

Mourning Jerusalem
The Jewish Prophetic and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

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In 2002, I was asked to speak at the founding conference of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation. As it was their inaugural conference the participants were carefully chosen – and limited to about 100 people. I was grateful to be asked to address the conference but since I was in a trying mood – at a trying time - since the second Palestinian uprising was in full swing, an uprising that drew an elevated Israeli response, including Israel’s use of helicopter gunships and fighter jets - I attempted to beg off the honor. I didn’t think that the organizers or the delegates wanted to hear what I had to say. After all, from its founding literature, the fledgling campaign seemed to replicate the sum total of every previous campaign to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I thought that such a replication was useless and, more, it might even be counter-productive since it kept alive and renewed in vigor the decades-old failed slogans and dreams. It was time to wipe the slate clean and begin again.

The organizers continued to pursue me. I consented to speak. As it turns out, I was right. The delegates did not want to hear what I had to say.

I remember it all. The room where I spoke was the correct size for the number of people involved. It was wider than it was long in length, with two seating areas separated by an aisle. In the aisle that split the two sides, just feet from where I spoke, was a microphone. At the end of my presentation, people would line up there to ask their question. As it turns out, by the time I finished speaking most of the seats in the room were vacant. Almost to the person, the audience lined up to ask a question or, rather, to speak a piece of their mind.

Since it was a time of great turmoil and the beginning of a new venture, people's energy was high. I could feel the emotion – and tension - in the air. The main theme of my presentation was that the dreams Jews and Palestinians had in this ever evolving movement was over, failed, and spent. The slogans, which continued at the conference - "Two States for Two Peoples" being only of one of them – abounded. The slogans were dreams that people continued to cling to. I knew that the time for these dreams/projects, and thus the slogans, was over. I spoke instead about the need to mourn the end of our dream. We had failed.

The difficulties that all of us experience speaking and embodying the dream of peace between Jews and Palestinians, the tears we cry, the time spent on the struggle, the relationships broken and made, is empty. Our slogans have become signs of a bankruptcy and now, by staying with them when we know they are bankrupt, they become signs of dishonesty. After all, do we believe in our heart of hearts that the future belongs to our dreams?

For me, to continue mouthing what we don't believe is more than hypocrisy; it denigrates those who suffering on the ground. It is also using a recruiting tool that we no longer believe in. Thus the organizational tool for the new campaign patronized those who were asked to sign on. The movement accused the powers that be, especially the Israeli and American governments, emphasizing as well groups like AIPAC, of rank deception. Could the movement to end the occupation elude that same accusation?

At the microphone, person after person spoke with anger. How dare I bring such a message before this conference. The line was long. It was difficult to see who was next in line. Then I saw Hilda Silverman edging her way closer. I had known Hilda for some years and had experienced her compassion. I had also felt her anger when she thought I pushed the envelope too far. As she approached, I had heard all that I could absorb. I had enough.

When Hilda reached for the microphone, I preempted her. I blurted out that she should save what she had to say, I didn't want to hear her. My words just came out, from a place deep inside of me. As I told her to desist, she spoke over my words, warning me that she was about to say something that would surprise me. Hilda hesitated a moment, sighed and then spoke: "With a heavy heart, I have to say that agree with Marc." I was right, Hilda continued, the dream was over. It was time to mourn.

The Golden Age of Constantinian Judaism

What does mourning mean? Where does it lead? At some point in our lives, all of us have reasons to mourn. Still, a large part of our energy is spent attempting to limit our mourning. We devise patterns of life to deflect it. A very human hope is to never have to mourn. Much of modern life is constructed to limit or permanently delay mourning. By pushing mourning to the side or covering it over with future promises, modernity is like a religious faith. Modernity's afterlife is affluence and power. Moreover, we all seek salvation in this world and the next. Can affluence and power actually save us? Perhaps not but our modern faith at least demands that mourning be kept far away from us.

Mourning seems restricted for the deeply personal, a loss of a loved one for example. Thus it is individualized. Could I – could we – actually apply mourning to politics, or to distant lands like the Middle East? Was mourning applicable at a conference like the one I spoke out where political mobilization for justice is the goal? What were Hilda and I agreeing on at that moment when an expected clash joined us, unexpectedly, at a much deeper level?

In traditional cultures and religions mourning is limited. After all, though we mourn our loss, mourning is for the living. Without mourning, we glide on the edges of our humanity, seeking relief from loss without addressing the sadness at the core of our being. If we stay in a permanent state of mourning we lose our capacity to live. Mourning is usually about a death of some sort out of which we must salvage life. The life that survives mourning is different.

Though we usually think of mourning as internal and humbling, there is also a danger in mourning loss. With discernment and discipline, the life that comes from mourning is life-giving, compassionate and embracing. Unfortunately, that outcome is hardly foretold. Sometimes the life that comes from mourning is strident, militarized and exclusive.

Too, there is a collective dimension to mourning. Though made up of individuals, groups, peoples, even nation-states often enter this difficult terrain. In Jewish history, mourning is highlighted and becomes part of the collective journey of the Jewish people. One way of viewing Jewish history is through mourning, what one prominent Jewish scholar named the Jewish liturgy of destruction.¹

Though collective mourning can manifest itself in different ways, today the majority of Jewish community too often uses mourning – in this case, mourning over the Holocaust – to enhance Jewish power. Sometimes that mourning is used over against others. The use of Holocaust memory as power over others manifests itself most directly against the Palestinian people. But the blunt instrument of mourning infused with power has also been turned against Jews who see mourning as a bridge of solidarity toward Palestinians and others on the margins of the contemporary world. This is the essence of the Jewish civil war that has infused Jewish life for decades. To what affect shall Jewish mourning be embodied in the world?²

Though mourning has turned some Jews toward power over others, it has also brought other Jews toward a deeper embrace of compassion and justice. Perhaps because of the breakdown of our self-identification as an ethical and just people, some Jews have thought again about what it means to be Jewish in the world. Thinking again has consequences.

Sometimes it means being pursued by the Jewish establishment, defined broadly as those Jews in political, religious, economic, cultural and academic life who use the Holocaust as an instrument of Jewish ascendancy in the post-Holocaust/Israel oriented world. Over the years, the Jewish establishment has driven dissenting Jews into exile, maligning them with accusations of self-hate and bearing the stripes of encouraging another Holocaust. Who among Jewish dissidents has not been so accused? Periodically I am wished death by my accusers, either in the near future or, in the ultimate inversion, in the past, in the European Holocaust. I doubt that these death wishes come to me alone.

Strange how far Jewish thought has devolved, in our actions first of all, then in the defense of the actions that we know are wrong. The Constantinian formation of contemporary Judaism – in whose Golden Age we live – is militarized in ways unheard of since Biblical times. Even then there were prophets – what today I would call Jews of Conscience – who warned that the Constantinian path for Jews was death to our destiny as a people and death to a future that would only be exilic. The threatened exile in Biblical times had teeth; in the exile everything would be lost until nothingness became Israel's lot.

Constantinian Judaism meant then and means today a scattering of ethics and personhood that can only be recovered through justice, especially to our Other, the Palestinians. As it turns out, the Jewish Palestinian Other isn't only Other but, through oppression and exclusion, is now and forever a part of our community as we are part of theirs. Could it be any other way? The violence against the Other ultimately means a new and expanded community where the Other becomes neighbor.

When we mourn we come to an end. At the conference, I announced the end of Constantinian Judaism, even as it triumphs, but also the end of Progressive Jewishness, which sees the reform of Constantinian Judaism as a possibility while seeking to limit its damage. Whether consciously or not, Progressive Jews don't understand the depths of the conundrum they are involved in. To my surprise and perhaps to her surprise as well, Hilda, a militant Progressive Jew, joined me as Jew of Conscience.

Progressive Jews struggle against a Constantinian Judaism that is defined by its enabling of empire in Israel and America, thus the militarized violence we experience in material life, thought and religion. It does so, however, only around the edges, trying to maintain the Constantinian narrative that covers over its violence with a narrative that features Jews as innocent in suffering *and* in empowerment – in the Holocaust *and* in Israel. Constantinian Jews see the Holocaust as an international event around which all other communities and nations must bow and, similarly as with the state of Israel, its innocence must be affirmed with devotion.³

While battling aspects of the Constantinian narrative, Progressive Jews affirm its central themes, simply placing some limited boundaries on the use of the Holocaust and the power of Israel. Progressive Jews seek to maintain the Constantinian Jewish narrative against the enemies which seek to unravel it. The enemies are first, the threats that Others, including Palestinians, pose to the narrative in their opposition to the Jewish state of Israel, and second, the threat that Constantinian Jews pose to the narrative by extending its power within the Jewish community and outside of it, especially through political action committees and support of Israel in its most aggressive forms.

Thus while the Constantinian Jewish understanding allows for Israeli occupation and settlements without questions, Progressive Jews critique Israel's occupation and settlement of the West Bank and Gaza after the 1967 war. For Progressive Jews, if only the misguided policies of occupation and settlements hadn't occurred and if now we can end them, then Jews will return to our innocence and redemption. Moreover, any Jew or non-Jew who seeks a deeper exploration of Jewishness where innocence and redemption are impossible to return to, is characterized by Progressive Jews in the same way that Constantinian Judaism does: as misguided, as self-haters, as anti-Semites.

So while Constantinian and Progressive Jews disagree on aspects of contemporary Jewish life, their agreement is substantial. No substantive mourning is important for either group, in fact just the opposite. Both Constantinian and Progressive Jews celebrate Jewish life in its power and in its renewal. Unlike Constantinian Judaism, Progressive Jews do believe that Jewish life needs correction. Then Jews can move forward - more or less the way we are.

This lack of substantive divergence is deeply problematic. This is why, at the Campaign's founding conference, I evoked the image of Constantinian Judaism and Progressive Jews as two sides of the same coin. Yet the Campaign was itself a celebration of its opposition to Constantinian Judaism. Conflating the two, if just to provoke thought, ran against a significant grain. The reaction was telling, betraying an anxiety about their eroding position itself. Could it be that the narrative of innocence and redemption was itself already lost?

The hostile response I received convinced me that the delegates felt all was lost and that if time were taken for mourning there may be no way back to their sense of innocence and

redemption. Their hostility was a rear guard action. The place beyond Constantinian and Progressive Jewishness was a forbidding unknown.

Difficult Lessons

When Hilda stepped to the microphone on that fateful day, she affirmed that I had not gone over the edge. I had entered an unknown and forbidden territory beyond Jewish innocence and redemption. In fact in private discussions over the next days of the conference many affirmed Hilda's statement and my own views. The disconnection between the conference participants' public statements and private thoughts startled me. Why hadn't everyone just spoken their real feelings of loss and failure?

I experience this private and public disconnect more and more over the years, though this too holds a special irony. Since I began writing and speaking on Jewish identity, the Holocaust, Israel and the Palestinians in 1984, this disconnect has widened and lessened, since more people, even some political and religious entities, have become more forthright in public actions and statements. It goes both ways, changing directions during different time periods. Just when a Jewish activist is ready to come out, she hesitates, then boldly ventures forth, only to retreat again.

Regardless, the coming out increases. There are more and more people who know and will speak the score. However, the expanding discourse over the last decades has yielded few results on the ground. As the discussion in Europe and America among engaged folks from different identities has expanded, including among engaged Jews, the situation in Israel-

Palestine has declined. The hope of previous years, when a political settlement might have been real, has come to an end. Most expressions of hope today, as illustrated at the founding of the Campaign, are fig-leaves. The last covering is held adamantly against our nakedness, as if by exposing our loss, the community so assiduously assembled, would implode. The fear of our nakedness is only trumped by the fear of the community's nakedness.

At that moment, however, Hilda and I recognized what many others there – and many more today – understand; there is no way back. This statement – there is no way back – is the essence of mourning. Something has happened that cannot be changed. Something has been lost that cannot be recovered. Moreover, only those who understand the situation at a deep level can mourn. Therefore, those whom we have worked with and often appeal to may be, on this crucial issue, lost to us. They have not reached the place we now dwell within. Though it is difficult to think through this at the moment, our sense of self *and* others is undergoing a change as well – from which there is no way back. Those in mourning often drift away, if not in a physical sense then mentally. The mourner is here and not here. The sense of aloneness can be absolute and abiding.

Yet it is also true that a community of mourners exists that is waiting to be found. We are joining them. They are joining us. This might be the true definition of New Diaspora of our time, as those in mourning – in exile – for all sorts of political, economic and spiritual reasons, and from all over the religious and geographic world, find one another along the way. Though exiles always think they will return to what was, once in exile, exiles never return. Instead, living among exiles, exiles form a new community. Instead of traditions, cultures and values

intact, or pretending to be, exiles carry only the fragments of their former lives and identities into this uncertain future. Shattered and in mourning, despite the rhetoric of return, exiles are humbled and searching.

Too, exiles journey to places that were formerly forbidden and find people there who, having been once characterized as enemies, in their shared brokenness, become fellow travelers in the search. Many Jews and Palestinians have entered this forbidden territory. It isn't easy describing it to those who have never been there.

Mourning, then, represents a specific kind of learning. At this moment in history many are learning unwanted and untoward facts about themselves, the community they come from, the histories that have gone before them and the history that is being created today. As Jews, what have we learned about our Jewishness over these last years? In the mourning we acknowledge and mourning we don't acknowledge, there are lessons to be found here. They are crucial to the Jewish future.

For those committed to justice and reconciliation in Israel-Palestine, the lessons to be learned seem endless. One aspect of mourning is the fear that the depth we explore will preclude a life beyond mourning. The darkness feels all encompassing. The way back to the known is obscured.

At the same time, we fear that mourning is unlimited in another respect. Usually, mourning is occasioned by a singular event. Yet that singular event is also connected to other events. And these events are linked to the building blocks of identity and meaning. We

painstakingly build the meaning of our lives brick by brick, creating a structure that allows us to experience meaning in life. Mourning challenges that structure. Mourning challenges that meaning.

When I spoke at the Campaign's founding event and Hilda addressed my concerns, more than our understandings of the Middle East were at stake. Our entire identity as Jews was on the line, which meant the entirety of Jewish history, as well as our investment in that history as a structure of meaning for our lives. We were caught up short. Accepting the need for mourning, Hilda and I had to reevaluate our personal and collective sense of Jewish destiny. But as with any case of mourning, the felt loss had no destination. The loss did not present a future and, if it did, the future would have to be quite different than the past. In mourning, though, it is difficult to look ahead.

What was at stake? In truth, an unfolding and cascading understanding that eventually indicted our received notions of what it means to be Jewish.

It begins with the question about the state of Israel as it had become. Perhaps belatedly, it is clear that the state of Israel will continue to expand. By the time the Campaign began, Israel had already conquered all of Palestine. As it does today, and even more so, Israel controls the land from Tel Aviv to the Jordan River. Not only does Israel control this territory, it has no intention of relinquishing that control. Within the territory that Israel controls are millions of Palestinians, including the remnant Palestinian population within Israel's 1967 borders, now numbering over a million Palestinians. When recognizing Israel's now permanent control of Palestine, the Palestinian populations in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, have to

be recognized as remnant populations as well. In fact, the demographic map of Palestinians under Israeli control shows these remnant populations as sharing more or less the same unprotected and Israeli-occupied space. All of these remnant Palestinian populations are surrounded and enveloped by Israeli power. Thus, the creation and expansion of Israel shares a similar trajectory: more and more space for Jews, the displacement and control of more and more Palestinians, the end of Palestine as it was and could have become in the future.⁴

All of this is to say that the founding of Israel, no matter the historical exigencies, can no longer be held up simply as an ethical response to the emergency situation of Europe's Jews after the Holocaust. This also means that the idea that Israel was innocent in its creation but strayed with its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza after the 1967 war has to be rethought. If one believes as many Jews did and do, that the correction of the post-1967 era will return Israel to its ethical trajectory, the continuing expansion of Israel contradicts this hope. Whether it was inevitable or not, mapping the Palestinian remnants beyond the pre-1967 borders precludes this understanding.

Since the development of a Jewish narrative of innocence and redemption was crucial in the explanation and support of Israel from its inception, what does this permanent expansion mean for that narrative? Though that narrative was originally formed in Israel, with Israel representing world Jewry, American Jews have been intimately involved in the creation and maintenance of that narrative as well. The narrative that twins Israel with the Holocaust and unfolds like this: The suffering of Europe's Jews which culminated in the Holocaust mandates the state of Israel; Israel is the rescue land for the survivors of the Holocaust but also the

potential exit area for all Jews who might be persecuted in the future; Thus the project of establishing and building Israel is a duty for all Jews – in sum the equivalent of a religious mandate – and any Jew – and any non-Jew for that matter – who opposes the building and maintenance of a Jewish state is *per force* anti-Jewish and ultimately wishes upon the Jews another Holocaust; Furthermore, criticism of Israeli policies toward Palestinians is forbidden or allowed only around the edges; Any Jew or non-Jew that acknowledges more than a brief injustice in Israel’s treatment of Palestinians, in this view usually occasioned by the Palestinian themselves, is playing with the fire of anti-Semitism and Jewish self-hate.

One shouldn’t underestimate the power of this narrative or the consequences of departing from it. Finding a fatal flaw at the very origins of the state of Israel - a flaw that continues to manifest itself with such regularity that it can hardly be seen as aberrational - places oneself at odds with the contemporary definition of what it means to be an “authentic” Jew. In the years since Israel’s founding the definition of what it means to be Jewish has revolved around the Holocaust and Israel. Questioning Israel, then, penetrates to the heart of the authenticity of one’s Jewishness. Does the Jewish or non-Jewish questioner seek to place Jews back in jeopardy, a jeopardy that once did and could again occasion another Holocaust?

Moreover, mapping the remnants of Palestinian life in the present cannot help but reflect on the very origins of the state of Israel and Jewish culpability in the emptying of Palestine of the Palestinians, at least in the areas which became the Jewish state. This means the involvement of Jews in ethnic cleansing, a crime Jews have been subjected to since time immemorial. The Holocaust was a crime that can be defined as a genocide, which it was, but it

was also a successful policy of ethnic cleansing. In the end, Europe was “cleansed” of its Jews. For a time remnants survived, surrounded by hostile powers, until the war ended and the remnants scattered, some to the newly forming state of Israel.

Are Jews capable of ethnic cleansing? As a theoretical question, most Jews would think it impossible. If Jews had ethnically cleansed Palestinians in the origins of the state of Israel, it can then be asked if the ongoing settling of Palestinian territory in Jerusalem and the West Bank is in continuity with Israel’s original founding. Could such a potential, now realized, be impossible?⁵

A Challenged Jewish Identity

It is easy to see where this is going. If one of the lessons learned about the history of the state of Israel, supported and enabled by Jews around the world, is that Jews with power are no different than other groups/peoples/nations – including those who have historically wielded power against Jews – then the Jewish narrative of innocence and redemption is also shared with those who have ethnically cleansed, abused and oppressed others. It is only a short walk to the other side of the street regarding Jewish particularity and Jewish identity. If Jewishness has been seen by many Jews and more recently by others, as somehow special, honed by an ethical witness and suffering to seek justice in the world, and if that ethical witness in modern times is seen as a transmuted but continuous understanding of Jewish chosenness surrounded by an aura of a special destiny, then admitting that the original and ongoing injustices committed against Palestinians are permanent augurs the collapse of Jewish identity itself.

Mourning, then, becomes confession, and an unexpected and troubling learning. What one thought it was to be Jewish no longer holds. Any confession has consequences. Here the stakes are as high as they come. A Jewish confession to the Palestinian people admits that the core of Jewish identity has collapsed, that the Jewish identity we inherited, taught and embraced at a primal level, is fraudulent.

Placing “Jewish” before a state does not make a state more just. Does this also mean the same with the Jewish community and individual Jews as well? For non-Jews, this may be an obvious point, a reverse syllogism, if you will. What identity, however constructed, and with innocence and redemption at the forefront, can stand the judgment of history? Indeed, at the founding conference of the Campaign, Hilda and I were surrounded by others from diverse backgrounds - Western Christian, Diaspora Palestinian, Muslim and alike. None of their histories are innocent or redemptive either. They were gathered with Jews in their broken histories as well. Though each affirmed the specificity of their own backgrounds and particularities, or hid from them, a joint confession and mourning may have exposed the shattered reality behind the mobilized activist identity construction. Mourning and confession raises the possibility that the joint work to overcome injustice, itself a good, may also be a way of denying the difficult history/reality of each specific community.

Could ethnic cleansing rather than justice be at the center of Jewish identity? Over the last years this has become a line of thought in the international discourse relating to Israel-Palestine. There is also the charge that Jewish identity is implicated in colonial and imperial adventures beyond the Middle East. Much of this criticism has to do with present day policies

of the state of Israel and the Jewish establishment in America. But there is also another sensibility underlying these charges, one that is increasingly spoken with reference to ethnic cleansing, colonialism and imperialism: that it is inherently Jewish to act in this way, stretching back to Biblical times, and that Jewishness itself is problematic. The question being posed is whether there is something inherently violent and oppressive about being Jewish.

Clearly, such charges carry the historical weight of anti-Semitism, indicting a collective for the worst of its history and, more, conflating the worst as the essence of Jewish identity. As well, the negative myths that grew up around Jews during their European sojourn, are in play, at least in the background. Though this can be rationally discussed and dismissed, an opposite post-Holocaust romanticized image of Jews has also grown - of the innocence and goodness of Jews – and held with or without the state of Israel as redemptive.

The competing myths of demonization and romanticization is a itself a drama, so much so that, rather than either side of the myth, the sheer reality of Jews and the Jewish community perpetrating and enabling injustice is caught in between. Because of the history of Jewish suffering and empowerment and everything that surrounds both, everyone is caught here. Jews are caught in the crossfire, which is experienced as an external and internal trauma. It is difficult to learn lessons when even one's outreach is under assault by others and by one's own community. Would a confession of Jewish sins confirm the anti-Semites? Would silence be a sign of complicity in the Jewish establishment's policies of injustice?

Standing in between, speaking and responding as a Jew among others, but also being surrounded by ancient, medieval and modern Jewish history, and standing as well among the

recent ruins of the Holocaust and the ongoing *Nakba*, the Palestinian catastrophe, how should Jews respond? Indeed, standing in between and among others who are also in many ways standing in between – so as Jews standing in between and among others who are also standing in between their histories – is there a way of signing Jewish identity that is neither fated to violence nor innocent? One that can be spoken and lived as distinct in and of itself and yet at the same time is embracing of others? Which leads to the following questions: For our time, can solidarity with Jewish history be expressed through solidarity with the Palestinian people? Can that solidarity be returned by Palestinians and others who are neither Palestinian nor Jewish?

As Israel continues its expansion, the international discussion has moved from the possibility of a two state solution to a one state necessity. Part of the movement is due to Israel having cleansed so many Palestinians and taken so much Palestinian land that many believe that the two state solution has been foreclosed. In a time when Israel's control stretches from Tel Aviv to the Jordan River, with no relinquishment of that control in sight, the question now is how an almost equal population of Jews and Palestinians will live together in the land of Israel-Palestine. Yet another level of the one state solution is also in play. This level sees Jewish and Palestinian identities as constructed with an essentialism that is false at its core.

From this perspective, identity is fluid, evolving, ever changing. The identity of individuals should be free and unencumbered by the state. Only citizenship's responsibilities and rights should be defined. Thus there is no need for a "Jewish" state and indeed assigning

such an identity to a state is harmful to non-Jews and Jews themselves. Further, there is the argument that assigning the label “Jewish” to the state or even to specific formations of community struggle for justice is itself restricting and self-defeating. Moreover, at least from the perspective of Europe and America, such designations define Jewishness in a contested and privileged place. For Palestinians, the struggle is not about Jewishness or its internal identity conflicts, it is about Palestinian displacement and the Palestinian struggle for freedom. If Jews are to join the struggle for Palestinian life and flourishing, their Jewishness has to be checked at the door. In this line of analysis, Jewishness isn’t judged in a negative or positive light. It should be irrelevant. In Palestine, the state of Israel is a force of oppression. Pure and simple, that oppression must cease.⁶

Is Jewish particularity affected if, from a Palestinian or Jewish perspective, one thinks a Jewish state is important or an anachronism? Is Jewish particularity tied to a state, since in most of Jewish history, Jews have lived among others with no state of their own? Is Judaism, indeed Jewishness, primarily a Diaspora sensibility which has only been linked with a state for short periods of time and destined to resume its Diaspora status, then and now? Are modern times different, the Holocaust mandating a Jewish state from that point forth? Can Jewish particularity as previously understood survive the challenge of a state or has, of necessity, Jewish particularity changed because of the two formative events of our time, the Holocaust and the state of Israel?

As Jews, perhaps we are at the crossroads, deciding the future of Jewish identity. Perhaps it has already been decided. Jewish particularity may be fated to be mobilized and

militarized for centuries to come. Thus proposing choice might be an illusion. Indeed, the Jewish community might be moving toward a permanent mobilization and militarization where Jews who refuse that direction will be exiled and lost to the community. Perhaps the Constantinian Jewish establishment is attempting to banish the Jewish prophetic from the Jewish community and, if it can, from very essence of Jewishness in order to make this transformation complete.

Does Jewishness Have Anything to Do with Palestine?

Though many Jews believe that the Israeli-Palestinian question is, first and foremost, a Jewish question, revolving around the needs and witness of Jewish history, understandably Palestinians demur. The framing of the question of Israel-Palestine in the West has been almost completely Jewish and this is so with non-Jews in the West as well. This has to do with the history of Jews in Europe, especially relating to the painful issues of Christian anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, as well as prejudice against Islam and the East, a history artfully portrayed by the late Edward Said. Today, the discussion of the One State solution as the preferred, secular and democratic solution to the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, attempts to steer the discourse on Israel-Palestine from this Judaic sensibility. For Palestinians, the drama of displacement and the struggle for freedom is theirs. Their struggle is against a colonial and imperial state of Israel.⁷

In the One State discussion there is a strict separation of Judaism, Jewishness, Jewish history and the state of Israel. For Palestinians, again, the question is one of an insurgent colonial state that continues to displace and occupy an indigenous people. The remedy is to

displace that occupying power, end the structures that abet oppression and begin anew with the banner of freedom for all. That is why the affinity of Apartheid South Africa and Apartheid Israel is employed with such vigor. Palestinians see the Jewish state as part of a history of Western apartheid regimes that are destined to disappear from the stage of history.⁸

Some Jews argue along the same line. Mostly these are Jews of Conscience who have awakened to the nightmare experienced by Palestinians as an indictment of the state of Israel in its Jewish and Western character. This includes more than a few Jewish Israelis whose critique of the colonial and imperial elements of Israel force them to envision the end of the state of Israel as it has been constructed and maintained.⁹

The abandonment of the project of a Jewish state is one of the dividing lines between Jews of Conscience and Progressive Jews. Though Progressive Jews critique the post-1967 occupation and settlement of the West Bank and Gaza, they hold fast to the necessity of a Jewish state as an expression of Jewish particularity in the post-Holocaust era. In fact, the more advanced Progressive Jews see justice for Palestinians in the creation of their own state alongside Israel as absolutely essential to the Jewish witness after the Holocaust, a witness that features the necessity of Jewish empowerment and the retention of the Jewish ethical witness in the world. If the twinning of Jewish empowerment and Jewish ethics is to be narrated by Progressive Jews, then the post-1967 injustice must be rectified. At the same time, the creation of Israel and its Jewish character must be preserved and its essential innocence asserted.¹⁰

This also recovers the Holocaust as the *raison d'être* for the creation of the state of Israel. If the creation of the state of Israel wasn't innocent in its creation, then the post-1967

occupation may be a continuation of the original occupation of Palestinian land in the creation of Israel. The issue of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians looms large here as the very discussion of the Holocaust as a Jewish identity marker is thrown into question. It is more and more difficult for the Holocaust to be held as the epitome of suffering in the world - which then becomes a Jewish entitlement of power - if the years after the Holocaust, Jews, including Holocaust survivors, cleansed Palestinians from their land.

At least for American Jews, the state of Israel, is the battleground for all things Jewish, including the way the Holocaust is narrated. Thus, American Jews, and perhaps Jews in Israel as well, carry the double burden of statehood linked to an ancient Jewish particularity which, though historically often under assault, is now held high in many quarters of the world. That is why criticism of the policies of the state of Israel, and even the ultimate transformation of Israel from a Jewish state into a democratic secular state, seemingly political issues to be rationally debated, is seen by many Jews, especially Jewish elites, as an assault on Jews, Judaism and Jewish history. If Jews aren't innocent in our suffering and in our empowerment, what kind of Jews are we? If Jews aren't innocent in our suffering and in our empowerment, what can be said about our narration of Jewish history? Since so many stereotypes of Jewish life demonize Jews, can the criticism of the state of Israel that Jews are so heavily invested in, be separated from those stereotypes? Do Jews who join the critique of the state of Israel join a long history of those who denigrate Jews, Jewishness and Jewish history?

For Jews, then, the state of Israel *is* about Jews, Jewishness and Jewish history. For Jews, so are Palestinians and Palestine. As the Other of contemporary Jewish life, Palestinians

are the image/reality that accuses Jews. The previous ways of dealing with this accusing Other – ignoring, demonizing or patronizing Palestinians - have failed. With that failure, the assertion of Jewish innocence by Constantinian Jews or the reassertion of that innocence by Progressive Jews – with in both cases the state of Israel being seen as redemptive – has also failed.

The almost fanatical and ever increasing Jewish communal involvement with the Holocaust can be linked to this accusing Other who represents a deep anxiety about the direction of Jewish life. Again the threat of a cascading undermining of Jewish identity should be noted. In the ironies of ironies, after the Holocaust, Jewish empowerment has thrown into stark relief the very survival of Jewish identity in the world.

Surrounding this anxiety is the question of what it means to be Jewish after the Holocaust *and* after Israel. By “after” Israel, I mean after what Israel has done and is doing to the Palestinian people. It means that the idea of Jewish innocence is compromised by its participation in ethnic cleansing, settlements, violent and aggressive wars, and an occupation of another people. It means that there is violence at the heart of Jewish memory and identity – in actual fact rather mythic projections. It means, as well, that with the continuing assault against Palestinian life, there is no recovering of Jewish innocence. It means that placing “Jewish” before a state does not in any way affect the imperatives of state power. Furthermore, barring a miraculous turn about, which also would necessitate a reversal of historic proportions, the state of Israel will continue on into the future as it is and Jewish life will be further mobilized and militarized.

If present trends continue, the Golden Age of Constantinian Judaism will flourish for centuries and, more, it will be the singular form of life recognized as authentically Jewish. Since even Jews will recognize this single path, Jews will either join Constantinian Judaism or cease to identify as Jews. Because of this internal assent to the definition of Jewishness, over time, Progressive Jews will diminish in numbers and force. The only Jews who oppose Constantinian Judaism will be Jews of Conscience but they will exist in exile. They will be so distant from the Constantinian Jewish community that their ability to recreate a Jewishness that is linked with ongoing Jewish history is doubtful. We may be facing the last exile in Jewish history.

The Persistence of the Jewish Prophetic

As the deconstruction of Jewish particularity continues apace a little noted phenomenon exists alongside that deconstruction: the renewal, indeed the explosion of, the Jewish prophetic in our time. Jews of Conscience embody this phenomenon in their actions. They also speak and write in prophetic ways. Almost always secular in their analysis, Jews of Conscience are often seen simply as political dissidents, dissenting on the policies and structure of the state of Israel like they would dissent on other political issues. In this line of analysis, there is no difference in their take on Israel/Palestine than on United States policies in Iraq and Afghanistan. Though there is continuity in political outlook, a closer examination of Jewish writing on the state of Israel shows a peculiar, quite Jewish, outrage and focus that differentiates one from the other.

Even if they are taken together, say Jews of Conscience on the state of Israel and American foreign policy, the focus on Israel is enlightening. Though the ramifications of Israel

loom much larger on the world stage than its size and reach, the concentration on Israel by Jews of Conscience betrays an involvement with Jewishness that most Jews of Conscience did not expect to find in their own lives. An example is the proliferation of Jewish “Not in My Name” groups and rhetoric in the last years. Many Jews in these groups have either never been affiliated with any Jewish issues or haven’t been for years. Often these Jews state openly that the only reason they are affiliated with any Jewish group is a political act of defiance.

Some years ago, the Lithuanian born, French philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, wrote of Jews in the nineteenth and early twentieth century who rebelled against the bourgeois assimilation of European Jewry. Most Jews of Conscience today would fit his description of many European Jews in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Writing in 1952, just years after the Holocaust, Levinas described the earlier Jews of Conscience as atheists and rebels who, in fleeing the Jewish community, battled against the hypocrisy of the “emancipated” world. In Levinas’ view, these Jewish atheists and rebels struggled against an assimilation that promoted bourgeois freedom but enslaved the masses. They could not adjust to the possibility that Jews would leave their situation on the margins of Europe and be accepted by the ascendant classes of European life, only to leave behind the non-Jewish masses who toiled as slaves to the bourgeois order. Of these Jews, Levinas writes poignantly: “Perhaps, from that age on, the Jewish presence manifested itself more in the Israelites’ participation in liberal and social movements – in the struggle for civil rights or true social justice – than in the sermons to be heard in emancipated synagogues. All these denigrators of tradition, all these atheists and rebels, unwittingly joined the divine tradition of intransigent justice which expiates blasphemy

in advance.” Transposing Levinas’ words for Jews of Conscience today perhaps this could be said of them: “Perhaps, from that age on, the Jewish presence manifested itself more in the Jewish participation in liberal and social movements – in the struggle for civil rights or true social justice for Palestinians – than in the narrative of innocence and redemption promulgated by Constantinian and Progressive in the halls of colonial and imperial power. All these denigrators of tradition, all these atheists and rebels, unwittingly joined the divine tradition of intransigent justice which expiates blasphemy in advance.”¹¹

Here Levinas identifies the Jewish penchant for social justice as being impossible to pursue in an assimilating Jewish community. Jewish atheists and rebels had to leave the Jewish community to pursue their vocation. Assimilating into bourgeois life with its attendant presuppositions and exploitation of others was impossible for them. Somehow and without recourse to an overt Jewish narrative or specific Jewish speech, they opposed Jewish assimilation to the kinds of power that had oppressed Jews and kept them on the margins of acceptable society. Without specific articulation, Jewish atheists and rebels decided that Jews were no longer Jews since, first, they were trying to escape their singled out outcast status, and second, their Jewishness was being transformed into a conformism that made Jews and the Jewish community into something that wasn’t Jewish. At any rate, these Jews could not abide this transformation of Jewishness.

Yet, if we say that these Jewish atheists and rebels were simply human, seeing injustice and responding to it as others have done – an analysis that many of those Jews and Jews today express – why then does their pattern of dissent so clearly follow the central themes of the

Biblical prophets? This Biblical trajectory is especially interesting since, unlike the Biblical prophets, these modern atheists and rebels adopt a revolutionary secular rhetoric and are, if anything, anti-religious in their tone and outlook. At the same time, however, it is instructive that more than a few of the most prominent Jews of Conscience of that time came from homes steeped in Jewish learning. Today, many Jewish atheists and rebels are either survivors of the Holocaust or are children of Holocaust survivors.

Think of Noam Chomsky and his Jewish background. Think also of Sara Roy and Amira Hass, both children of Holocaust survivors. None of these write in any specifically Jewish language or narrative. None of these figures publically speak of their Jewishness or typically include their Jewishness as central to their work for justice. Yet taken together they offer a critique of Israel in lieu of Palestinian suffering that is remarkable and relentless. Perhaps Roy's and Hass' familial links to the Holocaust are prime motivations not to assimilate to the violence of post-Holocaust Jewish life. In this way, they may be similar to those earlier Jewish atheists and rebels who refused to assimilate to bourgeois European civilization.¹²

In Jewish history, the struggle against assimilation has taken many forms. As pointed out by Jewish historians, the strict division of Jew and the Other, for example the often used distinction between the Hebraic and Greek, is too strong. Jews have always been assimilating to cultures different than their own. Yet at the same time, there has always been resistance to a full assimilation. If assimilation was ever fully successful, the push and pull of Jewish history - the desire to assimilate for the benefits at hand and the refusal to fully assimilate - would disappear. Jewishness might then disappear as well. This back and forth has led to many

different Jewish cultures over the millennia and continues to this day. One way of framing the discussion of Jewishness at any given time is tracing the desire to and the struggle against assimilation. It is my view that Constantinian, Progressive and Jews of Conscience of our time are involved in the same cultural, political, economic and religious drama that characterizes Jewish history.

It is well known that the Biblical prophets railed against injustice. But they also linked injustice with assimilating to the practices of the surrounding cultures. Moreover, the prophet's main target was the corruption of ancient Israel's political, economic and religious elite, especially when they used religious symbols and authority to justify their ambitions and rule. The misuse or overriding of formative events in Israel's history was also the prophet's target. From the prophet's perspective, the rulers of Israel could hardly claim the Exodus/Sinai events as intrinsic to their rule while violating the basic thrust of what those formative events meant and taught. Included here is the language Israel's rulers used, a language that spoke of Israel's destiny as a light unto the nations. The prophet's believed that Israel's rulers used that destiny for their own purposes and thus squandered it. The people Israel's destiny was something other than power and injustice.

The Biblical prophets also link the squandering of Israel's destiny with colonial and imperial ambition. The Biblical prophets primarily see this in terms of internal Jewish life, as if a corruption within Israel creates the danger of a wholesale assimilation to the ways of the world which Israel is supposed to transform, if not avoid or transcend all together. All in all, the prophets call Israel back to its formative events as a witness to the nations. Otherwise Israel is

destined to be corrupted, to collapse and ultimately, the greatest threat, to disappear from the world stage.¹³

After praising the Jewish atheists and rebels who “expiated blasphemy in advance,” Levinas writes about their impoverishment. For Levinas, Jewish atheists and rebels had to leave the assimilating Jewish community in order to be faithful as Jews. Since Jewish discourse was also assimilating, they adopted a different language to embody their fidelity. The language they chose was a European universalism, the revolutionary language of their time. Yet for Levinas this is a foreign language for Jews and one that revealed its own corruptions in due course. The Holocaust was the pinnacle of that corruption or, at least, the end point for Jews adopting foreign languages as their own. Having adopted European languages, however, the children and grandchildren of these atheists and rebels were adrift. They were too distant from the Jewish community. At the same time, Europe had betrayed them. All these atheists and rebels were left with was a corrupted language.¹⁴

Recognizing this conundrum of alienation, drift and corruption, after the Holocaust, Levinas seeks the accommodation of retaining part of Europe’s language, which he identifies as Greek, and returning and renewing the Jewish language, which he identifies as Judaic reasoning and ritual. Levinas begins his adventure in the 1950s, right after the Holocaust and the creation of the state of Israel. Even then, Levinas is ambivalent about the powerful imagery of both the Holocaust and Israel. For Levinas, it is possible that both will lead to the renewal of the Jewish language, thus recreating a home – and a language - for Jewish atheists and rebels. It is also possible that the Holocaust and the state of Israel will presage a new assimilation to the world

of injustice and power. Through thick and thin, Levinas retained this ambivalent posture until his death in 1995.¹⁵

Even if not spoken in these words or addressed specifically to the Jewish community, Jews of Conscience have broken this ambivalence with the declaration that the Jewish language that Levinas sought to recreate and renew has again assimilated to power and injustice. Therefore in the post-Holocaust and post-Israel era, Jewish language, discourse and community life has to be abandoned once again if Jews are to be faithful to their calling to be a light unto the world. The formative event the Jewish community has betrayed is the new Exodus/Sinai event – the Holocaust and the state of Israel. The way back has also been squandered. If Jewish dissent is to be lived and spoken then distance from this corruption must be found.

But if the languages that Jewish atheists and rebels have fled to and from are corrupted, and the renewed Jewish language that Levinas sought is also corrupt, what language can Jews of Conscience speak and act within? Is it a conglomeration of the shattered fragments of languages – indeed of cultures, ideologies and spiritual inspirations – that come together in the New Diaspora, where exiles from around the world gather?

Revolutionary Forgiveness in the Broken Middle of Jerusalem

In the New Diaspora, where Jews of Conscience share a global space with exiles from all lands and culture, including Palestinians, are there geographical spaces of special interest, symbolic spaces, where the work of collaboration and reconstruction might begin anew? At least for Jews and Palestinians, Jerusalem is at the center, though there are many others who

look to Jerusalem for inspiration and light. Jerusalem is the place where mourning takes on a concrete specificity. In turn Jerusalem could illumine other contested spaces of exile and the New Diaspora. In and around Jerusalem a new language of justice and compassion can be developed and embraced.

Historically, Jerusalem holds a special place in the Jewish life. Over the millennia, Jerusalem has been the capital city of Jewish liturgy and the Jewish imagination, reminding Jews of their despair and of messianic possibilities. Regardless of the details of its actual history, and sometimes in spite of it, Jewish memory has Jerusalem as central to Jewish destiny. Jerusalem has functioned as a messianic portent, gauging how near or distant Jews have been to the promises that God made to the Jewish people in their original liberation and sojourn through the desert. Through most of Jewish history, there has been a religious content to the messianic view of Jerusalem. At the same time, and through various interpretive frameworks, Jerusalem as a symbolic quality has maintained its importance in the Jewish secular narrative.

Whether being in Jerusalem, seeking to return there, or wanting a distance from the actuality of Jerusalem so as to keep an ideal from being sullied by reality, Jerusalem remains a constant in Jewish life. It may even be more resonant today because of the existence of the state of Israel, than it has been in other parts of Jewish history. After the Holocaust and after Israel, Jerusalem remains in the Jewish imagination. Now it has assumed a concrete place in world affairs where Jews in the state of Israel and Jews around the world have a symbolic and political challenge that is difficult to exaggerate.

This intersection of historical, symbolic centrality and practical, political control is a *novum* in Jewish history, at least since the Judeo-Roman wars of the first century, ACE. Having Jerusalem in the Jewish liturgical orbit or under political control has its own set of complexities. Combining liturgy and politics at the same time, especially after the Holocaust and within the context of the global struggle against colonialism and imperialism, and coupling both with the modern understanding of conscience and human rights which Jews helped pioneer, Jerusalem has become so heavily contested that all of Jewish history seems to be on the line there. Could Jews having emerged from a history of struggle, suffering and contribution, often holding Jerusalem aloft as the center of Jewish ideals, only to combine this symbolism with political control with a force that permanently dispossess the Palestinian people from their own symbolic and concrete destiny?

The answer as we have it is “yes,” Jerusalem has become the field of Jewish hegemony in symbol and practice. The Palestinian people have been and are being dispossessed from Jerusalem. Radiating out from Jerusalem in all directions is further dispossession. Jerusalem has never been Jewish only, is not Jewish only today, and will never be Jewish only without ethnic cleansing becoming an integral component of Jewishness.

Since violence is at the core of Jewish sovereignty in Jerusalem today, because of the importance of Jerusalem in Jewish history, Jewish symbolism and practice is now irretrievably tainted with violence. Looking at the reality of Jerusalem, it is not surprising that violence is also at the core of contemporary Jewish identity. The only way to change that core is to change the contemporary core of Jerusalem. Therefore, the only way to demilitarize Jewishness is to

redress the militarization of Jerusalem. This is why the state of Israel, with Jerusalem as its capital, is so contested within Jewish life. Today, no matter where Jews live, the state of Israel, with Jerusalem at the center, is at the heart of what it means to be Jewish.

Is Jerusalem, then, the place where the lost language of Levinas' Jewish atheists and rebels can be found once again? Reconnecting, on the one hand, with our ancient history of Jews that has travelled with us throughout history in prayer and idealism, and on the other, now, in the twenty-first century, experiencing the complex global political, religious, economic and social intersection of innocence and culpability after the Holocaust and after Israel, Jerusalem may be the place for Jewish renewal.

Any Jewish renewal without justice in Jerusalem is an illusion. If Jerusalem is the place, then Jews will have to find their way forward with a particularity infused with universalism. Such a particular/universalism demands a Jewishness inclusive of others - as Jews want to be included. Contested Jerusalem allows for an understanding of our present as well as a glimpse of a future that is extraordinary in the establishment of its ordinariness. The task is to create a Jerusalem where Jewish and Palestinian life can co-exist and ultimately flourish together.

Thus mourning over Jerusalem, in its loss as a practice of justice, or one that was never fully realized, existing as an ideal never achieved, is now a city where the practice of justice in its ordinary manifestations - equality of citizenship with its obligations and protections - would be a modern miracle. A mourning which leads to action on behalf of justice, one that involves Jews and Palestinians charting a new direction, could create a language that is responsive to both peoples in their particularities and together in a new relationship.

A practice of justice that comes from mourning over Jerusalem would have the ingredients for a future for a Jewish and Palestinian particularity that would include a Jewish-Palestinian component as part of that particularity. In essence, both communities retain their historic particularity while creating a new particularity that crosses the boundaries that suffering and conquest has made obsolete.

This revived and enhanced particularity can only occur if the importance of Jerusalem is, at one and the same time, enhanced and diminished. This dovetails with the understanding that the reconstruction of Jerusalem can only begin if the peoples who populate Jerusalem recognize their brokenness. Noting also that Jerusalem represents the geographic, cultural, intellectual, economic and religious middle of Israel and Palestine, the challenge is to see Jerusalem as the broken middle of Israel/Palestine for Jews and Palestinians. Once recognized as the broken middle for both peoples, then the question is how to practice justice in the broken middle of Israel/Palestine.¹⁶

Practicing justice in the broken middle of Israel/Palestine could lead to a future for Jews and Palestinians beyond the present impasse. Such a practice would also influence and perhaps transform Diaspora Jews and Palestinians. The transformation of these communities in and outside of the land would have repercussions on other Diaspora peoples especially those other exiles in the New Diaspora.

Practicing justice in the broken middle of Israel/Palestine could lead to a broader global breakthrough that moves within justice toward reconciliation. Or put another way, justice and reconciliation go hand in hand. Embarking on justice is itself the beginning of reconciliation.

For without justice, though a status quo of injustice can be maintained for a time or even a cold peace of the victors over the vanquished can be declared, the foundations for a long term flourishing of adversaries cannot be established. Nor can the healing that peoples need and desire be found without the twinning of justice and reconciliation.

This is where forgiveness becomes revolutionary. When justice is at the heart of reconciliation, a new history is created, until an offence against one becomes an offence against both. When that happens, history experiences a healing – which also needs a new language to express the hope in history now experienced.

Will the various uprisings in the Arab world contribute to this new hope? Will the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt be formative to the evolution of a language of justice and reconciliation that features Jerusalem as the center of a new polity and religiosity that transforms the monotheistic faiths? Since Jerusalem is also central to Christianity and Islam, the democraticization of the Arab world could further the needed dialogue of Jews and Palestinians in a renewed and shared Jerusalem. Perhaps a symbolic Tahrir Square in Jerusalem would be an important addition to that ancient city. One can imagine a gathering of Jews and Palestinians in such a square. But one can also imagine others gathering there with Jews and Palestinians. Coming from different particularities, each would bring their own brokenness and hope. Thus joined, Jerusalem might once again radiate an inner light that spreads outward.

Despite the pitfalls all around us, history is open. The future is not fated to be one way or another. The time for Jews is now. The persistence of the prophetic remains even and, perhaps especially, in exile.

One day the exile might be over. Or, at least transformed. Mourners can never reenter life as if nothing untoward has occurred. But mourning is for the living. A new moment in history might be the impetus for the mourners to recover their energy to birth new life. After the Holocaust and after Israel, a revived and just Jerusalem would give Jews hope that light has returned to the world. It will also present the possibility of a healing that is so long overdue for Jews and Palestinians. With that, a new era in world history would commence.

Endnotes

¹ David Roskies, *The Liturgy of Destruction: Jewish Responses to Catastrophe* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989).

² I have been writing about this Jewish civil war for years and much of what I write here comes out of this exploration. For two of my latest attempts to analyze this phenomena see *Judaism Does Not Equal Israel* (New York: New press, 2009) and *Encountering the Jewish Future with Wiesel, Buber, Heschel, Arendt and Levinas* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011).

³ For an early exploration of the themes of innocence and redemption in the Jewish narrative see my *Beyond Innocence and Redemption: Confronting the Holocaust and Israeli Power* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990).

⁴ For the continuing expansion of Israel see Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman, *A Civilian Occupation: The Politics of Israeli Architecture* (London: Verso, 2003).

⁵ On ethnic cleansing see Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestinians* (London: One World, 2007).

⁶ For a Jewish take on the Jewish identity construction – as well as mourning as a contested value – see Ronit Lentin, *Co-memory and Melancholia: Israelis Memorialising the Palestinian Nakba* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

⁷ For the questions of identity see an interesting understanding analysis of Edward Said's work see *Edward Said: A Legacy of Emancipation and Representation*, ed. Adel Iskander and Hakem Rustom (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010). From the Palestinian perspective on the Jewish question as it relates to Palestine see Joseph Massad, *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians* (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁸ This I think is the reason for the reaction against Jimmy Carter's recent work on the Israeli-Palestinian question. See his book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2007).

⁹ An example these Jewish Israelis is found in Ilan Pappé, *Ethnic Cleansing*.

¹⁰ The classic example of a contemporary Progressive Jew is Michael Lerner, *Healing Israel/Palestine: A Path to Peace and Reconciliation* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2003).

¹¹ Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Spirit, in Emanuel Levinas: Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*, trans. Sean Hand (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 5.

¹² See Sara Roy, *Failing Peace: Gaza and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (London: Pluto press, 2006). Also see Amira Hass, *Drinking the Sea at Gaza: Days and Nights in a Land Under Siege* (London: Picador, 2003).

¹³ For one take on the prophets, see Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, 1955).

¹⁴ Levinas, "Ethics," *Difficult Freedom*, 5-6.

¹⁵ I explore Levinas' ambivalence on this central issue to Jewish identity in Chapter 5 of my *Encountering the Jewish Future*.

¹⁶ I explore *Revolutionary Forgiveness: Essays on the Future of Judaism, Christianity and Religious Life* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2000).