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THE JEWISH QUESTION IN THE 21ST
CENTURY: AN UNANSWERED
QUESTION?
EXPLORING THE JEWISH QUESTION IN
LITERATURE AND POLITICS

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Abstract

This paper explores the relevance of the Jewish Question in the Twenty-First Century. The Jewish Question, what political space exists for the Jews in the modern world, was seemingly answered by two historic events in 1948. The first of these was the creation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. The second was the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The first of these meant that Jews could live as Jews in their own state as a majority, in control of their own political destiny. The second of these paved the way for the age of minority rights that developed in the 1960s. This development meant that Jews could live a life as Jews in the Diaspora, thereby significantly altering the terms under which assimilation could be understood. Assimilation became integration. Consequently, it would appear that the Jewish Question has been answered and is no longer of significance in contemporary Jewish thought. However, if that is the case, why is it that the Jewish Question is serving a central role in important contemporary Jewish novels? The Question has served as a key plot element in the novels of two award-winning Jewish novelists, Howard Jacobson and Michael Chabon. Why is the Jewish Question featuring so strongly in the works of leading Jewish authors in the Twenty-First Century? Because it has not been answered. Using a combination of Jewish literature and a political sociological framing of contemporary debates regarding Diaspora/Israel relations, this paper explores how the Jewish Question was not answered, and suggests that part of the reason why the Question

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has not been answered is because we were never clear about what the Question was in the first place.

Keywords: Jewish Question, Political Space, Diaspora, Israel, Transnationalism, Michael Chabon, Howard Jacobson.

Introduction

The Jewish Question which asks what political space exists for the Jews in the modern world, was seemingly answered by two historic events in 1948. The first of these was the creation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. The second was the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The first of these meant that Jews could live as Jews in their own state as a majority, in control of their own political destiny. The second of these paved the way for the age of minority rights that developed in the 1960s. This development meant that Jews could live a life as Jews in the Diaspora, thereby significantly altering the terms under which assimilation could be understood. Assimilation became integration. Consequently, it would appear that the Jewish Question has been answered and is no longer of significance in contemporary Jewish thought. However, if that is the case, why is it that the Jewish Question is serving a central role in important contemporary Jewish novels. The Question has served as a key plot element in the novels of two award-winning Jewish novelists, Howard Jacobson and Michael Chabon. Their work helps to reveal not only that the Jewish Question remains relevant, but that its answers could challenge the underlying premises upon which the Question was based.

The Unanswered Answered Question

Jewish political thought is seemingly no longer concerned with what used to be called the Jewish Question. This Question addressed what political space exists for the Jews in modernity. Michael Walzer suggests that there were only two (humane) answers: assimilation and Zionism.¹ There were, however, more than these two. Its well-known Jewish answers were not just assimilationism and Zionism but also Jewish socialism. The Jewish orthodoxy also provided its own response in its rejection of modernity. Walzer's point, however, is that in a sense all answers spoke to two spatial options. As he writes, "The question itself might be phrased as follows: What political space is there for Jews in the modern world? The first

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answer points toward citizenship in inclusive democratic states; the second answer toward sovereignty in the 'land of Israel.'"²

With these answers in mind, the Jewish Question, it would appear, is no longer relevant because both have ostensibly proved successful. Sixty plus years after the State of Israel declared independence, and in an age of minority rights in the Diaspora countries with significant Jewish populations, the Jewish Question seems to have, at long last, been resolved and in a positive way. Jews have their own state, and have international legal standing as a member of the community of nations. Instead of court Jews there are now diplomats that represent their own Jewish state.

The change has not just been political and legal. Israel also offers Jews a sense of pride, and in this vein is sometimes referred to as the world's first 'start-up nation'.³ In 2009, Dan Senor and Saul Singer noted that Israel has more companies listed on the NASDAQ than any country other than the United States⁴ While, this claim is no longer empirically valid,⁵ Israel is nevertheless a leader in technological innovation. With a population of a little over seven million people, compared to the UK with over sixty million⁶ but only 52 companies listed on NASDAQ, Israel's 64 remains an impressive economic and technological achievement. The 'start-up nation' story is reassuring for a people that have, according to traditional Zionist historiography, not amounted to much for the last 2000 years prior to the creation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948.

In the Diaspora, the Jews have never been more established or more secure, especially in the United States where Jewish culture has influenced wider American discourse.⁷ Yiddish curses have ventured into the English vernacular just as the Jewish deli has become an important contributor to American food culture. Jews can be religious and successful politicians in Washington. Jews can lobby for Israel and not be accused of dual loyalty, as the various successes of AIPAC, J-Street, and the related activities of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations attest to.⁸ All of these successes mean that the Jewish Question seems to have been answered, and for good. Or has it? Is the Jewish Question still relevant today?

In one sense, the Question has been answered and resolved. Jews are no longer faced with having to decide if they should be Jews or citizens. Of course, the actual history of Jewish politics did not involve quite so clear-cut a distinction. European Jews who fought for Jewish rights in the 19th Century were not seeking to reject their Jewish identity in the process.⁹ Yet the historical responses to Jewish struggles for equality in the modern-nation state cannot be read outside of the rise of modern anti-

Semitism with its claims about a Jewish world conspiracy and the ultimate horrors of the Holocaust.¹⁰ The successes of European Jewry in its quest for integration were ultimately limited as national race discourses developed and suggested an incompatibility between being both a member of the Jewish nation and being a citizen.¹¹ The choices for European Jews were, consequently, attempt to assimilate and lose any public Jewish identity or become a Zionist.¹² Both choices, however, were similar in that they both accepted the underlying premise that tied nation to political emancipation.¹³ The failure of the integrationists and assimilationists in late 19th and early to mid 20th Century Europe, coupled with the development of minority rights in the second half of the 20th Century altered the conditions under which assimilation could mean integration.¹⁴ Consequently, today, most Jews in the Diaspora can be both citizens and Jews.

In another sense, however, the Question has not been answered because the answers that it did provide have led to significant cleavages that may fracture the integrity of the Jewish people. The most significant of these cleavages is how Jews in Israel and Jews in the Diaspora are heading in different directions, with the possible consequence of fracturing the Jewish people.¹⁵ While Arthur Hertzberg noted this challenge to Jewish peoplehood in the 1970s, in the early 21st Century the situation may well be more serious due to the increasing moral gulf that separates many Diaspora Jews from Israel. For Diaspora Jews, who live in countries with minority rights and in the United States especially, fought for minority rights, it can be troubling to support a country that, as Simon Rawidowicz noted in Israel's early days, offer no such protection.¹⁶ Many Jews in the Diaspora are troubled when expected to uncritically support Israel, a country that has not lived up to its moral promise because of the unfortunate consequences of war and the intoxication of military victory.¹⁷

It is in this sense that the Question has not been answered, and this absence can partly explain the extent to which Israel is contributing to splits in the Jewish community, as recently demonstrated by Keith Kahn-Harris.¹⁸ In this case, it is not so much that there are different answers about what Israel should do vis-à-vis the military Occupation and the Palestinians, or how Diaspora Jews should understand their relationship with Israel. Rather, it is that the answers in effect all speak to the same underlying assumptions. To borrow language from Thomas Kuhn,¹⁹ they may disagree in their conclusions but the paradigm remains the same. The Jewish Question was ostensibly about a paradigm shift in Jewish thinking from the Jewish people being a stateless people to a people either with a state of their own or becoming an equal member of an existing state. Yet, this paradigm has some potentially fatal flaws.

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As Michael Walzer has argued,²⁰ Jews have traditionally been most comfortable thinking about persecution as opposed to the political challenges of ruling, and as a people who have been the victims of the rule of others for so long, there was often an assumption in Zionist thought that a Jewish state would be different than other states because of the Jews' history of persecution. Whether it was Theodor Herzl or the socialist Nahman Syrkin, Israel was supposed to be a land of hope and promise.²¹ Indeed, the idea that Jews could be an oppressor people, when every year at Passover the Jews remember what it meant to be slaves in Egypt, is a disturbing conclusion, all the more so for Jews who live in the Diaspora and do not live with the same kinds of security challenges that exist in Israel. This different socio-political experience is not meant to suggest that either Israeli Jews or Diaspora Jews are right when it comes to critiquing what goes on in Israel – it is only, for the moment, to emphasize different experiences and perception that have contributed to Diaspora and Israeli Jews heading in a variety of different directions.

In this regard, Hertzberg was writing at a turning point in Diaspora/Israel relations. Whereas the debate used to be about which form of political space the Jews should strive for, the debate has become how to navigate the spaces created by Jewish politics. One significant example of a success was the effort by American Jews to lobby for the rights of Soviet Jewry to emigrate. The Jackson-Vanik amendment of 1974 tied U.S.-Soviet trade relations to the USSR's treatment of its Jewish population. However, today most of the negotiations are about Israel, Israeli security policy and of the role that the Diaspora has in Israeli politics. This kind of debate is new and it certainly marks a different landscape from when Zionism was, in the words of Rabbi Isaac Wise, viewed as the "inebriation of morbid minds."²² Today the debate is about what it means to support Israel.²³

As Peter Beinart writes, "We need a new American Jewish story, built around this basic truth: We are not history's permanent victims."²⁴ He argues that, "In the spirit of Hillel, [Israel] must not do to others what Jews found hateful when done to them."²⁵ His view is that Israeli democracy must be protected, which means confronting both the institutional racist policies in Israel and a security discourse that prioritizes national rights over democratic ones. His argument remains Zionist, but one that seeks to build on the historical legacy and politically liberal democratic values that have animated so much of American Jewish life. Gershom Gorenberg has also argued that security for Israel should be directed toward protecting its democratic character above protecting the borders it gained in 1967 and still controls. In a direct appeal to Diaspora Jewry he writes,

What Diaspora Jews should give Israel – now, immediately, without waiting – is a reminder that we were strangers in Egypt, in Russia and Germany, even in America. They can remind Israelis of the urgency that the minority experience gives to liberal values. They can support organizations in Israel, as they do in the Diaspora, that advocate human rights and the separation of religion and state. They can help fund institutions that teach Judaism as it deserves to be taught, as a faith that deepens respect for every human being. Instead of pretending that Israel is the country that they want it to be, or giving up on it because it is not, they can help make it that country.²⁶

Compare these views with those of Alan Dershowitz who argues that defense for Israel is to focus on territorial integrity and protection from terrorist attack and defends a vision of Israel that while imperfect means that criticisms of Israeli policy without more wide global condemnation of other states is a kind of bigotry²⁷ (although this normative approach is really a kind of moral nonsense, since moral argument is rarely accomplished by comparing how bad you are by noting how somebody else is worse). Security debate around Israel all too often heads into paradigmatic divisions that do not speak to each other. Either you support Israel's right to defend itself against external enemies, including enemies within that could be terrorists, or you support Israel as a democratic country with the rule of law and respect for human rights. What these options demonstrate, however, is that the debate is no longer about whether Jews should be Zionists or assimilationists, but about how Jews can best support and defend Israel.

The Jewish Question has seemingly been answered then, but its answers have led to more questions, questions that we do not have the answers for, or if we do, risk tearing apart Jewish communities. Moreover, we may not even know what the actual question is. It may be that the framing of the Jewish Question was itself always problematic, searching for political spaces in the wrong places and uncritically adopting modern-European-national assumptions about political space. To even suggest as much today, when Israel's existence is as assured as it has ever been, and when Jews in the Diaspora can by and large now live in an age of minority rights that protects them as much as anybody else, may seem odd. Nevertheless, Israel's existence, minority rights, multiculturalism, melting pots, pluralism or cultural mosaics have been unable to resolve an underlying discomfort that the Jewish Question addressed.²⁸ This discomfort is reflected in the uncertainty and possible anxiety faced by many (younger) Jews in the Diaspora who seek out how to retain their

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Jewish identity in an age when Israel is not just the national homeland for the Jews, but also an occupying military-power with a nuclear arsenal and some serious problems with racism. Indeed, according to one Israeli poll, “a large number of Israeli Jews seem to accept discrimination against Arabs and that while Israelis do not perceive their country to be an apartheid state, they are mostly unopposed to it becoming one.”²⁹ If the Jewish Question has, by way of one of its answers, provided for a spatial foundation upon which Jews could uphold institutionally racist ideas, is it possible to uncritically accept this answer? What if the answer is a consequence of a problematic question?

What kind of research can justifiably question a historical context in which the Jewish Question was not only about Jews finding a political space for themselves, but also was framed by attempted genocide? The Jewish Question was very much formulated in the assumptions of its time, but that does not mean that the spatial framing behind the Question needs to be accepted, or that the Question is beyond reproach. The issue is not to doubt the importance of Israel, but it is to follow in the intellectual path taken by Hannah Arendt when, as a refugee, she sought out alternative ways of thinking about politics, political space Jewish identity, Zionism, and belonging.³⁰

Debate about Israel does not critically question the spatial underpinnings upon which this answer to the Jewish Question was based. In other words, as Hannah Arendt noted,³¹ the answers to the Jewish Question were really all variations of the same type of answer, but it was an answer that could only lead to more conflict and thus require asking the question again. The ongoing debate about the Diaspora Jewry’s relationship with Israel demonstrates the various ways in which the Question has not been answered. Indeed, the Question remains relevant, not just in regard to Diaspora/Israel relations, but also in the role that the Question plays in contemporary Jewish culture and society. It is in this vein that Jewish fiction becomes important, as a marker of significant issues that continue to inform and influence cultural and social Jewish landscapes.

First, that these novels have been written by award winning authors is all the more interesting. It demonstrates the extent of successful integration into the wider society where Jews live, for in this case not only are these authors well respected and recognized as leading authors, they are well regarded as Jewish authors. The literary and commercial success of these novels illustrates the integration as opposed to assimilation as the Jewish identity of the authors is not hidden, questioned or marginalized. This publicity of Jewish identity is greater in North America than in the UK, but exists in both countries nevertheless.³² The novels that brought

them some of the highest awards in literature are all explicitly Jewish texts. The main characters are almost all exclusively Jewish, they are often set in Jewish communities, they are faced with Jewish problems, and so on. It is not simply that the authors of these novels are Jews and are widely successful as authors. It is that Jewish novels can be recognized to an extent that demonstrates a high degree of integration, not assimilation.³³

In this regard, the success of these authors could be an example of how successful the integrationist answer to the Jewish Question has been. Yet this argument misses the point, for integration in the Diaspora has not required nor demanded distancing oneself from Israel and thus participating in debate about the Jewish Question. Indeed for some Jews, it was important as Diaspora Jews to become Zionists. For example, in the United States, Louis Brandeis (1856-1941) and Solomon Schechter (1847-1915) both argued for American Jews to be Zionists, but did not call for them to move to Palestine or Israel. Brandeis, who was an associate justice of the Supreme Court, was perhaps the most famous.³⁴ What he did was to equate being Jewish with being a Zionist.³⁵ Not only that, he also claimed that to be a good Jew and a good American, one should become a Zionist.³⁶ As Brandeis argued, “loyalty to America demands... that each American Jew become a Zionist.”³⁷ He claimed that American Jews had a home, and did not need a new one, but many Jews did not have a home and for them there was Israel. Schechter, one of the founders of Conservative Judaism in North America, saw Zionism as an important factor in preventing assimilation because it helped to maintain a sense of Jewish identity in the Diaspora.³⁸

Second, it is noteworthy that all of these novels are in some way connected to the Jewish Question. Both Howard Jacobson and Michael Chabon place central emphasis on the Jewish Question as a starting point for a narrative. In both cases, the narrative begins in some way with the Nazi answer. Neither author begins with any of the answers provided by Jews themselves, although Jacobson comes closest. His novel, which, as will be explored below, involves regular referrals to the need for Israel because of the Nazis but is primarily almost a monologue of a tortured soul riveted by guilt caused by Israeli security policy toward the Palestinians. Thus, if we are to recognize these authors as voices that contribute to and reflect Jewish cultural and socio-political themes, regardless of the extent to which they may be representative they are powerful, it is fairly clear that the question of what political spaces exists for the Jews today remains important and animating. The question, however, is why, and what is it about the Jewish Question that remains relevant?

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Methodologically going back to explore the context in which the Question was asked would require asking what kinds of answers could work in the age of National Socialism. Yet, the issue today is how the answers to the Jewish Question may not have actually been answers but were more like further questions. It is not the aim here to engage in historical counter-factualism as a means to critique the main 20th Century Jewish answers to the Question. Rather, the method here is to use contemporary Jewish literature to explore the relevance of the Jewish Question today. In short, the Jewish Question created subsequent questions that have fundamentally challenged the original terms of the Question and its answers. Jewish literature, which in this context refers to literature not only written by Jews but also about Jewish themes, provides a way to explore this situation. Moreover, some significant 21st Century Jewish novels imply that the Jewish Question may not have been answered. If we read contemporary Jewish literature as aiming to say something about Jewish life,³⁹ we find that something peculiar is going on, at least in regard to the novels that I focus on here: *The Final Solution*, *Kavalier and Klay*, *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* and *The Finkler Question*.

The Jewish Question in Chabon and Jacobson

Something peculiar is going on when leading Jewish authors, in both the United States and the United Kingdom feel that the Jewish Question remains an important point of Jewish identity and use the Jewish Question as either the focus of, or the starting point for their novels. If the Jewish Question has been answered, why is it so strongly featured in the work of leading Jewish authors? Firstly, because the Question speaks to the scope of political imagination that has shaped if not haunted modernity and Jewish political discourse. Second, because its answers have contributed toward a contemporary crisis that may be splitting the Jewish people. In this sense, the Jewish Question's normative purpose, to find a political space for the Jews, has led to political spaces that may either be unmaking the Jewish people or demanding that we question the normative values that come with nationhood and contemporary Diaspora life. The new political spaces for the Jews are requiring new questions that are remarkably similar to the original one. As such, a significant aspect of the Question has been unanswered. The novels by Michael Chabon and Howard Jacobson help, when read together, to make sense out of these issues.

To begin, Michael Chabon's three novels, *The Final Solution*, *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* and the Pulitzer Prize winning *Kavalier and*

Klay all speak in some way to the Jewish Question and its 20th Century Jewish answers. While only *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* is directly centered around the Jewish Question, all three novels begin in some measure as a response to the Nazi answer to the Final Solution

The Final Solution is set during the Second World War. A small boy, Linus Steinman, is found wandering on some train tracks in England, with a parrot on his shoulder. The boy is Jewish, German, a refugee: "He formed part of a small group of children, most of them Jewish, whose emigration to Britain was negotiated by Mr. Wilkes, the vicar of the English Church in Berlin."⁴⁰ The boy is staying at the house of the Panickers. The father, an Anglican Vicar, the mother a housewife who cares for the lodgers' meals, and their son, a problematic youth who becomes a murder suspect. He is suspected of the murder of the potential thief of Linus' parrot, and an old man, who could be a retired Sherlock Holmes, decides to find the parrot, and ends up finding both the parrot and the murderer of the potential parrot thief. The novel's relevance to the Jewish Question is twofold. First, the title of the novel is a clear reference to Hitler's solution to the Jewish Question. Second, the boy is an escapee of Holocaust.

The Final Solution is a detective novel, with three mysteries. The first is a murder mystery. The second is the mystery of the missing parrot. These two mysteries are related, and in the end the rescue of the parrot also results in finding the murderer. The third mystery is not solved. The parrot recites numbers, but the numbers are never explained. The "old man" detective does not solve this riddle and the reader is never told what the numbers mean. We are told what they do not mean: they are neither Swiss bank accounts, nor cypher codes. But it is likely that the numbers have something to do with the Nazi Final Solution, possibly the identification numbers of trains departing for concentration camps, or something along those lines. While in this novel Chabon is not trying to provide a narrative of Jewish life, it does serve as an important introduction to the relevance of the Jewish Question in Chabon's other works, for like the other two novels of interest, he begins this one with a reference to the Jewish Question: "'Nazis was it?' Said Shane. He gave his head a moderate shake. 'Rotten business. Tough luck for the Jews, when you come right down to it.'"⁴¹ Tough luck indeed.

The mystery in this novel of the unanswered numbers, which may represent extreme tough luck, emphasizes the unanswered elements for how Jews today understand the political spaces that have come into being post-Holocaust. Linus survives the war, and so does the mystery of the numbers. These numbers could represent the everlasting shadows of the Holocaust. They also, however, could represent unanswered questions

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about political space and Jewish politics. In this vein, Chabon has multiple characters in multiple novels searching for a life by fleeing or escaping their homes because of the Nazis. The first of these characters is the young Linus. The second is Josef Kavalier, from the novel *Kavalier and Klay*.

Josef, or Joe, wants to become an escape artist. He takes lessons, learns the ropes, how to pick locks, etc. He even has his younger brother throw him into a river while chained inside a bag. He manages to escape and then has to save his younger brother Thomas from drowning in the same river after Thomas went in trying to save Josef from drowning.⁴² Saving Thomas is a recurring storyline in this novel, and Joe spends a large portion of the novel trying to save his younger brother from the Nazis, a task that he comes tragically close to accomplishing. Alas, his brother dies en route. However, while he tries to save his brother, Joe's story is one of escape. Joe's parents do their best to help Joe escape from Prague before it is too late. He is the only one given the chance, but the route they provide for him does not work out and he has to find another way out. He is, with the help of his escapist teacher, Bernard Kornblum, hidden in a coffin that is carrying the Golem out of Prague and into safety. "As soon as the German army occupied Prague, talk began, in certain quarters, of sending the city's famous Golem, Rabbi Loew's miraculous automaton, into the safety of exile."⁴³

Note the last phrase, "the safety of exile" for this phrase raises all the hopes, dreams and dangers that the Jewish Question sought to address. Exile has, in the Zionist liturgy, not been a safe place. For Jewish victims of Nazi aggression, to refer to exile as a place of safety is both cruel and hopeful. The exile is not a reference to the fate of European Jewry in the Nazi death machine, but to the hope of escape from Prague into another, safer place in the Diaspora. Interestingly, in the novel this safer place becomes the United States. The exile is not the exile of the *Galut*, but being forced to flee from one city to another, which is ultimately what Joe ends up doing, and finds his way to New York City which becomes his home. Joe thus goes into exile, and he departs Prague with words of warning and wisdom from Kornblum: "Forget what you are escaping from. Reserve your anxiety for what you are escaping to."⁴⁴

The Jewish Question was forward looking, in the sense that it posed a question about the future of the Jews. However, it was also always backward looking, framing the issue of needing to escape from something. Thus, for example, we find extensive analysis in traditional Zionist thought about anti-Semitism, but nowhere near as much systematic analysis about state-building. This point is raised by the Israeli reporter and author Ari Shavit in his book, *My Promised Land*. As he argues, Israel

survived because the Zionists did what they needed to, and did not distract themselves with too much abstract thinking.⁴⁵ Chabon, however, invites us to change focus of the Question, so that we ask more clearly and critically about the future, about what we were escaping to.

The shift in direction, instead of asking what the Jews ought to escape from to a critique of what they have escaped to, is reflective of the anxiety that many Jews feel when confronted with the political and security challenges that Israel faces, and what role Diaspora Jews have in confronting and addressing related issues. These anxieties are exposed in Chabon's novel *the Yiddish Policeman's Union*, where Israel does not exist: "Nineteen forty-eight: Strange time to be a Jew. In August, the defense of Jerusalem collapsed and the outnumbered Jews of the three-month-old republic of Israel were routed, massacred, and driven into the sea."⁴⁶ Instead of surviving in Israel, those who made it out alive ended up in the Jewish community of Sitka, Alaska, in the United States.

This outpost of a Jewish community in the far North is not as outlandish as it may seem. Gerald S. Berman writes in the journal *Jewish Social Studies* that, "In August 1939, the United States Department of the Interior released a report drafted under the auspices of Undersecretary Harry Slattery entitled *The Problem of Alaskan Development* which called for the economic development of Alaska by means of a limited influx of European refugees."⁴⁷ The proposal was never adopted. Chabon's novel presumes that it was. The Slattery Report was one answer to the Jewish Question, and it provides the basis for Chabon's novel.

The Jewish Question hovers over this book in a different way than *Kavalier and Clay*. In both novels the Question's relevance sets the stage for the life experiences of the novel's protagonists but in *the Yiddish Policeman's Union*, we also have a physical space for the Jews to live as Jews, in a Jewish community of their own that has a legal separation from the rest of the United States. It is not the characters so much as the place that makes this novel an important contribution to contemporary thinking about the Jewish Question. Sitka may not be the most culturally Jewish of places (in the Diaspora, New York fills this role as *the Jewish City* according to some)⁴⁸, but in the novel it is a political and legal Jewish polity.

Nevertheless, this fictional Jewish polity does not replace Israel. As Chabon writes in the novel, "Observant Jews around the world have not abandoned their hope to dwell one day in the land of Zion. But Jews have been tossed out of the joint three times now – in 586 BCE, in 70 CE and with savage finality in 1948."⁴⁹ Jews still hope, and Sitka does not betray that hope, even though it is a Jewish community with some degree of political and legal autonomy.

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Yet it is a peculiar kind of political space, a temporary one:

Like the rest of Congress, like most Americans, the House Committee was sobered by grim revelations of the slaughter of two million Jews in Europe, by the barbarity of the rout of Zionism, by the plight of the refugees of Palestine and Europe. At the same time they were practical souls. The population of the Sitka Settlement had already swollen to two million. In direct violation of the act, Jews had spread up and down the western shores of Baranof Island, out to Kruzof, all the way up to West Chichagov Island. In the end, Congress granted the Sitka Settlement “interim status” as a federal district. But candidacy for separate statehood was explicitly ruled out. NO JEWLASKA, LAWMAKERS PROMISE, ran the headline in the *Daily Times*. The emphasis was always on the word “interim.” In Sixty years that status would revert, and the Sitka Jews would be left once again to shift for themselves.⁵⁰

The Sitka Settlement is thus presented by Chabon as both an answer and not an answer to the Jewish Question. It is temporary and in sixty years the Question will reappear. Or will it?

What is of especial interest is that the Slattery Report provides an answer to the Jewish Question that indirectly raises a point of view that the main Jewish answers did not take seriously. Why was it that, excluding Jewish socialism, the main Jewish answers to the Question presumed that a solution lay in the political qualities bequeathed by a specific spatial setting, one where the Jews were either sovereign over their own land, or were protected by the sovereignty of others? The Sitka Settlement, however, has no sovereignty. It is an interim federal district. The Jewish Question did not think of districts, perhaps because a district might seem like a ghetto, perhaps because in a district they would not have control over the laws, but remain at the mercy of other more powerful rulers. Whatever the reason, Chabon instructs us to take alternatives seriously, to remember that no political space is permanent, and, perhaps, to be a little anxious about the future. Kornblum, Joe’s escapist teacher in *Kavalier and Klay*, encourages thinking hard about the future. Jews may be escaping *Galut* or possibly escaping a life in Israel (think of the Israeli Diaspora,⁵¹ for example). Wherever Jews are escaping to, however, Kornblum’s lesson is not to think that it will to be a place that provides all the answers.

The epitome of this anxiousness can be found not in one of Chabon’s characters or novels, but in Howard Jacobson’s Man Booker winning novel, *The Finkler Question*. The title of the novel is a clear reference to the Jewish Question, and to one of the protagonists in the novel Finkler. Finkler’s question is a late 20th and 21st Century exploration of Israel and

Jewish identity. The question is not explicitly stated but it is regularly alluded to with Finkler, a philosopher, regularly debating Israel and the Middle East with his former teacher and elder, Libor. They cannot separate their Jewish identity from the security politics of Israel, or, for that matter, from the security politics of Jewish history. Libor would often raise the Holocaust as a defense clause supporting Israel, and he would attack any Jew who is critical of Israel as being self-hating. The novel repeats this circle of debate almost endlessly.

For Libor, Israel provides a “lifeboat position.” As he says, “No, I’ve never been there and don’t want to go there, but even at my age the time might not be far away when I have nowhere else *to* go. That is history’s lesson.”⁵² This argument is, in the words of one veteran Israeli peace activist and current volunteer with the American liberal Jewish lobby group J-Street, not a strong argument, nor one that he had heard for a long time.⁵³ Thus it was with great surprise when he learned that a young woman who also volunteers for J-Street was using precisely this argument.⁵⁴ Libor, the fictional character, is not young, and so his historical consciousness would surely be different from that of a twenty-something (non-fictional) New Yorker. What is interesting, however, is the extent to which the fictional debates in the Finkler Question replicate those taking place in the Jewish world, and do so almost verbatim, even if the arguments are not good ones. Peter Beinart, for example, explicitly challenges this kind of historical-victim mentality in his approach to Jewish politics and Israel.⁵⁵

The characters Finkler and Libor display a deep level of anxiety in their debates around Israel, so much so that it is a third party, Treslove, who is not Jewish and as such plays the role of the outsider who can describe the neurosis of these debates. For Libor, the Holocaust is always central, so central that he rarely has to even mention it. “It was always possible, Treslove concluded, that Jews didn’t have to mention the Holocaust in order to have mentioned the Holocaust.”⁵⁶ Libor’s accusations toward Finkler being a self-hating Jew also do not ring true. “Treslove had never met a Jew, in fact never met anybody, who hated himself less than Finkler.”⁵⁷ Moreover, Finkler’s view toward Israel is one of simultaneous disappointment (tinged with disgust) and frustration. “Treslove... could never quite get whether Finkler resented Israel for winning or for being about to lose.”⁵⁸ For Libor the questions over Israel were one of conscience whereas for Finkler the issue is justice. Neither of them are ever satisfied. When Finkler raises the justice question, Libor says that shame is best kept within the family, and that you can explain to your family member your shame, but you would not boycott a family member. Libor and Finkler are unable to resolve their dispute, and they

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both represent archetypes of contemporary debate around Israel. The other characters in the novel fit into these archetypes, modifying and supplementing them. They never, however, challenge them. The terrain of the debate remains fixed between the poles of Libor and Finkler.

Occasionally, for Finkler the terrain of this discussion slips out of control. Finkler's son, Immanuel gets into a fight. Finkler is led to believe that the fight was with anti-Semites. Immanuel attended a debate at the Oxford Student Union. The topic was something along the lines of "This house believes that Israel has forfeited its right to exist."⁵⁹ Many student unions in the UK currently have such debates. As Finkler interrogates his son, he learns the truth, that Immanuel ended up picking a fight with Jews.

'They were Zionists. The real meshugganers with black hats and fringes, like settlers.'

'Settlers? In Oxford?'

'Settler types.'

'And he picked a fight with them? What did he say?'

[Blaise, Immanuel's mother replies] 'Nothing much, He accused them of stealing someone else's country...'

She paused.

'And?'

'And practicing apartheid...'

'And?'

'And slaughtering women and children.'

'And?'

'There is no and. That's all.'

Immanuel looked up. He reminded Finkler of his late wife, challenging him. He had that same expression of ironic unillusionedness that comes with knowing a person too well. 'Yes, that's what I said. It's true, isn't it? You've said so much yourself.'

'Not specifically, to a person, Immanuel. It's one thing to iterate a general political truth, it's another thing to pick a fight with a person in the street.'

'Well, I'm not a philosopher, Dad. I don't iterate general political truths. I just told them all what I thought of them and their shitty little country and called one of them, who came up to me, a racist.'

'A racist?' What had he said to you?'

'Nothing. It wasn't about him. I was talking about his country.'

'Was he an Israeli?'

'How do I know? He wore a black hat. He was there to oppose the motion.'⁶⁰

Finkler ends up being furious at his son for provoking this physical fight. Yet as his son points out, his argument was not that far away from

Finkler's. While a significant portion of the exchange involves the complications of the father/son relationship, there are other ingredients as well. It is fascinating how his son assumes that a religious looking Jew is automatically some type of right-wing settler type. The correlation between Jewish identity and hawkish support of Israel is a problematic feature of the politics of perception that complicate relations both inside Jewish communities and between Jewish and non-Jewish communities. Indeed, such perceptions play a part in the European Left's relationship with Israel and minority Jewish populations in Europe.⁶¹ Another important ingredient in their exchange is the extent to which Israel polarizes Jewish opinion to such an extent that it can provoke Jewish attacks. In the extreme, relevant examples include the assassination of Rabin or of Orthodox Jews attacking Jewish women at the Wailing Wall. Outside of Israel, similar debates take place, with the emotional and ego-laden Finklestein/Dershowitz saga being one of the more public illustrations.⁶²

Whereas Chabon's novels took the Jewish Question as a starting point for creating narratives about Jewish lives in fictional settings, Jacobson's novel is about where the Jewish Question has gone, and what it has brought the Jews. The difference between the two authors is stark. Chabon treats the Question as unanswered, as opening up possibilities for future scenarios of Jewish life. He warns against taking the future for granted, but without forgetting the past. He provides alternative realities, where Jews live in Alaska instead of Arad, and he develops Jewish themes in the Diaspora, comic books, Superman, escape from the Nazis, desires for vengeance against the Nazis, hope in the Diaspora. In his novels, the Jewish Question is left open.

In Jacobson's novel, however, the Question is a kind of closed question. It is not so much a question with only a yes or no answer, but one that offers an equally dichotomous alternatives as represented by Libor and Finkler. Israel is one answer, but this answer is unsettling. The title of the novel, *The Finkler Question*, is a reference to how the Jewish Question remains for some a dark shadow that has, because of Israel, turned Jews into aggressive military Occupiers, frustrating the hopes and dreams of another people. An underlying moral struggle throughout this novel is with Jews transforming from the oppressed into the oppressor, courtesy of modern nation-state-hood. The Question's answer has thus given rise to a somewhat existential problem about what it means to be Jewish, when Jewish identity is now readily associated with Israeli oppression. The debates throughout the novel regularly address this issue, placing it in historical and contemporary geo-political contexts, but without providing a resolution.

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Conclusion: A Possible Paradigm Shift?

These novels each represent a different approach to thinking about the Jewish Question. They explore the role of identity, morality, escape, anxiety, and critique. Taken together they reveal the range of questions and uncertainties that the Jewish Question addressed and has left unanswered. The novels do not provide answers but they do help illuminate what the questions are. For example, one of the main points that reverberates throughout the Finkler Question is that the Israeli answer to the Jewish Question has created a deep neurosis within Jewish circles about what it means to be Jewish. The answer, Jacobson tells us, is with Israel. Even in the Diaspora, Israel often animates Jewish political thought and defines Jewish political spaces, sometimes to the point of violence. Of course, while being Jewish in no way requires that one become a Zionist, the expectation is there nonetheless, from both inside and outside Jewish communities.⁶³

The point to take from reading these four novels together is not so much that the Jewish Question has been asked and answered, but that the Question may have been unclear. Each novel suggests a different way to explore the Question and its answers, but when read together they demonstrate that the Jewish Question remains a point of interest if not of contention in the construction of modern Jewish identity and contemporary Jewish political discourse.

Answers to the Jewish Question were supposed to provide security, safety, prosperity, and so on. An answer would resolve the perpetual uncertainty and insecurity of Jewish life in the Diaspora. In important ways, the answers that exist today have accomplished much in this regard. Yet, the anxiety contained in the Jewish Question, and which is a deep trait in collective Jewish psychology, remains. This anxiety is familiar, developed over hundreds of years of fear, persecution, victimhood, and violence. Yet, the ongoing presence of this anxiety, so clearly revealed in character Libor from the Finkler Question, allows a history of insecurity to overshadow accomplishments and strengths. While the past may not have been always bright, perhaps Jews should not have been so willing to be seduced by the future. Perhaps Jews should have been more anxious about what the future could create. For Jews today this future is largely defined by the existence of Israel, and of what it means to be a Jew in the age of the Jewish State.

When the Question was originally being posed it was during a period when political thought was heavily influenced by the nationalist politics of the 19th and 20th Centuries.⁶⁴ The history of the Twentieth Century was not

kind to the Jews, and it was not surprising that so many Jews ended up learning one of many painful lessons from the Holocaust. This lesson had to do with the ostensible homelessness of the Jewish people, of their being without a state of their own. Zygmunt Bauman has argued that this distinguishing feature of the Jewish people, their statelessness, their seemingly perpetual homelessness, this geographical void, was part of what made them vulnerable.⁶⁵ To counteract this vulnerability, the Zionists fought for their own political geography, and many Diaspora Jews also came to the aid of the new Israeli state. This internationalization of Jewish life was not the internationalization of humanitarianism or human rights (epitomized in the 20th Century by the lawyer and French Jew René Cassin, one of the authors of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights). Rather this internationalization was more closely related to the international diplomatic activities of the Jews in the 1840s, in response to the blood libel charge in Damascus,⁶⁶ and much later developed as part of national political lobbying, especially in the United States,⁶⁷ home to the largest percentage of Diaspora Jews.⁶⁸ This was an inter-nationalism, or more accurately a kind of transnationalism,⁶⁹ focused on the role of nations and of nation-states. Many Jews in the Diaspora went along with this discourse, coming to increasingly understand the future of Jewry being tied to the future of Israel. Israel became the ostensible centre of Jewish geography in a way that had not been the case before.

This centrality, however, always existed in a tension, a tension that the novels illustrate and hint at, but which, in everyday life, is often hidden from view, for what the novels insinuate is that the Jewish Question was really a question about paradigms and a possible paradigm shift. Using Thomas Kuhn's definition of a paradigm,⁷⁰ the paradigm that framed the Jewish Question was by and large one defined by the political spaces of the 19th and 20th Centuries. The influence and promise of the modern nation-state was both a salvation and a threat to Jewish life, and the Jewish Question approached the topic of political space accordingly, finding both salvation and threat in the politics of nationhood.

What could not have been foreseen was the extent to which the latter half of the 20th Century came to promise a form of "assimilation" for Jews that had not previously existed. The legal regime of minority rights⁷¹ created the conditions under which minority populations could retain their identity as a minority group. The rights discourse changed, especially in the 1960s with the civil rights movement, but so too did Jewish political discourse. For while minority rights were granting Jews increasing opportunities in the democratic Diaspora, Israel was creating another reality whereby Jewish salvation resided not in promise of minority rights

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and the law, but the grand historical narrative of the nation-state. As a consequence, Jews in Israel and the Diaspora started moving in different directions.⁷² As David Vital has observed, “the rise of an independent Jewish state has both revolutionized and destabilized the Jewish world.”⁷³ The evidence of this destabilization is evident in the seemingly intractable debate surrounding Israel’s place in the Diaspora.

Jacobson’s novel in particular indicates that what is at stake is not a debate but the potential of a paradigm shift. The incommensurability of viewpoints between Libor and Finkler is evidence of something more than a disagreement. There is no middle ground in their worlds. Even though they are friends, they are also adversaries in their worldview. They may both belong to the Jewish people, but in such seemingly different ways that Libor can view Finkler as a self-hating Jew, simply because of Finkler’s moral frustrations with Israel. It is safer to view this debate within the comfortable world of fiction, but this safety is no less indicative of a developing sociology among world Jewry. The situation regarding Finkler’s son could well be a retelling of similar incidents at the London School of Economics, Columbia University, or Concordia in Montreal, for example. Fiction illustrates the problem, but it also demonstrates the hopelessness of the discourse.

While Jacobson’s novel is heavily involved in revealing this hopelessness, it is not featured in Chabon’s novels. His argument is for the need to escape from such hopelessness by thinking differently. His turn to alternative realities, counterfactual histories, and warnings about the future are all gestures toward the need to escape from the “normal science”⁷⁴ of Jewish thought about political space. What his novels suggest is not so much what the answer to the Jewish Question is, but that what we thought were the answers have created a new reality that cannot be answered in the terms that framed the Question. The knowledge that grounded the Jewish Question and its answers does not appear capable of resolving the current crisis about Israel’s role for Jewish identity, about how the Diaspora is to engage with Israel, or about what political spaces do exist for the Jews today.

As some important Jewish intellectuals have argued, the creation of Israel may not be the resolution to the Jewish search for an equal political footing in the modern world.⁷⁵ The turn to Israel, and the importance that Israel plays in the construction of Jewish identity and in Jewish political discourse, has also had some significantly challenging consequences that accompany the transition from being a people familiar with persecution to a people now with political authority.⁷⁶ This transition has not gone unnoticed, and it was a transition that the Jewish Question did not take seriously enough. The regular blindness on the part of Zionists as to how

Zionism would be received by the Palestinians, the willful ignorance behind the idea of Palestine being a “land without a people for a people without a land,” are signs that the challenges that came with political authority, with majority/minority politics, were not seriously addressed within the terms of the Jewish Question. Rather, the Question largely took it for granted that the answers would all take on a similar spatial formula, with the modern nation-state setting the geographic conditions of possibility and resolving any obstacles. Now that this condition has been met, the Jews in the Diaspora and the Jews in Israel are faced with having to confront the reality that the Question created problems that it could not answer: namely that by tying Jewish political aspirations to the nation-state, it may have been necessary to sacrifice the diaspora values and traditional moral discourses of Jewish identity and in the process dramatically redefine what means to be Jewish. Arthur Hertzberg was right when he pointed out that Jews in the Diaspora and in Israel are heading in different directions.⁷⁷ He was wrong, however, to think that the two could be rejoined within the contemporary political spaces of the nation-state. The Jewish Question may have been answered, but its answers have taken Jews into largely unforeseen directions and has created new questions about what it means to be Jewish in modernity, questions that cannot be answer according to the same guiding assumptions that framed the original Jewish Question.

Notes

¹ Walzer, M, ed. *Law, Politics, and Morality in Judaism*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006.

² *ibid.* vii.

³ Senor, D. and Singer, S. *Start-up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle*, 1st ed. ed. New York: Twelve, 2009.

⁴ Eizenstat, S. E. *The Future of the Jews: How Global Forces Are Impacting the Jewish People, Israel, and Its Relationship with the United States* New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012.

⁵ Israel has 64 listed companies which is less than the United States at 4601, but both China at 150 and Canada at 147 have more than Israel, although Israel has more companies listed than the UK which has 52. See, <http://www.nasdaq.com/screening/companies-by-region.aspx> (last accessed July 2, 2013).

⁶ Population numbers are from the CIA factbook (last accessed July 3, 2013). <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>.

⁷ Goldberg, J. J. *Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment* Reading, Mass.; Harlow: Addison-Wesley, 1996.

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⁸ Dual loyalty here does not mean that debate over the Israel lobby necessarily raises the spectre of dual loyalty. The debate over the Israel lobby is not the same as a debate over a Jewish lobby, although there was significant debate on this score in regard to the article and book published by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt. Whatever the faults may be of the Mearsheimer and Walt article and subsequent book, their focus is on the Israel lobby, which includes Christian organizations and other non-Jewish groups. Mearsheimer, J. J. and Walt, S. M. *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* London Allen Lane, 2007.

⁹ See for example, Lisa Moses Leff, *Sacred Bonds of Solidarity: The Rise of Jewish Internationalism in Nineteenth-Century France*(Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006).

¹⁰ Compare Leff's *Sacred Bonds* with Arendt, A. *The Origins of Totalitarianism* London: André Deutsch, 1986. On the relation between identity, nation and the Holocaust see Bauman, Z. *Modernity and the Holocaust* Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1991.

¹¹ See Part III in, Mendes-Flohr, Paul R., and Jehuda Reinharz. *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*. 2nd ed. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

¹² For a historical framing of this debate see Laqueur, Walter. *The History of Zionism*. 3rd. ed. London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003.

¹³ See, Arendt, H. *Jewish Writings*. edited by Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman New York: Schocken Books, 2007.

¹⁴ Compare, Hertzberg, Arthur. *Being Jewish in America: The Modern Experience*. New York: Schocken Books, 1979; Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Anti-Semite and Jew: An Exploration of the Etiology of Hate*. Translated by George Becker. New York: Schocken Books, 1995; Wettstein, Howard, ed. *Diasporas and Exiles: Varieties of Jewish Identity*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002; Zeitlin, Irving M. *Jews: The Making of a Diaspora People*. Cambridge: Polity, 2012.

¹⁵ Hertzberg. *Being Jewish in America*..

¹⁶ Myers, David N. *Between Jew & Arab: The Lost Voice of Simon Rawidowicz*. Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press; Hanover; London: Published by University Press of New England, 2008.

¹⁷ Note Beinart's argument for saving liberal Zionism. See, Beinart, P. *The Crisis of Zionism*. New York: Times Books, 2012

¹⁸ Kahn-Harris, K. *Uncivil War: The Israel Conflict in the Jewish Community*. London: David Paul, 2014.

¹⁹ Kuhn, T. S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed., Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996. Kuhn is not altogether clear on what he means by paradigm (or incommensurability, which could mean disagreement over a conclusion more than anything else), but for the immediate purpose what matters is in how a paradigm denotes the unity of a research community that shares a

common knowledge, that it is what unites a scientific community and that paradigms are incommensurable in that they are fundamentally opposed.

²⁰ Walzer. *Law, Politics, and Morality in Judaism*

²¹ Hertzberg, A. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1975 pp. 200-231, 330-351.

²² Laqueur. *The History of Zionism* p. 402.

²³ Eizenstat, S. E. "Loving Israel. Warts and All," *Foreign Policy* 81(1990-1991).

²⁴ Beinart, P. *The Crisis of Zionism* p. 8.

²⁵ Beinart, P. *The Crisis of Zionism* p. 11.

²⁶ Gorenberg, G. *The Unmaking of Israel* New York: Harper, 2011 p. 248.

²⁷ Dershowitz, A.M. *The Case for Israel* Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

²⁸ The trend toward increased alienation by Diaspora Jews, especially younger Jews, from is more intense in North America, but still present in the UK. Compare: *PEW v JPR*

²⁹ Baron, I. Z. "Not My Grandfather's Israel: The Growing Racism of the Modern Israeli Public." *Tikkun Daily*. November 27, 2012. <http://www.tikkun.org/tikkundaily/2012/11/27/not-my-grandfathers-israel-the-growing-racism-of-the-modern-israeli-public/>

³⁰ See, Arendt, H. *The Jew as Pariah*, ed. Ron H. Feldman New York: Grove Press, 1978; Arendt, H. *Jewish Writings*, ed. Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman New York: Schocken Books, 2007.

³¹ Arendt, *Jewish Writings*.

³² Kahn-Harris, K. and Gidley, B. *Turbulent Times: The British Jewish Community Today* London: Continuum, 2010.

³³ Other Jewish authors in the second half of the Twentieth Century who demonstrate a similar integrationist success are Mordecai Richler and Philip Roth. In Richler's case, there are even national debates about his success, or comparative success: Barber, J. "Why Mordecai Richler Isn't Being Studied in Canadian Universities," *The Globe and Mail*, Wednesday, December 22 2010. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/why-mordecai-richler-isnt-being-studied-in-canadian-universities/article1321266/> (last accessed January 8, 2014).

³⁴ Laqueur, W. *The History of Zionism*, 3rd. ed.(London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003).

³⁵ Urofsky, M. I. *American Zionism from Herzl to the Holocaust*(New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975).

³⁶ Brandeis, L. D. "The Jewish Problem and How to Solve It," in *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*, ed. Arthur Herzberg(Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press).

³⁷ Eisen, *Galut*, 157.

³⁸ Ibid. See, Schechter, S. "Zionism: A Statement" in *Seminary Addresses and Other Papers* (New York: Burning Bush Press, 1959), 91-97.

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³⁹ There are many examples, but one less-well known historical example that makes this point exceptionally well is Perle, Y. and Roskies, D.G. *Everyday Jews: Scenes from a Vanished Life* New Haven, Conn.: London: Yale University Press, 2007.

⁴⁰ Chabon, M. *The Final Solution* New York: Fourth Estate, 2005 p. 18.

⁴¹ Chabon, M. *The Final Solution* p. 19.

⁴² Chabon, M. *The Adventures of Kavalier and Klay* New York: Fourth Estate, 2000, 2010 pp. 34-36.

⁴³ Chabon, M. *The Adventures of Kavalier and Klay* p. 14.

⁴⁴ Chabon, M. *The Adventures of Kavalier and Klay* p. 21.

⁴⁵ Shavit, A. *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2013.

⁴⁶ Chabon, M. *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* London: Harper Perennial, 2008, 2007 p. 29.

⁴⁷ Berman, G. S. "Reaction to the Resettlement of World War II Refugees in Alaska," *Jewish Social Studies* 44, no. 2/3 (1982): 271.

⁴⁸ Aviv, C. and Shneer, D. *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora* New York: New York University Press, 2005.

⁴⁹ Chabon, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, p. 17.

⁵⁰ Chabon, *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, p. 29.

⁵¹ Gold, G. J. *The Israeli Diaspora* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.

⁵² Jacobson, H. *The Finkler Question* London: Bloomsbury, 2010 p. 25.

⁵³ Interview conducted in New York City on August 22, 2012.

⁵⁴ Interview conducted in New York City on August 14, 2012

⁵⁵ Beinart, *The Crisis of Zionism*.

⁵⁶ Jacobson, *The Finkler Question* p. 24.

⁵⁷ Jacobson, *The Finkler Question* p. 25.

⁵⁸ Jacobson, *The Finkler Question* p. 25.

⁵⁹ Jacobson, *The Finkler Question* p. 118.

⁶⁰ Jacobson, *The Finkler Question* p 189. The phrase "shitty little country" is an allusion to a remark made by the French ambassador to London in 2001, Mr Daniel Bernard, to the then owner of the Daily Telegraph Conrad Black. See BBC. *'Anti-Semitic' French envoy under fire*. December 20, 2001. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/1721172.stm> (last accessed July 25, 2013).

⁶¹ A relevant discussion of this is, Shindler, C. *Israel and the European Left: Between Solidarity and Delegitimization* New York: Continuum, 2012.

⁶² See for example, Finkelstein, Norman G. *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History* (Berkeley, Calif.: [Great Britain]: University of California Press, 2005) p. 17; Dershowitz, Alan 'Is Norman Finkelstein in Tehran?,' *The Huffington Post*, December 12 2006; Wilson, John

K. to Academe Blog, June 8, 2012, <http://academeblog.org/2012/06/08/an-interview-with-alan-dershowitz/>.

⁶³ See, Baron, I. Z. *Obligation in Exile: The Jewish Diaspora, Israel and Critique*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming 2015.

⁶⁴ See Laqueur, *The History of Zionism*.

⁶⁵ Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*.

⁶⁶ Frankel, J. *The Damascus Affair: 'Ritual Murder', Politics, and the Jews in 1840* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; Cohen, R. "Diasporas and the Nation-State: From Victims to Challengers," *International Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1996).

⁶⁷ Goldberg, *Jewish Power*.

⁶⁸ Eizenstat, *The Future of the Jews*.

⁶⁹ Vertovec, S. *Transnationalism* London: Routledge, 2009. See also, Baron, *Obligation in Exile*.

⁷⁰ Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

⁷¹ Preece, J. J. *Minority Rights* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005. For more on minority rights and the modern nation-state see Tully, J. *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. A key text in the multicultural minority rights literature is Kymlicka, W. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press, 1995.

⁷² Vital makes a similar conclusion, but from different premises. See, Vital, D. *The Future of the Jews: A People at the Crossroads?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990 p. 147.

⁷³ Vital, D. *The Future of the Jews* p. 147.

⁷⁴ Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

⁷⁵ Shatz, A. ed. *Prophets / Outcast: A Century of Dissident Jewish Writing About Zionism* New York: Nation Books, 2004; Karpf, A., Klug, B., Rose, J., Rosenbaum, B. eds., *A Time to Speak Out: Independent Jewish Voices on Israel, Zionism and Jewish Identity* London: Verso, 2008.

⁷⁶ See Walzer, *Law, Politics, and Morality in Judaism*; Walzer, M., Lorberbaum, M., and Zohar, N. J. eds., *The Jewish Political Tradition: Authority*, vol. I New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000.

⁷⁷ Hertzberg, *Being Jewish in America*.