

Scholars Circle Resource Guide

Double-sided

Why Current Strategies to Combat Antisemitism Are Doomed to Fail



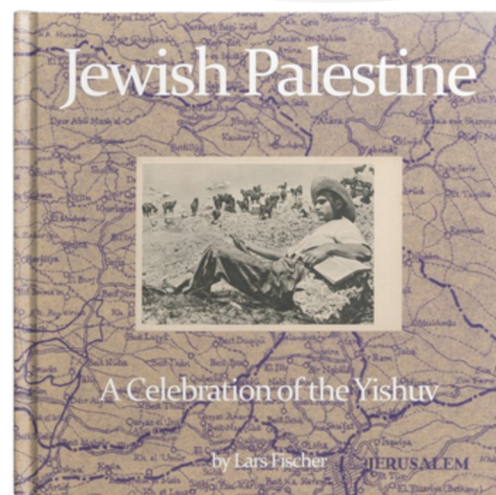
About Lars Fischer

Educated at Queen Mary, University of London, and UCL, Lars Fischer has taught at King's College London, UCL, and the University of Cambridge. A former Secretary of the British Association for Jewish Studies and Councillor of the Royal Historical Society, he now lives in Berlin and runs The History Practice. His research primarily focuses on the history and conceptualization of antisemitism and Frankfurt School Critical Theory. In addition to his numerous scholarly publications, he is the author of the *Jews in Old Postcards and Prints* book series.

DR. LARS FISCHER

Historian specializing in antisemitism and Frankfurt School Critical Theory

Author of Jewish Palestine: A Celebration of the Yishuv. Visit vintage-press.co.uk to purchase or ask your local bookshop to order the book.



Contact Lars Fischer

Website: independent.academia.edu/LarsFischer8

Email: fischerlars82@gmail.com

Learn more at
chaimitzvah.org

Common Q&A's*

What good accrues to otherwise “sensible” persons when they subscribe to ideas about Jews which have no basis in reality and which we ordinarily associate with maladjustment?

Charging the Jews with all existing evils seems to penetrate the darkness of reality like a searchlight and to allow for quick and all-comprising orientation. The whole complex of the Jew is a kind of recognized red-light district of legitimized psychotic distortions.

Can one “correct” stereotypy by experience?

Stereotypy is a device for looking at things comfortably; since, however, it feeds on deep-lying unconscious sources, the distortions which occur are not to be corrected merely by taking a *real* look. Rather, experience itself is predetermined by stereotypy, the antisemite has to reconstitute the capacity for having experiences.

Is establishing as many personal contacts as possible between different groups the best way to improve intercultural relations?

Even if brought together with Jews as different from the stereotype as possible, the antisemite will perceive them through the glasses of stereotypy, and will hold against them whatever they are and do. Optimism with regard to the hygienic effects of personal contacts should be discarded.

*with a little help from a friend

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Most current attempts to combat antisemitism fail because antisemitism's character as a pathetic projection is ignored, leading to the fallacious assumption that antisemites could be convinced with rational arguments and/or that they would stop being antisemites if only all Jews were on their best behaviour.
- ✓ Most current attempts to combat antisemitism fail because little or no attention is paid to the question of how and why antisemites benefit from their antisemitism, i.e., to antisemitism as an evidently effective coping mechanism that helps individuals make sense of their lives and the world they inhabit.
- ✓ Most current attempts to combat antisemitism fail because government agencies, funding bodies, academic institutions and private think tanks almost invariably pursue a technocratic, short-term, target-fixated approach to possible counter-measures that tends to render the sort of in-depth research required to develop a more productive and effective approach impossible.

The views expressed by the speaker don't necessarily reflect Chai Mitzvah's official position.

Contact Lars Fischer

Website: independent.academia.edu/LarsFischer8

Email: fischerlars82@gmail.com

Learn more at
chaimitzvah.org