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Warum Antisemitismus? Warum Rassismus?

Antisemitism and Racism as Crisis Ideologies: Contributions from the Early Institute for Social Research (ISR) and the Early Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS)

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The central idea of critical theory is (self-)enlightenment about social relations of domination, coercion, and violence, with the aim of overcoming them in an emancipatory manner. This claim can only be considered realised if it is conceived universally, which – according to Marx – would mean to “overturn all conditions in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, abandoned and despised being” (Marx 1844/1981, p. 385, our translation). The tiny word ‘all’ is of specific significance in this categorical imperative as it emphasises the holistic aim to overcome any condition that (unnecessarily) causes (human) suffering. In view of the ubiquity and complexity of social injustice, this is of course a highly challenging ambition. However, if critical theory *principally* restricts itself to the critique of some social conditions while ignoring others, it ultimately falls short of its own standards.

This difficulty has often been at the heart of discussions in critical theory around the role and relation of class, gender, and other social categories of domination and exclusion. One example that has gained (renewed) attention in the last years concerns the relationship between antisemitism and racism (see Morina 2024). Academic research and discussions of racism and antisemitism have largely taken different paths, with differing points of reference regarding both their theoretical underpinnings as well as their historical foci (see Biskamp 2021). This discussion has been characterised by one-dimensional approaches which, in their discussion of one of the two ideologies, tend to close themselves off to the other ideology. This polarisation has also contributed to the fact that the search for possible points of reference for overcoming such one-dimensional perspectives has largely been pushed into the background.

This chapter seeks to contribute to more recent research that counteracts this tendency by engaging with the complex relationship between racism and antisemitism from different disciplinary perspectives (see Achinger/Fine 2015; Stoetzler 2023). To this end, it sets out to bring two research

contexts into dialogue with each other, which have largely been received separately to date: a) the studies on antisemitism and (post-)National Socialism of the early *Institute for Social Research* (ISR) in the 1940s and 1950s, and b) the studies on racism and (post-)colonialism of the British *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies* (CCCS) in the 1970s and 1980s. While both contexts have produced insights that have been highly influential either for the study of antisemitism or racism, they seldomly have been looked at in conjunction in the German context.¹ By taking a comparative perspective, we intend to demonstrate, first, how each research context is largely confined to their focus on either antisemitism or racism. In a second step, however, we argue that these boundaries are not absolute. For the way in which both research contexts approach their specific subject areas through a crisis-theoretical lens that draws both on critical-materialist and social-psychological perspectives also provides important clues for the development of an integral theory of antisemitism and racism.

1 The Experiential Limitations of the ISR and CCCS

Both the early ISR and the CCCS are widely known for their central contributions to the critical theory of (post-)Nazism and antisemitism as well as (post-)colonialism and racism respectively. Both foci can be understood as an expression of the different socio-historical contexts the researchers biographically found themselves in. Nevertheless, these experiential horizons are also associated with programmatic limitations: while racism only plays a marginal role in the works of the early ISR, antisemitism remains unexamined in the works of the CCCS.

1.1 ISR: Racism as a Marginalised Problem

Though the ISR had been founded as a traditional Marxist research institute in the 1920s, it soon focused on the analysis of the rapid rise of fascism

1 With this particular focus, we hope to make a contribution to an emerging field of studies that re-examines both of these research contexts as valuable sources of inspiration for bringing together materialist and social-psychological perspectives (see Behrens 2002; Hund 2006; Marz 2020, 2023 and in this volume). While these contributions tend to compare the early ISR's materialist social psychology with the later CCCS' post-structuralist discourse theory, we seek to show that a comparison with the early CCCS is more productive.

and national socialism in the 1930s. In his programmatic essay on *Critical and Traditional Theory*, which he published in US exile in 1937, Max Horkheimer puts this theme in the centre of his thought. He characterises critical theory as “the unfolding of a single existential judgement” which deals with the question of how the “internal and external contradictions” of the “historically given commodity economy on which modern history rests” have paved the way for the emergence of a “new barbarism” (Horkheimer 1937/2002, p. 227). In the following years, Horkheimer and his fellow researchers increasingly realised that antisemitism is the key driving force of this “new barbarism”.

Particularly during the period of exile in the USA, the researchers of the ISR extensively studied different forms of modern antisemitism from the perspectives of social theory, philosophy of history, ideology critique and social psychology. Apart from the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Horkheimer/Adorno 1944/2002), the five-part *Studies in Prejudice*, which was produced in cooperation with the *American Jewish Committee* and included *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al. 1950/1993) as well as *Prophets of Deceit* (Löwenthal/Guterman 1950), are particularly noteworthy. After some of the researchers had returned to West-Germany, their focus shifted to the “survival of National Socialism *within* democracy” (Adorno 1959/1998, p. 90, original emphasis), which included the analysis of secondary antisemitism (see Adorno 1955/2010). All of these studies became paradigmatic for the study of antisemitism and remain important points of reference until today (see Claussen 1987; Rensmann 2018; Salzborn 2010). At the same time, they also include some – if only rudimentary – discussion of racism. Traces of such an examination can be found in three places in particular.

First, the theoretical and philosophical works on fascism, National Socialism and antisemitism also contain reflections on the “pseudo-natural criterion” (Adorno 1951/1978, p. 129) of ‘race’ and the logic of imperial expansion (see Horkheimer/Adorno 1944/2002, p. 63–93). In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, both phenomena are interpreted as a delusional and violent intensification of the modern principle of the domination of nature, based on the premise that “there are the strong and the weak, there are classes, races and nations which dominate and others which are subjected” (ibid., p. 77). However, these are fragmentary considerations.

Second, the empirical study *The Authoritarian Personality* not only centres on antisemitic attitudes but also entails critical engagements with racism (see Marz 2023, pp. 251–254). For instance, the quantitative part

of the study, in which the potential for manifest fascist attitudes in the United States is measured, includes both an antisemitism scale and an ethnocentrism scale. Moreover, the questionnaire for the qualitative interviews conducted for this study also contained a section of questions on “Minorities and ‘Race’” (Adorno et al. 1950/1993, p. 302). Although Adorno explicitly describes antisemitism as the “main subject” (ibid.) of the study, ethnocentrism is still regarded as important. Nonetheless, no attempts were made to fully theorise racism as a bridging ideology between bourgeois-democratic and fascist milieus. This ambivalent relationship to the question of racism is also expressed in Adorno’s subsequent reflections on the “American experience” (1968/2003, p. 737, our translation). As a Jewish refugee, Adorno provides a testimony of his “gratitude for the rescue from the catastrophe that was already looming in 1937” (ibid., p. 703) and emphasises the fortune of being able to live in one of the few remaining bourgeois democracies: “The Enlightenment moment, also in relation to culture, in the American intellectual climate of course, had to touch me most strongly” (ibid.) However, the fact that this liberal-democratic tradition had simultaneously produced a regime of colonial slavery and racist segregation is not reflected in these reflections on the American experience.

Third, the most extensive engagement with racism can be found in the later works of Herbert Marcuse, who, unlike most members of the ISR, remained permanently in the US. Both in his study *One-Dimensional Man* (Marcuse 1964/1991) and – above all – in his political essays of the 1960s and 1970s, it becomes clear that the struggles over racism in the period of decolonisation left a strong impression on his thinking. In his *Essay on Liberation* (Marcuse 1969), for example, Marcuse understands racism as (late) imperialism’s central ideology of justification:

Class conflicts are suppressed or extinguished by racial conflicts; racial barriers become an economic and political reality – a development that is rooted in the dynamics of late imperialism and its struggle for new methods of internal and external colonisation (ibid., p. 58).

Here again, however, Marcuse never went beyond these historical observations and did not develop a more systematic theory of (post-)colonial racism.

1.2 CCCS: Antisemitism Overlooked

The University of Birmingham's *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies* was founded in 1964 by sociologist Richard Hoggart, who had been one of the founding figures of British cultural studies since his 1957 publication of *The Uses of Literacy* (Hoggart 1957/2009). The CCCS gained its particular relevance for the study of racism with its second director, Stuart Hall, who shaped its academic programme from 1968 to the late 1970s. Just as National Socialism and its aftermath was the central experiential point of reference for the early ISR, the legacy of the British Empire and the experience of migration between the metropole and the (post-)colonies shaped the perspectives of the CCCS. Not only Hall himself, but also many other CCCS researchers such as Hazel V. Carby, Paul Gilroy, Errol Lawrence and Pratibha Parmar were of Afro-Caribbean and South-Asian descent. In his autobiography, Hall expressed this experience as follows: "I was born and formed in the closing days of the old colonial world. They are my conditions of existence" (Hall 2017, p. 10). Against this background, the CCCS centred the idea that "[t]hough vigorously disavowed, race has played a historically determining role in the self-identification of Britain as a nation" (ibid., p. 180). One work of high significance from the early CCCS was *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al. 1978), which presented the results of a collective research project on the relationship between "race and urban crime" (Hall 2007, p. xii) in the British post-war period. The book had a major influence on the development of Anglo-American research into racism and authoritarianism, not only as a comprehensive empirical study, but also as a major theoretical contribution. Another significant milestone was the joint work *The Empire Strikes Back* (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1982), in which the authors put the focus less on criminalisation but more on the transformation of British racism in the post-Fordist and post-colonial transitional phase.

While (post-)colonialism and racism only played a rudimentary role in the works of the early ISR, (the legacies of) European fascism, National Socialism, and the specific role of antisemitism for either did not figure as significant points of reference in the early works of the CCCS, nor did antisemitism in general. In *Policing the Crisis*, we find some sporadic Gramscian reflections on the political structure of historical fascism as well as its historical genesis as "an extraordinary political response to the extraordinary circumstances of economic depression" (Hall et al. 1978, p. 209; see also ibid., pp. 320–321; Gilroy 1982, p. 303). In addition, the book

highlights the significance of British neo-fascism as a central driving force of racism, though these political forces are not examined in any detail. For example, with regard to the extreme right-wing party *National Front*, which was particularly successful in the 1970s, the authors write: “Its small but potent appearance on the political stage (by no means confined to its extra-parliamentary fringes) has been one of the most powerful forces polarising popular sentiments in an openly racist direction” (Hall et al. 1978, p. 334). What they completely ignore, however, is the central role of far-right antisemitism. When mentioned, antisemitism is relegated to the past:

Overt fascist organisations, pivoting on the blacks as before the war they had focused on the Jews, had, of course, been fishing in and around the race issue from the early 1950s (ibid., p. 333).

However, as Billig demonstrated at the same time, the political ideology of the National Front was characterised by both colonial racism and Nazi antisemitism (see Billig 1978). The antisemitism of the liberal-democratic mainstream as well as mass culture in general is also disregarded (see Julius 2010). Interestingly, there is an engagement with the problem of conspiracy thinking in some types of left-wing anti-capitalism and state critique (see Hall et al. 1978, pp. 57–60; 176–177; Solomos et al. 1982, p. 14; Gilroy 1982, pp. 171–172; Lawrence 1982, p. 46). However, even in these cases, antisemitism remains unexamined. Accordingly, no attempts were made to theorise antisemitism, or to relate racism and antisemitism to each other.

2 Racism and Antisemitism in Times of Crisis: Comparing the Early Works of the ISR and CCCS

Having outlined how the authors of the early ISR and CCCS largely overlooked either racism or antisemitism, we now turn to a comparison of their approaches to antisemitism and racism. By focusing on their respective crisis-theoretical reflections, we aim to show similarities in their approaches that might help us to better understand the relationship between antisemitism and racism.

2.1 ISR: Crisis of Subjectivity, Social Malaise, and Antisemitism

In their philosophical study *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno locate the rise of fascism and national socialism within the inner contradictions of a process of enlightenment which they trace back to its ancient origins (see Horkheimer/Adorno 1944/2002, pp. 35–62). While this “philosophical prehistory of anti-Semitism” (ibid., p. xix) can be criticised for its lack of historical specificity (see Claussen 1987, pp. 42–50), the authors demonstrate clearly how the emergence of capitalist modernity has been a key moment in the thousands-year old history of Jew-hatred. Understanding enlightenment as an expression of “the real movement of bourgeois society as a whole” (Horkheimer/Adorno 1944/2002, p. xvi), they put much effort into identifying the modern roots of antisemitism. In contrast to more traditionalist Marxist notions of antisemitism as either a manipulation technique used by the ruling-class or a mode of expressing working-class interests, Horkheimer and Adorno highlight its “economic futility” (ibid., p. 139). Even though modern antisemitism does contribute “to conceal[ing] domination in production” (ibid., p. 142), it does so in a distorted and projective manner. It does not appeal to the individual needs or rational interests of people but rather feeds on their socially repressed drives and affects:

The psychological attack is directed not so much against the Jews as they actually are, as against a mythical picture of the Jews, an amalgam of observations, remnants of an archaic imagery and projection of psychological drives (Adorno 1968/2003, p. 117).

The key task, then, is to decipher how this “mythical picture of the Jews” is created and what kind of hallucinatory experience of the dynamics of modern capitalist socialisation it offers. While the critical theory of antisemitism developed by the early ISR has been widely discussed (see Claussen 1987; Rensmann 2018; Salzborn 2010), we want to draw attention to one aspect which has received less attention: the interpretation of antisemitism as a crisis phenomenon.

For good reasons, the early ISR has not figured prominently in contemporary theoretical debates about economic crisis and reactionary politics. The problem of capitalist crisis is indeed only discussed in the early to mid-1930s (see Pollock 1933/1980) and becomes largely irrelevant in the works after the late 1930s and early 1940s (see Pollock 1941/1980). This development was largely due to the growing influence of theories of

monopoly and state capitalism. As Pollock argues, “[g]overnment control of production and distribution furnishes the means for eliminating the economic causes of depressions, cumulative destructive processes and unemployment of capital and labor” (ibid., p. 217). Taking a closer look at the ISR’s studies of fascism, national socialism, and antisemitism since the late 1930s and early 1940s, however, results in a different picture. Here, we can find attempts to develop a social-psychological crisis theory. In his essay on the relevance of Sigmund Freud’s mass psychology for the critique of fascist propaganda, Adorno argues that

[w]hile Freud did not concern himself with the social changes, it may be said that he developed within the monadological confines of the individual the traces of its profound crisis and willingness to yield unquestioningly to powerful outside, collective agencies (Adorno 1951/1978, p. 120).

Of particular interest for our discussion is the approach taken by Leo Löwenthal and Norbert Guterman (Löwenthal/Guterman 1950) as well as Adorno (see Adorno 1951/1978, 2003; Horkheimer/Adorno 1952/2003) who made use of the Freudian concept of “malaise” (*Unbehagen*) (Freud 1930/1961, p. 135) in order to further reflect on this crisis of the modern individual and its relevance for making sense of the popularity of fascist, national socialist, and antisemitic agitation.

In his late socio-cultural writings, Freud conceptualises malaise as a specific type of “ambivalence of feeling” (ibid., p. 132) vis-à-vis the social world. Those who experience malaise are riddled by two opposing emotional dispositions. On the one hand, they tend to take the status quo for granted and identify with it. Such a conformist attitude is not merely an individual problem but results from the overwhelming power of the social whole, which demands from each individual the partial suppression, deferral and transformation of libidinal energy into socially required work practices. Its most important manifestation is what Horkheimer and Adorno call ‘common sense’: an attitude oriented towards the most immediate ‘facts’ of everyday life which does not take into account those anonymous social processes that have a determining impact on most everyday life situations. It is an “unquestioning” (Adorno 2002, p. 81) attitude that “stresses accepted values and takes it for granted that this is a ‘competitive world’ – [...] and that the only thing that really counts is success” (ibid.). On the other hand, those who experience malaise also find it difficult to uphold their conformist identification with the status quo as they begin

to realise that complying with the imperatives of hard work and rigorous discipline is highly contradictory: Although these imperatives allow them to fulfil their individual needs, they simultaneously require to severely restrict themselves:

From childhood on, man is burdened by a repression of instinctual drives imposed on him by civilization in the name of its values. To live up to these values, man must constantly deny himself and make sacrifices, for which the only solace is the promise that ultimately he will be rewarded. But in the lives of most people there occurs a moment, usually near middle age, when they realize that their dreams have remained and will remain unfulfilled. (Löwenthal/Guterman 1950, pp. 21–22)

As long as the conformist attitude is manifest, however, those who experience these feelings of unpleasure and frustration tend to refrain from engaging with their social conditions of existence. As a result, they remain trapped in a confusing state of both identification with, and resentment towards, a social world that remains largely mysterious to them. Those who suffer from malaise “bear the world a grudge because they feel it has cheated them, and [they] are therefore insecure, dependent, and bewildered” (ibid.). This grudge is an expression of real suffering but in a distorted way: “Although malaise actually reflects social reality, it also veils and distorts it” (ibid., p. 15).

The ISR authors analyse regressive political ideologies as specific forms of re-articulating this feeling of malaise (see Marz 2023, pp. 276–288). While these ideologies constantly remind their addressees of their emotional discomfort and intellectual confusion, they actually prevent them from making sense of “the roots of emotional frustration in our society” (Löwenthal/Guterman 1950, p. 92). In this sense, they do not help people to overcome their feeling of malaise but rather transform it into the authoritarian desire to persecute and destroy others: “The whole idea of objective cause tends to recede into the background, leaving only on one end the subjective feeling of dissatisfaction and on the other the personal enemy held responsible for it.” (Ibid., p. 7) Against this background, modern antisemitism is analysed as a particularly powerful mode of re-articulating malaise insofar as it strongly appeals to feelings of power- and helplessness – in contrast to traditional ideologies of superiority. In this sense, the antisemitic image of a ‘Jewish plutocratic conspiracy’, for instance, can be considered as a specific response to the above-discussed crisis of the modern individual as it offers a “regressive repersonalisation of impersonal,

abstract social forces” (Adorno 1951/1978). The uncomfortable feeling of being subjected to anonymous societal structures and processes is projected upon an imagined group of malicious people that ‘pull the strings’ behind ‘closed curtains’. In the antisemitic worldview, then, the fight against social evils becomes identical with the destruction of ‘the Jews’. This antisemitic conspiracy ideology can be substantiated with (pseudo) anti-capitalist motives: the key object of mistrust is not the capitalist mode of production as such but only the sphere of circulation. Common-sense thinking assumes that the entire world is organised in terms of the exchange of equivalences, which is why it tends to misconceive or disregard the sphere of production as the source of power asymmetries and social inequalities. Thus, once it perceives such asymmetries and inequalities, it only seeks to look for an answer in the sphere of circulation – a futile endeavour which paves the way for the false suspicion that ‘someone must have broken the rules’. The antisemitic image of the ‘secret machinations’ of ‘Jewish bankers’ feeds on these feelings of confusion:

Many people distrust bankers because transactions on the stock exchange, particularly sudden booms and slumps, used to be largely incomprehensible to them. Since they often had to suffer under such moves, they tended to personify the anonymous reasons for financial losses and to blame acquisitive, plotting groups. [...]the fight against ‘nonproductive’ capital is one of the most effective stimuli of anti-Semitism [...]. (Adorno 2003, p. 120)

Overall, in the works of the early ISR, we find a perspective on anti-semitism as an ideological answer to the crisis of modern individuals finding themselves overwhelmed by the tension between the expectations and realities of the world. As we will see, we can find a similar crisis-centred perspective taken on racism in the early works of the CCCS.

2.2 CCCS: Multiple Crisis, Moral Panic, and Racism

What makes the early works of the CCCS particularly important is their attempt to develop a “non-reductionist” (Hall 1980/2019, p. 210) materialist theory of racism that distinguishes itself from two other theoretical strands. First, it differs from class-reductionist notions of racism that either understand racism as a manipulative technique deployed by the ruling class

and its political elite or as a vessel through which politically suppressed working-class interests are articulated. Instead, in the early works of the CCCS racism is characterised both as a strategy of domination exercised ‘from above’ and as a mass phenomenon reproducing itself ‘from below’: “In our view, the more developed racist ideologies *are popular* precisely because they succeed in reorganizing the common-sense racist ideologies of the white working class [...]” (Lawrence 1982, p. 46, original emphasis). This focus on both elite and popular racism is accompanied by a closer engagement with the specific techniques of “ideological displacement” (Hall et al. 1978, p. 29) by which racism re-imagines modern capitalist relations of domination, coercion and exploitation. Second, the early works of the CCCS highlight the limitations of hyper-constructivist approaches that tend to detach racism from its social conditions of existence: “In rejecting reductionist forms of analysis we do not believe that it is at the same time necessary to construct race as a *completely* autonomous factor, with no relation to other areas of social reality” (Solomos et al. 1982, p. 13, original emphasis).² Similar to the early works of the ISR, we can also find crisis-theoretical reflections in their work on the transformations of British racism in the (post-)Fordist and (post-)imperial transition period.

The above-mentioned studies *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al. 1978) and *The Empire Strikes Back* (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1982) argue that the 1970s witnessed a massive resurgence of racism and authoritarianism. Beginning with an analysis of a case of ‘mugging’ in the early 1970s that led to a criminal trial with draconian punishments as well as an alarmist public debate about so-called ‘Black youth crime’, the CCCS authors observe a more general authoritarian shift in British political culture and state practice throughout the 1970s. Furthermore, they interpret this emergence of a “law-and-order society” (ibid., p. viii; see also ibid., pp. 218–323) as a specific political response to three political-economic crises in the late 1960s and early 1970s: First, a “crisis of accumulation” (Solomos et al. 1982, p. 14) triggered by the 1973 Oil Crisis and reinforced by the long-term structural deficits of British industrialism; second, a “crisis of hegemony” (ibid., p. 17) of the post-war consensus which was increasingly challenged by trade union opposition and counter-cultural movements since the late 1960s; third, a crisis of Britain’s geo-political and world-eco-

2 With the emergence of the post-Marxist paradigm in the early to mid-1980s, Hall and other CCCS authors began to move in this direction as well (Hall 1986/2019). This is why this chapter primarily focuses on the earlier works.

conomic dominance following the loss of its Empire and the re-organisation of the international system following World War II (see Hall et al. 1978, p. 233). While the CCCS authors primarily focus on the “crisis of hegemony” (Solomos et al. 1982, p. 14), they nonetheless provide a multidimensional frame of analysis that goes beyond the ISR’s focus on the crisis of the modern individual.

The key task, then, is to explain why racism and authoritarianism have become such a popular mode of relating to these multiple crisis tendencies. This is where the CCCS authors begin to engage with ideology-theoretical and social-psychological perspectives. The most important reference points are Gramsci’s conceptualisations of ideology and common sense (see Lawrence 1982; Hall et al. 1978, pp. 139–217). Gramsci understood common sense as an “eclectic, unsystematic and contradictory” (Lawrence 1982, p. 79) type of everyday knowledge that

contains elements from the Stone Age and principles of a more advanced science, prejudices from all past phases of history at the local level and intuitions of a future philosophy which will be that of the human race united the world over. (Gramsci 1971, p. 47)

In comparison to the early ISR, this Gramscian notion of common sense puts a stronger emphasis on its ambivalent character. However, the CCCS researchers, too, argue that both the modern-capitalist regime of knowledge and the specific history of English intellectual and popular culture tend to reinforce traditionalist, anti-intellectual and conformist tendencies:

The term ‘common sense’ is generally used to denote a down-to-earth ‘good sense’. It is thought to represent the distilled truths of centuries of practical experience; so much so that to say of an idea or practice that it is only common sense, is to appeal over the logic and argumentation of intellectuals to what all reasonable people know in their ‘heart of hearts’ to be right and proper. (Lawrence 1982, p. 46)

From a racism-theoretical perspective, this notion of common sense is significant in various regards. Most notably, its traditionalist tendency makes it prone to identify with the dominant norms and values of the status quo. Given that British political culture is rooted in the legacies of colonial imperialism, bourgeois elitism, patriarchy and law-and-order, common sense tends to be directly infused with repertoires of racism and authoritarianism. “Britain’s imperialist past”, Lawrence argues, “provides important clues as to how racist ideologies have come to be such a tenacious feature of

the common-sense thinking of the white working (and other) class(es). The past is alive, even if transformed, in the present” (ibid.). However, the past is “alive” only insofar as it provides ways of ‘making sense’ of the present. Rejecting the assumption “that racist ideas are the mere ‘relics’ of a distant imperial past, which are out of place in a ‘modern industrial society’” (ibid., p. 45), Lawrence suggests analysing contemporary forms of racism as “an organic component of attempts to make sense of the present crisis” (ibid.).

This task entails two steps: First, the specific relation between common sense and crisis tendencies needs to be elaborated. Given its matter-of-factness, common sense tends to prioritise concrete perceptions over abstract principles, personal relations over structural patterns, immediate situations over large-scale developments. This is why it tends to be incapable of making sense of those complex world-economic and geo-political developments that underpin the above-discussed multiple crisis tendencies. Thus, those who experience the social world from a common-sense perspective tend to be confronted with vague feelings of anxiety whose origins they cannot explain. The CCCS researchers do not systematically engage with these common-sense crisis experiences, but there are some thoughts that show similarities to Löwenthal and Guterman’s concept of malaise. In *Policing the Crisis*, for instance, Hall et al. wrote about the emergence of “a diffuse social unease” about “an unnaturally accelerated pace of social change” and “an unhinging of stable patterns, moral points of reference” (Hall et al. 1978, p. 321). Second, the specific ideological and affective techniques by which racism rearticulates these common-sense feelings of unease need to be analysed. In *Policing the Crisis*, the public responses to the above-mentioned case of street robbery are characterised as what Stanley Cohen called a “moral panic”, that is, a moment when “[a] condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests”, and “its nature is presented in a stylized and stereo-typical fashion by the mass media” (Cohen 1972/2011, p. 1; see also Hall et al. 1978, pp. 3–28). Moral panics are composed of techniques of dramatisation (an empirical phenomenon is constructed as a ‘threat’ to the national order), displacement (the nature and extent of that ‘threat’ is exaggerated), personalisation (the ‘threat’ is attributed to a group of people), externalisation (this group of people is located ‘outside of’ the national order), and moralisation (this group of people is imagined as having malicious motives and morally reprehensible values) (see Hall et al. 1978, pp. 29, 32, 142, 182–184). The construction of so-called ‘black crime’ is a case in point: Hall et al. demonstrate that ‘street crime’ played a significant role in

the public discourse about the multiple crisis tendencies during late 1960s and early 1970s, because it allowed to break down all complexities and contradictions of that moment into a simple, emotionally gripping story about a small group of ‘evildoers’ threatening ‘our way of life’ (see *ibid.*, pp. 3–80). Furthermore, given that this type of crime was strongly associated with the urban (lumpen) proletariat (see *ibid.*, p. 160), the moral panic about ‘street crime’ provided an opportunity to displace common-sense frustrations about capitalist work regimes and class relations:

Crime [...] is set off against work in the public mind, precisely because it is an attempt to acquire by speed, stealth, fraudulent or shorthand methods what the great majority of law-abiding citizens can only come by through arduous toil, routine, expenditure of time, and the postponement of pleasure. (*ibid.*, p. 142)

This also made it a popular theme in the hegemonic crisis discourse of the late 1960s and early 1970s: “The society comes to perceive crime in general, and ‘mugging’ in particular, as an index of the disintegration of the social order, as a sign that the ‘British way of life’ is coming apart at the seams” (*ibid.*, p. vii). Post-colonial racism adds further projective elements to this general law-and-order discourse. Most notably, the imagination of ‘street crime’ as a ‘black problem’ reinforces the moral boundary between ‘evildoers’ and ‘ordinary people’ by giving it a biologist foundation. Furthermore, by attributing the problem of ‘mugging’ to the presence of postcolonial labour migrants in urban working-class areas, socio-economic crisis experiences are further externalised and detached from capitalist social relations:

The cause of the crisis was constructed through ideas about externality and criminality which supported a view of blacks as an ‘outside’ force, an alien *malaise* afflicting British society. [...] By the mid-seventies it was possible to present blacks as the main danger to society. Anything could be blamed, so long as it was not capitalism itself. (Hall et al. 1978, p. 24, original emphasis)³

Finally, the image of the ‘black mugger’ also feeds on the traditionalist tendency of common sense. The association of ‘violence’, ‘crime’ and ‘blackness’ was not invented in the post-colonial period, but draws on a

3 For an analysis of the specific role which the criminalisation of irregular work practices plays in antigypsyism, see Roman Thurn’s contribution in this volume.

long tradition of colonial ideology inscribed in common-sense worldviews and collective identities (see Lawrence 1982, p. 66).

3 Bridging the Gap: Antisemitism and Racism as Crisis Ideologies

For the development of a theoretical framework that is attentive to the relationship between antisemitism and racism, reconsidering the works of the early ISR and the early CCCS from a comparative perspective is relevant in two regards: First, while both approaches lack an explicit engagement with both antisemitism and racism, they provide valuable insights into the ideological specificities of (post-)Nazi antisemitism and (post-)colonial racism. The images of 'Jewish plutocratic conspirators' and 'Black muggers' are deciphered as specific techniques of transforming feelings of malaise into authoritarian desires and paranoid anxieties. While the former draws on the diffuse feeling of being controlled by mysterious social forces, the latter feeds on the frustrating experience of having to comply with a merciless regime of work and discipline. These observations are particularly relevant insofar as they show that both of these images are not interchangeable. Because antisemitism and racism feed on different common-sense experiences of crisis, they are not suitable to replacing each other. This insight is not only useful to challenge one-dimensional approaches to racism and antisemitism, but also to critically engage with the limitations of the early ISR and CCCS themselves. Second, however, this emphasis on ideological specificity is not reified. The main reason is that both antisemitism and racism are deciphered as specific ideological and affective responses to a general social tendency. They are massively popular because they are symptoms of the dynamics of capitalist socialisation and their damaging effects on the individual. In this sense, then, the reproduction of antisemitism and racism hinges on the same social causes, which is also why both can only be practically overcome in conjunction with each other.

A key aspect of these reflections about the ideological specificities and common social causes of antisemitism and racism is the problem of crisis, which comes in at different points in the early works of the ISR and CCCS. Writing at the heyday of organised and state capitalism in the early to mid-20th century, the early ISR mainly focused on the crisis of the individual in an age of massive corporate and bureaucratic power. The early CCCS, on the other hand, primarily reflected upon the growing erosion of that phase of capitalism, which led them to put a much stronger emphasis on

political-economic crisis tendencies. Both these crisis-theoretical approaches can complement each other. The ISR's concept of malaise provides reflections on the relationship between common sense and crisis which are useful to further substantiate the concept of moral panic. The CCCS's crisis-theoretical framework, in turn, provides useful insights into how the different manifestations of malaise change under the condition of multiple crisis tendencies. Such a focus is particularly important to engage with the relationship between antisemitism and economic crisis which remains largely underexplored in the works of the early ISR.

Overall, then, such a comparative reading demonstrates that both approaches, despite their respective limitations, provide crucial impulses for the development of a critical-materialist theory of ideology that overcomes the polarising tendencies in contemporary antisemitism and racism studies.

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