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Antisemitism in the UK
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Antisemitism in UK Academia

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Let me begin with a quote from our chair, Kenneth Lasson. This year, Kenneth wrote the following from his 80-page working paper

1. Due to the short amount of time allotted for my presentation at the conference, I put some additional information in these notes to provide a complete picture of my topic. To begin with, antisemitism is a flexible and widespread ideology. Critics are always one step behind the antisemitic activists. When I started working on this presentation I thought about starting with the Tottenham Hotspurs. This idea became particularly timely due to the horrible antisemitic attack last week at supporters of the Spurs in a pub in Rome by some 30 Italian neo-Nazi activists, probably associated with the football teams of Lazio Rome and AS Rome. Several English football fans were severely beaten and injured; luckily, no one was killed. The motivation was antisemitism, because the Tottenham Hotspurs are known and famous worldwide for their pro-Jewish history and stance. During the game in the Euro League the following day, the same Italian neo-Nazis, or others, displayed pro-Palestine banners in the stadium and screamed “Jews Tottenham, Jews Tottenham.” Anti-Zionism and antisemitic attacks often go hand in hand. The pro-Palestine banner could have been displayed by Muslims, left-wingers, or even Jewish post- or anti-Zionists. But why did I want to start my presentation on antisemitism to the Spurs in the first place? Well, “Jürgen was a German, now he is a Jew” is a well-known slogan of the Spurs. Ironically and unfortunately, however, Jürgen Klinsmann, a German football player who once played for the Spurs, was a leading voice in probably the biggest wave of German nationalism in recent decades, when he helped initiate a pro-German climate in 2006 during the football World Cup, which was held in Germany. Bestselling authors like Matthias Matussek from the leading German weekly journal and news portal on the Internet, Der Spiegel and Spiegel online, respectively, argued against Holocaust remembrance, and in his 2006 book We Germans, in which he attacked the people of England as being “the most disliked people on earth,” he embraced German capitalism while aiming at the “English class society,” which in his view is not on the same high level as Germany’s. I analyzed German nationalism, political culture, scholarship, and antisemitism during the football Worldcup in summer 2006 (Clemens Heni, “Das nationale Apriori. Wie aus der BRD endgültig ‘Deutschland’ wurde,” HaGalil, July 7, 2006, accessed November 23, 2012, http://www.hagalil.com/archiv/2006/07/deutschland.htm.)

2. Hatred of England is widespread in Germany, particularly among those who also defame Sir Arthur Harris and the Royal Air Force (RAF) of the British army during the Second World War. For them, Dresden equals Auschwitz, more or less. This portrayal of Germans as victims, like the Jews, and the projection of guilt onto the allies (or the Jews) are typical forms of so-called secondary antisemitism, a term of Peter Schönbach, a co-worker of philosopher Theodor W. Adorno around 1960. Theodor W. Adorno, “Zur Bekämpfung des Antisemitismus heute,” in

3. Then, hatred of Israel during the Lebanon war in summer 2006 and German nationalism went hand in hand. One example of anti-Zionist Jewish activism is Tamar Amar-Dahl. She returned her Israeli passport in 2006 due to the war and got a German passport instead. In addition, she wrote a doctoral dissertation about Israel president Shimon Peres, framing left-wing Zionism as no less “racist” or nationalistic and as bad as right-wing Zionism. Worse, Amar-Dahl has joined anti-Israel Palestinian events in Germany in recent years, even giving a friendly interview to leading pro-Iranian Islamist homepage Muslim-Markt. This site has been promoting the boycott of Israel for over ten years now; I was part of a group in Germany criticizing that kind of anti-Zionist antisemitism as early as 2002. See Clemens Heni, *Antisemitism: A Specific Phenomenon: Holocaust Trivialization – Islamism – Post-Colonial and Cosmopolitan Anti-Zionism* (Berlin: Edition Critic, 2013 [in print]), 434-436. Tamar Amar-Dahl, *Shimon Peres: Friedenspolitiker und Nationalist* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010); Tamar Amar-Dahl, “Muslim-Markt interviewt Dr. phil. Tamar Amar-Dahl—Historikerin an der Humboldt Universität zu Berlin,” Muslim-Markt, February 17, 2011, accessed May 13, 2012, http://www.muslim-markt.de/interview/2011/amar-dahl.htm. The interview of someone like Amar-Dahl doesn’t shock anyone in Germany because leading scholar in antisemitism Wolfgang Benz, former long-time head of the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA) at Technical University Berlin from 1990 until 2011, also embraced the Islamism and hatred of Israel by Muslim-Markt and gave them a friendly interview on November 1, 2010; Wolfgang Benz, “Interview mit Muslim-Markt,” November 1, 2010a, accessed February 26, 2012, www.muslim-markt.de/interview/2010/benz.htm. For criticism of Benz and the ZfA, see Clemens Heni, *Schadenfreude. Islamforschung und Antisemitismus in Deutschland nach 9/11* (Berlin: Edition Critic, 2011), 219-246. This Center for Research on Antisemitism is a part of a consortium of scholars on antisemitism and racism, co-headed by David Feldman from the Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism in London. After having been dismissed by Jewish studies scholar and historian Michael Brenner, Amar-Dahl then wrote her dissertation under the auspices of very right-wing historian Horst Möller from Munich; her second reader, ironically, was hard-core left-wing sociologist Moshe Zuckermann from Tel Aviv University. Then, Amar-Dahl was invited by then head of the Institute for the History of German Jewry in Hamburg Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, who is now the head of that controversial center in Berlin and a member of this consortium. If it comes to hatred of Israel, right-wing Germans and left-wing Israelis have a common cause. Horst Möller is infamous in Germany for his anticomunist propaganda, framing communism as “Red Holocaust”; he honored revisionist Ernst Nolte, who was awarded the Konrad Adenauer Prize in 2000. Nolte is well known in England, thanks to the important scholarship of British historian Richard Evans, for example. Evans is among the best experts on National Socialism, Holocaust denial, revisionism, German nationalism, and antisemitism, including the analysis of the Historikerstreit and Ernst Nolte in 1986 and the following years. For criticism of Möller, German president Joachim Gauck, the German New Right, and the equation of the Holocaust with
2013] LONDON SYMPOSIUM, JUNE 2013—HENI

“Antisemitism in the Academic Voice,” which calls to mind this quote: “Many words hurt more than swords”:

The romanticized vision of life in the Ivory Tower [. . . ] has long been relegated to yesteryear. While universities like to nurture the perception that they are protectors of reasoned discourse, and indeed often perceive themselves as sacrosanct places of culture in a chaotic world, the modern campus, of course, is not quite so wonderful.”

University of Sheffield Scholar in Law Lesley Klaff addressed contemporary anti-Zionism and hate speech in the UK with this observation:

The last few years have witnessed an explosion of anti-Zionist rhetoric on university campuses across the United Kingdom. Encouraged by the University and College Union’s annual calls for discriminatory measures against Israeli institutions and academics, the rhetoric has become even more strident since Operation Cast Lead. [. . . ] There has been a proliferation of anti-Zionist expression on UK university campuses since 2002 when, on 6 April, 125 British academics published an open letter in The Guardian calling for an EU moratorium on funding for grants and research contracts for Israeli universities [. . . ]. This letter marked the official start of the British “academic boycott of Israel” and acted as a catalyst for the use of the British university campus as a platform for the expression of anti-Zionist views.

As I will argue in this short presentation, antisemitism in the UK is a widespread phenomenon even among scholars in the field. Robert Wistrich criticized the weekly London Review of Books, perhaps the “most widely circulated of European literary magazines,” for its constantly anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, or post-Zionist approach and its defamation of Israel in recent years.

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communism, including articles about Lithuania and Holocaust remembrance, see Clemens Heni and Thomas Weidauer, eds., Ein Super-GAUck. Politische Kultur im neuen Deutschland (Berlin: Edition Critic, 2012).


6. Robert Wistrich, “From Blood Libel to Boycott: Changing Faces of British Antisemitism,” Posen Papers on Contemporary Antisemitism 13 (The Vidal Sas-
Analyzing and criticizing scholars is an important field of research; take, for example, Campus Watch, an organization of the Middle East Forum (MEF) in Philadelphia, which deals with scholars in Islamic and Middle East studies in North America.7

In an August 2009 Montreal conference, Robert Wistrich, head of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA),8 noted: “George Orwell said, ‘There are some things which only an intellectual would be stupid enough to believe.’ ” Wistrich went on: “Intellectuals invented modern antisemitism. They were the pioneers of it and therefore we need to be particularly attentive and vigilant to the ways in which contemporary intellectuals are contributing to new and more modern, or postmodern in some cases, forms of antisemitism.”9

7. “Campus Watch, a project of the Middle East Forum, reviews and critiques Middle East studies in North America with an aim to improving them. The project mainly addresses five problems: analytical failures, the mixing of politics with scholarship, intolerance of alternative views, apologetics, and the abuse of power over students. Campus Watch fully respects the freedom of speech of those it debates while insisting on its own freedom to comment on their words and deeds.” Accessed November 22, 2012, http://www.campus-watch.org/.

8. Let me say a few positive things about the UK and its relation to antisemitism. Perhaps the best-known research center on antisemitism today is the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA) at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, established in 1982. It is named after Vidal Sassoon, who died in 2012; I posted an entry on my homepage to commemorate him. Sassoon first got in touch with politics in London after the Second World War. In 1947, he became a member of the famous group 43, a Jewish group fighting antisemitism in London and England, particularly Oswald Mosley and the Union Movement, and his pro-Nazi fascists, the Blackshirts. Antisemitism and hatred of Jews did not end on May 8, 1945, as we all know. Mosley was friends with Arthur Ehrhardt, himself a Nazi, member of the Waffen-SS, and a SS-Hauptsturmführer, responsible for fighting “partisans.” Ehrhardt was then supported by Mosley and others after 1945 to reorganize SS activities under another name, and he founded the journal Nation Europa, following the pan-European SS-ideology. Ehrhardt was the political father of Henning Eichberg, the leading theorist of German New Right ideology since the late 1960s. In 2006, I finished my doctoral dissertation about Henning Eichberg and the New Right and German ideology from 1970-2005, including the analysis of anti-Americanism, national identity, and antisemitism. Clemens Heni, Salonfähigkeit der Neuen Rechten. “Nationale Identität, Antisemitismus und Antiamerikanismus in der politischen Kultur der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1970-2005: Henning Eichberg als Exempel” (Marburg: Tectum), 2007; [doc. diss., University of Innsbruck, July 2006]).

9. Robert Wistrich, presentation at the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA), Montreal, August 2009, transcript by Clemens
British historian Arnold Toynbee produced an antisemitic trope when equating Israel and the Jews to Nazis in the 1950s, as literary critic Anthony Julius and Robert Wistrich have shown. The Israel-equals-Nazism-and-the-Holocaust comparison and equation has been part of leftist agitation for decades, in fact; just have a look at such an antisemitic cartoon in the Labour Herald of June 25, 1982.


11. “The intellectual pioneer in the 1950s of the idea that Zionism is a form of Nazism was, however, another eminent member of the British establishment, the renowned philosopher of history Arnold J. Toynbee. His monumental A Study of History unequivocally and relentlessly indicted the Zionists as ‘disciples of the Nazis.’ According to Toynbee, they had chosen ‘to imitate some of the evil deeds that the Nazis had committed against the Jews.’” Wistrich, “From Blood Libel to Boycott,” 7.

12. Even critics of antisemitism, such as Dave Rich from the Community Security Trust (CST), sometimes argue not so convincingly. He said in 2011 at a conference about the EUMC Working Definition on Antisemitism: “For example, the Working Definition’s list of examples of antisemitism relating to Israel—which includes describing Israel’s existence as ‘a racist endeavour’ and comparing Israel to Nazi Germany—is preceded by the crucial sentence: ‘Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel, taking into account the overall context could include . . . ’ [emphasis by Dave Rich]. This leaves an obvious question not often asked, much less answered: What is the context in which these examples may not be antisemitic? For example, does a statement daubed on a wall differ from the same statement, but made in a lecture theater or written on an Internet blog? At what point does the manner and context in which the statement is made demand intervention, either by a website moderator or by the police?” (Dave Rich, “Reactions, Uses and Abuses of the EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism,” paper presented at Tel Aviv University, July 2011), accessed November 23 2012, http://kantorcenter.tau.ac.il/sites/default/files/proceeding-all_3.pdf. Well, if we take the comparison of Israel to Nazi Germany as an example, as Rich did, one should state that every single comparison of Israel with the worst regime on earth ever, National Socialism, is antisemitic, regardless if this comparison is made on a wall, in a lecture theater, or in a book, during daylight, at night, on a Wednesday afternoon, or on a Sunday morning. Such a comparison is obfuscating the Holocaust and defaming the Jewish state in the worst way possible: It projects the German guilt onto the Jews. Sigmund Freud, who died in London in 1939, could have written about this kind of antisemitic projection in some length. I do not understand why Rich asks if there might be a situation where the comparison of Israel to Nazi Germany (which is one of the examples of comparisons he refers to) may not be antisemitic.”

Let’s have a look at contemporary scholars and authors and listen to Jacqueline Rose, a leading voice in the UK when it comes to anti-Zionism and antisemitism. She is a wonderful example, and maybe George Orwell had her in mind when he analyzed intellectuals and their relationship to stupid things many decades ago. Rose wrote in 2005:

"It was only when [Richard] Wagner was not playing at the Paris opera that he [Theodor Herzl] had any doubts as to the truth of his ideas. (According to one story it was the same Paris performance of Wagner, when—without knowledge or foreknowledge of each other—they were both present on the same evening, that inspired Herzl to write Der Judenstaat, and Hitler Mein Kampf.)"

First of all, one must wonder about the scholarly standard of Princeton University Press. This is not a spelling mistake, because otherwise the editors would have told Rose to correct this. Everyone knows that Hitler was born in 1889 (a few days after British historian Arnold Toynbee was born). Rose needs the parallelization of Hitler and Zionism to defame Zionist Jews in the most shocking way possible, so she invented an extremely ridiculous and absurd constellation in Paris. Every serious historian and intellectual must recognize this, regardless if someone likes anti-Zionism or not. This is simply no longer scholarship, not even controversial scholarship; this is claptrap.

Theodor Herzl indeed finished the manuscript of Der Judenstaat in May 1895. We do not know which concert Rose is talking about, but it could not have been later than May 1895. At that time, young Adolf was 6 years old and in fact only visited Paris in 1940, when he conquered France during the Second World War, as historian Robert Wistrich recalls in his critique of Jacqueline Rose. Wistrich wrote in his A Lethal Obsession: Antisemitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad (2010) that “no contemporary platitude about the Jewish state is left unmentioned” in Rose’s The Question of Zion.

Rose also compared Israel to Nazi Germany, a hard-core antisemitic slur, as Anthony Julius, a well-known lawyer and critic of antisemitism,

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16. There are other examples of people in the UK who analyze, criticize, and fight antisemitism in all its forms, including Muslim, left-wing, and academic antisemitism. These activists and authors include, among many others, Ronnie Fraser and the Academic Friends of Israel (http://www.academics-for-israel.org/,

The London-based Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism is rather fascinated by Rose; she was invited to present her new work on June 19, 2012. Not one of the speakers criticized her work, including chair/moderator Anthony Bale from the Department of English and the Humanities at Birkbeck, independent consultant Ingrid Wassenaar, University of Reading’s English literature scholar Bryan Cheyette, or Pears Institute director David Feldman.

accessed November 23, 2012); Douglas Murray, an outstanding voice against the Western and British denial of the Iranian threat, who spoke against the affirmation of Islamism, anti-Zionism, and antisemitism at the Cambridge Political Union in March 2011, accessed July 9, 2012, http://www.cus.org/connect/debates/2011/this-house-would-rather-a-nuclear-iran-than-war; or see Jonathan Hoffman, vice president of the Zionist Federation, http://www.zionist.org.uk/, accessed November 23, 2012, or young activists and authors like Sam Westrop. It would be interesting, by the way, to learn why a Muslim member of British Muslims for Israel was dis-invited to speak at an event of the Union of Jewish Students (and the possible involvement of the Community Security Trust in that decision). I think it is important and tremendously timely to support pro-Israel Muslims. Maybe many Muslims are pro-Israel, but do not dare to speak out. Therefore, it is imperative to give pro-Zionist Muslims a forum and to support their cause; in May 2012 Westrop reported the following: “Pro-Israel Muslims are especially feared. Kasim Hafeez—my Muslim friend and Israel advocate whom I mentioned earlier—was recently banned from speaking to Jewish students by the Union of Jewish Students (UJS). The UJS stated that Kasim’s presence would be dangerously provocative during the annual ‘Israel Apartheid Week,’ because his speaking tour was ‘very controversial and could potentially backfire on the J-Socs, exacerbating tensions and disrupting interfaith relations. We are concerned that he will stir up unnecessary anti-Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment among several hostile groups on campus.’ This proscription was supported by a number of Jewish organisations within Britain.” Sam Westrop, “Fool to the Left of Me, Neo-Nazi to the Right . . .,” May 24, 2012, accessed November 23, 2012, http://blogs.jpost.com/content/fool-left-me-neo-nazi-right. Westrop is also criticizing right-wing extremist Jewish groups like the Jewish Defense League (JDL), as well as rather anti-Zionist Jewish groups, both of whom defamed the British Israel Coalition, where Westrop and Hafeez are members, http://bicpac.co.uk/, accessed November 23, 2012.

21. For an analysis of the Pears Institute, including a critic of Jonathan Judaken, who is a member of a consortium of nine scholars on antisemitism, co-headed by
Instead, they praised her, as podcast recordings show. Cheyette referred to Rose as his “teacher,” Wassenaar was “very honored” to speak at the panel with Rose, and Feldman addressed the Palestinian “Nakba” without referring to disputed history, as Islamic studies scholar Efraim Karsh suggested in *Palestine Betrayed*. Feldman has no problem with a possible “one state” or two-state solution—although the former calls for the demise of Israel as a Jewish state. Instead, he focuses on the “politics of citizenship,” pointing out the “vicious attacks on Jacqueline” without mentioning the shocking concerns about Rose’s publications and scholarship. For Feldman, Zionism has something to learn from the Jewish Diaspora, not vice versa. In her own contribution at the event, Rose thanked Feldman “enormously” for organizing the discussion and for inviting her; Feldman thanked Rose for having convinced him to be part of the panel.


According to the “Working Definition of Antisemitism” of the former European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), “antisemitism manifests itself” by “drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.”

Or take Steven Beller, who wrote in his small book *Antisemitism: A Very Short Introduction*, published by a leading publishing house, Oxford University Press: “Antisemitism, in the form of a political movement aimed at persecuting, discriminating against, removing, or even exterminating Jews is no longer a major threat in our globalized world.”

This is denying reality. Tell the Israeli population in Sderot, Ashkelon, Beersheba, Tel Aviv, or Jerusalem about this! Beller goes on, claiming that “the answer to antisemitism is ultimately not a Jewish state, but the establishment of a truly global system of liberal pluralism.” Anti-Zionism is...
mainstream in the UK, and Oxford University Press is eager to print and
distribute this in a small book supposedly dedicated to analyze antisemit-
ism. German publisher Reclam translated the book into German; the Oxford
University series claims that its books have been translated into many
languages.

Consider British historian Tony Judt (1948-2010), and his infamous
article “Israel: The Alternative” from 2003,29 in which he wrote: “The
depressing truth is that Israel today is bad for the Jews.”30

Ahmadinejad or the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas are grateful to
Judt for defaming the Jewish state of Israel. Although scholars like sociolo-
gist Werner Cohn,31 Judaic studies scholar Alvin H. Rosenfeld,32 literary

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31. “Broadly speaking, Jews who hate Israel fall into three categories: a) the
famous, of which Noam Chomsky is about the only one; b) the well-known, like
Norman Finkelstein and Tony Judt, and c) others who are not known beyond their
immediate circles but who do lurk in various crevices of the Internet. Altogether, as
I will explain below, it is not likely that there are more than a few thousand of these
haters active worldwide, say fewer than 10,000 and probably no more than half that
number. Considering that there are more than 13 million Jews in the world at the
moment, the proportion of those who actively hate Israel, about 0.04 of 1 percent,
might well be considered to be modest indeed,” Werner Cohn, “Prolegomena to the
Study of Jews Who Hate Israel. Not to Weep or to Laugh, but to Understand,”
32. Alvin H. Rosenfeld, “Progressive” Jewish Thought and the New Anti-Semi-
EAF%20PROGRESSIVE_JEWISH_THOUGHT.PDF.
citic Anthony Julius,33 or Manfred Gerstenfeld,34 formerly from the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (JCPA), analyzed the antisemitism of Tony Judt, there are a huge number of scholars and students who still take Judt seriously. British historian Timothy Garton Ash, for instance, gave the first Tony Judt memorial lecture on September 27, 2011, at New York University.35 For historian David Cesarani, who is familiar with Judt’s anti-Israel position, Judt was a “superstar” and his “social and political agenda is resolutely moderate.”36 Moderate! Cynically spoken: Maybe Judt was “moderate”—in terms of a UK standard of hatred of Israel.

Then there’s Eric Hobsbawn. Hobsbawn (1917-2012), along with many other anti-Israel academics, signed a letter in the Guardian during Operation Cast Lead aiming at questioning the very existence of Israel as a Jewish state since 1948.37 We can see the close relationship of downplaying...
has turned Gaza and the West Bank into a pair of gigantic political prisons," “Growing Outrage at the Killings in Gaza,” January 16, 2009, accessed March 29, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/16/gaza-israel-petitions. Robert Fine referred in substance to Paul Gilroy in another article in Patterns of Prejudice in December 2009 without criticizing the anti-Israel stand of Gilroy; Robert Fine, “Fighting with Phantoms: A Contribution to the Debate on Antisemitism in Europe,” Patterns of Prejudice 43, no. 5 (December 2009): 459-479, 473-474. Fine, a sociologist from the University of Warwick, follows Gilroy, his colleague, in the post-colonial trope to equate antisemitism with racism and anti-Black racism in particular, following Frantz Fanon. Fine hosted Walter Mignolo from Duke University in the United States at his institute. Mignolo, an anti-Zionist, is known as a supporter of the “one-state solution”—read: the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state—which would result in the killing of Jews; no doubt about this. Fine (and his misleading, rather positive analysis of philosopher Jürgen Habermas—Robert Fine, “Nationalism, Postnationalism, Antisemitism: Thoughts on the Politics of Jürgen Habermas,” Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft no. 4 [2010]: 409-420), and Mignolo; see Heni, Antisemitism: A Specific Phenomenon, 23-29. For Fine collaborated with sociologist Gurinder Bhambra from his department; she also organized events with Mignolo. Bhambra bases her own work on post-colonial “superstar” Edward Said; see Gurinder K. Bhambra, Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination (UK, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). In this work, Bhambra compared the Holocaust to the history of slavery and the United States Holocaust Memorial to the Museum of Slavery in Liverpool; this is a distortion of the Shoah. Edward Said was a leading voice of anti-Israel scholarship since the late 1960s. He portrayed Arabs as the “new Jews” as early as 1969 (Edward Said, “The Palestinian Experience,” in Moustafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin, eds., The Edward Said Reader [London: Granta Books, 2001], 14-37, 34). Said equated Israel with South-African apartheid in 1979 (Edward Said, “Zionism from the Standpoint of its Victims,” in Bayoumi and Rubin, eds., The Edward Said Reader, 114-168), and denounced Israel as the leading Orientalist, imperialist, and racist power in his bestselling book Orientalism (Edward Said, Orientalism [New York: Vintage Books, 1978]). The chapter on Israel is the last and longest chapter in this anti-Western and antisemitic book. In an interview in 1987, Said said that Israelis had not learned the lessons from their own suffering under Nazi Germany. In his view, Jews have become perpetrators now in the same way the Nazis were perpetrators against the Jews. (The interview reads: “[Question to Said] Given the history of the Jews and the creation of the Israeli state, because of their historical experience with persecution and suffering and [H]olocaust and death camps, should one feel that Israelis and Jews in general should be more sensitive, should be more compassionate? Is that racist? [Said] No, I don’t think it’s racist. As a Palestinian I keep telling myself that if I were in a position one day to gain political restitution for all the suffering of my people, I would, I think, be extraordinarily sensitive to the possibility that I might in the process be injuring another people,” Edward Said, The Pen and the Sword: Conversations with Edward Said by David Barsamian, introductions by Eqbal Ahmad and Nubar Hovsepian (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2010 [first published in 1987], 42).
2013] LONDON SYMPOSIUM, JUNE 2013—HENI

or trivializing the Holocaust and anti-Zionist activism in Hobsbawn’s work. In his worldwide bestseller *Age of Extremes*, first published in 1994—supposedly a history of the 20th century—there is no chapter on the Holocaust. Auschwitz is apparently not worth mentioning in either the book or index.\(^{38}\) Hobsbawn mentions the Holocaust only in passing. There are 68 photographs in that book, but not one about the Holocaust.\(^{39}\) Historian David Feldman honored Hobsbawn in 2012,\(^{40}\) while Anthony Julius analyzed the problematic approach of Hobsbawn and anti- or post-Zionist Jews in the UK like the “Independent Jewish Voice.”\(^{41}\)

Or take Edinburgh historian Donald Bloxham, who in 2009 wrote:

Aimé Césaire, mentor of the anti-colonial theorist Frantz Fanon, was one of the first to formulate the verdict that Nazi Germany did to Europe what Europeans had been doing to Africans and others for a long time. The judgment has since become a commonplace in the scholarship of genocide and colonialism.\(^{42}\)


39. These pictures have no page numbers, and follow page 212 in Hobsbawn, *Age of Extremes*.


41. Anthony Julius analyzed the anti-Zionist approach of Eric Hobsbawn and the “Independent Jewish Voice” (IJV):

The anti-Zionist is not just a Jew like other Jews; his dissent from normative Zionist loyalties makes him a *better* Jew. He restores Judaism’s good name; to be a good Jew one has to be an anti-Zionist. Eric Hobsbawn, for example, explained when IJV was launched: “It is important for non-Jews to know that there are Jews . . . who do not agree with the apparent consensus within the Jewish community that the only good Jew is one who supports Israel.” This refusal to “support” Israel leads to the formulation: “Israel is one thing, Jewry another.” So far from Zionism being inextricably implicated in Jewish identity, fidelity to Judaism demands that Israel be criticized and one’s distance from Zionism be affirmed. The public repudiation of the “right of return,” guaranteed to Jews by Israel in one of its earliest pieces of legislation, was considered to be one important such affirmation.” Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora*, 548.

Remember: this is a quote from Bloxham’s Oxford University Press book, *The Final Solution*, which is about the Holocaust. There was nothing like the Holocaust in Africa, as scholarship has shown, but Bloxham ignores recent academic research on that topic. He mainly refers to one highly controversial German scholar, Jürgen Zimmerer.43 (I have discussed Zimmerer and Jakob Zollmann, who is critical about Holocaust distortion, elsewhere.)44 Suffice it to say that if the Shoah were more or less the same as colonial crimes, then there would not be a need for Holocaust studies.

Bloxham then accuses Israel of “ethnic cleansing,” without giving the slightest context and without referring to scholarly literature on the Arab-Israeli war of 1947-48 and the establishment of Israel. Bloxham writes—again, in *Final Solution*: “In the ensuing years, in another former Ottoman province, Palestine, the nascent Israeli state forced the dispersal of large numbers of Arabs and went on to deny them the right to return.”45

Bloxham next considers the Islamist and secular anti-Zionist position of “right of return,” which is until today a main obstacle for peace in the Middle East and a core ideology of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine in the Near East (UNWRA).46 Here, Bloxham distorts the Holocaust. For him, colonial crimes like those of imperial Germany were the same as the Holocaust, just on a smaller scale, or “dimension.” In fact, there was no *cui bono* in the Shoah, no economic exploitation, for example. Bloxham is unable or unwilling to face what Steven T. Katz called the “metaphysical abyss” between massacres or crimes in the colonies and the Shoah. Aimé Césaire also was unable to see the difference between the Holocaust and colonialism.

These are just a few outstanding examples of scholars from the UK and their relationship to antisemitism, anti-Zionism, Holocaust distortion, and post-colonial ideology.47

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44. Heni, *Antisemitism: A Specific Phenomenon*, 132-150; the chapter is entitled: “From Windhoek to Auschwitz”—“Kaiser’s Holocaust.” I am analyzing and criticizing these expressions, which in fact are book titles of contemporary historians!
47. I could also ask why David Seymour, a scholar in law from the University of London, denied the antisemitism in the early work of Karl Marx and did not even deal in detail with the remarkable scholarship on the antisemitism in “On the Jewish Question” of Marx from 1844. I would go further and say that Marx actually changed his position and started analyzing the value form of capitalism instead
Finally, almost all scholars in the social sciences and humanities—I just focus on a few outstanding examples from the UK here—reject or ignore research on Islamism and Muslim antisemitism. This is not so much different from the 1930s, when the Western world ignored if not embraced Nazi antisemitism. Just look at the Ivy League in the United States and its pro-Nazi policies since 1933, for example, as historian Stephen Norwood has convincingly shown in recent years.\(^{48}\)

The Jihadist attacks in London on July 7, 2005, did not at all change the minds of most British academics in the humanities and social sciences. Instead of analyzing Islamist antisemitism, anti-Western ideology, terrorism, and Jihad, denial of the Iranian threat as well as of Islamist antisemitism and Islamism as a whole is prevailing.

The strange increase in research centers, consortiums, and events regarding antisemitism are indicating a hijacking of serious scholarship by newcomers who have no interest in analyzing antisemitism; instead, the obfuscation or affirmation of antisemitic tropes is prevalent, often based on post-colonial and post-Orientalist ideology (following Edward Said), Holocaust distortion, and anti-Zionism or post-Zionism.

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of defaming Jews and the field of distribution, finance, money lending, and so on. There is, however, a horrible legacy of the early Marx until today if we look at left-wing and right-wing as well as mainstream anti-capitalist tropes, which defame one aspect of capitalism, such as Wall Street or the financial sector, while embracing the labor movement and the production of goods as such. Antisemitism among groups like Occupy Wall Street has been analyzed in recent years. I was astonished that Seymour omitted an analysis of Giorgio Agamben’s anti-Americanism and his distortion of the Holocaust when comparing the Shoah to Guantanamo Bay, for example. Finally, but not surprisingly, Seymour did not deal with perhaps the most troubling aspect of Hannah Arendt’s scholarship: her anti-Zionism, which predates most of her political writing on other topics, such as “totalitarianism.” See David M. Seymour, *Law, Antisemitism and the Holocaust* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007).