

The Anti-Golem



by Ehud Neor

One of the most imaginative conjurations of Jewish folklore was that of the Golem, in particular the Golem created by the Maharal of Prague to protect the Jews of his congregation. The Maharal shaped this humanoid creature out of clay or mud in the attic of his synagogue. What animated this Jewish Frankenstein was not a jolt of electricity, but a text consisting of a single word, placed on its forehead, the original sticky note. That word was "Truth."

The Golem may or may not have been real back then in medieval Prague, but the Jewish desire for protection from without was real and remains real to this day. Now with a state and an army, the Jews are better at protecting themselves, so much so, that their enemies feel need to construct a monster of their own, an anti-Golem, with the sole purpose of destroying Jews. It is a mindless thug that cannot think on its own, programmed to delegitimize the Jews, destroying rhetoric and reason along the way. Yes, on its forehead appears a scrap on

which is scrawled "Truth," but it has been sloppily pasted over the original demonic parchment that says "Death to the Jews." It is a shell of a creature, a full-body costume that bends at unnatural angles and that gives the impression that it is being controlled from afar, lurching from podium to public protest to podcast, spewing a gaseous hatred of Jews. It's controller—there, behind that curtain!—leers with pleasure at the anti-Golem's effectiveness.

What's that? A new patch? This forehead beacon flaps declarations like a suburban bus line flaps destinations. "UNRWA," it now says. Is it by chance related to "INRI?" Who is to blame when a conspiracy is the only thing that makes sense? Not only that, but as the object of the demonic focus, still we feel compelled to rush to the next bus stop to see just how twisted the exercise can become, only to find the anti-Golem waiting for us, and we stand breathless at the sight of a forehead flashing "Genocide." We look beyond the anti-Golem and see that it has created a legion of clones, spread across the hills beyond like the gravestones on the Mount of Olives, mindless lumps of clay screaming in unison that which flashes on the forehead of their master. The noise is deafening, one cannot think. One cannot focus. The centre is lost. The rough slouching beast has arrived.