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# *Et in Ashkenazia ego*: Utopias of the Holocaust?

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**ABSTRACT**
This article interrogates examples of alternative histories in contemporary British Jewish writing which redraw and reinterpret the topography of the Holocaust. More specifically, it explores the tensions which arise in Clive Sinclair's short story 'Ashkenazia' (1980) and Dan Jacobson's novel The God-Fearer (1992) between notions of a Jewish heterotopia, the re-inscription of historical topographies, and the imaginary of the Holocaust. Set in an imaginary Jewish state, which is mapped onto the pre-existing Jewish topography of the loosely defined Ashkenaz of historical reality, both texts unfold alternative histories which, though imagined, nevertheless cannot un-think the historical occurrence of the Holocaust.

Cynically speaking, the Final Solution attempted the ultimate Jewish 'utopia': no place, nowhere. The aggressively utopian character of National Socialism has frequently been asserted.[1] Jews, as we know, had no place in this utopia, they were literally – and bodily – to be eliminated from it. The Holocaust was, in theory, the ingenuously devised process of ensuring the realization of this utopian objective. It was to be supplemented by the quest for *lebensraum* in the east and by the genetic engineering of the master race through the *lebensborn* program.[2]

From outside the perverted alternative morality of National Socialism, the inhumane nature and gruesome extent of this utopian vision reveal the perilous ambivalence inherent in utopianism which necessarily privileges a restrictive and exclusive, frequently idealistic, ideology over a heterogeneous reality. It is, in fact, a brutal reminder that the etymology of utopia – the place that is not – gives not only an indication of its ideological provenance but articulates at the same time also an oblique warning. It is a place that is not, because it must not be; because without fail it is always fashioned, in the sense of Foucault's notion of heterotopia, as a corrective of what is perceived to be 'messy, ill constructed, and jumbled'[3] and what, therefore, is denied its *raison d'être*.

And yet, once it entered reality the utopia of the Holocaust, perhaps inevitably, acquired a persistent and immovable presence. After all, any attempt to elide the Holocaust retrospectively even from a fictional world would effectively amount to the denial of its historical reality. Indeed, the cultural pervasiveness of this 'utopia' imposed on the Jews has been such that it cannot be un-thought even in alternative histories – or so it appears.[4] The utopia of the Holocaust, the ultimate *dys*topia really, is certainly a shadow that hangs darkly over the alternative histories elaborated in the two texts I want to discuss in what follows.

Rather than proper dystopias, Clive Sinclair's short story 'Ashkenazia' (1980) and Dan Jacobson's short novel *The God-Fearer* (1992) are alternative histories.[5] Yet as such they project images of other, alternative societies in response to real historical events that always need to be imagined in parallel, and they emerge as dystopian imaginings on a specifically Jewish substratum. They are, in fact, the dys-topian equivalent to Foucault's implicitly u-topian heterotopia. Where the latter evokes the other etymological root of the word as a 'good' place, these texts create another space that is not 'perfect,' 'meticulous,' and 'well arranged,' but a place that is as 'messy, ill constructed, and jumbled' as ours.[6] It is not in itself any worse than the historical space of the Holocaust – how could it be? – but its projection of an implicit, yet frustrated, hope reasserts the primacy of the conflagration also in the imagination. It thus not only adds weight to it but turns it into the millstone around our necks or, indeed, the eternal albatross.

Both texts approach the inevitability of the Holocaust from very different angles. Yet both are also predicated on the notion of a Jewish utopia that turns into a dystopia in a Jewish land that is not Israel and thus participate in negotiations between promised lands and exile. In this article, I propose to explore in a comparative analysis of Sinclair's and Jacobson's texts some of the tensions which arise between notions of a Jewish heterotopia, the symbolic re-inscription of historical topographies, and the imaginary of the Holocaust.

## Re-inscribing the topography of the Holocaust

The first definable area of concentrated Jewish settlement in central and eastern Europe was called Ashkenaz. Hence also the designation Ashkenazim for the Jews from this area. The name connotes a certain cultural, linguistic, historical, social, and religious – but not national – coherence of Jews in a distinct geographical setting which, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, has acquired an almost mythical dimension of a mostly nostalgic provenance in a fiddler-on-the-roof sort of way – a perception forcefully contested by both texts.

In Clive Sinclair's short story, first published in the November issue of *Encounter* in 1980, Ashkenazia is an independent Jewish state which was formed after the Great War as a result of the Treaty of Versailles.[7] Its capital is Krakow and it has been carved out of Poland. In fact, it is located precisely where some of the most 'efficient' extermination camps of the Holocaust were situated – Auschwitz and Bełżec. Sinclair's story is therefore not only an alternative history in which the British Jewish writer unfolds the utopia – or, more accurately in this case – the dystopia of a Jewish state in Europe in what roughly appears to be Galicia. It is also a re-inscription of the topography

of the Holocaust which in itself is of course mapped onto the pre-existing Jewish topography of the loosely defined Ashkenaz of historical reality.

Less than a decade after the publication of Sinclair's 'Ashkenazia,' the South African-born Jewish writer Dan Jacobson began to work on what eventually turned out to be a short novel, which was published in 1992 under the title *The God-Fearer*.[8] This novel, like the earlier short story, is set in a Jewish land called, in Jacobson's case, Ashkenaz. Sinclair's Ashkenazia is vaguely set in a period after the First World War which may be contemporary with the time of the Holocaust that, in the story, never happened; yet it may also – sixty uneventful years after Ashkenazia's creation in 1919 – be contemporary with the story's publication. Jacobson's Ashkenaz is relegated to an indefinite medieval or early modern past which similarly unfolds an alternative history. Evoking a mythical topography, it extends 'from rainy Anglia to savage Russ' (GF, 63), but the narrative is set more specifically in a location reminiscent of central or eastern Europe, with vaguely German-sounding place names and with a view 'to the east of hills with raggedly wooded summits and their lower slopes neatly combed into vineyards, and flat plains (farms, grazing cattle, scrub) stretching to the big river in the west' (GF, 29), presumably the Vltava or, possibly, the Danube. In addition, whatever authority the original dust jacket image of Jacobson's novel may have, the central figure's dress associates Bohemian folk costume.[9] *The God-Fearer* is thus also set in a topography that is historically tied to the cataclysm of the Holocaust.

In Sinclair's story, the Holocaust, if in different guise, nevertheless catches up with the Jews of Ashkenazia. In Jacobson's novel, the Jews become, in a historical inversion, perpetrators of a holocaust suffered by the Christers. Their persecution is not predicated on racial markers but motivated with religious and cultural difference and, in this way, reflects historical anti-Judaism rather than more recent antisemitism. While Jacobson's novel is a searching reflection on the nature of individual guilt and atonement, Sinclair's much shorter text unfolds an apocalyptic scenario in which guilt and destruction are predicated on superciliousness, complacency, and envy. Ultimately, as I would suggest, its multi-layered topography, a palimpsest of sorts, becomes blurred, the latter re-inscription fading as the indelible topography of the Holocaust re-emerges.

Sinclair sketches his dystopian vision of an alternative past with little historical detail. His interest is rather in the larger questions, such as the language, culture, and identity of the Jewish commonwealth as well as – eventually – its cataclysmic obliteration: Ashkenazia is portrayed as over-confident and internally querulous, as culturally marginal, and as complicit in its own destruction. Given its character, it is no surprise that the promise of the land appears to have been displaced onto America. Efraim Sicher has argued that the story articulates diasporist principles,[10] and indeed one senses an analogy to the real Jewish state here, which is of course not mentioned and which obviously does not exist in the alternative reality unfolding in the story. Yet in other narratives of the same period, Sinclair's criticism of Israel is rather more explicit, even more so in the aftermath of the Lebanon War of 1982.[11]

'Ashkenazia' – both the story and the imaginary country – culminates in a *nuclear* holocaust. All that remains of it is what in effect is the disembodied voice of Sinclair's narrator – which may just as well be the effusions of someone suffering from a severe personality disorder.

The story's narrator, the writer Clement Stashev, has been commissioned to write the official English-language *Guide to Ashkenazia* to be distributed among the delegates of the first International Conference in Yiddish Language and Culture (A, 113). Fully aware that no one will ever have heard of the country, much less know its location, Stashev insouciantly questions his own existence: 'Many of my fellow-countrymen do not believe in the existence of God. I am more modest. I do not believe in myself. What proof can I have when no one reads what I write? There you have it; my words are the limit of my world.' (A, 113) In fact, his effort to put Ashkenazia on the map is clearly marked as one of creating by writing. His poietic task, Stashev claims, is: '*Fiat Ashkenazia*' (A, 113). In this way the short story early on draws attention to its own fictionality and unreliability.

Stashev's doubts in his own existence are motivated by the fact that his literary language is Yiddish. He feels bound to and paralysed by the past and yearns to transcend his limitations with being translated and moving to America, leaving behind the failed experiment of Ashkenazia. To him, Jake Tarnopol, the famous American Jewish writer invited to Ashkenazia to speak at the conference – and arguably modeled on Philip Roth[12] – becomes the vehicle to realize his aspirations of being heard and, in effect, of writing himself into being. Like Ashkenazia embodies the centripetal force field of the past in physical and topographically localized form, Tarnopol embodies an alternative, centrifugal trajectory toward the Jewish future. Yet the intersection of both trajectories sparks as its ghostly product the *what might have been* and effectively allows the Holocaust to invade this Jewish heterotopia.

In America, the Jewish writer lived at the margins of the centripetal force field of this past. His return to the land of his grandfather, his increasing immersion into its force field, is therefore also his undoing. It makes him vulnerable to the past locked into its topography and to its ghostly interpenetration with that of extra-narrative reality. There is, it is implied, a certain seepage between the layers of the palimpsest of topographical re-inscriptions suggested by Sinclair's story.

Both the narrator's name and Tarnopol's are connectives between the layers of the topographical palimpsest of 'Ashkenazia.' They help to re-establish the topographical re-inscription of the Holocaust over that of the imagined country. Both in fact refer to actual places, which are situated within the pale of the topography of the Holocaust. The small town of Stashev (Staszów) was a centre of the anti-German resistance in Poland and was also the site of the massacre of most of the town's 5,000 Jews who made up about half its population. Tarnopol (today known as Ternopil and in western Ukraine) had developed since the eighteenth century into a centre of Hasidic culture. At the beginning of the Second World War, Tarnopol's Jewish population numbered about 14,000, making up almost half of the city's population. Between 1942 and 1943, most of the Jews confined to the Ghetto of Tarnopol were deported to Bełżec where they were 'exterminated.'

While the positivistic comparison with historical events is certainly misguided in relation to Sinclair's short story, some of these details nevertheless add levels of meaning to the text which it is important to acknowledge. Taking Tarnopol the writer on a nostalgic trip to Tarnopol the town, Stashev's description of the latter, for instance, not only emphasizes the Hasidic presence in the town, but also foreshadows the Holocaust; it associates incineration and billowing smoke and attributes to the Hasidim an

unimaginative solipsism that prohibits the trajectory into the future offered by America and thus effectively is a death sentence.

In the narrator's account, Tarnopol the writer is indeed struck by the incongruence of life in the old town with life in America: 'Tarnopol past is more than Tarnopol future can take.' (A, 121) He senses the danger the otherworldly place poses to him: 'If only Tarnopol didn't really exist,' he exclaims. (A, 122) And, of course, in extra-narrative reality the Tarnopol described here, a Jewish Tarnopol, does not exist, not anymore. Nor does it by the end of the story. But then, Tarnopol the writer similarly ceases to exist.

On their return from Tarnopol to Krakow Stashev, his concupiscent wife, and the Jewish American writer stop half-ways for a picnic. In the topography of the Holocaust, this puts the spot close to the ominous name of Bełżec: 'The field we choose is full of stacks of drying grass that look like *golem* awaiting the breath of life.' (A, 122) Yet what follows is not the breath of life but the blast winds of the nuclear holocaust which scatter the 'humanoid haystacks built upon skeletons of wood.' (A, 121) From the beginning, the pastoral idyll of the field is subverted by the ghoulish aspect of the life-less golems, both a foreshadowing of and a retrospective on the other Bełżec.

Destruction has caught up with Ashkenazia, yet it is in the literary imagination of another of its writers, Simcha Nisref, a previous Nobel Prize laureate, that an indication of historical events as they did happen in extra-narrative reality is given in the short story. Nisref's novel *Wawel* imagines that Britain and France sacrificed Czechoslovakia to Hitler. 'What follows,' Stashev continues his summary of the novel, 'is a terrible vision. Having overrun the Continent the Germans turn their attention to Ashkenazia. […] Nisref turns the dismemberment of our name – a nation burnt to *ashes* by the *nazis* – into a metaphor of our fate.' (A, 114) Not surprisingly, the writer's vision 'provoked an outcry in Ashkenazia. It was branded obscene, the morbid fantasies of a madman.' (A, 114)

Nisref, as suggested by David Brauner, may have been modeled on Isaac Bashevis Singer.[13] More importantly in the present context, in contrast to Tarnopol and Stashev, his name is linked to the topography of the Holocaust by a more circuitous association than theirs. *Simcha* is the Hebrew and Yiddish word for joy or gladness; Yiddish *nisref* refers to 'one who has lost his property in a fire.'[14]

More importantly, the name suggests an allusion to one of Sholem Aleichem's *Railroad Stories*: 'A Nisref' (1903) in the original Yiddish and translated by Hillel Halkin as 'Burned Out.'[15] This too is steeped in ambiguity and, while published long before the Holocaust, nevertheless appears to prefigure it, if more obliquely than Simcha Nisref's *Wawel*: Moshke laments his misfortune of being a Jew from Boheslav 'and burned out to a fine crisp too, a whole-offering to the Lord, just as it says in the Bible!'[16] Reference to the town – presumably Bohuslav in present-day Ukraine, which around the turn of the century was home to a large Jewish community that comprised about 60 per cent of its population – is part of the story's development of a Jewish topography in what historically was then imperial Russia. It is a topography of persecution. As Moshke says:

> [F]ires have been breaking out all over. Every summer each little town has too many of them for comfort. It's one fire after another; if it's not Mir, it's Bobroisk, if it's not Bobroisk, it's Rechitsa, if it's not Rechitsa, it's Bialystok – the whole world is going up in flames! … [17]

First published in 1903, 'Burned Out' precedes by only very few years the worst of the pogroms to happen in all the places enumerated by Moshke.[18] Sholem Aleichem's story in this sense gains an uneasy prophetic quality which, arguably, made it even more interesting to Sinclair. The topography of Jewish persecution is moreover uncannily projected into the future of the Holocaust when Moshke describes himself as a 'whole-offering.' This is of course a translation of the Greek *holokaustos*, the word which, with many misgivings, has been adopted to refer to the genocide of the Jews under the German National Socialist regime during the Second World War.[19] Obviously not intended by its author, the retrospective significance of the phrase would not have escaped Sinclair.

In Ashkenazia, too, the world is going up in flames with the Uranium previously sold to Hitler. 'Hurricanes tear the haystacks apart' in the Bełżec field:

> Blades of grass rip into us like green rain. Hail becomes a blizzard. We tumble to the ground and the grass piles around us until we are buried. The wind dies. I return from the grave. But Olga and Tarnopol look like fallen haystacks. Neither mound moves. Great mushrooms are growing in the sky. Flames lick the horizon as though Wawel's dragon were once again stalking the land. All that remains of my dumb heart-broken country is a field of wooden skeletons. (A, 123)

The final image calls to mind the vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones, which it however negates. The biblical prophet is commanded by the Lord to prophesy to the risen dead of Israel: 'Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.' (Ezekiel 37:12)

In the nuclear holocaust, neither Olga's nor Tarnopol's grave is opened. All that remains are wooden skeletons and the writer as prophet who concludes the story with words bereft of meaning: 'Now the world will listen to me, for I am the guide to Ashkenazia. I am Ashkenazia!' (A, 123) The concluding vision is bleak. In the end, Ashkenazia and its past obliterated, Stashev too is nothing but a ghost.

No one, in Sinclair's story, is going anywhere, least of all to their 'own land.' For the narrator, too, though he returns from the grave of his own making (A, 123), there is ultimately no place, nowhere: not Ashkenazia, not America, nor anywhere else – not even the grave.[20] The topography of the Holocaust and its utopian destructiveness has reasserted itself. The seepage has obliterated not only the alternative layer of the palimpsest but has relegated the Arcadian Ashkenazia of picnics, haystacks, cows, and Jews to a non-place – figments of the imagination.

### *Et in Ashkenazia Ego*: the persistence of the Holocaust

Before turning my attention to Jacobson's *The God-Fearer*, I would like to explain the implicit reference in the title of this article to the iconographic tradition of the *Et in Arcadia ego* motif, thought to have been introduced by Guercino in his eponymous painting of 1618–1622. In the picture, two shepherds chance upon some crumbling masonry on which rests a skull and into which the enigmatic inscription has been carved. As Erwin Panofsky has shown already in 1936, the potential ambivalence of the elliptic text eventually facilitated a shift in interpretation. Variously translated

either as 'I, too, was born, or lived, in Arcady' or as 'Even in Arcady there am I,' the inscription can suggest either 'the retrospective vision of an unsurpassable happiness, enjoyed in the past, unattainable ever after, yet enduringly alive in the memory' or 'a present happiness menaced by death.'[21] It is the second reading which is identified by Panofsky as the philologically correct one. Yet in the course of time and with the addition of a tomb to the iconographic inventory, notably by Nicolas Poussin, we are confronted, as Panofsky has it, 'with a change from thinly veiled moralism' – the *memento mori* – 'to undisguised elegiac sentiment,' to the 'contemplative absorption in the idea of mortality.'[22]

Arcadia as a retrospective heterotopia seems to me to evoke connotations similar to those associated with Ashkenaz – and with Ashkenazia. Both are the products of wistful imaginings of a better past, at least initially; but also of lost innocence – when death intrudes. Panofsky observes that 'for the modern mind, this Arcady was not so much a Utopia of bliss and beauty distant in space as a Utopia of bliss and beauty distant in time.' It developed, as he continues, 'into a haven, not only from a faulty reality but also, and even more so, from a questionable present.'[23] Of course, the cryptic *Et in Arcadia ego* is never referred to in Sinclair's story. Yet it is replete with similarities, the initially nostalgic and estival setting, the wooden skeletons as symbols of death, and, finally, the presence of graves or tombs.

However, in strong contrast to the *Et in Arcadia ego* motif, Sinclair inserts into his story an almost hysterical challenge to the contemplative mood of the iconographic tradition. His story is very much about wanting to be heard, but it is also about the failure of making oneself heard, of being a voice in the wilderness. 'Ashkenazia' associates the biblical prophets of doom; Nisref is an unlikely Jeremiah; Stashev, a failed Ezekiel. For unlike the latter who, as a conduit for God's word, sees the People of Israel resurrected in the Valley of Dry Bones, Sinclair's narrator only achieves a solipsistic epiphany. In the end, his poietic powers desert him and all he is left with is existential loneliness. His imaginative solipsism is ultimately no more productive or redemptive than the 'unimaginative solipsism' he denounces in the Haredi Jews of Tarnopol. The creative act of writing itself, of re-interpreting the topography of the Holocaust, appears to fail in the face of peremptory historical reality: past and present are similarly questionable. The story's ending is like a colon; but it is followed by silence.

The apocalyptic conclusion to the story confirms its constant insistence on the poietic power of the word, to create and to destroy. Yet it denies the biblical solace. Words are indeed the limit of its world. But words are limited by the indelible deed of the Holocaust. As Bryan Cheyette has pointed out, 'for the post-Holocaust writer […] an "imaginary homeland" can not [*sic*] merely be constituted by words alone as Europe is littered with "fields of wooden skeletons".'[24] There is no consolation in solipsism, be it unimaginative or imaginative; nor in the telling of alternative histories. The reassertion of the Holocaust for the literally imagined community and the solipsistic narrator emphasize the insistence on the eternal immanence of the Holocaust also in the Jewish heterotopia, in parallel to the Arcadian recognition of the inescapable presence of death, which I have suggested with the paraphrase of the notorious *Et in Arcadia ego* in the title of my article: *Et in Ashkenazia ego*. In the end, it may be said, that instead of *Fiat Ashkenazia*, the trajectory of Sinclair's story culminates in *Fuit Ashkenazia*. What remains, in 'Ashkenazia' and of

Ashkenazia, is the written word; though even this – and the poietic process itself – is challenged by its narrator.

## 'One in a Multitude': Perpetrator and Victim

In *The God-Fearer*, the written word is also questioned. At the beginning of Jacobson's novel, the very narrative of the creation is challenged:

> What a story! Kobus did not believe it for a moment. It amazed him that anyone, the wisest or most self-confident of scholars included, should have the impudence to imagine that he actually knew when the world had been created, or by whom, or for what purpose. (GF, 1)

The biblical creation narrative, and hence presumably scripture as a whole, is thus effectively set up as an alternative history. The implicit challenge to narrative authority, extended in the novel also to the internal narrative of memories, sounds from the very beginning a sombre warning. Yet Jacobson's novel nevertheless suggests the redemptive potential of stories.

While Sinclair's narrator doubts his own existence, Kobus in *The God-Fearer*, characterized as an 'inveterate sceptic' (GF, 64), never challenges his own existence but its parameters, both topographically and historically:

> Ashkenaz […] was, he was usually convinced, where he lived, where he had always lived; where his grandparents and (as far as he knew) their grandparents had lived; and yet, having written the word down, he would find himself staring at it as if it were the name of some foreign part he had never seen. Ashkenaz … Ashkenaz … (GF, 11–12)

In fact, in a passage not yet included in the first draft printout of the novel (1PT),[25] Ashkenaz is consigned to a potentially mythical realm that is itself inserted into a mythical topography based on the political geography of late antiquity:

> Perhaps in the end it was nothing more than one of those mythical countries, supposedly visited by travellers of times long past, which he had read about in the books he had once made a habit of collecting. How could he tell? (GF, 12)

The octogenarian Kobus lives in a constant state of confusion attributed, beyond his age, to some kind of accident. It extends from the confusion of past events to the confusion in his recollection. His bewilderment is exacerbated by the unexpected appearance of two children. Kobus eventually recognizes in them redemptive specters akin to the Eumenides (GF, 27). His reflections on their nature include also a significant metafictional commentary, which serves as an indirect legitimation of the alternative histories dreamed up by the old man, but also the alternative history presented in the novel and its identificatory potential: Kobus wonders what

> was the source of the power such stories had over us, if not in the chance they gave us to recognise ourselves in them, however feeble we might be, and however remote our lives might be in time and circumstances from the figures in the legends? (GF, 27)

In *The God-Fearer*, the Jews become perpetrators of a holocaust suffered by the Christers. The historical inversion is simple and has been criticized for being too literal.[26] But Jacobson's novel is not only about the mind-play of a historical inversion; his interest is rather in the individual's responsibility, guilt, and atonement: the question of how to live with one's past, the acknowledgement of guilt, and the articulation of a moral imperative.

*The God-Fearer*, too, presumably in recognition of Frank Kermode's observation that 'it is ourselves we are encountering whenever we invent fictions,'[27] offers a chance of self-recognition – to us all.

Jacobson prefixed a passage from Dante's *Divine Comedy* as an epigraph to his short novel:

> As a man might dream of hurt he has received,
>    And, dreaming, wish that it were a dream.
>
>     Dante: *Inferno*, Canto XXX [136–7] (GF, n. p.)

Yet this was not the author's first choice. In 1PT, Jacobson cited another passage from the *Inferno*:

>        Why gazest still intent?
> Why on the maimed unhappy shades below?
> Still lingering is thy vision bent?
>
>     Inferno XXIX 4–6 (1PT: n. p.)

The substitution suggests an intriguing inversion in that the finally adopted epigraph is focused inward, on the individual, while the narrative, with the shift to the third-person narrator introduced only in the final version of the novel assumes a more distanced, external position. The ultimately rejected epigraph, in turn, is directed outward, toward the masses, while the first-person narrative of the earlier versions establishes a more internal focus. Reading the earlier epigraph in its original context, this is even more palpable. The passage sees Dante chided by Virgil for pausing tearfully in the *malebolge*, the eighth circle of the inferno, to search for his kinsman Geri del Bello in the chasm of the sowers of discord; he is reminded by his guide of the impossibility of considering every individual fate (see *Inferno* XXIX, 7–9 and III, 51).

This clearly was not what Jacobson intended. With Kobus's reflections on the Christer servant girl Sannie, he searches out precisely the individual fate, both that of the unfortunate young woman and of Kobus himself, though it is only the old man's memory work, developed across the whole of the novel, which eventually achieves the acknowledgement and description of their individual, yet calamitously intertwining, fates.

More pertinently, the epigraph of the printed version suggests in its original context that to dream and to wish that one were dreaming is, in fact, to dream the truth; one is dreaming of what one already possesses, although not knowing it. Hence, as suggested by Teodolinda Barolini, one is dreaming reality: one is dreaming what is.[28] This entails at the same time the imperative to learn 'that there are other kinds of sight, other realities.'[29] The relevance to Jacobson's alternative history, which offers just such another reality, is evident. The epigraph not only authenticates the alternative reality, but moreover asserts its infernal dimension, associating, like the discarded epigraph, the *malebolge* and the punishment of the sowers of discord and the falsifiers.

The contiguity of dream, narrative reality, and extra-narrative reality is suggested in the novel with an actual dream, in which Kobus, reminiscent of Dante's *Inferno*, envisages a multitude of Christers in a 'muddy, treeless plain which stretched away as far as he could see in every direction' (GF, 33; cf. *Inferno* III, 55–6). Yet it also associates nightmarish scenes from the Holocaust. The muddy plain is dotted with wooden kitchen tables where the displaced Christers need to register (GF, 34). Any hope they may have of redemption is

futile, as Kobus knows: 'Nothing the people did would make the slightest difference to their fate. None whatever. There was no release, no hope, for any of them.' (GF, 34) There is an echo, here, of the inscription on the gate of Dante's hell: to abandon all hope (*Inferno* III, 9). In addition, the image suggests a cynically inverted parallel to the Ezekiel episode in Sinclair's 'Ashkenazia' which once again reverberates with echoes of the Holocaust: are those thronging the plain yet to be reduced to their bones, the land they will be led to, the 'grave in the air' trenchantly invoked by Paul Celan?[30]

As if in illustration of Dante, the nightmarish dream of Kobus is related to 'a recollection returning after decades of absence' (GF, 38), a vague memory of motionless and exhausted Christers in a much smaller field. Without being explicit about this, the suggestion is that Kobus witnessed the deportation or expulsion of Christers. 'But he did know enough not to ask such questions of them or of anyone else he might meet. He hurried past.' (GF, 38) The passage seems to respond to Virgil's admonition of Dante; but perhaps even more pertinently, it evokes the trope of the *mitläufer* (the bystander) and the gradual acceptance of 'murder,' '[w]holesale expulsion,' and 'despoliation' that were to come later (GF, 62).

In Jacobson's novel, it is primarily the zealous, inquisitor-like Malachi who is represented as a sower of discord and as a falsifier. But, ultimately, the novel's trajectory leads Kobus to the realization that he, too, if only by omission and the blinkered trajectory – or, in fact, the lie – of his life, is among those whom Dante condemns to the *malebolge*.

In his youth, Kobus, apprenticed to a bookbinder in the big city, did nothing to prevent the wrongful conviction at the behest of Malachi of a young Christer servant girl for practicing witchcraft and seducing her accuser from the faith. Sannie's subsequent suicide and his part in the destruction of a potentially proliferating future is what the infantile Eumenides inexorably draw from the recesses of his repressed past to Kobus's conscious mind.

In an imaginary trial with Sannie's 'never-to-be-begotten nurslings' as his judges (GF, 129), the final judgment pronounced on Kobus is:

> Never to become the person you might have been. Never to know how the man you might have been would feel about himself. Also, to be a runner-after the mob. A conniver in crime. A silent witness to persecution. An accomplice in murder. One of a multitude. (GF, 134)

This, as in Sinclair's story, is another affirmation of *what might have been*, the haunting of chances lost, and of opportunities missed, of guilt and regret. The final sentence harks back to Dante in the *malebolge*, but its inherent paradox of the one and the many ultimately emphasizes the need to consider the individual, the perpetrator as well as the victim. It signifies, in defiance of Virgil's admonition, the apotheosis of Sannie as an individual in Kobus's conscience, and of the world of potentiality that was destroyed with her. But it also challenges Kobus to the core by confronting him with his own squandered potentiality.

## Shifting pasts, evolving texts

Bryan Cheyette argues that *The God-Fearer* 'demonstrates, above all, the extent to which the past needs to be continually remade.'[31] In view of the notion of *what might have been*, it may also be interesting to consider in more detail the textual genesis of Jacobson's

novel and what it might have been like – was, in fact, like – in the imagination of the author through the process of its evolution.

A particularly intriguing element is the 'Postscript' which was included in 3PT but was finally jettisoned by the author. It constructs (part of) a frame narrative to the main text which deliberately links the story of Kobus, at that time still also the eponymous title of the manuscript, with that of the Holocaust, if only implicitly, through the refugee fate it ascribes to its supposed author and the community in which he is found:

> There is a coffee bar and restaurant in Hampstead which used to be frequented almost exclusively by Jewish refugees from Hitler's Germany and Austria. The menu was German; so was the decor; German was the only language heard there, except when some of the clients came in with their children – in which case they did not so much speak English as laboriously construct it. (3PT: n. p.)

Almost in itself an alternative reality, the *ersatz* Germany of a time before the Holocaust inexorably fades away. The fictitious editor persona observes that both the décor and the clientele of the café have changed greatly and notes flatly: 'The generation for which it was founded has virtually died out.' (3PT: n. p.) It is a reminder that, though realities – and their wistful simulacra – may fade, they have a place in human experience and memory, and a story to tell in which we may 'recognise ourselves.' But it is also another reminder of the persistence of the Holocaust.

The editor persona relates in the postscript that he was sent the manuscript by one of the old men frequenting the café, but in apparent error, for what he was expecting to receive was a study in which the author

> was attempting to prove through the use of certain mathematical formulae […] that revolutions, wars, and other major social upsets were the consequence of certain movements in the public rate of interest. The period covered by the study, he added, with an embarrassed yet determined smile, stretched from the time of Justinian to the Korean War. (3PT: n. p.)

The connection between both texts is oblique but not entirely imaginary, because the alternative reality described in 'Kobus' does indeed offer an abstract reflection on the cataclysmic events of the Holocaust; it offers an analogy by inversion which might suggest in a quasi mathematical manner a formula, though, as Kobus cautions in the novel: 'Inversions of any kind, it seemed, were always thinkable by us, at least, even if never truly available to us.' (GF, 54)

It is in the postscript, too, that the editor persona suggests two ways of reading the text of 'Kobus,' both of which seem to be 'red herrings' intended to provoke the reader's dissent:

> Whether the work should be read primarily as an act of imaginative retaliation or as an expression of what has become known as 'survivor's guilt' – or as both of these at once – I leave to others to decide. (3PT: n. p.)

Survivor's guilt fails, I think, to capture fully the essence of the novel which is, after all, about the guilt of the reluctant perpetrator and the possibility of atonement. In fact, rather than as an act of imaginative retaliation, the narrative might more fittingly be characterized as an act of imaginative culpability which, in line with much recent perpetrator fiction, establishes the essential humanity of the perpetrator,[32] an effect exacerbated by the inversion of the historical perpetrator and victim

roles, though we should remind ourselves here of Kobus's insistence on the limits of inversion (GF, 54).

Jacobson originally envisaged to add two appendices to the postscript, supposedly attached to the original manuscript, which would have given some historical justification to his alternative history by focusing on a liminal point in antiquity when Judaism, according to Ernest Renan, 'could have become the religion of the [Roman] Empire, and thus the religion of the entire Western world – and beyond.'[33] The first of these appendices would have been taken from Salo W. Baron's *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (1937), where Jacobson originally came across the reference to Renan's historical thought experiment;[34] the second was to be taken from George Foot Moore's *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (1927).[35]

In Baron's *History*, where proselytes to Judaism in the period after the destruction of the Temple are designated as '"god-fearing" men (*sebomenoi* or *metuentes*),'[36] Jacobson would also have found inspiration for his title, though he notes that he had first 'picked [it] up from a newspaper report about a Baptist sect in the Southern United States.'[37] In the final version, the author evidently no longer felt the need to suggest the historical potentiality of his alternative history, though he nevertheless draws the reader to the historical moment of bifurcation, when Kobus muses: 'What would have happened, he wondered, if history had taken a different turn when Roma had ruled what it chose to regard as the entire civilised world?' (GF, 64) Dismissed by Kobus as a 'mad fantasy,' the scope of the inversion seems 'a kind of blasphemy' even to an 'inveterate sceptic' like him (GF, 64–5).

Clearly, Jacobson anticipates here the criticism he expects to be leveled against the central conceit of his novel. Hence, perhaps also his attempt to explain his idea and its historical potentiality in an article and excerpt of his novel in the *London Review of Books* just prior to the publication of *The God-Fearer*.[38] The article has an apologetic feel to it, which presumably is meant to absolve Jacobson of the charge of blasphemy when touching the taboo of the Holocaust.

## Of happy endings and the futility of alternative histories

Jacobson's novel reverberates with echoes of Albert Camus's *The Fall* (1956), which is of course also an oblique engagement with the Holocaust and not only similarly associates Dante's *Divine Comedy*, but explores notions of guilt, judgement, and penitence. Teasing his imaginary interlocutor about distinguishing 'what's true from what's false in the things I say,' the narrator of Camus's dramatic monologue suggests:

> Don't lies in the end put us on the path to truth? And don't my stories, true or false, point to the same conclusion? Don't they have the same meaning? So, what does it matter whether they are true or false if, in either case, they signify what I have been and what I am?[39]

His assertion seems almost a rationalization of the alternative histories exemplified by Sinclair's and Jacobson's texts.

No less significant is that Camus's novel challenges the comfort of the deliberate bystander, a part played also by Kobus in his youth. One night, Camus's protagonist, the self-styled judge-penitent Jean-Baptiste Clamence, chances upon a suicide, leaping from a bridge into the Seine. Yet he chooses to walk on, inwardly recoiling from confronting the situation and having to take a stance, deliberately disregarding the suicide's

faint shouts. To his imaginary interlocutor he initially poses his experience as a hypothetical dilemma, saying that he never crosses a bridge at night:

> After all, what would happen if someone were to jump in the water? One of two things could happen: you would go in after, to fish the person out, and in cold weather it could be the death of you. Or you would abandon the poor creature; but repressing an urge to dive can lead to strange sorts of cramp.[40]

As his dramatic monologue unfolds, it emerges that his narrative is in fact an attempt to alleviate such a cramp:

> I realized that the shout I had heard many years earlier echoing across the Seine behind me had not ceased to travel across the world […] and that it had been waiting for me until the day when I encountered it.[41]

More specifically, Camus's judge-penitent insists on the significance of confession, even in a world devoid of God, because,

> [o]therwise, if there was only a single lie that remained hidden in a life, death would make it absolute. No one, ever again, would know the truth on that point because the only person to know it was the dead man, who had taken his secret with him.[42]

This finds a distinct echo in a passage in 3PT, albeit deleted by Jacobson from the final text, in which Kobus affirms: 'Since there is no God, everything we do is done forever. It can never be cancelled out or put right.' (3PT: 105) Yet Kobus's moral application of his insight extends beyond the judge-penitent's perspective. To 'put [it] right,' to make amends, is the objective of a moral imperative which falls outside the ken of Camus's narrator whose penitence never achieves the sincerity of Kobus. 'It's too late now, it will always be too late,' he asserts, and adds: 'Thank goodness!'[43]

Clamence's concluding words suggest his desire for a happy ending, even if it requires his narrative manipulation, the donning of metaphorical blinkers. In The God-Fearer, Kobus has progressed beyond this point. The most important change introduced by Jacobson to the manuscript across the course of its textual genesis is the shift from the first-person narrator, similar to Camus's dramatic monologue, to the third person in the fourth and final draft printout (4PT). Closely connected to this is the revision in particular of the concluding pages of the novel, which offer an ultimately metafictional reflection on the alleged human craving for happy endings.

Emphasized by Kobus (GF, 158), the human longing for happy endings is critically interrogated in Jacobson's novel. It emerges as the driving force of narrative, but also as a fallacy. In the earlier draft printout versions, Kobus insists: 'what happier ending can [we wish for] < there be > than that the past should be redeemed' (2PT: 104).[44] Clearly of great importance to the author, in 3PT, this passage was heavily revised as follows: 'what [happier] <better > ending can there be < for any of us > than [that the] < to see the > past [should be] redeemed' (3PT: 104). Jacobson's revisions not only emphasize the universal dimension of the sentiment and its individual application, but his substitution of 'better' for 'happier' also suggests a certain resignation, as it stresses the relative nature of endings which no longer are perceived to have the potential of being happy.

In both 2PT and 3PT, Kobus moreover insists on having learned from his little Furies 'that nothing is so steadfast to itself as the past' (2PT: 104; 3PT: 104), and that the past can

only ever be effaced by oblivion – an illustration of which is provided in the postscript with the fading café. In 2PT, this insight was still followed by the cynical contention: 'Call that redemption if you like' (2PT: 105), but this was deleted from 3PT. Yet the concept of oblivion retained its significance in the complete re-writing of the lengthy passage – of four or three pages, respectively, in 2PT and 3PT – in the published version, where it is condensed into little more than a paragraph.

The earlier textual stages of the novel are nevertheless interesting, because they document a change of perspective, when Kobus effectively suggests the transformation of his little Furies into Eumenides – as prefigured, of course, in Aeschylus's eponymous tragedy. Incorporating most of the revisions to 2PT (2PT: 106–7), the relevant passage in 3PT reads:

> A belated thought. I have always seen the appearance of the children as essentially threatening and accusatory in nature. Quite rightly too. But only now does it occur to me that throughout they have been summoned (I have summoned them) to satisfy my ineradicable yearning for a happy ending. (3PT: 106)[45]

But, ultimately, Kobus realizes that 'there is no alternative realm of being to which we can have recourse when this one fails us. History is the record of what we cannot undo.' (3PT: 106)[46]

As he is told by his Eumenides: 'You will never be anyone else, no matter how long you live.' (GF, 133) There is no escape into musings of alternative pasts. To make amends, effectively to rewrite the ending, would also mean to eradicate the perpetrator's guilt; in a very literal sense, to exculpate them. Yet this is not the nature of atonement, which is predicated on the eternal reality of guilt and its acknowledgement. The moral imperative, that is, needs to be observed in the present. It cannot be applied retrospectively.

It appears that the Kobus of the earlier versions specifically interrogates the narrative creation of alternative pasts: 'The alternate histories we write have no effect on what actually occurred.' (1PT: 106) As such, his deliberations are simultaneously reflections on Jacobson's own project of writing an alternative history. Yet in the published version of the novel, the connotations are subtly different. Kobus, abandoned by the children far away from his home, 'spoke to them nevertheless' (GF, 156), because he finds it impossible to deny them as he denied Sannie. He has learned his lesson. He tells them of his grief and of his mourning of lost possibilities, but also that he does not expect forgiveness; he tells them:

> That he did not follow them in hope of achieving some kind of happy ending to their tale or his. The past could never be redeemed. Justice could never be done to it retrospectively. Its sorrows were never to be assuaged by anything which came afterwards. No belated fantasy could put it right. Its lineaments were fixed for ever in the grimace which time had given it to wear. Only oblivion, nothing else, could change it, mask it, smooth it away. (GF, 156)

Jacobson is unequivocal here. Kobus is no longer hoping to achieve, or even contemplating, a happy ending, because the past cannot be redeemed. He accepts his guilt, but in his atonement finds nothing like redemption. His only relief is that '[h]e was the one sinking into oblivion.' (GF, 156)

One last time Kobus is lured by his Eumenides out of his house, late at night and far out of town where his body is found by children from 'an encampment of tinkers, nomads, strangers, people from elsewhere' (GF, 158) – another marginal, and

marginalized, group of 'others.' The final sentence of the novel sees his body lumbering on a cart into the morning light (GF, 159).

## Conclusion

Though his body may be carted toward the dawn of a new day, Kobus's death in Dan Jacobson's *The God-Fearer* is not redemptive; or, if it is redemptive, then only in a very limited way, in that his story is a story in which we may recognize ourselves and take to heart the judgement passed on him by his Eumenides as a moral imperative. There may be hope in that dawn of another day for us, if we do. Clive Sinclair's 'Ashkenazia' envisages no comparable moral obligation. His is rather a cautionary tale about Israel and diasporism, but also about the impossibility of escaping the specter of the Holocaust, which of course also haunts *The God-Fearer*. Yet while Sinclair engages with the parable of his alternative history with the persistence of the Holocaust, Jacobson encourages individual responsibility and moral fortitude. His novel is a parable rather of the moral failure and eventual self-discovery of an everyman figure to which the setting of his alternative history lends a sense of universal significance, precisely because it, too, indirectly summons the specter of the Holocaust in confirmation and exhortation.

Both writers create alternative histories of a Jewish state in an imaginary Ashkenaz (ia) in which they map onto the historical topography an imaginary topography superficially at odds with reality but subliminally associated with it. Yet they do so in different ways, and Panofsky's spatial and temporal definitions of the meaning of Arcadia may help us to understand the differences more fully. In *The God-Fearer*, the topography in itself has no real relevance, it mostly serves to provide a suitably vague setting for a tale that is of universal admonitory import. Yet in 'Ashkenazia' the topography itself becomes significant because it is the vehicle of the persistence of the Holocaust which like the blisters of an old layer of paint cracks open the apparently smooth surface of the fresh paint superimposed on it. Jacobson's Arcadian idyll is mostly temporal in Panofsky's sense, the spatial aspect is secondary in this case; Sinclair's is more complex. It, too, combines elements of the temporal and the spatial, yet here the latter is by far the more insistent. What is significant, however, is that in both texts the illusionary imaginary of Ashkenaz(ia) as an Arcadian idyll is dismantled. Because in both texts death in the guise of a different holocaust intrudes: *Et in Ashkenaz(ia) ego*.

Kermode described myths as 'agents of stability,' and fictions as 'agents of change.'[47] As they superimpose different topographies upon one another, Sinclair's and Jacobson's texts also superimpose fiction on myth, or myth-like imaginaries; and both explode the stability of myth with the catalytic and transformative power of fiction. In 'Ashkenazia,' the myth is a self-perpetuating myth of recent Zionist creation which is centered on the recovery of the Jewish homeland. It is exploded by Sinclair with the spatial displacement of his story: not Palestine, but Galicia; but also, almost literally, with the reassertion – if not quite a recurrence in the Nietzschean sense – of the Holocaust, even in the alternative reality, which reflects on anxieties in contemporary reality. In *The God-Fearer*, the myth is of a temporally removed Ashkenaz in a hazily imagined idyllic setting. Jacobson uproots it with the insights of Kobus in the process of his self-examination induced by the little Eumenides who haunt him: the idyll of peaceful villages, fields, and vinyards

is internally corrupt and blighted by the canker of the discrimination and persecution of the 'other.'

In the end, both texts turn out to be alternative histories which are initially set up as utopias but quickly deteriorate into dystopias. They are characterized by the persistence, in different guises, of the Holocaust as a failure of humanity that cannot be written out even of its imagined alternative histories. The spectral presence of the historical occurrence pervades both texts and inescapably determines the reader's response. In fact, both writers explicitly set up historical fact as a potential alternative history within the logic of their respective narrative: the Second World War and the rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Yet in both texts it is dismissed as madness – presumably an indication of the authors' expectation of the potential reception of their own works. But the madness has method. Both 'Ashkenazia' and *The God-Fearer* rely on inversions. In Jacobson's novel, the inversion extends, perhaps controversially, to the attribution of the roles of perpetrator and victim, though the markers of difference are determined by religious, not by racial criteria. A complete inversion, where Jews perpetrate a holocaust on Germans would still, it seems, be unimaginable, though Simone Zelitch moves in this direction in her *Judenstaat* (2016). Yet in her novel, too, the primacy of the Holocaust is established, which provokes its inversion as a retaliation, similar to Jacobson's suggestion in his abandoned postscript to *The God-Fearer*. In Sinclair's story, the inversions are more complex and intricately intertwined. They encompass the substitution of Ashkenazia for Israel; the destruction of the Jewish state instead of the historical Ashkenaz; and the annihilation of Tarnopol the writer as he foregoes the centrifugal force of the diaspora to succumb to the centripetal force of the deceptively Arcadian Ashkenazia.

Finally, both Sinclair's 'Ashkenazia' and Jacobson's *The God-Fearer*, share a deep distrust of narrative. Their skepticism, articulated through the imaginative solipsism of Stashev, no less than Kobus's own 'inveterate' skepticism and the confusion of his recollections, is confronted with the implicit danger of realities and memories dwindling away – to annihilation and oblivion. Thus, while there may be no consolation in alternative histories, as both texts insist, they nevertheless help to prevent the fading away of historical reality and reinforce the implicit imperative to face this reality. In this sense the imaginary of Arcadia itself and the *Et in Arcadia ego* appears as a sort of alternative history; and this is where its relevance to my argument lies: its enduring moral is that there is, in Panofsky's words, no refuge from a 'faulty reality' nor from a 'questionable past' to be had. Hence also: *Et in Ashkenazia ego*.

## Notes

1. See, e.g., Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*, 256–7.
2. For the concept of *lebensraum* in the East, see, e.g., Fritz, *Ostkrieg*, 16–20; for the *lebensborn* program, see Clay and Leapman, *Master Race*.
3. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 27.
4. Michael Chabon, e.g., envisages in his alternative history *The Yiddish Policemen's Union* (2007) the creation of an independent Jewish settlement in Alaska. As a result, the Holocaust claims two million Jews instead of six million; the State of Israel, founded in 1948, is destroyed after only three months in an alternative version of the Arab-Israeli War. Another example is Melvin Jules Bukiet's *Stories of an Imaginary Childhood* (1992) through which the author 'inscribed' himself into a life that might have been his; yet his

collection of stories, set in Proszowice on the eve of the Holocaust, has no pretensions of undoing or altering the fate of the Jews. It is, rather, the reader's knowledge of historical events which creates its impact. See also Simone Zelitch's *Judenstaat* (2016), a dystopia, in which a Jewish state is formed on German soil after the Second World War and where, 40 years later, a historian uncovers a retaliatory massacre of Germans; Nava Semel's *Isra Isle* (2016), which envisages a Jewish state on Grand Island in the Niagara River as part of the Union and in which the Holocaust is 'both present and absent,' see Rovner, "Alternate History," 139; and Lavie Tidhar's *Unholy Land* (2018), another dystopia, in which the Uganda plan of 1903 is realized and which suggests the modern Jewish state to perpetrate atrocities on its African inhabitants.

5. See Sinclair, "Ashkenazia," quoted from the collection *Bedbugs*, and Jacobson, *God-Fearer*; subsequently referred to parenthetically as (A) and (GF), respectively.
6. Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 27.
7. Sinclair's "Ashkenazia" should, moreover, be read as a companion piece to his earlier "The Promised Land" (1979), which is another disappointed heterotopia engaging with the State of Israel.
8. Jacobson's first notes on the novel, originally conceptualized as a short story, date back to November 1988, see Jacobson, "Kobus: Notes and Early Drafts."
9. The cover was designed by Jeff Fisher who also drew the illustration, see Jacobson, *God-Fearer*.
10. See Sicher, "Burden of Memory," 63.
11. See, e.g., Sinclair's novels *Blood Libels* (1985) and *Cosmetic Effects* (1989).
12. See Brauner, *Post-war Jewish Fiction*, 175.
13. Ibid., 205n21.
14. Weinreich, *English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary*, 527.
15. See Sholem Aleichem, "Burned Out." The twenty-one Railroad Stories were first assembled in book form in 1911.
16. Ibid., 248.
17. Ibid., 250.
18. Bobroisk (Babruysk in present-day Belarus) experienced various pogroms during the 1890s, Rechitsa (also in present-day Belarus) in October 1905, and Bialystok (in present-day Poland) in June 1906. Mir is a special case, because in 1905 members of a Jewish self-defence organization were able to avert a pogrom. For pogroms in imperial Russia, see, e.g., the report of the Kommission zur Erforschung der Pogrome in Russland in two volumes and, more recently, Lambroza, "Pogroms of 1903–1906."
19. See, e.g., Garber and Zuckerman, *Double Takes*, 4–7.
20. The ultimate restlessness of the narrator is reminiscent of the antisemitic figure of Ahasverus, or The Wandering Jew, of Christian legend, see Anderson, *Legend of the Wandering Jew*; it is also reflected in Sinclair's story "The Luftmensh" (1979), see, e.g., Stähler, "Stories of Jewish Identity," 335–6.
21. Panofsky, "*Et in Arcadia Ego*," 296, 307.
22. Ibid., 313.
23. Ibid., 303.
24. Cheyette, "Moroseness and Englishness," 25.
25. Jacobson's early drafts and four draft printouts of the novel, originally to be entitled "Kobus," are held at the HRC. Henceforth, I refer to the different textual stages of the novel as 1PT–4PT. References to the published text follow the first Bloomsbury edition, Jacobson, *The God-Fearer*.
26. See, e.g., Symons, "Intolerance," 10.
27. Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, 39.
28. See Barolini, *Undivine Comedy*, 164.
29. See ibid.
30. Celan, "Deathfugue," l. 4.
31. Cheyette, "Englishness and Extraterritoriality," 33.

32. See, e.g., Pettitt, *Perpetrators in Holocaust Narratives*, 16.
33. Jacobson, "About "The God-Fearer"," 22.
34. See ibid. See also Baron, *Social and Religious History*, I, 173. For Renan's original suggestion, see Renan, *Apostles*, 221–5.
35. The projected appendices included excerpts from Baron, *Social and Religious History*, I, 173–9 and II, 89–90 as well as Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries*, I, 352–3.
36. Baron, *Social and Religious History*, I, 179.
37. Jacobson, "About "The God-Fearer"," 22.
38. Ibid.
39. Camus, *Fall*, 75.
40. Ibid., 10.
41. Ibid., 68
42. Ibid., 56.
43. Ibid., 92.
44. The author's deletions are indicated by square brackets [ ], while his insertions are enclosed in angle brackets < >.
45. 'Quite rightly too' has been substituted for 'Even when I have longed for them this has been so,' though this is not reflected in the author's handwritten revisions, see (2PT: 107).
46. 1PT concluded with the assertion that '[t]here is no other realm to which we can have recourse. The alternate histories we write have no effect on what actually occurred.' (1PT: 106)
47. Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, 39.

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