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Why Europe Struggles With the Combat Against Antisemitism.

An Analysis of Debates About Antisemitism in Europe.

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ABSTRACT

The rationale of this literature-based thesis is to explore and interpret contemporary European debates about antisemitism while focussing on the German and Austrian context without ignoring the phenomenon's historical evolvement in order to render visible potential challenges as well as dangers in the combat against modern antisemitism in Europe.

The first part is dedicated to terminological questions as well as the task of defining the phenomenon itself. Subsequently, the main part of this thesis deals with manifestations of antisemitism especially after 1945 and identifies essential issues such as secondary antisemitism and philosemitism, anti-Zionism in particular after 1967, Islamised antisemitism, semantics of modern antisemitism and the debate on "new antisemitism".

On the basis of an examination of the prevalent controversies about antisemitism in Europe, the following challenges in the combat against antisemitism revealed: first, the lack of consensus over what antisemitism is and the therewith connected lack of comparable official data on antisemitism; second, the Shoah lead to a modification of antisemitism so that the phenomenon manifests itself camouflaged and under the surface; third, anti-Zionism and critique of Israel do not equal antisemitism but they overlap; fourth, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not the cause of antisemitism but complicates the combat against it and fifth, migration of Muslims to Europe does not cause the rise of antisemitism but Islamised antisemitism is a problem and the combat against it risks perpetuating anti-Muslim racism.

This thesis strives to fill the gap of knowledge why Europe faces difficulties in the combat against antisemitism to enable a reconceptualization of strategies against it in order to foster social cohesion in the multicultural societies of Europe.

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