

Dossier:

International scholars and authors criticize Brian Klug as keynote speaker at the ZfA/EVZ/Jewish museum Berlin international conference on antisemitism, November 8–9, 2013:

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Statement by Clemens Heni:

Is Brian Klug Doing Justice?

Brian Klug is among the worst choices for a keynote speaker at an event dedicated to the question “What do we mean when we say ‘antisemitism’?” This is the title of the keynote lecture Klug is supposed to deliver in Berlin on November 8, 2013. He denies that there is a new antisemitism and he affirms anti-Israel positions. He rejects Israel’s right to exist and collaborates with German anti-Israel agitators and activists (like participants on the Mavi Marmara). For Klug, antisemitism does not exist in our mainstream world. For him, antisemitism only exists in marginal neo-Nazi groups or among people who promote obvious antisemitic conspiracy myths. Brian Klug is particularly eager to use his “Jewishness” to fight the Jewish state of Israel. No surprise, then, that he has many allies in Germany, on ships, in the ivory tower of academia, on the streets, in journals, among activists in foundations, and even at the so-called Jewish museum in Berlin.

On November 8–9, 2013, the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA) at Technical University in Berlin, the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility, and Future (EVZ) and the Jewish museum Berlin will hold an international conference in that museum, entitled “[Antisemitism in Europe Today: the Phenomena, the Conflicts](#).” There are several troubling speakers invited to that event, known for distorting and downplaying contemporary antisemitism, including historian David Feldman from the Pears Institute in London, known for its [kosher stamps for post- and anti-Zionism](#), and several German scholars like retired sociologist [Detlef Claussen who endorsed the historian Tony Judt and his anti-Israel ideology](#). In the following short introduction I will focus primarily [on the keynote speaker of that event: Brian Klug](#) from London.

Klug is already known as a public speaker in Berlin (although he does not speak German), e.g. thanks to invitations by a tiny and extreme anti-Israel group called AK Nahost (working group on the Middle East). This group is a radical left-wing pro-Palestinian action group. They are running several campaigns against Israel. They invited the co-founder of BDS, [Omar Barghouti](#) to address their left-wing, pro-Palestinian Berlin audience in 2007 and in 2013. Klug spoke there in 2009 and 2010. At the event in 2009 Klug said that “Zionism prevents Jews from having a normal conception of their life”. Klug’s allies from the AK Nahost frame

the security fence in Israel (which is in some regions a wall) as “[Apartheid wall](#).” This anti-semitic distortion of racist apartheid South Africa and anti-Israel attack is common among such extremist circles. Shockingly this agitation is again welcome in the Jewish museum Berlin (in 2012 this institution invited Judith Butler, who frames Israel as Apartheid) and now at the Berlin Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA).

Brian Klug is infamous for his article in *The Nation*, and the cover page of that journal in February, 2004, displaying a star of David and Klug’s title of his article “The Myth of the New Anti-Semitism.”¹ If someone argues that Jews have been killed in Israel by suicide bombers in recent years, and that synagogues in France have been attacked with fire bombs by Muslim youngsters and adults, Klug argues that these people did not kill and attack “Jews as Jews.” He and his followers are very serious about this ‘argument.’ They truly believe that killing Jews is not necessarily antisemitic, because Muslim extremists did not act against Jews as Jews. Instead these attacks are seen by Brian Klug and his fans as a ‘result of the conflict’ (Arab-Israeli conflict). Klug is in denial regarding the new antisemitism and the fact that Israel is seen by the new antisemites of our times as “a collective Jew.”

In October 2004, Brian Klug gave a lecture at the German-Israeli Working Group for Peace in the Middle East (DIAK) in Arnoldshain.² In it he equated hostility towards Jews with that toward Muslims and Arabs in Europe,³ despite all empirical facts. In fact, neo-Nazis joined forces with Arabs and Muslims to fight Israel at rallies in Europe. Germany in particular has a history of racism too, but this has nothing to do with antisemitism. Neo-Nazis killed Muslims in Germany in recent years not because they were seen as Muslims, but because they were seen as non-Germans or immigrants.

In his talk in 2004, Klug downplayed Arab and Muslim violence against Jews and Jewish institutions in Europe and said that it was not at all antisemitic, but simply understandable due to the Middle East conflict.⁴ This rationalization of the new antisemitism is widespread among scholars in Germany, too.

The title of this article refers to a book by Brian Klug from 2011: “Being Jewish and Doing Justice.”⁵ In fact, Klug seems to use his Jewishness to fight Zionist Jews, the Jewish state of Israel, and those who analyze and criticize the new antisemitism in a scholarly way.

Hostility towards Israel is not antisemitic in Klug’s view:

In short, the empirical evidence overwhelmingly supports the view that hostility towards Israel, at bottom, is not a new form of antisemitism; it is a function of a deep

¹ Brian Klug (2004): “The Myth of the New Anti-Semitism,” *The Nation*, February 2, 2004, online at <http://www.thenation.com/article/myth-new-anti-semitism#> (accessed October 27, 2013).

² Brian Klug (2005): “Is Europe a lost cause? The European debate on antisemitism and the Middle East conflict,” *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 2005, 46–59.

³ Klug 2005, 59.

⁴ Klug 2005, 58: “Such attacks, whatever the reason, cannot be tolerated in a civilized Europe. But when Moroccan or Algerian youths from the banlieues of Paris attack Jewish targets, this is not the return of an age-old hatred, a ‘mutation’ of the ‘virus’ of antisemitism.”

⁵ Brian Klug (2011): *Being Jewish and Doing Justice. Bringing Argument to Life*, London/Portland (OR): Vallentine Mitchell.

and bitter political conflict. The depth and bitterness of this conflict is sufficient to explain, for the most part, the strength and intensity of the polemic against the state, especially on the part of those who are directly impinged on by Israel's presence in the Middle East and by the expansion of Jewish settlements in the territories it has retained since the June 1967 war.⁶

Klug goes so far and denies any specificity of anti-Zionism and says that, if Israel were a Catholic state, a Christian state would be viewed as negatively as Israel is:

Suppose, for the sake of argument, it were Catholic, like the Crusader states that Europeans created in the Middle East in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and its name were, say, Christiania. Would Christiania be accepted into the bosom of the region more readily than Israel has been? I doubt it. Would the animosity felt towards Christiania be qualitatively different from, or significantly less than, the hostility actually directed at Israel? Again, I think not. Any differences would, I submit, be a matter of nuance.⁷

Klug wants to deny any connection between antisemitism and hatred of Israel.⁸ He states:

What, in that case, can Israel do? If it is true that the community of nations is, either covertly or openly, antisemitic, what steps can it take to solve its own problem? Apparently none. If Israel is basically the victim of persecution in an antisemitic world, then it bears no responsibility for the position in which it finds itself: the object of widespread condemnation. For antisemitism is a phenomenon for which Jews, neither collectively nor individually, can be held responsible. It is an *a priori* prejudice that revolves around a fiction, a figment of what Jews are like. It is in the nature of such a prejudice that it will always find facts that seem to corroborate its fiction. Nothing that the Jewish state does or refrains from doing could produce it or prevent it.⁹

Frequent slurs by Arab and Muslim agitators reveal the intrinsic antisemitic ideology of our times. Take S'ad al-Bawardi, writing in the Saudi daily newspaper Al-Jazirah in January 2009, as an example:

⁶ Brian Klug (2003): "The collective Jew: Israel and the new antisemitism," *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 2003, 117–138, 133. Deputy Director of the Fritz-Bauer-Institute in Frankfurt, [Werner Konitzer](#), follows Klug and promoted Klug's article, Werner Konitzer (2005): "Einige Überlegungen: Antisemitismus und Moral," *Mittelweg* 36, No. 2/2005, online at <http://www.hagalil.com/archiv/2005/05/moral.htm> (accessed October 27, 2013). [Leading German Cultural Studies](#) (and Gender Studies) professor at Humboldt University, [Christina von Braun](#) (currently touring in the US like at Yale), [known for comparing the bikini to the Hijab](#) and for downplaying of the [Islamist threat](#) and [ideology](#) and her cultural relativist portrayal of anti-female Islamist policies like the veiling of women, republished Klug's article in a German/English book: Christina von Braun/Eva-Maria Ziege (eds.) (2004): *Das 'bewegliche' Vorurteil. Aspekte des Internationalen Antisemitismus*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann.

⁷ Klug 2003, 133.

⁸ Brian Klug (2003a): "No, anti-Zionism is not anti-semitism. As an idea, a Jewish homeland was always controversial. As a reality, Israel still is - and it is not anti-Jewish to say so," December 3, 2003, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/dec/03/comment> (accessed October 26, 2013).

⁹ Klug 2003, 135.

“You were merciful, oh Hitler (...)
when I see around me
The cruel acts
Of the descendants of apes.
You were wise, oh Hitler
To rid the world
Of some of these wild pigs.”¹⁰

This antisemitic, Arab and pro-German/pro-Hitler slur goes on:

“Oh Hitler,
The descendants of apes
None are more cruel and horrifying than they are...
Their wars of destruction
Are worse than the ‘Holocaust.’
Destruction of the world is their motto,
And they are implementing it in practice
In Gaza, in the Golan and in Lebanon.
The descendants of apes are the cruelest creatures
That mankind has ever known.”¹¹

This is an example of today’s Muslim and Arab antisemitism. It is a core element of the new antisemitism.

Brian Klug denies that there is a new antisemitism. For him, “new antisemitism“ is a “myth.” Praising Hitler and fighting the *collective Jew*, Israel, though, is a new antisemitism, not known in the 19th century, for example.

There are other examples, like cartoons from the Arab press, which show that we are talking about antisemitism. In his classic research on Muslim antisemitism, *Muslim Antisemitism. A clear and present danger*, published 2002 by the American Jewish Committee, historian Robert Wistrich documented, for example, Muslim (and Arab) antisemitic cartoons. Take a cartoon from the Syrian paper Tishreen, which in April 1993 compared the list of crimes by Nazi Germany to those of Israel (Israel’s list is even longer); or take the Egyptian newspaper al-Gumhuria, May 1994, equating Nazis and Israelis (“Israel über alles”), or take the Palestinian al-Quds paper, defaming in May 2001 Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon as a child murderer (eating children), or take the Palestinian al-Dustour from March 1994, showing an Israeli giving “a gift for Mother’s Day,” a bottle with the “blood of a Palestinian child,” or a cartoon from Egypt’s al-Gumhuria from December 2001, displaying Sharon and Hitler and equating the swastika with the Star of David, and Sharon as Hitler’s successor.¹²

We know of Holocaust affirmation by German-Muslim (mostly German-Turkish) Facebook users at the end of the Mavi Marmara incident on May 31, 2010. Those Germans with Turkish background have nothing to do with the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Even if they had, Holo-

¹⁰ Quoted by Neil Kressel (2012): “*The Sons of Pigs and Apes*”. *Muslim Antisemitism and the Conspiracy of Silence*, Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 22.

¹¹ Quoted by Kressel 2012, 24.

¹² Robert S. Wistrich (2002): *Muslim Anti-Semitism. A Clear and Present Danger*, New York: The American Jewish Committee, 25–29.

caust affirmation is an extremely antisemitic statement and criminal under German law, by the way. Those Facebook users wrote their anti-Jewish slurs on their real accounts, including their real names and pictures (sometimes including pictures of their husband or wife, kids etc., too). [They celebrated Hitler and the Shoah and urged the world to finish Hitler’s job. I documented this hardcore anti-Jewish/antisemitic agitation on my website.](#) To ignore, obfuscate or downplay this kind of antisemitism and Holocaust affirmation, as Klug does, is remarkable.

Brian Klug knows the above-mentioned brochure by Wistrich and ignores its empirical examples and analysis intentionally because it does not fit his model of framing anti-Zionism as not antisemitic at all. Klug wants to reject the analysis that Jews are defamed and attacked today as the “collective Jew,” read: as Israeli.

Klug himself rejects Israel as a Jewish state and therefore needs to distort the ideological transformation from old-style antisemitism to the new antisemitism, with many of the same features, but including new features after the Shoah like the projection of German guilt onto the former victims, the Jews, the “collective Jew”, Israel: anti-Zionist antisemitism. Brian Klug wrote in 2011:

“It is time to end this preoccupation – if not obsession – with Israel’s ‘right to exist’. Israel should be treated like any other country. It has the rights that (all other things being equal) every existing state possesses. But no state is exempt from challenges to its constitutional arrangements, whether those challenges are made by its citizens or by others. This extends to the question of whether the state should break up or, conversely, enter into a union with another state.”¹³

This is from a chapter in Klug’s book “Being Jewish and Doing Justice,” from 2011.¹⁴ This chapter was [first published in German in an anti-Israel book co-edited by a left-wing anti-Israel activist from the party Die Linke, Hermann Dierkes](#), from the city of Duisburg.¹⁵ [Dierkes was listed among the Top Ten individuals making antisemitic slurs](#) by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in 2011. In April 2011 (and maybe before), the homepage of Dierkes’s party in Duisburg promoted a poster ([see screenshot: “Against apartheid – boycott Israel”](#)) and an antisemitic flyer that equated a swastika and a star of David. They claimed that the party was not responsible for these propaganda materials on their own homepage.

Before, in November 2009, Dierkes was criticized by the Central Council of Jews in Germany and the media for a statement he made during a Marxist conference in Berlin. [Dierkes said that it is “ridiculous” \(in German “läppisch”\) to emphasize Israel’s right to exist.](#) This is very much the same position as Klug’s. Klug’s article was published alongside with many anti-Israel pieces by authors like Norman Paech, another politician from the Party of the Left (Die Linke) and former Member of Parliament, who was on the Mavi Marmara terror ship in May

¹³ Klug 2011, 145.

¹⁴ The chapter is entitled “On Saying that Israel has a Right to Exist,” in: Klug 2011, 136–146.

¹⁵ Brian Klug (2010): „Was es bedeutet zu sagen, Israel habe ein Existenzrecht,“ in: Sophia Deeg/Hermann Dierkes (eds.): *Bedingungslos für Israel? Positionen und Aktionen jenseits deutscher Befindlichkeiten*, Cologne/Karlsruhe: Neuer ISP Verlag, 63–74.

2010.¹⁶ In the book, the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) movement is promoted as well, for example in an article by activist Martin Forberg.¹⁷

In 2007, Brian Klug, Jacqueline Rose, and others created the “Independent Jewish Voices” (IJV) in the UK. In 2008 they edited a book promoting this tiny circle of anti-Israel Jews. In the book they thank Jonathan Judaken for his support (among others).¹⁸ Judaken, though, is also known for his endorsement of post- and anti-Zionism. He is an ally of David Feldman and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum in the so-called International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism.

Like Judaken and the other scholars involved, Klug ignores genocidal threats from Iran or does them not take seriously. He also ignores the entire history of Arab and Muslim antisemitism in recent decades. Ignoring this very specific environment Israel is facing simply endangers Jews.

Klug does not even deal accurately with the Middle East when it comes to ethnicity. Otherwise he would have found that Israel is among the very few non-homogenous states in the region (the other one is Lebanon with a mixed Christian and Muslim population, and Egypt with a substantial Christian minority). All other Arab countries, like Morocco, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, are extremely homogenous states, as is the Palestinian Authority.

It is a scandal that a speaker like Brian Klug, who is an ally of internationally criticized German anti-Israel agitators and activists on the Mavi Marmara like Hermann Dierkes or Norman Paech, respectively, is invited to give the keynote lecture at an event in the Jewish museum Berlin organized by the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA) and the EVZ Foundation. Brian Klug is not doing justice. He uses his Jewishness to endanger other Jews in Israel and elsewhere who are not in denial about Islamist, left-wing, neo-Nazi and mainstream new antisemitism.

Former MP in Canada, lawyer and author Richard Marceau (a “pro-Palestinian Zionist”) puts it like this:

There are differences of opinion in the Jewish world regarding Israel’s future, its relationship with its Palestinian neighbors, and what kind of society Israel should strive to be. But there is immense consensus regarding the right of the Jewish people to have an independent state in our ancestral land in the Middle East.

Anybody who identifies as anti-Zionist, even if one professes to be Jewish, cannot be considered anything other than a representative of a very marginal group in the Jew-

¹⁶ Norman Paech und Kerstin Seifer (2010): „Israel und Palästina – die aktuelle Lage aus völkerrechtlicher Perspektive,“ in: Deeg/Dierkes (eds.), 129–144; Norman Paech (2010a): „Bericht von einer Reise nach Palästina und Israel vom 3. bis 10. Oktober 2009,“ in: Deeg/Dierkes (eds.), 152–162.

¹⁷ Martin Forberg (2010): „Überlegungen zu BDS in Deutschland,“ in: Deeg/Dierkes (eds.), 181–183.

¹⁸ Anne Karpf/Brian Klug/Jacqueline Rose/Barbara Rosenbaum (eds.) (2008): *A Time to Speak out. Independent Jewish Voices on Israel, Zionism and Jewish Identity*, London/New York: Verso, no pagination (Acknowledgements).

ish world. That these people could also lay any claim to courage – an eminently Jewish trait exemplified by those who defended our people in history’s darkest hours – speaks only to their capacity for self-delusion.¹⁹

I think I am not alone in stating that Brian Klug is out of touch with reality and that he ignores today’s antisemitism and frames it as a simple result of a “conflict.” This approach is unscholarly in nature and unworthy of a *keynote speaker* at a major event dedicated to the analysis – not trivialization or affirmation – of the new antisemitism.

Non-Jewish anti-Zionists, though, *depend* on Jewish anti-Zionists to do the ‘dirty job’ of defaming the Jewish state. Ignoring the Iranian threat in particular and Islamist antisemitism in general, while inviting anti-Israel Jews and endorsing cosmopolitan anti-Zionism, speaks volumes for the current trend in research on antisemitism in Germany at the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA).

* * *



Prof. Dr. [Gerald Steinberg](#) is Professor of Political Studies, Bar Ilan University, and founded the Program on Conflict Management and Negotiation. He is also the Founder/President of NGO Monitor, a Jerusalem based Public Affairs Institute. His research focuses on the changing nature of power in international relations, as reflected in the Middle East diplomacy and security, the politics of human rights and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Israeli politics and arms control.

Statement by Gerald Steinberg:

Brian Klug is an immoral anti-Zionist who seeks to deny the Jewish people sovereign equality and the right to self-determination. His history as a leading campaigner exploiting his Jewish heritage to support political warfare against the Jewish nation-state speaks for itself. Organizations that give Klug a platform, including the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA) at Technical University Berlin, the Jewish museum Berlin and the EVZ Foundation, are also acting immorally and not for the first time. Instead of learning from history, these German institutions have shamefully allowed themselves to contribute to the spread of hatred and modern antisemitism in the form of anti-Zionism, while abusing the memory of the Holocaust.”

* * *

¹⁹ Richard Marceau (2012): „The Real Nature of Jewish anti-Zionists,“ Jerusalem Post, August 27, 2012, <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/The-real-nature-of-Jewish-anti-Zionists> (accessed October 26, 2013).

<http://bicsa.org/wp-content/uploads/BICSA-International-scholars-criticize-Brian-Klug-ZfA-EVZ-Jewish-museum-Berlin-Nov-2013.pdf> (online since October 30, 2013)



Isi Leibler is a veteran international Jewish leader with a distinguished record of contributions to the Jewish world and the cause of human rights. Born in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1934, Leibler was brought to Australia by his parents as an infant just before the outbreak of World War II. Described in the new edition of Encyclopaedia Judaica as “unquestionably the dominant Jewish lay leader in Australia during the previous quarter century”, Leibler occupied the leadership of the Australian Jewish community (Executive Council of Australian Jewry) from 1978 and served four terms in this office, retiring in 1995. Following the liberation of Soviet Jewry, Leibler focused his attention on the Asia-Pacific region. His meetings with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen were recognised as major contributions towards accelerating the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and both countries. Leibler occupied senior roles in the World Jewish Congress, the umbrella organisation representing global Jewry, including Chairman of the Governing Board and Senior Vice President. Leibler writes prolifically and is a weekly columnist to the Jerusalem Post enjoying a vast following throughout the world on the internet. He is also a regular columnist for Israel Hayom, the Israeli daily newspaper. Leibler was one of the first to warn of the dangers of religious extremism, in particular radical religious nationalism. He has written extensively on this subject and his works have been translated into Hebrew, Russian, French and Spanish.

Statement by Isi Leibler:

The so-called Berlin Jewish museum has an appalling record of inviting guest speakers – often of Jewish origin – to promote an anti-Israeli agenda that in terms of the OSCE would unquestionably be defined as anti-Semitic. Many of these even sink to the level of Holocaust inversion.

To invite Brian Klug to be a keynote speaker on the 75th anniversary of Kristallnacht is unconscionable and consistent with the behavior of this organization [Center for Research on Antisemitism, ZfA] which has the gall to present itself as a research center on anti-Semitism.

* * *



Dr. Günther Jikeli earned his PhD at the Centre for Research on Antisemitism, Technical University Berlin. He is co-director of the International Institute for Education and Research on Antisemitism and affiliated with the Moses Mendelssohn Center, Potsdam University, and the Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités / CNRS, Paris. From 2011 to 2012, he was OSCE/ODIHR Adviser on Combating Antisemitism. He recently published (with Joelle Allouche-Benayoun) (eds.) “Perceptions of the Holocaust in Europe and Muslim Communities” (Springer Science 2013). Asked by BICSA if he would like to comment on Brian Klug, Jikeli sent us the following paragraph from his doctoral dissertation, published as the book, Antisemitismus und Diskriminierungswahrnehmungen junger Muslime in

Europa (Essen: Klartext, 2012), 43.

Statement by Günther Jikeli:

John Bunzl and Brian Klug see attacks against Jewish individuals and property by “alienated Moroccan and Algerian youths in the banlieues of Paris” as “an ethno-religious conflict between two communities with opposed identifications: roughly, French Muslims with Palestinian Arabs versus French Jews with Israeli Jews.”²⁰ For the French context,

20 Brian Klug, “Anti-Semitism – New or Old?,” The Nation, April 12, 2004,

<http://bicsa.org/wp-content/uploads/BICSA-International-scholars-criticize-Brian-Klug-ZfA-EVZ-Jewish-museum-Berlin-Nov-2013.pdf>
(online since October 30, 2013)

however, Michel Wieviorka's study disproves the thesis that antisemitism among young Muslims is based around an ethnic conflict.²¹ Klug further interprets anti-Jewish attacks by “young Muslim immigrants” as “political outrage, not bigotry” and explicitly not antisemitic. He suggests that these attacks are motivated by anti-Zionism and believes that “it is closer to the truth to say that anti-Zionism today takes the form of anti-Semitism rather than the other way round.”²²

* * *



[Lt. Col. \(res.\) Dr. Mordechai Kedar](#), The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Affairs, Israel; Ph.D. Bar-Ilan University, served for 25 years in IDF military intelligence specializing in Syria, Arab political discourse, Arab mass media, Islamic groups, and Israeli Arabs. An expert on the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups, he also maintains [a blog in English](#).

Statement by Mordechai Kedar:

Nobody denies the right of the French nation to have its own nation-state and to defend it, after all French people exist as a nation. Similarly, nobody denies the right of the Chinese nation to have its own nation-state and to defend it, since Chinese are also an existing nation. So is the right of any nation all over the world, to have its own nation-state, to take good care of its security, to deter its enemies and to fight them if needed. The situation with the Jews is different: there are many who deny the right of the Jewish nation – one of the oldest nations all over the world, if not THE oldest existing nation – to have its own state and to defend it. This denial of a natural right which every other nation has stems from denial of the mere existence of the Jewish nation, which is the result of the denial of the Jewish nation's RIGHT to exist. Therefore, the denial of the right of the Jews to have a state and to defend it like any other nation stems implicitly from the denial of the right of the Jews to exist. This is the core standpoint of anyone who supports anti-Jewish attitudes. Unfortunately there are some Jews – take Brian Klug as an example – who adopt this antisemitic standpoint, but cover it by opposing Israeli policies and actions aiming at the preservation of the Jews to have their own safe state. These “court Jews” appear as an “other voice” within the Jewish community, in order to be acceptable to Jew-haters as respectable people, by deny-

<http://www.thenation.com/article/anti-semitism-new-or-old#>. John Bunzl cites this quote approvingly in John Bunzl, “Spiegelbilder – Wahrnehmung und Interesse im Israel-Palästina-Konflikt,” in *Zwischen Antisemitismus und Islamophobie: Vorurteile und Projektionen in Europa und Nahost*, ed. John Bunzl and Alexandra Senfft (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 2008), 141.

21 Wieviorka even dedicated a chapter to the issue with the telling title “Antisemitism [almost] without Jews.” Michel Wieviorka, *La tentation antisémite □ : haine des Juifs dans la France d’aujourd’hui* (Paris: Laffont, 2005), 143–158. The book has been translated into English. Michel Wieviorka, *The Lure of Anti-Semitism: Hatred of Jews in Present-Day France*, trans. Kristin Couper Lobel and Anna Declerck (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

22 Brian Klug, “The Myth of the New Anti-Semitism,” *The Nation*, February 2, 2004, <http://www.thenation.com/article/myth-new-anti-semitism>.

ing their own nation's right to have its own nation-state and to defend it. Organizations such as "Independent Jewish Voice" are exactly this. They are independent from the opinions of the Jewish establishment, but they are at all not independent from the influence of anti-Jewish discourse, after they submitted to this discourse and adopted its negative attitude to the Jewish nation and its nation-state. Therefore, having a prominent member of such an organization speak at a conference about antisemitism is like having a convicted rapist speak at a conference about women's rights.

* * *



[Ben Cohen](#) is a New York-based writer who publishes extensively on Jewish and international affairs. Publications he writes for include the *Wall Street Journal*, *Tablet Magazine* and *Haaretz*. His essay on contemporary anti-Semitism, "The Big Lie Returns," was the cover story of *Commentary* magazine's February 2012 edition.

Statement by Ben Cohen:

I want to state at the outset that I do not object to the invitation to Brian Klug to address this conference. What I do find manifestly objectionable is that Klug will have a privileged platform to express his views on the definition of anti-Semitism in a prestigious setting that will doubtless give his words extra, and likely undeserved, gravitas.

When it comes to scholarly work on contemporary anti-Semitism, Brian Klug has made it his mission to immunize anti-Zionists from the charge of anti-Semitism, a classic example of making a case *after* one has reached a conclusion.

This intellectual dishonesty necessarily closes off avenues of inquiry. It prevents us, for example, from critically examining the legacy of Soviet-era, state-sponsored anti-Semitism — which dressed itself in the language of "progressive" anti-Zionism — for leftist anti-Semitism in the west today. It cajoles us into closing our eyes to the obvious; for example, were the left-wing terrorists (and Klug's audience should be reminded that these were *German* left-wing terrorists) who hijacked an Air France plane from Tel Aviv in 1976, and who then separated the Jewish from the non-Jewish passengers at Entebbe airport in Uganda, anti-Semites or anti-Zionists? If our first concern in addressing a question like this is to protect the reputations of those who call themselves anti-Zionists today, then we are engaged in a propaganda exercise, and nothing more.

At a time when openly Nazi parties are agitating in Hungary and Greece, when the precious religious rituals of both Jews and Muslims are being attacked in the name of human rights by European political parties and institutions, and when much of the European media persists in portraying Israel as a rogue state as Bashar al Assad, next door in Syria, unleashes chemical weapons on his own population, academics should be candidly asking what it is that they've got so badly wrong for more than a decade. Trotting out the same tired platitudes in defense of anti-Zionism displays a dogmatism that is unworthy of a serious conference like this one.

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Dr. Denis MacShane is a British politician who served as a Labour MP for two decades and was UK Minister for Europe and Deputy Foreign Secretary under Tony Blair. He was also UK delegate to the Council of Europe. In 2005 he set up and chair the House of Commons All Party Parliamentary Group on Anti-Semitism which reported on the growth of anti-Semitism in Britain. Many of its recommendations were accepted by the UK government and are still in operation today. In 2008 MacShane published “Global Hatred: the New Antisemitism” (Weidenfeld and Nicolson) which was widely praised. He has continued to write on antisemitism in addition to his work as a writer and commentator on European politics. His articles appear in Le Monde, Die Welt, Financial Times, El Pais and Haaretz as well as web journals like Slate.fr and The Globalist. He has an MA from Oxford University and a PhD from London

University and has written several books including a biography of Francois Mitterrand and a study of the cold war and trade unions.

Statement by Denis MacShane:

Brian Klug – a Very English Intellectual

England has the most provincial intellectual class in Europe. Very few professors (unless they are foreign language teachers or specialists in say French or Italian history) will speak and read a foreign language fluently. They do not pick up Le Monde, Der Spiegel or El Pais and wait, sometime for years, for a translation of a key work published in a European language to appear in London. Massive books are being published righty now on World War One without any of the writers citing a single French or German source unless it is in translation.

On the foundation of Israel, few English intellectuals appear to have heard of the Cambon declaration which preceded the Balfour declaration by several months and committed France to recognizing and supporting a homeland for the Jewish people on the east Mediterranean shoreline close to Jerusalem which had been a Jewish city for millennia. Of course the fact of the mandate going to Britain made the Balfour declaration more important but one could read 100 or 1000 accounts of the creation of Israel without ever knowing that France was as supportive as Britain of the rights of Jews to create a homeland and state. But that requires some knowledge of French and some interest in history beyond England.

The argument that concerns over anti-semitism which can be read daily in obnoxious tweets or with sly references to Jews controlling the media or world capitalism are somehow artificial and invented only to support the policies of the current Israeli government is a peculiar English obsession, a hobby-horse of marginal intellectuals like Brian Klug.

Klug will be the keynote speaker at a Berlin conference on antisemitism on November 8–9, 2013 at the Jewish museum Berlin. Isn't there a relation between Klug's denial of the “new antisemitism” since 2000 and the increasing antisemitic rewriting of history? Isn't it dangerous both for Israel and remembrance of the Holocaust, to downplay or even deny currents of antisemitism?

Provincial England which never suffered Nazi rule and where communism was more a dinner party discussion for Hampstead intellectuals or a power struggle for control of some trade

<http://bicsa.org/wp-content/uploads/BICSA-International-scholars-criticize-Brian-Klug-ZfA-EVZ-Jewish-museum-Berlin-Nov-2013.pdf>
(online since October 30, 2013)

unions has never shown much interest in the double-genocide thesis. But it is England, rather than most other European countries, where there is the most vehement denial that contemporary anti-Semitism exists and has been refreshed by being adopted as a leitmotif of Islamist ideology. The centrality of Jew-hate in the Hamas Charter or the obiter dicta of the main Sunni theologian and preacher Sheik Qaradawi are well known.

But as the Guardian journalist Jonathan Freedland has written anti-semitism in modern English discourse is coded and diffuse. As he writes: ‘Unless antisemitism comes dressed in an SS uniform and doing a Hitler salute, we are regularly thrown into confusion. Suddenly we are in the seminar room, calling on experts to tell us whether or not this or that sentence was anti-Jewish, the debate usually ending without clear resolution. To add to the complexity, very often Jews disagree among themselves, with just as many willing to give the disputed word or deed a free pass as to condemn it.’

On the whole the liberal Jewish intelligentsia in England steer away from denouncing anti-Semitism unless a line is crossed.

In their place come people like Brian Klug who make a profession of rubbishing concerns about anti-semitism as just a cover for uncritical support for Israel. To be sure there are Israel loyalists who denounce as anti-semitic any questioning of Israeli state policy in relation to land occupied since 1967 and to the discriminatory treatment of others living under Israeli control. There is the invention of the ugly trope – the ‘self-hating Jew’ – to condemn any Jew who does not uncritically support what the current rightist government in Israel does. But the more worrying category consists surely of the deniers that new anti-semitism exists today. As a non-Jew I wrote a book in 2008 called ‘Globalising Hatred: the new Anti-semitism.’ (Weidenfeld and Nicolson). It was a follow up to work undertaken by a Committee of Inquiry into Antisemitism set up by the British House of Commons which I chaired after standing down as deputy Foreign Secretary in 2005.

Both my book and the parliamentary inquiry revealed example of modern anti-semitism in Britain which should be a cause for concern. Certainly the British government thought so as ministers adopted and today still apply many of the committee’s recommendations aimed at exposing and tackling modern anti-semitism. Predictably the book was attacked by Brian Klug as a leading new anti-semitism denier. Klug equated my analysis and criticism of anti-semitism to the anti-semitic ideology.

He, like others, is also obsessed with the European Union’s concerns about anti-semitism. The EU’s Monitoring Committee (EUMC) working definition of anti-semitism elaborated in 2005 has rightly won praise as a major, scholarly and balanced effort to put into words what 21st century anti-Semitism consists of. It has been the object of a sustained attack by ideologies, notably Islamist, but also from anti-Israel leftists who want to expunge from contemporary politics the concept that anti-Semitism still exists. The Council of Europe has said that one-sided criticism of Israel can be considered anti-Semitic and the attacks on young Jewish students on campuses if they show any affinity or support for Israel are a matter of record.

Apparently it is acceptable to express any degree of solidarity with Palestinians without questioning aspects of Hamas ideology, corruption, or the record of nearby supportive Wahabi

states on human rights, democracy or freedom of expression but it is unacceptable to argue that Israel has a right to exist and that the Jewish people of Israel have many achievements to their name of which they can be proud, not the least sustaining classic liberal freedoms of expression, scientific inquiry and democratic changes of rulers.

Klug is of course entitled to his views but his obsession with anti-semitism denial weakens and distorts the current English discussion of anti-Semitism. Instead of a mature discussion about today's European anti-semitism – for example an examination of how far it is has been expunged from the Front National in France or its place in extreme parties like Jobbik in Hungary – endless time is wasted on whether accusations of anti-semitism are invented by Israel to divert attention from its policies. The English Jewish community tends to caution and to avoid confrontation or differences with the English establishment. Anyone who is cast aside by the English establishment is automatically declared persona non grata by the Jewish establishment. Those the paradox arises that the non-Jewish friends of Jews are pushed to one side while Jewish deniers of new anti-semitism like Klug are given a free run. That is the price paid for provincialism and the inability of English intellectuals to think and argue in universal categories and their pleasure of substituting pre-1939 dislike of Jews by modern dislike of Israel. In that sense Klug is a very English intellectual.

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Prof. Dr. [Neil Kressel](#), professor of psychology at William Paterson University, Wayne, NJ. He has been Director of the Honors Program in the Social Sciences there since 2004.

Asked by BICSA what he would say vis-à-vis Brian Klug and the ZfA/EVZ/Jewish museum Berlin international conference, Prof. Kressel told us to take a paragraph from his new book, Neil Kressel (2012): “The Sons of Pigs and Apes”. Muslim Antisemitism and the Conspiracy of Silence, Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 79.

Statement by Neil Kressel:

British writer and Oxford professor Brian Klug's attitudes toward Jew-hatred resemble those of Judith Butler. Declaring himself an unbending opponent of old-style antisemitism, Klug denounces the 'new antisemitism' as a myth. Rather than seeing real bigotry in the demonization and delegitimization of Israel, he, like Butler, detects partisan political tactics consciously to deflect criticism from Israel. In a 2004 article, Klug quoted Ludwig Wittgenstein: 'Say what you choose, so long as it does not prevent you from seeing the facts.' Yet Klug's primary concern – anti-Israel politics – apparently hinders his ability to gauge the intensity of old-style Jew-hatred in the Muslim and Arab world. If Klug does see the facts here, he either ignores them, mentions them as an insignificant part of 'the mix' of what is going on, or mischaracterizes them as equivalent in scope, intensity, religious origin, and consequence to Jewish racism against Arabs. In his reality, 'there has been 'a continuum of prejudice' against Jews in the history of anti-Semitism. But this is a European, not Middle Eastern, history.' Ignoring evidence of virulent antisemitism in the contemporary Muslim

world as well as questionable treatment of Jews in traditional Muslim religious source material, he has written about those who call attention to global attacks on Jews (whether from Muslim or other sources):

‘There is no such war. It is, in fact, a much a figment of the imagination as its mirror image: a Jewish conspiracy against the world.’

In other words, those who focus on Jew-hatred in the Muslim and Arab world are as deceived as those who believe in the core argument of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

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Sam Westrop is a Senior Fellow of the Gatestone Institute and Director of Stand for Peace, a counter-extremism organisation based in London. He appears regularly on television and radio.

Statement by Sam Westrop:

The University College Union (UCU) is Britain’s largest trade union for academics and faculty staff. In 2009, the Union invited Bongani Masuku to address its conference just days after the South African Human Rights Commission had found Masuku guilty of hate speech against the South African Jewish community.

John Mann MP has recounted how the UCU refused, in 2006, to accept the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism, and that he had been “gobsmacked” when union representatives refused to discuss anti-Semitism during a meeting in Parliament.

For all those concerned with increasing levels of anti-Semitism, the UCU is a key example of an organisation that enables anti-Semitism under the guise of progressive causes. Over the past several years, the UCU has supported the boycott of Israeli businesses. Their self-proclaimed ‘progressiveness’ is thinly veiled.

This familiar attempt to distort – or perhaps, negate – the issue of modern anti-Semitism is also found in the writings of Brian Klug, an Oxford academic who claims ‘new antisemitism’ does not exist, anti-Zionism is not anti-Semitism and that those who equate the two only weaken the ‘actual’ problem of the latter.

It is hardly surprising, then, that Brian Klug’s thoughts on the nature of anti-Semitism can be found quoted within a UCU publication discussing the dangers of anti-Semitism.

British academia often expresses its tolerance for the intolerant. Orwell famously quipped that, “Only an intellectual could say something so stupid.” But the explanation of anti-Semitism, as

explained by Klug, is not mere hypocrisy; it is a considered attempt to sanitize the darker side of the anti-Zionist movement and to paint liberal defenders of the Jewish state as hysterical peddlers of hyperbole.

Klug is no objective academic; he is an agitator with a political agenda. In 2007, he helped establish Independent Jewish Voices, an international group that promotes anti-Zionist sentiment. In 2009, Independent Jewish Voices sponsored the ten-minute play ‘Seven Jewish Children’ by Caryl Churchill, in which Jews discuss how to use the Holocaust as justification for their wanton murder of Palestinians, an act in which they revel.

One of the key arguments advocated by Klug is that Zionism is most offensive to the Jewish people themselves. In 2006, Klug argued, during a debate at the Cambridge Union, that “Zionism must be toppled from its pedestal” and that the “Jewish thing” to do is to “subvert it.” Writing in the Guardian for the launch of Independent Jewish Voices, Klug decreed that, “No one has the authority to speak for the Jewish people.” And yet Klug, in proclaiming Zionism as the antipathy to Judaism, claimed that very privilege.

Klug’s condemns Zionism for the supposed privileges it affords Jews above all others. In truth, this complaint is almost identical to accusations by the far-Right British National Party that groups such as the National Black Police Association are discriminatory against whites. Such logic sits uncomfortably with genuine anti-racist campaigners.

Klug’s selective moral outrage is accepted by a few because all of his arguments are predicated on the tired fallacy that Zionism is inherently wicked. Meanwhile, Klug proclaims a dedication to fighting classical anti-Semitism – that is, as Klug writes, “the negative stereotype of ‘the Jew’: sinister, cunning, parasitic, money-grubbing, mysteriously powerful.” Such statements afford Klug credibility as a ‘moral’ voice and distract from his unpleasant anti-Zionism.

Klug does admit that anti-Zionists can, on occasion, be anti-Semitic: “There is a long and ignoble history of “Zionist” being used as a code word for ‘Jew’.” He adds, however, that “Anti-Zionism is one thing, anti-Semitism another. They are separate. To say they are separate is not to say that they are never connected.”

In order to justify this reasoning, Klug restricts anti-Semitism to the image of the money-grubbing Jew and defines Zionism as a perversion of Judaism rather than a fulfillment.

Klug’s narrative – his welter of ideas – is not the result of genuine outrage or flawed logic; it is the product of political dogma -- based on the single fallacy of Zionism as an iniquitous ideology. Klug is not able to conclude logically that anti-Semitism is no *more* than the crude caricature of the money-grubbing Jew; he has, instead, lobbied hard to make the definition so. Klug has ‘academicised’ the anti-Zionist narrative. He is guilty of a very particular form of bigotry: defining both prejudice and victimhood solely to fit his own political agenda.

If institutions such as the Center for Research on Antisemitism invite Klug to address their conferences, they risk further legitimising Klug and his agenda as an authority on the question of modern anti-Semitism and so diminish the threat of anti-Jewish sentiment expressed, unchecked, through the global network of anti-Zionist movements.

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Jörg Rensmann is a Berlin based political scientist, representative and co-founder of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME)/German Chapter. He is the author of a brochure on "[The Nakba Myth. Facts about the Founding of Israel](#)," written on behalf of the German-Israel Friendship Society (Deutsch-Israelische Gemeinschaft, DIG, AG Stuttgart/Mittlerer Neckar). He is a frequent speaker on antisemitism, the Iranian threat, German and international anti-Zionist antisemitism, the Holocaust and Holocaust remembrance, and related topics.

Statement by Jörg Rensmann:

The invitation to the anti-Zionist Brian Klug to address a conference organized by the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA) documents the increasing tendency in Germany to give anti-Zionist motivated delegitimization of the sovereign Jewish state more and more space, both on a cultural and academic level. This corresponds with a majority in Germany that holds Israel responsible for all evil in the Middle East. A big part of German society truly believes that “Israel is waging a war of extermination against the Palestinians.” Results of a recent study on how German high-school textbooks portray Israel and Israeli history are to such an extent alarming, that teachers are urging responsible offices to take action. Despite well known facts, Israeli history is distorted and presented wrongly; this has devastating consequences for young, curious pupils, who’d love to inform themselves instead of being presented with an obfuscated reality.

Anti-Zionism is tolerated, to say the least. German civil society was unable to develop effective counter strategies towards antisemitism among immigrant societies. So far, we lack any serious concepts. Instead, antisemitic motivated anti-Zionism is often being rationalized and sympathetically legitimized at conferences and programs by actors of civil society.

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*Efraim Karsh is Professor of Middle East and Mediterranean Studies at King's College London and Professor of Political Studies at Bar-Ilan University, where he is also a Senior Research Associate at the BESA Center for Strategic Studies. He is editor of the [Middle East Quarterly](#) and [Israel Affairs](#) academic journals, and the author of over 100 scholarly articles and fifteen books, including *Palestine Betrayed* (Yale, 2010); *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (Yale, 2006); *Arafat's War: The Man and his Battle for Israeli Conquest* (Grove, 2003); *Empires of the Sand: The Struggle for Mastery in the Middle East 1798-1923* (Harvard, 1999); *Fabricating Israeli History: The "New Historians"* (Routledge, 1997); *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991* (Princeton, 1993); and *Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography* (The Free Press, 1991).*

Statement by Efraim Karsh:

In 2005 the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) adopted a groundbreaking definition of anti-Semitism decrying the denial of the Jewish right to self-determination, and the demonization of the state of Israel and its citizens, as a quintessential manifestation of this longest hatred. It is mind boggling, therefore, that a Jewish-German institution would offer a foremost proponent of this vile credo a platform to spawn his venom, and on Kristallnacht's 75th anniversary of all dates!

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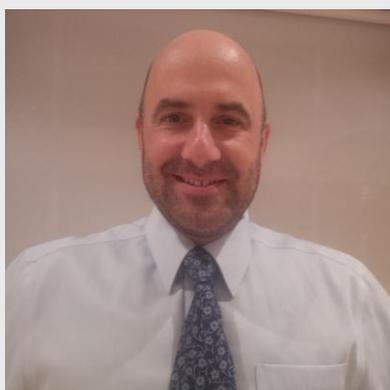


Jonathan Hoffman is Co-Chair Advocacy for the UK Zionist Federation and serves on the Defence Division of the board of Deputies of British Jews. He is an active campaigner against antisemitism. He has written [a paper about antisemitism on the Comment is Free blog of the Guardian](#) and his [exposure](#) of the summing-up of Judge Bathurst-Norman in the EDO case in 2010 was instrumental in the censoring of Bathurst-Norman by the legal authorities.

Statement by Jonathan Hoffman:

Brian Klug is entirely unsuitable as a speaker for a Conference on antisemitism. For example in a debate hosted at Cambridge Union in 2006, Klug supported the motion “This House Believes that Zionism is a danger to the Jewish people” alongside fellow anti-Zionists [Daphna Baram](#) and [Richard Kuper](#). As [reported](#) by [Ben White](#), Klug stated that it was high time that “Zionism must be toppled from its pedestal” – the “Jewish thing” to do is to “subvert” it.

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Richard Millett is a British political journalist and commentator appearing on tv and radio including Israel's Channel 2 for a documentary about anti-Semitism. Has written numerous pieces for the Jewish Chronicle and the Jewish News and was responsible for footage which effected British Parliamentarian Jenny Tonge's removal from the Liberal Democrats. He blogs at [richardmillett.wordpress.com](#).

Statement by Richard Millett:

It is a surprise to find an anti-Zionist activist as a keynote speaker on anti-Semitism. The rhetoric used against Israel very often crosses the line into anti-Semitism and, sadly, many anti-Zionists are more concerned with attacking Israel than attacking those that use anti-Semitic rhetoric or those who align themselves with those that use it. Activists more con-

cerned with attacking Israel than opposing such rhetoric does not bode well for a conference analysing anti-Semitism.

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*Prof. Dr. Norman Simms (PhD Washington University) is associate professor in the Department of Humanities and English at the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. He was born in Brooklyn and in 1970, after several years in Canada, he moved to Hamilton, New Zealand where he ran the Waikato Jewish Studies Seminar. He became an Israeli citizen in 1995. He is the author of *Festivals of Laughter: Blood and Justice in Biblical and Classical Literature* (2007), *Marranos on the Moradas: Secret Jews and Penitentes in the Southwestern United States from 1590-1890* (2009), *Alfred Dreyfus: Man, Milieu, Mentality, and Midrash* (2012) and *Alfred and Lucie Dreyfus in the Phantasmagoria* (2013).*

Statement by Norman Simms:

A Klug to Mr. Klug?

Israel is not above reproach, Zionism can be criticized, Jews are not perfect. But it is not legitimate to reproach Israel before all other nations, sometimes to the exclusion of all other considerations of history and geography. Zionism must be considered along with other national liberation movements and understood as a specific response by many Jews to specific historical circumstances, as well as an ideology that has many forms and continues to change as the world changes around it. Jews are an ancient people, a civilization, a nation that has grown, developed and continues to express itself in many forms in many parts of the world. To deny these dynamic aspects of Israel, Zionism and Judaism, to lump them altogether as an essential whole, and to castigate this entity as a demonic, dangerous and despicable presence in the world is anti-Semitism at its worst.

One of the unfortunate consequences of my years of studying the life and times of Alfred Dreyfus has been the need to read many anti-Semitic books and articles.²³ In fact, reading Goldhagen's latest book (*The Devil Who Never Dies*)²⁴ is like looking into a mirror image of Jean de Ligneau's *Juifs et anti-Semites en Europe*.²⁵ Ligneau's is not a name that trips off the

²³ Norman Simms, *Alfred Dreyfus: Man, Milieu, Mentality and Midrash* (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2012), *In the Context of his Time: Alfred Dreyfus* (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2013), and *Alfred and Lucie Dreyfus in the Phantasmagoria* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013). Each of these books deals with the immediate context of anti-Semitism in France and the larger issues raised by the development of modern anti-Jewish and anti-Zionist attitudes. See also my "Yes, Dreyfus Still Matters, But Not the Way Some People Think" *Family Security Matters* (20 May 2012) <http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/detail/yes-dreyfus-still-matters-but-not-the-way-some-people-think#ixzz1vRgEmsDv>

²⁴ Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *The Devil that Never Dies: The Rise and Threat of Global Antisemitism* (New York, Boston and London: Little, Brown and Company, 2013). My temptation is to remove the "d" or at least put it into brackets: *The [D]evil that Never Dies*.

²⁵ Jean de Ligneau, *Juifs et antisemites en Europe : extraits d'Edouard Drumont, Dr. Jacques Lipschitz et du docteur Adolf Stoecker* (Paris : Librairie Saint-Joseph, 1891). I was drawn to this book because of its

<http://bicsa.org/wp-content/uploads/BICSA-International-scholars-criticize-Brian-Klug-ZfA-EVZ-Jewish-museum-Berlin-Nov-2013.pdf> (online since October 30, 2013)

lips, but his book is a thesaurus of anti-Semitic tropes, motifs and slurs based on long citations from Edmund Drumont, Jacques Lipschitz, Adolf Stoecker and a host of other Jew-hating pseudo-scholars of the late nineteenth century. What makes it more horrible to read than the mere length of the catalogue of evils attributed to the historical and racial essence of the Jewish people in Europe is the realization in hindsight that all these lies and myths are compounded in the subsequent century, culminating in the Nazi regime that came to power in Germany in the 1930s. Here one can find the immediate and long-term sources for all the monstrous details to be found in a slew of contemporary revelations of how deep and extensive anti-Semitism remains in the opening decade of the twenty-first century.

And this hatred of the Jew only becomes worse when it is spouted by Jewish scholars, whether or not they live in or come from Israel. It is also there when some nice person “congratulates” you on being a Jew, expresses admiration and wonder that so many of you people win Nobel Prizes, run all the media in the world, and yet, please excuse me, they will say, how come you behave like Nazis against the poor suffering Palestinians?

When I made *aliyah* to Israel in the mid-1990s, I learned two things that changed a rather naïve and vague notion about what it meant to become an Israeli. For one, very soon and clearly I learned that I was surrounded by millions of people and their governments whose great aim in life was to murder everyone in my family, my friends, my neighbours, that is, every Jew no matter where in the world. Since the impossible has already happened several times in my lifetime—the Holocaust, the Foundation of the State of Israel, the Fall of the Soviet Empire—it is not possible for me to dismiss as “mere rhetoric”²⁶ or political posturing the “sabre-rattling” of those leaders who want to wipe Israel off the map or to drive into the sea or to create a state of any and all people who live within its national boundaries. They are very serious and dangerous words. No responsible Israeli leader or citizen can afford to treat them lightly.

The second thing I learned, after several months when up in the north of Israel, near the Lebanese border, there were rocket attacks on towns and villages, on schools and hospitals, that violence was real—not some abstract existential threat. When eventually the IDF air force began to bomb the places from whence the rockets came, the overseas newspapers and television broadcast charges that Israel had made these raids without provocation, that they

detailed account of the founding meeting of the League of Anti-Semites in France, its printing of the primary documents of this organization, and its citation of other of the leading members, all of whom would become key figures in the Dreyfus Affair—and some who lived long enough to become part of the collaborationist and Vichy regimes in the early 1940s. By the way, the epigraph to this book is :”Le Juifestl’ennemi naturel des nations chrétiennes de l’Europe” (The Jew is the natural enemy of the Christian nations of Europe).

²⁶ The time when rhetoric became “mere rhetoric” was in the late sixteenth century following reforms in the scholastic system of education; the two early steps in the formal teaching called “invention” and “distribution” of concepts, words and images were removed from the process that culminated in the teaching of Logic and Law or Dialectic, leaving rhetoric itself without the means to discover, test and apply knowledge and merely to engage in *eloquentia* and performance or posturing, making pretty and emotionally persuasive speeches. In its fullness, rhetoric was more than a study of using language for various effects: it was the body of information and its literary tradition, the methods by which such knowledge was to be examined, brought to bear on a subject, and transformed into an effective set of legal and political principles. In that fullness, granted a few subtle and significant differences, rhetoric comes close to the philological, grammatical and semiotic practices of rabbinics.

were violations of international treaties, and that they were asymmetrical, out of all proportion to the injuries inflicted on Israelis. What I learned, then, was that you could not trust the large media outlets to be objective and fair, to be anything else but self-deluded by their own hatred of Jews and Israel, and that consequently, when push came to shove, when the chips were down, when the Jews were under attack verbally and by mortar and rocket shells, there was no one else in the entire world we could depend on and that our existence was solely up to us—and therefore we had better always be strong and ready, even in terms of pre-emptive strikes.

As on 11 September 2001, these experiences in Israel led to the scales falling from eyes and my own deepest-felt liberal and tolerant ideals crumbling into dust and vapour. In fact, the more I studied anti-Semitism cum anti-Zionism, examined its historical origins as a modern political movement in nineteenth-century Europe and its older, ancient roots in the pre-modern world, the less I could find to comfort me. It comes as no surprise when the traditional slurs and slanders of Judeophobia play out on our television screens, when Jewish buses, pizzerias, and community centers in Israel or the rest of the world are blown up, when mobs rage through the streets of European streets screaming death to the Jews and take them back to the ovens, when individuals and small groups turn their guns on school children, torture young rabbis, and blow themselves up in the midst of holiday crowds. I am infuriated, but not surprised.

But I remain surprised, shocked, disappointed and infinitely sad when I come across Jews and Israelis joining with these rampaging mobs, pretending to be calm scholars and dispassionate political commentators, and yet providing rationalizations for terrorism, calls for boycotts, divestment, sanctions (BDS) and ostracism of visiting lecturers and students from Israeli universities. One of these types is Brian Klug. To read his work is to enter into a bizarre half-lit world of mystification and seeming plausibility: he can sound so reasonable and balanced, on the one hand, but on the other, when read in the context not only of the current dangerous plight the Middle East—indeed, the world—is in, with murderous regimes in Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Afghanistan, Iraq and above all Iran, to peruse carefully his arguments that seek to delegitimize Zionism, to disestablish the State of Israel, and to cast terrible aspersions against Jews who take seriously the need for a Jewish Homeland is to find oneself getting physically ill. Because I hear Klug's mendacious and captious words in the echo-chamber of explicitly anti-Semitic tracts, what he attempts to smooth over with modernist jargon and academic finesse rings out loud and clear. He seems a master of sophistry.

Klug begins a chapter in his book called *Being Jewish and Doing Justice: Bringing Argument to Life*, “On Saying that Israel has a Right to Exist,”²⁷ with a bit of tergiversation on the

²⁷ Brian Klug, *Being Jewish and Doing Justice: Bringing Argument to Life* (London and Portland, OR: Valentine Mitchell, 2011), Chapter Eight, Epilogue: “On Saying that Israel has a Right to Exist” pp. 136-146. The bibliographical note tells that this epilogue is a version of a paper entitled “Jewish Identity and Human Rights” in an anthology edited by Alan Brown and Mary Hayward, *World Religions in Education*, Vol. 27: *Human Rights and Responsibilities* (London: 2006-2007).

phrase that is tossed about promiscuously, to be sure, and which Klug plays with to say and not-say at the same time that Israel has no right to exist. He first cites Abba Eban using the expression in order to argue that in 1981 Israel does not need anyone to tell it whether or not has any right to exist: it exists, as any other nation exists in its own historical territory. But later, as Klug points out, the phrase gets muddled and twenty and thirty years later it has become necessary for Israelis, Jews, and their friends and allies to not only state the obvious but require other people, governments and intergovernmental agencies to make such a declaration as a preliminary to other negotiations. But then, not questioning whether there is a parallel question about the legitimacy of Palestinians to say that they have a right to exist as a nation-state, nor to point to other nations which have not been the granted the right to have a state of their own, such as the Kurds, Brian Klug's sense of Jewish "justice"²⁸ appears to turn on Israel's need to prove its *bona fides* as a statement on its treatment of Palestinians. This fudges the issue of what constitutes valid criticism of Israeli policy and action with its political and legal "right to exist."

When he speaks of "Zionist apparatchiks" or "the Israel lobby," Klug writes in a dialect of aspersion and exaggeration, as though the Zionist Organization was equivalent to the old Soviet government by party bosses or that the tiny minority of Jewish people in the United States had an indecent influence on law-makers and executives in the American government—more so than, say, the vast amounts of money spent by the Saudi Arabian royal family or the pressure available to the Islamic organizations that put pressure on Senators and Representatives. However, when he remarks on "Operation Defensive Shield" he crosses a different red line of decency and truthfulness:

In spring 2002, Israeli troops entered the West Bank in force. Television viewers and newspaper readers across the globe *were assailed with scenes of devastation* in Jenin, Ramallah and elsewhere (my emphasis).²⁹

There is no explanation for why the IDF had to enter the three Palestinian towns "in force",³⁰ and what that expression means. Viewers of television and readers of newspapers in Israel and around the world who knew why the action was necessary were also frustrated by the fact that Israeli leaders went in only with ground troops, avoided any bombing of the areas from the air, in order to avoid civilian casualties, and thus put IDF soldiers into great danger by

²⁸ In rabbinical traditions, Justice (*din*) is a concomitant of Peace (*shalom*). Post-Modernism transforms these words into virtually their opposite. The famous Hebrew expression *shalom* does not mean the absence of conflict or war but the establishment of a balance in relationships based on the equitable distribution of justice; simply put, in Israel, when you pay for something at a shop, you say *anim 'shalaym*, I will pay the bill, that is, provide a fair equivalent in funds to the goods or services provided. In terms of the Middle East conflict between Arabs and Jews, the Israeli side is always making concessions and offering compromises, whereas the PLO and its affiliates give in return intifadas, terrorist raids and empty rhetoric.

²⁹ Klug, "Being Jewish and Doing Justice," p. 144.

³⁰ What does "in force" mean? If the police hear of a domestic incident in a house where a husband is threatening his wife with a knife or a gun, the officers do not go in one at a time to ensure a symmetrical, proportionate response. They go there "in force" with enough men to control access to the house, to protect residents living nearby, and to ensure that the perpetrator is arrested or otherwise disarmed and neutralized of quickly and efficiently.

house to house fighting. They also knew that many of those houses in Jenin were booby-trapped and that supposedly neutral residents often lured Israelis into ambush. The only audience “assailed” by the media were those who have no alternatives to the virtually universal anti-Israeli reporters and Palestinian photographers who create the phony words and doctored images that constitute the “news”. Yet supposedly, at the same time, the anti-Semites assure us, Jews control and manipulate the world media. The “devastation” in Jenin, for instance, was not only limited to a few streets where terrorist gangs had hidden themselves, but the supposed “massacre” much shouted about at the time, turns out never to have occurred, and deaths and injured were extremely low amongst Palestinians and unnecessarily high amongst Israelis.

Compare this technique of obfuscation to Jean de Ligneau’s *Juifs et anti-Semites en Europe* who prefaces his book by saying in a supposedly disarming and liberal way: “This is not a book of hatred, a polemical work. It is a book of history and documented history,”³¹ as though the author and his sources were a beleaguered minority of Frenchmen fighting against the invasion of destructive and demonic Jews, as though the barbarians were not only at the gates but were already running around like wild beasts in the streets undermining the culture of the nation and imposing an alien rule on the republic. De Ligneau wants to have his cake and eat it. He wants to prove his case logically and historically—show its justice in an argument—by citing evidence: but anti-Semites keep citing one another, sometimes with and sometimes without contradictions, but almost always without proportion and perspective. They also like to cite Jewish authorities, or those individual Jews they elevate to authoritative heights, as though Judaism had a Pope or a High Priest and any voice crying in the wilderness reverberated with heavenly resonance—misconstruing polemical hyperboles for facts, misunderstanding jokes for serious truisms, and never hearing or feeling the subtleties of tone in what is said in the context of its times, or raising individual opinions to the level of religious dogma and governmental doctrine.

These therefore are the two main and seemingly enduring features of anti-Semitism (or whatever other name it may be fashionable and politically correct to use: Judeophobia, anti-Zionism, anti-Globalism): first, the lack of proportion and perspective which sees Jews as an overwhelmingly dangerous, intrusive, invasive force, and therefore this very tiny group of people, scattered, weak and forever being persecuted, is made into a demon that hovers over the world, a spider with its web encompassing all facets of modernity, an octopus whose tentacles ensnare all, a contagious disease spreading everywhere; second, a unity so diabolical that it is everywhere and always the same, a never-changing enemy of all that is just, normal and healthy in the world, so that every individual Jew knows and conspires with every other member of the tribe, able by some devious, mechanical or magical power to cause every evil ever experienced or imagined.

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³¹ “Celivren’est pas un livre de haine, un travail de polémique. C’est un livred’histoire et d’histoiredocumentée”, Ligneau, *Juifs et l’antisemites*, p. i.



Samuel Laster is the editor of www.juedische.at, based in Vienna

Statement by Samuel Laster:

The appearance of Brian Klug fits perfectly with the activities of the Center that downplay Antisemitism. The Center appears eager to surround itself with alibi-Jews and we-distance-ourselves-Jews who uninhibitedly devote themselves to their “criticism of Israel”.

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André Freud is a member of the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Nuremberg, and Deputy Chairman of the Nuremberg chapter of the German-Israel Friendship Society (Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft e.V., AG Nürnberg-Mittelfranken, DIG). He blogs at <http://gestaltenstattverwalten.wordpress.com/>

Statement by André Freud:

Brian Klug criticized the Board of Deputies of British Jews for its “unconditional support of Israel”.

How can someone conditionally support Israel – in a situation where not supporting Israel means an act of double standards, demonization, delegitimization?

It's a matter of opinion whether someone supports today the Zionism of the late 19th century. It's a matter of hate to put Israel's existence into question as it means to be ready to talk about the banishment, repression, de-democratizing and, at the end of the day, extirpation of a people.

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Prof. Dr. Elhanan Yakira is [Professor of Philosophy at Hebrew University, Jerusalem](#). He was a Visiting Prof. CNRS, Paris, 1989–90 and a Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies. His Research Interests include early modern philosophy, especially 17th century rationalism. He is the author of several books, including “Post-Zionism, Post-Holocaust. Three Essays on Denial, Forgetting, and the Delegitimation of Israel” ([Cambridge University Press](#) 2009) (this book was first published in Hebrew and initiated a vibrant debate about post-Zionism and anti-Zionism)

Statement by Elhanan Yakira:

Dear Clemens,
Thank you for informing me about the up-coming conference in Berlin and of the participation of Brian Klug as a keynote speaker. Although apparently a professor of philosophy, I have never heard of him. From what I could learn about him, he holds typically anti-Israeli opinions (so-called "critical of Israeli politics"), which are neither particularly original nor very interesting. The only interesting thing here is that he was invited as a keynote speaker to a conference allegedly about the new European antisemitism. It is particularly interesting that there is not one Israeli and/or American among the participants. This is interesting not only because Israel and the USA are, after all, the major centers of research on anti-semitism - in Europe and elsewhere - but also, and in particular, because the two main, by far the most important, Jewish communities are the Israeli and American communities. Once again, it seems that for many European - apparently, regrettably, also for the Jewish Museum in Berlin – real Jewish life, feelings and thought is a source of embarrassment. Easier to speak of dead Jews and/or let the Brian Klug kind of Jews speak.

Yours,

Professor Elhanan Yakira

Department of Philosophy

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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