Introduction: Jews: Caricatures, Cartoons, Comics

Rebels with a Cause

Caricatures, cartoons and comics reflect the age-old human desire to be independent in thought and action. Cartoons challenge subservience and deference – and acknowledge that the master in his underwear looks really ridiculous. As Orwell succinctly pointed out in *Animal Farm*: 'All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.'

Cartoons also record history. They provide a snapshot of an event or an episode that often reflects popular feeling at the time. They are an invaluable adjunct of historical research.[1]

While caricatures go back to antiquity, Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) is reputed to have developed it in more modern times and realised its potential to reveal and indeed shock. He said that 'a good caricature, like every work of art, is more true to life than reality itself'.[2]

Pompous politicians often worry about reputational damage and a downward swing in the polls if they are constantly lampooned. Others revel in the brilliance of the cartoonist in depicting their flaws and foibles as well as their achievements.

Hannah Arendt pointed out in 1967 that 'truth and politics are on rather bad terms with each other' and that no one had ever counted truthfulness among the political virtues.[3] Cartoons therefore bring out the fears and insecurities of authoritarian leaders. They 'capture the bias, prejudice and suspicion often sanitised from other mass media content'.[4] Throughout history, cartoonists have been murdered, imprisoned and exiled because they stoke the fires of dissidence.

In the UK, James Gillray attacked sympathisers of the French Revolution such as Charles James Fox and his Whig supporters. In February 1805, he mocked Britain and France for literally carving up the globe in *The Plumb-Pudding in Danger (or State Epicures Taking un Petit Souper)*, in which the newly crowned Napoleon Bonaparte and Prime Minister William Pitt were depicted eagerly dissecting a plum-pudding-shaped world.[5] Although figures such as William Hogarth had depicted the vagaries of life in eighteenth-century Britain in works like the brilliant *A Rake's Progress*, it was only the French Revolution at the end of that century and the European Enlightenment that truly liberated caricaturists to ply their trade in puncturing the high and mighty in political cartoons.[6]

[1] Richard Scully and Marian Quartly, 'Using Cartoons as Historical Evidence', in *Drawing the Line: Using Cartoons as Historical Evidence*, ed. Richard Scully and Marian Quartly (Clayton, Victoria 2009) pp. 1–13.
[2] E. H. Gombrich and E. Kris, *Caricature* (London 1940) pp. 11–12.
[3] Hannah Arendt, 'Truth and Politics', *The New Yorker* 25 February 1967.
[4] Ilan Danjoux, *Political Cartoons and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict* (Manchester 2012) p. 1.
[5] See Tim Clayton and Sheila O'Connell, *Bonaparte and the British: Prints and Propaganda in the Age of Napoleon* (London 2015).
[6] See David Alexander, *Richard Newton and English Caricature in the 1790s* (Manchester 1998).

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Yet this still brought threats and intimidation to those who challenged the established order. Honoré Daumier, a republican, was repeatedly imprisoned for his caricatures of the nineteenth-century Orléanist monarch Louis Philippe. Even so, the advance of technology brought with it the introduction of mass-circulation newspapers and journals. *La Caricature* started in Paris in 1830, *Punch* in London in 1842 and *Simplicissimus* in Berlin in 1896. *Le Canard Enchaîné* remarkably began publication at the height of World War I.

Cartoons and caricatures acted upon the public imagination in nineteenth-century France. The competing regimes, Bourbon, Orléanist, Bonapartist and Republican, fought for dominance whenever there was a whiff of revolution. A cartoon, like the head on a coin, could be a subtle method of propaganda. Conversely a satirical cartoon which distorted the figure of a leader in caricature and held him up to ridicule was clearly a weapon of social criticism. Charles Philipon depicted the head of Louis Philippe as gradually morphing into a pear! *La Poire* subsequently led to censorship of some cartoons by his regime.

A clever caricature can also be a catalyst to quite easily release pent-up anger at a particular political scenario. As the writer Joseph Conrad succinctly commented in his 1915 novel *Victory*: 'A caricature is putting the face of a joke on the body of a truth.'

In more modern times, cartoonists have continued to pay for their ingenuity and biting wit. In 2006 in Belarus, the cartoonist Oleg Minich was given the choice of five years in prison or exile from the country for insulting President Aleksandr Lukashenko.

Héctor Germán Oesterheld, an originator of graphic novels and comics in Argentina, fell foul of the military dictatorships that held power during the post-Peronist period in the 1970s. A supporter of the Cuban Revolution, he was also a member of the Montoneros underground. Jorge Videla staged a military *coup d'état* in 1976 in the name of Christian civilisation – and many opponents, including a disproportionate number of Jews, were murdered. Between 1976 and 1983, it is estimated that as many as five thousand political inmates were tortured, drugged and undressed to be sent as unwilling passengers on 'death flights' from which they would be dropped far out to sea. Inhabitants of the Paraná delta, north of Buenos Aires, reported 'bodies falling out of the sky'. The babies of executed parents were handed over to 'good' military families.

Oesterheld 'disappeared' when this Argentinian junta took power. He was never seen again – and neither were his daughters, Diana, Beatriz, Estella and Marina. One grandson, born in prison, was rescued by Oesterheld's wife. She became one of the *Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo* (the grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo) who continue to search for the stolen children of the murdered.

In the Arab world, cartoonists have often run into trouble when depicting leaders in authoritarian societies. In Algeria, Ali Dilem was sentenced to a year in prison and a 50,000 dinar fine in February 2006 for drawing the ancestors of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika in a less than flattering light. Dilem had previously also been the subject of a fatwa issued by Islamists and angry threats from army chiefs.

Naji al-Ali, a Palestinian illustrator, was shot in the head in London in 1987 outside the offices of the Kuwaiti paper that he worked for. In 2008, Baha Boukhari, the chief cartoonist for *al-Ayyam* in Gaza, drew attention to the sycophantic behaviour of those around the Hamas leader, Ismail Haniya. All depicted in his cartoon bore the image of Haniya's face. Boukhari was sentenced to six months' probation and a fine of $270. In 2011, Ali Ferzat was attacked by Bashar Assad's security police in Syria; both his hands were broken as a warning.[7]

[7] For a recent list of cartoonists who have been the victim of repression, see Victor S. Navasky, *The Art of Controversy: Political Cartoons and their Enduring Power* (New York 2013) pp. 201–9.

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In Turkey, Recep Erdoğan was elected prime minister for the first time in 2003, before later becoming president, and since then has repeatedly sued cartoonists for their perceived misdemeanours. Erdoğan has been depicted as a horse (Sefer Selvi), a dog (Michael Dickinson) and a cat (Musa Kart). As Turkish courts do not make their records public, the number of lawsuits which Erdoğan has filed is unknown.[8]

Cartoons also prepare the ground for revolution and record its stages such as the denouement of the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, during the 25 January Revolution in 2011.[9] Cartoons always achieve new zeniths of popularity during the course of unpopular wars waged by democracies. As early as 1954, the British cartoonist Vicky was illustrating an article about the leader of the Communist insurgents in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, following the defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu.[10]

Figures such as Hugh Haynie (*Courier Journal*, Louisville), Guernsey Le Pelley (*Christian Science Monitor*), Pat Oliphant (*Denver Post*, *Washington Star*), Bill Mauldin (*Chicago Sun-Times*) and many other notable cartoonists continued to deconstruct the policies of successive American administrations in dealing with the war in Vietnam. Herbert Block (Herblock) won three Pulitzer prizes and shared a fourth for his caricatures. The flip-flop policies of Lyndon Johnson on Vietnam and Richard Nixon on Watergate provided ample material for American cartoonists.

On the other hand, cartoons were also utilised during times of war to uphold public morale and to mobilise public support for the conflict.[11] During the 1930s, the Nazis extended this to peacetime and were particularly adept at mobilising support under the direction of Josef Goebbels. Anti-Nazi cartoonists therefore posed a potent threat to the regime, which was particularly sensitive to any ridiculing of the Führer. Goebbels conveyed his anger to the British foreign secretary, Lord Halifax, about David Low's cutting cartoons of Adolf Hitler in the London *Evening Standard*. These drew attention not only to the evil of Nazism but also to the mental instability of the Führer. Halifax's softly-softly approach failed to convince Low and the cartoonist took little notice of the admonitions of his editor at the *Evening Standard*, Percy Cudlipp. He responded by depicting Halifax's butler asking the good Lord in bed: 'Which backbone shall I lay out this morning, my Lord?'[12]

When war broke out, Low's name was placed on the *Sonderfahndungsliste GB* – in the Black Book of citizens to be arrested by the Gestapo if Operation Sea Lion, the German invasion of Britain, was successful in August 1940. Hitler's sensitivity to the power of art had no doubt been heightened through his failure twice to enter the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.[13] He also knew the value of art to move people and understood full well that Low's caricatures in conjunction with Churchill's rhetoric would stiffen British resistance to the Nazis. As early as 1926, he had referred to the ease of utilising a caricature as an instrument of propaganda in a chapter in *Mein Kampf* on the spoken word.

> One must also remember that of itself the multitude is mentally inert, that it remains attached to its old habits and that it is not naturally prone to reading something which does not conform with its own pre-established beliefs when such writing does not contain what the multitude hopes to find there. Therefore,

[8] Efrat E. Aviv, 'Cartoons in Turkey: From Abdülhamid to Erdoğan', *Middle Eastern Studies* vol.49 no.2 (2012) pp. 221–36.
[9] Rania Saleh, '"Let them Entertain Themselves": the Fall of the Mubarak Regime, Seen through Egyptian Political Cartoons', *Middle Eastern Studies* vol.54 no.3 (2018) pp. 494–520.
[10] *New Statesman* 8 May 1954.
[11] Eberhard Demm, 'Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History* vol.28 no.1 (1993) p. 167.
[12] *Evening Standard* 1 August 1938.
[13] Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889–1936: Hubris* (London 1998) p. 48

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> some piece of writing which has a particular tendency is, for the most part, read only by those who are in sympathy with it. Only a leaflet or a placard, on account of its brevity, can hope to arouse a momentary interest in those whose opinions differ from it. The picture, in all its forms, including the film, has better prospects. Here there is less need of elaborating the appeal to the intelligence. It is sufficient if one be careful to have quite short texts, because many people are more ready to accept a pictorial presentation than to read a long written description. In a much shorter time, at one stroke, I might say, people will understand a pictorial presentation of something which it would take them a long and laborious effort of reading to understand.[14]

Goebbels too understood Hitler's appreciation and sponsored a travelling exhibition, *Der Ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew), replete with cartoons. This was on display between November 1937 and January 1939 and was viewed by hundreds of thousands of citizens in Munich, Vienna and Berlin. Its central theme of anti-Semitism was then transferred to the silver screen as Fritz Hippler's film of the same name in 1940.

A Solitary Profession

Cartoonists were, by definition, outsiders. David Low's famous cartoon, 'Very Well: Alone!', published during the summer of 1940, captured this. It depicted a British soldier, standing on the White Cliffs of Dover, lapped by angry waves, waving a fist defiantly at the Luftwaffe in a black sky.[15] It, of course, reflected the grave situation after Hitler had overrun Europe, marched into Paris and was preparing for an invasion of the British Isles. It also described the solitary nature of the cartoonist, developed into a national perspective when Britain truly stood alone.

Cartoonists challenged the accepted order and therefore could never be fully trusted by any regime. On one level, they did not have the responsibility that comes with government. On the other, they were relatively free of the shackles of politics and often spoke out for the governed. They were not, however, free of the whims and demands of their employers – often all-powerful newspaper proprietors.

In 1929, Lord Birkenhead, a leading Conservative party politician and eminent member of several previous governments, had written to Lord Beaverbrook, owner of the *Evening Standard*, complaining that Low had published 'filthy and disgusting cartoons of me which were intended and circulated to do me deep injury'. Low had characterised him as 'Lord Burstinghead' owing to his overblown speeches.

In response, Beaverbrook told Birkenhead that he was out of touch:

> The new generation like the Low caricatures. For my part, Low outrages my feelings when he makes me crawl out from under the table or peep through the door. But I hold the view that a caricature cannot give good ground for complaint. Perhaps I am wrong, but I stick to it.[16]

The *Evening Standard*, in which David Low's cartoons were featured, was banned in Nazi Germany. Even Beaverbrook failed to get the ban lifted during a visit to Germany. While allowing

[14] Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (1926), vol. II, trans. James Vincent Murphy (1939), chapter 6: 'The Struggle of the Early Period: the Significance of the Spoken Word'; see https://hitler.org/writings/Mein_Kampf/mkv2ch06.html.
[15] *Evening Standard* 18 June 1940.
[16] A. J. P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook* (London 1972) p. 261.

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editorial independence, Beaverbrook made an exception when he told Low to 'lay off Franco' in 1940, when Britain feared that Hitler would be given carte blanche by the Spanish dictator to march through Spain and conquer Gibraltar.[17]

While a cartoonist was clearly attracted to the very idea of an independent existence, this sometimes translated into radicalism. After all, the middle of the road was the location where people got knocked down by passing traffic. Many were attracted to the far Left or the libertarian Right.

David Low was irked by the British government's inability to stand up to Hitler. Under official pressure, he stopped his *Hit and Muss (in their axis*) cartoon strip of the dictators and unapologetically telescoped them into *Muzzler*. Yet even avid cartoon collectors such as Churchill complained about Low's independence and described him as 'a communist of the Trotskyist variety'.[18]

Yet clearly Low, while sympathising with the underdog, was not going to be straitjacketed by subservient ideology. This was apparent in his memorable cartoon 'Rendezvous',[19] which was drawn after the dissection of Poland by the Nazis and the Soviets in the wake of the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact. Over the dead body of 'Poland', Hitler bows to Stalin with the greeting: 'The scum of the earth, I believe?' To which Stalin responds, 'The bloody assassin of the workers, I presume?'

History's Outsider

Cartoonists as outsiders sided with the underdog, and during the 1930s, this was the persecuted Jew. Moreover it was made patently clear who was the persecutor and who was the persecuted – there was no need for explanation. Low himself had depicted Hitler setting fire to 'some inoffensive Jew' with an Olympic torch during the Berlin Games in 1936.[20]

Moreover, the Jew had been history's outsider. It did not matter whom he aligned himself with, he was marked out for special attention and individual treatment. The essay by Moses Leib Lilienblum, 'The Future of our People', which was written shortly after the discriminatory May Laws of 1882 and the first *aliya* – the first emigration of Jews from the Tsarist Empire to Palestine – captures the sheer absurdity of the situation, exemplified by a wry black humour.

> The opponents of nationalism see us as uncompromising nationalists, with a nationalist God and a nationalist Torah; the nationalists see us as cosmopolitans, whose homeland is wherever we happen to be well off. Religious gentiles say that we are devoid of any faith, and the freethinkers among them say that we are orthodox and believe in all kinds of nonsense; the liberals say we are conservative and the conservatives call us liberal. Some bureaucrats and writers see us as the root of anarchy, insurrection and revolt, and the anarchists say we are capitalists, the bearers of the biblical civilisation, which is, in their view, based on slavery and parasitism.[21]

Two events occurring within days of each other indicated the pathways through the twentieth century for the Jews. The October Revolution espoused the universalism within Jewish tradition to repair the world. This persuaded many Jews to declare their natural affinity

[17] Ibid. p. 435.
[18] Ibid. pp. 434–5.
[19] *Evening Standard* 20 September 1939.
[20] *Evening Standard* 25 July 1936.
[21] Moses Leib Lilienblum, *The Future of our People* (1883) quoted in Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: a Historical Analysis and Reader* (Philadelphia 1997) p. 173.

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with the Left and to transcend their Jewishness. Their hallmark was often acculturation and assimilation.

The Balfour Declaration, on the other hand, promised a home for the Jewish people in Palestine and appealed to particularism in Jewish tradition. The Jews, it was argued, did not simply adhere to a specific religion but were actually a nation in exile with all the accoutrements of a people – history, culture, languages, literature and a religion. The Zionists of 1917 believed that Zionism was not wrong, but just different. It did not fit into the conventional theory of nations and nation-states.

Both universalism and particularism – and their hybrids – gave Jews a sense of belonging, which gave them a mission and an identity, and provided a structure.

As cartoonists, Jews were latecomers. As the focus of cartoonists, they were not. Many of the early cartoonists such as Honoré Daumier and Aubrey Beardsley conjured up anti-Semitic stereotypes. Ashkenazi Jews in late eighteenth-century London were characterised as purveyors of criminality by caricaturists such as Thomas Rowlandson. In 'Get money still and then let virtue follow if she will' of 1808, Rowlandson depicted three decrepit and grotesque Jews – as stereotypical Fagins. It is estimated that 60 per cent of Rowlandson's prestigious output was devoted to anti-Semitic caricatures.[22]

Racist imagery in Europe looked back to medieval times and viewed Jews as child murderers, blood drinkers, sorcerers, blasphemers and Christ-killers. Jews in the early twentieth century were often depicted as aged, bearded, ugly and religious, with bulging eyes and hooked noses. They were sometimes caricatured in zoomorphic terms – often as spiders at the centre of a web of conspirators. In January 1953, in Stalin's USSR, the Doctors' Plot depicted Jewish doctors as poisoners. Whether as capitalists or communists, they were seen as the puppet masters, controlling the world through others.

Jews were disproportionately represented in the various socialist movements that threatened Tsarism. For many, Russia was the homeland of death and destruction for Jews, characterised by pogroms and persecution. For several million, emigration to the United States, Palestine and Western Europe became the solution.

In established Jewish communities such as that in Britain, there was a liberal backlash against Russian anti-Semitism. Following the assassination of Alexander II in March 1881, the *Punch* cartoonist John Tenniel published 'A Cry from Christendom' which protested against the many attacks on Jews following the killing of the Tsar.[23] Alexander III, who succeeded his father, was much more hardline and continued to introduce oppressive measures against Jews in Russia. A cartoon in *Punch*, entitled 'The Alarmed Autocrat', showed an old, bent Jew bowing before a uniformed Tsar Alexander III, who retreats in horror, ordering his guards: 'Take him away! Take him away! He frightens me!'[24] Tenniel portrayed the persecuted Jew exotically as Shylock from *The Merchant of Venice*.[25]

In other countries, a similar struggle by the liberal intelligentsia was taking place. In France, there was the infamous case of Alfred Dreyfus and the defence by Emile Zola. In Austria, the

[22] Jeremy Smilg, *The Jews of England and the Revolutionary Era, 1789–1815* (London 2021) pp. 55–65.
[23] *Punch* 28 January 1882.
[24] *Punch* 13 June 1891.
[25] Dominic Williams, 'Punch and the Pogroms: Eastern Atrocities in John Tenniel's Political Cartoons, 1876–1896', *Revue d'Art Canadienne* vol.42 no.1 (2017) pp. 32–47.

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populist Karl Lueger, known for his anti-Jewish comments, became mayor of Vienna despite the objections of Emperor Franz Josef. Both Hitler and Theodor Herzl, living in Austria, took note.

While the Bolsheviks initially combated traditional anti-Semitism, by 1926 Stalin began to use anti-Semitism against his rivals, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev. This paralleled the growing fear of Judeo-Bolshevism, stoked by many priests in the Catholic church in many European countries.

In a territorially shrunken Germany after the sudden defeat in 1918, the easy answer was to blame 'the stab in the back' by cosmopolitan Jews who owed no allegiance to the Fatherland. The War Ministry had actually conducted a survey of the 100,000 Jewish soldiers in the German forces during World War I. It found that 80 per cent of all Jews in the ranks were serving at the front. And, of these, 12,000 had been killed and 35,000 decorated for bravery. The results were never published and so the myth of Jews as shirkers, deserters and defeatists was born.

'The stab in the back' became a political instrument for more mainstream figures to build their political careers. It can be argued that even Hindenburg used it to divert attention from his own military failures during World War I.[26]

The post-war instability of the Weimar Republic encouraged the imagery of the scheming Jew which the far Right subsequently promoted assiduously during the inter-war years. The German minister of finance, Matthias Erzberger, was assassinated by a far Right group in August 1921. He was a victim of the ultra-nationalism that had ballooned in the immediate aftermath of the end of World War I. The humiliation of defeat and the prospect of a Communist uprising were also characterised by cartoonists on the far Right who often blamed the Jews for Germany's woes. The gradual character assassination in cartoons of figures such as Erzberger was no doubt a factor in his real assassination.

These difficult times also brought many German Jews into the world of caricatures and cartoonists. For many Jews, it was an escape from the ghetto and Jewishness. It was a world without boundaries where nascent fascism could be counteracted and conquered. It was paradoxically an extension to the richness of self-deprecating Yiddish humour – with the cartoonist cast in the role of a warrior in the fight against injustice. Puncturing the inflated and the pompous while spotlighting the absurdities of life appealed to the post-war Jew after 1918 – someone who often looked to Lenin and Trotsky for an answer to the problems of the world.

For some, it was the legacy of the stubborn Jew who, no matter how distant he or she was from their Jewishness, always stood on the margins and insisted on speaking out against the prevailing wisdom. In 1904, Ahad Ha'am, the Zionist thinker, wrote a remarkable essay about Moses. In it, he defined Moses neither as a warrior nor as a lawgiver, but as a prophet. He characterised today's prophet:

> He sees facts as they are, not through a haze of personal dispositions and tells the truth as he sees it . . . not because he has convinced himself by a process of reasoning that he is duty-bound to tell the truth, but because he can do no other. Truth-telling is the law of his nature, he cannot escape it even if he would.[27]

This perception which defined the Jew by his moral strength suited the budding Jewish cartoonist perfectly. While the freedom of cartooning appealed to the acculturated and the assimilated Jew rather than the traditional Jew, it also characterised that category of Jews who defined their Jewishness by escaping from it.

[26] Richard Sculley, 'Hindenburg: the Cartoon Titan of the Weimar Republic, 1918–1934', *German Studies Review* vol.35 no.3 (2012).

[27] Ahad Ha'am, *Moses* (1904) in Leon Simon, *Ahad Ha'am: Essays, Letters, Memoirs* (Oxford 1946) p. 105.

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The Nazis and the Cartoonists

The difficulty was that the Jewish cartoonist could not escape who he was in Nazi Germany.

Many were suddenly confronted with an abrupt end to their careers when Hitler became chancellor on 30 January 1933. Non-Jewish cartoonists, on the other hand, had the choice of remaining and acquiescing in Nazi megalomania or going into exile and seeking work abroad. For Jews, there was no choice.

Max Liebermann became the president of the Berlin Academy of the Arts in 1920, but despite his attempt to acculturate, he had been described as 'the Jewish enemy within'.[28] When the Nazis came to power, his works were removed from public view.

The youthful Victor Weisz left Germany for Britain in 1935 and became a national institution as 'Vicky', famed as the deflater of politicians. In 1958 he famously drew Prime Minister Harold Macmillan as 'Supermac',[29] an ageing superhero who had told the British public that they had 'never had it so good!'

Vicky later recalled the atmosphere in January 1933, when Hindenburg appointed Hitler as chancellor. He went out from the offices of the *12 Uhr Blatt* into the street:

> Thousands of Nazi swastikas and old Nationalist black-white-red flags decorated the houses and enthusiastic Nazis were making their way to the centre of the city to see their Führer. They cheered him wildly as he drove to the Presidential palace. But there were those Berliners whose sullen, grim expressions spoke as loudly as the shouts of 'Heil Hitler'.[30]

The burning of the Reichstag, the end of freedom of the press and the Nazi takeover of *12 Uhr Blatt* ended Vicky's Berlin career. He reached Britain in October 1935.

Many German caricaturists followed Vicky out of Germany. They had been stalwarts of publications such as *Simplicissimus* and *Kladderadatsch*. Although both had moved to the Right, *Simplicissimus* had been a beacon of hope and enjoyment during the Weimar years; it was now transformed into a tool of Goebbels's propaganda machine.

Prague became a centre of opposition to the Nazis by German émigrés. In May 1934, an exhibition of anti-Nazi cartoons opened in the Czechoslovak capital. Hitler's appetite to reverse the Versailles Treaty and to recover lost German territory led to the Anschluss, the conquest of Czechoslovakia and a growing thirst for *Lebensraum*. Many cartoonists subsequently fled to Britain and the United States.

Arthur Szyk (Poland), Walter Trier (Czechoslovakia), Stephen Roth (Czechoslovakia) and Louis Mitelberg (Poland via Paris) managed to escape to the UK. Eric Godal, né Erich Goldstein, left Germany just a few weeks after Hitler's ascent to power and made his way to the United States. André François, né Farkash (Hungary), remained in Paris during World War II. Saul Steinberg (Romania) left for the United States in 1941. Fritz Behrendt, a student at the Amsterdam College of Arts and Crafts whose family had escaped from Germany to Holland, was imprisoned by the Gestapo, but managed to survive the war.

Such cartoonists interpreted their Jewishness in different ways. Arthur Szyk was a committed Zionist who illustrated the rise of Israel and its pioneering youth. John Heartfield was the son of the

[28] Mitchell B. Frank, 'Max Liebermann: Assimilation and Belonging', *Revue d'Art Canadienne* vol.45 no.2 (2020) pp. 97–110.
[29] *Evening Standard* 6 November 1958.
[30] Russell Davies and Liz Ottaway, *Vicky* (London 1987) p. 14.

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Jewish socialist writer and activist Franz Herzfeld. He joined the newly founded Communist party in 1918 and settled in the German Democratic Republic fifty years later at the end of his life.

Jewish cartoonists who fled abroad were joined by many anti-fascist emigrés from different European countries. Josef Novák and Antonín Pelc managed to reach the United States but returned to Czechoslovakia after the war. Joseph Flatter left Austria in 1934 for London, but was subsequently interned as an enemy alien, but then became an official British war artist. George Grosz, Otto Dix and Max Beckmann were all associated with *Simplicissimus* during the 1920s. Grosz, a bitter anti-Nazi and Weimar caricaturist, had seen what was coming and left for the United States just a couple of weeks before Hitler became chancellor. Dix was conscripted into the Volksstrum, the makeshift people's militia formed to defend Germany at the end of the war, and survived the conflict. Beckmann went into Dutch exile and emigrated to the United States after the war.

Thomas Theodor Heine was one of the founders of *Simplicissimus* in Munich in 1896. He soon fell foul of the Kaiser and was imprisoned for several months. His Jewish origin proved to be an impediment in 1933 for the editors of *Simplicissimus*, who tried to accommodate the journal to the demands of the new regime. Heine eventually settled in neutral Stockholm where he died in 1948.

Others who remained often paid the price. Josef Čapek was arrested in 1939 and disappeared in Bergen-Belsen. František Bidlo died of typhoid in Terezin in May 1945 – on the very day after the formal end of the war.

Many Jews who had escaped from Nazism and found sanctuary in Britain and other countries appreciated the incisive attacks on Hitler by local cartoonists. Sigmund Freud, whose books had been burned by the Nazis, wrote to David Low, 'A Jewish refugee from Vienna, a very old man, personally unknown to you, cannot resist the impulse to tell you how much he admires your glorious art and your inexorable, unfailing criticism.'[31]

In Occupied Europe

Sometimes anti-fascist organisations published cartoons in their own journals to attack their opponents during the 1930s. In Paris, the Ligue Internationale contre l'Antisemitisme caricatured François de la Rocque, the leader of the Croix-de-Feu, for his Janus-like duplicity and the anti-Semitic colouring of his organisation.[32] On the other hand, in London Alexander Bowie drew many anti-Semitic cartoons, often featuring the Jewish East End, for the British Union of Fascists' journal, *Action*.

In occupied Europe, underground newspapers often carried cartoons. L. J. Jordaan's *De Robot*[33] which characterised the impervious, unstoppable Nazi war machine, appeared in the underground *De Groene Amsterdammer* after the invasion of Holland in 1940.

In contrast, assorted fascists, Nazi admirers and ultra-nationalists collaborated with the Germans in occupied Europe. Cartoonists were amongst them and they often drew hook-nosed Jews whom they depicted as part and parcel of Judaeo-Bolshevik subversion. Following Operation Barbarossa – Hitler's invasion of the USSR – high-ranking Soviet Communists who happened to be Jewish were the target for caricature. Stalin's commissar for foreign affairs, Maxim Litvinov, né Meir Walloch-Finkelstein, suddenly acquired exaggerated 'Jewish features' in *La Gerbe* in Paris.[34]

[31] Colin Seymour-Ure and Jim Schoff, *David Low* (London 1985) p. 118.
[32] *Le Droit de Vivre* 4 April 1936.
[33] Mark Bryant, *World War II in Cartoons* (London 1989) p. 38.
[34] La Dernière Croisade, *La Gerbe* 16 October 1941.

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This French publication was pro-Nazi and regarded Operation Barbarossa as a pan-European crusade to destroy Communism – a modern-day version of past crusades to reclaim the Holy Land for Christendom.[35]

In occupied Holland, the fascist sympathisers Peter Beekman and Pieter Pouwels utilised anti-Semitism in their illustrations. Beekman, a supporter of the Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging in Nederland (NSB), featured prominently in *Volk en Vaderland*, an NSB weekly. Jews were viewed as either representing the elite or at the centre of a web controlling them from behind the scenes,[36] including everyone from Prince Bernhard to King George VI to Eleanor Roosevelt. The Jews were depicted as both greedy capitalists and devout Communists. The Princess Irene Brigade, a Dutch military force stationed in Wolverhampton in the United Kingdom, was depicted as a Jewish unit.

In Mussolini's Italy, anti-Jewish legislation was not introduced until 1938. However, Italy's alignment with Nazi Germany and eventual participation in the war allowed Mameli Barbara to suggest that Jews controlled the United States in the satirical magazine *Marc'Aurelio*. John Bull was similarly transformed into a Jewish stereotype to imply that the British were, in fact, fighting a Jewish war against Italy.

In the Soviet Union, Boris Efimov drew for *Pravda*, *Krokodil* and *Ogonyok*, but followed the latest twists and turns of Stalin's political whims such as castigating Trotsky and Bukharin during the period of the show trials. His brother Mikhail Koltsov, who had fought in the Spanish civil war, was shot as an English spy in February 1940. Boris Efimov was the son of a Jewish shoemaker, Haim Fridlyand, and had attacked Hitler through his cartoons as early as 1924.[37] Like many Jews in Stalin's USSR, Efimov preferred to conceal his Jewish origins for fear of discrimination and persecution.

In Nazi Germany itself, Julius Streicher published *Der Stürmer*. It was characterised by its crude but popular anti-Semitic cartoons. Many of these stereotypes were drawn by its in-house cartoonist, 'Fips', aka Philipp Rupprecht, who had worked for the magazine since 1925. Jews were depicted as sexual predators, financial exploiters, collectors of Christian blood, ritual murderers of German children[38] and anti-patriotic subversives. One cartoon in 1935 depicted a kosher butcher and his wife making sausages from rats.

In the August 1935 edition, Streicher wrote: 'The Jew is monstrosity incarnate . . . his soul is disjointed, inharmonious, debased. As the blood so the soul! The soul of the Jew is the sum of the bad qualities of other races.'[39]

In periodicals such as *Das Schwarze Korps* of the SS, members of the Jewish Brigade were depicted as weaklings who did not want to fight and bribers of non-Jews to take their place. Churchill was seen in Nazi publications sporting an armband bearing the insignia of the Star of David. Periodicals such as *Kladderadatsch* and *Lustige Blätter* often featured Jews as the puppet masters of the Allies.

Some cartoonists who stayed in Germany believed that they could retain their spirit of critical observation. Karl Arnold remained with *Simplicissimus* after 1933 and attempted to cope with its total change of direction under Nazi rule. He believed initially that Hitler would quickly be

[35] Roy Douglas, *The World War, 1939–1945: the Cartoonists' Vision* (London 1990) p. 93.
[36] Kees Ribbens, 'Picturing Anti-Semitism in the Nazi-Occupied Netherlands: Anti-Jewish Stereotyping in a Racist Second World War Comic Strip', *Modern Jewish Studies* vol.17 no.1 (February 2018) pp. 8–23.
[37] Stephen M. Norris, 'Laughter's Weapon and Pandora's Box: Boris Efimov in the Khrushchev Era', in *Cultural Cabaret: Russian and American Essays for Richard Stites*, ed. David Goldfrank and Pavel Lyssakov (Washington, DC 2012) p. 132.
[38] *Der Stürmer* (Nuremberg) May 1934.
[39] *Der Stürmer* no.32 August 1936, in *The Yellow Spot* (London 1936) p. 74.

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replaced by just another of Hindenburg's numerous chancellors, taken from his 'Magic Factory'.[40] Others such as Oskar Garvens and Paul Weber continued to draw for publications which promoted anti-Semitic caricatures.

The war decimated Europe. It had lasted in reality from 1914 until 1945 with a hiatus in between. Hitler and his acolytes turned the friendly neighbour into a member of the *Einsatzgruppen* whose mission in life was to kill as many Jews as possible. Many wondered in hindsight how this could have happened. How could 'a down and out' from Linz have reinvented himself as the infallible, conquering hero of a new Germany – and sucked millions into blindly following him.

The Allies might have won the war, but the Jews certainly lost it. The British cartoonist Philip Zec – of Russian-Jewish parentage – summed up the fragility of victory in his VE Day cartoon for the *Daily Mirror*. A wounded British soldier is seen handing over a laurel wreath, representing peace in Europe. The caption reads: 'Here you are. Don't lose it again!'

Stalinism and the USSR

The post-war world was a period of renounced empires and a clash of ideologies. The wartime cooperation between the anti-Nazi powers fell apart within months rather than years. This initially led to the Berlin airlift and then to the full onset of the Cold War. Half of Europe had substituted one oppressor for another.

In the post-war period, Stalin directed a campaign against Jews in the USSR which led to the trial and execution of leading members of the Jewish intelligentsia in August 1952. This was followed by the Slánský trial in Czechoslovakia in November 1952 and the Doctors' Plot in January 1953. In both processes, Jews were represented throughout as the forces of evil, bent on undermining the benevolent wisdom of the leadership.

While the brutal nature of victimisation and deportation to the Gulag receded after Stalin's death in March 1953, anti-Semitic innuendo and discrimination against Jews continued. There even was an unofficial *numerus clausus* to prevent Jews from gaining access to universities. After all, Khrushchev had commented in 1958 that 'Jews never consider themselves educated enough' and always wanted to enrol at universities.[41]

The rise of the state of Israel in 1948 provided an alternative pathway for Jews. Although the USSR and the USA had joined together in recognising Israel, Stalin had hoped for a warm-sea harbour in Haifa or a socialist state sympathetic to the USSR. What he did not expect was the warm welcome which Soviet Jews extended to Golda Meir, the Israeli ambassador, when she attended the Jewish New Year service in a Moscow synagogue in the autumn of 1948. Jews turned out in their thousands to greet her – crowded on the streets, suspended from lampposts, hanging out of windows, shouting greetings in Yiddish to the emissary. It was perhaps the biggest unofficial demonstration since those of the oppositionists in the 1920s.

Many had written to Soviet officials requesting permission to leave for Israel to join surviving family members. Others took Stalin at his word and offered to put their military knowhow at the disposal of the state which was fighting a war of independence against a plethora of Arab armies. Stalin responded with arrest and incarceration. Externally the USSR supported Israel. Internally it did not. Requests for emigration were frowned upon and applicants often sentenced to years in strict-regime labour camps.[42]

[40] Karl Arnold, *Simplicissimus* 25 December 1932.
[41] *Le Figaro* 9 April 1958.
[42] See Mordechai Namir, *Shlichut B'Moskva* (Tel Aviv 1971).

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While the gates of the Gulag were opened under Khrushchev and Stalin's crimes gradually condemned, Jews who wished to leave for Israel were still being placed on trial and sentenced during the 1950s. Anti-Semitism had not abated such that several Jews were accused of economic crimes in the 1960s.

In October 1963, the Ukrainian Academy of Science published Trofim Kichko's *Iudaizm bez prikas* (Judaism without Embellishment) which featured caricatures of hook-nosed Jews, wearing prayer shawls in synagogue and dipping their claw-like hands into pots of gold. This brought protests from the Western Left and in particular from Communist parties who had clearly undergone some retrospective examination of past Soviet history. Indeed, cartoons featuring Jews and Israel which appeared in the Ukrainian press during the 1960s bore an uncanny resemblance to those that had appeared in journals such as *L'vivs'ki visti* and *Krakivs'ki visti* during the German occupation.[43]

During the 1960s, the Soviet Union followed a policy of cultivating the developing world. This meant preferring nationalist regimes in the Arab world, such as Nasser's Egypt, and opposing social democratic Israel. Themes castigating the state of Israel appeared regularly in Soviet cartoons: Uncle Sam was controlled by Israel and Nelson Rockefeller in the United States was Jewish; there was no difference between Jews in the Middle East conflict and Nazis during World War II.

During and in the aftermath of the Six Day War in June 1967, Soviet cartoonists were deployed to depict Israeli soldiers as Nazi stormtroopers, backed by the long arm of American capital;[44] a goose-stepping Moshe Dayan kicking Hitler off his pedestal in order to take his place;[45] a skeletal hand emerging from a broken swastika to hand a baton labelled 'Genocide' to an Israeli soldier already dripping blood.[46] Israel's territorial expansion to almost four times its initial area during the war was compared in *Pravda* to Nazi expansionism in Eastern Europe decades before.[47]

The quick defeat of Egypt and Syria spurred on this Soviet display of rage and led to a breaking-off of diplomatic relations with Israel. Cartoons depicted Israel as now being on the wrong side of history and compared the Israeli military forces to the Americans in Vietnam and to the military junta that had taken over Greece.[48] Such tropes began to influence the far Left in Western Europe. Such imagery was therefore in place before the Jewish settlement drive on the West Bank and before the election of Menahem Begin's Likud party some ten years later.

In Poland, anti-Semitic imagery was similarly utilised in a power struggle within the Polish Communist party. Non-Jews were turned into Jews, leading figures were found to be controlled by their Jewish wives – and all were connected to the Zionists in Israel. This led to an exodus of often highly assimilated Polish Jews – the remnant who had survived the Shoah and thought that they had found a home in the Communist party in Poland – to Scandinavia in 1968.

In addition, Jews featured disproportionately in the dissident movements in both the USSR and the Eastern bloc. This allowed the Kremlin to invoke the idea that Jews were unpatriotic and unworthy. Publications such as Yuri Ivanov's *Ostorozhno sionizm* (Beware Zionism!) in

[43] Henry Abramson, '"This is the Way it Was": Textual and Iconographic Images of Jews in the Nazi-Sponsored Ukrainian Press of Distrikt Galizien", in *Why Didn't the Press Shout? American and International Journalism during the Holocaust*, ed. Robert Moses Shapiro (Hoboken, NJ 2003) pp. 537–56.
[44] *Kommunist Tadjikistana* 9 June 1967.
[45] *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* 21 June 1967.
[46] *Bakinsky Rabochi* 23 June 1967.
[47] *Pravda* 4 July 1967.
[48] *Sovietskaya Estonia* 24 June 1967.

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1969 accentuated the sense of discrimination. This gelled with the anti-Semitic inferences projected by anti-Israel cartoons.

The Star of David was associated in the USSR both with the synagogue and with the Israeli tank. As cartoons were driven by government policy, there was no inner restraint on the part of Soviet cartoonists to ensure that criticism of Israel did not tip over into criticism of Jews per se. 'Excused as satire and obscured as symbolism, cartoons reflect the biases and prejudices of their community'[49] – and the Soviet Union was no different.

When demonstrators protested in Red Square against the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the police attacked, screaming that they were all Jews.[50] Soviet intellectuals who spoke out in support of human rights in the USSR, such as Andrei Sakharov, Andrei Sinyavsky and Dmitri Shostakovich, regarded the malaise of anti-Semitism in their country as symbolic of all that was wrong in the Soviet Union.

Lenin had always believed that the answer to the Jewish problem in Russia was assimilation and disappearance. He was surrounded by many acculturated Jews and therefore had little contact with the Jewish masses. He knew nothing about Marxism–Zionism and the building of socialism in Palestine. Stalin's use of anti-Semitism since 1926 and the Nazi–Soviet pact of 1939 started a reappraisal for Soviet Jews. The invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 proved to be the final straw for many of them.

Many Jews in the literary and artistic world hid their identity behind traditional Russian names. The writer Samuil Abramovich Draitser became Emil Abramov. The satirist Grigory Kremer became Grigory Kroshin.[51] The only task of cartoonists who worked for satirical journals such as *Krokodil* was 'to ridicule things the state apparatus has proved wrong and worthy of criticism'.[52]

McCarthyism in the United States

In the United States in the 1950s, there was a similar but different involvement by cartoonists and satirists in political life. The McCarthy years tried to define patriotism by opposing Communism and persecuting liberals. The search for clandestine Communists was led by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Of course, some Jews did indeed believe in Stalin, but a far greater number believed in liberalism and a tolerance of the other. US Jews – and their humour – cemented the existing ties between Jews and the profession of cartoonists.[53] After all, Jews had voted overwhelmingly for the Democrats since the 1920s and embraced Roosevelt's New Deal. The manic search for 'Reds under the bed' in the USA was paralleled by the discovery of 'Zionists under the bed' in the USSR. Both affected Jews – albeit in different scenarios.

Mad magazine first saw the light of day in August 1952. Many of its writers and cartoonists were left-wing Jews. It reflected the post-war humour, non-conformism and political individualism of Jewish New York. Many who worked at *Mad* were acculturated Jews who did not wish to advertise their Jewishness in the era of McCarthy. The anarchic dialogue in the magazine was peppered with Yiddishisms – sometimes real words, other times not, written sometimes in English,

[49] Danjoux, *Political Cartoons and the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict* p. 11.
[50] Abraham Rothberg, *The Heirs of Stalin: Dissidence and the Soviet Regime, 1953–1970* (London 1971) pp. 146–7.
[51] Emil Draitser, *In the Jaws of the Crocodile: a Soviet Memoir* (London 2021) pp. 77–83.
[52] Ibid. p. 117.
[53] George M. Goodwin, 'More than a Laughing Matter: Cartoons and Jews', *Modern Judaism* vol.21 no.2 (May 2001) pp. 146–74.

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other times in Yinglish. It subtly attacked McCarthyism and the antics of the House Committee who saw Jews as 'liberal outsiders'.

Such second-generation Jews came from poor immigrant backgrounds and often sided with the Left politically. Harvey Kurtzman edited *Mad* magazine between 1952 and 1956 and later recorded the remarkable evolution of US comics.[54] William Elder (Wolf William Eisenberg), Al Jaffee (Abraham Jaffee) and Al Feldstein (Albert Feldstein) were all associated with *Mad* magazine in its earliest days.

Several members of staff on the magazine had survived the Shoah and made their way to America. While Jews were formally not mentioned in *Mad* and Yiddishisms were essentially dissociated from Jewishness, there was a clear irritation at how Hollywood occasionally softsoaped Germany and the Germans during the period of the Shoah. Jewish victims became nondescript general victims.

Jewish food featured heavily in the magazine and its use often reflected Jewish uncertainty about acceptance in American society. In the third issue of *Mad* in early 1953, the parody 'V-Vampires' depicted the main character Godiva the Vampire, 'who pretended to eat blintzes and borscht but preferred blood'.[55]

In the shadow of the defeat of Nazism, superheroes were soon discovered to be Jewish in *Mad* magazine! The mild-mannered Clark Kent was actually a Jew. For non-Jews, this was a bizarre revelation which they eventually acclimatised to, but for American Jews at that time, it built on the very opposite belief that Jews were totally helpless and disempowered – and alienated from mainstream American society. Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster brought Superman to the world's attention – significantly on the eve of World War II. Bob Kane (né Robert Kahn) followed with Batman. Indeed some found echoes within the Jewish liturgy and compared Superman to Moses.[56] Joe Simon (Hymie Simon) and Jack Kirby (Jacob Kurtzberg) brought forth Captain America. X-Men, the work of Kirby and Stan Lee (né Stanley Lieber), first appeared in September 1963. Lee revamped the Flash and the Justice League of America, and then brought the exploits of the Fantastic Four, the Black Panther and Spiderman to an appreciative audience.

While Lee is best known because of the proliferation of superhero films in recent years, he was just one of many Bronx Jews who distanced themselves from both their geographical and ethnic backgrounds.[57] Even so, Lee, dubbed 'the Jewish Walt Disney', was deemed worthy of inclusion in Yale's *Jewish Lives* series.[58]

Israel after 1948: Anti-Semitism and Anti-Israelism

Many non-Jewish cartoonists strongly identified with the Jewish survivors of the Shoah. As challengers of the established order, many were to be found on the Left. The difference for Jews was that they did not want to be defined by victimhood. In contrast, they believed now that they should stand up for themselves and be the forgers of their own destiny. Many Jews asked why, if the solidarity of the international working class was unbreachable, there were so few uprisings in support of persecuted Jewry.

[54] See Harvey Kurtzman, *From Aargh! to Zap! A Visual History of Comics* (New York 1991).
[55] Leah Garrett, '"Shazoom. Vas ist das Shazoom?": Mad Magazine and Post-War Jewish America', *Modern Jewish Studies* vol.16 no.1 (March 2017) pp. 57–79.
[56] Itay Stern, 'Where Moses Meets Superman', *Ha'aretz* 31 July 2015.
[57] J. Hoberman, 'Marvel's Ringmaster', *New York Review of Books* 19 August 2021.
[58] Liel Leibovitz, *Stan Lee: a Life in Comics* (Yale 2020).

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The tragic reality in the Holy Land was that two national movements had arisen at essentially the same point in history with claims to the same territory. The proposed partition of Mandatory Palestine into Israel and Palestine, according to UN Resolution 181 in November 1947, was an inevitability. The British during their sojourn in Palestine believed that Jews and Arabs were little more than 'squabbling natives (who) had to be kept apart by poor, harried John Bull'.[59]

Even so, British censorship prevented the publication of acerbic and critical cartoons by artists such as Yosef Ross. By 1947, the British government returned the Mandate to the United Nations. In Britain itself, the Labour government of Clement Attlee had hoped to find a solution to the problem, but there were clearly differences of opinion even within the party. While Aneurin Bevan, the leader of the Labour Left, threatened to resign from the Attlee government over British conduct in Palestine,[60] cartoonists such as David Low and Leslie Illingworth began to discern the complex reality of the Israel–Palestine struggle and thereby distance themselves from the conflict. For Vicky, it was different. As an acculturated Jew, he was certainly ambivalent about Zionism, yet he could not forget what the Nazis had done even if he wished to. While he visited Israel in 1951 and published his sketches afterwards,[61] privately he favoured an assimilationist solution to the question of the Jews.[62]

The idea of 'the fighting Jew' affected ideological sensibilities: it was easier to cast the Jew as the victim of fascism, peacefully seeking a haven in the Holy Land. The very idea of the Jews as a nation in exile, returning to their ancient homeland from far-flung lands – as of right – did not fit into theory. The nascent, evolving Palestinian Arab nation, suppressed by British imperialism, was less problematic as it fitted the template of colonised peoples. The campaign of nationalist organisations such as the Irgun under Menahem Begin and Lehi under Natan Yellin-Mor, Israel Eldad and Yitzhak Shamir accentuated unease. Following the blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1946, Illingworth drew two British soldiers carrying a stretcher – and written on the blanket concealing a body was 'World Sympathy with Zionism'.[63] Begin had defined the Irgun as an underground army, but it was also noted for its botched military operations in which civilians became 'collateral damage'. Lehi, on the other hand, embraced the principle of 'individual terror', taking its ideological cue from the Narodnaya Volya, which had employed assassination as a revolutionary tool in Tsarist Russia.

David Low had drawn a cartoon entitled 'Standing Room Only' in 1937, which drew attention to the proposal of the Peel Commission to partition Mandatory Palestine.[64] While David Ben-Gurion and Chaim Weizmann accepted the idea of partition, Golda Meir and Vladimir Jabotinsky rejected it. Paradoxically, Low's cartoon sided with the sceptics.

Ten years later, Low had moved away from his original position. The fighting in the Holy Land and the Irgun's activities had clearly disillusioned him. At the beginning of 1947, he drew 'The Dark Mirror' in which a 'Jewish terrorist' is seen peering into a mirror which reflects back 'the beast of anti-Semitism'.[65]

The armistice in early 1949 concluded with an independent state of Israel, the West Bank was occupied by Jordan and Gaza was seized by Egypt. It also produced a refugee problem of more than

[59] Jonathan Freedland, Introduction to the *Guardian* exhibition *Twice Promised Land* 2–30 July 2004.
[60] Michael Foot, *Aneurin Bevan, 1945–1960* (London 1975) p. 87.
[61] *Jewish Chronicle* 27 April 1951.
[62] Davies and Ottaway, *Vicky*, p. 105.
[63] *Daily Mail* 23 July 1946.
[64] *Evening Standard* 30 July 1937.
[65] *Evening Standard* 3 January 1947.

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700,000 Palestinian Arabs who had fled or been expelled. Low compared the plight of the refugees to that of the Jews before World War II in a cartoon entitled 'There, yesterday were we'.[66]

Between 1949 and the Suez war of 1956, Israel refused entry to all those refugees who wished to return. In the summer of 1948, the Israeli cabinet had agreed this policy for fear of establishing a fifth column. Even after the end of hostilities in 1949, Israel's policy did not fundamentally change. The raids of fedayeen, often with Jordanian and Egyptian help, resulted in the deaths of Israeli civilians and the triumph of the hardline approach of Ben-Gurion, Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres. This was in contrast to the questioning of the policy of automatic retaliation by Moshe Sharett. Low was critical of Israel's Operation Black Arrow which resulted in the killing of many Egyptian soldiers.[67] Sharett himself was appalled and realised that the raid would have far-reaching consequences.[68] Low was presciently critical on the eve of the Suez campaign in a cartoon entitled 'What is sown must come up'.[69]

The collusion of Israel with the imperial powers, Britain and France, agreed at Sèvres in 1956, enhanced the charge of the Left that Israel had crossed the ideological Rubicon and was therefore opposed to the principle of decolonisation. With the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1964 and a growing national awareness on the part of the Palestinians, many cartoonists gradually shifted their sympathy towards the Palestinians.

Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza during the Six Day War in 1967 led to a settlement drive. At first, security settlements were established at strategic points to impede any future invading Arab army. The victory in the war, however, awakened forgotten dreams of a Greater Israel among the Right, the National Religious and even some members of the Labour party, to incorporate the West Bank as Judaea and Samaria. As the Left fragmented and demanded change, the Right coalesced and supported the status quo – now understood as holding on to the conquered territories.

Spiritual fervour and messianism coloured the outlook of the succeeding generation of religious Zionists in the National Religious party (NRP). They moved from demanding religious rights from a secular government, such as the provision of kosher food, to espousing the demand to establish new settlements on the West Bank. The election of the Likud under Menahem Begin in 1977 cemented the approach of a new Israel.

The débâcle of Operation Peace in Galilee in 1982, in which Lebanon was invaded, and the subsequent killing of Palestinians in the camps at Sabra and Shatilla by the Christian Phalangists, brought opprobrium from many cartoonists. The change in the 1980s from a labour-intensive, controlled command economy to one based on neo-liberalism extinguished the ideal of a new type of society arising in Israel in the minds of many on the international Left. On the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Israel, the *Guardian* newspaper in the UK proclaimed that 'in the 1970s, before it was fashionable to do so, we pioneered the argument that there must be justice for the Palestinians'.[70] Increasingly, the *Guardian* gave less space to the peace camps amongst both Israelis and Palestinians: it proved easier to provide polarised opinions from both sides. With the start of the al-Aqsa, or Second Palestinian, Intifada in 2000, from the *Guardian* standpoint, it was as if the Oslo Accords between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat in 1993 had never been signed. The retaliatory attacks by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), in an attempt to force an end to the Islamist suicide bombers, brought tremendous criticism – and this was reflected in many cartoons.

[66] *Evening Standard* 23 March 1949.
[67] *Guardian* 4 March 1955.
[68] Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars, 1949–1956* (Oxford 1993) pp. 324–34.
[69] *Guardian* 16 October 1956.
[70] *Guardian* 30 April 1998.

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Misinterpretations and Ignorance

The problem for the critics of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's policies in the early 2000s was that the Star of David, which signified the synagogue and Jewish communities around the world, also adorned an Israeli flag which flew from many an Israeli military vehicle. This lack of distinction and indeed of sensitivity, together with an absence of familiarity with the complexities of the Israel–Palestine conflict, led many cartoonists to dig a hole for themselves.[71] David Brown's cartoon in the *Independent* showed Sharon seemingly biting off the head of a baby. Its caption stated: 'What's wrong – you never seen a politician kissing babies before?'[72] This contrasted Sharon's desire for re-election in the upcoming national election in 2003 with his orders to the IDF to crush the al-Aqsa Intifada, to implement air attacks on overcrowded Gaza and to stage the incursion into Jenin in Operation Defensive Shield.

David Brown used as his model for the cartoon Goya's *Saturn Devouring his Son*. For Jews, it conjured up instead a medieval anti-Semitic imagery of Jews imbibing Christian blood. Moreover, Sharon was not kissing babies, but eating them.

This unintentional tipping over from criticism of an Israeli government policy into a classic depiction of anti-Semitism – albeit a misinterpretation – marked a lack of awareness, but did not prevent Brown's cartoon from being awarded 'Political Cartoon of the Year' at the end of 2003. Cartoonists had almost a duty to offend, but were there any red lines that should be drawn?

Les Gibbard also walked into 'an emotional minefield' when he published a cartoon of Begin and Sharon in the *Guardian*[73] in 1982, following the killing of Palestinian men, women and children in the refugee camps outside Beirut by the Christian Phalangists, allies of the Israeli invading forces. Amidst a pile of dead bodies, Begin is seen holding out his hands in bewilderment, while Sharon, in party dress on top of a tank, proclaims 'Happy New Year!' The caption reads: 'We did not know what was going on . . .' The implication that the Israelis were mounting a cover-up after a crescendo of international criticism was accompanied by an implied comparison between Israeli Jews and German Nazis. The cartoon also implied that since the massacre coincided with the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, the celebration of this religious festival was similar to the secular New Year and somehow tied to the deaths of the Palestinian civilians.

Again, a lack of awareness led a concerned cartoonist to drive at full speed into a dead-end street. It suggested that the complexity of the Israel–Palestine conflict was difficult for the reductionist approach of many a cartoonist. It was not as clear-cut a situation as British Tommies or American GIs confronting Nazi stormtroopers.

Similarly the Portuguese illustrator António Moreira Antunes was perplexed at accusations of anti-Semitism after publication of his cartoon of a blind President Trump, sporting a skullcap, being led by his guide dog, Benjamin Netanyahu, in the *New York Times* (15 April 2019). The dog's collar was emblazoned with a Star of David. For some Israelis and Jewish organisations in the USA, it conjured up anti-Jewish tropes from the past.[74]

The absence of context has caused contemporary cartoonists many problems since those who read these creations may see something else. Yet even within the coterie of Jews who identify with the state of Israel, there are differences between Jews who have settled in Israel and those who

[71] Jerome Bourdon and Sandrine Boudana, 'Controversial Cartoons in the Israel–Palestine Conflict: Cries of Outrage and Dialogue of the Deaf', *International Journal of Press/Politics* vol.21 no.2 (2016) pp. 188–208.
[72] *Independent* 27 January 2003.
[73] *Guardian* 20 September 1982.
[74] *Jerusalem Post* 3 May 2019.

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remain in the Diaspora over what is and what is not anti-Semitic when attacking Israeli politicians.[75]

In Israel itself, there has often been disagreement between what is overtly anti-Semitic and what is a criticism of politicians and policy. In October 2014 Amos Biderman drew Netanyahu as the pilot in the cockpit of an aircraft which was flying towards a tower, adorned with the American flag.[76] The self-evident comparison with the hijackers of 9/11 in New York brought forth an agitated protest from the Israeli Foreign Ministry. *Ha'aretz*, however, defended its cartoonist. It stated that 'it reflected the current state of mistrust between Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Obama Administration'.[77]

A profoundly different controversy arose in the summer of 2018 when the cartoonist Avi Katz was dismissed from the *Jerusalem Report* – probably at the behest of the *Jerusalem Post* management – for a cartoon which offended the elite in the Likud and employed pigs to represent them. While this was internationally criticised as another breach in the wall of freedom of speech, the *Jerusalem Post* editorial stated that the cartoon was 'reminiscent of anti-Semitic memes, used against Jews in history'. It also trumpeted its patriotism: 'We, a Zionist newspaper, cannot accept this demeaning analogy.'[78]

Katz's cartoon was based on an Associated Press (AP) photograph of a selfie by the controversial Likud MK, Oren Hazan, with triumphant party representatives, huddled around Netanyahu after the passing of the controversial Nation-State Law. Avi Katz drew the Likudniks in exactly the same position in exactly the same clothes as in the photograph – but as pigs! The caption was, of course, taken from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*: 'All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others.' This was plainly a nod to the broad accusations that the Nation-State Law made Israeli Arabs second-class citizens.

The relevance to Orwell's pigs was glossed over. Instead it was the notion that pigs are not kosher that prevailed.

Yet the Israeli cartoonist Ze'ev had similarly depicted a squabbling Menahem Begin and Ariel ('Arik') Sharon as pigs around a table in a cartoon in August 1980.[79] It also featured Rabin as a donkey, Peres as a horse, Shamir as a piglet and Ezer Weizman as a camel. The cartoon depicted Sharon's anger at not being appointed minister of defence following Weizman's resignation. Begin took over the post himself as Sharon was both feared and unpredictable. Hanging on the wall behind Begin and Sharon was a framed statement which read: 'All ministers are equal, but some are more equal than others.'

The leader of the National Religious party, Yosef Burg, was also depicted as a pig – while wearing a *kipa*, a skullcap. He was anxiously drawing attention to another framed picture which depicted 'Arik' Sharon as 'Aricus Caesar', a Roman soldier, crossing the Rubicon. Begin's fellow architects of the Camp David Agreement in 1979, Anwar Sadat and Jimmy Carter, peer through the windows in bewilderment at this spectacle.

While all this also caused protests, it did not result in the dismissal of Ze'ev. The liberal *Ha'aretz* in 1980 proved more tolerant than the illiberal *Jerusalem Post* in 2018. It also perhaps reflected the profoundly different times. In 2018, Netanyahu was at the height of his power during the Trump era. In addition, the *Jerusalem Post* was an English-language newspaper, directed also at

[75] *Guardian* 29 January 2013.
[76] *Ha'aretz* 30 October 2014.
[77] *Ha'aretz* 31 October 2014.
[78] *Jerusalem Post* 31 July 2018.
[79] *Ha'aretz* 15 August 1980.

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the Jewish Diaspora. The very idea of conjuring up leading Israeli politicians as pigs may have proved more offensive to a broad Diaspora audience, emotionally connected to Israel and cognisant of the heritage of 'pigs' in Jewish tradition.

Ducks also caused a problem. In September 1991, the Disney Corporation sued the Israeli cartoonist Dudu Geva for appropriating the figure of Donald Duck without permission. Geva argued that his creation was entirely different, but was fined 9,000 shekels. Many artists viewed this as an example of cultural Americanisation and symbolic of 'the broader relationship between artists and power'. A decade later Geva's duck was celebrated as an official symbol of Tel Aviv.[80]

Given the differences between communities in Israel, Left and Right, religious and secular, non-Zionist ultra-orthodox and religious Zionist, a dispute took place in 2007 between Mizrahim and Ashkenazim. The spiritual leader of the Mizrahim in Israel, Ovadia Yosef, took umbrage at what he perceived to be an 'anti-Semitic' cartoon, disparaging his flock. It appeared in the Ashkenazi, non-Hasidic weekly, *Yated Ne'eman*.[81]

In Germany, the 85-year-old veteran cartoonist Dieter Hanitzsch drew a cartoon for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* at the time of Neta Barzilai's triumph at the Eurovision Song Contest in the summer of 2018.[82] It depicted Netanyahu holding a missile emblazoned with a Star of David and a background at the Eurovision Song Contest. The 'V' in Eurovision was replaced by a Star of David. Hanitzsch, who was no racist, intended to depict Netanyahu as an opportunist who would exploit any situation to his benefit, but he was summarily dismissed by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

This incident not only depicted German ultra-sensitivity to questions of anti-Semitism in the aftermath of the Shoah, but also asked whether Germans, specifically, and other non-Jewish cartoonists could direct their ire at an Israeli politician. Netanyahu was exceptional in that he was disliked in Europe for his cavalier attitude in arenas of political trust. It was well known that in Israel itself, Netanyahu was being investigated on several charges by the Israeli police and his moral conduct in high office was the subject of weekly protests.

Jews in the Arab Mirror

Arab cartoonists were faced with the difficulty that a majority of Israelis just happened to be Jews. The dilemma was one of how to criticise Israeli actions without appearing to be anti-Jewish.

The use of the Star of David and the bearded, orthodox Jew wearing a skullcap, however, often proved to be a signifier for Israelis in cartoons in the Arab press. Jews were also seen to be rich. At the onset of the Arab Revolt in 1936, *Filastin*, an Arabic-language daily in Mandatory Palestine, published a cartoon entitled 'Jewish Money Talks'.[83] In addition, there were often the tropes that appeared in both Nazi and Soviet cartoons[84] – Jews at the centre of a spider's web of influence, as blood-drinking vampires and child murderers, as controllers of international finance and of America, and comparisons between the Israeli presence in the West Bank and Nazi-occupied Europe, and between Warsaw in 1945 and Jenin in 2002. Mentions of the Tsarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* reoccurred in Arab, and especially Islamist, media.

[80] 'Duck Fights: Walt Disney vs Dudu Geva and the Politics of Americanisation in Late Twentieth Century Israel', *Journal of American Studies* (2022) pp. 1–29.
[81] *Ha'aretz* 16 October 2007.
[82] *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 15 May 2018.
[83] *Filastin* 19 June 1936.
[84] Joseph S. Spoerl, 'Parallels between Nazi and Islamist Anti-Semitism', *Jewish Political Studies Review* vol.31 no.1/2 (2020) pp. 210–44.

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In April 2002, the IDF entered Bethlehem as part of Operation Protective Shield – in retaliation for the killings at the Park Hotel in Netanya as guests sat down for the Passover meal. Israeli troops laid siege to the Church of the Nativity in Manger Square after Palestinian militants fled there. This induced a spate of cartoons identifying the Palestinians as Jesus on the Cross,[85] with captions such as 'Do not kill him twice!'[86] and 'Father, forgive them because they know what they do . . .'[87] Giorgio Forattini similarly depicted the Israelis as Christ-killers in the liberal Italian daily *La Stampa*.[88] All this conjured up the ancient imagery of the Jews as deicides, promulgated by the Church Fathers.

The role of Palestinian Islamists in the al-Aqsa Intifada and in the Hamas takeover of Gaza in 2007 pointed to a growing Islamisation of the conflict. This communicated to the international Muslim community beyond the Arab world. In addition, periodic flare-ups between the IDF and Hamas, such as in 2009, 2014 and 2021, promoted the Palestinians as a cause célèbre to many Muslims. This also coincided with the rise of both al-Qaeda and ISIS (or Islamic State).

Following the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, the Danish daily newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published twelve cartoons of the Prophet in September 2005. Many Muslims considered them blasphemous and insulting. While the situation provided fertile territory for Islamists to expand their influence amongst Muslims, it was also accompanied by violence and anger directed against Denmark.[89] It led to attacks on Danish embassies in Syria, Lebanon and Iran. Al-Qaeda advocated a boycott of Danish goods, while Saudi Arabia recalled its ambassador from Copenhagen. One politician in Uttar Predesh in India called for the beheading of the cartoonists. In Pakistan, the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami offered a $10,000 reward for killing a cartoonist. Six people were killed when the Danish Embassy in Islamabad was stormed in June 2008.

In Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was in power and the Danish cartoons provided him with an opportunity to erase from human consciousness the perception of the Shoah, which ostensibly offered a raison d'être for the existence of Israel. Iran broke off diplomatic relations with Denmark and at Ahmadinejad's behest, an International Holocaust Cartoon Exhibition was organised by the daily *Hamshahri*. While this was geared to questioning the Shoah as a historical event, Ahmadinejad also attempted to question modern Germany's responsibility for it and its reparations agreement with Israel. Why should the Germans have feelings of guilt toward Zionists? Why should the costs of the Zionists be paid out of their pockets? If people committed crimes in the past, then they should have been tried sixty years ago. Why must the German people be humiliated today because a group of people committed crimes in the name of the Germans during the course of history?[90]

In February 2008, the Danish police prevented an assassination attempt directed at Kurt Westergaard, the cartoonist who drew the 'Bomb in the Turban' cartoon. In 2009, a scholarly work by Jytte Klausen of Brandeis University about the cartoons controversy was due to be published by Yale University Press – except that Yale thought it best that the controversial cartoons be omitted in the name of preventing further violence.

In Paris in 2012, the satirical weekly newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* published the cartoons – and a court held that this did not incite race hatred. Republican France upheld secular values and refused

[85] Joël Kotek, *Cartoons and Extremism: Israel and the Jews in Arab and Western Media* (London 2009) pp. 43–6.
[86] Boukhari, 7 April 2002, Arabia.com.
[87] Stavro Jabra, *Daily Star* 4 April 2002.
[88] *La Stampa* 3 April 2002.
[89] See David Keane, 'Cartoon Violence and Freedom of Expression', *Human Rights Quarterly* vol.30 no.4 (2008) pp. 845–75.
[90] *Der Spiegel* 30 May 2006.

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religion a role in public life – and there was no law against blasphemy. *Charlie Hebdo* attacked and insulted priests as well as rabbis and imams.[91]

Some Algerians who settled in France had been influenced by FIS, the Islamic Salvation Front, and its struggle to overthrow the Algerian regime. The availability of satellite television and the increasing influence of the internet and social media assisted in the growth of Islamism in France. The invasion of Iraq and the al-Aqsa Intifada in Israel provided local Islamists with foreign causes. Islamism also brought with it a growing anti-Semitism such that several French Jews moved to London or emigrated to Israel.

In January 2015, twelve people were killed at *Charlie Hebdo*'s offices by brothers Saïd and Chérif Kouachi, French-born sons of Algerian immigrants – one of whom had declared his desire to attack Jewish targets. This was followed by an attack by an associate of the brothers on a kosher supermarket, Hypercacher, in which four Jews were killed.

The cover of the next issue of *Charlie Hebdo* showed the Prophet in tears, carrying a placard which stated: 'Je suis Charlie'. This defiant illustration in the face of a mass killing undercut the Kouachi brothers' core beliefs. It indicated that the Prophet himself not only opposed the killing of the cartoonists, but by implication also criticised their brand of Islamism. In September 2020, *Charlie Hebdo* republished the Danish cartoons.

The Rise of Zionism

Zionism was just one solution among numerous answers to the age-old conundrum that was the 'Jewish problem'. Some like the fathers of Marx and Disraeli chose conversion. Others chose assimilation and disappearance – as did a multitude of Jewish revolutionaries who had emerged from closeted ghettos. Still others wished to preserve the Jewish national heritage – some within religious tradition, others outside it, often within socialist parameters. Many believed in a territorial solution in a plethora of geographical locations. Zionism projected one such solution: the Zionists believed in a return to the ancient Jewish homeland, Israel, then a backwater under the control of the Ottoman Turks.

Zionism arose in the penumbra of European nationalism and the advent of the nation-state. The early Zionists were therefore highly influenced by the French Revolution and its desire and motivation to overthrow the *ancien régime* and create a new order. Max Nordau spoke of 'the great men' of the French Revolution at the first Zionist Congress in 1897.

The Zionist movement quickly fragmented into different political factions, but they looked to different periods of the revolutionary era and to different figures. Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Tabenkin looked to Robespierre and Danton while Jabotinsky preferred Mirabeau. While Zionism was to some extent a revolt against Judaism, religious tradition provided the backdrop to the emergence of the movement. Many drew their inspiration from the annals of Judaic history.

Zionist factions were influenced by recent history and the revolutionary national movements of the nineteenth century including the Italian Risorgimento and Irish Republicanism. Many located Jewishness within the advance of Bolshevism in Russia after 1917. Some Zionists therefore switched to the here-and-now of Communism in the 1920s and found biblical universalism there rather than within Marxist-Zionism. Moreover, many felt that they needed to prove themselves ideologically and turned on their former comrades in the Zionist movement in the USSR which was gradually being suppressed. Zionists in the newly established Soviet Union were sentenced to long periods in the Gulag.

[91] Jane Weston, 'Bête et méchat: Politics, Editorial Cartoons and Bande dessinée in the French Satirical Newspaper, *Charlie Hebdo*', *European Comic Art* vol.2 no.1 (2009) pp. 109–29.

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The French Revolution also fragmented Judaism into several new interpretations. There were many other religious leaders who followed the views of the Hatam Sofer who simply wanted to rebuild the ghetto walls after Waterloo and defined themselves as 'authentic' followers of Judaism. Indeed Shneur Zalman of Lyady preferred the autocratic traditional rule of the anti-Semitic Tsar Alexander to that of the French invader in 1812.[92] After all, Napoleon had originally promoted the secularism of the French revolutionary republic. This approach of the Hatam Sofer and ultra-orthodoxy meant standing against Zionism and not forcing 'God's hand' to return the Jews to the Holy Land. The Lubavitcher Rebbe of the time accused the Zionists of replacing the Torah with nationalism.

At its outset, the Zionist movement was led by the socialists rather than by the nationalists and the religious. This placed emphasis on the creation of a new society as well as settling a new land. This defined Zionism as different from the imperialist inclinations of the great empires. Zionists did not arrive in Palestine in great conquering armies, but as impoverished workers carrying pitchforks and hoes, willing to build a new Promised Land.

Zionism also arose in the early nineteenth century when nationalism had assumed a progressive approach. European nationalism, however, gradually moved to the Right with the desire to colonise the world and built grandiose empires.

Zionism was spiritually and culturally indigenous to Palestine, but Zionists remained outside in a widely dispersed Diaspora. This posed a difficulty for European socialists who had no theoretical mechanism for understanding national liberation movements that existed outside the territory that they wished to liberate. Zionism was different and possibly unique. Was it therefore also wrong?

The other fundamental problem for Zionism was that it occurred at approximately the same time as the rise of Arab nationalism. The Arabs too wished to free themselves from the Turks and to decide their own destiny. Both Zionist Jews in the Diaspora and the Arabs of Palestine ultimately had claims over the same territory. The inevitable armed clashes followed, with partition of the land the obvious solution.

Cartoonists for Zion

Cartoonists who supported Zionism were undoubtedly affected by the heavy burden of Jewish history and the possibility of changing its course to forge a different future. Zionism, however, was a displaced national liberation movement, dispersed around the world and working towards emigration – as well as liberation. There were therefore many cartoons that appeared in the journals of different factions of the Zionist movement as well as in Jewish newspapers which catered for the general reader in a plethora of languages. This included specifically Jewish languages such as Yiddish and Ladino as well as English, French and German. Many illustrators would come to hear Ben-Gurion or Jabotinsky pronounce on the latest developments – and proceed to sketch them as they were in full flow.

For journals, such major figures would serve a political purpose. Thus, at the time of the Tarpat disturbances in 1929, Jabotinsky was depicted, dressed in his Jewish Legion British army uniform, sword in hand, in front of the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the outer wall of the Second Temple which was destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 CE. All of this resonated with those who closely followed events in 1929 and believed that the Jews should defend themselves against Arab attacks. Jabotinsky was also depicted wearing a blood-red cloak over his uniform which resembled a talit (a prayer shawl), presumably reflecting the holiness of the Western Wall. Yet

[92] Dovid Margolin, 'The Hasidic Rebbe Who Helped Defeat Napoleon', *Tablet Magazine* 26 August 2021.

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Jabotinsky himself was never religious: once he even organised a meeting of his aides without realising that it was Yom Kippur.

In a broader context, art was at the disposal of the Jewish national movement to create the imagery to further its goals and to attract new supporters. At the opening of the fifth Zionist Congress in Basel in 1901, both Max Nordau and Martin Buber promoted Jewish art as part and parcel of national rebirth – an essential part of cultural Zionism.[93] This was integral to a broader move by Chaim Weizmann's newly formed Democratic Fraktion. This essentially opposed the continual demand of religious Zionists and their rabbinical mentors to control education and propaganda within the movement. The orthodox suspected that an uncontrolled Zionist culture would be the first step on the slide towards secularism. The 'cultural question' therefore became an ongoing, sharp controversial debate between Weizmann and his allies and the rabbis.[94]

Even so, this espousal of a Jewish national art actually attracted many religious Zionists such as Hermann Struck, who argued that culture and religion were not in opposition to each other. This led to the establishment of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design by Boris Schatz in Jerusalem in 1906. It was named after Bezalel ben Uri, the artisan of the mishcan (the Tabernacle) which housed the Ark of the Covenant during the forty-year-long Israelite wandering in the desert before entering Canaan.

The Democratic Fraktion also attracted many young liberals who were opposed to Theodor Herzl's cultivation of 'the rich and the powerful, Jewish bankers and financiers' as well as the Kaiser and the Turkish Sultan.[95] One of those attracted to Weizmann's standard was the artist Ephraim Moses Lilien, who was opposed to the conservatives within the Zionist movement and indeed to the bourgeois values of Theodor Herzl himself. At the fifth Zionist Congress in 1901, Lilien organised an exhibition of Jewish artists and earned Buber's public praise for his art and his endeavour to challenge conventional views.

The socialist Lilien had embraced the Jugendstil movement, an art nouveau opposition to neo-classicism, and he contributed to several avant garde and modernist periodicals. In opposing the middle-class values of Herzl and his followers, Lilien celebrated 'sexuality and physicality as well as the life of the working man' and promoted 'the rejuvenation and potential freedom of the Jewish people – a rejuvenation, as it were, of the Jewish body as well as the Jewish body politic'.[96]

Lilien thereby portrayed Herzl as Moses, as the Assyrian emperor, as the very embodiment of 'male Jewishness' and the concrete projection of Nordau's *Muskeljudentum* (Muscular Judaism) in contrast to the imagery of the ghetto weakling.

Cartoons therefore reflected the highs and lows of the Zionist movement, the flaws and foibles of its main actors and the advance of the Hebrew press during the inter-war years. Children's works were often a starting point for cartoonists. In the 1930s in Palestine, Itzhak Yatziv, the editor of *Davar l'Yeladim*, asked Arie Navon to illustrate a story accompanied by rhyming text in Hebrew by Leah Goldberg. This gave rise to the character of Uri Muri, a sabra, native of the Jewish settlement in Palestine, the Yishuv. Other cartoon characters for children appeared who were fighting the Nazis in the late 1930s on the eve of World War II.[97]

[93] See Gilya Gerda Schmidt, *The Art and Artists of the Fifth Zionist Congress, 1901: Heralds of a New Age* (New York 2003).
[94] Jehuda Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: the Making of a Zionist Leader* (Oxford 1985) pp. 65–91.
[95] Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error: the Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann* (New York 1949) p. 52.
[96] Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle: Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley 2001) p. 100.
[97] Galit Gaon, 'How to Write Comics in Hebrew: the Early Years, 1935–1975', in *Israeli Comics (Part 1): the Early Years* (Holon 2008) pp. 6–11.

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The Shoah was the great leveller. Several of Israel's cartoonists after 1948 carried the memory of the anti-Semitic cartoons in *Der Stürmer* and their role in dehumanising Jews. This produced a subconscious block on demonising Arabs during the early years of Israel's existence.

In addition, some cartoonists were survivors of the Shoah and many had to learn a new language, not being fluent in Hebrew: this produced problems in providing captions. Of the 'Hungarian Mafia' at *Ma'ariv* – Tommy Lapid, Ephraim Kishon, Kariel Gardosh and Ya'akov Farkash – all, apart from Kishon, had lived in the Hungarian ghettos at the end of the war in Budapest and in part owed their lives to the heroism of the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. Ranan Lurie, a veteran of the Irgun, attacked Ernest Bevin in *Yediot Aharanot* and then contributed to *Bamahane*, the IDF weekly. In the United States, he drew cartoons for *Life Magazine*, the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*.[98]

Some were stopped from entering Palestine by the British navy and subsequently interned in detention camps in Cyprus. Ze'ev Ben-Zvi (1904–52) and Naftali Bezem (1924–2018) organised art classes for the internees and subsequently became cartoonists and caricaturists in Israel. Some cartoonists during the dying days of the British Mandate were unable to publish their frequently acerbic drawings because of censorship laws. Instead they often found American publications willing to publish them.

The first Israeli cartoonists, however, reflected the euphoria of the re-establishment of a Hebrew republic after two millennia of exile. Arie Navon brought the cartoon character 'Mr Israel' to public attention to record the events of the first years of the new state. He also looked back to Jewish history. He took the theme of the Iudaea Capta coins, minted by Vespasian and his two sons, Titus and Domitian, to commemorate the victory over the Jews in the decade after 70 CE, the year of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. These coins were also designed to reflect the power and durability of the Flavian dynasty to the ordinary Roman citizen.

Navon reimagined the two sides of the coin. On one side was the traditional 'Iudaea Capta' image with the Roman centurion standing guard over a seated weeping Jewess. On the obverse was the head of a young Israeli, wearing the kova tembel hat of the kibbutznik; the words 'Iudaea Libera' were inscribed around the edge of the coin. From defeat and enslavement in 70 to liberation and freedom in 1948.

In December 1949 during the Festival of Hanukah, Navon similarly depicted the move of the Knesset from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in the manner of the Arch of Titus in Rome. Instead of defeated and exhausted Jews carrying the Menorah into captivity, Ben-Gurion and his cabinet were carrying it back to Jerusalem.[99]

Recording the History of Israel

In the 1950s, Dosh (Kariel Gardosh) introduced the child-like 'Srulik', kova tembel, sandals and short trousers to the Israeli public in *HaOlam Hazeh*. Srulik seemed to embody the aspirations and enthusiasm of the new state, evolving into a national symbol and even featuring on an Israeli stamp.

Once again events were noted in children's sections of the press. Navon and Uriel Ofek introduced 'Sa'adia', the Yemenite boy who flies to Jerusalem on a magic carpet. This reflected Operation Magic Carpet which brought Jews from Yemen, Aden, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia and Eritrea in a series of airlifts between June 1949 and September 1950.

[98] *Ha'aretz* 21 August 2017.
[99] *Davar* 16 December 1949.

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Avigdor Luizada's character 'Daring Dan' appeared in the children's section of the religious Zionist paper, *HaTzofeh*. This reflected fighting the Arab foe – and all the Israelis were depicted as religious.

Israeli politicians were lampooned by their political rivals in cartoons. The General Zionists during the 1955 election campaign depicted Herut's Menahem Begin as sporting a 'fascist' armband. The word on the armband read 'Herut' – Begin's party – while a childish Begin was seated on a rocking horse, labelled 'demagoguery'.[100] The electoral outcome a few days later showed an increase of seven seats for Herut and a decrease of seven seats for the General Zionists.

The desire for a better world for all its citizens reflected the work – and wishful thinking – of Pinhas Sadeh and Elisheva Nadel. They introduced Dr Joseph K. in *Ha'aretz* in 1960. The good doctor discovered that the radiation from the atomic plant at Dimona caused the local ants to turn into giants. Moreover, the bodies of these ants contained a chemical cure for cancer. Receiving Ben-Gurion's approval, Joseph K. approaches Kennedy and Khrushchev to end the Cold War in return for the cure for cancer. He similarly resolves the conflict with Egypt by approaching Nasser.

Israel's politics have changed profoundly since the early years of rebirth and wonder. It expanded its territory almost fourfold after the Six Day War of 1967 and thereby clasped the poisoned chalice of the West Bank and Gaza – and their populations of Palestinian Arabs. In 1977, Israel moved from the Left to the Right with Menahem Begin's victory, such that the Likud has remained the dominant party in power while Labour has now diminished to a single figure representation in the Knesset.

Since the Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel in 1979, the far Right has emerged and established a permanent presence in Israeli politics, forming part of numerous government coalitions. There has been a normalisation of relations with several countries in the Arab world – Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Morocco, Sudan – and no major wars with Arab states. The leaders of rejectionist states such as Gaddafi and Saddam Hussein have disappeared from the scene.

There has not been a peace treaty with Lebanon. Instead there was a war with Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2006. This conflict reflected an ongoing proxy conflict with Hezbollah's mentor, Iran, which subsequently established a military presence in Syria during the course of the country's civil war.

While the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat was greeted with great expectations, the hope for a conventional peace did not materialise – more a situation of 'no war'.

Palestinian nationalists in the West Bank were challenged by Palestinian Islamists in Gaza. Palestine has been split into two parts, the West Bank and Gaza. While the Jewish settlements on the West Bank have proliferated, the takeover of Gaza by Hamas in 2007 resulted in a state of siege by Israeli military forces. Ditching its belief in suicide bombers, Hamas has instead developed long-range and sophisticated missiles in the workshops of Gaza and through smuggling routes, often starting in Iran. These missiles have been fired during periodic clashes with the Israel Defence Forces, who have responded with air attacks on a crowded Gaza.

Israel also moved from a regulated command economy in the 1980s to a globalised free enterprise philosophy. This was accentuated by the advance of a dot.com technology which produced a plethora of young entrepreneurs. Israel's newly found prosperity also brought in its wake corruption and great disparities between the haves and the have-nots in the country. While Zionism was supposed to create a new society unlike the ones the pioneers had left behind, by the

[100] *Ma'ariv* 24 July 1955.

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1990s, the Israeli economic model resembled that of Western Europe. Prime ministers and presidents, instead of being revered, found themselves convicted by courts and sent to prison.

This ongoing voyage of discovery as Jewish history advanced brought forth a richness of possibilities for many aspiring cartoonists – from Navon's 'Mr Israel' and Dosh's 'Srulik', to the detailed presentations of Ze'ev[101] and the strips of Ya'akov Kirschen's 'Dry Bones', to the animated illustrations of Amos Biderman in the twenty-first century.

The advent of social media in all its inanity often produced a tipping over of anti-Zionism into anti-Semitic tropes. Sometimes it was through ignorance, other times through ideological blindness, and still others through sheer racist malice. Moreover, the far Right in Israel believed that anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism were one and the same, while the far Left in Europe believed that anti-Zionism could never be anti-Semitic.

When the Iranian daily *Hamshahri* organised a cartoon competition in the name of 'free speech', to essentially cast doubts on the reality of the Shoah and its legacy, it provoked an Israeli Anti-Semitic Cartoons Contest which was designed to exceed the Iranian one in total absurdity.

The broad rise of anti-Semitism generally provoked reactions to this developing scenario from figures such as Fritz Behrendt in Holland and Will Eisner in the United States. Eisner wrote a graphic novel about the Tsarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Writers such as Arie Stav[102] and Joel Kotek[103] have published collections of anti-Jewish cartoons. Yet others believe that pushing the boundaries of humour is a radical act.[104] For many Jews, the Shoah remains a no-go area.

The brilliance of Israeli cartoonists was finally recognised by the establishment of the Israeli Cartoon Museum in Holon – a joint venture between the local municipality and the Israeli Cartoonists Association. Its voluminous archives, publications, exhibitions and educational work will serve the cartoonists of the future well.

In today's era of 'alternative facts', 'fake news', unhinged imaginations and vested interests, art – and especially the political cartoon – attempts to impede the blurring of fiction and reality, to puncture Orwellian 'doublethink'. As Gideon Ofrat says, 'Could it be that even in the era of post-truth, art has no choice but to tell the truth? Could it be that in an age when culture seems to be losing its hold on truth, art may be the last space unable to say "yes" to a lie?'[105]

Today's cartoonists carry a heavier burden in the age of social media than their predecessors, but they still speak truth to power. The tradition continues.

[101] 'Ze'ev: Eyewitness with a Smile' at the National Museum of Cartoon Art, London, April–May 1994.
[102] Arie Stav, *Peace, the Arabian Caricature: a Study in Anti-Semitic Imagery* (Tel Aviv 1999)
[103] Joël and Dan Kotek, *Au nom de l'antizionisme: l'image des Juifs et d'Israël dans la caricature depuis la seconde Intifada* (Brussels 2003).
[104] Louis Kaplan, '"It Will Get a Terrific Laugh": On the Problematic Pleasures and Politics of Holocaust Humor', in *Hop on Pop: the Politics and Pleasures of Popular Culture*, ed. Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson and Jane Shattuc (Durham, NC 2002) pp. 343–56.
[105] Gideon Ofrat, *Art and Lie* (Haifa 2017).

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