Deepa. 2021. "Antisemitic Posts Are Rarely Removed By Social Media Companies, A Study Finds." NPR, August 2, 2021, sec. Technology. https://www.npr.org/2021/08/02/1023819435/antisemitic-posts-are-rarely-removed-by-social-media-companies-a-study-finds.

[91] "Facebook Removes More Antisemitic Content than Other Social Media." 2023. The Jerusalem Post. January 22, 2023. https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-729238.

[92] Facebook Transparency Center, "Facebook Community Standards."

[93] Ibid.

[94] "Hate Speech." n.d. Facebook Transparency Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://transparency.fb.com/policies/community-standards/hate-speech/.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Allan, Richard. 2017. "Hard Questions: Who Should Decide What Is Hate Speech in an Online Global Community?" *Meta* (blog). June 27, 2017. https://about.fb.com/news/2017/06/hard-questions-hate-speech/.

[99] Ibid.

[100] "Dangerous Organizations and Individuals." n.d. Facebook Transparency Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://transparency.fb.com/policies/community-standards/dangerous-individuals-organizations/.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Fishman, Brian. 2023. "Dual-Use Regulation: Managing Hate and Terrorism Online before and after Section 230 Reform." *Brookings*. March 14, 2023. https://www.brookings.edu/research/dual-use-regulation-managing-hate-and-terrorism-online-before-and-after-section-230-reform/.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Stjernfelt, Frederik, and Anne Mette Lauritzen. 2020. *Your Post Has Been Removed: Tech Giants and Freedom of Speech*. London: Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25968-6.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Facebook Transparency Center, "Dangerous Organizations and Individuals"

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

[118] "Misinformation." n.d. Facebook Transparency Center. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://transparency.fb.com/policies/community-standards/misinformation/.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Facebook Transparency Center, "Dangerous Organizations and Individuals"

[121] Facebook Transparency Center, "Hate Speech."

[122] Facebook Transparency Center, "Dangerous Organizations and Individuals"

[123] An organization like the Council of Conservative Citizens is an example of an entity that would fall clearly within the confines of a Hateful Ideology (e.g., white nationalism, white supremacism, and white separatism) but does not have a significant history of conducting or openly advocating for violence. "Council of Conservative Citizens (CofCC) / Conservative Citizens Foundation, Inc." n.d. Web page. Library of Congress. Accessed June 15, 2023. https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0002693/.

[124] For example, Facebook could designate Salafi-jihadism or Kahanism as Hateful Ideologies.

[125] "Christian Identity's New Role On The Extreme Right." 2021. Center on Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. August 6, 2021. https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/academics/centers-initiatives/ctec/ctec-publications/christian-identitys-new-role-extreme-right.

[126] Marks, Eliza. 2023. "The Revitalisation of Christian Identity Content on YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok." *GNET* (blog). May 10, 2023. https://gnet-research.org/2023/05/10/the-revitalisation-of-christian-identity-content-on-youtube-twitter-and-tiktok/.

[127] Facebook Transparency Center, "Hate Speech"

[128] Broschowitz, Mike. 2023. "Holy Hate: Religious Antisemitism's History and Contemporary Political Influence." Monterey, CA: Center on Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism. March 2023. https://www.middlebury.edu/institute/academics/centers-initiatives/ctec/ctec-publications/holy-hate-religious-antisemitisms-history-and.

[129] Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander, Bennett Clifford, and Lorenzo Vidino. 2020. "Antisemitism as an Underlying Precursor to Violent Extremism." Washington: Program on Extremism at George Washington University. https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2191/f/Antisemitism%20as%20an%20Underlying%20Precursor%20to%20Violent%20Extremism%20in%20American%20Far-Right%20and%20Islamist%20Contexts%20Pdf.pdf.

[130] Facebook Transparency Center, "Hate Speech"

[131] Vrzal, Miroslav. 2020. "QAnon as a Variation of a Satanic Conspiracy Theory : An Overview." *Theory and Practice in English Studies* 9 (1–2): 45–66.

[132] Thomas, Daniel Robert, and Laila A. Wahedi. 2023. "Disrupting Hate: The Effect of Deplatforming Hate Organizations on Their Online Audience." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 120 (24): e2214080120. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2214080120.

[133] Fishman, Brian. 2019. "Crossroads: Counter-Terrorism and the Internet." *Texas National Security Review* 2 (2). https://tnsr.org/2019/02/crossroads-counter-terrorism-and-the-internet/.

[134] Ibid.

Program on Extremism

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY