

# **On The Discourse of Prejudice and Racism: Two Examples from Austria**

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## **Introduction**

In 1989, the "iron curtain" dividing Europe was torn down. In Austria, as in other Western countries, these changes were greeted euphorically by politicians and media alike. Armed with wire-cutters, Austria's Foreign Minister Alois Mock was shown doing his part--literally as well as symbolically--to open the border between Austria and Hungary. The end of 1989 witnessed the success of the Rumanian "revolution," and the fall of eastern European Stalinist regimes (or the death of Marxism, according to taste) was everywhere exuberantly acclaimed. As the first waves of refugees and immigrants seeking asylum and work made their way westward, however, this enthusiasm soon dampened.

In the wake of the democratic revolutions in east central Europe, such distinctions between "political" and "economic" refugees quickly elided. Indeed, the condescending tolerance in Austria of political refugees from Communist eastern Europe seems to have veiled more profound ethnic hostilities towards these same groups. The uncertainties of this new political configuration in Europe occasioned the emergence in Austrian public life of xenophobic discourses, fed by and couched in the terms of social anxiety. Those who even a few months previously would have been largely welcomed as heroic refugees from tyrannical regimes, suddenly became socially more threatening "economic

immigrants," "spirit and salami merchants," "criminals," etc., too lazy and selfish to remain in their countries and solve their own problems.

An indication of the political implications of this transformation was given in the campaign preceding the 1990 elections to the Austrian National Assembly. Confronted by the obvious success which the Austrian Freedom Party (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, or FPÖ), seconded in its effort by the *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, the largest selling newspaper in Austria, was registering with its more or less explicit appeals to these ethnic hostilities, politicians from the mainstream Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the Christian democratic Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) quickly accommodated their own electoral strategies and general political propaganda to the new climate of resentment and anger. (cf. Dressler/Wodak 1990, Wodak 1991a) Unsurprisingly, the kinds of ethnic stereotypes which the studies of Helsen (1990), Jäger (1991), and van Dijk (1984) had registered in other political cultures found their equivalents in contemporary media discourse and politicians' statements in Austria. The new immigrants, in Austria as in Germany, for example, were said to be dirty, lazy, violent, criminal, etc.

The emergence, in this new context, of both hoary but frequently encountered ethnic prejudices as well as stereotypes with a less common contemporary cast, has provided critical linguists involved in prejudice research not only with new data, but has also raised new challenges and opportunities to test the adequacy of our terminology, our methods, and our theories. Utilizing an approach that has been termed the "discourse-historical method," for example, recent research in Austria has both confirmed the variation in the complexity and explicitness of discursive patterns of prejudice-expression, and has as well suggested that even the specific prejudicial content such expressions transmit is largely determined by the historical and linguistic contexts of their emergence (cf. Wodak et al. 1990, Wodak/Matouschek 1993). Though the specific combination of theoretical insights and methodological procedures involved in the discourse-historical method was itself novel, most of the individual discourse-theoretical components of this approach, as well as the analytical categories employed, were more familiar, and had been derived principally from Gordon Allport's social psychological study of prejudice, Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of prejudice formation, and Ruth Wodak's theory of text planning (cf. Allport 1987 [1954], van Dijk 1984, and Wodak 1986).

Some of the leading figures involved in prejudice research, most notably Teun van Dijk and Siegfried Jäger, however, have proposed a new, streamlined conceptual framework to analyze what had hitherto been designated ethnic and racial prejudice. (See van Dijk 1991 and Jäger 1991) Challenges to existing categories are to be welcomed, even if the precise methodological implications have yet to be fully elaborated, if for no other reason than because a far more subtle system of categories ordinarily issues from such a debate. It is fair, however, to question whether or not this proposed new terminology can really advance our understanding (scholarly or otherwise) of these hostilities. We believe that in this case some doubt is justified. In this essay we would like to indicate some of the methodological inadequacies we feel van Dijk's and Jäger's new conceptions of racism

imply and suggest that the "older" and "proven" categories (many of which van Dijk himself used to defend, e.g., van Dijk 1989) are able to achieve more satisfactory analytical results without blurring distinctions the new terminology logically entails.

### **A New Conception of Racism**

In his recent work, *Racism and the Press*, van Dijk lays out his definition of racism clearly and states the political justification underlying his choice of terms. The "racial differentiations of earlier Western ideologies," he argues, are being transformed into an "emphasis on culture and cultural differences." "Racism is being transformed into ethnicism," van Dijk continues, because the latter is seen as "morally less reprehensible" than the former. Consequently, abandoning what he terms "a dual or even multiple set of basic theoretical terms," van Dijk employs the term racism "in a more general sense, as it also has become adopted in political contexts of resistance, denoting both racism in the strict sense as well as various forms of ethnicism." Racism is thus "the type of racism or ethnicism prevalent in western countries, both against 'black' groups, including people of African origin and those of (South) Asian origin, as well as against specific, such as Mediterranean or Arabic, peoples or immigrants from the 'borders' of Europe, or against Hispanics in the US." (van Dijk 1991: 26-27)

Van Dijk, however, admits two major exceptions to this general usage of the term racism. For the "historically special case of ethnicism . . . directed against Jewish people," van Dijk prefers to "retain the usual term 'anti-semitism.'" Moreover,

in order to distinguish racism, as a general term, from various forms of intra-European ethnicism, such as in the case of the British dominance over the Irish, or of what is presently sometimes called the razzismo of North Italians against South Italians, the latter forms of ethnicism may also be called "regionalisms." These are not merely socio-culturally based (for instance in language or religion), but also politically and economically grounded. Although the ideological basis of these different forms of ethnicism may differ as to the set of criteria by which "difference" is socially constructed, the structural consequences for the position of the respective dominated group may be very similar. (van Dijk 1991: 26-27)

There seem to be no objections in principle to simply altering the taxonomy one employs in research, so long as one makes one's definitions clear, as van Dijk admirably does. It is equally legitimate, within limits, to justify such a taxonomical revision on grounds of cultural sensitivity. (One need only consider how anachronistic--at the very least--the term "Negro" would appear in contemporary scholarly works on "race" in the United States.) However, merely to mention this example is to underline the contingent nature of such enterprises related to current insights and sensibilities. Nonetheless, on the assumption that van Dijk's causal claim--i.e., that the category "ethnicism" is employed primarily to render racial prejudice less opprobrious--could be satisfactorily demonstrated, there would seem to be no principled reason to object to van Dijk's proposed changes in nomenclature, though the rewards of doing so seem to us rather

meager. At the same time, however, also on this assumption, it seems reasonable to question the advisability of conceding this point politically. Why, in other words, ought "ethnicism" be viewed as "morally less reprehensible" than "racism"? If the consequences issuing from "ethnic" and "racial" prejudice are identical--which in the present political context they ordinarily are--would it not be more appropriate to increase the moral stigma attached to ethnic prejudice, rather than using a conceptual sleight of hand to ascribe a "racial" foundation to "ethnic" or cultural prejudices?

In our view, moreover, new analytical categories must also pass a more rigorous test of methodological usefulness. There are several reasons van Dijk's conceptions fail to meet this test, some of which are more serious than others. Firstly, the inconsistency in van Dijk's own position mitigates against adoption of his categories. Leaving aside the question as to whether the term "regionalism" really enunciates the language of resistance, there are no obvious methodological or analytical grounds for excluding certain "intra-European forms of ethnicism"--especially that exhibited towards the Irish in Britain--from his category of racism. Even more perplexing is the exception he makes for antisemitism, which he, somewhat surprisingly, describes as an "historically special case of ethnicism." If the term ethnicism does indeed trivialize, what place does it have here? It is true that the term antisemitism (however it is spelled) does possess a very wide currency, and thus might be considered to satisfy the "political contexts of resistance" condition. Yet it could also be argued that the normative caveats attached to the usage of "ethnicism" applied equally to antisemitism, in other words, that the term "antisemitism" could itself be considered less offensive than "racism". Moreover, there are theoretical objections to the use of the term "antisemitism" to define post-1945, i.e., "post-Auschwitz" hostilities towards Jews, precisely because the term antisemitism presumes an intentionality which cannot always be assumed in contemporary utterances containing anti-Jewish prejudice. (See Mitten 1992b: 40)

Thus, although the arguments van Dijk has thus far advanced for preferring "racism" to "ethnicism" have been largely moral/political, his taxonomical variation nonetheless entails a more consequential shift in our analytical categories themselves. It is, indeed, our contention that van Dijk's new generic term racism not only collapses the boundaries between previously distinct concepts, it also assumes a much more explicit intentionality on the part of an individual expressing prejudice than do the socio-cognitive categories of prejudice formation he himself previously (and convincingly) employed. (van Dijk 1984: passim) Van Dijk has been unable to demonstrate how his generic category "racism" does or would have an analytical value equal or superior to the competing discrete notions of ethnic and/or racial prejudice, which his proposed new term conflates.

Siegfried Jäger's "broad concept of racism," while it avoids the inconsistencies which beset van Dijk's terminology, also merges the notions of ethnic and racial prejudice into one. Also like van Dijk, but far more explicitly, Jäger incorporates a specific power relation into his definition of racism. Unlike van Dijk, however, Jäger's definition places a great deal of emphasis on the imagined projective character of the "differences" which

"racists" according to his definition infer about members of minorities. Racism, according to Jäger, comprises

the genetically determined or culturally determined differences which one sees, or believes one can see, which characterize the members of minorities. Generally these are seen to be negative, occasionally positive, and this evaluation is made from a position of power, derived from belonging to a majority. (Jäger 1991: 4)

On purely taxonomical grounds, Jäger's more consistent but equally broad definition of racism seems unassailable. Upon closer examination, however, Jäger's notion of racism, like all terms defined by specific power relations, appears unduly restrictive. If, for example, one wished to describe phenomena of prejudice which fall outside the given power relation, i.e., to name prejudices which are cognitively analogous but functionally discrepant, one could either develop a separate terminology for these latter, or include them in the notion of racism. The former choice, however, would seem to render the new concept of racism very rapidly analytically otiose, while the latter, by making everything "racism" and thus implying a kind of equivalence between the beneficiaries and victims of prejudice, would in fact trivialize the racism all of us wish to combat.

Thus, although neither van Dijk nor Jäger would deny that there are differences which are culturally acquired and which become part of a cultural tradition, i.e., "ethnic" differences (cf. Erdheim 1984, Quasthoff 1989), they have offered what we consider too restrictive a definition for naming them. The same prejudices may certainly be "grounded" either ethnically or racially, since for those subscribing to racial theories the prejudices against the outgroup are assumed to be genetically determined. However, a wide range of negative ethnic stereotypes can be linked to an outgroup and generalized without necessarily assuming a biological concept of race. Just how far it is possible to amalgamate ethnic with racist prejudices would have to be decided on the basis of an exact contextual analysis of each individual prejudiced statement. Moreover, though questions of power are ineluctably bound up with prejudice (of whatever kind), they are not coterminous, and we believe that it is more helpful to view the relevant aspects of power as analytically distinct. We therefore prefer to retain the basic socio-cognitive category of prejudice, and add qualifying statements about these prejudices according to the specific attributes (including, but not restricted to, ethnic or racial stereotypes) they exhibit or imply, and the functions which they might serve or legitimate.

This point might best be illustrated by examining how we might best describe, say, the "culturally determined differences which [a Slovene] sees, or believes [he or she] can see, which characterize" the Serbs. Is it particularly enlightening to describe these cultural prejudices of one "South Slav" group towards another as racism? Would it not be preferable to analyze the structure of the prejudiced beliefs as such, specify their content, and, since someone of Slovene origin could be a member of a majority (in Slovenia) or a minority (in Austria), indicate their possible functions based upon the evidence of power relations specific to a given discursive context?

Beyond this general objection, a collapse of previous conceptual distinctions also tends unnecessarily to constrict our analytical possibilities, even when the "racial" principle underlying such statements is undisputed (and indisputable). Alois Huber, for example, a member of national executive of the Austrian Freedom Party (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs) and the party's spokesperson on agricultural affairs, was quite explicit about the nature of his opposition to the integration of non-Austrians from southern and eastern Europe into Austria. He was, in his words, "an opponent of a mixture of this type. If the Creator had wanted to create only one race, he would have made only one race. Yet there are many races, and the Lord knew what He was doing." (quoted in *Der Standard*, 6-7 April 1991). This is indeed a discourse of "racism," according to anyone's definition (even, perhaps, Huber's), yet with a particular history and a distinctive idiom. Xenophobia and a ban on immigration were given an immensely crude racial justification with a quasi-religious gloss: Huber's concept of race linked it to the Christian story of the creation.

Yet not all statements premised upon racial categories are this explicit about their assumptions. In March, 1990, Josef Ratzenböck, the provincial governor of Upper Austria, commenting on the debate in Austria about how many foreigners (mainly Rumanians) the labor market could absorb, and where they should be allowed to settle, stated that "We are dealing with people whose origins [*Abstammung*] one can clearly tell just by looking. Many people fear that tourism will suffer because of them." (quoted in *Kurier*, 10 March 1990) Though technically Ratzenböck's statement might apply to such cultural differences of these groups such as dress, customs, etc., in this context the use of the German word "Abstammung" implied that there were obvious physical characteristics that distinguished Rumanians from other people. The concept of race is taken for granted, but not openly articulated (indeed, Ratzenböck denied holding such a view), and in some respects this view is more pernicious, since Ratzenböck stresses the visibility of these ostensible differences. In addition, his introduction of the anonymous "many people" as an explanation cum justification, exemplifies in a rather commonplace way a "semantic move" (van Dijk) employed to dissociate oneself from the content of one's statement, should it be in danger of transgressing the boundaries of allowable political discourse about refugees. The governor also linked to this supposed physical trait an economic argument designed to cause social anxiety: the appearance of "these people" is supposedly frightening and would scare off desirable foreigners (namely tourists). Ratzenböck did not say whether or not he could tell these latter people's origins merely by looking at them.

There is, then, no question as to the racial assumptions which underlay the statements of Huber and Ratzenböck, nor would the policy implications of these respective views of foreigners necessarily diverge in any significant way. However, does calling them, along with all other forms of non-genetically determined forms of prejudice, "racism," really offer advantages over a terminology in which conceptions such as these, which assume the presence of observable genetic characteristics, are differentiated analytically from those which do not?

Below we will use two examples to illustrate in more detail our preference for retaining a conception of prejudice based on van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of prejudice formation, and demonstrate what we believe to be its descriptive and analytical superiority over the generic notion of racism. First, however, we would like to suggest in a brief way our conception of the boundaries between ethnic and racial prejudice. (See Wodak et al. 1990, Wodak 1991b)

### **Prejudice and Language: Allport, Quasthoff and Van Dijk**

Noting that ethnic distinctions "are rarely neutral," but rather "are commonly associated with marked inequalities of wealth and power, as well as with antagonism between groups," the sociologist Anthony Giddens describes "racial differences" as "physical variations singled out by the members of a community or society as ethnically significant." Racism, for Giddens, thus "means falsely attributing inherited characteristics of personality or behavior to individuals of a particular physical appearance." Consequently, "[a] racist is someone who believes that a biological explanation can be given for characteristics of superiority or inferiority supposedly possessed by people of a given physical stock." (Giddens 1989: 244, 246) Gordon Allport held that visual categories help to ease perception and lead therefore to a corresponding categorization of individuals along these lines. Ethnic characteristics are culturally transmitted and learned by socialization. In so far as the term has any meaning, racial characteristics are those behavioral traits that are believed to be genetically-determined.

Using the term "racism" in such a broad way to define and describe the entire scope of prejudices against minority groups risks losing sight of sometimes significant distinctions concerning the intensity, quality, effectiveness and political consequences of these prejudices. It is possible, for example, that the presence of ethnic and racist prejudices against blacks and Jews has implications concerning the relative immunity of prejudiced people to a revision of their beliefs. Such potential differences in the mutability of prejudices, in turn, might conceivably imply discrete, even if complementary, pedagogical or political strategies for combating such beliefs. Allport distinguished prejudice from discrimination and described a progressively more onerous range of exclusionary acts, based on the ideological legitimation of specific actions. Prejudices can be expressed verbally, and need not imply discriminatory intent; racist ideologies, however, can lead to whole groups being excluded "legally" as, for example, in the case of the Nuremberg laws in the Third Reich, "Jim Crow" laws in the United States or apartheid in South Africa.

Yet Allport was careful to specify the cognitive as well as the various contingent factors determining the emergence and retention of all possible prejudiced beliefs. This anti-teleological conviction is also apparent in linguistic models of prejudice such as Quasthoff's on social stereotypes and van Dijk's more extensive socio-cognitive model of prejudice formation.

Quasthoff (1973, 1989) distinguishes between attitudes, conviction and prejudice. She defines attitudes as the affective position taken towards a person to whom one relates and towards whom one can express dislike or sympathy. Convictions, according to Quasthoff, ascribe qualities to others and often provide rationalizations for one's negative attitudes (e.g., "blacks smell bad"). A stereotype is the verbal expression of a conviction directed towards a social group, or individuals as members of that social group. It takes the logical form of a judgment, which in an oversimplified and generalizing way attributes or denies to a certain class of persons particular qualities or behavioral patterns. Prejudices, finally, consist of attitudes (the affective element) and convictions (the cognitive element).

To explain the function of social prejudice, Quasthoff considers several psychological approaches. She sometimes describes prejudice as an integral part of authoritarian systems ("inner psychic functions of stereotypes") (Adorno et al. 1968, Mitscherlich & Mitscherlich 1977); on the other occasions, she prefers a scapegoat theory explanation ("social functions of stereotypes"). She rightly argues that social prejudices also have a cognitive-linguistic orientation function. They simplify communication within one's own group, strengthen the sense of belonging and delineate the outgroup. This is particularly the case during periods of inner resistance and in times of rapid social change.

According to Quasthoff, sentences are the linguistic unit most amenable to her type of analysis. (Quasthoff 1973:28) She distinguishes four types of prejudice expressed in sentences, which she defines using the rules of formal logic:

(1) Analytical propositions claiming to express a truth. This is the basic form of a stereotype, and all stereotypes can be seen as conforming to this pattern. A quality or behavior pattern is ascribed to a group. The group is the subject, the quality the predicate. It takes the form of a statement, from the point of view of logic it is, however, a judgment (e.g., "Germans are hard-working").

(2) Modified statements are those which limit their force by using certain signals in their surface structure (e.g., "The inhabitants of Lower Saxony are said to have a reputation for being taciturn".).

(3) Directly expressed opinions are sentences in which the speaker explicitly refers to herself or himself (e.g. "I don't think that . . .").

(4) Text Linguistic type. In this case, the stereotype is expressed implicitly (e.g. "He is Jewish, but he's very nice").

Quasthoff's four categories cover a fairly broad range of verbal expressions and nuances. As the four types express different grades of directness, their occurrence is heavily dependent on situation and setting. Because of the latent and subtle prejudice patterns found today, types 2 and 4 occur most frequently. However, the categorization of obvious prejudice according to the sentence structure neglects latent meanings, allusions, strategies, vague formulations, implications and forms of argumentation which all relate

to the level of written text or oral discourse (cf. Van Dijk 1990, 164 for a definition of "text" and "discourse").

Many of these limitations were successfully overcome by van Dijk's model of prejudice formation, which is based on similar socio-psychological considerations. According to van Dijk, prejudice is not merely a characteristic of individual beliefs or emotions about social groups, but a shared form of social representation in group members, acquired during processes of socialization and transformed and enacted in social communication and interaction. Such ethnic attitudes have a social function, e.g. to protect the interests of the ingroup. Their cognitive structures and the strategies of their use reflect this function.

Far more than Quasthoff, however, van Dijk emphasizes this explicit social function of prejudice, namely, the "rationalization and justification of discriminatory acts against minority groups." (van Dijk 1984:13) He designates the categories used to rationalize prejudice against minority groups--dominance, differentiation, distance, diffusion, diversion, depersonalization or destruction, and daily discrimination--as the "7 D's of Discrimination." According to van Dijk,

these general plan categories will organize, in principle, all actions against, about, or with minority members, viz. maintaining power and control, treating them differently (a social act function related to the cognitive function of seeing them differently), keeping them at a distance (out of our country, town, neighborhood, street, house, family, etc.), diffusing beliefs and prejudices about them (mainly in prejudiced talk) attributing social or economic problems of the ingroup to them, treating them as inferior, hurting or destroying them, and, finally, enacting all these more general actions also in small everyday activities (minor inequities). (van Dijk 1984: 40)

For our purposes, however, perhaps the most valuable aspect of van Dijk's model is the heuristic assistance it provides in linking the generation of prejudice to discursive units larger than the sentence. Van Dijk's initial assumption is that those parts of the long-term memory directly relevant to the production and retention of ethnic prejudices (recognition, categorization, and storage of experience) can be divided into three memory structures: semantic memory, episodic memory and the control system.

According to Van Dijk, semantic memory is social memory: it is here that the collectively shared beliefs of a society are stored. These beliefs are organized as attitudes, and as such are fitted into group schemata which provide the cognitive basis of our information processing about members of outgroups. Our perception of individual experiences is thus influenced by these cognitive representations and these latter are always adapted to pre-existing models. The models themselves are initially acquired during socialization. The attitudes stored in the group schema are of a generalized and abstract nature and are determined by their organization in the socially-relevant categories of the group that is being evaluated at the time. In van Dijk's view, the following three categories are decisive for ethnic prejudice: national origin and/or appearance; socio-economic status; and socio-cultural norms and values, religion and language. In linguistic utterances, such attitudes appear as generally accepted statements,

frequently divorced from their immediate context (e.g. "Jews are good business people"). Episodic memory, he argues further, retains personal experiences and events as well as patterns abstracted from these experiences. These general situational models are the link between one's own retained experiences and the structures of the semantic memory mentioned above:

Such representations are the memory recording of the subjective experiences of people. The listener constructs a textual representation of a story in episodic memory. This representation allows the listener to reproduce, if necessary, what was told and also how it was told. The listener constructs a model of the story (situation model), richer than the discourses about them. They also feature previous experiences about the same or similar situations and will also embody instantiated information from general group schemata. (van Dijk 1984: 25).

In this way, staying with the example quoted above, one unfavorable experience of doing business with a Jewish merchant is turned into a situational model that states that "doing" business with Jews will always have negative results.

The third and final part of long-term memory that van Dijk designates is the control system. Its task is to link communicative aims and interests (e.g. persuasion) with the situational and individual social conditions (e.g., the level of education, gender, relationship to the person one is addressing) of an individual subject. Van Dijk calls the processes involved in the perception, interpretation, storage, use, or retrieval of ethnic information about minority groups and their actions strategies. The control system coordinates these various strategies and at the same time monitors the flow of information from long term memory to short term memory as well as the storage or activation of situation models in episodic memory.

One of the main strategies of this control system is to link a positive self- presentation-- i.e., one acceptable to society and signaling tolerance--with an existing negative attitude to foreigners. Positive self-presentations are expressed in phrases such as "Personally, I have nothing against Jews, but the neighbors say . . ." The interaction of these three memory systems thus influences both directly and indirectly the decoding and encoding-- taking place in the short-term memory--of the received and/or self-produced remarks about minorities. Van Dijk's model can thus explain the cognitive processes of the text recipients: isolated experiences, statements, symbols, etc., are assigned to general schemata and confirm existing prejudices.

In one study, van Dijk (1984, 1991b) analyzed prejudice stories which were elicited systematically at certain points in interviews with different groups of informants in Amsterdam and in the US. Often enough, these stories were introduced by disclaimers, which allowed the speaker to present herself or himself in a positive light. Such disclaimers included: (a) apparent denials ("I have nothing against Blacks, Turks, Jews, but . . ."); (b) apparent admission ("Of course there are also smart Blacks, Turks, Jews, but . . ."); (c) transfer ("I don't mind so much, but my neighbor, colleagues . . ."); (d) contrast ("We always had to work a lot, but they . . .").

Thus, the interview subject is able to project herself or himself as an absolutely tolerant person, who conforms to the explicit and implicit norms of the official policy and public morals in the Netherlands. The negative experience with a singular person or specific group is then embedded into the discourse and provides ostensible empirical evidence for the character of the defamed group as a whole. Van Dijk is able to show in a very thorough analysis of these stories that the narrative schema developed by Labov and Waletzky (1967) is followed, but with one notable exception. A resolution is often missing. Thus, the listener is left to draw her or his own conclusions. This "openness" is another profession of acceptance of the official norm and exempts the speaker from any personal responsibility. The speakers do not suggest that any measures be taken, they only relate a story. Such narratives cluster around a very small and precise number of topics. Immigrants threaten the population, they are criminal and their cultural traditions are alien.

As van Dijk recognizes, it cannot be assumed that the informants had given a frank and therefore accurate account of their own prejudices, since the interview situation introduces the unknown (and ultimately unknowable) variable of the interview subject's knowledge of, and unspoken obeisance to, the normative expectations of public discourse about immigrants in the Netherlands. Nonetheless, it is possible to infer from the discursive patterns exhibited during the interviews that the respondents were masking prejudices with semantic moves of the above-mentioned kind. Van Dijk does discuss possible restrictions and taboos which may be caused by the interview situation, but he comes to the conclusion that this may very well simulate a natural setting and may thus produce relatively authentic data. However, since he does not analyze any other comparative oral data from other settings or contexts, this claim can only be informed speculation.

Though van Dijk's model can account for a far wider range of discursive manifestations of prejudice than can Quasthoff's, at times his explicit cognitive approach does not seem to accord sufficient weight to the affective and socio-historical aspects of prejudiced discourse, either of which can influence the schematic categorization and perception of reality. Prejudice becomes comprehensible only within its social and historical as well as its linguistic context, and van Dijk's model could differentiate more in these areas. Yet the insights gained by van Dijk's use of the prejudice story are considerable. Our approach--which we have termed "discourse-historical" because it was first used in a study of anti-Jewish prejudice issuing from the discussion of Austrian presidential candidate Kurt Waldheim's wartime past--should thus be seen as an extension of van Dijk's socio-cognitive model. It attempts to incorporate historical-political and affective levels into the analysis of prejudice. By means of two examples of discourse containing prejudice stories, we would like to suggest the benefits of integrating a more systematic attention to both the broad and narrow contexts of prejudiced discourse.

### **Prejudice and Prejudice Stories: A Discourse-historical Approach**

The distinctive feature of the methodological approach we have termed discourse-historical is the attempt to integrate systematically all available background information into the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a text. The study in which and for which this approach was developed attempted to trace in detail the constitution of an antisemitic stereotyped image, or "*Feindbild*," as it emerged in public discourse during the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign of Kurt Waldheim.

Our study addressed the problem of "antisemitic language behavior" in contemporary Austria, in other words, linguistic manifestations of prejudices towards Jews. It is important to emphasize that "antisemitic language behavior" may, though it need not, imply explicitly held and/or articulated hostility towards Jews, but it does imply the cognitive presence of prejudicial assumptions about Jews as a group. For example, the slogan "Kill Jews" painted on the Sigmund Freud monument in Vienna clearly does contain an explicit, though anonymous, imperative call for the most hostile of actions against Jews. On the other hand, a Jewish joke, which can have various meanings, depending on the setting, the participants, the function of the utterance etc., also forms part of what we termed "antisemitic language behavior," but only in circumstances where the joke intentionally expresses negative anti-Jewish prejudices.

In our study of the Waldheim affair 1986 (Wodak et al. 1990), we ("we" in this context being the research team of six) were able to show that the context of the discourse does have a significant impact on the structure, function and content of prejudice stories. Even the choice of disclaimers--if they are used at all--is dependent on the context.

In our case, context had to be defined in various ways, due to the many layers of discourse which we analyzed. On the one hand, we made allowance for the official norms and taboos on antisemitic utterances in post-war Austrian political culture, i.e. one is not allowed to utter antisemitic utterances in public. On the other hand, we analyzed data from a very specific historical context, the Waldheim affair, in which elements of antisemitic prejudice surfaced in public discourse; and, because of the role played by the World Jewish Congress and the "outside world" in the disclosure of documents about Waldheim's past, certain antisemitic topics, such as that of "the world Jewish conspiracy" or the "tricky, dishonorable Jew," were more pronounced. And thirdly, we also included the analysis of the narrow context of each utterance, its setting, the participants, the audience etc.

The norms of Austrian political culture after 1945 enjoin the utterance of any overtly antisemitic remarks in public settings. Nobody may ever question the horror of the extermination of Jews, for example, and everybody tries to put some distance between Austria's and Germany's respective roles in the Second World War. In addition, everyone in our example attempted more forcefully to justify her or his own role during the Third Reich, or the role of the whole "Wehrmacht generation," even in those cases where speakers had not taken part themselves or where they belonged to the younger generation anyway. The discourse about the past is thus a justification discourse, which involves several macro-strategies. We would like to mention only two here which are important for our further analysis: the strategy of rendering harmless the past and the measures

taken against Jews and, secondly, the strategy of turning the tables, which means that the measures taken against Jews were somehow legitimate because Jews as such are blameworthy and the punishment meted out therefore condign.

**The "Hödl letter."** Our first example is taken from the Waldheim affair proper. (Mitten 1992a; Wodak 1991b,c; Wodak et al. 1990) One of the questions most intensely debated in 1986 and 1987 was the recommendation of the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations that Waldheim's name be placed on the U.S. government's so-called "watch list" of undesirable aliens, a move that would effectively bar him from entering the United States. After an initial deferral of the decision in 1986, then Attorney General Edwin Meese did eventually place Waldheim on the list in April 1987. The World Jewish Congress, whose president is Edgar Bronfman, had been a strong advocate of such a measure since March 1986. Carl Hödl, at that time deputy mayor of Linz and an enthusiastic supporter of Waldheim, wrote an open letter to Bronfman on 12 May 1987, which is full of religious anti-Jewish allusions. We reprint below the sections of the letter relevant to our point:

It is difficult for an Austrian not to employ a polite phrase in the salutation. In your case, my tongue would indeed balk. As an Austrian, a Christian and a trained lawyer, I must protest against your biased, unqualified and most infernal attacks on our President and thus on us Austrians.

[ . . . ]

You, my dear Mr. Bronfman, probably lived in a safe country during the Second World War, or perhaps had then just outgrown your diapers (nappies). Otherwise you would remember that millions of innocent civilians were senseless victims of bombings, especially in the German city of Dresden.

[ . . . ]

Thus your allegations are to be judged as [were] those of your co-religionists 2000 years ago. These allowed Jesus Christ to be condemned to death in a show trial, because he didn't conform to the thinking of the masters [*Herren*] of Jerusalem. And I should like to make another comparison. Just as then it was left to a Roman to pronounce the judgment, so now were you able to find the "culprit" in the American Department of Justice, which is [now] to place Dr. Waldheim on the Watch List.

[ . . . ]

I only hope that the members of your association will call you to account [for your actions, "which have damaged Jews in Austria, Germany, Hungary and God knows where else"]. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, is not our European conception. I leave it to you and your ilk to advocate this Talmudic tendency in the wider world. I can merely take note of this, but with the deepest horror and shock.

Hödl begins by immediately constructing two mutually exclusive groups: the Austrians, Christians and lawyers, and the Austrian President as opposed to Bronfman and his "ilk," i.e. the Jews. Hödl's demarcation--simultaneously normative and ethnic--is reflected in the "we discourse" he employs, and this in turn serves as the fundament for his anti-Jewish remarks. The use of "infernal" itself intimates the religious ambiance: Bronfman is associated with hell and the devil. Another, albeit indirect, religious motif may be inferred from Hödl's attempt to criticize Bronfman for having survived the war: Apart from implying that his avoiding the fate of the Jews in Europe somehow morally disqualifies any statement he might make against Waldheim, the non-sequitur introduced by Hödl contrasting Bronfman's ostensible secure living environment with the civilian victims of Dresden seems also designed to underline Bronfman's lack of proper "Christian" virtues like charity. Presumably uncertain as to Bronfman's age, Hödl complements this argument with one invalidating the post-war generation's right to render any verdict on the Nazi past. On a more explicitly religious note, Hödl recalls the traditional story of Christian salvation as an allegory explaining Bronfman's actions in the 1980s, with Waldheim as Jesus Christ, Edwin Meese as Pontius Pilate, and the World Jewish Congress, like their forebears thirsting for vengeance, urging on his crucifixion. In its current epistolary form, of course, Hödl's biblical morality play required an assumption of Jewish power which is far more modern, and which only makes sense as part of the conspiracy to "get" Waldheim and Austria.

All of the antisemitic stereotypes expressed by Hödl in his letter to Edgar Bronfman are ethnic or religious or both. It seems far better to us to designate them as such and to point to their origins and discursive functions, than to view them either as a terminological exception granted for an "historically special case of ethnicism" or as "racism" tout court. And can anyone seriously argue that Hödl's views are any less noxious for their not condemning the Jewish "race?"

**The election rally.** The second text we would like to discuss was recorded during an election rally of the FPÖ held on 11 November 1991. As mentioned above, the negative discourse on foreigners in Austria nowadays includes Poles, Rumanians, Turks, Serbs and Gypsies. Although Jews from Russia also immigrate to Austria, they are usually not mentioned in anti-foreigner speech. The populist right in Austria, represented by Jörg Haider's FPÖ, has gained much popularity and won many votes with its anti-foreigner propaganda, especially in districts where many workers live and which until recently regularly returned Socialist majorities.

At this rally, three people, two men and one woman, were standing together engaged in a discussion. They first exchanged bad experiences about foreigners of Turkish or formerly Yugoslav origin (*Tschushn*): because of the criminality of the Turks, the old mother of one of the speakers is too afraid even to walk alone in the park. Her son must accompany her (first story). Suddenly, the discourse switches to the subject of the Jews. This antisemitic phenomenon, which we term "Iudeus ex machina," is frequently encountered when a general scapegoat is needed. The coherence seems clear to all participants, and no explicit transition is felt to be needed. Then the discussion continues, again without

transition, about foreigners.

**The Stories.** E=Elderly male; Y=Younger male; F=Female

E: They chased my mom out of the park, they said this is a (Turkish park) and she can't go there any more. She's 86 and when the weather's nice I have to go with her to the park, see, if you want her to have any peace (. . .)

Y: Yeah, he inherited from his uncle, from a Jew, yeah, well, and where did the Jew come by it?

F: They work just like we do

Y: yeah, and you know what, hey, your Hillinger, yeah, you've also lived a long time yeah, you've lived a long time

E: (. . .) just like Hitler (. . .) with the Palestinians, understand?

Y: in this world you live in Vienna, just like the Jews, I've seen the Jews first hand, I've seen it first hand, it was like this,

E: they're no good

Y: but they used us again and again and I'll tell you something, I grew up in the country. This Jew came, we didn't have anything to eat, nothing to wear, my parents had to go into debt to buy clothes for me and food. This Jew came at harvest time (. . .) and took everything, in summer, and then we once again didn't have anything left to eat, that's the way he was, the way the Jew is, my dear lady well, I ask you now, I lived through it myself

F: well, I worked for Jews as a young girl

Y: I lived through it myself, didn't I boy, did they have it good? what I heard about what had happened to the Jews

F: (. . .) (. . .)

Y: I have a lot of friends and they told me that they used them again and again, too, used them again and again

F: (. . .)

Y: good, there was a good one, look, there are good and bad everywhere, but I can but, but

F: exactly (. . .) most Jews, they are

Y: but but there were in fact many bad ones and this Jew he he let them do that, didn't he? he didn't didn't

F: really honest (. . .)

Y: till it himself there and that (. . .) he skimmed it off from somewhere, didn't he? Well, then, you

F: they work hard

Y: the Jews? The Jew is a businessman, he doesn't work himself, he lets others work for him

F: well, all right, he just

E: the Jew has it here, my dear lady [pointing to his head]

F: (. . .) but today's young people don't want to work, either

E: listen, if I got 7000 schillings from the dole, I wouldn't go to work either--what do you think?--you see, they are right not to go to work (. . .)

A bike rider (. . .) on the sidewalk--yeah, really, one of them recently ran into me in the park, do you hear? (. . .) my wife and I were walking hand in hand--a Tschusch, a Tschusch, a Tschusch it was, do you hear? at 9:00 in the morning [laughter] like I'm walking through the park with Wally [his wife], do you hear? he rode down on his bike (. . .) rode between us. I got all dirty, my wife, my wife fell down, he fell down himself, that's the the children the Tschuschs

bike riders (. . .) bike riders (. . .)

The first story is short; it has neither an orientation nor a disclaimer, but starts immediately with the complication. Thus, the mother of the speaker, an old lady, was chased out of the park by "them." The perpetrators remain anonymous and vague. The resolution is clear, however: the mother cannot visit the park alone anymore, because it has become "Turkish." The beliefs implied, that Turks are criminal and violent, especially towards women, may be assumed as given for the other participants. The implication is equally obvious: the Austrians have to defend themselves. This stereotype implicitly claims that Turks are different and violent, but no biological relationship is assumed.

The second story begins with an orientation. One speaker mentions a rich Jew who seems to have inherited money. The first generalization which appears, "the Jew" (*der Jude*) is used as a predication. "The Jew" was common currency of all antisemitic propaganda,

and it is to this ideological tradition that this speaker clearly alludes. The topic is then explicated: Jews are rich, but come by their wealth by chance or guile rather than through work. The second speaker then posits a moral equivalence between the Jews and the Nazis: Hitler acted the same towards Jews as the Jews do towards the Palestinians. This serves to deny or justify any guilt antisemites might have been expected to feel.

The second introduction to the story is a generalization: Jews are no good. As in the previous example, the speaker feels no need to introduce any initial disclaimer. The complication, which follows, an apocryphal story about the village Jew, is very similar in structure and content to the first story. Again we find the victim-victimizer reversal: the Jew was responsible for the poverty of the farmers. A woman present tries to defend the Jews. She has had her own experience with these people, she claims, as she used to work for a Jewish family. But she is not able to persuade the two men, since they continue the antisemitic discourse, again--like in the previous story--drawing generalizations and general conclusions out of the empirical evidence of one example: Jews are exploiters and let other people work for them. Although there "are good and bad everywhere," as the disclaimer--the first introduced--suggests, the Jew is and remains a businessman. The speaker claims to have heard "what happened to the Jews," but even those left over are bad. The sentence itself is internally contradictory: since there are "good and bad everywhere," some good persons must be presumed to have survived, yet the use of the generic "the Jew" suggests that all Jews are bad. Often enough, such contradictions are not noticed, but are nonetheless typical for prejudiced discourse. No resolution is felt to be needed; the story ends with another generalization. Pointing to his head, the speaker says "The Jew has it here." The precise character of this statement is not entirely clear: he might have meant that Jews are innately intelligent, or that their intelligence is learned. Whether Jewish intelligence is genetically or culturally acquired is, however, less important than what it signifies for the speaker, namely, because Jews are intelligent, they do not have to work themselves. The attempted reply of the woman, that "they [do] work hard," was not even noticed. In this story, we thus find many ethnic stereotypes, and one arguably racist belief. This, however, is neither surprising nor analytically troubling, for it tends to reflect what has been termed the "syncretic" nature of antisemitic beliefs historically in Austrian political culture. (see Mitten 1993: 24-33)

The third story is short and starts with the complication. The speaker then expands the story, describes the setting in the park, and repeats the incident in more detail. The generalization at the end claims this one example to be typical of the "*Tschuschn*": they are reckless and do not care about other people. Many people dislike bicycle riders in public places, but here this dislike is associated with foreigners. Again, we must assume an ethnic stereotype of deviance and difference: no racist motif is mentioned or alluded to.

The story about the Jew possesses several functions related to its specific context: it is supposed to underline the bad experiences with foreigners in general (Jews apparently being strangers as well). Moreover, it serves as the premise for the generalizations that follow. It also establishes group solidarity for the two men who share the same opinions on more than one outgroup. Finally, this passage suggests that the prejudiced discourse

about foreigners has not displaced the antisemitic discourse during the Waldheim affair, but has only elaborated and augmented it. The general conclusion of this text could be: "real" Austrians are total victims: the foreigners are criminal, reckless or steal jobs. And even if you should have a job, you will be exploited by Jews.

### **Concluding remarks**

The foregoing examples illustrate a few of the theoretical and methodological achievements of discourse analysis of prejudice which we believe would be at risk if we replace our existing terminology with a generic category of racism (qualified or not). In our view, the basic category of prejudice ought not be abandoned. Distinctions between racist and ethnic prejudice (as well as between other forms as well) can and should be specified according to the inferable content of the prejudiced statement itself, the specific linguistic realization patterns in which the prejudices were expressed (explicit propositions, allusions, etc.), together with the discursive function the specific text may be said to have. Analyzing prejudices in the way indicated implies retaining distinctions between ethnic and racist prejudices as well as employing an exact context-oriented approach which attempts to collect as much historical, sociological, and political, etc. information about and from the context as possible, and which also takes into account the exact setting of the statement, the text type, the speaker, etc. None of this, it must be emphasized, circumscribes in any way one's ability, or one's desire, to combat racism anywhere in any form. However, we see no need, and can divine no purpose, in blunting the analytical implements we use to do so.

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