

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 Orleanist 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, Orleanist, 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 Mittelberg (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 Volkssturm, 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, unflinching 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 Mamei 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.

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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 children³⁸ 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.