



Cultural Drivers of Radicalisation

France/D5.1 Country Report
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Stephen W. Sawyer and Roman Zinigrad

The American University of Paris, Center for
Critical Democracy Studies



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: ssawyer@aup.edu; zinigradr@gmail.com.

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Abbreviations

CRIF: *Conseil Représentatif des Institutions juives de France* (Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions)

CSA: *Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel* (French broadcasting authority)

RSF: *Reporters sans frontières* (Reporters Without Borders)

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About the Project

D.Rad is a comparative study of radicalisation and polarisation in Europe and beyond. It aims to identify the actors, networks, and broader social contexts driving radicalisation, particularly among young people in urban and peri-urban areas. D.Rad conceptualises this through the I-GAP spectrum (injustice-grievance-alienation-polarisation) so as to move towards measurable evaluations of de-radicalisation programmes. Our intention is to identify the building blocks of radicalisation, which include a sense of being victimised; a sense of being thwarted or lacking agency in established legal and political structures; and coming under the influence of “us vs them” identity formulations.

D.Rad benefits from an exceptional breadth of backgrounds. The project spans national contexts, including the UK, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Georgia, Austria, and several minority nationalisms. It bridges academic disciplines ranging from political science and cultural studies to social psychology and artificial intelligence. Dissemination methods include D.Rad labs, D.Rad hubs, policy papers, academic workshops, visual outputs and digital galleries. As such, D.Rad establishes a rigorous foundation to test practical interventions geared to prevention, inclusion and de-radicalisation.

With the possibility of capturing the trajectories of seventeen nations and several minority nations, the project will provide a unique evidence base for the comparative analysis of law and policy as nation-states adapt to new security challenges. The process of mapping these varieties and their link to national contexts will be crucial in uncovering strengths and weaknesses in existing interventions. Furthermore, D.Rad accounts for the problem that processes of radicalisation often occur in circumstances that escape the control and scrutiny of traditional national frameworks of justice. The participation of AI professionals in modelling, analysing and devising solutions to online radicalisation will be central to the project’s aims.

Executive Summary/Abstract

This report is a study of the French contemporary media, focusing on the mainstreaming of radicalisation through physical and digital platforms. Using critical discourse analysis, it demonstrates the impact of communication through language, images, and gestures on the cultural entrenchment of antisemitic narratives in the French popular culture and society. The I-GAP framework developed for the D.Rad project sheds light on the links between these narratives and violent radicalisation.

The report examines manifestations of antisemitism in traditional and new media through the work of Dieudonné, a famous French comedian and highly influential disseminator of antisemitic propaganda. Dieudonné's creative output and online presence reflect the recent structural changes in the French media sphere and upsurge of hate speech on social networks. His popularity in radical circles demonstrates the inherent limitations of hate speech regulation and attempts to entirely remove a radicalisation agent from the public sphere. His comedy attracts a wide range of marginalised groups that have little in common beyond their antisemitic perceptions. And finally, the products of his prolific career are highly diverse in their circulation and nature: they are available physically and online, comprise artistic-humorous and political content, and carry literal and symbolical meanings.

The report examines three emblematic samples of Dieudonné's antisemitic discourse: The *quenelle*, a gesture that was invented by Dieudonné, and turned into a cultural phenomenon and a mobilising element of radicalisation; a revisionist infographic on the Vichy regime from one of Dieudonné's websites demonstrating Dieudonné's non-humorous, antisemitic political activism; and a YouTube video of an extract from one of Dieudonné's theatre shows, representative of three predominant elements in Dieudonné's comedy: derision and revisionism of the Holocaust, antisemitic stereotypes, and pitting Afro-French against Jews. The report also includes an overview of the public attitudes towards Jews, the government's measures taken to limit antisemitic violence and online hate speech, and the expressions of antisemitism in the mainstream, fringe, and social media.

Dieudonné's multidimensional world of content, where one seamlessly shifts from the entertaining to the offensive, is a sophisticated hotbed of radicalisation. It strives to maximise outreach to anyone receptive to antisemitic views and create a community whose members are situated between the passionate and the passively accepting on the antisemitic spectrum. The communication and artistic strategies employed to this end are central to the understanding of the media's role in (de)radicalisation in France.

Introduction

This report studies contemporary radicalised media spheres in France, focusing on the mainstreaming of radicalisation through digital platforms and popular culture. Specifically, it examines manifestations of antisemitism in traditional and new media, evaluating their influence on the spread of antisemitic views in the French society, and their links to threats and violence against Jews. At the centre of the report are three artistic objects produced by Dieudonné, a widely known French comedian and highly influential propagator of antisemitic ideas. Having begun his career at the heart of the French consensus in the 1990s, Dieudonné's theatre productions, movies, and television performances continued to draw large and diverse audiences until the late 2010s notwithstanding the troubling increase in his blatant disparagement of Jews and mockery of the Holocaust. Ultimately, his antisemitic attacks could no longer be ignored or discounted as mere entertainment. Dieudonné was convicted multiple times of hate-speech related offences, decidedly denounced by the mainstream media, and most recently, banned from most major video and social media platforms. But Dieudonné's impact on French popular culture has hardly disappeared. His banishment from the mainstream public sphere coincided with the rise of new partisan media in France and the growing influence of online actors that are not dependent on institutional recognition.

In the past decade, the French traditional media has faced financial difficulties and a drop in popularity, characteristic of the digital age. The crisis has been exacerbated by high levels of discontent and mistrust in the news media as compared with other Western European countries (Sumida, Walker and Mitchell, 2019). For the moment, the media ecology in France remains relatively homogenous. It "possesses specific features that complexify and thus hinder the emergence of highly partisan stories in mainstream public debates. [...] French traditional media have close ties with one another [and] reality-check dynamics still largely shape the media ecosystem". But recent studies have identified trends of media polarisation that unfolds on a "vertical" axis, between the mainstream press and peripheral, populist outlets. Unlike in the United States, this divide does not develop along the traditional left-right political spectrum and is not felt within the mainstream media space. Both right and left mainstream media outlets "regularly cite each other, rarely cite partisan actors outside their sphere, and seem to share common practices and values". Instead, polarisation "occurs between the institutional sphere (which comprises the left-right spectrum), and a sphere that rejects the elites" (Institut Montaigne, 2019). French social media networks exist within this structure and reproduce polarisation. For instance, there is a "clear divide on [French] Twitter between stories shared by traditional media and by the Satellite [counter-informational] media". Accordingly, "[i]n this environment, social media do not polarise, they are the space where polarization unfolds" (Institut Montaigne, 2019).

Media attitudes to antisemitism split along the same lines. Antisemitic hate speech and prejudice is disseminated by fringe, offline and online, media outlets, whereas both left and right leaning mainstream media unequivocally condemn antisemitism and provide extensive coverage of violence against Jews. Public opinion surveys reveal a more complex pattern of antisemitic perceptions in the French society. The vast majority of respondents expresses high levels of tolerance towards Jews and strongly rejects antisemitism but, at the same time, millions of French agree with traditional antisemitic statements about Jews, such as that Jews hold too much power in France or have a special relationship with money. Antisemitic hatred

is amplified on social media and is a major source of concern for the government and for French Jews.

Dieudonné has managed to thrive in the digital age and remain influential while bypassing the institutional media. He produces rich online antisemitic content on his websites and social media, including on Twitter, and continues to perform on clandestine stages across France. Much of Dieudonné's old body of work is still readily available on YouTube; he is regularly mentioned in the extreme-right press; and his followers continue to celebrate his by-now iconic gestures and symbols in the French public sphere and on social networks. Contemporary coverage of Dieudonné in the mainstream right and left media is always negative but this only reinforces his image as a heroic and idealist underdog in the eyes of his supporters. In fact, the phenomenon of Dieudonné's popularity is a particularly vivid illustration of the institutionalist vs. anti-elitist polarisation in the French media and society. His work rallies a wide range of marginalised groups that have little in common beyond their antisemitism and who are ready to redirect their grievances against the system and the elites toward Jews.

This report addresses the drivers of antisemitic radicalisation in the French media sphere through the lens of Dieudonné's artistic and political activity. It is structured as follows: Having spelled out the methodology used in choosing the objects of analysis, the report outlines the media landscape within the cultural and political contexts of radicalisation in France. This section addresses the degrees and expressions of antisemitism in the general public, in French government and politics, and in French mainstream, fringe, and social media. The next section zooms in on Dieudonné, the main subject of this inquiry. It offers a critical analysis of the representation of antisemitic ideology in Dieudonné's work, the circulation of his ideas off and online, and the consumption of this content by large audiences. The section begins with an overview of Dieudonné's career, which shows how the combination of humour and ideological self-righteousness produced a highly effective driver of antisemitic radicalisation; and then proceeds with three emblematic samples of his work that demonstrate how Dieudonné communicates antisemitic messages through his art. The report ends with conclusions regarding the impact of contemporary media on French culture and antisemitic radicalisation. The concluding section includes an analysis of Dieudonné's discourse and its circulation through the I-GAP framework developed for the D.Rad project.

Methodology

The report applies critical discourse analysis (CDA) to three artistic products circulating in the physical sphere and online. CDA “focuses on the role of language in society and political processes” and shows how it is employed “to legitimize, maintain, and naturalize forms of social power and inequality” (Bouvier and Machin, 2018). Specifically, we use this method to demonstrate the impact of communication through language, images, and gestures on the cultural entrenchment of antisemitic narratives in France. The I-GAP framework developed for the D.Rad project complements the CDA in the concluding section of this report by analysing the links between these narratives and processes of radicalisation in French society.

All products examined in this report are generated by Dieudonné M'Bala M'Bala, a French-Cameroonian comedian and political activist. The choice to focus on Dieudonné's work was motivated by four factors: the longevity of his presence in French media which offers a long arc of development for understanding his radicalization; his prominence in the French far right and other fringe radical circles; the substantial impact of his work on French mainstream culture; and the masterful mobilization of multiple communication platforms to disseminate his comedy, political agenda, and antisemitic propaganda. Prior to his recent ban from most major social networks, Dieudonné had 1,2 million followers on Facebook and nearly 450,000 YouTube subscribers. Videos he uploaded easily gained 150,000 views overnight and in May 2020, his channel reached 7,5 million views (Le Figaro, 2020c; Turcan, 2020). Even after the suspension, more than fifty videos of Dieudonné's sketches and monologues on YouTube, uploaded by other users, have more than one million views. The most watched video, uploaded in November 2017, is a full-length recording (1h39m) of his 2005 show “1905” that amassed more than 6,6 million views and 23 thousand likes. And even recent uploads of news or discussions about Dieudonné are watched hundreds of thousands of times. Dieudonné's own Twitter account has more than 160,000 followers. He also operates two websites (60,000 unique monthly visitors (*Semrush*, 2021)), three Telegram channels (more than 15,000 subscribers and up to 5,000 views for individual posts), and a Spotify channel (about 600 monthly visitors). Aside from his online presence, Dieudonné performs on stages across France ten to fourteen times a month and organises annual public events (see Appendix 1 for a full list of Dieudonné's shows since 1997).

Dieudonné's effective articulation of antisemitic messages and the use he makes of the media to communicate it to his audience are illustrated in this report by three media objects. The criteria for their choice were representation of diverse aspects of Dieudonné's artistic work and tangible outreach. The first object is the *quenelle*: a physical gesture invented by Dieudonné and performed during the “1905” show, which became his trademark and a driver of antisemitic mobilisation. This gesture functions as an aspect of language that carries discourse information and is a strong cohesive device (McNeill, Levy and Duncan, 2015). A 2016 discourse analysis of the *quenelle* has established its function as an agent of social polarisation that solidifies the identity of Dieudonné's followers and strengthens their group solidarity (Amadori, 2016, p. 93). The analysis also attested to the “viral spread” of the gesture in 2013-2014. A query of the word “quenelle” in the francophone press in France run in the Factiva news database demonstrates the wide circulation of this gesture-symbol in the media since 2004, when it was invented by Dieudonné (see *Figure 1*).

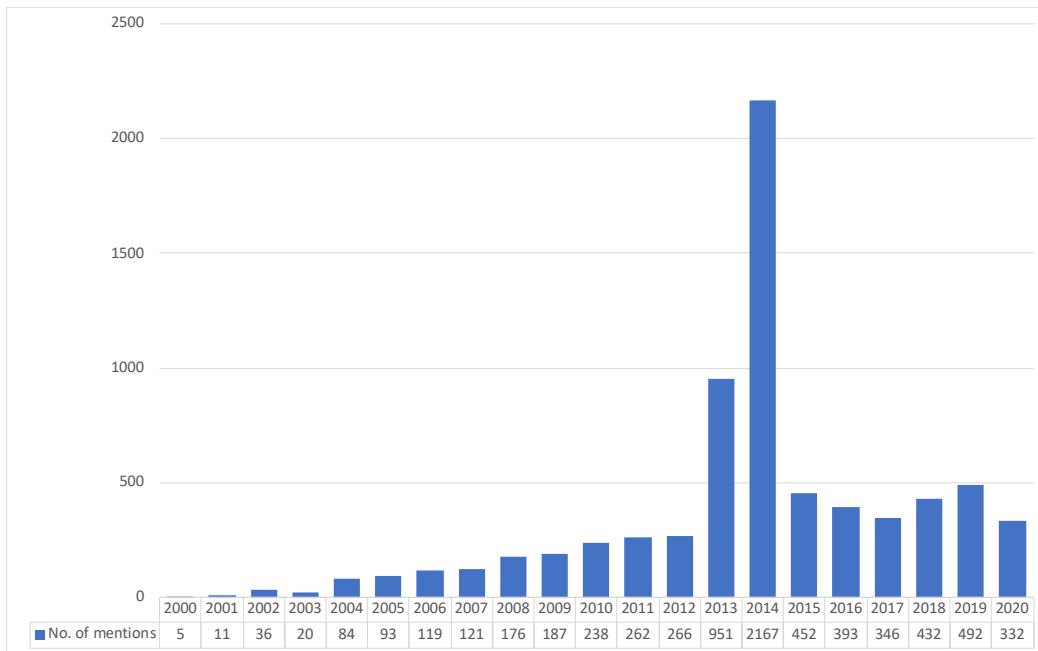


Figure 1: Mentions of the word “quenelle” in the francophone press in France in 2000-2020 (mentions before 2004 show the frequency of the word’s use in its literal meaning) (Source: Factiva)

The second media object, an infographic video presenting a revisionist account of the French collaborationist Vichy regime in WWII, was chosen as an example of Dieudonné’s non-humorous, antisemitic political activism. The video is available on one of Dieudonné’s websites (9,000-15,000 unique monthly visitors) without charge, which increases its likelihood to be viewed even by occasional visitors. Comments to the infographic can be left only by paying subscribers; since its appearance in September 2020 and as of June 2021 when this report was written the infographic was commented on 137 times by 103 subscribed visitors.

Finally, the third object is a YouTube video of an antisemitic sketch from one of Dieudonné’s shows. The extract is representative of three predominant elements in Dieudonné’s comedy: derision and revisionism of the Holocaust, antisemitic stereotypes, and pitting Afro-French against Jews. The video was uploaded in 2015 and, up to now, has 840,000 views, more than 500 comments (17 comments in the past six months), 6,500 thousand likes and about 400 dislikes. All three objects are examples of discursive products generated by Dieudonné through the very process of their circulation among his fans and the general population in his theatre shows, social media, and other digital platforms (Hall, 1973; Bødker, 2016).

Media landscape, cultural and political contexts of radicalisation in France

Antisemitism levels in the general public

Contemporary manifestations of antisemitism in France are visible and violent but are not widespread. The levels of tolerance towards Jews in the French public opinion have impressively grown in the past thirty years and are higher than of other minorities. An overwhelming majority of the French considers French Jews to be “French as the others” (90%) and most are in favour of a vigorous fight against antisemitism (71%) (CNCDH, 2020, pp. 31, 84). Surveys of the general population show that since 2000, the Jewish minority is consistently considered the most accepted and “well-regarded” ethnic group in France (CNCDH, 2020, p. 78).¹ And even the average number of people adhering to historical antisemitic stereotypes has considerably declined in recent years (CNCDH, 2020, p. 32).

Yet, antisemitic prejudice is a stable and hardly marginal phenomenon in French society. Online antisemitism (including social media) is assessed to be a very or a fairly important problem in France by 95% of French Jews, and 93% estimate that it has increased over the past years (FRA, 2018, pp. 22–23). These evaluations reflect the pervasiveness of antisemitic stereotypes in the general population. One out of five people in France thinks that Jews have too much power in France, two out of five suspect French Jews to be more loyal to Israel than to France, and every third believes Jews have a special relationship with money (CNCDH, 2020). Violence against Jews also remains a constant and frequent phenomenon. Hundreds of attacks and threats against Jews are reported annually over the past twenty years. Surveys show that one in three Jews in France feels threatened because of their religious affiliation and two in three worry about becoming a victim of verbal insults, harassment or physical attack (Fondapol, 2020; FRA, 2018, p. 34). What is more, the extent of antisemitic violence in France is highly disproportionate in comparison with other groups. In 2019, Jews were the target of more than a third of all racist violence, whereas they represent barely 1% of the population (CNCDH, 2020, p. 159; Tésorière, 2018).² Furthermore, the estimate is that the statistics reflect only a fraction of the actual numbers antisemitic as racist violence is highly underreported. Since 2010, the lowest number of violent attacks and threats was reported in 2017 (311 cases) and the highest in 2014 (851 cases – 241 incidents of physical violence and 610 threats) (Vaudano, 2019; Chaverou, 2020; Fondapol, 2020).

Government measures against antisemitism and hate speech

The French government strongly condemns antisemitism and acts to prevent it. French law criminalises the expression of negationist or revisionist accounts of the Holocaust, prohibits antisemitic speech, and, more generally, fights against the dissemination of false information in traditional and online media (*Loi n° 90-615 du 13 juillet 1990 tendant à réprimer tout acte raciste, antisémite ou xénophobe*; *Loi n° 2018-1202 du 22 décembre 2018 relative à la lutte*

¹ Tolerance indicators for 2019 are the highest since 1990.

² According to the President of the Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions (CRIF), in recent years, Jews are the target of 40% to 50% of all racist violence (Kalifat, 2020). For further information on extremist and racist violence in France, see (Sawyer and Zinigrad, 2021).

contre la manipulation de l'information).³ The government also monitors antisemitic threats and attacks and publishes regular reports and recommendations on the fight against antisemitism (along with other types of racist violence). Education against antisemitism is among the highest priorities in French public schools, and mediatised antisemitic violence and vandalism are consistently denounced by French presidents, ministers, and high-ranking government officials.

In what specifically concerns the regulation of violent and hate speech online, ISP's and providers of related services are required "to contribute to the fight against the dissemination" of materials containing revisionist or negationist messages about the Holocaust, crimes of enslavement and other crimes against humanity, as well as messages inciting racial hatred and violence. This requirement involves no regular monitoring of online platforms but does mandate service providers to promptly report all complaints about the above materials to the government. An even stricter obligation applies to publications containing incitement to or glorification of terrorism (or child pornography). In such cases, the government may enjoin the service providers to take down or prevent access to these materials within 24 hours of being notified of the order (*Loi n° 2004-575 du 21 juin 2004 pour la confiance dans l'économie numérique, Articles 6, 6-1*). In June 2020, France further reinforced the regulation of online content by establishing an "observatory of hate online" and charging it with "analysing and quantifying the phenomenon of online hate" (*Loi n° 2020-766*

³ The spread of "fake news" is particularly sensitive during election campaigns. The 2018 law "on the fight against the manipulation of information" imposes heightened transparency requirements on digital platforms at the time of elections. This involves reporting sponsored content and – for platforms exceeding a certain number of hits a day – also having a legal representative in France and making their algorithms public. The law also allows courts to issue injunctions preventing the circulation of "fake news" that may compromise the outcome of an election (*Loi n° 2018-1202 du 22 décembre 2018 relative à la lutte contre la manipulation de l'information*). In between elections, digital platforms are subject to a general "duty of cooperation" that requires online operators to introduce measures to eliminate "fake news". The French Broadcasting Authority (CSA) supervises the fulfilment of this obligation and is also authorised "to prevent, suspend and stop the broadcasts of television services that are controlled by foreign states or are influenced by these states, and which are detrimental to the country's fundamental interests" (Government of France, 2018). The scope and effectiveness of these measures were questioned by various journalist organisations such as Reporters Without Borders (RSF, 2018) and the French National Syndicate of Journalists (Syndicat National des Journalistes, 2018). To date, only one known attempt has been made to issue an injunction against the dissemination of "fake news". During the 2019 European elections, a French court rejected a complaint against a tweet by the French Minister of Interior about an alleged "attack" of demonstrators against a hospital staff and a police officer (the demonstrators broke into the hospital but did not physically attack people). The court ruled that the tweet was "exaggerated" but did not amount to the definition of "fake news" under the law (Mounier, 2019). Note that the 2018 law is not France's first attempt to prevent the spread of "fake news". It only reinforces the previous, broad legislative framework of civil and criminal sanctions that fight the publication of false information. The main provisions regulating the diffusion of "fake news" can be found in Article 27 of the 1881 French Press Law ("The malicious publication, dissemination and reproduction, by whatever means, of false news and documents which have been fabricated or falsified or mendaciously attributed to third parties, when this has disturbed the peace, or was capable of disturbing it, will be subject to a fine of 45,000 euros. The same offence will be subject to a fine of 135,000 euros when this malicious publication, dissemination or reproduction is likely to undermine the discipline or morale of the armed forces, or interfere with the Nation's war effort"); and Article L97 of the French Electoral Code ("Those who, using false news, slanderous rumours or other fraudulent manoeuvres, have modified or diverted ballots, or led one or more voters to abstain from voting, will be punished with one year's imprisonment and a fine of 15,000 euros") (*Loi du 29 juillet 1881 sur la liberté de la presse, Article 27; Code électoral, Article L97*). For further analysis see, e.g., (Smith, 2019; Mouron, 2018).

du 24 juin 2020 visant à lutter contre les contenus haineux sur internet, Article 16; CSA, 2020).⁴ The observatory consists of major stakeholders representing the various interests in the online sphere. Its members include online operators (such as Facebook, Google, Microsoft, TikTok and Twitter), civil society organisations (such as CRIF, the Human Rights League, SOS Homophobie and SOS Racisme), government representatives (e.g., the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights, the Inter-ministerial Delegate for the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBT hatred, and the Ministry for the Digital Economy) and researchers. The agenda of this newly established organ is still under development: In October 2020, the observatory set up thematic working groups whose mission is to define the notion of hateful content, conduct a comprehensive analysis of its evolution, study the mechanisms of its diffusion and prevention, and provide support to the victims and the general public (CSA, 2020; Hoareau, 2021).⁵

Antisemitism in the media

Mainstream media

In past decades, the mainstream media has generally assumed an active role in the fight against antisemitism (although a much larger proportion of French Jews is concerned with manifestations of antisemitism in the media (80%) than in politics (67%) (FRA, 2018, p. 22)). The French right and left press widely covers the subject, reports on incidents of violence against Jews and related political and judicial proceedings, and is favourably viewed by representatives of the Jewish community (CRIF, 2017). Notably, the trust of many French Jews in the media was markedly undermined following the controversial press coverage of the April 2017 attack and killing of a Jewish woman in her apartment in Paris. Sarah Halimi was beaten, strangled, and defenestrated by her 27-year-old Muslim neighbour, shouting “Allahu Akbar” and reciting verses from the Quran throughout the act. These circumstances immediately convinced many that the killing was an antisemitic hate crime, but the national press was slow to report it and hesitant to establish its antisemitic motives. *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *L’Express* addressed the affair only six weeks after it took place, and *Le Monde* titled its piece, “Was Sarah Halimi killed ‘because she was Jewish?’” (Couvelaire, 2017; Kovacs, 2017; Pham-Lê and Benjamin, 2017). The media’s doubts about the motives of the killing seemed to reflect the questions rising from the police investigation as to the killer’s mental state at the time of the incident. But not everyone found this explanation convincing. One French journalist accused the press of a “cover up” (Weitzmann, 2017) and a

⁴ Initially, the establishment of the observatory was supposed to be only one part in a broader legal reform inspired by the 2017 German Network Enforcement Act (*Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz*) and advanced by President Macron with the purpose of imposing extensive government oversight on online content. An early draft of the 2020 “law against online hate speech” included a substantial expansion of contents the government can order to remove within 24 hours, from incitement to terrorism and child pornography to any material that contains “manifest” glorification or contestation of crimes against humanity, crimes of genocide, of enslavement, and of war; incitement to discrimination, hatred, violence or defamation against a person or a group because of their ethnicity, nationality, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability; or sexual harassment (Avia, 2019). The Constitutional Council struck down most of this reform ruling it unconstitutionally undermines the freedoms of expression and communication in a manner that “is not necessary, appropriate and proportionate” (*Décision n° 2020-801 DC du 18 juin 2020*, 2020, paras 8–9).

⁵ The observatory has only convened three times since its foundation. The latest meeting in May 2021, was framed as “an opportunity to take stock of the work carried out and to testify to the dialogue and consolidated cooperation between the stakeholders” (CSA, 2020).

communications expert argued that the incident's "antisemitic and Islamist motives appear to have been watered down, and in any case little questioned" by the mainstream media and that "Sarah Halimi's tragedy would probably not have sprouted indignation without the haunting power of [social] networks" (Benedetti, 2017).⁶ Whatever the reasons behind this initial silence, the media has since extensively covered the police investigation of the case, the court rulings (in the first instance and on two appeals) acquitting the killer of liability on grounds of temporary insanity at the time of the incident (caused by his heavy and regular use of cannabis) (*Arrêt n°404 du 14 avril 2021 (20-80.135)*), the protests expressed by large parts of the French Jewish community in response to what they perceive as an unjust outcome, and, most recently, the government's intentions to amend the Criminal Code so as to prevent similar acquittals in the future (Vincent, 2017; Le Parisien, 2018; Couvelaire, 2019; Kovacs, 2021; Le Monde, 2021).

Another potential impact of mainstream media on radicalisation can be inferred from the correlation between intensive press coverage of antisemitic incidents or of antisemitism-related events and spikes in violence against Jews. Some high media profile jihadist attacks against Jews in the past decade – such as the March 2012 shooting at a Jewish school in Toulouse, January 2014 ban of an antisemitic show staged by Dieudonné (see below), January 2015 attack of a kosher supermarket in Paris, or the murder of Mireille Knoll in March 2018 – were followed by an escalation in antisemitic attacks and threats as compared with the periods preceding the events (Ghiles-Meilhac, 2015, pp. 213–214; Jikeli, 2017, pp. 260–261; Prod'homme, 2019, p. 12). The number of antisemitic incidents in 2012 spiked to 614, as compared with 389 in 2011. Then, after a drop to 423 incidents in 2013, the next two years saw the highest numbers of reports of antisemitic violence since 2009 (851 and 808 cases, respectively). Violence against Jews also surged from 311 incidents in 2017 to 541 in 2018 (CNCDH, 2020). Note however, that the correlation between mediatised attacks and surges in antisemitic violence is not observed in all cases. For instance, the torture and murder of Ilan Halimi in February 2006, and the killing of Sarah Halimi in April 2017 were not followed by an increase in attacks or threats against Jews.

The French mainstream media may also be contributing to antisemitic prejudice and violence in a more indirect fashion, by reinforcing one-dimensional preconceptions of the Jewish and Muslim minorities. A recent empirical study argues that mainstream media exacerbates the already entrenched polarisation between French Jews and Muslims by constructing their image as two distinct and homogenous communities enduring a tense relationship. The study claims further that whereas "Jews tend to be presented as fully integrated and their representation is in general positive, Muslims are more often presented as not fully integrated – or even at odds with French society and its values – and their representation is, at best, ambiguous and, at worst, negative" (Bharat, 2021, p. 27). Perpetuation of these preconceptions may enable marginalisation and discrimination of Muslims in France, nurture both Islamophobic and antisemitic sentiments, and in extreme cases contribute to jihadist radicalisation.

⁶ French courts ultimately concluded that the killer bears no criminal responsibility for his actions and will not stand trial because his heavy and regular use of cannabis caused him to enter a state of temporary psychosis at the time of the killing (*Arrêt n°404 du 14 avril 2021 (20-80.135)*). The latest ruling in the case was issued in April 2021 but the

Fringe media

Far-right antisemitic publications are more direct and immediate drivers of radicalisation. Far-right literature became more available in recent decades through the Internet and proliferates in France off and online. To take only a few examples, new editions of antisemitic booklets dating from WWII, translations of Nazi and neo-Nazi literature, and publications of contemporary white supremacist authors, are currently distributed in France by multiple publishing houses, such as *Kontre-Kulture* and *Akribeia*. *Kontre-Kulture*, founded in 2011 by Alain Soral – an antisemitic icon of the far-right and an alter ego of Dieudonné – has a large part of its catalogue dedicated to antisemitic works. In 2013, a court ordered to withdraw from sales one of the books published by *Kontre-Kulture* and delete passages from four others, finding them to contain “verbal abuse against a group of people because of their belonging to a specific religion”, Holocaust denial, and incitement to racial hatred (Le Monde, 2013b). In September 2020, the publishing house was sentenced to pay 134,000€ in compensation for republishing one of the abridged books, *Le Salut par les juifs* [Salvation by the Jews], by Léon Bloy, originally printed in 1892 (Le Figaro, 2020a). Earlier that year *Kontre-Kulture* was enjoined to stop selling Joseph Goebbels’ “Battle for Berlin” (Johannès and Jacquin, 2020). *Akribeia* was partially owned by Robert Faurisson, a famous public figure and one of the most prominent French negationists, convicted numerous times of Holocaust denial and incitement to racial hatred (Nossiter, 2018). *Akribeia* publishes Faurisson’s works along with a negationist periodical *Tabou*, new antisemitic authors, and translations of works of American white supremacists and European neo-Nazis (François, 2020; Abloc, 2019). *Kontre-Kulture*, *Akribeia* and multiple other publishing houses operate online bookstores that sell their own and others’ publications.

Extreme right journals and newspapers like *Rivarol* or *Valeurs actuelles* regularly publish articles that echo traditional racist stereotypes implicating Jews in world domination, control of the media, banks and French politics (Lebourg, 2018). Antisemitic movies, videos, cartoons, podcasts, music, and news reviews that spur conspiracy theories and dress racist prejudice in modern clothing and make the contents attractive to the youth are easy to find on Google and in social media. Some of the more prominent public personas like Soral or Jérôme Bourbon, the chief editor of *Rivarol*, were convicted numerous times for Holocaust denial (punishable under French law as “contestation of a crime against humanity”), incitement to hatred and antisemitic offenses. Bourbon, who was already convicted in 2015 for tweeting “Sad time: people do not believe in God or in Hell but they believe in the gas chambers without having seen them”, received a suspended sentence in June 2020 for another series of antisemitic tweets he posted in 2018 (Le Figaro, 2020b). Soral was most recently convicted for Holocaust denial in April 2019, for a 2016 online publication of an antisemitic caricature. The drawing was titled *Chutspah Hebdo* in reference to the French journal *Charlie Hebdo*, and showed Charlie Chaplin against the background of the Israeli flag, surrounded by a shoe, a wig, a lamp and a soap, asking “Holocaust where are you?” (Le Monde, 2020).⁷

⁷ *Chutspah* is Yiddish for “audacity”.



Figure 2: An antisemitic caricature published on Alain Soral's website

The caricature parodied a 2016 *Charlie Hebdo* cover, published after the 2016 bombings in Brussels. The original cover featured a famous Belgian singer, Stromae, on the background of the Belgian Flag, saying “Father, where are you?” (a title of one of his songs) and surrounded by body parts that answer “here”, “there”, “and there too”, in reference to the victims of the attacks (Le Monde, 2016).

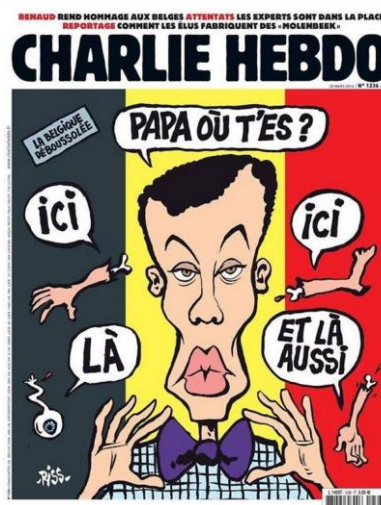


Figure 3: The original 2016 cover of the Charlie Hebdo journal

The far-right is the predominant but not exclusive source of antisemitic propaganda. Prejudice and hatred directed against Jews are also common in jihadist media and can be found in extreme left circles (Knobel, 2016; Chambraud, 2017; Wieviorka, 2018; Weitzmann, 2019). Some researchers attribute the rise in antisemitic attacks and online hate speech in the past two decades to the emergence of “new antisemitism”. This category is based on a distinction between “old”, nationalist, antisemitism and some of its new manifestations that emerged in Europe after the outbreak of the second intifada. “New antisemitism” in France is claimed to be driven by radical Islam, find sympathisers particularly among descendants of Arab or Muslim immigrants, and mobilise anti-Zionist or pro-Palestinian views into hatred and attacks against Jews (Taguieff, 2002; Rosenfeld, 2015). The strong causal links between an increase in antisemitic violence and anti-Zionism suggested by the “new antisemitism” thesis

have been questioned by several experts of antisemitism in France (Mayer, 2004; Ghiles-Meilhac, 2015; Wieviorka, 2018; CNCDH, 2020, pp. 76–84). But anti-Israel political discourse continues to be an attractive source of mobilisation for various antisemitic actors across the right-left spectrum, “much to the dismay of organisations traditionally representative of the Palestinian cause, which do not intend to see their political struggle side-tracked in the anti-Semitic sense”. One of its worrying outcomes is “the appearance of a new generation of demonstrators who no longer know how to distinguish between Jews, Israelis, Zionists and non-Zionists” (Chambraud, 2017).

It should be noted in this context that studies and reports in the mainstream media that attempt to correlate antisemitic violence with the perpetrators’ backgrounds rely mostly on political and ethno-religious indicators and classify the known cases of aggression into incidents of extreme-right (neo-Nazi), Arab-Muslim, extreme-left, and unidentified violence. Although political and religious views are shown to be indicative of antisemitic views in the French population, this approach has clear limitations. Most of the available data on the profiles of perpetrators is based on the perceptions of aggressed individuals. The majority of the perpetrators remain unidentified. Other factors, such as age and level of education are also predictive of antisemitic prejudice. And at least in what concerns the far-right platform in recent decades, the antisemitic agenda of the *Rassemblement National* (formerly, *Front National*) party and of some other far-right political and violent groupings in France has been pushed into the background, giving way to inflammatory anti-immigrant and Islamophobic discourse.

That being said, political and religious characterisation of antisemitic violence play a central role in the context of media literacy and cultural drivers of radicalisation. First, far-right (including fundamentalist Christian) and jihadist media mobilise antisemitic stereotypes and radical religious thought that nurture radicalisation and violence against Jews in all segments of the population, even if some individuals are more susceptible to adopt their ideas than others. Second, the circumstances and character of numerous antisemitic acts, as well as statements made by their perpetrators, give these incidents unmistakably political or religious colours. Ostensibly ideological violence is also the type that draws most public and media attention. The declared motives for the actions may be no more than a cliché of religious fanaticism or antisemitic prejudice, or a result of mental illness. Attempts at devising effective deradicalisation policies for this category of perpetrators or understanding the systemic problems facilitating antisemitic violence should therefore treat such declarations with caution. But the symbolic weight of mediatised political or religious extremist violence has a great, perhaps decisive, impact on the radicalisation of other individuals, public opinion, social cohesion in French society, and the French Jews’ perceptions of safety.

Social media

Government sanctions and mounting pressure from some NGO’s have compelled video and social media platforms to institute more rigorous moderation of online hate speech in France (RFI, 2020). Companies like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter have recently opted to remove some of the popular accounts publishing racist, antisemitic, and otherwise offensive content. Figures like Soral, Dieudonné, Bourbon, the famous negationist Hervé Ryssen, the extreme right *Génération identitaire* group were suspended from some or all of these platforms, losing an audience of hundreds of thousands to millions of subscribers (Le Monde, 2017, 2018, 2020; Le Parisien, 2020). These bans limit the online reach of “quality” antisemitic content and make a moral statement that antisemitism should be not tolerated in the public sphere. Yet, the

efficiency of such measures in countering radicalisation or preventing the dissemination of racist speech is questionable (Sawyer and Zinigrad, 2021). The removed contents are still available on internet websites, popular videos are reuploaded to YouTube by other users, and the French extreme right has quickly adapted to the new restrictions. It is migrating to alternative American and Russian platforms, such as Parler, BitChute, Gab, Telegram, and VK, already used by alt-right circles in the United States (Bounemoura, 2020; Laurent, 2020; L'Obs, 2020). (For a mapping of the French far-right online networks see e.g., (Froio, 2017)). Spontaneous and decentralised antisemitic content is also commonplace in mainstream social media, occasionally attracting large crowds. In 2013, the Twitter hashtags #UnBonJuif [a good Jew] #UnJuifMort [a dead Jew] and #SiJetaisNazi [If I were a Nazi] were trending among the most popular in France for several months (along with other hateful hashtags like #SiMonFilsEstGay [if my son was gay] and #SiMaFilleRameneUnNoir [if my daughter brings home a black man]) (Chrisafis, 2013). And in 2020, the hashtag #sijetaitunjuif [if I were a Jew]⁸ was the top trending hashtag in France, accompanying widely shared tweets such as "I would use my grandfather's grave as an ashtray" and "I will put the family in the oven to continue the tradition" (Fearnow, 2020; Grably, 2020). A comprehensive analysis of online contents conducted by the CRIF, a French Jewish organisation, identified more than 50,000 antisemitic statements made in open-access websites and social media in 2019.⁹ Almost 40% of the statements were classified as explicit expressions of hate, more than half featured antisemitic stereotypes or allegations, and 13% included revisionist or negationist accounts of the Holocaust (CRIF, 2020; The Jerusalem Post, 2020).¹⁰

Furthermore, calls in favour of hate speech regulation on social media are themselves claimed to be a Jewish plot. A recent analysis suggests the following portrayal of the role traditional and new media have in the spread of antisemitic propaganda:

From the moment when the shadow cast by the Holocaust loses its protective effectiveness for the Jews [...] the oldest prejudices are released. This is true even in educated circles, for examples those close to publishing, where it is apparently essential to redistribute the nauseating literature of the interwar period and of Nazism and where a kind of trivialisation makes possible the more or less evasive [...] liberation of expressions loaded with prejudice. Hatred, rumours and prejudice spread through blogs and social networks bring a modernisation to old anti-Semitism by adding to it a new dimension: "the Jews" [are said to] constitute an obstacle to freedom of expression, even of opinion – the exact opposite of the culture of the immediate, of reactivity, of interactivity, of expression without limits [...] allowed by current communication technologies – by asking more than others do,

⁸ The #sijetaitunjuif hashtag has a spelling mistake.

⁹ CRIF reported that the database for the analysis consisted of 600 million sources.

¹⁰ These statistics do not include hate speech against the state of Israel. On the impact of anti-Israeli sentiment on antisemitism in France and on the difference between anti-Zionism and antisemitism see e.g. (Wieviorka, 2018, p. 22) ("On the one hand, anti-Israel passions feed off the Israeli government's policy towards the Palestinians, and from there eventually slip into an 'anti-Zionism', which may itself be confused with pure and simple anti-Semitism. On the other hand, embodied in particular by the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF), pro-Israel passions take on the appearance of unconditional support for what the Israeli government says and does").

for regulation, controls, sanctions, pressure on Internet operators that are likely to disseminate anti-Semitic discourse (Wieviorka, 2018).

Two elements of this conspiracy theory are emblematic of contemporary antisemitic climate and, more generally, of the far-right agenda. The first is the adaptation of classic antisemitic stereotypes – in this case, Jewish control of the media – to the context of modern technology. But this is also a striking example of the appropriation of the human rights discourse by the conservative far-right. Invoking the institution of rights – in this case, freedom of expression – as an oppressive tool directed *against* minorities is increasingly witnessed in France as well as in other democratic regimes like the United States, Britain, or Israel. Beyond the immediate danger it carries for the protection of vulnerable social groups, it puts in question the very efficacy of the institution of human rights in the nearing future (See, e.g. Moyn, 2012; Perugini and Gordon, 2015).

Remarkably, Dieudonné, whose four-decade-long career and impact on the French culture are examined in the next section, has a foothold in most of the facets of antisemitism discussed above. He has led antisemitic political campaigns, played a significant role in befuddling the distinction between antisemitism and anti-Israel politics, and managed to attract diverse groups across the political and social spectra to his antisemitic messages. He continues to spread antisemitic propaganda off and online to this day while, sure enough, claiming that the sanctions taken against him are no more than a Jewish conspiracy to violate his human rights and silence his pleas for the oppressed.

An analysis of the representation, circulation and consumption context of the media object

Dieudonné: Humour as a driver of radicalisation

Dieudonné is the stage name of Dieudonné M'Bala M'Bala, a French comedian, actor and political activist, born in 1966 to a French mother and a Cameroonian father. Dieudonné is a controversial, charismatic, and widely known public figure, primarily famous for his comedy and antisemitic views. For the past three decades and until recently, he was among the most acclaimed and sought-after French comedians whose talent continued to attract mainstream audiences even as his antisemitism became flagrant and non-apologetic. Having been ostracised from his industry and convicted multiple times for incitement of violence and racial hatred, he continues to perform today and is very active online. His followers are easily recognisable on social media and in street demonstrations by his trademark symbols – a pineapple or the *quenelle* (see below). The mainstream media regularly covers his whereabouts, statements, and judicial proceedings. Most recently, the press reported that Dieudonné was fined for not respecting a 10-day quarantine after his return from Turkey to France during the Covid-19 pandemic (Décugis, Brigaudeau and Pham-Lê, 2021; Le Point, 2021).

Dieudonné began performing on stage in the early 1990s with Élie Semoun, a Jewish comedian. The duo's shows were famous for ridiculing the stereotypes associated with their ethnic origins and an anti-racist undertone. The duo split in 1997 and Dieudonné launched a solo career. He gained wide popularity thanks to his intelligent, provocative, and political humour, but at the same time started making increasingly antisemitic statements that become

harder and harder to dismiss. Over the span of the past two decades, his anti-system positions, longstanding advocacy against the oppression of blacks, support of the Palestinian cause, criticism of American imperialism and other political stances have become inseparably intertwined with antisemitic conspiracy theories and remarks. His convictions – irrespective of whether they were genuine or instrumental – eventually converged into attacks against Jews.



Figure 4: Dieudonné and Élie Semoun depicting a black member of the KKK and a Jewish SS officer on a poster of their theatre show, “Élie and Dieudonné”, that ran in Paris in 1991-1993 (Koskievic, 2016; Lévy)

Dieudonné’s public antisemitic statements started circulating in the press in 2002. In an interview given during his (eventually abandoned) presidential campaign the comedian criticised the lack of representation of French blacks (and women) in power and demanded reparations for descendants of slaves. When asked about the rise of antisemitism among “young Arabs”, he responded by intertwining seemingly universalist statements that reject distinctions among humans with an offensive against Judaism and Jews. His answer furthermore implied that the Jews themselves are to blame for antisemitism: “Racism was invented by Abraham. The ‘chosen people’ is the beginning of racism. Muslims today refer the shepherd’s answer to the shepherdess. Jews and Muslims, for me, that does not exist. So anti-Semitic does not exist because Jew does not exist. These are two equally stupid notions. No one is Jewish or everyone is. I don’t understand anything about this story. For me, the Jews are a sect, a swindle. It is one of the most serious ones because it is the first” (La Rédaction, 2014).¹¹

In the same vein, later the same year, Dieudonné blamed the Jews for discrimination against blacks in France: “There is a uniqueness of Jewish suffering which means that we do not have the right to claim anything. Jewish descendants continue to be compensated for what happened during the Holocaust. We blacks have never had anything because of some Jews

¹¹ In 2007, Dieudonné was convicted for this statement of an “insult directed against a group of people because of their origin” (06-81.785 Arrêt n° 552 du 16 février 2007).

who refuse to let our suffering be put on the same level as theirs!” (Blackmap, 2002). He then went on accusing Jews of gaining a monopoly over suffering and, importantly, conflated all Jews with Israel:

I wouldn't allow myself to make a scale of values, because I think that human suffering is the same in all tragedies, that it is the lot of humanity. But I think the Jewish lobby hates black people, really! Since the Black carries suffering in the collective unconscious, the Jewish lobby does not support it, because it is their business! Now all you have to do is roll up your sleeve to show your number and get recognition [...] As soon as I started to open it, they attacked me and called me an antisemite, etc. We must not forget, however, that Israel supported the South African regime until the last moment! They are the ones who financed the armament there, who financed the militias murdering blacks, like that, in the street (Blackmap, 2002).

The blur between Israel, Zionism, and Jews, while also throwing in the conspiracy plot that Jews control the world, recurred in a 2003 sketch performed live on the French public television. Dieudonné appeared in the studio in the role of an Israeli settler, dressed in a mix of traditional ultraorthodox insignias and military camouflage. He ironically invited the youth living in social housing neighbourhoods to “convert” and join the “the American-Zionist axis” and ended the sketch by making a Nazi salute while exclaiming “Isra-Heil” (Roberts, 2003).



Figure 5: Dieudonné on live public television, dressed as an Orthodox Jew in military uniform, performing a Nazi salute and exclaiming “Isra-heil”. The “*On ne peut pas plaire à tout le monde*” show, 2003

Two years later the artificial contrast between Jewish and black suffering evolved further. Dieudonné argued that the atrocities committed against blacks are ignored *because* of the Holocaust, which is even more unjust since the memory of the Holocaust is being hyperbolised *because* of the Jews. In a 2005 interview he stated: “In my children's class book, I tore the pages on the Holocaust. I will do it as long as our pain is not recognised” (Mercier, 2005). And in the same year: “It's funny to see how far Zionist power in France is prepared to go in depriving a part of the population of its duty of memory. The Jews have suffered less than the Blacks. All the talking is about gas chambers, but Blacks were thrown alive into the sea” (Altglas, 2012, p. 269). The trivialisation of the Holocaust was also occasionally used in Dieudonné's comedy to direct implied antisemitic threats against French Jews. In 2013, during his theatre show Dieudonné jokes about a Jewish radio host, Patrick Cohen: “If the tide turns,

I'm not sure he would have time to pack his bags. Me, you see, when I hear him speak, Patrick Cohen, I say to myself, you see, the gas chambers... Too bad!" (Bouquet, 2013).

Dieudonné's biggest artistic achievement in popularising antisemitism and Holocaust denial was attained in 2012, with the internet release of a video with the song "*Shoah nanas*" (*Shoah+ananas*, a portmanteau of the words Holocaust and pineapple in French). The song, which mocks the Holocaust and presents Jews as profiteers of its memory, got immense publicity, solidified the community of his devotees and remains engraved in the French public consciousness to this day (Jikeli, 2015, p. 56).¹² The song's lyrics include the verses:

Shoah nanas / hot, hot, hot pineapple / You hold me by the Holocaust
/ I hold you by the pineapple [...] Pineapple honey I'll never forget you
/ You've suffered so much, and for all that you endured / We ask for
reparation, may it be given to you / A country in the sun and millions of
dollars / For the millions of pineapples deported in their juice / For the
millions of pineapples deprived of their families / Let's sing Shoah
forever ... Shoah nanas.

The pineapple (along with the *quenelle*, see below) became one of Dieudonné's trademarks and is still used by him and his supporters as an antisemitic symbol. Notably, *Shoah nanas* is a parody of "Cho Ka Ka O" (*Chaud cacao* – Hot Cacao), a popular Belgian song from the 80's with strong racist undertones about children from "the island in the sun". Dieudonné's version contains therefore two statements: a criticism of the French indifference and blindness to racism against blacks and a mockery of the French recognition of the Holocaust. This amalgamation, where the memory of the Holocaust is ridiculed and instrumentalised to expose an injustice, is typical of Dieudonné's work. It is also one of the main causes for the bewilderment from his messages initially experienced by his non-antisemitic fans, who identified with his social critique but rejected his hate speech against Jews.

¹² "This paradoxical news coverage, in which Dieudonné is treated as a newsworthy object but not as an acceptable voice, probably contributed to turning him into a victim in the public's view and to arousing the curiosity particularly of the younger generation, which turned to the Internet to give Dieudonné a right of reply. Furthermore, such publicity through the social networks drew more people to his live shows in the theatres and cities that still authorized his performance. In the past few years, a real community of supporters has been formed, sharing signs such as the *quenelle* and a song, the 'Shoananas', which they would sing in chorus at the end of each show. This community – the 'Dieudosphere' as it calls itself – reacts violently, via Twitter or Facebook, to any attack on Dieudonné, be it expressed in the social or traditional media" (Boudana, 2015).



Figure 6: 1980's video clip of the song "Cho Ka Ka O" performed by Annie Cordy and featuring children dressed in "black skin", stereotypical costumes and curly black hair, dancing with cut-outs of big lips ('Annie Cordy "Cho Ka Ka O"', 1985).

Consciously and deliberately capitalising on the double-meaning of his comedy, Dieudonné reached the peak of his popularity and influence in mid-'10s. By 2014, 87% of the French know who he is, "16 percent of the overall population and 22 percent of those under the age of thirty-five had a positive view of him [...] 46 percent agreed with Dieudonné that there is not enough discussion about black slavery, and 23 percent agreed with him that 'Jews control the media' and that there is too much discussion about the Shoah" (Jikeli, 2015, p. 55).



Figure 7: A poster, titled "Shoah nanas", inviting supporters to protest against one of Dieudonné's court hearings in 2012 (posted on the website of Alain Soral)



Figure 8: Dieudonné arrives to a court hearing in a tax fraud case against him, wearing a pineapple hat and performing a *quennelle* (see below), in 2019 (F., 2019)

Yet, eventually, the accumulation of Dieudonné's antisemitic statements and his increasing political radicalisation turned him into a social pariah. Initially associated with left movements and causes he gradually drifted towards the extreme-right, befriending Holocaust deniers, siding with radical black supremacists and supporting jihadist terrorism (CNEWS, no date; Altglas, 2012; Le Blevenec, 2016; Jouan, 2018). Thus, in 2016, Dieudonné was convicted of glorification of terrorism for a Facebook post published after the January 2015 attacks on the offices of the *Charlie Hebdo* journal and a kosher supermarket in Paris. The post said: "I feel Charlie Coulibaly", in reference to Amedy Coulibaly, the gunman who killed four hostages at the kosher supermarket. A year later, Dieudonné addressed a letter to Salah Abdeslam, involved in the November 2015 series of jihadist attacks in Paris, the deadliest acts of violent extremism in France to date. The letter expressed a wish to meet with Abdeslam and an interest in his "state of mind and the reasons which urged" him to act. Dieudonné added that "violence is a mode of expression that arises when all the others have failed: the 'attack' aims to send a strong message that cannot be transmitted otherwise". He said that a discussion with Abdeslam would make him "better understand the deep revolt which inhabits you and to which society remains deaf" and mentioned his 2016 conviction of "glorifying an act of 'terrorism', at the time of what has come to be called the Charlie Hebdo attacks, for not having felt 'Charlie' enough" (Le Blevenec, 2016; Jouan, 2018).

By reason of his views and statements, Dieudonné, who was praised as "one of the best comedians of his generation" for his early career (L'Express.fr, 2014) ended up losing popularity in the general public, abandoned by fans and denounced by friends for his antisemitism and new fringe social circles. The *Shoah nanas* song and other on- and off-stage remarks triggered numerous administrative sanctions and criminal convictions of incitement to hatred, glorification of terrorism, Holocaust denial, racial discrimination and defamation (Le Monde, 2013a; Le Point, 2016; L'Express, 2016). In 2017 he was expelled from his theatre and in 2020 was banned from YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Vimeo (Le Figaro, 2020c; Le Monde, 2020; Plottu and Macé, 2020; Turcan, 2020).

Throughout his career on stage, Dieudonné was making attempts to run for politics, first with left- and later right-wing lists. He stood for local, national, and European elections seven times between 1997 and 2017, never with success.

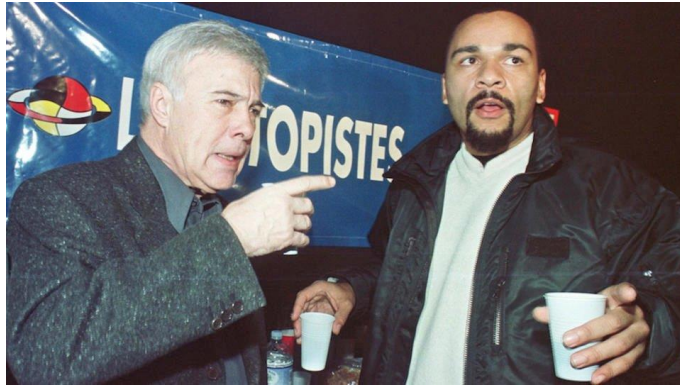


Figure 9: Dieudonné during his 1998 political campaign for regional elections in Dreux, heading the left list “*Les Utopistes*” (the Utopians) (CNEWS)

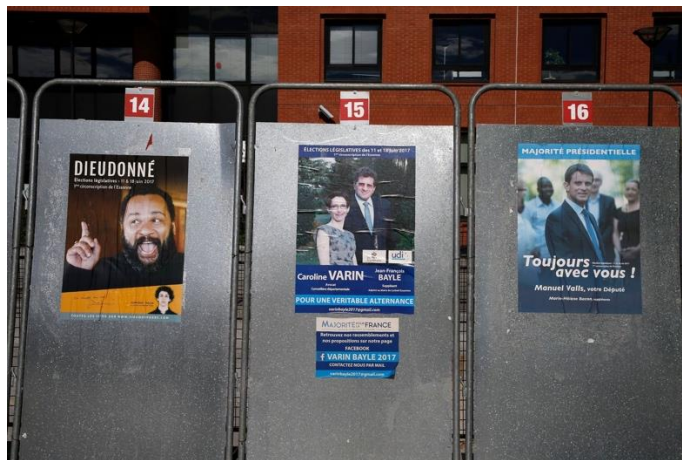


Figure 10: A poster of Dieudonné as a replacement candidate for legislative elections in 2017, running with a far-right candidate (Jouan, 2018)

Nonetheless, Dieudonné’s online presence and followers show that he continues to be relevant among older and younger crowds and exert influence on large audiences. Prior to the suspension of his accounts, he had 1,2 million followers on Facebook and nearly 450,000 YouTube subscribers. His YouTube channel had more than 550 clips and was daily updated with videos, each of which exceeded 150,000 views in 24 hours. Between February and May 2020, his channel’s views increased by 200%, from 2,5 to 7,5 million (Le Figaro, 2020c; Turcan, 2020). The suspension from major platforms limited his outreach to consumers of mainstream content but Dieudonné is still active on Twitter (with 160,000 followers), Telegram (15,000 subscribers) and other, more marginal social media outlets. He operates two websites (*Quenel+* and *dieudosphere*) with about 60,000 unique monthly visitors (*Semrush*, 2021). These websites offer daily news updates, videos, infographics, merchandise, and uploaded photos of Dieudonné’s followers performing the *quenelle* (see below). All Dieudonné’s theatre shows are available for rent (4,90€) or purchase (9,90€) on his websites, and two of the latest shows are also available on Spotify, where he currently has about 600 monthly listeners.



Figure 11: Dieudonné' Twitter account. The background picture shows Dieudonné performing a *quenelle* (see below).

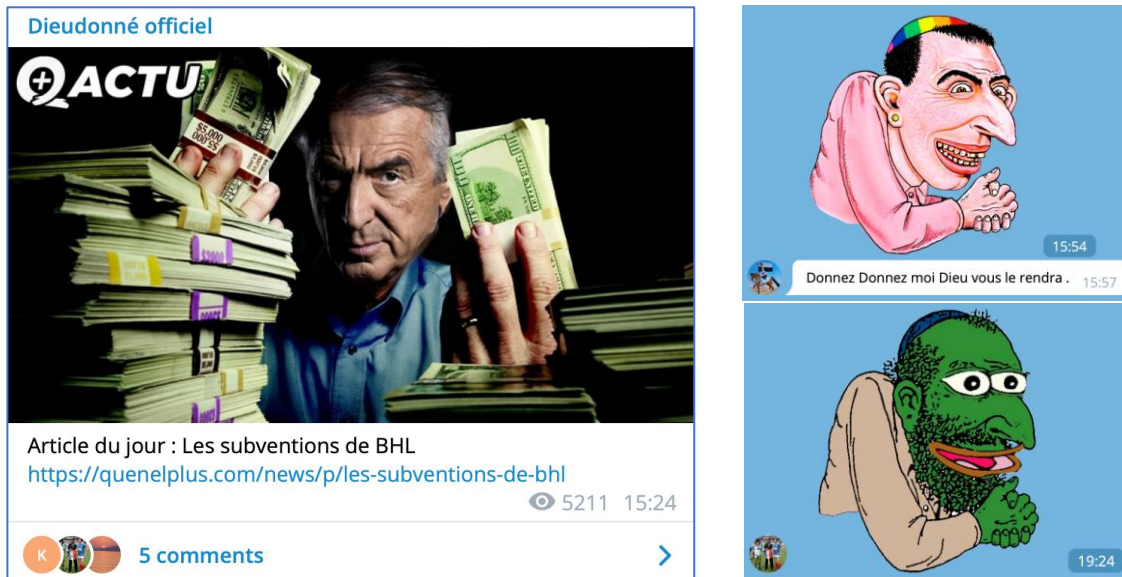


Figure 12: On the left: A post from May 26, 2021, posted on Dieudonné's Telegram channel. The post is a link to an article on one of Dieudonné's websites, titled "The grants of BHL", in reference to Bernard-Henri Lévy, a French Jewish public intellectual. The image in the post is a collage of Lévy with money banknotes, forming an antisemitic caricature; On the right: two comments to the Telegram post (the upper comment is captioned: "Give, Give me. God will give it back to you.")

Dieudonné continues to perform more than ten times a month across France in semi-clandestine shows, and organise public events, such as the annual "Quenelle Ball" where he awards prizes to Holocaust deniers and conspiracy theorists. He backs other, like-minded, antisemitic and neo-Nazi artists some of whom are directly inspired by his work. For instance, in 2020, Dieudonné expressed support for the French rapper Freeze Corleone, a self-described "Nazi Arab", whose songs – mimicking Dieudonné's characteristic practice – state he does not "give a fuck" about the Holocaust, contrasting it to massacres of Native Americans and slavery in the United States (Didier, 2020).



Figure 13: At the 2013 “Quenelle Ball” (Cassely, 2013)



Figure 14: Dieudonné awards the “Golden quenelle” to Chloé Frammery, a Swiss conspiracy theorist, at the 2020 “Quenelle Ball” (Screenshots from Dieudonné’s website)

Dieudonné’s fans commemorate him in the public sphere with graffiti and murals. In November 2020, a graffiti reading “Dieudo [short for Dieudonné] save us” was found in South West of France along with antisemitic drawings (Bonnet, 2020). And in 2018, a member of a city council in Alsace filed a complaint against a 3 by 6 meters fresco of Dieudonné that was for years adorning a wall in the city. The fresco depicted Dieudonné mimicking a rabbi – raising a finger in the air while miming a smirk and a kiss – one of his signature theatre gestures. The finger is a reference to Dieudonné’s catchphrase “above, it is the sun”, which means attacking the most sacred topics, especially the Holocaust.



Figure 15: A graffiti in the town of Angoulême, South-West of France, reading "Dieudonné save us", 2020 (Bonnet, 2020)



Figure 16: A mural of Dieudonné mimicking a caricature of a rabbi, 2018 (W., 2018)



Figure 17: A mural of Dieudonné parodying the famous poster of the 1972 movie, The Godfather. France, 2014 (La Dépêche du Midi, 2014)



Figure 18: A mural of Dieudonné performing a quenelle. Brussels, Belgium, 2011

Dieudonné's cultural impact and media influence are of particular interest to the research of (de)radicalisation because of the impressive socio-political range of his audience. Numerous analyses confirm that his versatile polemic, humour, and agenda attract such diverse supporters as extreme-right nationalists, Muslim fundamentalists, descendants of immigrants from former French colonies (especially, from Africa and the West Indies), marginalised and rebellious youth, and conspiracy theorists (*Le Temps*, 2014; San, 2013; Altglas, 2012; Jikeli, 2015; Cross, 2016; Prod'homme, 2019; Hussey, 2014; 'Quand l'humour ne fait plus rire...', 2013). The meaning Dieudonné offers to each of the groups moves from plain antisemitism and Holocaust denial, to anti-Zionist and anti-Israel causes, to advocacy for the recognition of the evils of colonisation, slave trade and other historical suffering of blacks, to libertarian views and anti-system revolt. "What unites these [...] heterogeneous audiences is the hatred of the Jews. Very active on the Internet, these fans are among those who think that anti-Semitism is an opinion: some are quite astonished to discover that anti-Semitic remarks are criminal" (*Le Temps*, 2014). According to a recent account, online networks such as that created around Dieudonné may be "the first step in the collapse of intellectual dikes protecting many populations against even more radical, in particular Islamist, discourses" (Ruty, 2018, p. 16). The spread of hateful messages proves to be particularly persuasive and powerful when delivered in an artistic form and infused with humour:

[T]he communicative role of humour and satire facilitated the journey of Dieudonné's comedy by not only undermining the Holocaust, but also as exploiting larger societal and cultural fractures in the French context. The Dieudonné case shows how a comedian, incentivised perhaps for financial reasons, tapped into the cultural frustrations of a group that felt marginalised and undermined, and was propelled by a form of inflammatory speech that was sure to receive attention (Elliott-Harvey, 2020).

The following sections offer three examples of Dieudonné's projects that illustrate how his artistic talent and political shrewdness allow for a sophisticated communication of antisemitic messages. The first section examines the *quenelle* – a gesture invented by Dieudonné that turned into a cultural phenomenon and a mobilising element of radicalisation. The second section analyses a revisionist infographic on the Vichy regime featuring on one of Dieudonné's websites. Finally, the third example is a YouTube video of an extract from one of

Dieudonné's theatre shows, which demonstrates how humour and grievances of other minorities can become effective drivers of antisemitism.

A Cultural Movement: The *Quenelle*

The *quenelle* is a gesture pointing one arm straight downwards and touching the shoulder with the palm of the other hand. The gesture was invented by Dieudonné around 2004 and became a viral phenomenon in 2013-2014. Today, the *quenelle* still makes headlines in the mainstream media when protesters perform it in street demonstrations. It remains a universally known cultural symbol in France and a recognisable gesture in far-right circles abroad. The *quenelle*'s initial popularity and efficient mobilisation of supporters to Dieudonné was due in part to its ambivalent meaning. Some interpreted it as an inverted Nazi salute, while others – including Dieudonné himself – insisted that it had no antisemitic connotation. The ambiguity of the “true” meaning of the *quenelle* still allows Dieudonné to use it without fearing criminal prosecution for hate speech and attract wider audiences that are either not determined enough to be associated with Nazi gestures or in fact are not antisemitic and use it out of other motives. The popularity of the gesture reinforces Dieudonné's social legitimacy and helps to portray the attacks against him as assaults on freedom of speech driven by paranoia. Tracing the various the interpretations assigned to the *quenelle* helps to understand why Dieudonné did not become a pariah in France, how he initially managed to attract large crowds that were not seeking antisemitic messages, and why his art and activity are appreciated by both far-right circles and marginalised Muslim French youth.

Initially, the *quenelle* was used as a representation of a violent sexual act. Dieudonné presented the gesture to broad audience for the first time during his one-man show titled “1905” (the year of the enactment of the French law on secularism), whose main theme was mockery of religion (Bouanchaud, 2013; Goar, 2013). Making a point about the lack of a large gap between human and mammal intelligence Dieudonné gave an example of a dolphin, saying that “when it sees a human, it makes fun of us. The dolphin, its fin, it will give it to us until here”. The sign was made at that moment to demonstrate the act and so signified a mere vulgarity without bearing an apparent political subtext (‘Dieudonné 1905 fête ainsi les 100 ans de Laïcité Réal Hilaci Attia’, 2017, min. 23:50). Since this first performance the *quenelle* has gradually acquired a strong political significance but is still claimed to be used for at least three different purposes – as an anti-establishment, anti-Zionist, or antisemitic message.



Figure 19: One of the first public performances of the *quenelle* during the show “1905”, 2005 (screenshot of a YouTube video).

The first public exhibition of the *quenelle* outside of theatre was made during Dieudonné’s 2009 political campaign. The poster of the anti-Zionist list under which he ran for European Parliament showed Dieudonné performing the *quenelle*. As if to underscore that the party’s agenda is not antisemitic the poster featured an ultraorthodox Jew (who possibly was an actual representative of an anti-Zionist religious group). In the same period he also declared that the “idea of sliding my little *quenelle* right up the ass of Zionism is a project which remains very dear to me” (Le Point, 2016). Yet, as shown above, while attempting to formally maintain an ambivalence in regard of his actual views, Dieudonné’s statements have been always accompanied by an unambiguous antisemitic wink to his followers. In the case of the anti-Zionist list, Dieudonné ran in the 2009 elections alongside Alain Soral (who also appeared on its poster) and other prominent negationists, and the poster’s slogan, which advocated for “a Europe free from censorship, communitarianism, speculators and NATO”, alluded to classic antisemitic clichés of money, manipulation of the media, global networks and cosmopolitanism (Riché, 2009).



Figure 20: Poster of the anti-Zionist list for the 2009 European Parliament elections

Links between the *quenelle*, Holocaust denial, and anti-Zionist sentiment are routinely made by Dieudonné throughout his career. In 2015, Dieudonné met with the former Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad – a noted Holocaust denier who called Israel a “tumor” and called for its “elimination” – and presented him with a “golden *quenelle*”, a statuette of a person performing the gesture (Roberts, 2003; Charbonneau, 2012; Dieudonné Officiel, 2013).

However, in later interviews, public statements and through his lawyers, Dieudonné has expanded the concept of the *quenelle* and presented it as a way to take a poke at the establishment. He explained it is “symbol of insubordination to the system” and an “act of popular emancipation”. Dieudonné’s supporters have confirmed that it is “a protest, revolutionary gesture. It is not racist” (Destrade, 2014).



Figure 21: Dieudonné presents the former Iranian President Ahmadinejad with a golden statuette performing a quenelle (“Golden quenelle”) in 2009.

The use of the *quenelle* by Dieudonné’s audience confirms its polysemic character. The French media became interested in the gesture in 2013 when pictures of an obviously antisemitic and negationist character started circulating online. Among the cases of “sliding a *quenelle*” spotted by mainstream media were Alain Soral’s video at the Holocaust memorial in Berlin, a picture of Jean-Marie Le Pen (prominent far-right figure and ardent negationist) at a private event, a picture of soldiers on a terrorism-prevention patrol in Paris performing the *quenelle* in front of a synagogue and posting it on social media, and a picture of an individual performing it during a public Jewish festivity. Yet, the message of the *quenelle* in other publicised incidents was not as straightforward. Known sportsmen and public figures who did not otherwise express antisemitic views were pictured doing the *quenelle* – including alongside Dieudonné – and others claimed they only use the gesture as a clandestine anti-system protest or in Dieudonné’s support as an artist (Perotto, 2013; Destrade, 2014; Boudana, 2015). It is not impossible that at least some of the posers were not at the time even aware of the *quenelle*’s neo-Nazi undertone.¹³ The double-sense of the gesture made it impossible to criminalise the *quenelle*’s use or even denounce it without reservation. The mainstream press was therefore always forced to qualify its commentary by reiterating the two possible interpretations and let the readers decide what stands behind each incident.¹⁴ According to one analysis, Dieudonné employs the human rights discourse to protect himself from accusations of spreading hatred:

In instrumenting disparagement humour, Dieudonné [...] communicates to people high in anti-Semitic prejudice that they can express themselves and behave more in accordance with their beliefs, while at the same time communicating to other people that these remain (harmless) jokes, only condemned by those interested in suppressing free speech or those lacking a sense of humor (Boudana, 2015, p. 196).

¹³ A host of a popular TV show apologised after a photo of him performing the *quenelle* became public, stating that he was asked to do it by a fan and did not know the meaning of this gesture at the time (Doucet, 2013; Le HuffPost, 2013).

¹⁴ Typically the articles would describe the *quenelle* as a “controversial gesture sported in particular by fans of Dieudonné, anti-system according to them, but antisemitic for others” (Cabiten, 2013).



Figure 22: Patrol soldiers performing the quenelle in front of a synagogue in Paris, in 2013 (France 3 Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, 2013)

Years later, the *quenelle* is still in use as an ambiguous symbol, which continues to affect the public opinion. Dieudonné regularly uploads pictures of people performing the *quenelle* to his Twitter account and one of his websites, and the *quenelle d'or* statuette is normally shown in his news satire video recordings. The gesture has returned to the public eye in 2018-2019 when participants in the *Yellow Vests* mass protests were documented doing it on camera. While some clearly used it as a substitute to a Nazi salute, others appeared to do it primarily as a sign of revolt against the government (Le HuffPost, 2018; Yahoo Actualités on Twitter, 2018).¹⁵ Media outlets today are more confident describing the *quenelle* as foremost an antisemitic symbol but still acknowledge that the *Yellow Vests* “who ‘do a quenelle’ today appear above all as ‘anti-system’” (Soullier, 2019; Riché, 2018).¹⁶

¹⁵ The protesters also chanted a “*quenelle* song” to a music of a hymn of resistance to the Nazi occupation, which was a nod to the Holocaust period (Riché, 2018)

¹⁶ The *Yellow Vests* is a social movement started by residents of rural areas and farther suburbs in October 2018 and driven by economic and democratic grievances of the lower-middle-class. The movement mobilised hundreds of thousands of protesters on the streets across France in its first manifestations, and was initially met with approval by 65% to 80% of the population (Frénois *et al.*, 2018; Chamorel, 2019; Elabe, 2019). Some of the participants in the demonstrations displayed antisemitic signs (e.g., Franco-masonic pyramids along a Star of David or pineapple logos in reference of the “*Shoah nanas*” song) and slogans (“They are all Jews”; “Rothschilds are not welcome in France”; “Macron, resignation, in prison, Jewish whore, hanging”). These incidents (along with other racist, homophobic and sexist expressions) were common and were not decidedly denounced by the *Yellow Vests*’ leadership, but are not considered to be representative of the movement at large (Berteloot, 2019; Leclerc, 2019).



Figure 23: Yellow Vests protesters publicly performing a *quenelle* in 2019
(Bensussan, 2019; Berteloot, 2019)

Dieudonné himself continues to employ the *quenelle* as an anti-government punch alongside antisemitic insinuations. Thus, among the paraphernalia sold on his website are yellow vests with a caption “Macron, can you feel the *quenelle*?” in the back. The front of the vest, however, has pineapple in reference to the song mocking Holocaust. This mix of messages is emblematic not only of the *quenelle* itself but more broadly, of Dieudonné’s political project. Instead of trying to take them apart and determine this project’s predominant narrative it is more instructive to see his antisemitic, anti-Israel and anti-system statements as complementary. The *quenelle* is therefore Dieudonné’s message to his followers and the public that the French establishment, the Jews, and the “American-Zionist axis” are all and the same enemy:

In Dieudonné's counter-speech [...] the adjectives “anti-system” and “anti-Zionist/antisemite” end up coinciding. The amalgam, characteristic of the pamphleteer genre [...] as well as of conspiratorial thought [...] is moreover the main rhetorical weapon used by the polemicist. The use of amalgam confirms the validity of what Mr. Angenot calls the “one-enemy rule” [...]. This “unique enemy” is a system that is supposedly dominated by the Jews and against which it is therefore necessary to revolt (Amadori, 2016, pp. 91–92).

The radicalising power of the *quenelle*, therefore, stems from its ambiguity. It pounds the antisemitic message into the public consciousness irrespective of the “true” intentions of those who “slide” it and the political views of the audience.

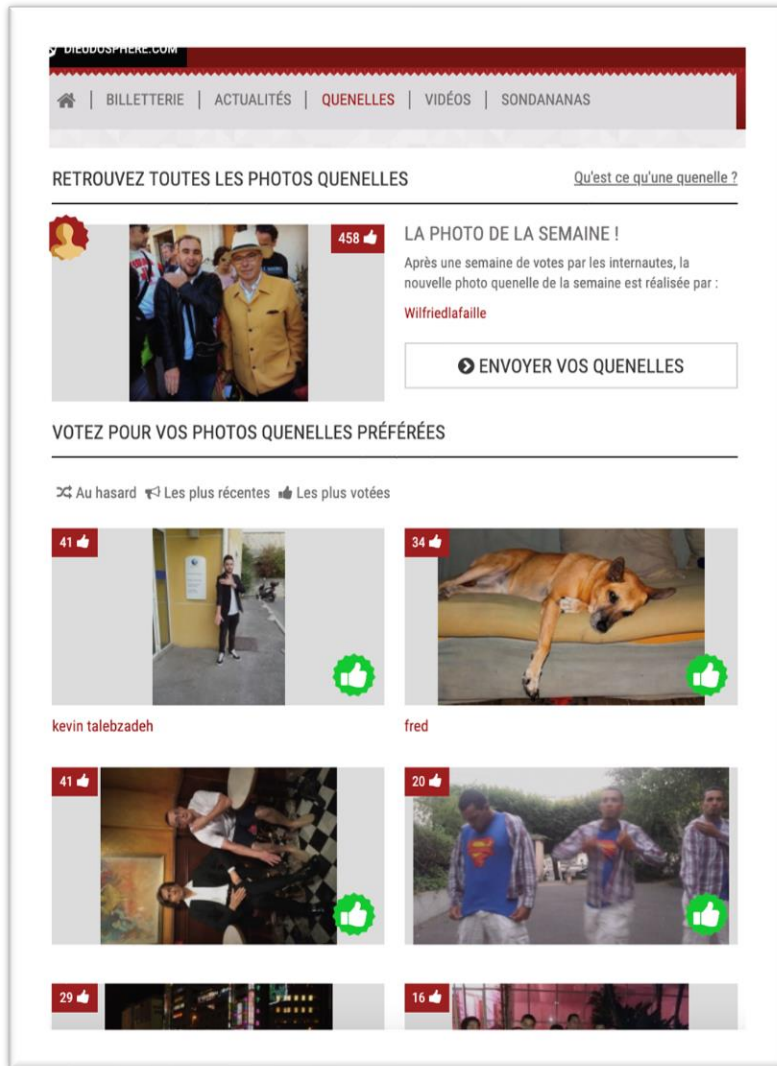


Figure 24: A screenshot of one of Dieudonné's websites with photos of people performing a quenelle, uploaded by the users

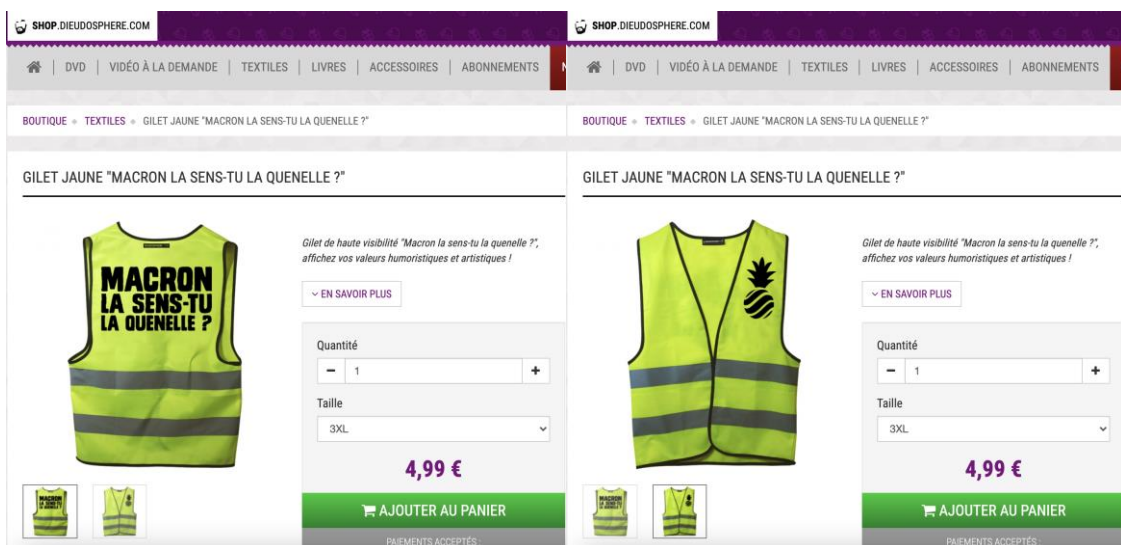


Figure 25: A yellow vest sold on Dieudonné's website with a caption "Macron, can you feel the quenelle?" and a pineapple in reference to the song "Shoah nanas".

Revision of History: “The Truth about Pétain”

Among the content offered on one of Dieudonné’s websites, *Quenel+*, is a 16-minute-long infographic video that tells “The Truth about Marshal Pétain”. Pétain, a decorated WWI hero, became the head of the collaborationist Vichy regime in South-East France that was not occupied by Nazi Germany, and was responsible, among others, for enacting racial anti-Jewish laws in 1940-1941, and later, internment and deportation of French and foreign Jews to extermination camps in Germany. The infographic presents a positive image of Pétain, encompassing all his life and touching upon his career landmarks and military achievements. His sympathetic cartoon character is of a devout patriot, beloved and admired by his surroundings, who manages to prevent bloodshed and the Nazi occupation of France, just to be betrayed by his own country at the end of the War. Hitler’s character in the video is no less sympathetic and welcoming. The Jews as a group are depicted in a stereotypical way, wearing traditional religious attributes.



Figure 26: Pétain is presented as a patriot who cares about and is admired by his soldiers. The caption says: “Accomplish your mission at all costs. Get killed if you must, but if you can fulfil your duty and stay alive, I like it better”

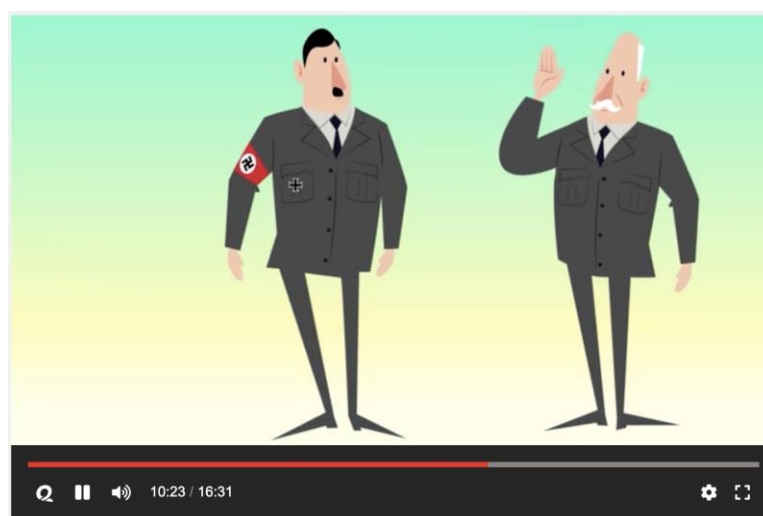


Figure 27: Hitler and Pétain



Figure 28: Stereotypical representation of Jews

The revisionist narrative in the video is subtle and contains no upfront antisemitic remarks. Manipulating historical events by a selective choice of events and by mixing fabricated and real facts, the infographic clears Pétain from responsibility in the persecution of Jews and claims that the Jews themselves are to blame. In the last minutes of the video the narrator asserts that the “demonisation of Pétain in relation of the deportation of Jews under the Vichy regime” must be “put in perspective”. Pétain’s efforts to pacify France are said to be disrupted by terror acts committed by “stateless Jews and communists”, and by the “Jewish army” that assassinates more than a thousand German soldiers. Pétain is then forced by the “desperate” Germans to arrest “thousands of stateless Jews” and send them to Drancy. Among the other pieces of distorted information, the narrator makes no reference of the anti-Jewish laws, fails to mention that French Jews were also sent to Drancy and does not explain that Drancy was an internment camp from which Jews were sent to extermination camps in Germany. The infographic ends with the proclamation: “*Monsieur le Maréchal, forgive France!*”.



Figure 29: Representation of German trains attacked by the “Jewish Army”



Figure 30: "Monsieur le Maréchal, forgive France!"

The clip reaches two strategic conclusions: first, France should be proud of its collaborationist past and second, the Jews merited the deportation. While the disinformation in the infographic can be easily double-checked and refuted, it would still require the uninformed viewer to invest time in research and reading. This cost, together with the clip's simple style and pleasant presentation of its revisionist message, increase the likelihood that the message will be taken at face value. Comments made on the video confirm the success of this strategy. More than two thirds of the 137 responses thank Dieudonné and praise the infographic, e.g., for an "excellent analysis that cocks a snook at such a manipulated history", for "setting the record straight", or for "promoting this debate between people of good will, who only want to learn, reflect, and better understand our world and its history!", and several of them include antisemitic insinuations. About 14% reject or question the video's narrative, and 17% are unclear or irrelevant. The "Truth about Marshal Pétain" contributes to antisemitic radicalisation by providing a counterculture, revisionist account of the Vichy regime, which exculpates the French government from responsibility for the deportation of Jews. Thus, avoiding antisemitic clichés or crude denigrations of Jews, the infographic nevertheless presents the mainstream discourse around the Holocaust as a false narrative imposed on the French by the Jews.

The Passer-by Jew

The third object analysed in this report is an unofficial video extract from Dieudonné's 2010 show "Mahmoud". The clip is titled "*Le crime contre l'humanité + Le passant juif - Extrait Dieudonné Mahmoud*" [The crime against humanity + The Jewish passer-by – Extract Dieudonné Mahmoud] in reference to its two themes, ridiculing the notion of the Holocaust as a crime against humanity, and a sketch of a conversation Dieudonné has with a Jew he encounters on the street. The video was uploaded to YouTube in 2015 by a private user. It has collected about 830,000 views, 6,400 thousand likes (and 442 dislikes), and more than 500 comments.

The sketch begins with jokes criticising the concept of crimes against humanity ("normally, it should have been crimes against the universe"), and falsely arguing that it was tailor-made only for the Holocaust ("the extermination of American Indians is not considered [a crime against humanity], it is a delinquency. The enslavement of blacks, it's the same, it was an inter-ethnic brawl, a scuffle. The crime against humanity [is] 1942-1944. Bing!

Jackpot!"). Dieudonné then ironically reassures his audience his statements are not antisemitic ("I am, obviously, not an antisemite. I don't have the time for it") and, as if to prove that, begins telling a story about his encounter with a religious Jew who recognises Dieudonné and accuses him of antisemitism. The account portrays the Jew as a neurotic racist who only cares about the Holocaust and antisemitism. Dieudonné says that the Jew said he should be ashamed of himself (on which Dieudonné comments, "ashamed of what? Of my race?") and then told him about his grandmother who was in a concentration camp, with a "pajama" and a "number on the wrist". Dieudonné's reaction to this account is two-fold. First, he mocks the Jew and vulgarly denigrates the Holocaust, and then confronts him with the story of his own grandmother who "died charred, under the napalm of the French Army during the occupation of Cameroon" (the Jew in the story replies with a racist remark: "I am telling you about my grandmother and you are taking out the Book of the Jungle"). The video continues in the same spirit, the Jew eventually leaves while calling Dieudonné an antisemite. Dieudonné concludes the sketch by saying this is the "blackmail of antisemitism".

This extract demonstrates Dieudonné's attempts to disseminate antisemitic contents beyond far-right circles. It is intended to appeal to audiences on the left and to second and third-generation immigrants from former French colonies who are critical of France's colonial past and discrimination but are not necessarily (or initially) antisemitic. The sketch shows to those concerned with racism against blacks or Native-Americans that Jews do not share the same sentiment and are only obsessed with themselves. It also belittles the significance of the Holocaust, implicitly presents it as an issue only for Jews and then invites the viewers to compare it with the atrocities that continue being ignored in France. In a brilliant and subtle manoeuvre, Dieudonné presents the Jews as an exception to all other minorities that is powerful enough to impose its own narrative of crimes against humanity and suppress the suffering of others. The Jews are the enemy and not part of the oppressed.



Figure 31: Screenshot of an extract from Dieudonné's 2010 theatre show "Mahmoud"

Putting antisemitism in opposition with colonialism, anti-immigration, Islamophobia and other types of racism is meant to construct the struggles against them as mutually exclusive objectives competing for public and institutional recognition. Jews are implicitly accused by Dieudonné of "winning" this zero-sum game by distorting and exploiting the memory of the Holocaust while silencing the suffering of others (Le Monde, 2005; Monod, 2014). As in the case of the infographic about Pétain or in any other intelligent bid to manipulate the public opinion, this fictional narrative draws on fractions of real facts and legitimate grievances of

French minorities. The French establishment is indeed reluctant to confront the country's colonial atrocities, pervasive systemic racism, and Islamophobia. Dieudonné's stand-up routine attempts therefore to channel the sense of injustice stemming from these problems into racial hatred against Jews (Altglas, 2012, pp. 267–268). This discourse does more than merely enhancing social polarisation and contributing to antisemitic radicalisation. It piggybacks on grievances of one minority group to increase the grievances of another.

Conclusion

The Talmud tells a story of a man who approaches Hillel, one of the leading authorities on Jewish law around the 1st century BC, and says, rather defiantly: “Teach me the whole Torah while I am standing on one foot”. Hillel replies the man with a proviso that, in his view, summarises Jewish law: “That which is hateful unto you, do not do unto your friend”, adding, “the rest [of the Torah] is commentary, now go and learn”. Paraphrasing this tale, if one were asked to summarise radicalisation in France in the 21st century while standing on one foot, Dieudonné would be an excellent candidate to epitomise this phenomenon. The rest of radicalisation is, in many ways, a commentary to his persona.

Dieudonné’s artistic career and online presence reflect the recent structural changes in the French media sphere and upsurge of hate speech on social networks. The popularity of digital platforms allows Dieudonné to endure years of boycott by the traditional (right and left) press and escalate the antisemitic character of his messages. Despite multiple legal sanctions and his recent ban from most central social media platforms, Dieudonné continues to reach (at the very least) tens of thousands of people in person and online, directly or through his fans, who reupload his deleted videos back on YouTube. His perseverance demonstrates the inherent limitations of hate speech regulation and attempts to entirely remove a radicalisation agent from the public sphere. The increasing “vertical” polarisation between the institutional and “anti-elitist” media outlets may contribute to the false impression of many that Dieudonné’s messages and other types of radicalising content are not in demand, but large numbers of populist press and social media consumers know different.

The shifts in Dieudonné’s political views and the typical profiles of his followers are likewise a telling representation of radicalisation in 21st century France. His roaming from the consensus towards the fringe far right and up the scale of antisemitic hatred coincides with three symptoms of radicalisation in the 21st century France: reorganisation of the far right, rise in jihadist extremism and increase in violence against Jews. Antisemitism is one of the factors linking these phenomena together: despite the apparent reciprocal hostility between far right and jihadist ideologies, both converge in the anti-Jewish cause. The success of antisemitic propaganda in assembling adherents with otherwise contradictory values extends even to the far left, by exploiting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to erase the distinctions between Israel, Zionism, Judaism and Jews. Alienated youth targeted by strategic communications of prejudice and stereotypes that designate Jews as the ultimate cause of their grievances is the main group readily susceptible to antisemitic radicalisation (For more details on these trends see Sawyer and Zinigrad, 2021). Dieudonné – a “disillusioned” left activist turned extreme-right Holocaust denier that sympathises with convicted jihadists and befriends advocates of Israel’s annihilation – shows how all these apparently incompatible views can peacefully dwell together. It is therefore no surprise that when an antisemitic collective action of far right and far left activists, joined by radicalised youth, took place on the streets of Paris in January 2014, they were accompanied by fans of Dieudonné who were chanting “Jew, France is not yours”, “no to Zionism”, “The Shoah is bogus”, singing *Shoah nanas* and performing the *quenelle* (AFP, 2014; Birnbaum, 2015).



Figure 33: Dieudonné's fans at the January 2014 "Day of Wrath" march in Paris (AFP, 2014)

Indeed, Dieudonné is not merely a personification of antisemitic radicalisation but one of its most prominent instigators in the French socio-cultural sphere. The I-GAP framework developed under the D.Rad project, which grounds radicalisation in perceptions of *injustice* which lead to *grievance*, *alienation* and *polarisation*, is helpful in dissecting his impact on the French society. Dieudonné's comedy and political campaigning nurture perceptions of *injustice* by tapping into antisemitic clichés and revisionism. His mockery of the Holocaust and claims that its scale is being overblown at the expense of other oppressed groups facilitate a sense of *grievance*. Accusing "the Jews" of controlling the media, the money, and the government while all along playing the victim amplifies *alienation* by nourishing sentiments of helplessness and lack of agency in established legal and political structures. Finally, Dieudonné successfully cultivates multiple axes of *polarisation* between Jews and various socio-political groups in France. As seen in the "Passer-by Jew" video extract, Dieudonné's preferred manoeuvre is pitting Afro-French against Jews by contrasting the Holocaust to slavery and other atrocities committed by France and the United States against blacks. But his ambitious repertoire appeals to much broader audiences, interested in anything from Holocaust denial (see "The Truth about Pétain"), to jihadist violence (see the correspondence with Salah Abdeslam), to anti-Israel politics (see the "Anti-Zionist" list), to anti-system activism, to a mix of all the above (see the *quenelle*). These components construct "us vs. them" narratives by depicting the Jews as the ultimate "other".



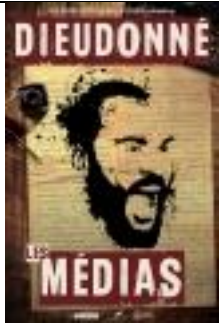

Finally, Dieudonné's impressive diversification of dissemination strategies has produced a *sui generis* media figure that encapsulates communication in the modern age. The products of his prolific career are available physically and online, comprise artistic-humorous and political content, and represent literal and symbolical meanings. Dieudonné's hardcore fans can still see him perform across France 10 to 14 times a month but can also rent the current or any of the previous shows on his websites. Having watched those, they might get interested in weekday news updates offered on the same platforms upon subscription, watch infomercials or other content for free, or buy his merchandise. Politically active supporters of Dieudonné can publicly signal their affiliation and views by "sliding a *quenelle*", wearing a pineapple symbol or chanting *Shoah nanas*. Those seeking lighter interactivity may just photograph themselves performing the *quenelle* and upload it to one of his websites or social media. Less committed followers can browse dozens of his sketches on YouTube or


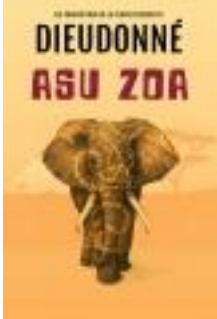


Dailymotion, drifting from old shows with his Jewish partner to more recent mockery of the Holocaust. Others might run into his tweets or Telegram channels where they can learn about his latest videos, shows and antisemitic conspiracy theories. This multidimensional world of content, where one seamlessly shifts from the entertaining to the offensive, is a sophisticated hotbed of radicalisation. It strives to maximise outreach to anyone receptive to Dieudonné's positions and create a community whose members are situated between the passionate and the passively accepting on the antisemitic spectrum. Dieudonné's success in generating this "Dieudosphere" is central to the study of the media's role in (de)radicalisation.

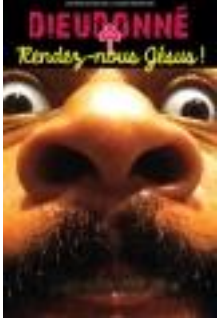
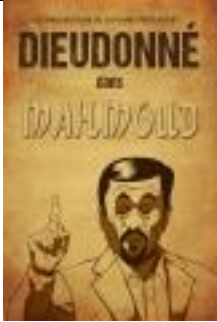

Appendices


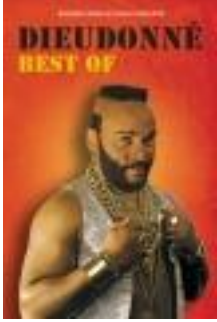

Appendix 1: List of Shows Staged by Dieudonné

Production Year	Show Title	Poster	Official Promotion
2020	<i>Finissons-en !</i> [Lets get it over with!]		“The time is of the most extreme exuberance and excesses. A context conducive to funny expression. In ‘Lets get it over with!’ Dieudonné has fun with the surrounding madness and the contagious alienation of a system which is radicalised in censorship. In the name of human rights and freedom ...”
2019	<i>Gilets Jaunes</i> [Yellow Vests]		“The Yellow Vests represent a unique social adventure in the history of modern democracies. Inspired by this extraordinary phenomenon, Dieudonné wrote a show in which he reveals the sublime feeling of freedom that this movement of emancipation gives him. This new opus is a hymn to freedom through laughter”
2019	<i>En Vérité</i> [Truth is]		“To continue to laugh in a world gone mad, such is my ambition. Pilgrim of farce and jokes, I face the bad weather of a sick era. Under an incessant rain of lies and perversions, the clown that I am opens the umbrella of truth to make people laugh, to appease ...”
2018	<i>L'Émancipation</i> [Emancipation]		“‘Emancipate’. Dieudonné dreams and has been talking to you about it for a few years. It is a subject that is both original and ambitious that the artist offers you. Transcending the limits of humour, laughing together, in peace. Break, at least for one show, our mental chains. Do not fear friends

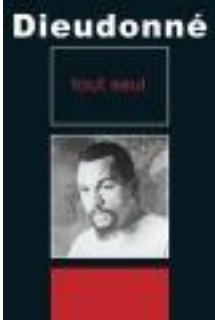
			and let us emancipate ourselves through laughter.
2017	<i>La guerre</i> [War]		“From July 2017 until December 2017, Dieudonné in "LA GUERRE": you never really know when it begins or when it ends. War is a subject that could not escape the sarcasm of a Dieudonné ... at peace”
2017	<i>La Politique</i> [Politics]		“With the show ‘La Politique’ Dieudonné offers a new living and unique universe! Dieudonné's humour put into images and music for your greatest pleasure. Emotion and laughter at the rendezvous! "The Politics" will be played from January to June 2017 only !! In this second opus in a series of 4 shows, Dieudonné will dissect the world of politics in his own way ... In the midst of the Presidential election ...”
2016	<i>Les Médias</i> [Media]		“With the show "Les Médias" Dieudonné offers a new living and unique universe! Dieudonné's humour put into images and music for your greatest pleasure. Emotion and laughter await you! In this first opus of a series of 4 shows, Dieudonné dissects in his own way the world of the media, the press, television, the Internet ... A world in which Dieudonné has evolved brilliantly between spitting and applause”
2016	<i>En paix</i> [In Peace]		“This opus completes a masterful work, making us witness to the culmination of a man's quest in ‘peace’. The Dieudonné ‘In Peace’ no longer opposes the system in place, he absorbs it, transcends it. After having satiated our spirits with laughter, with unworthy and immoral characters, the artist becomes a gangster of beauty, a slave of grace

			... The show 'In Peace' marks the end of an artistic journey outside of common and brought Dieudonné into the pantheon of clowns"
2015	<i>La bête immonde</i> [The Foul Beast]		"Dieudonné, for his 14th one man show, wears the convict outfit that the government has been trying to get him to endorse for several years ..."
2014	<i>Asu Zoa</i>		"After the censorship of his show 'The Wall', Dieudonné immediately bounced back with this show 'Asu Zoa'! With subjects tinged with philosophy, Dieudonné makes us laugh to 'forget' the censorship of which he and his audience were victims"
2013	<i>Le mur</i> [The Wall]		"We go straight into it and yet we are back to him, so rather than banging our heads against it, let's get out of the way! Let's make time for a spectacle of this world of lies! Let's laugh together, sheep friends, about our miserable condition as slaves ..."
2012			"In English: 'No fox'. It is a dance from the 1920s that perfectly illustrates the era of the 'American dream'. A time when everyone had the chance to become rich and prosperous! Finally each ... Anyway! For Dieudonné, dance is a formidable object of social analysis which allows him to decipher, with amusement, the moral casualness of the world in which we live. What if laughter was the last bastion of reason?"

2011	<p><i>Rendez-nous Jésus !</i></p> <p>[Give us Back Jesus!]</p>		<p>“Dieudonné, the father of little Judas, tells us about Jesus. What could be more normal! After all, Dieudo grew up in the light of Christ and like a mirror he reflects back to us his personal vision of Jesus, a Jesus both son of the God of Christians and also prophet of Islam announcing the coming of his messenger Mohamed. For Dieudonné, Christians and Muslims have a common destiny, that of laughing together and with a good heart!”</p>
2010	<p><i>Mahmoud</i></p>		<p>“Dieudonné comes back to us with ‘Mahmoud’ in what should be called: a contemporary artistic testimony with a strong humorous content. He tells us about the incredible events which led him to meet the Iranian president: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He takes us back time and transports us to the 16th century in a plantation in Martinique to tell us about the courteous relationship between the masters and their slaves. He also tells us about the all-powerful and revered medicine ... to make fun of course. . And it feels good!”</p>
2009	<p><i>Sandrine</i></p>		<p>“Patrick and Sandrine Boulard have been separated for a few years now. Patrick cannot mourn this story and breaks into his ex-wife's house one evening. Things quickly turn sour and a CD of Patrick Bruel's live album is introduced into an orifice... Sandrine lodges a complaint. The trial begins”</p>

2008	<i>J'ai fait le con</i> [I fucked up]		<p>“As a preamble to his show, Dieudonné returns to the event which, according to him, made the media start talking about him again, namely the baptism of his daughter Plume, with Jean-Marie Le Pen as godfather. Dieudonné fucked up, and he explains it with an increasingly corrosive humour”</p>
2007	<i>Best of</i>		<p>“Dieudonné looks back on his 10-year solo career ... In an original staging, he reviews all of his hilarious characters who made him the most prolific comedian of his generation”</p>
2006	<i>Dépôt de bilan</i> [Bankruptcy]		<p>“The comedian, through a gallery of wacky and offbeat characters, paints an acid portrait of our society. Dieudonné deals with bankruptcy in all its forms: social, historical, humorous and ... animalistic”</p>
2005	1905		<p>“Dieudonné thus celebrates 100 years of the promulgation of the Law of separation of church and State, supposed to dissolve communitarianism and lead the republic on the path of universalism, and notes its failure ... while trying to analyse the reasons with humour”</p>

2004	<i>Mes Excuses</i> [My Apologies]		“After the media lynching of which he was the target, Dieudonné bounced back and explained himself on stage in this already cult spectacle. ‘When doubt sets in, derision is essential. I invite you to come and laugh with me without any limit’”
2003	<i>Le divorce de Patrick</i> [Patrick’s Divorce]		“Dieudonné receives his friend Patrick. The latter is in deep depression following the divorce with his wife Sandrine. Dieudonné then comes to speak of the problems of couples, romantic encounters, the effects of several years of married life, the role of a parent, children in the midst of divorces. In the course of its development, it even comes to the subject of war, religions, the attacks of September 11. In short, a whole programme!”
2002	<i>Cocorico</i> [Cock-a-doodle-doo]		“After the previous show, ‘Forgive Judas’, Dieudonné encountered his first controversies, particularly following his political engagement in Dreux and then his attempt to start a campaign for the 2002 presidential elections. The artist evokes the ‘Dieudonné case’ through different characters. From politics to politicians, from the media to justice, your neighbor or even himself, Dieudonné really pinpoints everyone in an uncompromising portrait of our society, tinged with vitriol”
2001	<i>Pardon Judas</i> [Forgive Judas]		“After his betrayal, Judas did not go and hang himself, but undertook a 2,000-year wandering in the wilderness. The theme of the show centers around the biblical figure of Judas, bearing the weight of infamy (his betrayal of Jesus), before reappearing in the middle of the Algerian desert. By resuming the

			architecture of his first show, Dieudonné interprets in turn a gallery of characters who comment on the return of Judas in their own way. 'Me, Dieudonné, fanciful artist of this millennium, I make the decision to grant my forgiveness to Judas' (Quote from Dieudonné about this show on its official website)"
1997	<i>Tout Seul</i> [All Alone]		"Following a tragic incident, Dieudonné plays a dozen characters who, in turn, give their versions of the story of the massacre committed by Michel Laplume"

Appendix 2: Comments on “The Truth about Marshal Pétain” Infographic¹⁷

Comments in support of the video (82/137)

- Because on multiple occasions national education has twisted the critical spirit of a few generations, and therefore the faculty for today's man to reach logical conclusions.
- Big job, exceptional! Well done 🍌
- Excellent analysis that thumbs its nose at history so manipulated!
- Thank you, by lifting the lid of the trash cans of history, another perspective presents itself to us
- You brought tears to my eyes, Monsieur Dieudonne.
- Astonishing !!!! This should appeal to the interest of the French and invite them to do research. Good job and cool video to watch. Thanks to the whole team.
- Hey big dirty, take a sestrel and go buy yourself a brain.
- 😊👉
- easy and stupid!
- A Forbidden Story about Joseph Stalin, Venerated in Russia as a National Hero? Hero accused of all possible and unimaginable evils by the West subjected to the banks, INCLUDING - it should be known - OF ANTISEMITISM!
- Read the memoirs of Admiral AUPHAN
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whVirzWP06A>
- you can do your own research on what is said in the video that will remove your doubts
- De Gaulle is much better !!!! They lobotomised you my poor Jacques ... Who took the loose when our territory was under occupation ???? Let's see some common sense !!!!
- thank you for reposting it here !!
- Very good video 👍
- I took lots of notes and thanks to that I will be führer in family meals
- Interesting discussion. Different opinions, but very often well argued. So thank you, Dieudo, for promoting this debate between people of good will, who only want to learn, reflect and better understand our world and its history!
- As long as there remains ONE just to know and speak the truth they will have lost.
- thank you
- Superb sequence guys a very good job and informative! Can't wait to see what episode 2 will deal with => May the quenelle be with you 👍☀️PS
- Well done, great job, it sets the record straight.
- Formidable, c'est pas du Fernand Nathan qui file la chiasse ça !!
- This is the story of France that our leaders want to hide from our little pacifier monsters. It's a shame our policies have all deserved the guillotine for a long time.
- magnificent!
- A hero compared to Charlie
- too good thank you to you dieudo! and to your intelligence thank you mr dieudo!
- So true
- Fascinating, thank you ...
- It takes courage to oppose the doxa imposed by the system. What I read here reminds me of what my father used to say (born in 1893, he had done verdun and he was still shocked at the way things were twisted since the "liberation").
- A parallel world! Where we say good things about a so-called 'junk' it's funny to see him recover his rank !! 🍌

¹⁷ The comments are translated from French.

- Excellent documentary
- Its good to hear the truth
- My marshal, Verdun is waiting for you!
- Thank you for simply telling the truth! Excellent video.
- This little video has the merit of highlighting some little-known aspects of our history. Without falling into the angelism or the demonisation of this great character Philippe Pétain, we have to be clear that there is always an official version that is imposed on us (as usual!) As truth. exact, and the hidden truth. The General of Gaul was not necessarily this courageous venerable hero, and Marshal Pétain was not necessarily this traitor and this collaborator (to whom the hat was made!). For more information, you can read the book on De Gaulle, by Philippe Ploncard d'Assac, which reveals a very little known aspect of the general: [https://www.ebay.fr/itm/Charles-De-Gaulle-from-the-legend-to-the-reality-Philippe-Ploncard-dAssac- / 392941536399](https://www.ebay.fr/itm/Charles-De-Gaulle-from-the-legend-to-the-reality-Philippe-Ploncard-dAssac-/392941536399)
- thank you great! it's moving!
- Finally some truth! 👍👍
- 84 years old !! FRANCE needs you again! He will answer "present" again and again. The real French know what they owe him in these very dark moments in our history.
- hello except that there are no more Pétains and the French are so brainwashed that they no longer have any mental strength
- hi, speaking of Pétain, a person died a few years ago by my house who was one of Pétain's generals, his son to throw all the boxes stored in the attic and after having recovered them I had a hell of a surprise they contained all the history under Pétain of the Paca region his general who served under Pétain was called buffet dalmas, and there were all the names of the adherent families, prisoners, donations of all kinds and those who looted their loved ones now at the head of some towns, very nice story on Pétain
- Well done the dieudo family! You are brave intelligent funny personal I have a lot of admiration for you!
- Tell me, Gayluron, aren't you in a happy mood, looks like?
- Whatever gay ...
- "French, you have a short memory!" (Pétain ... big blow) ... the cock too and no balls.
- Great !
- Super quennel to history! #!
- Hey old man! These historians are really motherfuckers who have lied to the French for decades! I never imagined all this from Marshal Pétain!
- These historians are really motherfuckers who have lied to the French for decades!
- I never imagined all this from Marshal Pétain!
- Overall, the document is rather faithful to historical reality, despite some cookie-cutter statements.
- Beautiful as the truth
- In my opinion, this video is an objective and honest presentation of Marshal Pétain's military and political career.
- It is a beautiful presentation of our history with its emblem, that of the Marshal. It clearly shows how history is written collectively and that the value of a single man is not enough to raise the level of the community; on the other hand, its baseness inevitably tarnishes the greatness of its heroes.
- This is what should be taught at school, give the desire and curiosity to seek and understand for oneself, beyond the official imposed and schematic history of the disaster of education nanana nanana, bravo il must continue to search the back shops 🍄👍
- These English ... Parasitic people worse than corona! "America" massacre of Indians, Australia, India, New Zealand, etc And all this with the complacency of all. Underhand instigators of wars and violence without limits. Today they are taking possession of Australia, Papua, etc. without scruple, none. Sad race!
- very interesting, well done

- Pétain said during his trial that the truth would one day come to light in the eyes of the French
- # I AmPetin
- me too !
- Well done, very well done! Thank you ...
- And yes, as always, the official history is written by the victors and never by the vanquished ! 😞
- Yes, finally there are also a lot of notes on the side of the vanquished but none can withstand detailed lighting.
- very interesting disruptive view of history. I can't wait for the next episode. Beyond that, I offer you the character of Pierre Laval close to the bank in 1929, who made his fortune on the speculative and "social" insurance markets. This promiscuity with the backbone allows it to gain economic power, particularly in a private capacity with the US and to control multiple French monopolistic businesses (printing etc.) and especially the media of political propaganda and advertising, through radio waves and editorial staff and newspaper printing. The letters of his daughter are crusted with information on the lifestyle "coco chanel" of the French oligarchy collaborator of the time which resembles that of today.
- When will be next !! ?
- Very interesting
- My grandfather and my father have always told me the history of France and the truth about Marshal Petain, the way they all got rid of our Politcards, the general who fled, that marshal when he found out about it, he landed quickly to save the furniture, well what was left of it is quite a very good summary, thank you. Maréchal it is partly thanks to him that we are still French, the other countries all want to take the piece of the pie. And that he knew he was a true patriot, especially at his age, it is incredible, little we would have done as much as him.
- Magnificent, thanks. I am 68 years old and I have a portrait of the Marshal at home. And I'm ready to get angry even with my friends to defend his memory.
- What a shame to have treated the Marshal in this way! Nothing to change, corruption, mother of all vices!
- Welcome to PYRAMIDOPOLY ... From the stateless person, to the homeless via the hairdresser boy, the school principal, the prefect, the long-term unemployed, the agricultural craftsman, the fighter pilot, the precarious , the richou, the nun, the president of the fmi, the austrian newborn, the spanish flu, the wuhan laboratory assistant, ... and so on, we are all embarked on the great game of I adventure: earthly life (embodied). Do we play to win wars on both fronts, lottery cards, Nobel prizes in Oslo, ... or lose patience in our household scenes, time in the metro without awakening our knowledge, the sense of justice and a sense of duty, ... and I wash it off? KNOWLEDGE is POWER.
- Please restore history because the truth sets free 👍👍👍
- well done....
- Very interesting.Thank you for setting the record straight
- We never see this kind of documentary on TV as if by chance ... Thank you
- Truth and justice will eventually triumph in this world of injustice, lies, diabolical duplicity! Christ already triumphed almost 2000 years ago! This is the reality! Vade retro, Satanas! You've already lost! Denial ain't gonna do squat! Glory to the Almighty God in Christ-Jesus!
- When will episode 2 be?
- BEAUTIFUL ANIMATED REPORT
- Excellent
- History is written by the victors, and doesn't care about the truth. The marshal was certainly a great man. None of his detractors come close to him.
- bravo for this beautiful video and long live the Marshal and down with the larvae.
- Good evening everyone! Thanks for this video: I learned! PS: If you could put some links, because some passages caught my attention more than others: In particular, his life as a diplomat in Spain arouses my interest. Thank you .

- when we know the true story what a shame for France to shit on the honor which in the way no longer exists in France since 45 to propagate its history and / or honor !! Shame on France and those who repeat stupidly !! He was a true humanitarian as well as a hero of the toughest war the world has ever known ww1

Comments in support of the video that may be interpreted as antisemitic (12/137)

- Hello Jacques, the Jews were not the object of repression in North Africa. It was in the occupied zone that business was tough. Now the Zionist activist community has something to do with the rise of Nazism .. weimard the policy of the French government with its lodges ..!. In short. Pétain is the image of the resistance of the 1st hour! If Hitler does not go to AFN, and leaves to use against the English, it is him! Hitler will not have oil after his quarrel with the Soviet Communists. He loses his assets and wars them. So much the better. But as the rotten take power in 1944, purification ... and here we are in the current situation. Alez search well and in the right places. You will be very surprised. Good luck
- Hélas DE GAULLE is a fugitive! And yes. By an astonishing chance, I was able to listen to the oral testimony of a person who was aware of what had been said between DE GAULLE and the English general to negotiate his safeguard. Maybe a Masonic favor ...? DE GAULLE was very intelligent and he organized a "cloud of smoke" to mask his escape. Look carefully you say be!
- Maybe a Masonic favor ...? DE GAULLE was very intelligent and he organised a "cloud of smoke" to mask his escape. Look carefully you say be!
- Petain saved the French Jews, he was able to limit the broken pots. The Ugif, an organised Jewish community, formerly Crif, on the other hand gave the names and denounced the Jews !!! We have to dig a little deeper and stop swallowing the pill that we have been swallowing for more than 70 years ...
- Just like that for a laugh and invite you to have a lot of reservations, I submit this following to your sagacity. The German and Austrian Zionist associations collaborated with a recognised humanist by the name of Himmler, from 1933 until October 1941 in order to prepare German populations of the Jewish faith for emigration. Nazi Germany therefore provided agricultural and forestry training in 42 establishments, in 168 craft training, in 27 in domestic economy training, in 12 in the training of caregivers. Between 1933 and October 1941 the emigration of 66,546 people was prepared. Etc. . I close by reading another translation: Currently, therefore in October 1941, there are still 151,000 Jews in the old Reich, and so on. . These are very "official" translations of parts " you form an unofficial opinion. Terrifyingly filthy. you form an unofficial opinion. Terrifyingly filthy.
- I find on the contrary that re-establishing this truth, long forbidden, in place of the shameful Gaullist and Communist propaganda that you obediently repeat, Jacques, is essential today in France to erase the insults made to the marshal. If you talk about the Jews, they are 1% and all the politicians flock to their CRIF dinner. Curious isn't it?
- You raise an important point on the declaration of war of Germany on France and once again it is the system of international finance which is at the base of this regrettable time ... Since you seem to pose the right ones questions, I'll drive home the point: where was the Rothschild family (already) residing at that time? Hmm? ... In England of course ...
- France is under the tutelage of is-Rat-Hell, with the complicity of the Satanist Freemasonry elites
- For two centuries we have been victims of the KHAZARE mafia lobby which finances wars, foments revolts and prepares a hegemonic vaccination of population control. This mafia owns 99% of the press and publishing and continues to whitewash its crimes by putting them on the backs of the French who, intoxicated, end up being ashamed of being French. Let us not forget, as Papacino reminds us, that this intox and these useless wars have decimated the most burned and the most courageous French people ... to leave us the traitors and the collaborators! Although leftist Islamos feel they stink ever since the tide turned. Let us be proud to be French and let us find our FRANCE which is against violence and vulgarity ... and that the violent vulgar return quickly to the village by running!

- Good documentary. Too bad nothing is said about Pétain's desire to dissolve secret societies and in particular Freemasonry.
- yes the English yes. The worst on the surface of this planet. The Empire of Evil is not even American-Zionist but Anglo-Zionist ... even before we say it
- Hello Monsieur Dieudonné, the macronissimo president advised the duty of blasphemy, so make us a good sketch on the haredim (like, I torch myself with my mats, a blow to the right, a blow to the left) to answer this torch ass of Charlie Hebdo. thank you

Comments criticising the video's narrative (15/137)

- Pétain fascho.
- Easy, Dieudo, and whoever wrote the text. Pétain is the ignominious "status of the Jews", removing many of them from jobs and functions with "numerus clausus", aryanisation, etc. It is then the authorisation given to the Militia, and finally the Collaboration. We can discuss, but these are not glorious moments in the history of France. De Gaulle, there, it's still better, much better ... And finally, Pétain is a kind of institutional coup: the abolition, null and void, of the Republic by a pseudo-Congress Parliament, which did not have a mandate to do so. So the little film is too schematic and partisan; reality is more complicated ...
- "the very sociable Gestapo". And the concentration camps, they were undoubtedly vacation camps.
- Episode 2 is definitely going to be about Hitler. A good little guy who wanted to hurt no one and who we went to war because he was talking too loudly into the microphone.
- you are all mentally ill lol
- you are sick
- Everything is false except the start of his military career. Who signed the papers to arrest the non-French and then French Jews? Who deported children to a place that they themselves said they did not know (so as not to separate the families they said, lol)? Who sold the resistance fighters for fear of losing their small administrative powers?
- G want to vomit ... what is this bunch of serious bullshit?! ...
- @Encino - I sympathise
- Uh so the resistance was the Jewish army which derailed the German trains, frankly! ..
- This man was a rot, period!
- sheaf, shit, discount propaganda, a shitty voice, work on your kid story ... I pinch myself to believe it, I force myself to listen to this schoolboy crap until the end, wanting to believe in a valve, I'm waiting for a fall, ... there won't be any, nausea, go bow down on his grave at Ile d'Yeu, there is a small hill to hit on my bike, the cemetery is on the left at the top, her grave just to the right as you enter, hidden behind a cypress ... go get your ass fucked.
- unspeakable nausea
- it's really shit this vision of history in reality it's a far-right coup d'etat supported by the defeat wanted by this far right besides they were assassinated members of the government in bordeaux
- And the Rif war? How come there is no question of it in the video. It seems that Pétain was a real murderer who used mustard gas, having been in cahoots with a certain Francisco Franco. Too bad there is no question ...

Comments critical of the video's narrative (4/137)

- can you cite your sources? ...
- A second German offensive in Verdun? where does it come from? :-)
- Wow ... pure Pétainism and without any nuance ... If Pétain was not the caricature that we made of him today, to make a superhero as in this animation is the same excess on the contrary ... the story is more complex, the truth has its nuances, replacing one propaganda with another does not raise the debate ...

- Like the colored cockades upside down, this cartoon is a caricature, exactly the opposite of official history and no truer than it. The truth must be qualified and certainly between the two versions. That said, this story is interesting to know.

Irrelevant or unclear comments (24/137)

- Episode 1 ?...
- In the description, Pétain with an é, let's go!
- Yep, otherwise we would say LITTLE and that's not the case. We used to emasculate the vowels from their accents for capital letters, and that's what makes you believe that. You are victims of the reduction of the syntax by the capitalisation of the lettering, the writing of the headlines of the newspapers intoxicated you!
- Yes as for moron.
- as a mess
- Ah ok: new series, so nothing to do with La Quotidienne ... :)
- The abolition of the public ray, I dream of it! The return of corporations, a real emancipatory tool in the service of workers ... the end of usury and speculation, meritocracy as a functional social elevator ... that is already enough to explain why it was deposed.
- I correct "have collaborated"
- There is an error on Franco. He had no revenge to take against France because she did not support the Republican camp which was, in reality, anarchist. The only government that supported them is Mexico. The USSR played its own cards there, Hitler, Mussolini and Salazar agreed to put Franco in power. Officially, France and England remained neutral, but I think Hitler got screwed in this story and that Franco was a pawn of England, like Pinochet. Because how else to explain that it is not affected in Gibraltar?
- For the anecdote, Pétain was negotiating with Franco so that he opposes the crossing of the German troops which aimed at North Africa, where Weygand constituted the army of reconquest. Franco's endorsement forced the Führer to fall back on the eastern front, with the success that we know.
- 😊
- argh! General Nivelle was General Pétain's deputy in Verdun! for the Chemin des Dames offensive, he magnified the general's ideas and wanted to do better: disaster!
- The 2nd battle of Verdun in 1917
- at the end of the Spanish Civil War, the country was in ruins! the Spaniards had other things to do than try to cross the mountains ... ;-)
- By the way: de Gaulle was the godson of Marshal Pétain, which explains the fine military career of a captain taken prisoner during the 1st world war ... ;-)
- Godson? Show us the proof of what you are doing!
- De Gaulle was Colonel on the battlefield with his men. Pétain was in his officer's office, far from the bombardments.
- Whoever wants to save his life will lose it. Time is right for something else ... Let s forget about money or our survival ... For a time comes when money, the earth and the apples will no longer have any power over us. ..
- hello do you have any items to sell
- 95 years old is not bad for the time !!!! when we play with the devil, we should not be surprised at the consequences.
- Its not working anymore?
- This is the way of piou piou sa 😊
- Hihhi
- I love France from above, a bunch of stinking shit
- Shit I'm becoming a Jew, I cried!

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