UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Placing the 'Other' in Our Midst:

Immigrant Jews, Gender and the British Imperial Imagination

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Thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October 2010

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

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This thesis traces cultural and socio-political responses to the alien Jew in Britain through the prism of genre, space and time. Beginning with the reports of persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth century, it examines how representations of these foreign Jews changed and developed as sympathy for their plight turned to anxiety at the prospect of their arrival in Britain. It shows how a Semitic discourse evolved alongside, and in response to, wider debates about the state of the self, nation and empire at the *fin de siècle*, arguing that the vocabulary and mentality of imperialism was a crucial tool for deciphering the nature of Jewish 'difference'. However, this thesis also enables fresh perspectives by considering the gender and spatial dynamics of Semitic representations in Britain during and beyond the period of mass immigration, from the end of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the twenty first. This extended view of the Jewish 'other', which follows the 'typical' Jewish migrant journey from the *shtetl* of Eastern Europe to the North London suburb of the present-day, considers how Jewish spatial and cultural practices have been interpreted and articulated by the British and the British-Jewish onlooker.

The thesis' opening section, divided into three chapters, adopts an original approach to the aliens question by exploring how perspectives on the alien Jew were shaped and expressed within different mediums, or 'genres' at the *fin de siècle*. Through an assessment of newspapers, political debates, and fiction, this section offers a comparative analysis of how the particular dynamics and agendas of each of these genres operated to produce different textual and visual images of 'the Jew'. Building upon Bryan Cheyette's seminal work in relation to fiction, each of these chapters demonstrates not only the inherently ambivalent nature of Semitic representations but also reveal that, crucially, gender was an important moderator of Jewish 'difference'. This reading extends into the second section which, across four chapters, explores how gender functioned in conjunction with space to construct ideas in Britain about alien Jews as they traversed time and space from *shtetl* to suburb. Beginning with the point of departure, the opening chapter of the section reviews the long tradition of representing Eastern Europe by 'the West', arguing that this tradition laid the foundation for a paradoxical view of the Jew in Eastern Europe as both territorialized and territorializing. This perceived struggle for spatial ownership amongst Jews also featured in narratives of the migrant journey – the topic of the second chapter. That perception generated the notion that migrating Jews were staging an alien invasion of Britain. Thus the prolonged fascination with London's Jewish 'ghetto' and its interior – 'alien' territory *par excellence* – provides the focus for the third chapter which, in turn, lays the foundation for the final chapter's exploration of the replacement of the urban with the suburban as the alien Jew's 'territory' of choice.

Contents

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Hannah Ewence, declare that the thesis entitled 'Placing the Other in our Midst: Immigrant Jews, Gender and the British Imperial Imagination' and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

- parts of this work have been published as:

H. Ewence, 'Between Daydream and Nightmare: Fin de Siècle Jewish Journeys and the British Imagination', in G. Alderman (ed.), *New Directions in Anglo-Jewish History*, (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2010), pp. 1-24.

Signed: ....

Date: ....

Acknowledgements

Many friends and family have provided encouragement or simply a welcome distraction along the way, and I would like to mention a few here. Thanks goes to Jaime Ashworth, Adam Chapman, Kara Critchell, Hannah Gill and Diana Popescu who have all read parts of this thesis and have helped to improve it with their insight. Thanks also to Christen Ericsson and Frances Williams for country walks and cocktails – may there be many more! Appreciation also goes to James for calling most Friday afternoons without fail and reminding me that I have a brother. Your unwavering support has meant a lot. I also feel incredibly lucky to have had the friendship of Sofia Sivik before, during and hopefully long after this undertaking, who has put me up and cheered me up on countless occasions.

A very special thank you to Tony Kushner who has been endlessly patient, endlessly knowledgeable and endlessly inspiring. You have given me the greatest gift of self-belief. Thanks also to staff within the Parkes Institute, past and present, for your assistance and encouragement, most especially James Jordan and Andrea Reiter.

A simple thank you barely seems enough to thank my parents for years of care packages, phone calls, wise words and unconditional support. Both of you have, in your own way, helped me to achieve this.

Finally, my greatest thanks must be reserved for David, whose wisdom, support and love has been constant. That, above all, has got me through.

Introduction

'The Jew' in Space, Time and Genre

In February 1904 the leading Anglo-Jewish newspaper, *The Jewish Chronicle*, published an article entitled 'The Real Alien'. The article, as the title indicated, desperately attempted to detach the immigrant Jew, as actuality, from the myriad of representations which had come to make up his popular persona in Britain since the migration of Eastern European Jewry had begun in earnest in 1881. 'In view of the heated, and often very ignorant strictures passed upon the character of the Jewish alien', the paper wrote, 'the testimony of several men who know the foreign Hebrew population will not be inopportune at this juncture.'[1] That 'juncture', a reference to the very public debate which, just a year later, resulted in the first piece of permanent legislation restricting immigration into Britain, was both a stunning blow to liberalism, and a milestone in the creation of the modern British nation. Indeed the Aliens Act of 1905 was to become the model for immigration legislation throughout the twentieth century, and, moreover, was pivotal in demarcating British national identity at the *fin de siècle* through the prism of a highly racialised discourse of inclusion and exclusion, civilisation and barbarism. Yet the act's passage through parliament would not have been possible without the creation and widespread dissemination of an image of the immigrant Jew which was simplistic and familiar enough to be engaging, and was, above all, deeply symptomatic of the issues and concerns of the day.

Certainly the figure of 'the Jew', as a signifier of difference, has long been a source of fascination for writers and thinkers throughout the western world. As a highly pervasive, malleable and hugely recognisable cultural stereotype, 'the Jew' has appeared in many guises and in many genres as part of the theological and, later, the intellectual project in Europe to explore and (re)affirm the identity of 'the self' – both individual and collective – by delineating the archetypal 'other'. Many of the earliest academic surveys of Jewish stereotypes in Britain, however, which, for the most part took English literature as their central focus, failed to recognise the social constructionist character of 'the Jew' in fiction. That is to say, those studies did not comprehend

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[1] 'The Real Alien', *Jewish Chronicle*, 5 February 1904, pp. 21-2.

that the character of 'the Jew' was rather more a product of social forces, of a socially created system for racial categorisation, a projection of a belief system about groups within and beyond ones own society, than it was a reflection of 'truth'.[2] Instead infamous literary creations such as Shakespeare's Shylock and Charles Dickens's Fagin were interpreted as expressions of anti-Semitic feeling, and thus as misrepresentations of the 'real' Jew.[3] Those scholars 'seem to suppose that it was the intention of those who wrote about the Jew to treat the Jew realistically, either as an individual or as a race, and that this attempt had failed because of ignorance and hatred', wrote Columbia professor Lionel Trilling, somewhat exasperated, in 1931. 'The Jew was never treated in a way that demanded realism or truth', Trilling insisted, 'he was never treated as more than a type'.[4]

This recognition of 'the Jew' as a 'type', an 'abstraction', a 'symbol' created with explicit purpose by the author to convey meaning to a versed audience, became absolutely fundamental as the twentieth century progressed, to academic treatment of English literary texts in which Jews featured. Key mid-century studies such as Harold Fisch's *The Dual Image: A Study of the Figure of the Jew in English Literature* and Edgar Rosenberg's *From Shylock to Svengali: Jewish Stereotypes in English Fiction* sought to identify the most common Jewish 'types' who made appearances repeatedly in popular literature down the ages.[5] That process of classification, thanks to the very nature of its approach, sought to uncover continuities in representations of 'the Jew'. Within a climate of some debate, some scholars in the field grounded their studies in the assumption that they were dealing with 'fixed and recurrent caricatures', which defied the external context, or historical backdrop in which they were created.[6] Rosenberg in particular shook off any qualms he may have had about

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[2] The philosopher Paul Boghossian's article 'What is Social Construction', *Times Literary Supplement*, (February 2001), provides a useful introduction to the philosophy behind and approaches to social constructionism.
[3] See D. Philipson, *The Jew in English Fiction*, (Cincinnati: Clark, 1889); M. J. Landa, *The Jew in Drama*, (London: P. S. King, 1926) and J. Kunitz, *Russian Literature and the Jew,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929). Lionel Trilling references all of these studies as 'all more or less engaged in vindicating the Jew' from 'misrepresentation' and 'slander', in his article 'The Changing Myth of the Jew', (1931) republished in *Commentary*, (August 1978), pp. 24-34, (p. 24).
[4] Trilling, 'The Changing Myth of the Jew', p. 24.
[5] H. Fisch, *The Dual Image: A Study of the Jew in English Literature*, (London: Lincolns-Prager, 1959); E. Rosenberg, *From Shylock to Svengali: Jewish Stereotypes in English Fiction*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960).
[6] Rosenberg, *From Shylock to Svengali*, p. 8.

this 'decontextualised' approach arguing that although he had not 'stressed' 'historical currents', he had instead,

> tried to relate the stereotypes and conventions to each other, to establish grounds for comparison and discrimination, and to investigate and explain the particular Jewish figure within the configuration of the novel in which it appears.[7]

The significance of 'the Jew' *in* the text eclipsed all considerations of 'the Jew' beyond it, both as historical subject, and as a representation which resonated within, and was defined by, the socio-political context. 'The principle objection to the historical rationale', reasoned Rosenberg, 'is that it is apt to slight the massive durability of a stereotype, which is almost by definition the least pliable of literary sorts, the one least sensitive to social vibrations.'[8]

This understanding of representations as having given, or evident meanings neither wholly determined by, nor overtly responsive to, external stimulus, reflects one of the broader currents of thinking in social psychology up to the present day. Charles Stangor and James Lange, for example, show how stereotypes, as a set of interconnected beliefs held by one group about another, tend to endure from one generation to the next.[9] Certainly the pervasive stereotypes surrounding 'the Jew' have relied, to a great extent, upon the transmittance of prejudice from father to son. Yet this persistence of prejudice has only been sustained by the continuous existence of a socio-cultural backdrop in which such attitudes remained relevant and could flourish thus preventing them from falling out of usage. Theological and then racial conceptualisations of 'the Jew' in Britain, which positioned 'the Jew' as the antithesis to Christian, and then 'Aryan' culture, ensured that anti-

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[7] Rosenberg, *From Shylock to Svengali*, p. 13.
[8] Ibid., p. 14.
[9] C. Stangor and J. Lange, 'Mental representations of social groups: Advances in understanding stereotypes and stereotyping', *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 26, (1994) pp. 357-416. See also C. Stangor (ed.) *Stereotypes and Prejudice: Essential Readings*, (Philadelphia, Pa: Psychology Press, 2000) and C. McGarty, V. Y. Yzerbyt and R. Spears, (eds.), *Stereotypes as Explanations: The Formation of Meaningful Beliefs about Social Groups*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), for a introduction to research in this area.

Semitic attitudes not only remained current, but also became deeply entrenched within the British psyche.[10]

Although Harold Fisch also conceived of 'the Jew' in literature as a 'myth of great power and significance' created with 'the very minimum of reference to contemporary reality', he went some way towards problematising attitudes towards 'the Jew' as straightforwardly anti-Semitic.[11] 'The image of the Jew in literature is indeed a dual image', he wrote in 1959. 'He [the Jew] excites horror, fear, hatred; but he also excites wonder, awe and love.'[12] According to Fisch, 'the Jew', as literary construction, evoked polemical, paradoxical responses which were simultaneously 'positive' and 'negative'. In proposing such an interpretation, Fisch drew heavily upon the image of Jews formulated by Christianity, as both deicide nation – universally complicit in the murder of Christ – and as a people whose redemption through conversion would lead to the salvation of mankind. Yet, the power of this duality transcended a purely theological conceptualisation, and, as Fisch and others since have shown, was fundamental in shaping later stereotypes grounded in secular and popular culture.[13] The figure of 'the Jew' in literature, for example, was simultaneously depicted as both the incarnation of progress and modernity, and as the last remaining vestige of a despised medievalism.

Certainly Fisch's recognition of 'the Jew's' 'dual image' has been crucial in mediating approaches to literary representations. Moreover, it has also provided a 'way in' to thinking about how theological narratives of 'the Jew' have informed secular culture, beyond merely transmitting anti-Semitic prejudice. That said however, academic studies which have attempted to move beyond the confines of literary representations, have not always found the task of applying this

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[10] Colin Holmes seminal study *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876-1939*, (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979), has argued against the grain by comprehensively demonstrating that anti-Semitism in Britain 'was not uncommon between 1876-1939', (p. 220). Other studies which have since contributed to this assessment include D. Rosenberg, *Facing up to anti-Semitism: How Jews in Britain countered the threats of the 1930s*, (London: JCARP, 1985); T. Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: anti-Semitism in British Society during the Second World War*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), and, more recently, D. I Kertzer (ed.), *Old Demons, New Debates: anti-Semitism in the West*, (Teaneck, New Jersey: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 2005), especially chapters 6 and 7. J. Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989) also offers a broader examination of racism and immigration in Britain in a historical context, with a particular focus on the post-1945 era.
[11] Fisch, *The Dual Image*, p. 10.
[12] Ibid., p. 11.
[13] See, in particular, F. Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes: A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660-1830*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995).

conceptualisation of 'the Jew' an easy one. Frank Felsenstein's *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes: A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660-1830* epitomises this trend.[14] The study was innovative in the good use it made of material from high and popular culture such as magazines and periodicals, sermons and illustrations. Yet, as its title suggests, Felsenstein's study focused purely upon anti-Semitic representations, thus completely discarding the ambivalent, paradoxical readings of 'the Jew' as offered by Fisch. Although Felsenstein does makes reference to the 'heritage' of approaches provided by theology, he chooses to draw upon just one strand of that 'heritage', arguing that the perpetual depiction of 'the Jew' as 'forlorn' was 'frequently interpreted as witness of God's wish to hold them up as a paradigm or exemplum to the rest of humanity'.[15] This unbalanced reading of 'the Jew's' conceptualisation within Christian discourse failed to take account of the counter narrative which cherished the Jewish people as the conducts of human salvation. Representations of 'the Jew' were thus once again relegated to the purely hostile.

Not withstanding Felsenstein's 'one-sided' approach, his study excelled not only by utilising material which featured 'the Jew' besides and as well as fiction, but also by striving to show how anti-Semitic stereotypes shifted and fluctuated over time. The main thrust of Felsenstein's argument was to demonstrate the persistence of stereotypes throughout the 'long' eighteenth century, and, in particular, to stress the extent to which those stereotypes were rooted in medieval prejudice. However Felsenstein also attempted to show that by the nineteenth century, the steady march of liberalism had begun to alter attitudes in Britain towards Jews for the better.[16] What is more, those changing attitudes were guided by shifting perceptions in British society itself as to how it comprehended the world in which it lived. The tight grasp of Christianity was rapidly slipping, to be replaced by a more 'enlightened', secular and quasi-scientific view of the world. Such views, to put it simply, re-conceptualised Jews as a race rather than a religious minority, thereby perceiving Jewish 'traits' as inherent and immutable even after conversion to Christianity.

However, Felsenstein's supposition of the 'progressive liberalization of English attitudes towards Jews'[17] in Britain received surprising criticism from some academics within the field of

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[14]   Ibid.
[15]   Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes,* p. 3.
[16]   Ibid., pp. 215-44.
[17]   Ibid., p. 245.

British Jewish history. In a review for *The English Historical Review* Geoffrey Alderman concluded that he remained unconvinced that a liberalisation of attitudes had occurred with the arrival of the nineteenth century. The review's closing remarks rammed home that conviction:

'The unconverted Jews', the Tory MP Sir Edmund Isham argued in 1753, 'can never be incorporated with us.' 'However patriotic, able and industrious', the Tory Prime Minister, A. J. Balfour, argued in 1905, the Jews 'remain a people apart, and [...] only intermarried among themselves.' *Plus ça change!*[18]

Alderman's insistence that the more things appeared to change for the Jews in Britain, the more they stayed the same, was echoed by other reviewers who overlooked Felsenstein's ultimately hopeful conclusion of progress and tolerance, instead praising the study for stressing 'the persistence of prejudice' throughout the 'long' eighteenth century.[19]

This resistance to a more nuanced reading of the treatment of 'the Jew' amongst traditional historians, in deference perhaps to the realities for the 'real' Jew in British society, has been overcome, to a large extent, by scholars who have considered literary material through the prism of cultural studies. Bryan Cheyette's groundbreaking study *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945* was at the forefront of this movement, patiently demonstrating that far from being a fixed stereotype, the image of the Jew in literature and society was, more precisely, a product of its time and of its creator. That is to say, so argued Cheyette, 'writers [did] not passively draw on eternal myths of "the Jew" but actively construct[ed] them in relation to their own literary and political concerns'.[20] In proposing this argument, however, Cheyette was careful to avoid 'a naively whiggish perspective' which had been the downfall of other studies that had stressed change rather than consistency in treatment of 'the

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[18]   G. Alderman in review of Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, in *The English Historical Review*, vol. 112, no. 447, (June 1997), pp. 770-1, (p. 771).
[19]   M. Levene, in review of *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, in *Notes and Queries*, vol. 43, no. 2, (1996), pp. 227-8.
[20]   B. Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 268.

Jew'.[21]   Instead, his approach, which, as later reviews have observed, placed 'ambivalent representations of 'the Jew' at the heart of modernity', emphasised the confused rather than linear nature of shifting Semitic representations.[22]

Cheyette's refusal to adhere to a 'Whiggish' reading of 'the Jew' in literature was coupled with a critique of the discursive vocabulary formerly employed to categorise representations of 'the Jew'. The somewhat polemical terms 'anti-Semitism' and 'philo-Semitism', Cheyette argued, did not adequately describe the multifarious and often ambiguous cultural images of 'the Jew'. Instead those labels loaded representations with quasi-political undertones, and allowed only that they indicated a 'positive' or 'negative' attitude. To address these issues, and to bring greater attention to the very ambivalence of representations of 'the Jew' in English literature, Cheyette suggested substituting these misleading labels with the umbrella term, 'semitic discourse'.[23] He explained that 'the one ironically consistent feature of the literary representations under consideration is the protean instability of "the Jew" as signifier'.[24] Thus, it was that 'instability' or flexibility which enabled 'the Jew' to 'occupy an incommensurable number of subject positions' regardless of their contradictory or paradoxical character.[25] Here, then, Cheyette drew upon Fisch's idea of the 'dual image'. Yet although Cheyette, similar to Fisch, recognised that 'this doubleness points to a received Christological discourse', he grounded his investigation firmly in the modern era insisting that a prevalent racial discourse of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century utilised 'the Jew' in culture to reflect and refract contemporary concerns and anxieties.[26]

For the most part, explorations of Semitic representations in British culture and society at the *fin de siècle* which recognised 'the Jew' as emblematic of wider national concerns, has been duly noted by investigations which both preceded and followed Cheyette's seminal work.[27] The most

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[21] This is a criticism which Cheyette makes of early academic explorations into literary representations of the Jew, most particularly M. F. Modder, *The Jew in the Literature of England,* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1939) and Philipson, *The Jew in English Fiction* in *Constructions of 'the Jew'*, p. 3, footnote 5.

[22] E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman summarise Cheyette's central argument thus in their introduction to the recently published edited collection *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman (eds.), (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 3.

[23] Cheyette discusses this in the introduction to his *Constructions of 'the Jew'*, pp. 8-9.

[24] Ibid., p. 8.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., p. 9.

[27] The most notable of these works are D. Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder 1848-1918*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); L. Marks, *Model Mothers: Jewish Mothers and Maternity Provisions in East London, 1870-1939*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); N. Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-*

high-profile, glaring exception to this is Anthony Julius' recent *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England* (2010), a study which set out to establish the case for a persistent and very 'English' strain of anti-Semitism throughout history and literature, from the medieval to the modern period, from Chaucer to Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children*.[28] Aptly coined by Cheyette as 'a veritable base ball bat of a book', Julius' confrontational style allows little opportunity for either analysis or nuance of conclusions which seek out and thus sees only consistent hostility as the defining feature of attitudes towards, and representations of, Jews in English culture and society.[29] Whilst, as Nadia Valman has observed, Julius' approach to literature 'eschews the tendency of most literary critics in the past two decades to view semitic representations as metaphors for larger questions specific to time and place', more worryingly still is his rather simplistic and brief treatment of the period of mass Jewish immigration.[30] Detailed under the subheading 'Anti-Alienism' – a title itself encased in parentheses – the implication throughout is that anti-alienism should be understood as anti-Semitism under another name. The parliamentary, social and cultural response to immigration in Britain at the *fin de siècle*, Julius insists, is fundamentally about age-old hostility towards Jews. Even those who appear to demonstrate sympathy towards the Jewish newcomers – namely liberal politicians such as Charles Dilke – are seemingly condemned as covertly anti-Semitic, their so-called 'pro-alienism' dismissed as an adherence to 'Liberal values' or the rationalisation 'how can *all* Jews be bad?'.[31]

This rather blinkered approach to the history is, thankfully, not one which has been taken up by the majority of Julius' contemporaries of the last few decades. Instead, the one key strand which drew these academic works together, was their insistence that the treatment of 'the Jew' within British culture and society at the *fin de siècle* was not ultimately about anti-Semitism but rather was symptomatic of an insidious crisis of national identity. Certainly by the late nineteenth century, the prosperity enjoyed in the early Victorian period had begun to wane. Germany and the United States were rapidly advancing on Britain's commercial and financial dominance, and,

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Century British Literary Culture, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Bar-Yosef and Valman (eds.), *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*.

[28] A. Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[29] B. Cheyette, 'Trials of the Diaspora, by Anthony Julius', *The Independent on Sunday*, 26 February 2010.

[30] N. Valman, 'British Jewish Literature and Culture: An Introduction', Special Issue of *Jewish Culture and History* 'Whatever Happened to British Jewish Studies, T. Kushner and H. Ewence (eds.), (2011, forthcoming).

[31] Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora*, pp. 276-283; 347.

by the turn-of-the-century, the all-powerful British Empire faced challenges which would expose grave cracks in its very foundations.

Domestically, economic instability and the effects of industrial production had led to unemployment, under-employment, and the preference amongst industrialists for cheap casual labour rather than the employment of a permanent workforce, prompting huge discontent. This was compounded still further by the de-population of the countryside and the massive growth of urban centres. Living and working conditions for the majority in the cities was characterised by poverty and squalor. Perceptions amongst the wealthier classes of a growing crisis of morality often laid the blame with the working classes, seeing a tendency for 'base' behaviour as inherent rather than a consequence of circumstance.

Such anxieties about Britain's place in the world were taken up by writers and thinkers of the era who interpreted these signs of national decline as indicators that disease had infected the body politic which was being attacked from the outside in and, more worryingly, from the inside out.[32] Turn-of-the-century novels such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), and Julia Frankau's *Pigs in Clover* (1903), written under the pseudonym Frank Danby - both of which will be discussed in section one of this thesis – have been seen to explore these anxieties, depicting the immigrant Jew, both literally and figuratively, as the catalyst for decline.[33] This fear of national degeneracy, which Frankau and Stoker so powerfully depict, borrowed from a quasi-scientific continental discourse, which attempted to explain social problems such as alcoholism, sexual promiscuity, crime and anarchy as the outcome of the degeneration of the human race.[34] Such theories drew heavily upon

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[32]   S. Arata's 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization', *Victorian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4, (Summer 1990), pp. 621-45, offers an excellent introduction to the prevalence of the 'pervasive narrative of decline' in *fin de siècle* British literature, providing an especially compelling reading of *Dracula* as encoding fears of reverse colonization by the invading 'other'.

[33]   J. Frankau, *Pigs in Clover*, (London: William Heinemann, 1903), [written under the pseudonym Frank Danby] and B. Stoker, *Dracula*, (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1993), [first published 1897]. Nadia Valman applying this reading to both of these novels in her *Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, p. 201. However, whilst this is an important interpretation which has certainly informed my reading of these two texts, I also want to suggest that both Frankau and Stoker, consciously or unconsciously, offer a critique of *fin de siècle* race discourse by allowing their own ambiguities about their own sense of belonging to 'mainstream' British society to inform their writing. Thus whilst these novels draw upon discourses of national decline and anxieties regarding the 'other', they also subtly reprove Britain itself for its prejudices and immoral imperial conduct.

[34]   One of the most influential contemporary responses to those anxieties was Max Nordau's *Degeneration*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), [originally published in German, 1892], which argued that it was not just certain sections of society which had degenerated, but that culture itself had also succumbed to the same fate.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution which had effectively eradicated the certainties of human existence in favour of a far more fragile, unfixed, and unknown future for mankind.

For many late Victorians, these anxieties were exacerbated still further by the arrival of thousands of immigrants of strange, often shabby appearance and different habits. Between 1881 and the outbreak of the First World War, an estimated 150,000 Jews – economic migrants from Central and Eastern Europe as well as those fleeing from pogroms and protracted persecution across the Russian Empire – sought to eke out a new life in Britain by settling permanently.[35] Thousands more traversed the European continent to Paris, Berlin and other capitals in Western Europe, but by far the largest number – over two million – headed to the United States. Although this thesis is primarily concerned with the reception of Jews in Britain, and how the very particular strain of British imperialism came to shape that reception, the wider patterns of, and responses to, Jewish migration, particularly from other imperial nations, would, in a longer study than this, make for an exciting area of comparative research.[36] To return to the British context however, Jews heading for Britain settled in many of the nation's major urban centres with the vast majority making the East End of London their home. The Anglo-Jewish writer Israel Zangwill captured the essence of life in London's 'Jewish Quarter' in the 1892 bestseller, *Children of the Ghetto*.[37]

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[35] Estimates as to the number of Jewish immigrants in Britain by the outbreak of the First World War vary greatly, hindered by the lack of comprehensive data collected at the time and by the fluctuation in numbers caused by transmigration and return migration. In his seminal study *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914*, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960), p. 49, Lloyd P. Gartner uses the 1911 census of England and Wales together with a reasoned addition to include 'immigrant Jewry in Scotland' and 'East European Jews from Germany, Austria and Rumania' to propose the figure of 120,000 by 1914. However, in a later paper given to the Jewish Historical Society of England, Gartner demonstrated the enormous impact that transmigration had upon the Jewish population in England, estimating that between 1880 to 1920 as many as '400,000 to 500,000 Jews […] crossed the Atlantic as English natives or as East Europeans having passed two or more years in the British Isles'. See 'North Atlantic Jewry', published in *Migration and Settlement: Papers on Anglo-American Jewish History*, (London: The Jewish Historical Society of England, 1971), pp. 118-127. More recently, research undertaken by Nicholas J. Evans has considerably expanded the work begun on transmigration by Gartner, showing the fluidity of Britain's migrant population throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. See N. J. Evans, 'Indirect Passage from Europe: Transmigration via the UK, 1836-1914', *Journal for Maritime Research*, (June 2001), < http://www.jmr.nmm.ac.uk/server/show/conJmrArticle.28>.
[36] Work by Nancy Green has demonstrated the rich potential of conducting comparative approaches to this period of Jewish migration. In particular see N. Green, 'The Modern Jewish Diaspora: East European Jews in New York, London, and Paris', in *Comparing Jewish Societies*, (ed.), T. Endelman, (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pp. 113-134. For non-comparative approaches to other significant Jewish migratory routes see I. Howe, *World of our Fathers*, (New York: Galahad Books, 1976); S. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800-1923*, (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982) and N. Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque*, (New York and London: Holmes and Meier, 1986).
[37] I. Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto: A Study of a Peculiar People*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), [first published 1892].

However, whilst that novel went someway toward revealing this otherwise mysterious immigrant community to curious onlookers, the arrival and settlement of Eastern European Jews was, for the most part, greeted with a complex and mutable mix of sympathy, ambivalence and revulsion from intellectual circles, the press and the general public alike. 'It is the duty of Englishmen, irrespective of creed or party,' declared Henry Fowler, MP for Wolverhampton, in a letter to a public protest meeting in 1882 against the treatment of Jews in Russia 'to utter their strongest protest against this brutal and barbarous persecution'.[38] Fowler's words found repeated echo in the days and months following the earliest reports of atrocities.[39] Yet as the number of arrivals started to grow (or, at least, the *perception* of the number of arrivals grew) such sympathy began to wane.[40] 'This constant stream of paupers is becoming intolerable' wrote the *St James Gazette* in 1890. 'The refuse of the continent, they [Jewish immigrants] increase the misery and vice of the slums, and help bitterly to sharpen the struggle of our own people.'[41]

The numerous governmental committees and commissions which were convened at this time to address pressing social issues such as overcrowding, the sweating system, crime, anarchy and prostitution, have generally been seen as a response, in whole or in part, to the arrival of these Jewish immigrants.[42] Certainly for many at the time, the influx of immigrant aliens was thought to have aggravated many of the worst social problems. Anti-alienists, such as Arnold White, the social imperialist writer and orator, and William Evans-Gordon, MP for Stepney between 1900 - 1907and founder of the Nationalist British Brothers' League, were not afraid to exploit such

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[38] H. H. Fowler, from the report of the public meeting at the Mansion House, 1 February 1882, p. 7.
[39] Many of the most impassioned responses came from the press, most notably the *Jewish Chronicle,* the *Jewish World*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, *The Daily News* and *The Morning Post* who all attempted to whip up public opinion against Russia as they published some of the earliest reports of atrocities. A second public protest meeting was also convened in the Guildhall, London on the 10 December 1890.
[40] G. Smart, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration: The 'Alien' in Popular Print and Society, 1881-1906', Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of Southampton, 2008), convincingly demonstrates that public sympathy towards the plight of Jews in Russia steadily declined as the perception of a growing alien 'problem' in Britain grew.
[41] 'Untitled', *St James Gazette*, 28 November 1890, p. 4.
[42] See, for example, B. Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905*, (London: Heinemann Educational, 1972); D. Feldman, 'The Importance of being English: Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England', in *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, (eds.) D. Feldman and G. Stedman Jones, (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 56-84; Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994). The Committees and Commissions which have most frequently been cited: *Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners)* (1888); *Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Sweating System* (1889); *Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration* (1903); *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration* (1903), as well as 3 *Aliens Bills* to restrict the immigration of 'undesirables' (1897; 1904; 1905) which eventually became law in January 1906.

associations, condemning the immigrants through provocative rhetoric as 'poison to the immediate interests of the nation'.[43]   The Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, which first convened on 24 April 1902, signalled parliament's first serious attempt to address the unrestricted entrance of immigrants into Britain. Its recommendations that legislation was needed to restrict the entrance of 'undesirable aliens', resulted in the Aliens Act of 1905. Yet Daniel Pick has importantly argued that the Act, and the Commission which preceded it, 'should not be seen as a mere anomaly, nor, exclusively, as part of some timeless, centuries-old phenomenon of anti-Semitism, but in relation to the wider contemporary attempt to construct a racial-imperial identity'.[44]   Thus the treatment of the immigrant Jew by the political system cannot only be understood as a response to the growing presence of Jews in Britain, but as symptomatic of far broader concerns. For Pick, those concerns directly related to the continental discourse of degeneration. However, the utilisation of 'the Jew' within that debate, argued Pick, was just one outlet, of many, through which that discourse articulated itself.

Certainly the importance of reviewing responses to immigrant Jews in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain has been relegated to the peripheries by some studies, including Daniel Pick's, which have attempted to read identity discourse in the cultural exchanges and outputs of the period. Indeed academic literature which has dealt with the construction of British national identity within an historical framework, has, for the most part, ignored the presence and contribution of immigrants and minorities altogether. An image of Britain as a largely ethnically homogenous nation, at least before the arrival of African-Caribbean migrants from 1948 onwards, has tended to dominate surveys of Britain's emergence into the multi-cultural age.[45] Perhaps this is thanks to an implicit conceptualisation of 'the immigrant' and of ethnic difference within the modern mindset as non-white and non-European. However, this, of course, ignores the presence

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[43]   A. White, PP 1903 Cd. 1741 ix, 1, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration. Minutes of Evidence*, Q 405. Arnold White and William Evans-Gordon devoted considerable energies to the anti-alien movement, both travelling to Eastern Europe to investigate the 'Jewish question' there personally, and both publishing accounts of those journeys separately, yet bizarrely, in the same year and with the same title. W. Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, (London: William Heinemann, 1903); A. White, 'The Alien Immigrant', *Blackwood's Magazine*, (January 1903), pp. 132-41.
[44]   Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*, p. 215.
[45]   See, for example, D. Hiro, *Black British, White British: A History of Race Relations in* Britain, (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1971); H. Goulborne, *Race Relations in Britain Since 1945*, (London: Macmillan, 1998) and R. Hansen, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-war Britain: The Institutional Origins of a Multicultural Nation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), all of whom regard the immigration of 'black and brown' people into Britain after 1945 as 'catalytic […] in the process of Britain redefining her identity'. Goulborne, p. ix.

of long-existing, 'white' minorities such as the Huguenots, the Irish, and the Jews, as well as being completely dismissive of the myriad of responses which the rapid growth of the Jewish minority in particular prompted in Britain throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. For Victorians, Britain was very much a land of immigration, emigration, and transmigration. Its ports bustled with the constant ebb and flow of human traffic travelling from, and setting off to, Europe, the colonies and the New World.[46] Furthermore, the reach of the British Empire into all corners of the globe by the close of that century, and the rapid advances in communicative technologies, brought the world and its people ever closer. Yet the arrival of thousands upon thousands of Jewish immigrants into many of Britain's biggest urban centres prompted a renegotiation of national identity which sought to redefine Britishness not so as to include these newcomers, but rather to firmly position them as 'other' by demarcating, largely for their benefit, what they were not.

Robert Young's *The Idea of English Ethnicity*, which argues that, by the end of the nineteenth century, 'Englishness' was not constructed for the interest of those who lived in England but rather for those who did not, draws upon the underlying inference that it is awareness of the 'Other' which prompts a re-negotiation of the 'Self'. Young suggests that the rhetoric of imperialism was essential to how and why English 'ethnicity' was created because it prompted an image of England and the English to be constructed not merely as an 'internal' project of identity affirmation, but also as a scheme which marketed 'Englishness' to those who lived outside its geographical if not its cultural bounds.[47] However, Young's study is also an example of this scholarly marginalisation of representations of 'the Jew' because he limits the reach of his theory only to the English diaspora in North American, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, rather than recognising the important implications this reading of identity discourse also holds for the treatment of non – Anglo-Saxon immigrants and minorities.

Scholars immersed in the histories of minority groups in Britain have begun to despair of what they see as a long and enduring tradition of 'neglect and marginality' of minority histories, a neglect which has too frequently characterised mainstream investigations into British history and

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[46] Jonathan Schneer gives an excellent sense of imperial Britain as an increasingly diverse nation in his powerfully descriptive survey of the London docks, which he labels 'The Nexus of Empire', in his study *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 37-63.
[47] R. J. C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008).

identity.[48] In a review of the recent edited collection *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, Tony Kushner condemns 'the ignorance of scholarship on immigrants and minorities' in a collection of essays which claim to engage with 'the construction of national and local identities'. 'Such an intellectual lacuna', Kushner fears, 'points to a wider malaise in scholarship within the humanities in (or about) Britain. Are then "mainstream" historians simply doomed to replicate the exclusions and prejudices of the world in which they operate in?'[49]

Thankfully the picture is not an entirely bleak one. Joanna Bourke's stimulating essay, 'Nation: Britishness: illusions and disillusions', recognises that the three, perhaps somewhat clichéd, categories of class, gender and ethnicity are crucial to the development of national identity. Hence 'an individual's fabrication of the "nation" is multipartite, hurriedly stitched together out of a medley of relationships, rites and symbols which have to be unravelled to answer the question: is there a "we" and who are "we"?'[50] Such sensitivity to the multiplicity of individual identity also dictates Paul Ward's approach in *Britishness Since 1870*. Although the breadth of chronology that Ward attempts to cover allows only scant attention to be paid to certain periods and certain groups, Ward neither marginalizes their presence nor overstates socio-political hostilities to them. Instead his study acknowledges the vast number of indeterminate and ambivalent responses within British society to its 'others', and suggests the importance of these responses to the construction of modern British identity.[51]

The one issue which neither 'mainstream' histories nor those concerned with immigrants and minorities have comprehensively resolved, however, is that of the very definition of 'Britain' and 'Britishness'. Certainly with the burgeoning of popular and academic literature concerned with national identity, forged against a backdrop of devolution and rising nationalism, engagements with 'Englishness', 'Scottishness', 'Welshness', and 'Irishness' through a conceptual

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[48]   Important works on immigrants and minorities in Britain include C. Holmes (ed.), *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1978); K. Lunn (ed.), *Hosts, immigrants and Minorities: Historical Responses to Newcomers in British Society, 1870-1914*, (Folkestone: Dawson, 1980); C. Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigrants and British Society 1871-1971*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988); T. Kushner (ed.), *The Politics of Marginality: Race, the Radical Right and Minorities in Twentieth Century Britain*, (London: Cass, 1990); T. Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006).
[49]   T. Kushner, 'Review Essay: New Narratives, Old Exclusions? British Historiography and Minority Studies', *Immigrants and Minorities*, vol. 24, no. 3, (November 2006), pp. 347-51.
[50]   J. Bourke, 'Nation. Britishness: Illusions and Disillusions', in *Working Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Gender, Class and Ethnicity*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 170-212.
[51]   P. Ward, *Britishness Since 1870*, (London: Routledge, 2004). Kushner provides a useful review of this monograph in his review essay 'New Narratives, Old Exclusions?', p. 351.

framework have become evermore urgent.[52] Yet whilst this 'break down' of the collective identity of the United Kingdom reflects a greater sensitivity to the divergent and powerful nature of national identities – identities which have co-existed both in harmony and hostility to 'Britishness' – this tendency for differentiation has done little for the incorporation of minority and immigrant histories. These linguistic signifiers of national identity, as opposed to the 'politically correct' inclusiveness of 'Britishness', draw upon powerful, often highly mythologized narratives of regional history and heritage, which, especially in the Celtic tradition, even pertain to the tribal, to shape a useable past. That past, however, rarely acknowledges any presence which disrupts the homogeneity of that image.

Yet despite these exclusions it is by no means a straightforward decision to employ the all encompassing terms 'Britain' and 'Britishness' throughout this thesis. As Robert Young points out,

> the concept "Britishness" was invented as a cultural identity corresponding to the political identity, British, only fairly recently. The OED [Oxford English Dictionary] records just two uses of the term "Britishness" before 1904. In the nineteenth century, 'British' was as likely to be used to describe the ancient Britons who preceded the Saxons as the modern inhabitants of the British Isles – in a time when the English identified strongly with the Saxons, to call themselves British could give out the wrong connotations.[53]

Whilst I would argue that Young does not give enough attention to the powerful connotations that 'Britain', as a signifier of imperial might, also prompted by the close of the nineteenth century, the importance of recognising the contemporary rather than the present usage of the term is duly noted. That said, this thesis is not only concerned with exploring the (re)construction of 'Englishness', because such a study, as many before it, would marginalize the histories of Jewish immigrants settling elsewhere in the British Isles. Such Anglo-centricity, which in actuality has

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[52] For examples of this growing body of literature concerned with defining national, as opposed to 'British', identity see G. A. Williams, *When was Wales? A History of the Welsh*, (London: Penguin, 1991); M. G. H. Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and Scottish Identity, 1638 to the present*, (London: Routledge, 1991); P. Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Characters, 1650-1850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) and P. Logue (ed.), *Being Irish: Personal Reflections on Being Irish Today*, (Dublin: Oak Tree Press, 2000).
[53] Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity*, p. 12.

often been shorthand for London-centricity, serves only to reproduce the skewed perspectives of contemporary observers who conceptualised the alien question as a London question.[54] Whilst there certainly was, and remains something unique about the London case – its position as the Imperial Metropolis, the locale with the highest concentration of Jewish immigrants and, later, the British city with by far the largest Jewish suburban population, the cultural and political powerhouse of the nation from which the most potent and polemical rhetoric regarding 'the alien' was generated – it was neither a space nor a discourse in isolation. There were many other newly forming communities of migrants – Jewish and non-Jewish – across the length and breadth of Britain. Moreover, to prioritise London, and its East End in particular, as 'destination' at the exclusion of other peripheral locations, is to perpetuate the bias 'on settlement rather than transience', to overlook the narratives of Jewish journeys to, across and beyond Britain.[55] Whilst the limitations of this exercise alone have meant that representations of Jews in London predominate throughout this thesis, it is done with the full awareness of the broader geographical presence and heritage of Jews in Britain across the period.

Thus 'Britain' seems appropriate not only to accurately specify the geographical contextualisation of the research undertaken throughout this thesis, but also to indicate that representations of 'the Jew' impacted upon 'national identity' in the broadest, most inclusive sense. That is not, however, to suggest that sweeping generalisations of identity construction and reconstruction shall be an objective of this thesis, only that the emphasis throughout will

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[54] This is a criticism which can be levelled at S. Berrol, *East Side/East End: Eastern European Jews in London and New York, 1870-1920*, (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1994) which, although it offers an important comparison between the experiences of Jewish immigrants in the United States and Britain, limits its analysis only to New York and London. Hasia Diner has observed in her *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 13, that such exclusivity of focus has become a particular problem for studies on Jewish immigrants in America, noting that, 'The story of the Lower East Side has become almost universally understood to be synonymous with the story of Jewish life in America […] It emerged, and still serves, as the point of reference for all other American Jewish stories in its singularity'. Whilst the marginality of other places of settlement in Britain in favour of London certainly remains a feature of much scholarship on Anglo-Jewish history, increasing attention is now being paid to local and regional histories. The best of these include the classic study by Bill Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740-1875*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), as well as J. Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle: The Jewish Immigrant in Leeds, 1880-1914*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983); B. Braber, *Jews in Glasgow 1879-1939: Immigration and Integration*, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007); T. Kushner, *Anglo-Jewry Since 1066: Place, Locality and Memory*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2009) which focuses on Jewish life in Hampshire.
[55] T. Kushner writes of this bias – one of many – within Jewish historiography in his *Anglo-Jewry Since 1066*, p. 179.

intentionally be upon 'Britishness' as a collective identity which the inhabitants of the United Kingdom were slowly but surely assuming throughout the period under consideration.

Hence, it is a central objective of this thesis to re-position *fin de siècle* representations of the immigrant Jew at the very centre of debates in Britain about self, nation and empire. In doing so, this thesis shall follow the example set by recent key studies which have demonstrated how debates about modernity converged in representations of 'the Jew', and, moreover, have shown how those Semitic representations intensified during the late Victorian and Edwardian period.[56] The edited collection *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture* has been particularly monumental in this regard by exposing the colonial as well as the domestic context as crucial for understanding treatment of 'the Jew' in British culture and society.[57] Taking the Boer War (1899-1902) and the Uganda Plan (1903) – a proposed scheme to establish a homeland for Jews in East Africa – as key historical moments, the editors argue that multiple, 'dual images' of 'the Jew' resonated beyond the dichotomy of East/West long understood in readings of Victorian London, to offer an important 'way in' to consider 'the Jew' and the empire. Utilising Homi Bhabha's adage that the Jews were considered to be 'white but not quite',[58] Eitan Bar-Yosef and Nadia Valman argue in reference to the Uganda Plan, for example, that the Jews were 'sufficiently white to settle East Africa for King and Country, but not white enough to settle in the East End'.[59]

This highly ambivalent conceptualisation of 'the Jew' within western culture has, of course, already been noted. Yet this collection of essays attempted to continue what earlier studies had already begun; to view these ambivalent representations of 'the Jew' through the lens of post-colonial theory.[60] Drawing upon Edward Said's hugely influential study, *Orientalism* (1978), which conceptualised western attitudes towards the East – specifically the Muslim world – through the discourse of imperialism,[61] Bar-Yosef and Valman argue that orientalism, as a post-colonial 'tool',

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[56] Cheyette's groundbreaking *Constructions of 'the Jew'* established the conceptual framework which many studies since have adopted, most particularly Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, and Bar-Yosef and Valman (eds.), *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*.
[57] Bar-Yosef and Valman (eds.), *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*.
[58] H. K Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 89, cited by Bar-Yosef and Valman in their introduction to *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*, p. 3.
[59] Bar-Yosef and Valman, *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*, p. 3.
[60] See I. Davidson Kalmar and D. J. Penslar, (eds.), *Orientalism and the Jews*, (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2005) and A. R. Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).
[61] E. W. Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003), [first published London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978].

has much to offer readings of 'the Jew' in Britain and the empire. Although, as Bar-Yosef and Valman make clear, it was 'the Arab' rather than 'the Jew' which Said categorised as the subject of the orientalist gaze, his theoretical approach nevertheless provides a useful way in for thinking about representations of the alien Jew in Britain.[62] Certainly critics of these attempts to draw a correlation between orientalism and 'the Jew' as its subject have pointed to the analogy frequently drawn by Saidian theorists between Zionism and imperialism – a view which aligned Jews with those wielding imperial power.[63] Yet, as Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek Penslar have rightly pointed out, 'the Western image of the Muslim orient has been formed, and continues to be formed in inextricable conjunction with Western perceptions of the Jewish people'.[64] The Muslim and the Jew were frequently and irrevocably linked as 'orientals' within the occidental worldview – the Jew caught up and categorised alongside other people from 'the East'. What is more, as Davidson Kalmar and Penslar go onto say, there is also an ideological rationale for the association between 'the Jew' and orientalism. The modern forms of imperialism and anti-Semitism came into being in the same era, the late nineteenth century, with each racist perspective feeding from the other.[65] I would take this even further by suggesting that an orientalist world-view clouded the vision of Britons gazing upon Jews even beyond the bounds of the empire. As I shall explore in greater length in section two, for example, the Stepney MP William Evans-Gordon was 'forcibly' reminded of 'parts of Lower Burmah' in his travels through the Russian Pale of Settlement in the early twentieth century, whilst Victorian novelist Joseph Hatton lovingly dwelt upon the 'oriental picturesqueness' of the Jewish family warming themselves by their ghetto fireside in his tale of pogroms and persecution in Eastern Europe.[66] Here, then, the Eastern European landscape takes on the appearance of the Far East, and 'the Jew' assumes the form of the Asiatic. Thus, the discourse of orientalism, I will show, did not only operate in relation to the orient – strictly

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[62] Indeed as Bar-Yosef and Valman observe, Said wrote that 'one Semite [namely, the Jew] went the way of Orientalism, the other, the Arab, was forced to go the way of the Oriental'. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 307, cited in *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*, p. 4.

[63] This position was set out by Said in his article 'Zionism from the Standpoint of its Victims', in *Social Text*, vol. 1, (1979), pp. 7-58.

[64] Davidson Kalmar and Penslar, (eds.), *Orientalism and the Jews*, p. xiii.

[65] Ibid., p. xiv.

[66] Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, p. 115; J. Hatton, *By Order of the Czar*, (New York: John W Lovell Company, 1890), p. 17.

speaking, the Islamic Middle East – but can also be understood more broadly as a 'Western discourse of domination, constructing an Other that will be, or is already, ruled by the West'.[67]

However, this interchangability of landscape and form, place and identity, which the language of imperialism enabled, itself shifted in frequency and method of usage. That is to say, within British representations of the immigrant Jew, orientalist rhetoric was an important discursive tool but it was neither used consistently nor uniformly across time, space and genre. It was a language for articulating difference which transcended typical social boundaries between politicians and intellectuals, media and the general public, the bourgeois and the working classes, men and women. It was even employed by Jews about Jews.[68] Yet it was by no means the dominant or only discourse through which 'the Jew' was framed. As Bernard Porter's seminal study, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, has convincingly argued, despite the dominant belief to the contrary, the empire featured only infrequently, if at all, in the lives of many Britons. Apathy rather than enthusiasm, suggests Porter, characterised the responses of the majority:

> the empire, huge and significant as it was, did not require the involvement of any large section of British society for it to live and even grow. So long as a minority of men (and their female helpmeets) were committed enough to actually ruling it, the rest of the population could be left to concentrate on other things.[69]

Whilst I think that Porter overstates his case that the empire had little or no meaning for the majority of the population, he is right to argue that the spectre of empire (even a distaste for empire) visibly influenced the outlook of certain sections of society – politicians in particular – towards 'foreigners', more than it did for others. Imperialist discourse then, did not consistently

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[67] Davidson Kalmar and Penslar, p. xvii. Edward Said's refusal to apply his theory of orientalism in this more inclusive manner, is just one, of many criticisms that have been levelled at his 1978 landmark publication. Of more concern are the allegations made against Said's scholarship, particularly by medievalist Robert Irwin, who scathingly condemned *Oritenalism* as 'a work of malignant charlatanry in which it is hard to distinguish honest mistakes from wilful misrepresentations'. See R. Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and Its Discontents*, (Woodstock and New York: The Overlook Press, 2008), p. 4.

[68] Although an example drawn from continental as opposed to British Jewish writing, Arnold Zweig's *The Face of East European Jewry*, edited and translated by N. Isenberg, (Berkeley, Cal: University of California Press, 2004), [originally published in German in 1920], exemplifies this trend as does the writing of the Austrian Joseph Roth.

[69] B. Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 307.

colour the perspective of all sections of society. As Porter implies, whilst Britain was an imperial nation it was not, necessarily, an imperial society.[70] Yet the empire nevertheless provided a discursive language for articulating racial and cultural 'difference' that virtually the entire population, typically by way of the press, was privy to and were thus, in turn, in a position to employ, if only sub-consciously. The structural approach of this thesis, which traces discursive strategies for representation across time, space and genre comparatively, will allow this more nuanced reading of empire and British society to emerge. Thus whilst Porter knowingly concentrates *only* upon class as a social 'variable' or divide in the responses of British society to empire, I intend to explore and problematise how imperial discourse featured in *multiple* social groups, across political and cultural genres or communicative mediums, and in disparate locations.[71]

Certainly the different usage and conceptualisation of empire across the urban/rural divide was more than evident, and perhaps at its most acute in the case of London. Contemporary writers and observers repeatedly invoked imperialist imagery when depicting London as a strategy for articulating anxiety and for re-imposing control over perceived disorder. Within the urban setting, imperialist discourse was heightened. This has been frequently acknowledged by studies which have considered London, the 'heart of the empire', at the *fin de siècle*.[72] Joseph McLaughlin, an urban and post-colonial theorist, has observed that attempts to imagine the late nineteenth century city have 'irritated' cultural observers both past and present into 'metaphor'.[73] Certainly one metaphoric label in particular – that of the 'urban jungle' – captured the imagination of *fin de siècle* writers as no other discursive illustration had done before. The evocation of the Metropolis as both a symbol of modernity and yet reminiscent of an unknown, even menacing colonial space,

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[70] Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, p. vii.
[71] Ibid., p. xiv-xv.
[72] There has been a huge quantity of work undertaken on London as the imperial metropolis, and, more particularly, as a microcosm of the occident and the orient. However, some of the key works to consider are A. Briggs, *Victorian Cities*, (London: Odhams, 1963); P. Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); A. McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest*, (New York: Routledge, 1995); J. McLaughlin, *Writing the Urban Jungle: Reading Empire in London from Doyle to Eliot*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000); Sneer, *London 1900*. For a gendered reading of London, the divided city, at the turn-of-the-century, J. R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*, (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), is excellent.
[73] McLaughlin, 'An Irritation to Metaphor: Late-Victorian London as Urban Jungle', *Writing the Urban Jungle'*, pp. 1-26.

as caught between utopia and dystopia, fed into a very real fascination with 'the city', and London in particular, as emblematic of the contradictions facing the imperial nation. [74]   As Judith Walkowitz has remarked, 'in the last decades of the nineteenth century, journalist exposés highlighted geographic segregation, impressing on Londoners the perception that they lived in a city of contrasts, a class and geographically divided metropolis of hovels and palaces'.[75] With the arrival of thousands of Jewish immigrants, strange and dark foreigners from the East, this spatial metaphor assumed a greater urgency and relevance. The oriental 'savages' were no longer 'out there' but 'over here'. Geographical, cultural and social boundaries had been transgressed and the imperial metropolis infiltrated. London, it was feared, was afflicted with 'reverse colonization'; it was Britain's retribution for her imperial misdeeds.[76]

However, this persistent, almost pathological association of the alien Jew with a decaying imperial space, as symptomatic of the divide between East and West, was, to a large extent, confined in its intensity to narratives of the city. Whilst orientalist rhetoric and styling still remained an important imaginative strategy in observations of other landscapes and cityscapes which 'the Jew' inhabited, it was frequently diluted, or gave way altogether to alternative discourses. The classical dichotomy between city and country, for example, which idealised 'the rural' as a pure, idyllic space, and condemned the city as its 'dark mirror', featured prominently in both high and popular culture by the close of the nineteenth century.[77] Observations of 'the Jew' in the rural (or quasi-rural) environment, whether Russian *shtetl*, provincial town, or English Garden Suburb, I intend to show, drew upon that dichotomy, both reinforcing and problematising the orientalist association of 'the Jew' with the city. Very little research, however,

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[74]   For works by contemporary observers, writers and intellectuals who imagined and reproduced images of London, and the East End in particular, in this way see, as a starting point, G. R Sims, *How the Poor Live*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883); A. Mearns, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London: An Inquiry into the Conditions of the Abject Poor*, (1883); C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1889); W. Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1890); J. London, *The People of the Abyss*, (New York: Macmillan, 1903).
[75]   Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*, p. 26.
[76]   Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist'.
[77]   R. Williams, *The Country and the City*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973) seminal study explored images of the city and the country in English literature since the sixteenth century, demonstrating how the cityscape and the landscape were frequently constructed as the antithesis of the other. However, Williams' work also adopts a historicist approach by rejecting the static nature of that dichotomy, instead arguing for the 'need to trace, historically and crucially, the various forms of the idea' (p. 290). William's thesis has been both advanced and challenged in the decades since its publication, most directly in G. Maclean, D. Landry and J. P. Ward, (eds.), *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

has considered 'the Jew', either as cultural construct or as historical subject, beyond the realm of the city, the *shtetl* or the ghetto.[78] Whilst Zionism did much to re-establish an association in the popular imagination of the West between Jews and the rural landscape, the popular perception that 'the Jew' is the eponymous urban dweller still, for the most part, endures.[79]

Thus representations of the Jewish environment through the prism of 'the urban' and 'the rural' is a central theme of this thesis. Drawing upon the work of spatial theorists such as Henri Lefebvre and Barbara Mann, I explore how Jewish spaces from the *shtetl* to the suburb were 'produced' or constructed within the British cultural imagination throughout and beyond the *fin de siècle*.[80] I utilise space as an analytical category through which to view the Jewish immigrant, conceptualising the routes of migration as a perceptual journey as well as a physical one from one transitory space to another. Within that approach, however, I also remain sensitive to the implicit 'quality' of constructed space as distinctly gendered. That is to say, as one key theorist has crucially observed, 'the intersections of mutual influences of "geography" and "gender" are deep and multifarious.' Both have a role to play 'in the construction of the other'.[81] Within representations of the alien Jew, certain inter-related spatial and gender assumptions come into play which influence how that 'alien' space is thought about. As it became known that the typical Jewish home within the East London ghetto, for example, was a space championed and cherished by the male immigrants as much as it was by their wives – a significant departure from British nineteenth century notions of the home as an unequivocally female space – attitudes towards and representations of Jewish immigrant home life underwent sympathetic reconfiguration. Thus, a

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[78] Studies which have begun to venture beyond 'traditional' Jewish spaces include the special edition 'Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space', *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3, (Spring/Summer 2005); J. Brauch, A. Lipphardt and A. Nocke (eds.), *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, (Hants and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008) and D. Cesarani, T. Kushner and M. Shain, *Zakor V' Makor: Place and Displacement in Jewish History and Memory*, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008).
[79] A recent special edition of *Jewish History,* vol. 21, nos. 3-4, (2007), entitled 'Jewish Agrarianization', which grew out of the June 2005 conference 'To the Land!: 200 years of Jewish Agricultural Settlement', propounded its goal to be the reopening 'of academic discussion on the global dimensions of Jewish agricultural settlements' (p. 239). Although studies on early pioneers to *Eretz Israel* and on the Kibbutz movement have written about Jews within the rural environment, outside of the Israeli context few studies have taking up the challenge laid down by the journal.
[80] H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* trans. D. Nicholson-Smith, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); B. E. Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006).

[81] D. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 177.

failure to acknowledge the particular dynamics of, and interplay between, gender and space would be to overlook a fundamental and compelling component of spatial representation.

However, within the broader field of British Jewish studies, the significance of gender, as a crucial category of analysis has all too frequently been overlooked. Although attention has been paid to 'traditional' areas of female life in the Anglo-Jewish community such as the home, the family, and philanthropy, research which dares to push the boundaries of the female sphere outside of these conventional approaches, has been few and far between.[82] Yet perhaps an even greater oversight has been that which has failed to register the gender dimension of the Jewish male identity. The Jewish man, although often the central subject of study by default, has rarely been recognised as a gendered being. Cultural studies have gone some way towards correcting these omissions. Sander Gilman's seminal monograph *The Jew's Body* pointedly placed the Jewish male body at the centre of his analysis, arguing that it was the representation of the male Jew which 'lies at the very heart of Western Jew-hatred'.[83] Todd Presner has also contributed to the reconfiguration of the male Jew, illuminating the significance of Zionism's drive for a 'muscular Juadism' for sculpting a counter image of Jewish masculinity to that depicted within anti-Semitic discourse.[84] Whilst Gilman and Presner have done much to advance research into representations of Jewish male physicality, however, they knowingly marginalized images of the Jewish female. Where representations of the Jewish woman, as gendered cultural construct, *have* been noted they have 'been limited to masculinised representations of the Jewess and thus have assimilated her to the same set of concerns'.[85] Thus treatment of 'the Jewess', where it has occurred, has tended to

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[82]   For studies which explore gender and the immigrant experience in Britain see L. Gartner, 'Anglo-Jewry and the International Traffic in Prostitution 1885-1914', *Association of Jewish Studies Review*, vol. 7/8, (1982-3), pp. 129-78; E. J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982); L. Kuzmack, *Woman's Cause: The Jewish Woman's Movement in England and the United States, 1881-1933*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990); D. Englander, 'Stille Huppah Among Jewish Immigrants in Britain', *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 34, no. 2, (1992), pp. 85-109, as well as multiple publications by Rickie Burman, 'The Jewish Woman as Breadwinner: The Changing Value of Women's Work in a Manchester Immigrant Community', *Oral History*, vol. 10, (1982), pp. 27-39; 'Growing Up in Manchester Jewry: The Story of Clara Weigard', *Oral History*, vol. 12, no. 1, (1984), pp. 56-63; 'Jewish Women and the Household Economy in Manchester, 1890-1920', *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, (ed.) D. Cesarani, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell, 1990), pp. 55-78, and Lara Marks, *Working Wives and Working Mothers: a Comparative Study of Irish and East European Jewish Married Women's Work and Motherhood in East London, 1870-1914*, (London: PNL Press, 1990) and *Model Mothers*.
[83]   S. Gilman, *The Jew's Body*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 5.
[84]   T. S. Presner, *Muscular Judaism: The Jewish Body and the Politics of Regeneration*, (London: Routledge, 2007).
[85]   Valman, *The Jewess*, p. 3.

view her as an expression of anti-Semitism.[86] Nadia Valman's important monograph *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* has done much to address these lacunae, convincingly arguing that,

> in English culture of this period Jews were imagined as much in terms of desire and pity as fear and loathing. Rather than a denigrated masculine figure, the Jewess was often, in fact, an idealised representation of femininity. And it is the image of the beautiful or spirited Jewess, whose Judaism is not permanently inscribed on her body, that reveals most dramatically the ambiguous and dynamic character of responses to Jews in England.[87]

As Valman rightly observes, gender – a decidedly complex and elusive concept – shifts in meaning still further when filtered through the prism of race. Indeed it is this growing awareness of the constructionist, protean nature of the categories 'Jew', 'male', and 'female', and of the ambivalent, fluid nature of 'semitic discourse' itself, which has now begun to inform gendered analyses of Semitic representations.[88] These analyses, for the most part, however, have been confined to literary sources, rather than considering alternative cultural and socio-political products and artefacts, and how race and gender has functioned within them. Besides this neglect of the gendered quality of different genres of source material, little attention has been paid within Jewish studies, as elsewhere, to how the gendering of space and place is also altered by race. As Wendy Webster has noted with regard to Black and Asian images of home, 'the distinction between public and private is raced' and, as a concept, was constructed primarily for and in relation to middle-class, white femininity.[89] Nevertheless, it was a formulation which Britons readily, although often inaccurately, applied to 'Jewish' spaces. This thesis will look to explore this practice and to further decipher how gender and race operate in relation to each other by considering the interplay

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[86] Valman specifically references D. Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man*, (Berkley and London: University of California Press, 1997) for reproducing inaccurate and 'predictable narratives of the ubiquity and suppleness of anti-Semitic discourse', in *The Jewess,* p. 3, footnote 9.

[87] Valman, *The Jewess,* p. 3.

[88] For more considered treatment of the Jewess see A. Levine, 'A Jewess, More and/or Less', in M. Peskowitz and L. Levitt, (eds.), *Judaism Since Gender*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 149-57 and H. Erdman, *Staging the Jew: The Performance of an American Ethnicity, 1860-1920*, (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1997), chapter 2, cited in Valman, *The Jewess*, p. 3, footnote 8.

[89] W. Webster, *Imagining Home: Gender, 'Race' and National Identity, 1945-64*, (London: UCL Press, 1998), p. ix.

between these two discursive categories in two ways: initially through the study of genre and mass migration, and secondly through the concepts of space and place.

Gendered representations of the immigrant Jew and 'Jewess' in Britain across time, space and genre, or communicative mediums, lie at the very heart of this thesis, and, with the objective to further dismantle how gender and race behave in relation to each other, also underpin its organisational structure. It is this focus upon gender as well as the thesis' breadth of chronology, historiography and source material which makes this study's approach especially innovative and yet, as a history project, more difficult to define. Whilst the main body of material, for example, shall be drawn from the late Victorian and Edwardian period, the currency of the analyses beyond this timeframe shall also be acknowledged. The narratives of memoirs and personal testimony as well as contemporary impressions of the immigrant Jew recorded in literature, political testimony and print media shall extend the chronology of this thesis beyond the bounds of the historical into the realm of myth and memory – an extension which, given the cultural studies approach that underpins it, seems fitting. Similarly the focus upon the geographical progression of the immigrant Jew from *shtetl* to suburb, a progression which provides the main organisational structure for this study's second section, shall also, strictly speaking, take the chronology of this thesis beyond the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain will provide the main historical context throughout. This thesis, then, is organised into two sections. The first section deals with gendered representations of the immigrant Jew against the backdrop of the aliens debate in Britain, across the distinctive source genres of fiction, newspapers, and political testimony and debate. Whilst all of these genres have previously been utilised to varying degrees to trace the experiences of, and responses to Jewish immigrants in Britain at this time, few studies have been previously undertaken which explore the genre-specific nature of the representation constructed. Certainly whilst some within the field of literary studies have illuminated the very particular character of Semitic representations within literature during this period, they have typically been a little removed from the mainstream of history writing, less concerned with the interplay between the seemingly disparate arenas of culture and politics. This relational perspective, however, opens up a whole new way of considering the aliens question by viewing the political through the lens of the socio-cultural. What is more, it also facilitates a necessary comparative angle, which holds up for scrutiny literary images of the alien Jew, for

example, against those constructed within a markedly different yet nevertheless equally dynamic arena. This approach has, until now, been wholly lacking. Yet by contemplating the novelist's view of the aliens debate against those constructed by other communicative mediums, those qualities particular to the literary image of the alien would be thrown into greater relief, whilst those features held in common would become even more apparent. It is an approach will shall not only achieve greater clarity and insight into the particular dynamics of genre or source, and how they function in relation to gender, but will, by extension, also facilitate a 'total history'. Thus whilst the analyses within each of these three chapters shall be undertaken with the distinctive qualities of genre in mind, the discussion shall also draw out common representational themes and approaches which endure across genre, thus traversing the boundaries between culture, politics and society.

This study, therefore, shall open with three chapters which trace representations of the alien Jew through the prism of genre. The first of these chapters, which considers the evolution of press treatment of the immigrant Jew, sets the scene for what would become a protracted and highly-charged engagement with the aliens question by British political and cultural circles across the *fin de siècle* and beyond. I argue that more than any other medium, print media representations of the immigrant Jew were incredibly influential – by dint of the sheer number of people they reached, newspapers communicated to and 'spoke for' the nation. However, that influence did not initially result in the evolution of one single narrative regarding the alien Jew, but many. The disparate political agendas of different sections of the press meant that responses were, in the early years of the aliens question, far from uniform. However, with the arrival of the popular press in the final years of the nineteenth century, together with the growing comprehension that Jewish persecution abroad could actually lead to an immigrant crisis in Britain, press opinion began to transgress the boundaries between Conservatism and Liberalism, the 'intellectual' reader and the working classes, men and women, the national, regional and local. What is more, it was that wide reach which enabled the press to establish a dominant approach to the alien Jew which would also materialise within both fiction and political testimony of this period. As the news of persecution turned to alarm at the thought of an impeding immigration crisis, the salience of an imperialist discourse to media representations of the Jewish immigrant transformed the media's incarnation of the alien Jew from a piteous victim of prejudice and

atrocity to a sensationalised near-hate figure. Although the Anglo-Jewish press attempted to regulate and moderate such images, they frequently found themselves shackled by their own efforts to prove their loyalty to the nation and its ideals. Thus the idea that Jewish immigrants posed a threat to the status quo became a firm and abiding press narrative.

Chapter two continues to trace the tropes of crisis and incursion through the figure of the immigrant Jew, shifting the perspective from the press to politics. Taking the reports of committees and the Royal Commission of 1903 convened to discuss the aliens question and the many related issues, together with the corresponding parliamentary debates across the *fin de siècle* period, this chapter reads the treatment of the immigrant Jew as an expression of a collective anxiety about the health of the self, nation and empire. I argue that the discourse of imperialism, used so successfully to conceptualise the aliens' difference by the press, once again featured heavily as a representative tool for exploring the immigrant question; a discourse for articulating difference which transcended class and gender. However, unlike the press and novels of the era, treatment of the alien Jew within political debates and commission reports was not, for the most part, intended for widespread public consumption. Although members of the general public were asked to give testimony to the various committees and commissions, the results of which was reported by the national press, the primary audience for this testimony were politicians and the primary issue at stake was a legislative one. That is not to say that the rhetoric used in the political arena was devoid of either sensation or sentiment – far from it – but that participants must have been only too aware that with the opportunity to speak came great power and responsibility. Yet that was a privilege only granted to the few. Indeed, the political arena was a largely exclusive and predominantly masculine environment – a dynamic which was certainly reflected in the rhetoric of the era. Hence images of 'the Jew' within these political documents were distinctly gendered, even within the framework of the seemingly unifying rhetoric of imperialism. Thus as a strategy for categorising the alien Jew, the language and images of empire repeatedly surfaced as a more explicitly masculine narrative. In contrast the figure of 'the Jewess', a powerful icon for Jewishness within newspapers as well as literary culture, was persistently marginalized, barely registering at all to the male politician as worthy of comment or, if at all, only as a 'model mother' or wicked prostitute.

The last of these chapters, which deals with literary representations, draws upon a rich heritage of academic treatment of 'the Jew' in literary culture. As the previous pages of this introduction make clear, the wealth of bold and arresting Jewish characters in nineteenth century novels in particular, from Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819) to George Du Maurier's *Trilby* (1894), have made for rich analytical pickings. However, it has been the work of cultural theorists such as Bryan Cheyette, who stressed the historicist character and vacillating rather than polemical nature of Semitic representations, which has provided the greatest influence for my exploration into literature, and, indeed, for the thesis as a whole. Chapter three, which considers the figure of the alien Jew and 'Jewess' literally and allegorically in Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* (1892); Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897); and Julia Frankau's *Pigs in Clover* (1903), shall construct its analysis within this theoretical framework. These three novels, I argue, are not only united by their shared subject matter but also by the encroachment of autobiographical anxieties into how that subject matter is treated. That is to say, each of the three authors allow their own concerns about their perceived 'otherness' to the racial or sexual mainstream, whether consciously acknowledged or otherwise, to infiltrate their fictional representations of the Jewish immigrant. Each of these novels are thus intimate portraits not only of the alien Jew but also of the hinterlives of the authors themselves. Indeed when read against the first two chapters, what becomes clear is that it is the dynamics of fiction itself – as a humanising medium – which allows this far more sensitive reading of the alien Jew to surface. It is a reading which is neither visible nor possible for either press or political narratives, but is one which, in the case of Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* in particular, still carried enough weight to temporarily temper the calls for anti-immigrant legislation.

The second section, an exploration of Jewish alien spatiality, flows from, and is enabled by the approaches and conclusions of the first section. The conceptualisation of the *fin de siècle* immigrant Jew as a vehicle through which personal, collective and national identity was explored and constructed, remains the central supposition from which the analysis extends. Thus the chronological and topical focus is maintained. So too is the focus upon gender as a category for analysis, used now to assess the concepts of race, place and space. Accordingly, the primary discursive strategies for representing 'the Jew' – imperialism, degeneration, gender anxieties, the overarching theme of inclusion and exclusion – retain their currency, interweaving and interlacing the discussion from the opening pages of this thesis to its closing sentence.

Certainly the significance of space as well as time and genre, as a contextualising factor and 'variable' to Semitic representations in Britain, was acutely obvious from the earliest stages of research. It became clear that 'the Jew', as a signifier of difference, existed in space as well as time. Put more simply, representations of the alien Jew persistently situated 'the Jew' in very definite locations, constructing narratives of that 'other' which played into existing and highly charged British spatial discourses. The tireless fascination with 'the Jew' in London's East End of the late nineteenth century – a fascination which translated urban crises through the spectre of immigration – is a case in point. Certainly, the consistency of London as backdrop to the multiple images of the immigrant Jew throughout fiction, political debates, newspaper articles and, as will be seen throughout this section, in memoirs also, makes the acknowledgement of the spatial dimension of those images, to my mind, imperative. Yet other locations also featured, I began to notice, albeit more subtly, within cultural and political narratives of 'the Jew'. The Russian Pale of Settlement in particular prefigured the East End of London, as a distinctly 'Jewish' space, indeed as a Jewish habitat, in which the British observer could 'place' or situate the alien Jew. However, the influence of that landscape as a contextualising backdrop and as a cultural-geographic concept against which perceptions of the alien Jew were formed, has rarely been recognised. Thus the thematic focus of the second section has been designed with the express intention of providing greater depth to the analyses of the first section.

Yet this journey through Jewish space and place shall also push readings of 'the Jew' as a social construction beyond the more familiar terrain traversed in discussions of representation and genre, to consider questions of ethnicity, spatiality and gender. Hence whilst this exploration into 'Jewish' territories draws upon an existing body of literature which demarcated London's East End as alien space encoded through imperial rhetoric as a 'foreign colony' at the heart of the empire, it also strives to think beyond this solitary spatial conceptualisation. Certainly whilst this literature has provided a useful basis for considering representations of the immigrant habitat, it has also tended to reproduce the *fin de siècle* preoccupation with London as an 'urban jungle' and the immigrant Jew as a personification of this spatial anarchy and decay. A central objective of this thesis is, thus, whilst not overlooking this established scholarship, to also view 'the Jew' outside of 'the city'.

However the disparate milieus which I explore are not infeasible immigrant spaces. Rather the organisation of this section tracks the typical geographical progression of the immigrant Jew from the small towns and villages of western and southern Russia, Galicia and Poland, through the journey overland and by sea to settlement in British cities, and then, with the assistance of autobiographies and memoirs as well as the regional press, the steady upward and outward mobility to the provinces and the urban peripheries. I explore how these Jewish spaces as discursive constructs, yet distinctive in location and character, ultimately flow into one another, analytical themes and representations ebbing from one 'Jewish' site into the next. Thus spatial representations of so-called 'Jewish' territories do not stand alone without context, but rather are explained by the perspectives which precede and succeed them. Yet this sequential structure, from *shtetl* to suburb, is not meant to imply a similarly straightforward experiential narrative of hostility to acceptance, immigration to assimilation. Rather by adopting this approach, I hope to problematise this linear perspective by demonstrating that regardless of genre, chronology or location, representations of the alien Jew in Britain offer a crucial insight into the ever-fluctuating character of Britishness.

Literature, Media and Testimony:
Cultural Encounters with the Alien Jew

<u>Introduction</u>

Across the *fin de siècle* the image of the alien Jew featured, at times ubiquitously, in both the cultural and political arenas of British life. In the first instance it was the British and Anglo-Jewish press that took a leading role in forging that image, drawing attention to the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe, diligently disseminating information as to their plight to a mass audience as well as rallying material support for the long-suffering community. Yet as the realisation of an association between the events in the Russian empire and the prospect of a refugee crisis dawned, the 'Jewish question' became a matter not only for the press and its 'News from Abroad' section, but was reformulated into a pressing political issue of national importance. From 1888-1890, as one parliamentary select committee after another drew attention to the negative implications of allowing the Jewish immigrant community in Britain to grow unabated,[90] agitation for restrictive legislation grew, transforming the alien Jew from a pitiable, yet little-known figure on the margins of social consciousness to a menacing, threatening and wholly disruptive force ripe for treatment within the pages of a novel.

In this way then, the alien Jew not only featured passively in each of these cultural-political domains as a topical subject matter worthy of attention, but was actively constructed by these communicative mediums in ways which reflected each of their particular agendas and dynamics. Thus treatment of the alien Jew within parliamentary debates, for example, was markedly different to the images of the immigrant community which featured in novels from the period – despite the shared socio-political context in which both of those representations were produced. Semitic discourse generated within the arena of politics was restricted, in the first place, by a commitment to achieving a legislative solution to the aliens question whereas authors in their approach to the alien Jew were limited only by the bounds of their own imagination.

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[90] I am referring to in particular to the *Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration* appointed in February 1888 and the *Lords Select Committee on the Sweating System* which was also appointed in 1888, submitting its final report in 1890.

However despite these quite strikingly different approaches to the alien Jew, no previous study has considered separately and yet comparatively each of the three main forms of cultural-political output that generated Semitic representations throughout the entirety of the aliens debate. Whilst both literary and print media treatment of the immigrant Jewish community in Britain have by no means been neglected from an academic perspective, and indeed surveys of the aliens debate within politics of the *fin de siècle* have positively abounded, few studies have pointedly paid attention to how the particular characteristics and agendas of each of these communicative mediums have shaped the representations which they produced.[91] Where that has occurred, namely in the field of literary studies with the pioneering work of Bryan Cheyette, and to a lesser extent within newspaper history, those studies have been conducted by specialists with little or no attention given to either other source material or to the employment of a comparative approach. But even these examples are few and far between. Academic treatment has more typically taken these three types of sources together in the hope of building a more complete historical picture.[92] Certainly many of those studies have, to a great extent, been successful, and yet by integrating rather than differentiating each of the sources, one type of reading – which would take account of these unique dynamics – is lost. This first section of the thesis will hope to address this lacuna,

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[91] For studies on the alien Jew in literature see B. Cheyette, 'The Other Self: Anglo-Jewish Fiction and the Representation of Jews in England, 1875-1905', in D. Cesarani (ed.), *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), pp. 97-111; *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English literature and society: Racial Representations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) and N. Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth Century British Literary Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Academic surveys which have approached how the press represented and responded to the Jewish immigrant community in Britain are rarer and typically focus primarily upon the Jewish press, but as a starting point consult D. Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); G. Smart, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration: The 'Alien' in Popular Print and Society, 1881-1906', Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of Southampton, 2008), and, for a more general audience see J. Simpson, 'Aliens', *Unreliable Sources: How the Twentieth Century was Reported*, (London: Macmillan, 2010), pp. 47-63. For a comparable study of the American case see *Forward: The Jewish Daily Forward (Forverts) Newspaper: Immigrants, Socialism, and Jewish Politics in New York, 1890-1917*, (Brighton: Sussex Academic, 2009). Some of the key texts which have addressed the aliens debate within British politics include J. Garrard, *The English and Immigration, 1880-1910*, (London: OUP for the Institute of Race Relations, 1971); B. Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905*, (London: Heinemann Education, 1972); D. Feldman, 'The Importance of Being English: Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England', in D. Feldman and G. Stedman Jones (eds.), *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 56-84; I. Finestein, 'Jewish Immigration in British Party Politics in the 1890s' in I. Finestein, *Jewish Society in Victorian England: Collected Essays*, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1993), pp. 202-226 and more recently L. Trubowitz, 'Acting like an Alien: 'Civil' Antisemitism, the Rhetoricized Jew, and Early Twentieth-Century British Immigration Law', in E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman (eds.), *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 65-79.
[92] See, for example, L. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870- 1914*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1960); Gainer, *The Alien Invasion* and D. Feldman, 'Jews in London, 1880-1914', in R. Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, vol. 1, (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 207-229.

and thus provide fresh perspectives on British responses to alien Jews to that offered by earlier studies.

Perhaps this neglect of the differentiated and comparative approach to representations of the alien Jew which I am advocating here might be accounted for by the current lack of theoretical writings within the discipline of history that could provide a crucial foundation for a study of this type. There simply is no body of research – so far – which promotes this type of approach to the writing of history. Although much has been published to advise the budding historian about the numerous types of source material available to them and how best they might be approached, there is nothing which encourages the comparative treatment of primary material as a means to reach a more naunced understanding of a particular historical period or subject.[93] The closest literature upon which a study of this type might draw is genre theory. That field has developed a way of approaching and analysing the many different categories of cultural output, offering definitions of the particular dynamics of a genre, as well as debating how that genre came into being and its relationship with other genres.[94]

Certainly there are many modes of thinking within genre theory which are helpful to a historian interested in the genre-esque quality of the primary source. For example, whilst genre theorists have agreed that '[c]onventional definitions of genres tend to be based on the notion that they constitute particular conventions of content [...] and/or form', there is also widespread consensus that no one genre is ever fixed in its definition or meaning but is constantly subject to change and hybridisation.[95] This too is true of the primary source which, although loosely definable by a typical set of characteristics or conventions, will be both differently produced and

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[93] J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*: *Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, (London: Longman, 1984); M. Abbott, 'Sources and Resources' in M. Abbott (ed.), *History Skills*, (London: Routledge, 1996); J. H. Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); A. Marwick, *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

[94] See, for example, N. Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); A. Fowler, 'Genre' in E. Barnouw (ed.), *International Encyclopaedia of Communication*, vol. 2, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 215-7; K. Wales, *A Dictionary of Stylistics,* (London: Longman, 1989) and R. Stam, *Film Theory*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

[95] D. Chandler, 'An Introduction to Genre Theory', http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/intgenre/intgenre1.html. See also C. Gledhill, 'Genre' in P. Cook (ed.), *The Cinema Book*, 3rd edn., (London: British Film Institute, 2007), pp. 252-259 and D. Bordwell, *Making Meaning: Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989). On the use of genre theory within history see M. Chamberlain and P. Thompson (eds.), *Narrative and Genre: Contexts and Types of Communication*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) which considers oral history and autobiography as genre.

differently understood across time and space. This is exemplified most strikingly by the changes in content, form, agenda and readership which the British newspaper has undergone and continues to undergo up to the present day. As I discuss in greater length in the first chapter of this section, in the early years of the Victorian period, the press assumed the form of an educating medium and government regulator, predominantly catering to an intellectual male elite. However across the *fin de siècle*, in a few short decades, the newspaper had transformed from a medium which strove to educate its readers to one which claimed, instead, to represent them. The content and readership of newspapers also underwent significant change with the birth of the popular press – newspapers which prioritised stories of 'human interest' told in a sensationalist style, aimed at women and the working class. The 'intellectual' press still existed but now it shared the market with a wholly new type of newspaper. Thus by the early twentieth century the press, as a communicative medium, had itself evolved numerous 'sub-genres' which had grown from and yet deviated from earlier notions of what constituted 'the newspaper'. In this way then, the press had both changed and hybridised – an evolution and a genre fluidity of which the historian must be aware if they are to make effective use of newspapers as a historical source.

Genre theory is also helpful for providing the foundations through which the relationship between genre and gender might be considered. Just as genre is a means of imposing classification upon cultural products so too is gender a core organisational tool. Genre and gender then, as analytical categories, would seem to be a natural partnership – a partnership which also holds true for an examination of each of these three primary sources. As these three chapters will demonstrate, gender operated persistently, although often in subtle ways, as a strategy for exploring and exemplifying Jewish difference across the *fin de siècle* throughout literature and the press, as well as within political debates and testimony. Images of the Jewish man and the Jewish woman were typically constructed in contrast to (although occasionally in line with) essentialised and idealised notions of 'British' masculinity and femininity. Gender representations and motifs thus provided a narrative which was both easily usable (for the author) as well as readily comprehensible (to the reader or audience). Yet as Christine Gledhill has pointed out, not only is it important to explore how 'gender [is] constructed in representation' but also to ask 'how [...] gender impact[s]

on the cultural forms that do the constructing'.[96] This is a question which has rarely been asked by historians even though gender studies has, by now, become firmly embedded within the discipline.

Certainly gender functioned differently as a shaping force for each of these source genres. Novels and popular newspapers, for example, would have been more readily identified as women's cultural space – although not exclusively so – and constructed their representations to appeal to that audience accordingly. In contrast, politics was unequivocally a male domain, with men making up the vast majority of those providing testimony to the committees and commission, or participating in the debates over the aliens question. Indeed the dominance of the masculine voice not only determined who were the authors of the representations but also dictated who were to be their subject. As I argue in chapter two, the figure of the male Jew featured almost exclusively within discussions on the aliens question which took place within the arena of politics with the resultant virtual exclusion of the Jewish woman. She was simply considered of little importance to the Britain male commentator because her perceived lack of 'masculine' qualities such as virility, territoriality and cunning rendered her 'non-threatening'. Rather it was the male alien Jew who was seen to embody these characteristics and thus was the main point of discussion and concern for the male-dominated arena of politics.

That said, genre theory can only assist with this type of investigation up to a point. Novels, newspapers and political testimony and debate are not classes or categories relating to and derived from one particular artistic endeavour. Indeed each of these three mediums might well be more accurately definable by their differences from one another than comparable by the components they share. This is certainly the case when one considers the particular audiences that these three mediums attracted and the very different expectations that each of those audience types would have brought to bear. Whilst, for example, the primary agenda for the reader of a novel is to be entertained, someone keeping pace with the witness testimony given to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration would, one assumes, be motivated by a desire to remain informed or, perhaps, to be vindicated in their opinion. Thus this study is concerned with the product or the text itself, and how the alien Jew is represented within it. Yet the intended audience, the operation of gender dynamics, and the reception of those representations by that audience is nevertheless an important

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[96] C. Gledhill, 'Genre and Gender: The Case of Soap Opera', in S. Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, (London: sage Publications, 1997), pp. 337-386, (p. 345).

context. Those factors reveal points of differentiation between the three mediums which enables a more sensitive reading of the aliens debate to be made.

This section has been organised to reflect how representations of the alien Jew at the *fin de siècle* took root and evolved within key British cultural-political arenas of the era. From the early attention given to the persecution of Eastern European Jewry by the British and Anglo-Jewish press, to the prolonged and increasingly embittered deliberation of the aliens question within politics, and then finally climaxing in the compelling literary treatment of Jews, immigrants and others which took hold around the turn-of-the-century, the image of the alien Jew infiltrated the cultural imagination of the individual and of the nation. Certainly this was by no means a straightforward linear process – both time and narratives overlapped and interlaced – and yet by allowing this organic structure to underpin this section, the development and diversification of a distinct Semitic discourse will, it is hoped, be discernable. Neither are the choices of primary source genres contrived. The press, politics and the world of literature were *the* main forums in which the aliens question was debates. Not only this, however, but each of these forms were, in their own ways, responsible for constructing, reshaping and distributing images of the immigrant Jew which both illustrated and enlivened the debate as well as driving it forward.

Yet those three communicative mediums did not operate in isolation but borrowed strategies for forging representations from each other as well as replicating certain of the representations outright. Hence within press treatment of the foreign Jew, as fears of an alien crisis reached its height, newspapers began to appropriate (as well as no doubt inform) invasion fantasy narratives from recently published novels such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* to furnish their articles on the arrival of Jews from Eastern Europe with a greater resonance and power. So too did fiction reflect upon and challenge negative perceptions of the alien Jew – such as that of 'the sweater' humanised so convincingly by Israel Zangwill in his *Children of the Ghetto* – which had been demonised so thoroughly within political rhetoric. Thus in this way then, each of these genres communicated by way of the written and spoken word not only with an audience but also with each other. It is with the intention of discerning that dialogue as well as disentangling each of these genres' narratives from the whole, that my agenda for this section can be best understood.

Chapter One

Victims and Villains:
Britain, the alien Jew and the Press

In May 1904, a short article in the *Times*, entitled 'Jewish Schools and Empire Day', informed its readership of the participation of school children from Spitalfields, East London – 'mostly of foreign Jewish parentage'– in that most patriotic of days' celebrations.

> The proceedings began at 2 o'clock, and a long and varied programme included an explanation of the composition and history of the Union Jack, and the children were called upon to make a drawing of the British national flag. Lessons on the Colonies, on the British Empire, and on patriotism were given, and "The Flag of Britain" was sung.[97]

Such a full programme, the article seemed to imply, would make these young Jews good little English children, and imperialists to boot, before the day was out. The spectre of Britain's imperial glory could, the newspaper assured its readership, overcome all other 'unsuitable' or 'threatening' racial instincts which these children may have been exposed to and disposed to. As the second generation, successful assimilation might just be achievable.

Such confidence, however, rarely characterised the response of the British press to the whole of the immigrant Jewish community, especially those who were 'foreign-born'. Instead, during the protracted period across the *fin de siècle* in which Eastern European Jewry were the subject of considerable media attention, both as a persecuted minority on the continent and as an immigrant presence in Britain, national and metropolitan newspapers were, at best, sympathetically ambivalent, and, at worst, wholeheartedly hostile. Press rhetoric persistently delineated their subject matter as 'Jews', 'immigrants' and 'aliens' – a people apart – rather than regarding them as prospective citizens or as 'deserving' refugees. Even where a more liberal,

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[97] 'Jewish Schools and Empire Day', *Times,* 26 May 1904, p. 4.

compassionate view was espoused, especially throughout the period in which atrocities against Jews in Eastern Europe were first reported, it rarely contained within it an unconditional offer of inclusion to 'Britishness'. Even these young schoolchildren featured in the *Times* article – implicitly framed as the community's 'only hope' for assimilation – were reminded by their headmaster that the 'advantage' of living in England 'had its duties and responsibilities', and urged them to 'live honestly and industriously, and, if occasion ever demanded it, to fight and die for the flag which was the symbol of their freedom'.[98]

Certainly the 'honour' of fulfilling such a 'contractual obligation' seemed to hold the promise of admittance into national life, and yet, as this chapter will argue, the majority of the British press repeatedly failed to move beyond an uncompromising and clearly gendered perception of the alien Jew as outsider, as distinctive, as 'unBritish'. What is more, as the association between persecution and migration was challenged, the alien Jew was strikingly reconfigured from an implicitly feminised media figure of pity to a virile, menacing force with territorializing agency. That response to 'the Jew', whether propounded by the Conservative, Liberal, or even the Anglo-Jewish press, employed a common, cultural language through which to explore, categorise and denigrate Jewish 'difference' and the Jewish presence; the ideology of imperialism. That ideology, although not strictly relevant to Eastern European Jews as neither western racial 'equals' nor eastern imperial subjects, nevertheless provided a means through which the British press, well trained in the language of empire, could begin to categorise the awkward newcomers. In fact, in some instances that rhetoric was actually employed to heighten and sensationalise the immigrant threat, framing their arrival as an invasion of catastrophic proportions.

The centricity of an imperialist discourse to media representations of the Jewish immigrant mimics a theme which, as I shall argue in the following chapters, is evident within both fiction and political testimony of this period. That is to say, an imperial mentality as well as a language which took reference from the empire to describe 'difference' featured consistently in press treatment of the alien Jew as it would do also in other communicative mediums of the era. However, the newspapers' responses were distinctive from the rhetoric of those other genres by dint of the sheer

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[98] 'Jewish Schools and Empire Day' p. 4.

number of people they reached. Moreover, with the arrival of the popular press at the turn of the century, newspapers started to break through all boundaries of class and gender, beginning to access and address more typically marginalized groups such as the working classes and women, as no other narrative form had done before. Thus during the course of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, 'the daily press became an increasingly central component of British culture' for vast swaths of the British populous, 'as it gained greater political independence and social legitimacy'.[99]

Indeed that one gain, of political independence, prompted the second gain by carving out an image of the Victorian press as 'the voice of the people' speaking up against alleged government errors and excesses. Privileged with such a task it was not long before the press could also claim the title of 'guardians of the tradition of Liberalism' itself. As Alan Lee has noted:

> Perhaps only the steam railway rivalled the newspaper press in the Victorian estimation of the progress of civilisation. Journalists in particular never tired of extolling the wonders of their industry, both in their journals and in multi-volumed histories of their profession. Liberty, progress, knowledge and even salvation were virtues commonly attributed to the newspaper.[100]

Thus by the mid nineteenth century the press had assumed the role of a 'civilising' and 'educating' medium within the popular imagination. Moreover, the strength of that public role lay in its quasi-democratic approach. As media theorist Mark Hampton has written, 'the press was generally seen as a forum that would ensure the free discussion of ideas so that a consensus would develop around the "truth" or the "common good"'.[101]

Yet as the demand lessened for a radical style of journalism (a style which had typified the early nineteenth century press), and the enticements of greater commercialisation grew, the

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[99] G. Smart, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration: The 'Alien' in Popular Print and Society, 1881-1906', Unpublished PhD Thesis (University of Southampton, 2008), p. 15.
[100] A.J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914,* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), p. 21.
[101] M. Hampton, 'Understanding Media: Theories of the Press in Britain, 1850-1914', *Media, Culture and Society,* vol. 23, (2001), pp. 231-231, (p. 251).

educational ideal increasingly came under threat. 'After the 1880s', observes Hampton, 'the predominant understanding of the press was as a "representative" medium; that is, rather than "educating" the people, the press would "represent" them'.[102] So powerful was the lucrative lure of mass-circulation, and, significantly, the substantial role that advertisers played in facilitating it, that the newspaper industry increasingly found itself bound by the demands of its commercial sponsors to attract the 'right kind' of reader. Yet that reader was no longer invited to engage in discussion as a means to reach the 'truth' but was rather relegated to a position of passivity and silence as the newspaper assumed the role of sole spokesperson.

This reordering of the relationship between the press and its readership in favour of a patriarchal rapport was further accentuated by the growth of the popular press in the late nineteenth century. As Hampton has observed, 'commentators on the press often cast the "new journalism" as a blurring of the distinction between the public (masculine) and private (feminine) spheres'. Thus 'according to both critics and defenders' of the 'new journalism' 'topics that had recently been regarded as "private" or "domestic" became the subject of news and comment'.[103] Moreover this apparent 'feminisation' of the press, with the advent of 'human-interest' stories and fashion pages in favour of political commentary, was seen to possess a class dimension. Not only was this new, sensationalist style of journalism specifically aimed at the working classes, but, in the eyes of its critics, it was, primarily, perceived to have been shaped by a typically working class (un)intellectualism. Particularly scathing criticism of the 'new journalism', for example, appeared in the 1903 memoir of Chartist and educational reformer William Edwin Adams:

> [...] since our children have been taught to read without being taught to think, and since everybody can read, whether able to think or not, the general quality of popular reading has distinctly deteriorated. Newspapers find it necessary to play to the groundlings and the gallery, pandering to the lowest tastes because the lowest tastes pervade the biggest multitudes. And so vulgar sensationalism has taken the place of sober earnestness. Instead

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[102] Hampton, 'Understanding Media', p. 215.
[103] Ibid., p. 227.

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of being the instructors to the people, many of our newspapers have become mere ministers to the passions of the people.[104]

Thus by the close of the nineteenth century an explicit critique and snobbery, underpinned with class and gender prejudices, had developed towards the popular press within the upper echelons of society.

Certainly the naïve observer would be forgiven for assuming that the prevalence of such an attitude would render the positions and approaches of these two types of newspapers – the 'tabloid' and the 'broadsheet' – distinctive, even oppositional. Yet discussions of the immigrant Jew within both the popular press and the 'intellectual' press during the years in which the aliens question prevailed were more often characterised by the commonality of the representations than typified by any singularity of perspective. Unlike few other issues of the period, the aliens question provoked a protracted and impassioned response from all sectors of the press not only because it was an issue of perceived national (and, in the Anglo-Jewish case, communal) importance but because it engaged the entire nation in the self-gratifying project of identity reaffirmation. The figure of the male immigrant Jew in particular was repeatedly imagined and constructed within the pages of the British papers as different, as alien 'other', as everything the 'Englishman', as individual and as nation, was not. What is more, the alien Jew – by assuming the position of the 'other' – even served (at least within the press imagination) to vindicate Britons from the less salubrious aspects of imperial practice. To this end newspaper representations tapped into contemporary concerns regarding the fragility of self, nation and empire to legitimise their preoccupation with the immigrant Jew. The popular press outdid the 'intellectual' press in their fascination with the alien only by dint of the polemics of their sensationalist style.

This chapter explores how British press treatment of the alien Jew evolved from the earliest reportage of violence and persecution against Jews in Eastern Europe from 1881, to news of their journeys to and arrival at Britain's ports, and finally to the establishment of an immigrant community in the centre of the London metropolis and at the heart of Britain's empire. A comprehensive survey of all the available material in this area is far too ambitious for one chapter

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[104] W. Adams, *Memoirs of a Social Atom,* vol. 2, (London: Hutchinson, 1903), p. 584.

alone. That type of undertaking can be done, and has been done elsewhere.[105] What is more, a quantitative approach to the press treatment of the aliens issue, although valid within a certain context, would not be appropriate for a study which proposes to write a cultural history of the topic. An extensive survey of the material would impede the emergence of a more subtle analytical narrative, which is attentive not to the quantity of press articles and editorial on the subject, but instead to tracing the implicit socio-cultural discourses which weave their way throughout a small selection of newspapers. Consequently this chapter will not strive to detail a complete history of the alien Jew and the press, and hence does not look to draw comprehensive but rather only suggestive conclusions. Instead it will take a qualitative approach to the material. Preference has been given to the leading national and metropolitan newspapers, from both the 'intellectual' and 'popular' sectors of the industry, as the oracles most widely read and thus most indicative of press attitudes towards the aliens question at the *fin de siècle*. All of the papers follow a mainstream political outlook, either broadly Conservative or Liberal, and thus could be taken as representative of the majority of social attitudes at that time. However, the analysis shall not be limited only to these mainstream newspapers but shall also engage with the Anglo-Jewish perspective by incorporating a discussion of the two leading Anglo-Jewish newspapers of the era; the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish World.*

Feminising the Jew: The Alien in Eastern Europe

The first reports of violence against Jews in Eastern Europe, in the wake of the assassination of Tsar Alexander II on 13 March 1881, reached Britain at the end of April of that same year. Foreign correspondents alerted the world's press to rioting against the Jewish population of Elizabethgrad in southern Russia – acts which the London-based, Conservative daily *Morning Post*, promptly followed by the Anglo-Jewish newspaper the *Jewish World*, were quick to attribute to the 'superstition of the peasantry' towards their Jewish neighbours.[106]

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[105] Smart, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration'.
[106] 'Anti-Jewish Outbreaks', *Morning Post*, 30 April 1881, p. 5; 'Anti-Jewish Riots in Russia', *Jewish World*, 6 May 1881, p. 2.

Although not all sections of the British press were immediately convinced by these early reports of the severity of the violence perpetrated against Eastern European Jewry,[107] the events at Elizabethgrad as well as those which occurred in the coming months and years, did at least operate to confirm British attitudes towards Russia as a 'backward' and less 'civilised' nation. 'Russia is a vast congeries of puzzles and paradoxes', insisted the *Daily Telegraph* in July 1881. It is 'a country seemingly governed by impulse rather than by reason, fertile alike in surprises and disappointments, sensational achievements and commonplace shortcomings'.[108] This conviction of Russia's incongruities and 'inferiority' had a long history. As Larry Wolff has persuasively shown, 'the idea of Eastern Europe was entangled with evolving Orientalism, for [...] Philosophic Geography casually excluded Eastern Europe from Europe, implicitly shifting it into Asia'.[109] During the Enlightenment, Wolff suggests, Western Europe and Eastern Europe were invented as 'complementary concepts, defining each other by opposition and adjacency'.[110] By the late-nineteenth century that concept had aligned itself with an orientalist mentality which conceived of East (Europe) and West (Europe) in terms of inferiority and superiority respectively. The West constructed Eastern Europe as barbarous and uncivilised. However, unlike the perception of the orient, the Enlightenment also allowed that Eastern Europe possessed the potential for 'an emergence from barbarism',[111] and thus the potential to transgress the divide between East and West. Wolff defines this conceptual ambiguity as 'demi-Orientalization'.[112]

However, with the reported outbreak of violence in Russia in the spring of 1881 all notions of Eastern Europe's civilising potential were largely destroyed.[113] So great was the moral indignation stirred up in favour of those suffering under persecution and pogroms that the Conservative *Standard* (known for the high quality of its foreign reports), just days after the initial reports of violence reached British ears, likened Russia's behaviour to that of 'Western' Europe during the Dark Ages:

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[107] The *Daily Chronicle*, for example, suggested that the reports were 'no doubt exaggerated'. See 'The Anti-Jewish Crusade: Rumoured Massacre of 500 Families in Russia, *Daily Chronicle*, 2 May 1881, p. 5.
[108] 'Untitled Editorial', *Daily Telegraph*, 30 July 1881, p. 5.
[109] L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilisation on the Mind of the Enlightenment,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), p 7.
[110] Ibid., p. 5.
[111] Ibid., p. 11.
[112] Ibid., p. 7.
[113] Greg Smart makes this point in his thesis, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration', p. 36.

The belief that Christian blood is indispensable to the Jews for the due performance of their religious rites is as firmly rooted now in the minds of the Russian mujik as ever it was amongst the Western nations in the darkest of the dark ages.[114]

The *Jewish Chronicle* also took up the cry against Russia's violent conduct to its Jews lamenting that, 'to the uncivilised mind, to be a stranger is sufficient to deserve dislike, and the Russian government persistently treats its Jews as strangers'.[115] However, despite this display of sympathy for their Eastern European brethren, the *Jewish Chronicle* could not entirely divorce itself from the notion that Jews from the East, although perhaps not strangers, were, at the very least, strange. 'To anyone acquainted with the rather voluminous literature of the Russian Jews', mused the paper in June 1881, 'their attachment to traditional Talmudism appears to be the mainstay of existence and their opposition to all modern ideas of the most violent of character'.[116] It was a response to the plight of their fellow Jews clearly tinged with ambivalence which, whilst expressing sympathy for their current troubles, nevertheless implicitly laid the blame for the persistence of prejudice at the door of Eastern European Jewry themselves.[117] Such an obvious ambivalence, provoked by a concern with, and distaste for, the 'incivility' of Eastern European Jewry, seemed to echo the strains of an orientalist approach to 'difference'. The plethora of articles and editorials published in the pages of the *Jewish Chronicle* from the earliest days of the reported persecution indulged rhetoric which firmly placed the Jews of Eastern Europe as inferior to their Western European brethren. In their lifestyle, outlook, and their relationship with their 'host' nation, concluded the paper, they were to be pitied. Although the *Jewish World* was a little less adamant in its delineation of 'difference', its Special Correspondent, commissioned in the summer of 1881 to report on the deteriorating situation in Russia, nevertheless doubted that 'an English Jew' would ever be able to imagine the scenes of Jewish life which confronted him in Eastern Europe.[118] Thus the distinction between these two communities – between 'Eastern' and 'Western' Jewry – was not only conceived

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[114]   'Riots in the south of Russia', *Standard,* 2 May 1881, p. 5.
[115]   'The Jews and the Nations', *Jewish Chronicle,* 10 June 1881, pp. 9-11.
[116]   Ibid.
[117]   David Cesarani also makes this observation in his *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 70-82.
[118]   'The Russo-Jewish Question', *Jewish World*, 1 July 1881, pp. 5-6.

of in geographic or even cultural terms, but through the lens of a condescending philosophy which defined the East through the language of the West – and found it to be lacking.

This differentiation between different 'types' of Jews which the *Jewish Chronicle* (and to a lesser extent the *Jewish World*) had gone to careful lengths to cultivate, was gradually taken up by the non-Jewish press as well. In the Conservative London publication, the *St James' Gazette* of September 1881, for example, an anonymous correspondent explained that, unlike Jews in England or France, in Eastern Europe 'the Jew is at once known by his half-Oriental dress, and even by the arrangement of his hair'.[119] Jewish women, the article continued disdainfully, were also distinctive in their appearance by the practice of 'shaving their crowns and replacing the lost hair by a covering of black silk with a white line down the middle to represent the parting which would be there were there anything to part'.[120] The idea of Eastern European Jewish bodily 'difference' then, had clearly been effectively conveyed to the mainstream press by the late summer of 1881, however any vestige of sympathetic undertones which typically accompanied the Anglo-Jewish press reportage had been somewhat lost in translation.

Certainly, in the first months of the reported violence in southern Russia, both the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish World* faced a considerable battle to convince the non-Jewish press as well as the Anglo-Jewish community that the situation for Eastern European Jewry was critical. In September 1881, after months of relative inaction, the *Jewish Chronicle* begged the Anglo-Jewish community for its sympathy and practical aid, emotively informing them that 'they [Russian Jewry] are being literally hunted from place to place and the sufferings of the women and children must be terrible in the extreme'.[121] Moreover, lamented the paper, 'the people are as scattered sheep pursued by wolves and we almost despair of their fate'.[122] Eastern European Jewry – helpless and vulnerable – were in need of assistance that only their wealthy and fortunate brethren could condescend to provide. What is more, that plea for pity and assistance was, whether intentionally or otherwise, couched in a subtly gendered language which appealed to the honour and chivalry of

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[119] 'Jews and Peasants in Russia', *St James' Gazette*, 16 September 1881, p. 13.
[120] Ibid.
[121] 'The Jews of Russia', *Jewish Chronicle,* 2 September 1881, p. 3.
[122] Ibid.

the largely male readership to extend their protective care to the female – or certainly feminised – victims of the atrocities.

Although the *Jewish World* remained just as indignant as the *Jewish Chronicle* about the general lack of action within the Anglo-Jewish community to assist the Eastern European Jews, theirs was a more direct approach. As reports of further riots and violence against Jews in Warsaw began to circulate in December 1881 the *Jewish World* angrily exclaimed that only now would large numbers of people become 'convinced' 'of the precarious condition in which our co-religionists are just now placed in Russia'. What is more, 'it may, perhaps, bring home to our still inert and voiceless [Joint Russian] Committee the reality of the dangers which threaten the Russian Jew', complained the paper bitterly.[123] By 6 January 1882, the newspaper was pleased to note that certain prominent persons had begun to write 'vigorous' letters about the escalating situation in Russia to the mainstream British press, although the *Jewish World* continued to complain that the Anglo-Jewish leadership remained lethargic in their response.[124]

Those letters, or perhaps other pressures, led the *Times* to commission Joseph Jacobs, a regular contributor to the *Jewish Chronicle*, to write two articles outlining the recent events in Russia in far greater and more gruesome detail than had hitherto been attempted in the mainstream press.[125] In the first of those articles, published in the *Times* on 11 January 1882, Jacobs set the lurid scene:

> Men ruthlessly murdered, tender infants dashed to death, or roasted alive in their own homes, married women the prey of a brutal lust that often caused their death, and young girls violated in the sight of their relatives by soldiers who should have been the guardians

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[123] 'The Riots in Warsaw', *Jewish World*, 30 December 1881, p. 5.
[124] 'The Warsaw Riots', *Jewish World*, 6 January 1882, pp. 4-5.
[125] As John Klier has shown in his article 'The Times of London, The Russian Press, and the Pogroms of 1881-1882', *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no. 308, (Pittsburgh, PA, 1984), pp. 1-26, the *Times* 'had taken a specific interest in the Jewish Question in Russia a year before the pogroms' of 1881-2, and thus were vocal in their condemnation of the atrocities from an early stage. The commissioning of Joseph Jacobs in 1882 was the culmination of a prolonged period of reportage on the Jews in Eastern Europe rather than the newspaper's first act.

of their honour – these have been the deeds with which the population of Southern Russia has been stained since last April.[126]

This horrifically graphic account of Jewish persecution adopted a similar approach to the *Jewish Chronicle* article of a few months before, taking care to highlight the gender-specific nature of the crimes committed against the community. In doing so, it not only played into an existing rape discourse implicit within other atrocity reports, but also, rather surprisingly for an article published in the *Times*, veered dangerously towards titillating and salacious sensationalism. To that end, Jacobs pointedly fixed women and girls with a prolonged gaze, delineating them to be powerless, passive victims of the atrocities committed against them by violent and lustful men. By doing so the female Jew was configured, simultaneously, within the parameters of Victorian femininity as well as within the Jewish tradition – as sexually submissive and as a symbol of innocence and virtue. In this way, then, Jacobs translated and humanised the events occurring in Russia, making them both accessible and 'real' for the British readership – all part of a project to provoke moral indignation amongst the outraged readership.

Jacobs' ploy, it seems, was largely successful. By February 1882, a widespread outcry against the atrocities had swept the nation and a public meeting was convened to provide a platform through which the strong feelings of the moment could be expressed. The Mansion House meeting was well attended by leading social and political figures both within and beyond the Anglo-Jewish community, eager to publicly articulate their support for the resolution that 'the persecutions and the outrages which the Jews in many parts of the Russian dominion have for several months past suffered are an offence to civilisation to be deeply deplored'.[127] Protestations were, although no doubt sincerely felt, framed once again in the language of orientalism, with Russian crimes against their Jewish population not condemned explicitly for their anti-Semitic character but rather for the blow those actions brought to bear upon the progress of civilisation itself. Indeed perhaps this marginalisation of the anti-Semitic dimension of the atrocities helps to account for the growing anxieties about Eastern European Jewish migration to Britain which

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[126] 'The Persecution of the Jews in Russia', *Times,* 11 January 1882, p. 4.
[127] Mansion House Fund, 'Outrages upon the Jews in Russia: Report of the Public Meeting at the Mansion House', *Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association*, (1882), p. 11.

evolved in parallel with the Mansion House meeting. Violence perpetuated by the Russian state and people against a helpless minority was certainly to be condemned, but it was another thing entirely to unreservedly welcome that same, not wholly 'desirable' minority to British shores. The *Jewish World* had, in December 1881, already reported the arrival of 'about 150 souls, of whom 60 (13 families) were from Elizabethgrad', at Plymouth, although not with any intention of raising alarm.[128] However, by the following month, the newly Liberal *Pall Mall Gazette* was the first of the mainstream newspapers to give credence to the correlation between the persecution of Jews in Russia and the possibility of a refugee crisis that would directly and catastrophically affect Britain.[129] Relating the views of the *Tablet*, the Catholic oracle, the *Pall Mall Gazette* postulated that

> England will be flooded, or may be flooded, if things take not a different turn, with immigrant Jews reduced to destitution, and the aggregate poverty of the refugees may be more than their truly charitable brethren can relieve.[130]

The feelings of goodwill generated by the Mansion House meeting and the press in the wake of the 'Warsaw Outrages' gradually evaporated as sympathy turned to anxiety regarding the long-term consequences of the events in the Russian Empire.[131] Britain, led on by the speculation and agitation of the press, began to fear an 'influx' of foreigners – a fear which prompted the rapid re-configuration of the alien Jew from wretched, if somewhat primitive and pre-modern victim to menacing and sinister immigrant invader.

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[128] 'Russian Jewish Refugees at Plymouth', *Jewish World*, 9 December 1881, p. 6.
[129] For a brief period between 1880 and 1883, when the *Pall Mall Gazette* came under the ownership of Henry Yates Thompson and the editorship of John Morley, it temporarily abandoned its Conservative leanings to become a supporter of the Liberal party. See J. W. Robertson Scott, *The Life and Death of a Newspaper*, (London: Methuen and Co., 1952), pp. 4-5.
[130] 'The Jews in Russia', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 21 January 1882, pp. 11-12.
[131] On this see Smart, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration', pp. 75-83.

<u>Feminising the Nation: The Alien Arrival</u>

By 1890 – a year which marked a new wave of persecution against the Jewish community in Eastern Europe – the question of Jewish migration had thus become a firm preoccupation of the British press. The *Jewish World* – ever the champion of their suffering continental brethren – argued passionately in October of that year for a widespread commitment to the project of encouraging the emigration and resettlement of Russian Jewry. 'The fact is that there is only one way in which we can at all help the Russian Jew, and that is by emigration', insisted the newspaper's lead article. 'A sensible amelioration of their lot in the [Russian] Empire itself is, we are afraid, hopeless. Why then should not some attempt be made to draw up a scheme by which a certain number of Russian Jews might be annually emigrated under the auspices of an International Emigration and Resettlement Committee?'[132] The paper refrained, however, from explicitly stating their proposal for the place of resettlement, hinting only vaguely at the establishment of 'Russo-Jewish colonies' presumably somewhere in the British Empire although not in Britain itself.

Certainly the *Jewish World* was right to adopt a cautious tone when it came to the matter of resettlement. The issue of Jewish migration and its perceived consequences for Britain was already at simmering point, fuelled by the sensationalised rhetoric of certain sections of the press. The outraged declaration in the Conservative *St James' Gazette* in November 1890 that 'the refuse of the continent' was 'continuing to converge upon London' was typical of the melodramatic anti-alien tone which quickly came to characterise newspaper accounts of the arrival of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe.[133] The Anglo-Jewish press, in response, promptly adopted the position of the immigrants' staunch defenders, often frantically collating data, documents and interviews to refute the latest charge that had been laid at the door of the unwitting refugees. In direct reply to the 'sensational paragraph' carried by the *St James' Gazette* and others, for example, the *Jewish Chronicle* immediately undertook 'special inquiries into the accuracy of the statement' successfully challenging the news reports on every count. The paper was especially indignant, however, about the widespread definition of the arriving Jews as 'paupers' – a definition which was

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[132] 'Shall We Emigrate the Russian Jews?', *Jewish World*, 10 October 1890, p. 5.
[133] Untitled, *St James' Gazette*, 28 November 1890, p. 4.

increasingly to become a sore point amongst the pro-Jewish and anti-alien camps as the battle for the introduction of legislation to restrict immigration intensified.[134]   Indeed, despite the *Jewish Chronicle*'s acrimonious refutation of the definition, the *St James' Gazette* could not help but needle the issue, entitling their leading article less than a month later 'The Pauper Immigrant'.   In support of their position against the Jewish immigrant, the paper argued

> If a belief spreads among these ignorant and unhappy people that a refuge is to be found in the West, they may swarm from the at no time very desirable hive which is being made so hot for them. They would certainly not be received in Central Europe and the alternative is to come here [...] The emigrants would largely consist of peasants of the most ignorant kind, for whom there is no place here.[135]

For the *St James' Gazette*, then, the immigrants' poverty was indicative not simply of a lack of education but of a dangerous ignorance which posed a threat to the very security of Britain. Whatever had kept these peasants 'low' might also bring down Britain. What is more, that threat was couched – somewhat sensationally – in the language of savage, animalistic warfare with Jewish immigrants likened to a swarm of angry bees amassing upon a blameless, even defenceless Britain – a metaphor to which this thesis will repeatedly return.

This idea of Britain as a nation under attack from disruptive outside forces was one which the more outspoken sections of the press liked to indulge at every available opportunity. With the launch of a new type of daily newspaper in the opening years of the twentieth century, such rhetoric was employed with increasing frequency and excess especially in relation to the aliens question.   The right-wing *Daily Express*, founded in 1900, for example, had few qualms emblazoning their front page with the headline 'English Expelled: East-End Captured by Foreigners' in December 1902,[136] whilst the Liberal-leaning *Daily Mirror* (founded in 1903) insisted

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[134]   'The Alleged Influx of Foreign Jews', *Jewish Chronicle*, 28 November 1890, p. 5.
[135]   'The Pauper Immigrant', *St James' Gazette*, 23 December 1890, p. 3.
[136]   'English Expelled: East-End Captured by Foreigners', *Daily Express*, 12 December 1902, p.1

that an 'Organised Invasion' had taken place.[137] This highly masculinised, loaded language not only played upon patriotic sympathies but also framed the alien Jew – specifically the male Jew – as a racial and, implicitly, sexual threat preying upon the passive vulnerability of the English. Indeed, that notion was a curious inversion of the image of a strong and infallible British Empire which typically characterised representations of the nation at the *fin de siècle*.[138] Britain, claimed the press, was under siege and the alien Jew was its number one enemy – a distinctly new position towards Eastern European Jewry to that cultivated during the reports of persecution in the Russian Empire. The *Jewish World*, however, even by 1891, had very little patience with such rhetoric:

> People no longer talk merely of 'immigration'; the more sensational terms 'invasion' and 'deluge' have become the vogue. The idea that pauper Jews are pouring into British ports has somehow fixed itself in the public mind, and a certain portion of the press has thought it worth its while to exploit the sensation and foster the delusion.[139]

The paper went on to attribute the tendency to 'foster the delusion' of an alien invasion by the press to the perceived unsophisticated mental state of the readership, arguing that 'the public find it so much easier to grasp a general statement than to weigh the detailed and elaborate array of evidence'.[140] Certainly at the height of the aliens question the popular press liked to peddle the simplest, most lurid, if not always the most accurate angle of the story to their readers, pandering to their baser xenophobic instincts. Yet this does not fully explain the inadvertent denigration of Britain and the British as weak and passive which, if the invasion narrative was to be successful, was an integral part of the story. An incident concerning the alleged poor behaviour of Jewish refugees arriving in Southampton from South Africa in 1900, which was widely reported in both the mainstream and the Anglo-Jewish press at the time, begins to reveal a few clues as to why this

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[137] 'More Alien Hordes. Fresh Army of Russian Jews Descending on England. Organised Invasion', *Daily Mirror*, 29 December 1904.
[138] *Punch* in particular made frequent use of the 'John Bull' figure as an icon for sturdy and steadfast Britishness from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. On this see J. Surel, 'John Bull', in R. Samuel (ed), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity,* vol. 3: National Fictions, (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp 3-25.
[139] 'Immigration Delusions', *Jewish World*, 19 June 1891, p. 5.
[140] Ibid.

narrative – as opposed to that of the weak and effeminate alien Jew pitied by a strong and rather condescending paternal imperial power – came to dominant.

In February 1900, the longest running newspaper aimed at the newly literate working classes, the Conservative *Daily Mail* (founded in 1896) ran an article which reported 'disgraceful scenes on the Cheshire'. Using an investigative report format the correspondent outlined the 'shocking' testimony of one of the officers from the ship. '"All that the refugees were required to do, as they were taken free of charge, was to keep the troop decks and the mess utensils clean. This they flatly refused to do"', explained one sailor. Worse was yet to come. As the journey continued, claimed the officer, '"things became so threatening we had to arm. [...] We feared mutiny and night after night we watched for it. [...] We cowed them at last, but all the way home they fought and wrangled among themselves"'.[141] These provocative descriptions of unruly, anarchic, and even menacing immigrant Jews not only directly contradicted the established image of earlier years of the alien as physically enfeebled and wholly passive, but actually operated to transform the Jew into a symbol for all the external forces which were felt to threaten Britain at that time. Certainly, it seems more than a coincidence that this alleged incident abroad the Cheshire received such hostile press coverage at a time when Britain was facing mutiny in its South African colony. Since October 1899, the town of Mafeking, a strategically located administrative centre in South Africa, had been under siege from the newly-declared Boer Republic. Ammunition, food and morale was low, and Britons at home kept up with news of the siege via the press with mounting dismay at reports that confirmed the Boer's continued confident displays of military power against the British empire. In was in this context that the *Daily Mail*'s report of the behaviour of journeying Jewish refugees was both written and consumed. In light of this context, then, the incident on board the migrant ship was framed quite pointedly by the newspaper as a microcosm of events occurring in the wider world. The immigrant Jews were implicitly likened to colonial 'savages' – depictions which were thrown into even sharper relief by the contrary depictions of the 'quiet', 'sad-faced', and honour-bound Englishmen on board the ship. Even Jewish women were not spared this hostile (re)configuration. A Mrs Lachie

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[141] 'So-called Refugees', *Daily Mail,* 3 February 1900, p 3. This article and the response it provoked from the *Jewish Chronicle* is also discussed by T. Kushner and K. Knox in *Refugees in an Age of Genocide: Global, National and Local Perspectives during the Twentieth Century*, (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 22-27.

Thompson, the 'matron of the women's section' on board the ship insisted that, at one point during the voyage, 'a Jewess' had 'tried to injure her with her nails and teeth' – an attack from which she had to be rescued by the chief officer.[142]

The *Jewish Chronicle* went to great lengths to refute the *Daily Mail*'s 'sensational account', but no other mainstream paper took up the story.[143] The damage, it seems, was done. The popular press, only opposed with any frequency by the Anglo-Jewish newspapers, had been allowed virtually a free rein to report upon the arrival of immigrant Jews in increasingly exaggerated rhetoric which stressed the immigrants' diseased and degenerate characters and customs, and framed the entire aliens question within the wider discourse of imperialism, and, indeed, as a metaphor for its decline. Of course, some sections of the press occasionally attempted to temper those reports with a degree of 'measured' journalism, yet the cry which had gone up from the popular press as sympathy for Eastern European Jewry turned to anxiety was never truly silenced. The aliens were invading and must be stopped, they 'screeched'.[144] But by the dawn of the twentieth century it was already too late. The aliens had arrived, Britain was 'under siege' and East London was, without doubt, fast becoming alien territory once again.

The Empire Comes Home: The Alien Habitat

Certainly even before the mass influx of Jewish migrants into the East End, the notion that that quarter of the Capital was foreign space was firmly entrenched in the vocabulary of the British press. Social commentators, philanthropists, novelists and newspapers alike had long grappled with how to define and refine that most perplexing of urban environs.[145] What is more, however, it is a perplexity which has persisted. In 2000, as we have already seen, Joseph McLaughlin

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[142] 'So-called Refugees'.
[143] The *Jewish Chronicle* published numerous articles relating to the story. See, for example, 'Jewish Refugees from South Africa', 9 February 1900, pp. 9-10; 'Sober Facts versus Sensational Exaggeration', 9 February 1900, pp. 10-11; 'The "Cheshire" Refugees: A Further Refutation', 6 April 1900, p. 12.
[144] This was a derogatory term employed by the *Jewish World* to define certain newspapers' treatment of the aliens question. See 'Another Screech at Foreign Immigration', *Jewish World*, 10 July 1891, p. 5.
[145] See, for example, H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, (London: Griffin, Bohn and Company, 1861-2); A. Mearns, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London: An Inquiry into the Conditions of the Abject Poor*, (1883); C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1889); W. Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1890); J. London, *The People of the Abyss*, (New York: Macmillan, 1903).

exposed the continual preoccupation of social commentators both today and in the past with the metaphor of the 'urban jungle'.[146] It was and remains a highly engaging and useable language for describing the city which has enthralled those responsible for constructing and disseminating cultural vocabularies for over a century. What is more, it was a metaphor that passed quickly into common usage. Across the *fin de siècle*, the paradox of the 'urban jungle', which insisted that the metropolis at the very pinnacle of modernity and civility contained within its bounds an alter-ego in the form of a pre-modern, unfamiliar and even dangerous cityscape, fed off the insidious anxieties about the consequences of increased urbanisation and imperial expansion. Moreover, it was a metaphor which translated particularly well into the language of the press, bringing otherwise one-dimensional articles on the city to life. Against this context, it is useful to revisit Judith Walkowitz remarks that, 'in the last decades of the nineteenth century, journalist exposés highlighted geographic segregation, impressing on Londoners the perception that they lived in a city of contrasts, a class and geographically divided metropolis of hovels and palaces'.[147]

With Walkowitz' comment in mind, one might conceivably argue that the concept of the 'urban jungle' was simply an intriguing socio-cultural fantasy readily exploited by the press for commercial gains.[148] Certainly throughout the final decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century the press replicated and accentuated this fascination with the 'urban jungle' with much success. The metropolitan daily newspapers especially engaged with the discursive threads of the day; at once deeply hostile to instances of London's moral excesses and yet paternally defensive of 'their' great city. However it was with the arrival of seeming multitudes of Jewish immigrants into the capital that the metaphor of the 'urban jungle' assumed an urgency and a palpable relevance which the popular press in particular gave themselves over to wholeheartedly. In a provocative article published in 1897, the *Daily Mail* sought to clarify the extent of the alien 'problem' in the metropolis:

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[146] J. McLaughlin, 'An Irritation to Metaphor: Late-Victorian London as Urban Jungle', *Writing the Urban Jungle: Reading Empire in London from Doyle to Eliot,* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), pp. 1-26.

[147] J. R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London,* (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 26.

[148] Alan Palmer has suggested this in his *The East End: Four Centuries of London Life,* (London: John Murray, 1989), p. 85.

There are possibly some streets in London where there are no Jews; there are many where Jews are common; and there are a few where, as far as you can hear or see, there are none but Jews. In the East-end of London they swarm.[149]

Here, once again, the insect metaphor was readily, almost unconsciously employed to evoke the sight, the sound, but, above all, the menacing, territorializing agency of the alien Jews. In their arthropodian form, the alien Jew brought the 'urban jungle' to life.

Of course the association of immigrants with the East End long pre-dated the arrival of East European Jewry. Large numbers of Huguenots fleeing France in the seventeenth century, followed in the mid nineteenth century by famine-traumatised Irish, also made the traditionally working class quarter of London their home. Yet with the advent of the Jewish immigrant occupation of the East End, a once familiar, historically accommodating urban space developed, in its media representation, a menacing and deeply alien alter ego. The *Daily Mail* powerfully captured the essence of that netherworld, delineating images of 'dark interiors with shadowy figures bending over a dull fire; or in a dark corner a miserable figure tossing wearily on a bed of pain'.[150] Indeed so 'foreign' were such scenes to the English reader, assumed the newspaper, that they could only be deciphered by reference to more conventional or known spectacles such as a 'pantomime' or a Rembrandt painting.

Although the Anglo-Jewish press – the *Jewish World* in particular – made great efforts to demystify the new arrivals for the benefit of the non-Jewish observer, as well as discrediting all claims of their alleged 'sinister' intent, some of their own readers still began to internalise certain strands of that same aliens discourse. 'Our people have so many critics that I very unwillingly make one more', apologised a correspondent to the *Jewish World* in August 1901. However, continued the letter, since the immigration of large numbers of Jews into the district of Canonbury, East London, 'I am sorry to say that' Beresford Road is no longer 'one of the quietest and most unobtrusive streets in this part of London':

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[149] 'Strangers within our Gates: The Foreign Quarters of London', *Daily Mail,* 18 February 1897.
[150] 'Strangers within our Gates'.

Pass along the thoroughfare of an evening or on Sunday during the summer weather, and you will see a number of people sitting on chairs outside their doors. But worse than this; you will hear a conversation carried on across the road or between neighbours several doors distant.[151]

The correspondent, obviously far more comfortable assuming the role of the 'quiet' and 'unobtrusive' anonymous resident of a 'quiet' and 'unobtrusive' street, was certainly unsettled by the presence of such visible and audible Jews. Yet worse was yet to come:

However gallant one may be, it will be admitted that a row, more or less irregular, of ladies, many of whom could turn the scale at fifteen stone, is not a sight which can be fairly described as "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever", especially when the effect is heightened by the conversation I have stated striking the ear.[152]

These rather cutting remarks, clearly levelled at these Jewish ladies for their apparently 'unfeminine' behaviour and appearance, is a striking inversion of the popular literary image of the beautiful and sexually alluring 'Jewess' with which the nineteenth century British readership were familiar.[153] Neither is there any glimpse here of the innocent, virtuous and passive Jewish woman, terrorised by the barbarous Russian empire, which was such a dominant feature of earlier press treatment of the Eastern European Jewish question. Instead, in sardonic tones the correspondent lambastes the immigrant community of Beresford Road for their uninhibited – indeed thoroughly 'ordinary' –behaviour which he perceived jarred with a certain notion of English reserve and, moreover, with the meek demeanour which a 'grateful' refugee should assume.

Yet this complaint in the *Jewish World* against the Jewish immigrant community pales in comparison with certain other accusations levelled at the newcomers. In the month following that

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[151]   'A Word in Time', *Jewish World*, 16 August 1901, p. 340.
[152]   Ibid.
[153]   Nadia Valman has traced this literary image of the 'Jewess' in her *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, pp. 15-50.

letter, a lengthy investigative article appeared in *The Standard*, under the inflammatory headline 'Anarchist Colonies in East London'. In sensationalist rhetoric which made only a feeble attempt to mask the identity of those accused, the newspaper described how 'the anti-social confraternity in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel' had 'thrown out feelers' across the district until the streets 'swarm[ed] with both Socialists and Anarchists'.[154] Not only had the Jews, with their 'Yiddish Jargon' invaded the East End but, according to *The Standard*, they were now infiltrating its very socio-political infrastructure, inciting the people to violence and encouraging the overthrow of authority – an urban jungle indeed. Such rhetoric once again displaced and replaced the East End with 'the East', reframing the issue as one which concerned not only the security of the nation but the stability of the empire. What is more, it was wholly reminiscent of the *Daily Mail* article of February 1900, published only the previous year, concerning the 'anarchic' behaviour of the refugees arriving from South Africa. In both scenarios, the immigrant locale was reconfigured to appear as a microcosm of the colonial landscape – as a metaphor for the struggles between colonized and colonizer. Bizarrely, however, in those scenarios the British once again assumed the role of the community under threat, a parody, wholly indulged by the popular press, of Britain as a colonized society powerless to repel an invading force. It can only be presumed that such a reconfiguration of the imperial hierarchy held a certain appeal both for the press and its readership because it served to vindicate Britain in her own colonial activities. After all, Britain was a victim now too.

As the aliens question heightened in the early years of the twentieth century and calls for legislation to restrict immigration audibly increased, illustrations progressively became the press tool of choice to perpetuate this image of a 'helpless' Britain. From its inception the *Daily Mail* (setting the example for the popular press) incorporated illustrations into its pages, initially to entice female readers, and then later for the 'benefit' of all when it began to recognise their full power. Pictorial representations allowed the paper to communicate more effectively with a newly literate and less intellectual readership.[155] Yet the popular newspapers' visual depictions of Britain

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[154] 'Anarchist Colonies in East London', *Standard*, 14 September 1901, p. 3.
[155] See C. Hughes, 'Imperialism, Illustration and the *Daily Mail,* 1896-1904', in M. Harris and A. Lee (eds.), *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries,* (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1986), pp. 187-200; M. Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture,* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), pp. 101-106.

and the British as a somewhat passive and exploited nation – a theme which played out with great success in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and other invasion fantasy novels of the era, as we shall see – nevertheless lacked much of the subtly and all of the pretext of fiction which had characterised literary efforts. Indeed such representations of Britain cultivated by the press seemed all the more contrived as the charges against the alien Jew increased in both number and intensity. Whereas in the first years of Eastern European Jewish migration to Britain, the alien Jew had been criticised, amongst other things, for being a pauper and for being unskilled, thus condemned, paradoxically, as a victim of the sweating system as well as its perpetrator, before many years had passed the charges had become evermore sensational. The immigrant Jew was accused of ruining trades, of causing rent increases, of displacing the 'native' population and, above all, of endangering the health, wealth and morality of the nation.[156] Within press rhetoric, the more the alien Jew was denigrated, the more 'elevated' the position of the British became. What is more, the popular press was able to feed off the dialogue generated by the hours of witness testimony from the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration from 1902 onwards, which lent their articles and illustrations currency and the semblance of authenticity.[157]

However, certain sections of the press, and not just the Anglo-Jewish newspapers, were not above commenting upon the increasing absurdity of many of the claims levelled at alien Jews. A cartoon featured in the long-running satirical magazine *Punch*, in February 1903, for example, delineated, with mock indignation, the consequences of alien criminality in Britain – that the presence of alien criminals would put the 'British Habitual Criminal' out of work: '"Well, if these 'ere furrin aliens is a-goin' ter take the bread out of a honest man's mouth – blimey if I don't turn copper!"'.[158]

Nevertheless, despite these and other, more explicit protestations, the image of the alien Jew as colonizer, and more especially the alien Jewish habitat of the East End as colonized territory, became a firm and abiding feature of tabloid press rhetoric throughout the aliens debate of the

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[156] See, for example, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 'The Alien Invasion', 12 December 1901, pp. 1-2.
[157] 'Matters of the Moment: Aliens and Aliens', *Daily Express*, 27 January 1903, p. 4; 'The Alien Immigrant', *Daily Mail*, 12 May 1903, p. 4 and 'The Wandering Jew', *St James Gazette*, 26 August 1903, p. 3 which, when reporting in the aftermath of the *Royal Commission*, made reference to the alien Jew as a 'vampire who sucks the blood of his somnolent host'.
[158] 'Foreign Competition', *Punch*, 25 February 1903, p. 129.

early twentieth century. The invasion fantasy narrative constructed and disseminated by the popular press was, ultimately, absolutely instrumental in both stirring up and maintaining public interest in the issue of unrestricted immigration across the *fin de siècle*, and in securing it a prominent place within the arena of politics. Just as the agitation of the media regarding Jewish persecution in Eastern Europe had resulted in nation-wide protest meetings in 1882 and 1890, so too did the press's insistent delineation of the menace posed by the alien Jew go a significant way towards ensuring the passage of legislation in 1905 to restrict further potential arrivals.

'It must be admitted that the voice of the press is the greatest power of our modern civilisation', declared the *Jewish Chronicle* in December 1895.[159] Despite the rather self-congratulatory tone, the statement was certainly an astute one. As becomes obvious when placed in comparative context against other socio-cultural mediums of the era in which the alien Jew was represented and imagined – namely fiction and political testimonies – the power of the press in shaping, contorting, disseminating and controlling the image of 'the Jew' seems unrivalled. Newspapers were able to pick up as well as inform novelistic themes with popular appeal, most notably that of the invasion fantasy, and then communicate that theme to a mass audience – seemingly bringing fantasy to life. What is more, by thus engaging the imagination and the indignation of the public, the press were able to wield influence in the political arena. Certainly with the advent of the popular press and their tactic of manipulating stories for mass market appeal, some newspapers quite deliberately addressed their cries of outrage and presages of impeding doom at the immigrant presence not to 'the people' but, on behalf of the people, to the government. The newspapers, or, at least the tabloids, 'made' the aliens 'crisis' but it was also the making of them.

This chapter has attempted to draw out the central thematic approaches adopted by the press in their textual and illustrative representations of the alien Jew, arguing that those representations underwent significant revision as concern for the welfare of Eastern European Jewry turned to alarm at an impending refugee crisis. Images of the alien Jew within press rhetoric – initially depicted as a pathetic and pitiable, if somewhat 'pre-modern' figure existing in a far-flung barbarous land – were hurriedly and wholly inverted when it became apparent that the alien was

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[159] 'The Influence of the Press and its Abuses', *Jewish Chronicle*, 6 December 1895, p. 8.

on the move, as part of a seeming tacit agreement by the majority of the press to frame the alien Jew as a menace to Britain. Even those newspapers that were not explicitly in favour of legislation to restrict further immigration nevertheless engaged in this fantasy project to a greater or lesser extent, willing to indulge the notion that the alien Jew – whether by causing damage to trade, housing, health or morality – had the potential to do the nation and empire mortal harm.

However, it was, intriguingly, by way of gender motifs as well as by exploiting essentialised and often rather contrived gender narratives that this idea was constructed, and which, in turn, accounts for the success of its dissemination into public discourse. The very pointed emphasis upon the helplessness and physical vulnerability of 'the Jew' in Eastern Europe, for example, was quite deliberately employed primarily by the Anglo-Jewish papers in the early years of the reported atrocities, as a means to stir up indignant paternalist feeling and chivalrous resolution to assist the Eastern European Jews in their plight. The subtle feminisation of the alien Jew was thus necessary to ensure the ploy was successful. The Jews' continued emasculation by certain sections of the press in tandem with those reports was a spiteful yet inevitable consequence of that tactic. However, as the persecuted minority became mobile the mainstream British press took over the image of the alien Jew, transforming feminised victim into dangerously virile and deeply sinister masculinised intruder. In turn Britain now became the victim – that narrative assisted by the frequent use of images of the lady nation herself; Britannia.[160] Even before the arrival of the popular press from 1896 onwards, the Anglo-Jewish press had lost control of the image of the alien Jew. They had embarked upon a strategic game of careful and calculated Semitic representation but, with the passing of the aliens question from a matter for the press to a matter for politics, the game was well and truly lost.

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[160] In her essay on the figurative and illustrative use of Britannia within British popular culture, Madge Dresser explores the highly-masculinised, chivalrous response evoked by the repeated, metaphoric debasement of Britannia within international political grapples. See M. Dresser, 'Britannia', Samuel (ed.) *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity',* pp. 26-49, (pp. 34-5).

Chapter Two

Politics and 'the alien':
Gendering 'the Jew' in the Age of Empire

Throughout the nineteenth century, the 'Jewish question' would come to occupy Britain's political arena as at no other time since the Jewish peoples' re-admittance under Oliver Cromwell. In the first half of the century, encouraged by the emancipation of the Catholic population, Jews also began to campaign for their right to participate in British political life. The liberal establishment, however, grappled with the particularity of 'the Jew', perplexed as to how their assimilation into the Christian nation could be achieved. Bound by the pressures of liberalism and yet shackled still by the theological conceptualisation of 'the Jew' as the antithesis of Christianity, the emancipation debate of the 1830s and 1840s played out on the parliamentary stage as a struggle between 'tradition' and 'modernity', 'reason' and 'intolerance'.[161] Yet, as David Feldman has convincingly shown, through that debate the very relational parameters of religion, state and nation were also renegotiated and reconfigured. 'Jewish disabilities', he writes, 'whether to maintain, reform or abolish them – were inserted within the decisive conflicts of mid-nineteenth century politics'.[162] The matter of Jewish emancipation became a discursive forum through which the broader issue of British national identity in the modern age was refracted and explored.

Jewish emancipation was granted through a series of political manoeuvres by the mid nineteenth century, and the first Jewish politician took his seat in the House of Commons in 1858. Yet the 'Jewish question', albeit in a new form, once again came to dominate the parliamentary arena just a few decades later. The arrival of thousands of Jewish immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe from 1881 onwards, reinvigorated the debate with a new sense of urgency, if not with fresh rhetoric, within and beyond the environs of Westminster. Under the guise of the aliens debate – the political deliberations as to the need for legislation to restrict the entrance of immigrants into Britain – 'the Jew' once again became the conduit for 'questions' of national importance.

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[161] D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 28
[162] Ibid.

Early academic surveys typically did not provide a full exploration of the aliens debate from this perspective. That is to say, whilst scholarly commentary on the Aliens Act of 1905 conceived of that legislation as symptomatic of a far broader debate on race and racism in Britain, studies published in the 1970s generally went no further.[163] Neither did they typically offered an extended reading of the political documents generated by the 'aliens question', instead viewing the Aliens Act as the inevitable outcome of growing intolerance rather than a stage in a complex and contextually-driven process which began long before and extended far beyond the passage of the 1905 Act.[164] Thus from this narrow perspective, attitudes expressed towards Jews within the *fin de siècle* political arena were, at that point, interpreted within the parameters of anti-Semitism, rather than considered as indicative of expansive, even seemingly irrelevant, discourses on the state of society, nation and empire.

That lacuna has, to a large extent, been addressed through the work of David Feldman and, more recently, Nadia Valman, Nicholas Evans and others, all of whom identify the implicit usage of 'the alien' within political debates as figurative for wider national, racial or even gender concerns.[165] So too has this perspective been utilised by Bryan Cheyette in relation to fiction, as will be discussed in greater depth in the following chapter. [166] This chapter thus seeks to address this hiatus further still by drawing upon the groundwork laid by Feldman as well as borrowing from Cheyette to consider representations of 'the Jew' within political documents and parliamentary debates. By focusing on a broad selection of parliamentary papers collated on the aliens question, as well as the minutes of testimony contained within them, in the years directly preceding the passage of the Aliens Act of 1905, I shall show that, similar to literature, multiple cultural discourses converge in representations of 'the Jew' within *fin de siècle* politics.

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[163]   See, for example, J. Garrard, *The English and Immigration, 1880-1910*, (London: O.U.P for the Institute of Race Relations, 1971) and B. Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905*, (London: Heinemann Educational, 1972).
[164]   C. Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988) and J. Solomos, *Race and Racism in Britain*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989) are something of an exception, although neither study focuses solely on the Jewish case study.
[165]   Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*; N. Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and N. Evans, 'Commerce, State, and Anti-Alienism: Balancing Britain's Interests in the Late-Victorian Period', in E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman, *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 80-97.
[166]   B. Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

However, whilst I make use of the theoretical foundations carefully laid out by Feldman, Cheyette and others, I also strive to build upon that approach. In particular, I argue that gender, as a representative tool and as a subjective lens on the gaze was, crucially, a distinctive feature of 'semitic discourse' at that time, and a feature which has typically been overlooked. Yet, as this chapter shall demonstrate, 'the Jew' constructed throughout political debates surrounding the 'aliens question' of the *fin de siècle* was both unequivocally masculine and the product of a virtually masculine perspective. Very few women either contributed to the aliens debate from a political standpoint, or featured within the debate itself as subject matter. Yet plenty of Jewish women at that time were entering the country as immigrants, sometimes alone, sometimes accompanied by a chaperone or as part of a family unit. The near-invisibility of the Jewish woman in the political debate is thus, understandably, startling, and a central point of discussion throughout this chapter.

Another point of note throughout this chapter, and indeed throughout the thesis as a whole, is the perpetual slippage within the debates between the conceptualisation of the aliens question as an 'English' one and its often simultaneous configuration as a 'British' one.[167] The positioning of London, and especially its East End as the perceived epicentre of the 'problem', frequently prompted observers to think and speak of the immigrants in relation to England alone. Westminster, as the bureaucratic heart of the debate, also impelled a rather exclusivist understanding of the aliens question which was accentuated still further by the disproportionate clamouring on the matter from East End MPs. Indeed this rather skewed perspective is evident in the conduct of the earliest parliamentary committees convened to investigate alien immigration. The Lords Select Committee on the sweating system of 1888, for example, (which will be discussed in greater detail later on in this chapter) was forced to re-think such a gross misconception of the 'problem' as their inquiries quickly led them to understand that the 'evil' of sweating extended far beyond the confines of the capital.[168]

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[167] Indeed, this is not only limited to the primary documents but is also an occasional feature of scholarly literature that deals with the aliens question, which fails to distinguish explicitly between the specifically <u>English</u> context and the broader, <u>British</u> response. See, for example, Garrard, *The English and Immigration*, p. 213, who quotes Lloyd Gartner's estimate of immigration figures in Britain as the number of 'Jewish immigrants who settled' in England.

[168] See PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, *Select Committee of House of Lords on Sweating System, First Report*, p. iii. In this report – the first of five – the committee informed the house that they 'had reason to believe that the same or similar evils prevail in other parts of the Metropolis as well as in other Towns and Cities' and thus requested that they be allowed to extend their inquiries to the whole of the United Kingdom.

Yet the slippage between 'England' and 'Britain' was not only a matter of perception but was also largely a question of (mis) definition. For many English, 'England' was 'Britain' and 'Britain' was 'England'. Effectively, the two terms were characterised by an interchangability which was, for the most part, unconsciously employed. However, whilst this subconscious transposition certainly featured in discursive treatment of the aliens question to a lesser extent beyond English borders, the disproportionate quantity of political documents and testimony generated in England, and in London in particular, leaves the conceptualisation of the aliens question elsewhere in the British Isles far harder to assess. This chapter, then, focuses largely upon material produced in England by the English. Yet it argues that, despite this distorted picture, the question of alien immigration, in Westminster at least, was not only conceptualised within the parameters of English questions but was, at its core, aligned with questions of 'Britishness': self, nation and empire.

This chapter shall, broadly speaking, adopt a chronological approach to this investigation of Semitic representations within the aliens debate. I explore, as a starting point, the published report and minutes of evidence of two parliamentary Select Committees from 1888 and 1889 convened to investigate the 'problem' of alien immigration. The discussion shall then progress to consider the prevalent Semitic representations interwoven within the punctilious language of the multiple bills which followed. However, I suggest, it is within the voluminous report of the 1903 Royal Commission on Alien Immigration that the disparate threads of Semitic representation weaving throughout the proceeding documents knit together to form multiple rich and sharp images of the immigrant Jew. It is those images, formed from the testimony of a broad cross-section of society, which are especially potent as, in their construction of 'the Jew', those narratives transgress and complicate the categories of class, gender and political allegiance. Yet throughout, the figure of 'the Jewess' remains conspicuously absent. Intriguingly, it is only through the investigations of a parliamentary committee peripheral to the aliens debate, the Inter-departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration (1903), that the figure of the female Jewish immigrant begins to emerge. Yet, here too her likeness is negligible; a reductive representation of the Jewish woman to that of virtuous mother.

Select Committees, Selected Witnesses and Selective Conclusions

The Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, which first convened on 24 April 1902, signified parliament's first serious attempt to address the unrestricted entrance of immigrants into Britain. In sentiment and format, if not in political 'clout', the Commission was preceded in 1888 by two Select Committees to investigate Alien Immigration, and the Sweating System respectively. The parliamentary motion – brought by the Earl of Dunraven in the House of Lords in 1888 – which called the two committees into being played, in large part, upon a growing consciousness and concern within national politics of the pervasiveness of urban poverty and social problems. Recent publications such as Walter Besant's *All Sorts and Conditions of Men* (1882), Andrew Mearns' *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* (1883) and Charles Booth's *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1886) had caused shock and consternation amongst polite society, provoking a national outcry against the emerging revelations of social conditions in Britain's urban centres.[169] London and most especially its East End, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter, were particularly fascinating for the social investigator and public observer alike. As the political and cultural capital of Britain and its empire, 'public imagination invested its problems with higher significance than provincial ones although many were greater only in magnitude, not in kind'.[170]

Against a backdrop of rising unemployment and labour agitation it was but a matter of time before a causal link between alien immigration and social deprivation was forged. Committed restrictionist and social imperialist Arnold White's report to *The Lancet* in 1884 on the sweating system operated by 'the Polish colony of Jewish tailors', as well as his sensationalist survey of degeneration in the East End, *Problems of a Great City* (1886), did much to forge that link.[171] However, it was not until John Burnett – a trade union leader and civil servant – submitted a report to the Board of Trade in 1887 on the sweating system that the association between the aliens question and urban degeneration was fully propelled into the political arena.[172] Burnett's report, and, more importantly, the connection the trade unionist drew between sweating and alien

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[169]   Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, pp. 74-9.
[170]   Ibid., p. 74.
[171]   'Report of the Lancet Special Sanitary Commission on the Polish Colony of Jewish Tailors', *The Lancet*, no. 3166, (3 May 1884), pp. 317-8. Shelia Blackburn discusses Arnold White's role in forging this association in *A Fair Day's Wage for a Fair Day's Work: Sweated Labour and the Origins of Minimum Wage Legislation in Britain*, (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), pp. 51-56.
[172]   J. Burnett, *Report to the Board of Trade on the Sweating System at the East End of London by the Labour Correspondent to the Board*, (P.P., 1887, vol. LXXXIX), p. 256.

immigration, became the corner stone of Lord Dunraven's proposal for a select committee to investigate the matter further. In support of his 1888 motion in the Lords, he persuaded the house that 'we [have] plenty of social problems and difficulties of our own without undertaking those of other nations'.[173]

Thus convinced of the need for a parliamentary inquiry, a Commons Select Committee was appointed in February of 1888 to 'inquire into the Laws existing in the United States and elsewhere on the subject of the Immigration of Destitute Aliens, and as to the extent and effect of such Immigration into the United Kingdom'.[174] However, it was, in essence, little more than a tentative move towards legislation. The Select Committees of the nineteenth century typically acted only as a forum for inquiry or for the regulation of government departments rather than as a parliamentary body with the requisite power to see their recommendations become law. Hence, debilitated perhaps by an awareness of the speculative rather than decisive nature of their inquiries, as well as a lack of accurate data as to the number of immigrants residing in Britain, the Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration set the example for both inquiries by concluding that no legislation was immediately necessary.

That conclusion was delivered to parliament in 1889 despite the concerted efforts of Arnold White to influence the report to the contrary. Indeed White went as far as to concede – unwisely – that his desire for legislation was so 'intensely strong' that he was prepared, within his testimony, to exaggerate the extent of the alien menace.[175] But the Commons Select Committee, led by the Liberal MP for Northampton, political activist, and defender of the alien immigrant, Charles Bradlaugh, failed to be moved by White's prejudiced evidence. Instead the committee quickly recognised 'the difficulty of carrying such a measure into effect', if recommended, and, moreover, the ideological barriers which would prevent the approval of such legislation.[176] As Bernard Gainer succinctly observes, 'as an attack on the tradition of free asylum for refugees, restriction affronted the humanitarianism of liberal England and offended against its belief in the brotherhood of man; and as an attack specifically on the poor refugee, it was denounced as a crass

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[173] Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*), House of Lords: Official papers; vol. 322, 28 February 1888, col. 1604-5.
[174] PP 1888 Cd 305, ix 419, *Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration, Report*, p. ii.
[175] PP 1888 Cd 305, *Minutes of Evidence*, Q. 1954-5.
[176] See the final report of the Committee, PP 1889, Cd 311, x 265, *Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration. Report*, pp. iii-xi, (p. x).

piece of class discrimination'.[177] Thus an enduring investment in the image of the nation as a tolerant and liberal one repeatedly derailed the restrictionists' cause from the earliest days of the alien question. Furthermore, as an immovable ideological consideration, the issue of the right of asylum enacted an almost complete parliamentary division along party lines between the Conservatives, who favoured restriction, and the Liberals, who found themselves to be the 'natural defenders' of liberal values.[178]

Despite that divisive issue, however, the 1888 Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration remained remarkably united in their approach to the aliens question. Indeed, in that approach, the committee established a tone which would persist into other later debates and reports on the subject. At the heart of that approach was an explicit confidence in the superiority of Britain as a people and nation; a confidence that was founded upon a potent and highly gendered mixture of imperialism and intellectual theories of race. The figure of 'the Jew', as the primary and virtually exclusive subject of the immigration debate, was constructed within the parameters of this compounded and acutely masculine racialised discourse. Certainly the influence of that discourse most obviously and frequently manifested itself in the persistent comparisons of physicality, morality and character drawn between the alien Jew and the British 'native'. The committee, for example, reported 'the mode of living' of the immigrants to be 'wretched in the extreme' going on to insist that the alien is 'able to maintain existence on much less than an English workman'. In character and behaviour, however, 'they are for the most part an inoffensive race, and moral in their habits', although physically 'they are, as a rule, undersized' concluded the committee.[179] Yet such comparisons not only provided the helpful tools of evaluation for an inquisitive committee but also, through that linguistic style, implicitly revealed a nagging fear that an alien presence in Britain signalled a threat to the nation's status quo. Thus it was perhaps with something akin to relief that the committee noted the unimpressive physical appearance of 'the Jew'; reassured on a keenly visceral level that their comparatively superior physicality rendered the alien threat containable.

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[177] Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, p. 149.
[178] Ibid., p. 144. Gainer rightly points out that resistance to restriction 'based on the liberal values of Victorian England' also cut across 'party lines'. 'Political Liberals had no monopoly on them, but the Liberal party provided a convenient, traditional, and powerful rallying point'.
[179] PP 1889 Cd. 311 x 265, p. ix.

However the sense of unease at a growing immigrant presence was by no means wholly quietened by that one reassurance. The overbearing mood even influenced the manner in which statistical data was presented. With regards to 'the proportion of the foreign to the total population of England and Wales', for example, the Committee noted the figures from 1851. 'In that year [1851] there was one foreigner to every 356 persons enumerated; in 1861, one to every 239; in 1871, one to every 226; and in 1881, one to every 220'.[180] Here one cannot mistake the pervading sense that the British were slowly but surely becoming increasingly endangered by an expanding alien population. Moreover if those figures alone were not enough to awaken fear, the committee was quick to qualify them further by reminding the reader that the term 'foreigner' within the Census Returns referred only to those who had been born abroad and not to their children. Yet 'in the case of the colonies of Russian and German Jews in the East-end of London and other places, they might be practically foreigners'.[181] Despite, then, the liberal pretensions of some, the committee made little effort to distance themselves from the fear-mongering tactics of the restrictionists, but rather accentuated the alien threat as an enduring one, and, more especially, as a Jewish one. Furthermore, in the articulation of that sentiment, the committee established a trend which would persist into later discussions of the aliens question by borrowing directly from imperialist discourse. The reference to the Jewish community as a 'colony', for example, is the most explicit example of this.[182]

Thus it seems, but for lack of urgency to implement restriction, together with the multitude of difficulties surrounding the regulation of legislation, the aliens question may have evoked serious debate both within and without the parameters of the committee. As it was, the lack of concrete statistical data prevented the Select Committee from confidently recommending restriction, as well as providing a useful excuse for the government not to act.

The final report of the Lords Select Committee on the Sweating System in 1890 'confirmed the government in their inertia' by refusing to wholly associate the 'evils of sweating' with alien immigration.[183] The committee had gone to considerable lengths to explore the issue by expanding their inquiries beyond the initial remit of London's East End – the typical breeding

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[180] PP 1889 Cd. 311, x 265, p. iv.
[181] Ibid., p. vii.
[182] PP 1889 Cd. 311, x 265, p. v; vii; viii.
[183] Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, pp. 168-9.

ground for the worst of society's ills – to encompass the whole of the United Kingdom. Over the course of two years, and documented in five reports to the House, the Lord's Select Committee undertook a near-exhaustive investigation into what they deemed to be one of the *fin de siècle's* worst social 'evils'.[184] As a consequence, the committee was able to confidently report that sweating was not only found in areas in which the alien population were concentrated but was a problem across the nation. Somewhat surprisingly, however – or at least 'against the grain' of popular perception – the committee barely registered the popular correlation between sweating and the alien Jew, showing quite clearly that they considered the Jewish community to be as equally vulnerable to its evils as were the 'native' population.[185] In its final report the committee in fact moderated its perception of 'the Jew' to seemingly objective observations of character and labour contributions rather than shaping remarks imbued with racial overtones and imperial condescension.[186]

Perhaps this rather surprising outcome might be accounted for by the contributions of female witnesses to the proceedings, contributions which helped to moderate the tone of the report compiled by the Lords Select Committee. The testimony of Fanny Eisenberger, for example, a young, orphaned Jewish Tailoress appears to have been quite a significant inclusion, clearing evoking sympathy rather than hostility for Jewish immigrants from the committee members. Although the tale of Fanny's sad plight contributed to an already existing picture of immigrant exploitation, the explicit image of female suffering which her testimony evoked virtually silenced the committee. Neither the chairman, nor any other of the committee members made any attempt to cross-examine or challenge the witness. Instead, after Fanny was directed to withdraw from the stand, the committee, presumably exhausted from that day's proceedings, adjourned until the following Tuesday.[187] Thus, it seems that pro-alien sentiment, or, at least empathy for the victims of the sweating system, operated along gender lines in this instance at least. The exploitation of a woman, more so that the exploitation of men, left the all-male committee indignant and appalled.

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[184] PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, *Select Committee of House of Lords on Sweating System, First Report*, p. iii.
[185] PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, *Fifth Report*, pp. iii-xlv, (p. xiii).
[186] Ibid., p. vi-vii; xiii; xliii.
[187] PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, *First Report*, p. 276-7.

Certainly it was a softening of opinion towards the Jewish immigrant which was altogether absent from the proceedings of the Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration. That committee, unlike its upper house equivalent, called *no* female witnesses throughout the entirety of its proceedings. The resulting report, as previously discussed, presented a masculinised conceptualisation of 'the alien', delineated as physically weak and morally degenerate. Neither female testimony nor feminine image mediated that largely negative, wholly masculine and masculinised perspective. Gender clearly functioned, both overtly and covertly, within the racialised outlook of the late nineteenth century politician.

The Royal Commission, the Alien, and the Spectre of Empire

Whatever the recommendations of the two Select Committees, however, the aliens issue received scant attention until the socio-economic conditions began to favour it. By the early 1890s both unemployment and alien immigration were visibly on the rise, prompting restrictionists both within and outside of parliamentary circles to increase their noisy agitation for legislation.[188] Public support for restrictive legislation had also begun to emerge at the grassroots *en masse* for the first time, coaxed into action by the establishment of 'The Association for Preventing the Immigration of Destitute Aliens', an organisation set up by politicians and peers affiliated to the anti-alien movement.[189] The Conservative Government under Lord Salisbury, however, remained hesitant to fully commit to legislation except as a tool to win the working class vote.[190] Even that tactic failed to ensure their re-election in the general election of 1892. The Liberals swept back into power under William Gladstone, firmly relegating restriction to the murky depths of near-obscurity, until Salisbury dared to capitalise upon the government's disunity by introducing an Aliens Bill to the Upper House in July 1894.[191] The bill's most contentious and furiously debated points related to the degree of power which would be awarded to inspectors at the port of disembarkation, the principle at stake and the practicality of expelling pauper aliens, and the

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[188]   Sir Howard Vincent, MP for Sheffield Central and long-time advocate of restriction, led the anti-alien campaign, challenging the government's data as to the number of immigrants in the country. See Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, p. 169 for a fuller discussion of the challenge brought by Vincent and others.

[189]   See Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, pp. 61-2.

[190]   Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, p. 172.

[191]   *Aliens Bill* (1894), The Sessional Papers of the House of Lords, Session 1894, vol. 3, public bills.

necessity of legislation to expel supposed anarchists.[192] On this last clause, it has been suggested, Salisbury exploited a 'climate of fear' which hung over the establishment in the wake of the French President's assassination.[193] In defence of his bill to the house Salisbury insisted that 'the time has come when we must not allow it to be said that we offer special facilities and practically special assistance to assassins', going on to explain that legislation against the alien anarchist would therefore preserve 'the peace and tranquillity of the realm'.[194] Of course this somewhat idealised image of Britain fooled no one, however it did accentuate and perpetuate the representation of 'the Jew' as a nihilistic figure, an unknown and unknowable entity, a consummate 'other' who acted outside the 'realm' of 'Britishness'.

However, Salisbury's bill of 1894 was not to be. Neither circumstance nor Lord Rosebery's Liberal government favoured it and it was blocked by the government after its second reading. The promise of a bill in the Conservative Party manifesto of 1900, however, together with pressure from below, prompted Balfour's Conservative government to re-address the issue. Growing popular agitation against the alien immigrant in London's East End began to escalate under the manipulative hand of the British Brothers' League (BBL) – an anti-alien organisation with a strongly nationalistic ideology, links to the Conservative party, and a tellingly masculine appellation – in the early years of the twentieth century. In view of such visible signs of social unrest, political parties began to see the aliens question as a key issue upon which their popularity might depend. That said, the 1903 Royal Commission's protracted investigations and tentative conclusions were by no means conducive to the passage of the strongly worded and 'water-tight' legislation which the restrictionists were hoping for. Indeed, some academic surveys have gone so far as to suggest that the formation of an investigative commission was intended as a 'delaying tactic' for a hesitant government rather than the decisive act of a party convinced of the necessity of legislation.[195] Led by MP for Stepney and founder of the anti-alien BBL William Evans-Gordon,

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[192] Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*), House of Lords: Official papers; vol. 26, 6 July 1894, col. 1047-1060; vol. 27, 17 July 1894, col. 117-156.
[193] In *The Alien Invasion*, p. 175, Gainer argues, in reference to Salisbury's bill that 'The depression was lifting […] the abuses of sweating were no worse than before, and immigration was declining, so that only the anarchist menace offered a plausible excuse for urgent legislation'.
[194] Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*), House of Lords: Official papers; vol. 26, 6 July 1894, col. 1054.
[195] Greg Smart is the latest scholar to problematise the direct link between the Royal Commission and the 1904 bill to restrict alien immigration. Commenting upon the response of the liberal *Daily News* to the commission's report, Smart observes that 'the committee had not provided enough evidence to support the recommendation for an Alien Bill' and thus, in consequence, 'the investigation had rather exposed the superficiality of the need for legislation and

the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration asked 23,569 questions to 175 witnesses over the course of 49 days. From that expansive evidence the commission concluded that although no case for complete restriction could be made, the restriction of 'undesirable' aliens into Britain was certainly to be recommended, as was the prevention of further immigrant settlement in overcrowded areas of East London.

The significance of the commission, a major government inquiry into a hugely controversial and divisive issue previously unresolved either directly or indirectly at committee level, seems obvious. Certainly hindsight suggests that the Royal Commission was, if not the catalyst for the passage of the Aliens Act of 1905 – the law which became the model for immigration regulation in Britain throughout the twentieth century – then at least it propelled the question of immigration restriction to the forefront of public consciousness. Yet no detailed study of the commission proceedings has been published. Bernard Gainer's *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905* repeatedly draws upon witness testimony from the commission throughout his study, which is, at times, forward-thinking in its attempts to deconstruct the prejudices of British society towards the 'alien' immigrant. Yet the text shows its flaws, and perhaps even its age, when the author wholeheartedly embraces certain anti-Semitic stereotypes at face value. Adopting the prejudicial perspective of the East Ender, Gainer explains to his reader that 'even by the rather low standard of East London, the immigrants lived most unhygienically' concluding that 'understandably, their habits revolted their English neighbours'.[196] Other historians have only alluded to the commission in passing, although all define it as the consequence of a growing agitation for action from certain sections of government and society, and make some mention of the resolute, restrictionist position of the majority of the commission members.[197] Lord Rothschild, British Jewry's representative within the commission, only found support from one other commission member, Sir Kenelm Digby, Under-Secretary at the Home Office, in his attempt to bring a more balanced perspective to the commission's proceedings.

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the extent to which the question had been exaggerated'. G. Smart, 'From Persecution to Mass Migration: The 'Alien' in Popular Print and Society', 1881-1906', Unpublished PhD Thesis, (University of Southampton, 2008), pp. 192-3. Gainer also defined the Royal Commission as a 'temporizing measure' in *The Alien Invasion*, p. 57.

[196] Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, p. 46.

[197] See, for example, E. C. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1880-1920*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); I. Finestein, *Jewish Society in Victorian England*, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1993); T. M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain 1656-2000*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).

David Feldman offers something of an exception to this rule of neglect by examining the testimony presented to the commission within a quasi-sociological and, occasionally, gendered framework.[198] Crucially Feldman shows how the repeated references to the 'unmanliness' of the Jewish immigrant, for instance, became a vital tool for discrediting the incomers by the anti-alien campaign.[199] Of most importance, however, is Feldman's assertion that amongst restrictionists from all social classes 'there was the same slippage from an economic to a cultural understanding of the evils of immigration'.[200] For example, Feldman demonstrates how the East End home and community, as sites of a semi-mythologized ideal-English-existence, were deemed to be under threat from the 'intrusion' of the immigrant into the economic sphere. Feldman utilises the testimony to the Royal Commission of James William Johnson, a Stepney labourer, who complained that 'this great influx is driving out the native from hearth and home' to depict how such an image of the East End was constructed. [201] This image was seized upon by middle-class restrictionists who bemoaned the immigrants' desecration of the Sabbath as exemplary of their un-neighbourly behaviour, implying the otherwise harmonious existence of the East End community. Indeed, insists Feldman, the potent iconography of the home and family also provided frequent 'explanation' for 'the immigrants' success in the labour and housing market'. The immigrants' alleged readiness to 'live beyond the pale of values and practices projected upon the native family' not only seemed to deliver greater financial returns, but also constructed an image of 'the Jew' as the antithesis to British respectability.[202] This interpretation seems key to an understanding of negative representations of 'the Jew' because it hints at the function of the rhetoric of gender, society and nation within the aliens debate; rhetoric which appeared to cross class boundaries.

Tony Kushner also contributes to an analysis of the commission proceedings, in his 'Jew and Non-Jew in the East End of London: Towards an Anthropology of "Everyday" Relations'.[203] Although Kushner acknowledges the significance of the commission report as a lengthy

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[198] D. Feldman, 'The Importance of being English: Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England', in *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, (eds.) D. Feldman and G. Stedman Jones, (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 56-84; *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
[199] Ibid., pp. 72-73.
[200] Feldman, 'The Importance of being English', p. 73.
[201] PP 1903 Cd. 1741 ix, vol. 2, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*, Q 8558.
[202] Feldman, 'The Importance of Being English', pp. 72-3.
[203] T. Kushner, 'Jews and Non-Jews in the East End of London: Towards an Anthropology of "Everyday" Relations', in G. Alderman and C. Holmes, *Outsiders and Outcasts*, (London: Duckworth, 1993), pp. 32-52.

testimonial account of Jewish and Gentile relations in the East End, he also takes care to qualify the often bleak testimony as 'hardly surprising given [the commission's] bias and the determination of Evans-Gordon and others to justify alien restriction'.[204]

Certainly the commission's inherent imbalance was obvious from the outset. The commission's warrant to investigate deemed it 'expedient' that 'the character and extent of the evils which are attributed to the unrestricted immigration of Aliens, especially into the metropolis' should be enquired into 'forthwith'.[205] The overbearing sense of urgency of this opening statement partly deflects attention from the highly subjective position which this 'democratic' commission assumed towards the immigrants (which may have been its intention). Even without this 'fear tactic' decoy, however, the resolute belief of a relationship between 'evil' and the 'immigrant alien' amongst the commission's members is clear. The commission's purpose was, simply, to decide 'the extent'.

It is also worth noting the singling out of London as the most troubled site of immigration. This preoccupation with London, and with its East End in particular, persisted throughout the commission's investigations, with much of the evidence given against the immigrant alien relevant only on a local rather than a national level. As Bernard Gainer observed, 'when cities other than the capital were cited as the homes of these unwelcome guests it was usually as an afterthought'.[206] This fascination with location, of course, reflected an enduring cultural and economic association between the East End and grinding urban poverty. By the 1880s, however, journalists and novelists had further exploited that association by 'establishing an image of the East End which was simple enough in outline to be grasped immediately by the general public; stark and emotive enough to stir consciences, yet inclusive enough to contain, in essence, the central problems already troubling late-Victorian social reformers'.[207] The image of the decaying 'city within a city' quickly became cultural currency. Thus an entrenched perception of the East End as a site of moral degeneration, social and economic agitation, and crime, must, crucially, be understood as the backdrop against which the alien was seen to exist, and, moreover, provided the context within which that existence was judged. Whilst writers of the early Victorian era such as Dickens and

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[204]   Kushner, 'Jews and Non-Jews in the East End', p. 38.
[205]   PP 1903 Cd. 1741 ix, vol. 1, *The Report*, warrant, p. vii.
[206]   Gainer, *The Alien Invasion*, p. 4.
[207]   P. J. Keating, 'Fact and Fiction in the East End', in H. J. Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds), *The Victorian City: Images and Reality*, vol. 2, (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 585-602, (p. 585).

Engels had done much to establish the East End as 'anachronistic space'[208] at the heart of the Empire, subsequent writers both cemented and exacerbated that image.[209]

Yet it was the reconfiguration of East London as an 'urban jungle' by the founder of the Salvation Army, General William Booth, which appears to shape the image of the alien metropolis alluded to within the commission proceedings. Booth's popular tale of urban decay, *In Darkest London and the Way Out* (1890) 'warned that the presence of savages in London was much more pervasive than the dilettantish aesthete, the cocaine user or the random gothic cannibal'.[210] Using the established metaphor of Africa – one with which late Victorian's were fascinated thanks to the publication of Henry Stanley's *In Darkest Africa, or the Quest, Rescue and Retreat of Emin Pasha, Governor of Equatoria* (1890) – Booth 'reimagines the urban poor as African natives and the East End as a jungle'.[211] The very real presence of 'dark-skinned' foreigners, be they Jews or Italians, in that urban space further contributed to the image of the East End as, not only, a foreign space, but as a snapshot of the empire come home.

This Africanised imagery naturally found more resonance within the dialogue between middle and upper class witnesses and the commission; those sections of society more likely to have read or discussed Booth's literary metaphor. James Lawson Silver, Alderman of the Stepney Borough Council, and occupier of positions on several other boards, for example, makes a derogatory reference to the Jewish immigrants as 'half-barbarians', a description evocative of the accounts of imperialist adventurers.[212] Moreover, the constant reference to the immigrant community as a 'colony', a term first employed by the aristocratic commission members, clearly borrows from imperialist discourse.

However, the evocation of a colonized, yet near-untameable landscape and people as a backdrop for their testimony was not the exclusive illustrative tool of the middle and upper classes.

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[208] Anne McClintock first termed the figuration of the East End within an imperial discourse as the creation of 'anachronistic space' in her *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 40-2.

[209] Keating's essay 'Fact and Fiction in the East End', importantly charts how London's East End was created and constructed within literature during the nineteenth century showing that, although other slum areas of London also received varying degrees of attention from social reformers and novelists alike, the image of the East End as the capital's 'worst end' persisted well into the twentieth century.

[210] J. McLaughlin, *Writing the Urban Jungle: Reading Empire in London from Doyle to Eliot*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), p. 79.

[211] McLaughlin, *Writing the Urban Jungle*, p. 80.

[212] PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, 61, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration. Minutes of Evidence*, Q. 2695.

Witnesses of the lower classes, themselves inhabitants of the 'urban jungle', also frequently articulated an image of the East End as an anarchic, chaotic space, for which they held the alien Jew responsible. Mr William Walker, a caretaker from Stepney Green, likened the streets around his house to a 'rabbit warren', and the Jews who lived in overcrowded conditions as comparable to 'bees in a beehive'.[213] The likening of Jews to bees was a metaphor in common usage throughout this period, as we have already seen in the previous chapter, and is one that I shall explore at greater length in the first chapter of the second section of this thesis. Yet what is worth observing here is the frequent tendency for *fin de siècle* intellectuals in Britain to utilise animal imagery with which to refer to the London poor.[214] It is thus particularly intriguing that William Walker, himself a member of the working classes, had internalised that evocative imagery – a received 'language' for articulating disdain and revulsion – and, in turn, employed it to express his distaste for the immigrant community's existence.

Yet this focus upon the presence of quasi-colonial references is not to suggest that a pointed Semitic discourse did not also surface within the testimony given to the commission. Rather, I suggest, racialised narratives of 'the Jew' were often intricately intertwined with, and expressed through, the vocabulary and outlook of an imperialist nation in the wake of the Boer War; a nation acutely aware of its imperial vulnerability. That the 'colony' was encamped in the heart of the empire's metropolis played into that pervading anxiety, accentuated within the media and popular culture of the era, of 'reverse colonization' (as will be discussed in relation to *Dracula* in the following chapter), or what some scholars have termed 'the empire writing back'.[215] This anxiety was further exacerbated by the particular identity of the Jews; an uncolonized and uncolonizable people over whom British imperialism could assert little or no power, and, in consequence, for whom they lacked an adequate language to describe. It is 'the Jew's' very elusiveness as neither the colonized nor the colonizer, as uncategorisable, which renders them such a threat. Bryan Cheyette has explored expressions of this ambiguity within imperial fiction, noting that simplistic racialised descriptions of 'white or black' were the key signifiers of difference

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[213]   Ibid., Q. 8967, 8970.
[214]   Tristram Hunt discusses this in his *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City*, (London: Phoenix, 2004), pp. 391-3.
[215]   Joseph Childers conducts an interesting discussion of this aspect of colonial history in 'At Home in the Empire', *Homes and Homelessness in the Victorian Imagination*, (eds.) M. Baumgarten and H. M. Daleski, (New York: AMS Press, 1998), pp. 215-25.

between the assumed superiority of European culture and the inferior African peoples. The figure of 'the Jew', however, existed within both these categories and yet could be contained by neither:[216] 'He was very dark – dark as a man can be and yet show no sign of colour in his blood'.[217] Within literature, 'the Jew' repeatedly assumed an ambiguous, racialised position as 'neither black nor white', which, argues Cheyette, exposed 'widespread tensions in imperial culture concerning the whiteness and racial purity of British society'.[218]

Signs of this anxiety, as well as a tendency for highly ambivalent representations of 'the Jew', similarly resonate throughout the testimony given to the commission. Numerous witnesses testify to a growing trend amongst the immigrant community to change their names from 'Jewish' to 'English' ones. This trend, feared the witnesses, would jeopardise the Briton's ability to identify the alien in their midst.[219] This anxiety, of course, not only draws upon imperial concerns, but also echoes traits of contemporary anti-Semitic discourse, which feared the assimilated invisibility of 'the Jew'. However, the interplay between these two discourses is not surprising. In his seminal study *Orientalism*, Edward Said pointed to the commonalities of the roots of anti-Semitism and imperial racism, or what he terms 'orientalism'.[220] Yet it is Bryan Cheyette who further assesses the association between these two racist ideologies, arguing for the need to revise post-colonial theory to incorporate within its analysis of the process of 'othering' the ambivalent position of 'the Jew'. He maintains that the uncomplicated perception of 'the Jew' by post-colonial theorists, as 'fixed in their whiteness and dominance' or 'their blackness and victimhood [...] replicate the very oppositions they are working against'.[221] Thus a reading of the amalgamation of these two racist discourses within the commission testimony helpfully complicates a simplistic interpretation of 'the Jew' as 'other', whilst simultaneously indicating the internalisation of an image of 'the Jew', by the commission witnesses, as an ambivalent, even transitional figure.

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[216]   B. Cheyette, 'Neither Black Nor White: The Figure of 'the Jew' in Imperial British Literature', *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity*, (eds.), L. Nochlin and T. Garb, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), pp. 31-41.
[217]   This is Anthony Trollope's introduction for his Jewish hero Anton Trendellsohn in *Nina Balatka*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) [first published 1867], p. 11. Cheyette cites this example in 'Neither Black Nor White', p. 31.
[218]   Cheyette, 'Neither Black Nor White, p. 31.
[219]   See PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 2426-2430; 8844-6.
[220]   E. Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003) [first published 1978], p. xviii to 2003 preface.
[221]   B. Cheyette, 'White Skin, Black Masks: Jews and Jewishness in the Writings of George Eliot and Frantz Fanon', *Cultural readings of Imperialism: Edward Said and the Gravity of History*, (eds.) K. Ansell Pearson, B. Parry and J. Squires, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1997), pp. 106-26, (p. 124).

Significantly, however, the evidence provided by the commission proceedings demonstrates that this treatment of the Jewish immigrant did not emanate from a particular section of society, but rather was a strategy of 'othering' which crossed class boundaries. It can be understood as a rare example of large-scale social complicity and unity. Council officials and shoemakers alike testified to the 'indecent' and 'unEnglish' behaviour of the immigrants. What is interesting is that although the majority of witnesses, regardless of class and occupation, propounded similar conclusions, patriarchal hierarchies still dominated the quantity of testimony given and the order in which that testimony was received. The first five days upon which the commission sat to hear evidence, for instance, was devoted entirely to the testimony of official and high-profile figures, such as the Deputy Controller-General of the Commercial, Labour and Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, and Arnold White, the well-published and outspoken supporter of restriction. It was only after this period that the testimony of the working classes was called upon.

Women were sidelined to an even greater extent, with just three women giving evidence amongst a total of almost 200 witnesses called. Yet their testimony, although inherently polemical in its own right, and in terms of its relationship to the testimony of the other female witnesses, did not share the imperial-centric configuration of 'the Jew' which was a prominent feature of the male testimony. Certainly there is a case to argue that, at least from the evidence of the commission, imperialist discourse, as a highly masculinised language of power, was the preserve of men.

Despite this gendered distinction, the female witnesses still engaged with the figure of 'the Jew' through the prism of difference. Mrs Frances James, the owner of a lamp and oil shop in the Mile End Road, and Mrs Ayres, an East End Midwife, for example, willingly employ behavioural comparisons between Englishman and foreigner, of 'us' and 'them'. 'They [the immigrants] have so many living in the same house. We [the English] could not live like that', insisted Mrs James when asked how the aliens manage to afford the inflated rents of the East End.[222] Mrs Ayres also readily distinguished between the living standards she had perceived amongst the native East Enders, and those habits she had observed within the Jewish community: 'Whole families, with elders and grown-up sons and daughters, exist in one room – it is not living, it is existing; I have seen four bedsteads for adults and a heap on the floor in one room [...] they live like pigs in a sty,

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[222]   PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 9239.

many of them, and are as dirty'.[223]   Thus, to these witnesses, the difference is palpable, and, importantly, is most acute or is of most offence when observed within the domestic sphere. Moreover, animal imagery is once again a key linguistic tool through which disdain is articulated. What is more, where the female testimony does take on a more explicitly vicious racialised dimension (although still incomparable with the male testimony), as is the case with Mrs Ayres' testimony, there remains a preoccupation with alleged misdemeanours within the domestic space.

The final female witness, Mrs Levy, a District Visitor in Manchester *and* the East End, adopts a contrary position to that expressed by Mrs James and Mrs Ayres, propounding an increasingly impassioned defence of the immigrant community whom she declares to be 'sober, moral, industrious, thrifty, excellent fathers, mothers, and wives, willing to learn and easy to teach'.[224]   Certainly the statement is high praise indeed, and yet although that testament to the 'worthiness' of the foreign Jew comes from the lips of a fellow Jew, the witness unequivocally frames her praise of the alien community within the strict moral and gender codes of the Edwardian period.   That is to say, Mrs Levy articulated her defence of the immigrant in a cultural language with which the commission could identify.   Furthermore, she cleverly indicated the potential malleability, through education, of the alien Jew to anglicisation.   Thus one might be persuaded to perceive an element of design behind Mrs Levy's otherwise rambling testimony; to imply that Jews will make good citizens.   Despite her efforts to counter charges of 'difference', however, Mrs Levy does not wholly avoid the binary perspectives of 'us' and 'them' which framed the evidence of her fellow female witnesses, by repeatedly announcing her loyalty to the Jewish people by adopting the plural 'we'.   Thus, ironically it is Mrs Levy who reiterates the image of the ambivalent Jew; in her attempt to unite her acculturated understanding of British values with her sympathetic appreciation for Jewish traditions she compromises the integrity and stability of her own identity.

However, despite the disparate attitudes of the female witnesses towards the Jewish community, the language and imagery employed to articulate an impression of 'the Jew', whether that was positive or negative, indicated an attitude which, in many regards, can be understood as distinctively feminine. This conclusion is repeatedly borne out in the persistent focus upon Jewish

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[223]   Ibid., Q. 9408-9.
[224]   PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 17899.

lifestyles within the domestic sphere throughout the testimonies of all three female witnesses. Although the input of the questioner in determining the subject matter must not be forgotten, that all three witnesses repeatedly choose to draw upon domestic examples to support their answers, despite their observations of the community having been gleaned from a professional standpoint, implies the infiltration of a gendered perspective. Certainly, it seems something of an irony that the one point on which the contrasting accounts of Mrs Ayres and Mrs Levy agree is that women make far more effectual housing inspectors than men because, suggested Mrs Levy, 'they are far cleverer in perceiving where there is an attempted concealment of insanitary conditions'.[225]

Interestingly, there is a degree of intertextuality between Mrs Levy's and Mrs Ayres' witness testimonies, despite their having been delivered eight months apart. In the midst of her opening statement to the commission, Mrs Levy makes a direct reference to 'the evidence of Mrs Ayres, midwife, of 45, Jubilee Street', defining her testimony as 'so full of inaccuracies to anyone knowing the nature of these foreign Jews that it seems to me she has received some real or imaginary harm from these people which has prevented her from judging them fairly'.[226] This blunt challenge to the objectivity of Mrs Ayres' evidence not only further accentuates the polemical attitudes of these two witnesses to the Jewish immigrant, but, through the object of that attack, another woman, suggests an approach to the giving of testimony which, at its core, is gendered. Certainly Mrs Ayres' evidence is the only testimony which Mrs Levy directly attempts to discredit, possibly because she was instinctively drawn to another woman's testimony, or perhaps because she recognised that, within the male-dominated proceedings, another woman's testimony is the only testimony she may legitimately attack. The only other witness Mrs Levy discusses by name, Mr Coote, she tentatively requests the commission's permission to do so. Such a formality is not reserved for her challenge to the evidence presented by Mrs Ayres.

Yet it should not be forgotten that, however distinctive, the contributions of the female witnesses to the commission proceedings were marginal. The decidedly masculine tone of the proceedings is unmistakable, which certainly accounts for the blatantly gendered treatment of the commission's subject matter; the alien Jew, whose representation throughout the proceedings

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[225] PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 17899.
[226] PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 17899.

evoked, by default, the figure of the *male* immigrant. Both positive and negative representations of the alien Jew conjured up images which were distinctly masculine, and dwelt to a large extent upon the male sphere. Where the male witnesses discussed the typically feminine spheres of the home and family it was usually observations of how the male Jew acted and reacted to the other actors within that sphere. James William Johnson, a member of the British Brothers' League, testified that, unlike the Englishman, the alien sent his wife to work, claiming that this was 'evidence' of his unmanliness.[227] Although this accusation 'reflects more the assumption that being a husband was synonymous with providing support than the pattern of work in the immigrant colony',[228] nevertheless it is one example of the emasculative process which underlay the restrictionists' attacks upon the immigrant Jew. Moreover, although this line of attack was familiar to anti-Semitic rhetoric, it was also echoed within the imperialist campaign against colonized, or soon-to-be colonized peoples. Within the highly masculine world of imperial endeavour, the subjugated male often came under brutal and widespread verbal attack for their 'savage' ways and behaviour, which was deemed utterly distinct from the behaviour of an 'Englishman'. Whilst, then, these disparaging representations of foreign masculinities can be understood simply as part of the colonizing process, as a show of primal dominance, the internalisation and implementation of such attitudes by a broad spectrum of society, as seems evident from the commission's proceedings, is certainly of some interest. In light of this, it seems little wonder that the female Jewish immigrant received scant attention from the commission's witnesses. Within an imperialist discourse, women were not seen as threats to the security of the empire. Rather their destiny was tied implicitly to that of their men: if the men fell into line, the women would follow.

Thanks to this underlying assumption, it is more difficult to glean a definite impression of the Jewish immigrant woman as the commission's witnesses perceived her. Perhaps this marginalisation of the Jewish woman in part reveals the dominant perspective of the commission; a masculinised viewpoint far more concerned with the public rather than the private sphere. Indeed, as has already been discussed, it was generally the female rather than the male witnesses who conceived of the aliens question as one which had relevance not just to the housing and job market but also to the very cultural and moral fabric of the home.

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[227] Ibid., Q 8560.
[228] Feldman, 'The Importance of being English', pp. 72-3.

One topic of discussion that did appear to reoccur in both male and female testimony was that of sexual morality. Witnesses repeatedly testified that the entire family slept together in the same room, which, more often than not, served as the family's only reception room for visitors, and in some instances, as the workroom also.[229] The multifunctional purposes for living quarters, a scenario born of necessity, nevertheless disgusted many witnesses as an 'indecent' practice when measured against the high standards of a society trained to be morally vigilant. Yet, in contrast to the thinking of the day, the female Jew was not singled out by witnesses as responsible for the sexual morality of the family.

The sexual morality, or immorality, of the Jewish alien was not only discussed through reserved and speculative examples however. Some witnesses ventured to formulate the immigrants' sexual behaviour and preferences as something entirely foreign and perverse to British sensibilities. One witness, for instance, testified 'to the case of a Roumanian Jewess – a girl of, I believe, 15 – in our workhouse at the present time with a child of which she alleges her parent to be the father'.[230] The charge of incest, whilst not an impossibility within the overcrowded slums of London, should perhaps be conversely understood as an internalisation, by the witness, of an imperialist discourse on sexuality. The 'perverse' sexual practices of the colonized people, most especially those observed on the 'dark continent' of Africa, was a favourite topic of discussion within the popular press throughout the colonial period.[231] Imagining the sexual practices of the Jewish community, the 'colony' of aliens living at the very heart of the empire, through the prism of condescending imperialism, was only too easy. However, the association of Jewish immigrants with dangerous and degenerative sexual behaviour at the turn-of-the-century also extended beyond an imperialist voyeurism. The trafficking of Eastern European Jewish women into Britain's sex industry, in what became known as the white slave trade, was a very real issue, and one which restrictionists were only too eager to exploit. The lengthy and damning testimony of Mr William Alexander Coote (of whom Mrs Levy made mention), secretary of the National Vigilance Association, to the commission, exemplified the restrictionists' willingness to smear the immigrant community's image with the sex scandal of organised and large-scale prostitution. Mr Coote,

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[229] See, for example, PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 2520; Q. 3276; Q. 3427.
[230] PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 2627.
[231] See J. Schneer, *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999) for an excellent discussion of popular perceptions of colonized people in turn-of-the-century London.

however, takes the accusations one step further. In a rare reference to the female immigrant, the witness claimed that Jewish women were not only involved in 'simple prostitution' but in 'special forms of vice' which 'our English girls do not understand'. Furthermore, insisted Mr Coote, that perverse sexuality endangered 'our young men, who are simply demoralised, body, soul and spirit',[232] a warning which implicitly invoked the stereotype of the carnally insatiable 'Jewess' – a staple of the gendered Semitic stereotype of the *fin de siècle*.[233]

Gendering the Alien: Commendation, Degeneration and Legislation

Despite the conclusion of the commission's investigations in 1903, the figure of 'the Jew' continued to occupy discussions within the Edwardian political arena. Following the recommendations of the commission, the Conservative Home Secretary Aretas Akers-Douglas introduced a bill 'to make regulations with respect to the immigration of aliens', in March 1904.[234] Although it departed from the more radical elements of Salisbury's 1894 bill and its subsequent variations, Akers-Douglas' bill still configured the alien – an implicit reference to 'the Jew' – against the familiar images of the dangerous and disruptive anarchist, the hardened criminal, and the diseased and degenerative pauper. Thus in all of their multiple and mutating forms, the alien immigrant persisted as a threat and a danger to Britain. What is more, that threat was presented as an explicitly masculine one; the alien being referred to in the masculine form throughout the bill. Legislation directly referring to the female immigrant was relegated to the bill's 'schedule' in which regulations to exclude persons convicted of prostitution were laid out.[235] Indeed, the polemical positioning of the female Jewish immigrant as either 'mother' or, as in this case, 'prostitute' was both directly inherited from testimony presented to the Royal Commission, and was, indirectly, a product of Victorian and Edwardian constructions of femininity. Certainly the

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[232] PP 1903 Cd. 1742, ix, Q. 12589.

[233] Nadia Valman explores this stereotype in great depth throughout her important survey of *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, tracing this conceptualisation of the Jewish woman from early century literary culture such as Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819) and Eugene Scribe's *La Juive* (1835) to *fin de siècle* Anglo-Jewish literature which depicted Jewish women as confined by 'outdated, "oriental" patriarchy'.

[234] PP 1904 Cd. 147, vol. l.41, *Bill to make provision with respect to the Immigration of Aliens, and other matters incidental thereto*; Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*), House of Commons: Official papers; vol. 132, 29 March 1904, col. 987.

[235] PP 1904 Cd. 147, vol. l.41, p. 8.

dissident character of 'the prostitute' played into popular cultural images of the Jewish woman as a sexually alluring yet subversive force.

Thus Akers-Douglas' bill represented both the male and female Jew as a potential menace to the state of the nation, qualifying the need for legislation primarily on these grounds. Interestingly, however, it was not until that bill ran the gauntlet of parliamentary debate, undergoing numerous changes, that the alien threat was also conceived within the parameters of class. Under clause 8 on the revised bill of April 1905, 'the expression "immigrant" in this Act' was defined as 'an alien steerage passenger who is to be landed in the United Kingdom'.[236] The revised bill thus not only sought to exclude immigrants on the grounds of asocial behaviour, but also defined and confined persons with the potential for this type of behaviour to the lowest economic class.

Yet, at no point throughout the two versions of the bill and the final act which followed, was the word 'Jew' mentioned, although it was everywhere implied. Whilst the party leader and Prime Minster Arthur Balfour insisted that the aliens question was not a 'Jewish question',[237] the implicit association of the aliens issue with the growing Jewish community of the East End of London endured both within the popular imagination and within the minds of the politicians. The parliamentary debates generated by the aliens question make the association abundantly clear. One need only turn to the deliberations which occurred throughout 1904 and 1905 to observe that the aliens debate was heavily underpinned with race discourse which drew repeatedly upon the established tropes of anti-Semitic and philo-Semitic representations. From the outset, politicians debated the merits of a Jewish immigrant presence in Britain with the aid of a highly-racialised vocabulary. The Liberal Peer Lord Belper's condemnation of the alien community as 'a low type of civilisation', for example, was by no means unusual.[238] Yet, whilst the comparison of racial 'qualities' was certainly a feature of the arguments of those in support of restriction, it was by no means theirs exclusively. From the very first day of the parliamentary debates generated by the Aliens Bill, Sir Charles Dilke, the Liberal MP for the Forest of Dean and a fervent opponent of restriction, tapped into the contemporary discourse of scientific racism in support of his defence of the Jewish immigrant:

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[236]   PP 1905, Cd. 187, vol. l.59, *Bill to amend the Law with regards to Aliens*, p. 6.
[237]   *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 145, 2 May 1905, col. 795.
[238]   *Hansard*, House of Lords, vol. 150, 28 July 1905, col. 750.

'Miserable as may be their [the immigrants'] condition when they come here, they are not of a stock inferior to our own. They are of a stock which, when it mixes with our own in course of years, goes rather to improve than to deteriorate the British race.' [Ministerial cries of 'oh!'][239]

Dilke's remarks, it seems, were not well received. Certainly such a complimentary perception of the immigrant community's racial 'worth' found few sympathetic ears within the Houses of Parliament. Instead, 'the Jew' as immigrant was repeatedly incorporated within, and valued against, an unspoken racial hierarchy which implicitly deemed western European migrants of a comparably greater worth. The Huguenots, French Protestants persecuted by Louis XIV in the seventeenth century, were, in particular, continually evoked within the parliamentary discussions as an example of a successful and welcome immigrant group, against whose legacy the immigrant Jews could not be favourably compared. As Claude Hay, the Conservative MP for Shoreditch and Hoxton, told the House in July 1905, 'the Huguenots brought their wealth and skill and were competent men. They formed no Ghettos and they sweated no labour'.[240] Similar views were expressed just a few weeks later in the House of Lords by Lord James of Hereford who acknowledged that the nation owed a debt of gratitude to the Huguenots for 'the services they rendered us by their trades'. Importantly, however, he doubted 'that when we give to the unskilled agriculturalist from Russian Poland great indulgence or superior opportunity we are paying to the right persons the debt which we owe to the immigrants of former times'.[241] Clearly the obvious resistance to the immigrant Jew was both manifold and deeply rooted. However it was not a resistance based upon anti-Semitic prejudices alone, but rather upon a broader racialised view with a propensity for the familiar as opposed to the unknown, cultural similarities against religious difference, the comfort of the traditional against the fear of the modern.

Opponents of the Aliens Bill attempted to counter this unfavourable racialised perspective by pointing out that a diverse range of immigrants into Britain in previous eras had proved themselves to be 'useful' and 'well adjusted' citizens: 'We have had statesmen, manufacturers,

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[239] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 132, 29 March 1904, col. 995.
[240] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 148, 3 July 1905, col. 851.
[241] *Hansard*, House of Lords, vol. 150, 28 July 1905, col. 767.

merchants, and the like who themselves, or their predecessors, came to this country as aliens exactly as do those people you now wish to exclude. It seems to me a useless and short-sighted, and at this moment very largely an inhuman policy, to keep out those who may after all be like those of whom I have just spoken.'[242] Yet within such rhetoric remained the inference that although the Jewish alien might possess the *potential* to transcend the boundaries between his immigrant origins and respectable British society, there could be no guarantee of complete success. There was an expectation that ethnic identity be abandoned in favour of 'Britishness', and yet that sacrifice in no way fully erased one's life narrative of racial 'difference'. The evocation of well-known figures of alien ancestry, such as Benjamin Disraeli, for example, within the parliamentary debates attests to the permanence of the label of 'difference' which Edwardian politicians felt an immigrant past brought to bear.[243] In the case of the Jewish immigrant there was no question, even from their supporters, that Jewish racial and cultural difference could be completely erased, or, to state this point more clearly, there was no question that 'the Jew' could assume the mask of 'Britishness' which the 'true' Briton could not penetrate.

Yet 'difference' was not only viewed through stark and one-dimensional perceptions of racial identity. The figure of the immigrant Jew was also imagined as a gendered being, and thus was judged not only by the standards of 'Britishness', but was also held up against a paradigm of British masculinity. Whilst restrictionists justified their support of the aliens bill on the pretence of protecting British trade and standards of living, the subtle implication remained that 'the Jew' – imagined only in the masculine form – should not be permitted to enter because he would not abide by the same 'codes of honour' which were sentimentally attributed to the British working-class man. Thus, as a consequence of such thinking, it was something of an inevitability that sweating was seen as an exclusively Jewish 'evil', of which the British working man was simply not capable. With regard to the reported living conditions of the immigrant community, here too the restrictionist camp repeatedly sought to align themselves with evidence which attested that 'the Jew' existed in an environment in which the British man could not and would not. Thus those in

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[242] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 133, 25 April 1904, col. 1082.
[243] Disraeli is evoked alongside Brunel and Labouchere by MP for Lynn Regis Mr Gibson Bowles as examples of men of 'alien' heritage whose services Britain had greatly profited by. *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 148, 3 July 1905, col. 795.

favour of the aliens bill not only imagined 'the Jew' as racially incompatible with 'Britishness', but also, as a subset of that, moulded by an entirely different gender cast.

Thus questions of belonging and of Jewish compatibility with 'Britishness' were central to the Edwardian aliens debate. Beyond the Houses of Parliament such issues were played out on the world stage. Just prior to the introduction of Akers-Douglas' Aliens Bill, the colonial secretary Joseph Chamberlain brought the issue of Jewish statehood to the fore by proposing to the Zionist Congress of 1903 that they make their homeland in a portion of British East Africa. The British Uganda Programme, although marketed as a direct response to Jewish persecution in Russia, also conveniently offered at least a partial solution to the influx of foreign Jews into Britain. It was no accident that Chamberlain's offer of 5,000 square miles of what is modern day Kenya coincided with the recommendations of the Royal Commission that the flow of immigrants be diverted from the over-populated East End of London. In short 'the Jew', Nadia Valman and Eitan Bar-Yosef have perceptively written, was 'sufficiently white to settle East Africa for King and Country, but not white enough to settle in the East End'.[244]

This starkly ambivalent attitude towards 'the Jew', an explicit feature of the testimony provided to the Royal Commission, had thus most certainly seeped into the parliamentary debates. It was perhaps most visible within the discourse of comparable marginality through which both support for, and opposition to, 'the Jew' was repeatedly framed. The immigrant community, for example, was continually compared not only with other migrant groups such as the Huguenots, but also with the 'British' working classes. The Conservative MP for Durham North-West, Mr Atherley-Jones, declared in July 1905 that 'the evidence laid before the Royal Commission distinctly established that the general body of foreigners who came to this country were industrious, sober people, who seldom differed from the wage-earning classes in this country. They, in fact, compared favourably with the British wage-earning classes in these respects. It was also shown that so far as moral character was concerned they compared favourably with the British artisans.'[245] Superficially, then, such a comparison appeared suggestive of the assimilable potential of the Jewish community, not least because they were perceived to possess qualities such as morality and sobriety which were valued highly within Edwardian society. Yet that the comparison

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[244] E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman (eds.), *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 3.
[245] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 148, 3 July 1905, col. 823.

pointedly referred only to the 'wage-earning classes' – themselves an acutely marginalized and perplexing group at the heart of the empire – accentuates the implicitly ambivalent attitude towards 'the Jew' which resided at the core of Edwardian political discourse. The speech of Charles Trevelyan, Liberal Member for the Elland Division of Yorkshire, to the House on 25 April 1904 depicted the commonalities between, and ambivalence towards the alien Jew and the British poor still further, asserting that 'the only difference really to be found among the very poor and impoverished aliens and the English is that the English native sweeps the dirt under the bed and that the alien throws it out of the window'.[246] This somewhat flippant, and less than glowing account of sanitary attitudes amongst the country's poor, however, is suggestive of more than a distaste amongst the upper classes for the slovenly lifestyles of the country's 'wage-earning classes'. Rather its condescending tone, and its reference to the 'English' poor as 'natives', is indicative of the perspective of the colonizer towards the colonized. Thus, a quasi-colonial gaze encompassed both the alien Jew and the alien native alike, establishing both of these groups as unequivocally 'other'.

Attitudes, then, towards the alien Jew within the parliamentary debates were not only explored through comparative examples of marginality, or framed solely by an imperialist discourse. They were also heavily influenced by the self-interested and patronising perspective of class. Mr Trevelyan characterised this perspective when he announced his expectation 'that as the conditions of life for those people [the immigrant Jewish community] improve they will be just as susceptible to improvement as ever the Scotch were or as ever the English were'.[247] Of course, the Scottish and English to whom he refers, one might plausibly assume, were not of his class, but were of a class likely to 'benefit' from his 'civilising' influence. What is more, this evident need to impose order and control upon the chaotic and uncultured is reminiscent of the imperialist view which overlay the attitudes of those giving testimony on the East End to the Royal Commission of 1903.

Although participants in the parliamentary debates generated by the Royal Commission report attempted to broaden their understanding of the aliens question beyond its association within that one location, the perception that the matter at hand was a matter of control, and class

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[246] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 133, 25 April 1904, col. 1081.
[247] Ibid.

control at that, did not abate. That said, some MPs did demonstrate an awareness of the discriminatory position adopted by their fellow politicians towards the 'pauper alien', repeatedly arguing that legislation to restrict the entry of the poor into Britain did not necessarily equate to the prevention of anarchic and 'anti-social' elements. 'That kind of scoundrel did not come in the steerage', John Burns, Liberal MP for Battersea, reminded the house. 'He stole an English countess's jewels at Berlin, or a first-class passenger's tickets at Calais or Dieppe, looked like a German count, and talked like a foreign waiter.'[248] However, for the majority of the house, the distinction between those who should be admitted and those who should not was dependent upon who was deemed able to 'decently' support himself and his dependents. 'Who was to be the judge of decency?' asked the Liberal Durham MP John Wilson in July 1905, to no avail. 'There were some men whose judgement might be affected by an attack of indigestion after dinner.'[249] That might well have been so, yet the majority of the house, educated and cultured men of aristocratic descent, could not rid themselves of the association between poverty and anarchy. Against the background of steadily growing socialist agitation throughout Europe and the United States, perhaps this was hardly surprising.

Yet articulations of class control, as a signifier for immigrant control, were also underpinned by imperialist rhetoric. William Haynes Fisher, Fulham's Conservative MP, for example, reiterated the previously uttered sentiments of numerous MPs when he asked the house in May 1905, 'Why should we not, in regard to this question, have similar powers to those possessed by the United States and almost everyone of our colonies?'[250] Although a seemingly reasonable request, at the core of such sentiment lay a hint of indignation that the great 'motherland' lagged behind its colonies and its former colony in legislative matters. What is more, however, coupled with that indignation one might also discern the merest whiff of panic of what such an 'oversight' might mean. The Edwardians' ever-present fear of what Stephen Arata has termed 'reverse colonization', a scenario in which 'the colonizer finds himself in the position of the colonized',[251] seems central to an understanding of the restrictionists' agitation for legislative measures to prevent further immigration. Major Evans-Gordon, the Conservative Member for

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[248]   *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 148, 3 July 1905, col. 867-8.
[249]   Ibid., col. 855.
[250]   *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 145, 2 May 1905, col. 756.
[251]   S. Arata, The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization, *Victorian Studies,* vol. 33, no. 4, (Summer 1990), pp. 621-45, (p. 623).

Stepney and arguably the Aliens Bill's fiercest supporter, deemed it a serious error that immigrants claiming to have been persecuted within their own country 'be allowed to come into this country free from all inquiry', going on to infer that their presence would endanger and make victims of the British people.[252]

Certainly such a fear had very recently been temporarily realised as a result of a series of tactical defeats the British suffered at the hands of South African republicans in the early stages of Britain's last imperial war; the Anglo-Boer War. Both the British government and the British public were shocked to learn that republican agitators from this far-off colony had besieged a number of British garrisons. The government responded in 1900 with a show of imperial strength, pouring in tens of thousands of troops from Britain and the commonwealth to suppress the ill equipped, yet impassioned Boers. Despite Britain's eventual victory in 1902, the memory of that hard-fought war, and of the 'dirty tactics' employed, were both injurious and enduring for British imperial and national confidence.

Within the parliamentary debates generated by the Aliens Bill, the damaging legacy left behind by the Boer War is palpable. That politicians from both parties attempted to negotiate a 'fine line' between maintaining the façade of imperial strength, whilst conducting necessary repairs to Britain's tattered image as a tolerant and liberal 'master', is abundantly evident. It is through the figure of 'the Jew' that these dual, and somewhat contradictory, objectives seem to run. The alien Jew was conversely imagined as an imperial subject to be controlled and suppressed, and as a persecuted refugee to be admitted and pitied. Yet these conflicting attitudes were not always championed, as one might expect, by opposing sides of the debate. Instead 'the Jew', ever the malleable signifier of ambivalent attitudes, was repeatedly configured against both of these identities, often by the same individual. The then MP for Oldham and newly declared Liberal, Winston Churchill, epitomised this trend. In July 1905, he appeared to insist upon the importance of extending legal rights to immigrant aliens in a court of appeal, whilst, just a few moments later, he declared to the house that he was 'not seeking to safeguard the rights of immigrants, because [he] knew in some quarters, at least, they were regarded as sewage'.[253] This seemingly fickle and contrived treatment of 'the Jew' might be understood less as an expression of

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[252] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 133, 25 April 1904, col. 1086.
[253] *Hansard*, House of Commons, vol. 148, 3 July 1905, col. 797, 811.

ambivalence towards immigration, or even towards the Jewish alien, but as emblematic of a more deeply rooted anxiety about the pressures of change and modernity and how Britain might fare against them.

The Boer War had already brought that anxiety to the fore, provoking worrying questions as to Britain's imperial strength and dominance, and the morality behind her imperial practice. Concerns over Britain's national health had also arisen when it became known that over thirty percent of army recruits who underwent a medical inspection in 1899 were classified as 'unfit' to serve. Over the course of the Boer War the statistics barely improved, adding fuel to the fire of those who argued that Britain's imperial strength was severely threatened by pervasive national 'degeneracy'.[254] In response to the growing public outcry over the issue, calls within and beyond government were made for the formation of a commission to gather information 'as to [the] causes of physical deficiency and as to the best available methods for remedying defects and improving national health'.[255] To this end, the Inter-Departmental Committee of Physical Deterioration was formed in September 1903. The association between the arrival of the Jewish immigrant, and the apparent outbreak of physical degeneracy was quick to be drawn. John Gray, secretary of the British Association's Anthropometric Committee, told the Inter-Departmental Committee in 1903 that

> [...] the history of Poland is an awful example of national ruin brought about by unrestricted immigration of degenerate aliens. About 600 years ago the Jews were invited to settle in Poland at a time when they were cruelly persecuted in every other [European] country. [....] At that date the Poles had the high average stature which the other races of northern Europe still possess. Poland now contains the largest percentage of Jews and the lowest average stature in northern Europe.[256]

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[254] M. Hendley, '"Help us to secure a strong, healthy, prosperous and peaceful Britain": The social arguments for compulsory military service in Britain, 1899-1914', *Canadian Journal of History*, (August 1995), pp. 1-25, (p. 4).
[255] PP 1903 Cd. 1501 xxxviii, *Memorandum by the Director-General, Army Medical Service on the Physical Unfitness of Men Offering Themselves for Enlistment in the Army*, p. 7.
[256] PP 1904 Cd. 2210 xxxii, 145, *Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, Minutes of Evidence and List of Witnesses*, Q. 3,257.

The implication of Gray's testimony, that Jewish immigration into Britain threatened the physical health of the race and nation as had apparently been the case in Poland, found its way into the parliamentary debates over the Aliens Bill. Balfour's Foreign Secretary, the Marquess of Lansdowne, declared to the House of Lords in 1905 that 'if he [the Jewish immigrant] is a perfectly able-bodied, healthy man who will without doubt be able to take his place amongst our labouring population' then he had no objection to the entrance of such a man into the country.[257] The emphasis on physicality and health in place of other, perhaps more logical, concerns such as the immigrant's financial situation and level of skills, is striking. Concerns about Britain's physical deterioration had evidently spilled over into the aliens debate.

However those anxieties, when filtered through the figure of 'the Jew', were not broadly applied within the testimony presented to the Interdepartmental Committee of Physical Deterioration, but were, instead, distinctly gendered. The male Jew, as we have seen, provoked considerable concern. John Gray's lengthy and prolonged tirade against 'the Jew' as 'an exceedingly degenerative type'[258] drew clout from the nagging fears regarding the health and physicality of the British male. Gray took care to firmly categorise Jewish degeneracy as a threat to Britain's imperial strength, proclaiming that 'our position among civilised nations in peace and war depends on the maintenance of a high average physique'.[259]

Yet despite Gray's best efforts, discussion of the degenerative male Jew within the testimony to the Committee on Physical Deterioration was almost completely eclipsed by the quantity and consistency of evidence which referenced the Jewish female immigrant. For the first time within the British political arena it was the Jewish woman who dominated discussion. What is more, that discussion entertained neither hostility nor ambivalence towards the Jewish immigrant, but rather embraced a pro-Jewish stance. A member of the committee, Colonel Fox, summed up these collective, complimentary attitudes:

[...] we have had evidence from a great number of people that the Jewish mothers feed their children much better. And not only know what is best for them, but know how to cook it,

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[257] *Hansard*, House of Lords, vol. 150, 28 July 1905, col. 764.
[258] PP 1904 Cd 2210, Q. 3371.
[259] Ibid., Q. 3336.

and that they are thrifty and more abstemious, and that is the reverse with our Christian people [...][260]

Much of this good mothering was attributed to the 'domestic character' of the Jewish people. 'A Jewish woman is expected to take care of her home. In the poorest classes the married man does not expect his wife to assist in earning', Charles Booth informed the committee in January 1904.[261] Yet this image of model maternal behaviour and conduct, whilst grounded in a semblance of truth, was no less a mythologized construct than that of the physically inferior and diseased male Jew. As Lara Marks has rightly pointed out, 'not all Jewish women conformed to the idealised notions of motherhood. This was particularly the case for unmarried Jewish mothers and deserted wives whose presence did not accord with the ideal nuclear family model proposed by the Jewish community or the outside world'.[262] Nevertheless this stereotype established the Jewish mother as a positive role model for gentile mothers to follow. Indeed, good mothering, a persistent theme of the committee's discussions, was repeatedly evoked as the solution to the manifestations of the nation's physical deterioration: high infant mortality, declining birth rates, and the persistently poor health and fitness of recruits attempting to join the war in South Africa. That both politicians and medical authorities alike advocated following the domestic example set by otherwise contentiously regarded immigrants, seems surprising. At the very least, it perhaps reflects the perceived magnitude of the degeneracy 'crisis'. On another level, however, it serves as a reminder of the gender-specific character of Semitic representations. The image of the Jewish female, as mother, departed from the dominant association between immigration and crisis, and was, instead, imagined within the parameters of an empathetic and sympathetic race and gender discourse.

Of course, the model Jewish mother – an undeniably strong illustration of the female immigrant 'other' – was counterbalanced within popular discursive arenas of the day by her moral nemesis, the Jewish prostitute. Whilst the Jewish mother was praised for her conduct, which, by its example, was perceived to counteract national decline, the Jewish prostitute was condemned for

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[260]   PP 1904 Cd 2210, Q. 10356.
[261]   Ibid., Q. 1169.
[262]   L. Marks, *Model Mothers: Jewish Mothers and Maternity Provision in East London, 1870-1939*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 3.

undermining the health and strength of the family, nation and empire.[263] Yet, interestingly, the Jewish prostitute warranted no direct mention by the Interdepartmental Committee of Physical Deterioration, although the danger of syphilis, a disease traditionally associated with prostitution, was a great talking point.

The persistent manipulation of 'the Jew' as the conduit for national anxieties was an unmistakable feature of Semitic representations both within the numerous commissions deployed to directly and indirectly investigates the aliens issue, and within the parliamentary debates generated by those commissions' recommendations. The endurance of ambivalent attitudes towards 'the Jew' assisted this manipulation by configuring the immigrant Jew as a usefully malleable figure; familiar and yet alien, white and yet black, potentially assimilable and yet utterly racially fixed. Yet despite these commonalities, the image of the immigrant Jew conjured up within the commission testimonies was by no means straightforwardly replicated within the parliamentary debates which followed. Whilst much of the 1903 Royal Commission testimony, for example, imagined 'the Jew' through an imperialist discourse, politicians who participated in the parliamentary debates situated the immigrant Jew within a far broader racialised outlook. The politicians' adoption of a racial hierarchy against which the immigrant Jew was judged, although also an implicit feature of an imperialist perspective, was accompanied by an approach which showed how 'the discourse of Semitism' within the Edwardian era 'functioned as a subset of the discourse of marginality'.[264] In particular, the immigrant Jew was held up against the pervasive and often unflattering image of the British working class as a means to comparatively discern the nature of Semitic 'difference'. This discourse of comparative marginality, argues Michael Galchinsky, was a common feature of how Europe's ruling classes explored 'how Europe's Others might be brought into relation with the emerging nation-states and empires'.[265]

Within the parliamentary debates, however, examples of comparable marginality also yielded to a class perspective which was generally missing from the accounts given to the

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[263] Marks discusses these polemical representations of the female Jewish immigrant in *Model Mothers*, commenting that 'it is no exaggeration to say that in the late nineteenth century, when not being praised for motherhood, Jewish women were being cursed for prostitution', p. 3.
[264] M. Galchinsky, 'Africans, Indians, Arabs, and Scots: Jewish and Other Questions in the Age of Empire', *Jewish Culture and History*, vol. 6, no. 1, (Summer 2003), pp. 46-60, (p. 47).
[265] Galchinsky, 'Africans, Indians, Arabs, and Scots'.

parliamentary commissions. Indeed, the representations of 'the Jew' within the Royal Commission are notable for their classless unity of opinion. Instead it is gender which serves to primarily distinguish between Semitic representations. Thus, from that perspective, the association between imperialism and masculinity becomes acutely transparent. For the Edwardian man, regardless of class, the racial hierarchies of empire becomes a handy tool for the classification of 'difference', and as an expression of power. In an era before the evolution of a truly multicultural society, few other linguistic tools for describing racial difference, besides Semitic discourse, were common across all strata of society. For the ruling classes, however, the notion of ethnic diversity was both more easy to articulate, and yet more conceptually problematic to comprehend, not least because the presence of Jewish immigrants (inherently ambiguous figures) posed a challenge to society's status quo. Hence the ambivalent, even paradoxical treatment of 'the Jew' within the parliamentary debates illuminates a pre-existing instability suffered by the ruling classes with regards to the degree of control they exercised at a time when the nation's imperial confidence was being severely tested. 'The Jew' was simply a usefully fluid construct through which these issues were filtered, and, as a consequence, serves as a reminder that the treatment of 'the Jew' is invariably contextually specific.

Certainly representations of the Jewish immigrant as a gendered construct were also dictated by context. Within the male testimonies given to the Royal Commission, 'the Jew' was repeatedly configured through the very relevant and fundamentally masculine language and imagery of empire. What is more, the inherently gendered character of that imperial discourse explains, in part, the absence of a similar configuration of 'the Jew' within the testimonies of the three female witnesses. Although, as cultural historian Reina Lewis has shown, Edwardian women did have access to, and did internalise the imperialist discourse of western superiority,[266] within the women's testimonies to the Royal Commission symbols of Jewish difference were instead filtered through the prism of Edwardian domesticity. Within the parliamentary debates which followed one can, unfortunately, locate no comparative female response to the Jewish immigrant as, in the Edwardian era, women's voices remained almost completely absent from the political arena. Consequently, 'the Jew' was represented from a wholly masculine perspective within the

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[266] See R. Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

parliamentary debates, which, in turn, may also account for the persistently masculine subject of those representations.

When the Jewish woman was, occasionally, represented it was within the polemical confines of her role as a domestic or sexual being; as a mother or as a prostitute. Yet these limited female representations reflect a distinctly gendered configuration of the Jewish 'other' – setting the male and female immigrant apart. Moreover, it is suggestive of the covert gendering of Semitic discourse; a gendering which, more often than not, was exploited by anti-alienists. The Jewish woman, it seems, was not nearly as 'marketable' as a repugnant, degenerate or dangerous 'other' as was her male counterpart. Instead, as Nadia Valman has convincingly shown, the Jewish woman 'threw into disarray clear categories of difference'.[267] She was simultaneously the maternal ideal and the carnally insatiable, exoticised 'Jewess'. Ultimately, the bounds of her representation were far too indistinct and her image too appealing and seductive for her to be a useful emblem for the anti-alien campaign. This chapter has attempted to show that, whilst a long tradition of Semitic depiction exists within western culture, the figure of 'the Jew' within politics was not always constructed within the parameters of Semitic discourse alone, but was often imagined with the help of multiple, divergent, and even seemingly irrelevant cultural discourses. What is more, gender has shown itself to be a crucial category of analysis for accessing a more nuanced reading of these discourses without which representations of Jewish 'difference' would be rendered one-dimensional. However, it was beyond the arena of politics and in the literary world that notions of Semitic difference were truly tested.

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[267] Valman, *The Jewess*, p. 2.

Chapter Three

Recognising the Other in the Self:

Fin de Siècle Representations of the Jewish Immigrant in Fiction

The image of 'the Jew' in English literature has long proved to be a compelling topic for academic examination.[268]   The recent publication of the much discussed *Trials of the Diaspora* (2010) by Anthony Julius which devotes a considerable number of pages and much indignation to tracking down and proving how 'replete' English literature is 'with adverse, untrue things said about Jews and Judaism' is indicative of that enduring intellectual pastime.[269]   Yet progressive scholarly approaches within the last few decades – Julius' work an obvious exception – have sought to challenge interpretations of that image as 'a depressingly uniform and static phenomenon'.[270]   As discussed in the introduction, Bryan Cheyette's influential monograph, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945* (1993) headed this challenge, carefully and persuasively demonstrating the fluidity and socio-historical specificity of Semitic stereotypes.   Thus Cheyette argued that within literature a writer's use of a stereotype was not, or not only, determined by a long tradition of employing such stereotypes but was instead guided by how well such typologies might reflect the pressing social, cultural and political matters of the day.[271]

Cheyette's emphasis upon the importance of context was accompanied by a challenge to the typologies which have traditionally been employed to classify responses and attitudes towards 'the Jew'.   For Cheyette, the terms 'anti-Semitism' and philo-Semitism' were simply too rigid in their meaning, as well as evoking quasi-political connotations, to account for the myriad of

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[268]   See, for example, D. Philipson, *The Jew in English Fiction* (Cincinnati: Clark, 1889); M. J. Landa, *The Jew in Drama* (London: P. S. King, 1926) and H. Fisch, *The Dual Image: A Study of the Jew in English Literature*, (London: Lincolns-Prager, 1959).

[269]   A. Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 150.

[270]   E. Rosenberg, *From Shylock to Svengali: Jewish Stereotypes in English Fiction,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), p. 297.

[271]   B. Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 268.

complex, and often confused notions of 'the Jew' which litter English literature. Instead Cheyette has stated his preference for the more inclusive and pliable term 'semitic discourse'.[272]

This chapter, which traces the image of the 'immigrant Jew' and 'Jewess' in late nineteenth and early twentieth century fiction, shall construct its analysis within this theoretical framework. Whilst acknowledging the fluidity of representations of 'the Jew' and their dependence upon the discursive context, however, it is important to recognise that the image of 'the Jew' has remained constant in one regard – as a signifier of difference. As I have already shown in relation to the press and politics, within an imperialist culture, narratives of racial 'difference' or 'otherness' as a means to define 'the self' operated throughout the empire. Yet, by the late nineteenth century, 'unlike the marginalized "colonial subjects" who were, for the most part, confined racially to the "colonies"', Jews were, by dint of their proximity to the 'motherland', the consummate 'other' within the British cultural imagination.[273] The growing presence of a Jewish immigrant population, complete with their 'unEnglish' habits and customs, and an incomprehensible language, acted to further exaggerate the markers of racial and cultural difference. However, whilst novels of the era, similarly to the press and parliamentary debates, reflected and even exaggerated the otherness of the alien Jew, as well as the political atmosphere generated by their presence, those same novels were also able to draw upon fiction's unique propensity for humanising its subject matter. Within the bounds of their craft, authors were able to emotively as well as intellectually engage a readership – a ploy not available to journalists or politicians. It is this which set literary representations apart and, moreover, it is the recognition of this which will enable fresh perspectives from earlier studies.

Recent studies have become pre-occupied with how 'the Jew', as a signifier of 'difference', has operated within a socio-political framework to reinforce, or to prompt a renegotiation of 'Englishness'. David Feldman has shown how the decision as to whether to extend constitutional rights to the Jews of Britain in the mid nineteenth century was not simply a debate between liberalism and intolerance, or modernity and tradition, but brought into question the very

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[272] Cheyette discusses this in the introduction to his *Constructions of 'the Jew'*, pp. 8-9.
[273] Ibid., p. 12. On this see also Cheyette's later chapter 'Neither Black nor White: The Figure of 'the Jew' in Imperial British Literature', in L. Nochlin and T. Garb (eds.), *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), pp. 31-41.

relationship between state, nation, and religion.[274]   Nadia Valman's recent study *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* – a rare pointedly gendered approach to literary Semitic representation – has followed Feldman's example by arguing that 'the figure of the Jewess marked out the axes of difference through which English Protestant identity was imagined'.[275] Importantly, however, Valman recognises that British writers did not go unchallenged in their appropriation of the literary image of 'the Jewess'. She shows how, across the century, 'the Jewess', rather than the figure of the male Jew, was continually reclaimed by Anglo-Jewish writers wishing to participate in the 'discursive battles' that were commonly refracted through Semitic representations. Yet Valman maintains that for Anglo-Jewish writers to participate fully in those debates, they were frequently forced to adopt the literary forms and approaches of gentile writers. In this way, Anglo-Jewish writers often found themselves complicit in the act of representing the 'other' even as they attempted to represent themselves. It was, however, this compliance which legitimised their literary voice, and made their work accessible for a wider audience. It is the central objective of this chapter to consider how a similar 'double bind' functioned in the late Victorian period when 'outsider' writers approached the Jewish immigrant 'other' in their fiction.[276] Moreover, in an effort to further advance Valman's consideration of the interplay of gender in literary representations of the immigrant Jew, a secondary focus shall also be upon how and for what purpose each of the writers draw out a gendered reading of the immigrant community.

Thanks to the richness and quantity of literature in this era, a wide variety of texts, which 'imagine' the Jewish immigrant, present themselves as fitting for the task at hand. With the objective of limiting this study to a reasonable length, however, this chapter shall consider just three novels which, although all superficially appear largely dissimilar, share a range of common themes as well as some intriguing differences: Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* (1892); Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897); and Julia Frankau's *Pigs in Clover* (1903). Essentially what binds these three novels, I suggest, is the intrusion of the author's own 'outsider' identity, both consciously

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[274]   D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 28.
[275]   N. Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth Century British Literary Culture,* p. 2.
[276]   Bryan Cheyette has approached a similar question in his compelling essay 'The Other Self: Anglo-Jewish Fiction and the Representation of Jews in England, 1875-1905', in *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry,* (ed.) D. Cesarani, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), pp. 97-111.

and subconsciously, into their fictional representations of the Jewish immigrant as racial and sexual 'other'. Rather than offering a close reading of the novels, which suggests an intention to detach a text from its context, I am instead interested to show not only how the literary works are products of their time, but also how they reflect the author's personal struggle with their own sense of identity. In this way I shall unite both the 'internal evidence' available within the novel, with the 'external evidence', provided by the discursive context which characterised the era and formed modes of thinking and collective understanding.

Gendering Jewish Difference: Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto*

No investigation of this kind would be complete without taking as its starting point the best-known and most detailed literary sketch of the Jewish immigrant, and of the Jewish immigrant quarter of London; Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto*.[277] The epic two-volume novel offered a sensitive exploration of immigrant life in London's Jewish 'ghetto', and therefore proved to be largely unique for its time. Zangwill's sympathetic Realist tone was largely in keeping with the fashionable Realism movement of the late nineteenth century – a movement committed to depicting everyday life without embellishment – as well as paying homage to growing socialist agitation by its compassionate focus on a working-class people. That the writer stuck stringently to the emotiveless objectivity which Realism demanded, however, is debatable.

The author also adopted a distinctive approach from the large majority of Anglo-Jewish 'apologist' writers of the nineteenth century who wished to distance themselves from their 'embarrassing' brethren, and to instead promote the anglicised refinement of the established Jewish community. These writers, in a similar fashion to their literary descendants of earlier decades, still sought to safeguard their position in the nation despite the passage of political emancipation in the mid nineteenth century. Indeed, this tendency for apologetics can be understood as a prerequisite of emancipation. For as Zangwill's biographer Joseph H. Udelson points out, emancipation came at a price:

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[277] I. Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto: A Study of a Peculiar People,* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), [first published 1892].

For the right to enjoy equality, the Jews were required to accept the philosophic and political assumptions of the Enlightenment, to agree freely to a process of conversion as psychologically traumatic to one's conception of personal identity as that involved in any sincere religious conversion.[278]

Full anglicisation was demanded, and it was a condition the majority of Jews in Britain were only too happy to fulfil. Zangwill spoke often of his disgust at such a compromise with which he felt Anglo-Jewry complied a little *too* enthusiastically:

> The new Jew is vulgar in his snobbish self-consciousness, in his defiant assertion of equality. The old Jew was never vulgar; he never claimed equality with the Christian – he claimed superiority. If the Christian shut him in the Ghetto, that was the *rishus* and stupidity of the Goyim. He shrugged his shoulders and thanked his God that He had not made him an old woman.[279]

The scathing critique offered of Anglo-Jewry in the second volume of *Children of the Ghetto* is further testament to Zangwill's attitude. As Cheyette has pointed out, Zangwill occupied a position of 'revolt against Anglo-Jewry's image of itself'.[280] Yet the author, journalist, essayist and Zionist was by no means himself a committed orthodox Jew, nor opposed to British life and culture. In outward appearance Zangwill embraced anglicisation. Nevertheless, as his copious writings on the subject demonstrate, Zangwill entertained a life-long preoccupation with questions of Jewish life and culture. Biographers and scholars of Zangwill have often attributed this inner conflict between his Jewish and British identities as the tension at the core of his creativity.[281] 'He often referred to himself as a 'Cockney Jew', notes Edna Nahshon, 'an identity composed of the

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[278] J. H. Udelson, *Dreamer of the Ghetto: The Life and Works of Israel Zangwill,* (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1990), p. 12.

[279] I Zangwill, from a speech entitled 'The New Jew', delivered at a meeting of the Judeans in New York, 24th October 1898, cited in full in M. Simon (ed.), *Speeches, Articles and Letters of Israel Zangwill,* (London: The Soncino Press, 1937), pp. 54–63, (p. 56).

[280] B. Cheyette, 'From Apology to Revolt: Benjamin Farjeon, Amy Levy and the Post-emancipation Anglo-Jewish Novel, 1880-1900', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England,* vol. 29, (1982-1986), pp. 253-265, (p. 253).

[281] See, for instance, J. Leftwich, *Israel Zangwill,* (New York and London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1957) and Udelson, *Dreamer of the Ghetto.*

polarized amalgamation of indigenousness and outsiderness'.[282] In this light, Zangwill's most famous 'Jewish' novel, *Children of the Ghetto,* seems something of a literary catharsis; a 'working – through' of these conflicting identities. Zangwill's obvious fascination with the Jewish immigrant 'other' is thus something of a fascination with the 'self'.

Somewhat surprisingly, however, in *Children of the Ghetto* Zangwill does not reject the character templates laid out for him by 'apologist' Anglo-Jewish writers such as Grace Aguilar, Celia and Marion Moss, and Benjamin Farjeon – templates which equated the moral fibre of a Jew with their ability to successfully reconcile their Jewish and British identities.[283] Instead he detaches them from the assimilated 'English' Jews to which they had been originally applied, and reapplies them to the immigrant Jews of his fictional 'ghetto'. This curious mimicry can perhaps be seen most clearly in the distinctive gendered responses of his characters to modernity. The novel's protagonist Esther Ansell figuratively acts for all Jewish women when, in the climax to the second volume, she rejects the frivolities and excesses of modern Anglo-Jewish life by reversing her self-imposed exile from the ghetto, and, by extension, from 'true' Jewish life. By returning to the ghetto, Esther simultaneously becomes the protector of Judaism and its people, and the key negotiator for the path they will take into English society. Thus, it is in an echo of the apologist tradition as well as through the actions of a woman, rather than via the traditional regulators of Judaism – men – that this metaphorical redemption of Judaism from the destructive jaws of modernity is enacted.

This inversion of gender roles is not unique to *Children of the Ghetto*. Zangwill similarly depicts Florence, the youngest daughter of an elderly immigrant Jew in the short story 'Transitional' (1893) as the willing vehicle through which Jewish traditions and laws are maintained and upheld. Despite receiving her father's hesitant consent for her to marry a Christian, Florence breaks off her engagement because she realises her father is 'breaking his heart over it' and only gave his consent 'to promote [Florence's] happiness'.[284] The female, therefore,

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[282] E. Nahshon, (ed.), *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot: Israel Zangwill's Jewish Plays,* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006), p. 5.
[283] See Cheyette, 'From apology to revolt'; M. Galchinsky, *The Origin of the Modern Jewish Woman Writer,* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996); Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth Century British Literary Culture,* for a useful discussion of these and other nineteenth century writers on Jewish themes.
[284] Zangwill, 'Transitional' *They That Walk in Darkness: Ghetto Tragedies,* (London: Globe, 1925), [first published 1893], pp. 31-54, (p. 53).

assumes her position as not only the guardian of the Jewish race but also as a symbol of self-sacrifice. A similar father-daughter dynamic is played out in *Children of the Ghetto* through Reb Shemuel and his daughter Hannah, who falls in love with a Jewish man, but is forbidden by her father to marry him because of an obscure religious law. Despite the couple's plans to elope, at the final moment, on Seder Night, Hannah is overwhelmed by the spiritual and historical ties which bind her to Judaism and its people, and finds she is unable to break them, not even to secure her own happiness. Reb Shemuel suspects nothing and, indeed, expects nothing but acceptance and obedience from his daughter despite the anguish and romantic desolation this sacrificial act signifies.

It is interesting to note that although Zangwill assigns his female characters in both novel and short story leading roles through which much of the dramatic action is channelled, those women are never seen to act outside of the bounds of Victorian feminine propriety. For a Victorian reader the world inhabited by the female characters is clearly that of the racial 'other' – Zangwill acknowledges this in the novel's subtitle 'A Study of a Peculiar People'– and yet the constraints of obedience and duty to one's family and to God are recognisable traits of Victorian womanhood. The very centralisation of such patriarchal tensions seems to beg an identification between fictional figure and reader, between Jew and Gentile, between Jewish woman and Englishwoman. The first volume of the novel in particular is generally understood to have been aimed at a British rather than an Anglo-Jewish audience.[285] Its subtitle, 'A Study of a Peculiar People' seems to draw upon an unspoken affinity between assimilated Jew and British citizen; they are both inquisitive onlookers onto the curious 'ghetto' world. Thus in this way, Zangwill's female characters act not only as the mediators for the immigrant Jewish community between the 'old' world and the 'new', but are also the literary mediators between the stranger characters of the novel and the British readership. They act as intermediaries between the 'familiar self' and the 'alien other'.

That Zangwill championed the task, within his writing, of arousing sympathy for the immigrant Jewish community seems obvious. That he would exploit the figure of 'the Jewess' as a

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[285] See Udelson, *Dreamer of the Ghetto,* pp. 91- 109 for a fuller discussion of this.

strategy to achieve this continues a long and firmly established literary tradition.[286] Yet given the mood of the era in which Zangwill wrote, this strategy – to depict a more human and sympathetic image of the 'alien' Jew, and moreover to pointedly use women as his 'ambassadors' in that mission – required considerable daring. Mounting agitation regarding the influx of immigrant Jews to Britain fed off growing concerns, inherited from the continent, of national degeneration. The publication of Max Nordau's *Degeneration* in 1892, which attempted to apply the scientific theory beyond the biological as an explanation to a broad spectrum of social problems, was one of a string of books which increased the infiltration of those ideas into the public imagination.[287] Many national issues of the era, including the 'aliens question' were framed within this debate, signs of which were most obvious in the rhetoric commonly employed. The House of Commons Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration, for example, as I have discussed in the previous chapter, investigated Jewish immigration into Britain in 1888-9 and found by 'general agreement that pauper immigration *is an evil* and should be checked'.[288]

The late nineteenth century feminist movement was also framed, by its critics, within the pessimistic rhetoric of degeneration. Although the objectives of the movement were modestly limited to civic and constitutional rights for women, from the outset the popular press led something of a 'rebranding' campaign which preferred to represent the New Woman as irrationally rebellious, sexually decadent, and a threat to the 'healthy' regeneration of the British 'race'.[289] Whilst there is some evidence to suggest that Zangwill felt some sympathy for the feminist cause, he was careful not to allow such sentiment to invade his characterisations.[290] The author, it seems, recognised that an association between the 'aliens question' and the 'womens question' might only damage the immigrants' cause. Despite Zangwill's caution in this quarter,

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[286] Nadia Valman discusses this literary tradition in reference to Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819), arguing that Scott utilised 'the Jewess' Rebecca as a plea for greater tolerance towards racial difference. See Valman, *The Jewess*, pp. 15-50.

[287] M. Nordau, *Degeneration,* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), [originally published 1892, translated into English 1895].

[288] PP 1889 cd 311 *House of Commons Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners),* p. x.

[289] S. Ledger, 'The New Woman and the Crisis of Victorianism', in *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle,* offers an insightful discussion of the late-nineteenth century feminist movement, pp. 22-44.

[290] Udelson acknowledges the longevity of Zangwill's sympathy for the feminist cause, although he attributes the intensification of this sympathy with Zangwill's marriage to Edith Ayrton in 1903: *Dreamer of the Ghetto,* pp. 229; 274. Significantly, however, Nahshon suggests Zangwill's sympathy for, and involvement in the women's suffrage movement can be pre-dated to his acquaintance with Eleanor Marx in the early 1890s: *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot,* p. 19.

however, one reviewer of the novel still singled out Esther Ansell of displaying 'a want of good taste' – a social crime for any woman.[291]

Conceivably it was this criticism which may have prompted Zangwill to sideline Esther in his 1898 dramatisation of *Children of the Ghetto*. Instead the author–turned–playwright focused upon the story of Hannah and David, and their thwarted love affair, refashioning the central theme of the play as 'the conflict between adherence to Jewish law and the yearnings of the heart'.[292] This shift in tone and emphasis not only distanced the Jewish immigrant (perceived capable of 'race' anarchy) from the New Woman (perceived capable of gender anarchy), but it also aligned the play with the fashions of the era for 'problem plays' dealing with religious topics. Indeed in 1899, the year of the play's production, the London periodical *The Sketch* commented upon the profusion of 'some very startling, not to say daring, "religious", or religiously named "dramas"' staged in that year alone.[293] Zangwill, it seems, was not averse to catering to the trends of the day, or to playing up or down his allegedly 'realistic' representations of his ghetto inhabitants to suit the tastes of his Broadway or West End audiences.

Yet Zangwill seems not to have completely abandoned the Jewish cause in his dramatic adaptation of his best-selling novel. In her study of Zangwill as dramatist, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot: Israel Zangwill's Jewish Plays*, Edna Nahshon offers an insightful reading of the play's central storyline. She suggests that the elimination of Hannah's brother Levi, and the reduction of the role of Hannah's mother was part of a deliberate effort by Zangwill to emphasise the father-daughter dynamic, and, by extension, to evoke the parallel relationship within Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. However, suggests Hahshon, Zangwill objective was not to perpetuate these negative Jewish typologies, but rather to challenge them:

> In his rendition of Reb Schemuel and his daughter, Hannah, Zangwill offers a Jewish reading of the deep-rooted literary tradition of the old detestable Jew and his beautiful daughter, institutionalised in English letters by Shakespeare's Shylock and Jessica, Christopher Marlowe's Barabas and Abigail (*The Jew of Malta*), and Walter Scott's Isaac of

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[291] *Spectator,* 26 November 1892, p. 774.
[292] Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot,* p. 62.
[293] *Sketch,* 29 November 1899, p. 233.

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York and Rebecca (*Ivanhoe*). Zangwill reverses things: his old Jew is not a nasty usurer but a friendly ghetto rabbi, generous and kind to a fault [...] He is the antithesis of the avaricious stereotype of the stage Jew.[294]

Zangwill's pointed inversion of the entrenched Jewish father-daughter dynamic seems from this perspective as part of a continued defence of the Jewish people. Although reviews for the play on both sides of the Atlantic were mixed, by the close of the play Zangwill felt assured that his message had, in part, succeeded. In a private correspondence from the period the author and playwright proudly lauded the political ramifications of the novel, detailing how a Conservative newspaper editor 'influenced by *Children of the Ghetto* had prevented the exclusion of the immigrant alien being a plank in the Conservative platform'.[295]

If Zangwill eagerly engaged with the literary figure of the 'immigrant Jewess' by deconstructing and limiting her threat as racial and sexual 'other', his response to 'the Jewish man' was far more ambivalent. Whilst all manner of masculinity is brought to life within the pages of *Children of the Ghetto*, Zangwill sketches the responses of the male characters to anglicisation as largely polemic and often inadequate. Amongst the first generation, influences from outside the ghetto rarely infiltrate. Models of masculinity remain static and unchanging, with status frequently determined by adherence to religious life. Zangwill openly ridicules, most notably through the character of Esther's father Moses Ansell, the impracticality of such models for the demands of the 'new world'. It is a tragic irony of Esther's childhood that although her father could barely provide for his family, he was respected within the community as a highly religious man. In the construction of Moses Ansell, generally thought to have been modelled upon the author's own father, one can once again perceive the intrusion of Zangwill's biography. The author's parents were both immigrants from Czarist Russia. Moses Zangwill arrived in London aged just twelve in flight from his small hometown in Latvia, desperate to escape conscription to the Russian army. He remained a pious and mild-mannered man who struggled both to provide for his family and to adjust to Anglo-Jewish immigrant life. Israel became increasingly estranged from his father in

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[294] Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot,* p. 64.
[295] Zangwill, cited in B. Winehouse, 'Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto*: A Literary History of the first Anglo-Jewish Bestseller', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920,* vol. 16, (1973), pp. 93-117, (p. 103).

adolescence and adulthood, their relationship epitomising the classic tensions between immigrant parent and assimilated child.[296]

Other representations of the Jewish male immigrant are drawn perhaps less intimately, and yet with more obvious intent. As Meri-Jane Rochelson observes, 'many of the scenes in the first part of the novel illustrate, comment on, and respond to the precariousness of Jewish immigrant life in an atmosphere of growing anti-alien sentiment'.[297] Zangwill's treatment of Bear Belcovitch, a sweater, seems to respond directly to both Anglo-Jewry's ambivalence about the sweating trade, and the wider society's demonisation of this 'Jewish' occupation. The final report from the parliamentary select committee on the sweating system which conducted their investigations between 1888 and 1890 condemned the trade in the East End, and elsewhere in the country, for creating conditions of overcrowding, excessive working hours, and poor wages.[298] Although the report did not focus exclusively upon Jewish involvement, it nonetheless shored up public perceptions of the sweating trade as a 'Jewish' one.[299] *Children of the Ghetto* was written in the immediate aftermath of the publication of the committee's report. It seems clear that Zangwill was keen to respond to its conclusions. Thus in an early chapter of his novel the narrator assures us, 'no one could accuse Bear Belcovitch of fattening on the entrails of his employees'.[300] Indeed, Belcovitch neither fits the template of the malevolent capitalist, nor that of the destroyer of family and communal values; an accusation which David Feldman has shown commonly evolved from indictments of the immigrants for economic disruption.[301] Instead, Zangwill introduces the reader to Belcovitch in the midst of enjoying a small gathering of people celebrating his daughter's engagement. His benevolence even extends to his desolate and hungry neighbours, the Ansell's, to whom he donates his family's soup ration. Hence through a humanised portrayal of the figure of the sweater, Zangwill overtly challenged an entrenched, demonised 'Jewish' image, deconstructing a discourse of 'difference', and confronting the essentialising of difference through stereotype.

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[296] Leftwich, *Israel Zangwill,* p 47; Udelson, *Dreamer of the Ghetto,* pp 59-65; Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot,* pp. 5-19.

[297] M-J. Rochelson, 'Introduction', Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto,* pp. 11-44, (p. 21).

[298] PP 1890 cd 169 *Select Committee of House of Lords on Sweating System.*

[299] Rochelson, 'Introduction', *Children of the Ghetto,* p. 21.

[300] Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto,* p. 84.

[301] D. Feldman, 'The Importance of being English: Jewish Immigration and the decay of liberal England', in *Metropolis – London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, (ed.) D. Feldman and G. Stedman Jones, (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp.56-84, (pp. 72-74).

Despite his apparent relish for challenging stereotypes, Zangwill was not, himself, averse to employing them. In a lecture delivered in the late 1890s, Zangwill engaged in an exercise of Semitic typecasting when he spoke of how 'various curious characters were evolved in the ghetto'.[302] Although he took care to associate the evolution of these characters as a direct consequence of the ghetto conditions, Zangwill was nevertheless engaged in the act of perpetuating certain typologies. Edna Nahshon reports an interesting anecdote recounted by Wilton Lackaye, the actor playing Reb Shemuel in the stage production of *Children of the Ghetto*:

> He [Lackaye] explained that as he was studying the part, he went to the ghetto on the Lower East Side of New York and for weeks mingled among the local Jews...One day a rabbi entered the courtroom, having been summoned to conduct a wedding in a seduction case. "That's 'Reb' Shemuel", he thought...Lackaye recalled that after opening night, Zangwill asked him how he had formed his idea for the part, noting "Your Shem[uel] is an exact reproduction of the original as I first found him in London".[303]

Here one can once again observe Zangwill's reliance upon certain 'ghetto types' for his fictional representation of the Anglo immigrant Jew, which are of such stock value that they translate on both sides of the Atlantic. This occasional reference to established models of representation initially appears to devalue the authenticity of Zangwill's literary sketch. Yet, I would suggest, Zangwill's employment of stereotypes can be better understood as part of a concerted effort by the Anglo-Jew to challenge negative perceptions of 'difference' by reformulating them. Edna Hahshon has already convincingly shown how Zangwill used this tactic in his treatment of the father-daughter relationship between Reb Shemuel and Hannah. This interpretation also proves useful elsewhere. Throughout the course of the novel the narrator makes constant reference to the dirtiness of the ghetto and its inhabitants. Esther's sense of personal hygiene is explained away as 'an individualist instinct of cleanliness' rather than a way of life learnt from her surroundings.[304] Despite, then, Zangwill's otherwise largely sympathetic representation of the ghetto Jew, the repeated references to their dirtiness appears to evoke stereotypic depictions more akin to the

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302   Zangwill, 'The Ghetto', p. 20.
303   Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot,* p. 74.
304   Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto,* p. 74.

discourse of the wider society. Indeed, that Zangwill engages *with* the discourse of the wider society acts to legitimise his efforts at deconstructing the entrenched association between the Jew and dirtiness. The sympathetic portrait of ghetto life which encapsulates the stereotypic figure also works to humanise them, and to contextualise their lack of personal hygiene as a consequence of their living conditions rather than an inherently 'racial' characteristic.

Zangwill, however, demonstrates a greater degree of ambivalence in his depiction of the younger male immigrants. Despite the greater will for change and the slow permeation of modernity amongst the second generation, Zangwill derides the male characters within the second volume, 'The Grandchildren of the Ghetto', for their inability to adequately reconcile the 'old world' with the new. The reader observes how Esther's contemporary and friend from her ghetto childhood, Levi Jacobs, takes the challenges posed by assimilation to the extreme, and consequently appears repulsive. At the other end of the scale is Raphael Leon, a well-educated, likable character and Esther's love interest in the novel. Raphael perceives the salvation of the Anglo-Jewish community to be rooted in orthodoxy, and it is to this end that he agrees to be the editor of an orthodox newspaper, 'The Flag of Judiah'. Yet despite his skills as a writer and thinker, Raphael finds himself woefully equipped for the challenges posed by what is essentially a capitalist endeavour.

The obvious preoccupation of *Children of the Ghetto* with failing Jewish masculinities cannot be easily explained away with reference to a particular socio-historical event with which the Anglo-Jewish community may have grappled at this time, or even through a considered quasi-physiological association between author and theme. It seems feasible to suggest that Zangwill was simply reflecting a reality of immigrant life; that the gap between traditional Jewish masculinities, and the demands of modernity in the West was considerable to bridge. Similarly, one might suggest that Zangwill, himself a second generation Jew in England, felt qualified to adopt a critical tone in his depiction of Jews, who were, in essence, his fictionalised self. What is clear, however, is that throughout the novel gender difference seemingly dictates the potential of a character to negotiate the fine line between one's Jewish and British identities. Whilst the Jewish man stumbles and fails, the Jewish woman demonstrates the potential for the reconciliation of these two identities. Moreover, her ability to unite these two halves of the self makes her an obvious mediator between the gentile reader and the Jewish subject. She is an 'other', and yet she is

recognisable. Despite, however, Zangwill's preoccupation with the Jewish immigrant woman as the favoured conduct of dual identities, by the turn-of-the-century few of his literary contemporaries shared this perspective. Instead authors began to invest in the figure of the male Jewish alien to provide the central narrative strategy through which to explore Jewish difference in the age of immigration, and to suggest how that difference might be reconciled. The first of these was published five years after Zangwill's epic Jewish saga but in critical acclaim and popular appeal has far outlasted *Children of the Ghetto*. Its 'Jewish' themes, however, have been harder to discern.

Blurring the Boundaries of Difference: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

Bram Stoker's gothic horror masterpiece, *Dracula,* might not immediately present itself as a text concerned with the Jewish immigrant, or indeed, with 'the Jew' at all. However, within academic discourse such a parallel has already been drawn, which references the Count's striking physiognomy, his distinctive racial 'otherness', perverse sexual appetite, effeminate characteristics and feminising power, and deviant capitalist tendencies.[305] Thus readings of Dracula as Jew evoked distinctly anti-Semitic rhetoric to forge the association. Certainly an analogy between vampire and Jew would also have been obvious to contemporary readers of Stoker's novel. Within Victorian discourse, linguistic signifiers of the gothic horror genre – 'vampires', 'blood-suckers', 'wolves' and 'vultures'– were commonly associated with the unscrupulous Jewish capitalist.[306] I shall suggest, however, that the analogy can be pushed a little further by grounding Stoker's vampire firmly within the era of its creation, and thus interpreting Dracula, and the threat his presence posed, not as a generic Jewish figure, but more precisely as a metaphor for the Eastern European immigrant Jew. At the time of the novel's publication in 1897, the influx of impoverished Jews into Britain was coming towards its peak. The growing presence of this visible racial and cultural 'other' in Britain continued the debate which Zangwill had been forced to

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[305] See J. Halberstam, 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle,* (eds.) S. Ledger and S. McCracken, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 248-266; H. L. Malchow, 'Vampire Gothic and Late-Victorian Identity', *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth Century Britain*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 124-166; C. M. Davison, 'Britain, Vampire Empire: Fin-de-Siècle Fears and Bram Stoker's *Dracula', Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 120-157.

[306] Both Engles and Marx evoked gothic imagery to describe 'the vampire property-holding class', whilst George Robb has pointed to the prevalence of the link forged between Capitalist Jew and the blood-sucking vampire in popular Victorian discourse, in his *White Collar Crime in Modern England: Financial Fraud and Business Morality, 1845-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.97.

address in 1892 – a debate which fed off the existing anxieties concerning sexual, racial, and moral degeneration.

With this context in mind, it seemed little stretch to imagine Dracula and the fear his presence invoked as a figurative exploration of the Jewish 'aliens question' in Britain. Certainly, the very label of 'alien', which became irrevocably indicative of the Eastern European Ashkenazi Jew by the 1890s, is itself evocative of the mysterious and threatening 'otherness' which is central to Dracula's menace. Anti-alienists of the era, the most outspoken of whom was the social imperialist and writer Arnold White, further gothicised the image of 'degenerate' urban dwellers – an explicit if unspoken reference to the alien Jew of the East End – speaking of their 'tainted constitutions', of their 'brains charged with a subtle mischief, and languishing or extinct morality', and of their intent to 'transmit a terrible inheritance of evil to the next generation' and to 'taint' a 'whole community'.[307] Dracula inspires all of these terrors, not least because he too is an immigrant in Britain, a self-professed 'stranger in a strange land'.[308] In this way, then, it seems feasible to associate Stoker's vampire specifically with the most visible 'other' of the time, the immigrant Jew, than with a more generalised and less identifiable 'other', or even the more familiar figure of the Anglo-Jew.

Superficially this interpretation appears sound. However, if Stoker was utilising anti-Semitic rhetoric, which typically defines Jew in rigid opposition to Gentile, he was not doing so in a straightforward manner. Throughout *Dracula*, normally converse positions do not remain so. The boundaries between 'vampire' and 'victim', 'foreign' and 'British', 'bad' and 'good', 'Jew' and 'Gentile', are repeatedly transgressed and confused. Our acquaintance with the Count in the first section of the novel places an emphasis not on his distinctive appearance but upon his aristocratic demeanour, his intellectualism, his disquieting familiarity. As Stephen Arata has remarked:

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[307] A. White, *The Problems of a Great City* (London: Remington and Co Publishers, 1886), p.28. Although White seems to have been hesitant to name the object of his hostility directly in this publication of 1886, he had no reticence in doing so throughout numerous appearances as a witness for the parliamentary *Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration* (1888); *Select Committee on the Sweating System* (1888-90); *The Royal Commission on Alien Immigration* (1903), and in his numerous publications, most notably 'The Alien Immigrant', *Blackwood's Magazine* (1903), pp. 132-41.

[308] B. Stoker, *Dracula,* (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1993), [first published 1897], p. 19.

Dracula is the most "Western" character in the novel. No one is more rational, more intelligent, more organised, or even more punctual than the Count. No one plans more carefully or researches more thoroughly. No more is more learned within his own spheres of expertise or more receptive to new knowledge.[309]

The vampire assumes the traits indicative of every Victorian Gentleman. He is, in fact, 'more English than the English'. Dracula himself professes this intention to Jonathon Harker. 'I am content if I am like the rest, so that no man stops if he sees me, or pause in his speaking if he hear my words, to say, "Ha, ha! A stranger!"'[310] In turn, Harker's encounter with the vampire quickly drains him of these idealised Victorian characteristics which Dracula so obviously possesses, leaving the Englishman weak, vulnerable, feminised – traits more typically associated with 'the Jew'.

Thus, we can see how the transgression of boundaries operates as 'two-way traffic'. The identity of both vampire and Englishman appear blurred and interchangeable. Therefore, throughout the novel, identity reversal occurs in multiple ways, many of which can be understood through what Arata terms 'a narrative of reverse colonization'; a scenario in which 'the colonizer finds himself in the position of the colonized, the exploiter becomes exploited, the victimizer victimized'.[311] Of course these types of fears were particularly pertinent for Britons, who, by the close of the nineteenth century, were increasingly conscious of their position as the imperial race, and of the dubious morality of certain imperial practices.[312] Within *Dracula* all of these fears are realised. British strength and dominance is undermined by an invading racial 'Other' who inverts the balance of power from 'colonizer' to 'colonized'.

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[309] S. Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization', *Victorian Studies,* vol. 33, no. 4, (Summer 1990), pp. 621-645, (p. 637).
[310] Stoker, *Dracula,* p 19.
[311] Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist', p. 623.
[312] See, for example, E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage, 1989), pp.82-3. P. Brantlinger, *Rules of Darkness: British Literature and imperialism, 1830 -1914* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 227-253 makes the important connection between an increase in social and political concerns about empire and imperial practice in the late-Victorian period, and the resurrection of the gothic novel.

What is more, however, this fear of reverse colonization can be understood not simply as a product of rational anxiety, but more accurately as a 'response to cultural guilt'. As Arata adds, 'In the marauding, invasive Other, British culture sees its own imperial practices mirrored back in monstrous form.'[313] This has its resonance most particularly in the British characters' fears of deracination – that Dracula's invasion and vampiric activity will eventually lead to the dissolution of the British race. Jonathan Harker fearfully contemplates this fate as he stands over Dracula's entombed and 'sleeping' body:

> This was the being I was helping to transfer to London, where, perhaps for centuries to come, he might, amongst its teeming millions, satiate his lust for blood, and create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons to batten on the helpless. The very thought drove me mad.[314]

Harker picks up a shovel in a fit of passion and raises it over his head to strike the vampire 'but as I did so the head turned, and the eyes fell full upon me with all their blaze of basilisk horror. The sight seemed to paralyse me'.[315] Emblazoned in full gothicised imagery, the victim's helplessness, and by extension Britain's vulnerability in the face of the vampire threat, is starkly articulated.

This reverse colonization narrative further intensifies as the plot progresses, and it becomes clear that Dracula intends to achieve his racial conquest of Britain through the sexual conquest of women's bodies. Virtuous Lucy Westernra is the first to fall under Dracula's power. In what is a thinly veiled metaphor, the Englishwoman invites the charming foreigner into her bedroom night after night, allowing him to remain until he is sated. The chilling parallel between Dracula's

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[313] Arata, 'The Occidental Tourist', p. 623.
[314] Stoker, *Dracula*, pp. 44-5.
[315] Ibid., p. 45.

appropriation of the female body as a weapon of war, and this practice as a feature of imperialism is hard to overlook.[316] Here, Stoker's critique of imperialism is unmistakable.

Yet I would suggest that Bram Stoker not only ambiguously represents the 'other' in *Dracula* to facilitate a reverse colonization narrative, but also as a strategy to offer a critique of late-Victorian race discourse. Similarly to Israel Zangwill, the novelist's own ethnic origins, as well as his life experiences, were in fact central to such a strategy. As a Protestant growing up in predominantly Catholic Dublin, Stoker surely felt something of a social outsider from a young age. That the future novelist suffered from severe physical disabilities until the age of seven, which kept him largely isolated from the outside world, probably only accentuated such feelings. Neither did his adult life, the most part of which he spent as an Irish expatriate working as actor Sir Henry Irving's manager in London, serve to release him from his 'outsider' identity. His relationship with Irving was intense, and for Stoker all-consuming. The writer penned a lengthy and passionate monograph upon his friend's death in 1906, entitled *Reminisces of Henry Irving*, and named his only son after his long-time boss and friend.[317] Of course many have since speculated as to whether the relationship was a homosexual one, or if Stoker perhaps desired it to be such.[318] That topic is not one which this chapter has the remaining length, or indeed objective to discuss. What is clear, however, is that Stoker himself occupied a position of racial, spiritual, geographical, even sexual 'otherness', which I believe was central to his literary portrayal of the consummate outsider, Dracula.

Within the racialised discourse of the late nineteenth century, Stoker would no doubt have been sensitive to the turbulent nature of Anglo-Irish relations, and, more specifically, the often

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[316] On this consult A. L. Stoler, 'Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia', in *Gender and the Cross-Roads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era*, (ed.) M. di Leonardo (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp.51-100 and A. McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[317] Many biographers and scholars interested in Bram Stoker reference the writer's relationship with Henry Irving as absolutely central to an understanding of the adult Stoker. See, for example, D. Glover, *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals: Bram Stoker and the Politics of Popular Fiction,* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996), pp. 2-21; Malchow, 'Vampire Gothic', pp. 130-8.

[318] See T. Schaffer, '"A Wilde Desire took me": The Homoerotic History of *Dracula', English Literary History,* vol. 61, (Summer 1994), pp. 381-425; Malchow, 'Vampire Gothic', pp. 132-136.

derogative references to the Irish as a 'primitive', 'dirty', 'violent' and 'criminal' race.[319] In this marginalisation, the Irish shared something with the Jews, who, as we have seen, were also feared in Britain for their pollutive, degenerate influence. Both groups were deemed 'primitive, premodern, and deeply superstitious' – representations which invoke the *Dracula* legend.[320] Moreover, both the Jews and, to a lesser extent, the Irish were distinctive as migrant communities in Britain, visible examples of the 'other', known to populate, and thus largely define the cultural identity of London's poorest quarters. Although Stoker was fortunate enough in his social standing not to have to inhabit the ghetto, his affinity with his fellow Irish seems likely. Indeed, the novelist extended his sympathy for persecuted minorities beyond his fellow countrymen to the Jewish cause. In 1905 Stoker joined an artists' protest against the maltreatment of the Jews, which seemed the culmination of a slow growing respect and interest in the Jewish people throughout his career.[321] Against such evidence it seems increasingly difficult to conceive of Dracula as encoding an anti-Semitic rhetoric. Joseph Valente also reaches this conclusion, observing that,

> [...] the close parallelism between Stoker's employment of prejudicial Jewish and Irish motifs [...] in the construction of Dracula indicates that his monster is no more a piece of anti-Semitism than a racial attack on his own Anglo-Celtic bloodlines, but is rather a vehicle for destabilizing such racial typologies [...][322]

This final statement is important. Throughout *Dracula*, Stoker represents the 'other' not as a means to participate in the anxious discourses of the era, but rather to challenge the very legitimacy of those discourses. And this is where my argument comes full circle. Dracula can *still*

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[319]   For research in this area consult R. Swift and S. Gilley, (eds.), *The Irish in the Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm, 1985) and, more recently, the Special Issue 'Irish Identities in Victorian Britain', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 27, pp. 2-3 (July-November 2009).

[320]   See J. Valente, *Dracula's Crypt: Bram Stoker, Irishness and the Question of Blood,* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), p. 68 for a fuller discussion of this.

[321]   Cited in B. Stoker, *The Essential Dracula: The Definitive Annotated Edition of Bram Stoker's Classic Novel* ed. by L. Wolf (New York: Penguin, 1993), p.413, n.17. It has also been pointed out that Bram Stoker's full name – Abraham Stoker – probably meant that the writer was frequently mistaken for being Jewish – another clue which might help account for the complete absence of anti-Semitism in any of Stoker's publications. See Malchow, p.155.

[322]   Valente, *Dracula's Crypt,* p. 69.

be understood as a metaphor for the immigrant Jew, and yet, contrary to the perceived atmosphere of the era, Stoker sketches the Jew with a large degree of empathy. Dracula's very familiarity to the Victorian reader, as gentleman, as intellectual, as curious traveller, even as ambitious imperialist, are all qualities which seem to beg an identification, or, at the very least, self recognition in the persona of the 'other'.

What is more, Stoker's seemingly sympathetic depiction of the immigrant Jew challenges perceptions of the era as charged with a pervading anti-Semitic atmosphere.[323] Instead this reading of *Dracula* draws attention to the existence of a counter discourse. Although it is difficult to establish with any confidence how far, and into which quarters of society philo-Semitic attitudes may have existed in *fin de siècle* Britain, that the Aliens Bill, which sought to control and prevent migration into Britain, faced considerable opposition until its eventual passage in 1905 certainly suggests pockets of support for the Jewish immigrant cause.[324] As we have already seen, the Anglo-Jewish press were particularly vocal in critiquing the prospect of restrictive legislation, although even they, at times, peddled a more disparaging view of the immigrants themselves. Hence Cheyette's insistence upon employing the term 'semitic discourse' to define the often confused and ambivalent representations of 'the Jew' seems particularly pertinent. Stoker, however, certainly appeared more committed to engaging a more positive image of 'the Jew'.

This conclusion seems to naturally beg the question, 'Can *Dracula*, therefore, be understood as propounding what a modern audience might define as "tolerant multiculturalism"?' To answer confidently in the affirmative might be a step too far, yet this close reading of Stoker's masterpiece does offer a substantial challenge to an interpretation of the novel as a simple confrontation between 'good' and 'evil'. The two sides seem to share too much in common. As we have seen, Dracula embraces this affinity from the outset. The Britons, however, finally acknowledge this affinity only in the vampire's final moment, noting 'in the face a look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there'.[325] Thus, in this final image all

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[323] C. Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society*, *1876-1939* (London: Edward Arnold, 1979).
[324] The most persuasive of which borrowed from the liberal tradition which pitted the agenda of the restrictionists against the image of Britain as a nation with a 'long' and 'honourable' tradition of granting asylum to those in need of it. Feldman, 'The Importance of being English', has defined the passage of the Aliens Act (1905) as 'one of the turning points in the decline of liberal England'.
[325] Stoker, *Dracula,* p. 314.

boundaries of difference seem to disintegrate, seemingly ridiculing the Britons' judgement of Dracula as inhuman, as 'alien', as an binary opposite to themselves – a judgement upon which their fears of the 'other' were ultimately based.

Degrees of Difference and Gender Ambivalence: Julia Frankau's *Pigs in Clover*

Few novels either before or since *Dracula* have articulated the terror posed to Britain by racial and sexual difference with such chilling effectiveness as Bram Stoker achieved in 1897. Yet his gothicised treatment of an unequivocally dangerous masculine 'other' did find an echo in an 1903 novel by a less well known, although certainly no less 'direct' author. The Anglo-Jewish novelist, Julia Frankau, who wrote under the male, gentile pseudonym Frank Danby, has rarely been perceived by either the contemporary or the modern observer as a writer who entertained ambiguities towards her Jewish subject.[326] Indeed, as I shall discuss in a later chapter, the uproar caused by her first novel, *Dr Philips: A Maida Vale Idyll* (1887), a blistering critique of Jewish materialism and consequential sexual and moral degeneracy, won her the label of a self-hating Jew. Within Anglo-Jewish circles the novel was condemned, and, even within the British press *Dr Philips* received scathing criticism. The satirical magazine *Punch* famously remarked that the book 'should never have been written. Having been written, it should never have been published. Having been published, it should not be read.'[327] More seriously still, Frankau's polemical writing proved itself in a quasi-political arena, in the hands of anti-Semite Arnold White. His *The Modern Jew* (1899) used the novel as 'evidence' to shore up its claims of Jewish dominance of the 'English nation', and of the failure of Anglo-Jewry to shed their communal identity in favour of anglicisation.[328]

Although Frankau continued to write from a position of 'revolt'[329] on Jewish themes, by 1900 she sought to distance herself from charges of anti-Semitism and self-hatred. Her sister, Eliza Aria, expressed this desire on Frankau's behalf:

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[326] See A. Newman, 'From Exile to Exit: the Frankau Jewish Connection', *Jewish Quarterly,* vol. 34, no.4, (1987), pp. 49-52; M. Glachinsky, '"Permanently Blacked": Julia Frankau's Jewish Race', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* vol. 27, (1999), pp. 171-183.

[327] *Punch*, (1887), cited in G. Frankau, *Self-Portrait,* (London: Macdonald, 1944), p. 22.

[328] A. White, *The Modern Jew,* (London: Heinemann, 1899), pp. xi-xii and pp. 145-7.

[329] This is a term coined by Cheyette in his early essay 'From Apology to Revolt'.

Dr Philips was written in extreme youth; it is crude and harsh with immature judgement, but ['Frank Danby'] was bitterly hurt at the use Arnold White made of his boyish generalisations...One day I think Frank Danby will write another Jewish story, but he will write now in a different spirit – in one that will be worthy of the race that he loves.[330]

Frankau employed this 'different spirit' in her 1903 publication *Pigs in Clover*. However, neither can that novel be conceivably interpreted as encapsulating a philo-Semitic message. Set at the time of the Boer War, *Pigs in Clover* centres on the financial prosperity and growing political influence of Jews in Britain. The tale's morality is suspended between Karl Althaus, a Jewish orphan from the slums of Whitechapel 'made good', and his conniving and charismatic adopted brother Louis. Whilst Karl utilises his wealth and international influence to support the imperialist cause in South Africa, his brother exploits his position and his natural charms for his own ends, seducing the intelligent and good-hearted, if somewhat naïve, English novelist Joan de Groot.

The dichotomy between the two brothers, although crudely drawn, is an attempt by the author to 'differentiate between the moral and immoral aspects of "Jewish Finance" in England.'[331] Certainly the novel was written in the context of, if not in direct response to, anti-Semitic agitation in Britain over the outbreak of the Boer War, which was popularly perceived to have been provoked by 'alien' Jews for their own capitalist interests. Throughout the 1890s, notions of Jewish conspiracies dictating British foreign policy were widely disseminated. H. M. Hyndman's comments in the Social Democratic Federation's journal *Justice* of 1896 characterised this perception:

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[330] E. Aria, *Jewish Chronicle,* 4 May 1900, p. 22.
[331] Cheyette, 'The Other Self', p. 105.

It is high time that those who do not think that Beit, Barnato, Oppenheim, Rothchild and co. ought to control the destinies of Englishmen at home, and of their Empire abroad, should come together and speak their mind.[332]

By the outbreak of the South African conflict in 1899, anti-war campaigners utilised such perceptions to present a negative and highly racialised image of the Jewish financier. These images of a Jewish threat abroad were further compounded by debates surrounding the potential threat posed by the Jewish immigrant at home – themes which certainly pervade both *Children of the Ghetto* and *Dracula*. *Pigs in Clover* addresses both of these anxieties, although it fails to fully legitimise either the anti-Semite's claims or to demonstrate support for the race Frankau claimed to love. As Nadia Valman acknowledges, '*Pigs in Clover* suggests that while Britain's imperial supremacy may be bolstered by Jewish capital, its body and spirit stand to be undermined by Jewish immigration'.[333] Thus in her obviously ambiguous attitude towards her fellow Jews, Frankau demonstrates a middle-class perspective which acknowledges the steady economic contribution of Anglo-Jewry, and yet is fearful of the degenerative influence of the immigrant alien. Such sentiment echoed the dominant outlook of the era, intensified in 1903 by the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration.[334] The Commission were especially preoccupied with singling out Jews and prostitutes as the primary threats to the racial and sexual 'health' of the nation. Similarly to Frankau, however, the Commission also sought to differentiate between the 'good' and 'bad' Jew, defining their 'desirability' in terms of their potential for 'criminality, insanity, sexual immorality, lack of economic self-sufficiency, ill-health, and political immoderation'.[335]

Louis Althaus, the novel's unequivocal 'bad' Jew, demonstrates his propensity for many of these degenerate flaws. Significantly, however, Frankau also employs eugenics to 'justify' her depiction of Louis as an *irredeemably* 'bad' Jew. Whilst Karl is the son of a hard-working, 'great-hearted' Jewish widow, Louis is the neglected and orphaned offspring of a prostitute and a Jewish

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[332] H. M. Hyndman, *Justice*, 25 April 1896.
[333] Valman, *The Jewess,* p. 201.
[334] PP 1903 cd 1741, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*.
[335] See D. Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, 1848-1918*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 215-6.

immigrant *schnorrer* (sponger) of the worse variety. Such parentage seemingly dictates Louis' nature, despite Karl's prolonged efforts to 'civilise' his adopted brother: 'With all his good looks and all his culture, Louis Althaus was the descendant of that wheedling, ringleted son of a weak race that is no longer a nation.'[336]

Thus in this way, and indeed as a reflection of the social atmosphere of the era, Frankau directly linked the feared degeneration of Britain with the Jewish immigrant and the prostitute. Within Louis, the 'bad blood' and 'pathological elements' of these two 'undesirable aliens' are dangerously united. Moreover, Louis' very promiscuousness and sexual allure implicitly bind these two extra-societal figures, 'the Jew' and 'the prostitute', even more closely. It is not without reason that the authoress makes much of Louis' 'feminine' qualities; his vanity, his impeccable taste in and preoccupation with fashion, his lack of interest in business, his love of gossip and scandal. Moreover, the suggestion of Louis' ambiguous gender and deviant sexuality not only evokes both 'the effeminate Jew' and 'the prostitute', but also 'the dandy' – a particularly potent and recognisable symbol of degeneracy for the Edwardian reader in the wake of Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial for 'gross indecency'. Furthermore, I would argue, the clear association between the Jewish male and sexual deviancy bridges the gap between literary trends of the early Victorian era, which made much of the corrupting force of 'the Jewess'' sexuality,[337] and the preference by the close of that era to associate sexual degeneration more particularly with the immigrant Jewish male – Count Dracula, of course, is the most compelling, if implicit, example of this. In society itself, the 'Whitechapel' or 'Jack the Ripper' murders as they became commonly known, did much to correlate sexual depravity with the Jewish immigrant in the public imagination.[338] The location of the murders alone, in deepest, darkest East London was enough to forge that association in the minds of many, and yet that the brutal killings could be anything but the work of a man was barely entertained.

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[336]   J. Frankau [F. Danby], *Pigs in Clover*, (London: William Heinemann, 1903), p. 131.
[337]   See Valman, *The Jewess,* for a fuller discussion of this trend.
[338]   See S. Gilman, *The Jew's Body,* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 104-27; S. Gilman, '"Who Kills Whores?" "I do", says Jack: Race and Gender in Victorian London', A. Warwick and M. Willis (eds.), *Jack the Ripper: Media, Culture, History*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 215-228; J. R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London,* (London: Virago, 1992), pp. 203-4.

As was the reaction to *Dr Philips,* contemporary and modern reviewers alike have sought to interpret *Pigs in Clover* as simply another example of Frankau's self-hating attitude towards her Jewish identity.[339]   The evidence for this, so suggested one observer, was embedded within the novel's very narrative: 'She [Julia Frankau] expresses her own love-hate relationship towards her Jewishness, a typical minority syndrome, through her characters and her authorial asides.'[340] Certainly Frankau's biography would seem to substantiate this claim of a 'love-hate' relationship. The novelist, although reared in a Jewish environment that included daily pray and attendance of a strictly orthodox school, also enjoyed more secular influences under the tutelage of Laura Lafargue, Karl Marx's daughter, in later adolescence. Upon marriage to Arthur Frankau in 1883, Julia immediately began to distance herself from the Judaism of her parents'. Within society, Julia and her husband also shunned traditional Anglo-Jewish circles, instead preferring the company of people involved in journalism and the arts.   The couple's estrangement from Judaism was seemingly cemented with the birth of their children who were not raised as Jews.[341]   Thus Frankau's clear ambivalence towards her Jewishness, and yet her life-long preoccupation with it, which is evident from the centricity of Jewish characters within her novels, left her as an outsider from both the Jewish and the gentile world.

Yet I would be hesitant to agree with the conclusions of Frankau's critics who condemn her as 'self-hating'.   Importantly, Bryan Cheyette has pointed out that the author's very ambivalence towards her Jewish subjects is, in itself, a far cry from a show of outright hostility.[342] I would take this further by suggesting that Frankau's continual engagement with 'Jewish' themes, and, most particularly, the greater nuances and subtleties of character she applies to her portrait of Karl Althaus, if not to his brother Louis, is indicative of her not wholly unsympathetic fascination with 'the Jew'.   Karl's very characterisation is imbued with complexities which attests to this authorial fascination: 'Karl, coarse, vulgar, unscrupulous, nevertheless has his own definite moral standard.   Even as a boy he might steal, but never beg; he might lie, but never break his

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[339]   Newman, 'From Exile to Exit', p. 51; Galchinsky, 'Permanently Blacked', pp. 171-183. The contemporary reception of *Pigs in Clover* is also discussed in F. T. Cooper's *Some English Story Tellers: A Book of the Younger Novelists,* (London: Grant Richards, 1912), pp. 376-416.
[340]   Newman, 'From Exile to Exit', p. 51.
[341]   T. M. Endelman's *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945,* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990) offers a brief biographical overview of Julia Frankau, her family, and her ancestors.
[342]   Cheyette, 'The Other Self', pp. 104-5.

promise.'[343] In her depiction of Karl, Frankau, just as Zangwill before her, simultaneously evokes Jewish stereotypes in the same breath as she refutes them. Unlike Louis, Karl is by no means a 'one-dimensional' figure. Instead he is the ambitious and greedy capitalist who grows 'beyond money'[344], ultimately replacing his love of money with a love for Britain. Karl finds salvation from his financial 'instinct' through patriotism. He is the epitome of the redeemed Jew – a quality traditionally reserved for 'the Jewess' within British literary culture of this period.[345] Moreover, through that redemption Frankau indicate the potential of 'the Jew' to transgress the boundaries between the racial 'other' and the anglicised 'self'. Within the novel, Stephen Hayward, an aristocratic politician, confirms Karl's transcendence, commending him as 'a thoroughly good fellow, a gentleman too, for all his want of a coat of arms'.[346] Significantly then, by the close of the novel Karl not only sheds his racial particularity, but also assumes both the façade of Victorian masculinity whilst breaching the bounds of social class. Within Karl, the 'redeemed' Jew, issues of race, class and gender intersect, and are overcome. This seems too overtly a positive message for a self-hating Jew.

Conceivably it was the novel's sombre concluding image, Joan de Groot's suicide, which has largely caused the eclipse of Frankau's optimistic depiction of the redeemable Jew. Despite Joan's concerted efforts to free herself from Louis' dangerous and destructive sexual allure, 'the enemy was within, not without, it was herself she had to fight, not Louis'.[347] As Valman suggests, 'for in arousing her sexual passion, Louis [...] has Judaised Joan – has provoked in her a reversion to primitive sexual instinct.'[348] In something of a parallel with *Dracula*, the conquest of women's bodies by a racial and sexual 'other' functions as a metaphor for a vulnerable and endanger Britain, which is being infiltrated from inside as well as out. Death is the only release from this charming, yet deviant enemy. Unlike *Dracula*, however, the enemy, Louis, is neither defeated nor humanised. This final gothic image, part of Joan's drug-induced delusion, is chilling in its intensity:

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[343] Cooper, *Some English Story Tellers,* p. 389.
[344] Frankau, *Pigs in Clover,* p. 253.
[345] Nadia Valman has pointed out that the Jewish woman traditionally served as the antithesis to the excessive materialism of the Jewish man within literary culture. See chapters 5 & 6 of *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century Literary Culture.*
[346] Frankau, *Pigs in Clover*, p. 327.
[347] Ibid*.,* p. 369.
[348] Valman, *The Jewess,* p. 201.

> [...] in semi-consciousness she saw a crawling Reptile of Fear, with viscid eyes, and tongue that slobbered red saliva, it sickened her with its odour, it was the odour of dead desire. Overpowering, the Thing crawled about the room with ribbed and heaving sides, and she lay there shuddering at it, not knowing its direction, as it moved, a hateful yellow light shone through and about it. Then the reptile turned beast, and she recognised it – and tried to shriek. *It was the beast in Louis!*[349]

Joan succumbs to the entreaties of death, whilst Louis, the irrepressible, irredeemable Jewish 'monster' continues to prowl her room – a metaphor for her beloved homeland of Britain. Inevitably, it is hard to shake off the impression left by this final image. Louis is the threatening and dangerous racial, sexual and moral 'other' whose difference is utterly inassimilable. Yet one should not forget the message Frankau seemingly conveys through her other Jewish protagonist, Karl. His potential to transgress the boundaries between Jew and Gentile, and to eventually abandon one identity in favour of another, Frankau suggests, should be taken as a sign of hope for the future. Thus, although Frankau somewhat crudely deals in Jewish 'difference' as a central theme within *Pigs in Clover* it is in her painstaking effort to show degrees of Jewish 'difference' which gives away her continued preoccupation with the Jewish 'other' within herself.

Throughout this chapter I have grounded my reading of these literary works in the assumption that each novel is both a product of its time, reflecting the discursive context, but also a text imbued with each author's distinctly personal ambiguities about their own sense of belonging. I have argued, moreover, that literary representations of the Jewish immigrant, as a context-specific signifier of difference, provided the forum through which each author explored and negotiated their own identity ambivalence. Intriguingly, however, all of the novelists addressed these ambivalences differently. Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* can be read as a defence of the Anglo-Jewish immigrant community. Although the Realist tone cannot disguise the depravities

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[349] Frankau, *Pigs in Clover,* pp. 395-6.

and hardships of ghetto life, it also operates to humanise the ghetto inhabitants. The female protagonists, I have suggested, are central to this humanising process, to the formation of a sympathetic understanding between Jewish subject and reader. Within Bram Stoker's *Dracula* the author also exploits a relationship between reader and subject. I have suggested, however, that Stoker employs a narrative of reverse colonization to challenge the boundaries between reader and subject, between the 'self' and the 'other'. It is Julia Frankau's *Pigs in Clover*, however, which adopts perhaps the least sophisticated approach to her Jewish protagonists – an approach which is neither a vigorous defence of the Jewish immigrant nor a forceful challenge to the image of the Jew as a signifier of difference. Rather the novel is a cautious attempt to show the potential for redemption and assimilation by a certain 'type' of Jew. Yet, although the novel's 'good' Jew is a very masculinised figure in a male-centric world of business and imperialism, one cannot help but associate Frankau's empathetic depiction of this figure as a plea for greater understanding of herself.

The force which drives forward each of these narratives is thus deeply personal and yet it is the intrusion of the political which injects each of these works with an urgency and a vitality which is hard to ignore. The aliens debate, although not always an explicit context, is nevertheless an ever-present discourse against which each of these novels were created, and by which each of these novels are shaped. Certainly Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* can, with little hesitancy, be defined in this way. It is, unmistakably, a response to the mounting socio-political tensions of the day and, in that objective, is a novel which initiates a dialogue – perhaps the first dialogue – between the British establishment and the immigrant community. It gives voice to an otherwise silent and much misunderstood people. Although both *Dracula* and *Pigs in Clover* succumb to more sensationalised perspectives on the aliens questions, these two novels nevertheless continue this trend to address and dismantle the political through the realm of fiction. Hence Count Dracula is the eponymous alien – threatening, territorializing, and unknown – and yet is also intriguingly familiar who, in the end, is made human – a nod surely to those restrictionists who would premise their objections to further immigration on the grounds that integration was unachievable. Frankau too, in her own way, attempts to take on the popular notion of the alien Jew as disruptive and harmful to Britain, suggesting, through the character of Karl, that this is one generalisation

too far. Hence what ultimately unites these three novels is the agenda to deconstruct the essentialisms of racial and cultural 'difference' – an agenda which is, for these authors, as personal as it is political.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The intense, albeit fleeting, fascination with the figure of the alien Jew across society, politics and culture at the *fin de siècle* has produced and preserved an image and a narrative of Jewish difference for posterity. It is an intriguing image which offers not only an insight into race and gender discourses of the era but also, when viewed through the prism of genre analysis, gives a sense of how different cultural texts in the past operated to engage with an issue of seeming national importance. The press, fiction, and politics, I have suggested, each had their own tactics for doing so, dictated by the particular dynamics of their communicative medium.

Thus newspapers – the text with the largest readership and the widest reach – were able to, at least initially, take charge of constructing an image of, and a narrative about, the alien Jew, raising their own profile in the process. The use of established and familiar gender motifs such as that of 'innocent women and children' was especially instrumental in this project, particularly in the early stages of the press coverage of Jewish persecution abroad. However as the immigration 'crisis' increasingly became a matter for politics, politicians (as well as members of the general public giving testimony and frequently guided by their questioners), took on and re-styled those representations to suit their immediate political agenda – sold to the public under the guise of protecting the nation and empire. This, for the most part, meant the marginalisation of the Jewish woman who was regarded as simply not menacing enough to suit the restrictionist's cause but yet was considered still too racially unfamiliar and potentially sexually volatile to assist the pro-immigration campaign. These representations were revised once again within the realm of fiction, shaped by authors existing in the racial and sexual margins of society to reflect their own, very personal ambiguities about their place within the nation. Indeed, of all the genres, it is fiction which most successfully humanised the alien Jew. Despite literatures' limitless potential for engaging the widely sensational and thoroughly incredible in its treatment of 'the Jew', those three novels by Zangwill, Stoker and Frankau instead strove to challenge the idea that immigration meant 'crisis' and Jew meant unassimilable difference. This, of course, prompts one to wonder how remarkable these three novels in fact were. As texts which seemed to offer a counter-narrative to the wealth of hostile, or simply indifferent literary perspectives of the era about the alien Jew these novels might be seen to stand steadfastly and deliberately apart. Yet whilst the very personal

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agendas of these authors certainly dictated their sympathetic approach to the aliens question, it should not be forgotten that fiction has the great advantage of providing the necessary 'cover' behind which even the most provocative and challenging questions can be asked. The capacity for authorial disavowal which fiction thus facilitated was not an option available to either politicians or journalists whose credentials depended upon their sincerity.

Yet for all of these disparities of approach, similar thematic threads still wind their way through these three genres in their treatment of the alien Jew. Discourses of imperialism and gender, as well as anxieties about the identity of the self, collective and nation course through each of these texts, shaping not only which narratives of 'the Jew' are constructed, but how. Hence, throughout, there is a reliance upon established and popular notions of gender and Jewishness with the Jewish woman, as the sympathetic foil to her male counterpart, used to mediate and dilute the threat posed by the Jewish man, bringing nuance and colour to otherwise banal Semitic representations. So too is there a tendency to gender the nation, presenting Britain as the 'virtuous' and 'innocent' victim of the alien interloper – an artifice which makes it clear that the aliens debate of the *fin de siècle* was not really about the alien at all. Although frequently employed in distinct, even antithetical ways, these themes nevertheless give a clear sense of how diverse facets of the British cultural and political landscape invested in and borrowed from a common socio-cultural language and strategy for exploring, articulating and even challenging difference. It is the challenge for this thesis' second section to assess how that language and strategy – all too frequently gendered and gendering – operated not only within and across genres during the age of mass migration but also as a means to represent alien Jews as they were observed traversing space and time in their exodus from the old world to the new, from the *shtetl* to the suburb.

From Shtetl to Suburb:

Visions of Jewish Space, Place and Territoriality

<u>Introduction</u>

For human geographers, space has long been employed as an analytical category through which to map and understand the world. Conceived of not simply as a 'dead' area brought alive by human activity, space has come to be understood as intimately responsible for, and simultaneously constructed by, phenomena enacted within it.[350] The philosopher and Marxist theorist Henri Lefebvre's seminal work *The Production of Space* epitomised this conceptualisation arguing that, as later commentators have succinctly summarised, 'absolute [dead] space cannot exist because, at the moment it is colonized through social activity, it becomes relativized and historicized space'.[351] Lefebvre contested the popular understanding that space pre-existed phenomena, instead arguing that it was 'produced', and indeed that 'every society [...] produces a space, its own space'.[352] What is more, as Barbara Mann suggests, that process 'is both mutual and dialectical: society produces spaces, and these very spaces produce the society.'[353] Whilst Lefebvre's discursive reading of space dwelt largely upon the modern period, using the urban environment as its case study, he was, nevertheless, conscious that the production of space is intrinsically linked with a particular historical 'moment'. That is to say, space is both socially constructed and historically specific. Thus this understanding of space as a temporal locality holds implications for the historian; a realisation borne out through increasing interest in space as an analytical tool throughout the discipline, and indeed across the Humanities as a whole.

Place too has emerged as an important analytical category, implicitly linked to space in terms of its social constructionist quality, and yet place is understood by human geographers as a category in its own right. As Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin and Gill Valentine have recognised, place

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[350]   See P. Hubbard, R. Kitchin and G. Valentine (eds.), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, (London: Sage Publications, 2004) for an excellent introduction to the evolution of spatial theory and to its key theorists.
[351]   Hubbard *et al*, (eds.), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, p. 5.
[352]   H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 31.
[353]   B. E. Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 1.

is 'a particular form of space, one that is created through acts of naming as well as the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular social spaces'.[354] Thus place is a space which human activity, and more particularly, 'lived experience' has imbued with meaning.[355] It is people who 'give meaning to what is otherwise an abstract location, a point on a map, a structure at the intersection of coordinates, random space'.[356] Hence space and place are intricately related, one born from the other, transforming into the other as an anonymous space becomes invested with meaning and value.[357] Place, then, as an imaginative creation and as lived reality, is both highly subjective and highly personal. What may be a significant place for one person may be nothing more than an unfamiliar space for another.

Whilst academic interest in space and place as analytical categories has abounded, this 'spatial turn' has been slower to penetrate the field of Jewish studies. It was, perhaps initially, too obscure an approach for an already marginal corner of intellectual research. However, the work conducted by urban sociologists from the 1970s onwards provided a 'way in' for some to think about space, place and ethnicity.[358] Studies concerned with Jews and urbanity, for example, often explored through the spectres of 'the ghetto' and 'the *eruv*' as the most obvious of 'Jewish' spaces, have been plentiful.[359] In recent decades, post-colonial theory has offered an especially compelling reading, although only slowly taken up, of the Jewish quarter as a vestige of the East within the West, aligning representations of Jewish diasporic spaces with supercilious images of the Asian and

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[354] Hubbard *et al*, (eds.), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, p. 5.
[355] This relationship between place and human experience has been widely recognised. See, for example, Hubbard *et al*, (eds.), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, p. 5; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1977), pp. 6-7; D. Cesarani, M. Shain and T. Kushner (eds.), *Zakor V' Makor: Place and Displacement in Jewish History and Memory*, (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2008), p. 1.
[356] Cesarani *et al*, (eds.), *Zakor V' Makor*, p. 1.
[357] See Tuan, *Space and Place*, p 6, for an excellent discussion on this.
[358] Some key academic texts which consider space, place and ethnicity include F. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Culture Difference*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1969); D. Ley, *A Social Geography of the City*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1983); W. Davies and D. Herbert, *Communities Within Cities: An Urban Social Geography*, (London: Belhaven, 1993) and P. Jackson and J. Penrose (eds.), *Constructions of Place, Race and Nation*, (London: University College London Press, 1993) and J. Schlör, *Tel Aviv: From Dream to City*, translated by H. Atkins, (London: Reaktion Books, 1999).
[359] See, for example, L. Wirth, *The Ghetto*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928); A. Etzioni, 'The Ghetto: A Re-Evaluation', *Social Forces*, vol. 37, no. 3, (1959), pp. 255-62; Y. Bechhofer, *The Contemporary Eruv: Eruvin in Modern Metropolitan Areas*, (Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, 1998); P. Vincent and B. Warf, 'Eruvim: Talmudic Places in a Postmodern World', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 27, no. 1, (March 2002), pp. 30-51; C. E Fonrobert, 'The Political Symbolism of the Eruv', *Jewish Social Studies*, (Spring/Summer 2005), pp. 9-25.

African landscape.[360] However discourses concerned with ethnicity and identity have also perceived worrying parallels between real and imagined bounded space demarcated as 'Jewish', with Polish ghettos and Nazi concentration camps.[361] This association is exemplified in Tim Cole's groundbreaking study *Holocaust City: The Making of a Jewish Ghetto* which forcefully demonstrates the shocking dichotomy implicit within the Nazi's use of space:

> There was clearly an architecture for "Aryans" and an architecture for "non-Aryans", and, more broadly, distinctive "Aryan" and "Non-Aryan" spaces. And ultimately the difference between these spaces [...] was that the Nazis were creating 'non-Aryan' *Todesraum* [death space] in Poland while in the process of creating 'Aryan' *Lebensraum* [living space].[362]

Many contemporary Jews, however, have sought to banish such negative associations between Jews and urbanity by reclaiming certain urban locales as sites imbued with the rich heritage of the Jewish diaspora.[363] 'The slum, for so many years a byword for poverty and deprivation', wrote Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson of the Jewish immigrant quarter, 'is transfigured [in many memoirs and autobiographies] into a warm and homely place, a little commonwealth where there was always a helping hand. The narrative of hard times becomes a record of courage and endurance.'[364] Whilst many within the academic community remain sceptical as to the 'value' of these highly subjective and often emotionally charged genealogical accounts, as Samuel and

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[360] Edward Said's seminal study *Orientalism*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), which explored the construction of 'the East' by 'the West' as an expression of imperialism, although excluded the Jew as an example of the eastern 'other', has provided the foundations for post-colonial theorists, Jewish Studies scholars and others' explorations into representations of 'Jewish' space within the diaspora. The most recent example of this which draws parallels between the Jewish East End and East Africa is E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman, *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

[361] These are all key points of discussion raised in the special edition of *Jewish Social Studies*, entitled 'Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space', edited by Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Vered Shemtov, vol. 11, no. 3, (Spring/Summer 2005).

[362] T. Cole, *Holocaust City: The Making of a Jewish Ghetto*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 7.

[363] There are simply far too many memoirs and autobiographies which valorise former Jewish quarters in cities such as Boston, Glasgow and London to name here. However, these works are a good starting point: M. Antin, *The Promised Land*, 2nd edn., (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969) [originally published by Houghton Mifflin, 1912]; E. Cowan, *Spring Remembered: A Scottish Jewish Childhood*, (Edinburgh: Southside, 1974); A. Hartog, *Born to Sing*, Ordinary Lives Series no. 2, C. Murphy, (ed.), (London: Dennis Dobson, 1978).

[364] R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.), *The Myths We Live By*, (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 9.

Thompson aptly demonstrate, these personal narratives have done much to prompt a necessary (re)conceptualisation of Jewish place as well as Jewish space.[365] As Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin have pointed out, within a historical framework scholars have, repeatedly and unhelpfully, delineated one 'Jewish' place, and one place alone – Palestine – at the expense of all others.[366] However, if, as Yi-Fu Tuan has suggested, place is a stable and secure space to which one 'belongs', then perhaps this hesitancy within Jewish studies to acknowledge Jewish roots and rootedness beyond the biblical homeland is unsurprising.[367] As Neil Jabobs has written,

> Jewish geography may have been harder to discern [...] compared to the geography of peoples that are/were geographically concentrated – and who often possess(ed) the trappings of a geopolitical entity, i.e., a kingdom, state, etc. [...] The impression that Jews – unlike "normal peoples" were not geographically rooted has long existed at both the popular and the scholarly level. At the popular level, such impressions are seen in views of the "wandering Jew", rootless, without true underlying loyalty to the non-Jewish geopolitical entity in which s/he lives.[368]

Certainly this reading of the 'Jewish condition' has had implications for the treatment of *Eretz Israel* by spatial theorists. Zionist ideology adopted a narrative of 'the Land' which drew upon the Talmudic idealisation of Palestine. With the return to 'the Land', this projected image of Israel as

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[365] See T. Kushner, 'The End of the "Anglo-Jewish Progress Show": Representations of the Jewish East End, 1887-1987', in *The Jewish Heritage in British History: Englishness and Jewishness*, (ed.) T. Kushner, (London: Frank Cass, 1992), pp. 78-105; J. Weissman Joselit, 'Telling Tales: Or, How a Slum Became a Shrine', *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 2, no. 2, (Winter 1996), pp. 54-63; H. Diner, *Lower East Side Memories: A Jewish Place in America*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000); H. Diner, J. Shandler and B. Wenger, *Remembering the Lower East Side: American Jewish Reflections*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); A. J. Kershen, 'The Migrant at Home in Spitalfields: Memory, Myth and Reality', pp. 96-113 in K. Burrell and P. Panayi (eds.), *Histories and Memories: Migrants and their History in Britain*, (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006); T. Kushner, 'Heritage and the Refugees', in *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 55-100 for an introduction to academic debates in this area.

[366] J. Boyarin and D. Boyarin, *Powers of Diaspora: Two Essays on the Relevance of Jewish Culture*, (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).
[367] See Tuan's *Space and Place*, for an articulate introduction to these two concepts.
[368] N. G. Jacobs, 'Introduction: A Field of Jewish Geography', in *Shofar*, vol. 17, no. 1, (Autumn 1998), pp. 1-18, (pp. 2-3 & 4).

the one, true 'Jewish' place was further concretized as Israelis engaged with the project of nation building and the search for a collective national identity.[369] However this preoccupation within Jewish studies with Israel as 'The Place' has simultaneously caused narratives of alternative Jewish places within the diaspora to be marginalized. Indeed, as the editors of the groundbreaking volume *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place* point out, whilst 'Jewish spaces' within the diaspora may be considered '"Other" spaces', 'Other' spaces pose a crucial 'challenge' to 'conventional conceptions of place and space'. Thus 'exploring Jewish topographies [...] allows for new, subversive perspectives on the places and spaces of the majority society and for rethinking spatial assumptions that have been taken for granted'.[370]

Mindful of the value of contemplating alternative or 'other' topographies, this section shall seek to explore 'Jewish territories', and, more specifically, the demarcated 'territory' of the Jewish immigrant alien (or soon to be immigrant alien), and their descendants. Essentially however, I am interested in 'external' perspectives on Jewish space as it was perceived, experienced and imagined by many strata within and beyond *fin de siècle* British society during and after the years of large-scale migration into, and transmigration through, its ports. Essentially I want to demonstrate that territoriality – that is the matter of territory and its control – was a fundamental component of Britishness at the *fin de siècle*. Although by no means the only global imperial power of the time, unlike Europe's other great imperial nations, namely France and Germany, Britain's position as the world's greatest imperial power, meant that perceptions of spatial ownership and safeguarding against any potential threats, became crucial to the very essence of the nation in ways that it did not – or not to the same extent – for their continental cousins. This study, then, shall not only look to uncover narratives which delineate Jewish spaces and places from an 'internal' position, but, more particularly, shall exploit those narratives as a means to expose the contours and crevices of 'Britishness'. Thus from a theoretical standpoint, this study rests upon the assumption that 'the definition of all identities, whether personal or collective, involves the parallel and simultaneous

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[369] See J. Brauch, A. Lipphardt and A. Nocke, 'Exploring Jewish Space: An Approach', in Brauch, Lipphardt and Nocke (eds.) *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, (Aldershot, Hants and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 1-23 for a useful introduction to the evolution of research in this area of Jewish studies. See also Schlör, *Tel Aviv*, for an exploration and celebration of contemporary Jewish urbanity and spatiality in Israel.
[370] Brauch, Lipphardt and Nocke, 'Exploring Jewish Space: An Approach' , p. 3.

delimitation of their others'.[371]   In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Britain's 'others', whilst manifold, were largely defined according to a racist imperial worldview which privileged 'Europeans' or peoples from the 'West' over those of Asiatic or African origin.   'The Jew', whilst considered neither 'black' nor 'white'[372] nevertheless symbolised 'difference', a difference which was severely exacerbated with the arrival of Jewish brethren from 'the East'. The Jewish immigrant occupied a unique position within Britain as the first 'non-western' migrant group of any size to 'flood' her shores. Despite Britain's much-lauded tradition of granting asylum to refugees as well as her reputation as a liberal nation, the newcomers severely tested those credentials. Thus by the latter years of the nineteenth century, the British cultural imagination was confronted with the urgent task of (re)conceptualising the Jewish 'other' (a 'visible' minority group) as part of the crucial process of reconfiguring and re-stabilising the collective identity of the 'self' (the nation). Although this challenge was by not means unique to Britain – many other 'western' nations inherited sizable Jewish immigrant populations at this same time – Britain had long been more comfortable with the image of herself as a nation of emigration rather than immigration. As Nancy Green has pointed out, 'From 1830 to 1925 over seventeen million English [...] migrated westward', by far the largest migratory movement by a population leaving a so-called 'western' nation.[373] The imaginative mapping of the Jewish alien's spatial environment was thus a wholly challenging as well as an utterly central part of the process through which 'the nation' attempted to construct and organise its relationship with its newcomers.

That discursive process, however, was also indicative of a relationship of power. By demarcating 'Jewish' spaces with both real and imagined boundaries, be it the *shtetl*, the migrant ship, the urban 'ghetto' or, much later, the North London suburb, the British cultural imagination essentially sought to assume control and impose order upon spaces which, because of the 'otherness' of its inhabitants, seemed unfamiliar and precariously poised between incongruity and all-out anarchy. This, according to spatial theorists, has been seen as common practice amongst

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[371]   Ezequiel Adamovsky utilises this theoretical position in his study *Euro-Orientalism: Liberal Ideology and the Image of Russia in France, 1740-1880*, (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), p. 17.
[372]   Bryan Cheyette made use of this evocative description in his chapter 'Neither Black nor White: The Figure of 'the Jew' in Imperial British Literature' in L. Nochlin and T. Garb (eds.), *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), pp. 31-41.
[373]   N. Green, 'The Modern Jewish Diaspora: East European Jews in New York, London, and Paris', *Comparing Jewish Societies*, (ed.), T. Endelman, (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pp. 113-134, (p. 119).

authoritarian regimes wishing to construct 'spaces of domination'[374] in order to 'regulate and control' peoples', and most especially marginalized peoples' 'use of space'.[375] Whilst British responses to Jewish immigrants cannot, perhaps, be defined in such absolutist terms, this reading can still offer something towards understanding the production and representation of 'ethnic' or 'minority' spaces by the 'majority' or host society. As Peter Jackson has observed, 'many forms of racism have an explicitly territorial dimension that requires us to examine the complex interweaving of social relations and spatial structures'.[376]

It is this very term 'territory' which seems crucial to comprehending representations of Jewish immigrant spaces. At the most basic level 'territory' denotes ownership of space: tenure which transforms space into place. However within spatial theory, territoriality has been defined as 'a spatial strategy to affect, influence or control resources of power by controlling area'.[377] Yet, in real terms, Jews have historically enjoyed very little or no ownership of the places which they inhabited in the diaspora. The Russian Pale of Settlement, and, in its most extreme form, the Nazi ghettos and concentration camps of Eastern Europe, are key examples of this Jewish diasporic dislocation from, and lack of ownership of, environment. Nonetheless, within anti-Semitic, and, more recently, anti-Zionist discourse, the very opposite notion to this – that Jews have territorialized the landscape or cityscape – predominates. It is this paradox which resides at the very core of this investigation into the Jewish alien habitat. 'The Jew' is simultaneously possessor of, and yet dispossessed of, territory and power. Moreover, I want to suggest that this paradoxical association between 'the Jew' and territoriality was not a stable discourse but one that underwent enormous flux throughout and beyond the *fin de siècle* period. That is to say, as a discursive strategy for delineating Jewish spatiality, it functioned differently according to the socio-historical context which framed its articulation.

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[374] This is a phrase coined by Steve Pile in the introduction to S. Pile and M. Keith (eds.), *Geographies of Resistance*, (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 16.

[375] Tim Cole navigates some of the literature on this topic in his *Holocaust City,* pp 21-22. In particular he refers to W. A Douglas Jackson, *The Shaping of Our World: A Human and Cultural Geography*, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1985); D. Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion*, (London: Routledge, 1995); and Pile's introduction in *Geographies of Resistance.*

[376] P. Jackson (ed.), *Race and Racism: Essays in Social Geography*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987), p. 14.

[377] R. D. Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 1.

It is through this theoretical framework that representations of Jewish immigrant spaces and places shall be analysed. Lefebvre's trialectical definition of space as produced by cultural practices, representations and imaginations shall form the theoretical foundation. From this, an understanding of place 'as a particular form of space' intricately connected to it, yet with its own distinct identity and character, shall be adopted.[378] Thus whilst 'space' and 'place' as key analytical terms are understood and utilised as distinct categories, their inter-relatedness remains, nevertheless, at the very core of their definition and usage. Furthermore, 'territoriality' – 'the spatial expression of power' – shall also be recognised for its particular connotations of spatial power and ownership, whilst acknowledging its interrelatedness to space and place.[379] Thus tracing 'the Jews'' ever-changing relationship with territoriality, as an expression of their perceived spatiality, will also be central to the approach which this section will adopt.

As well as this, consideration shall also be given to the interrelatedness of geography and gender. As Doreen Massey has observed,

> [...] each is, in profound ways, implicated in the construction of the other: geography in its various guises influences the cultural formation of particular genders and gender relations; gender has been deeply influential in the production of "the geographical".'[380]

Certainly the dynamic between these two, especially with regard to their social constructionist quality and historicist nature, has considerable connotations for comprehending British perceptions and conceptualisations of Jewish immigrant spaces, places and territories. The gendering of the home, for example, as an unequivocal female space within modern western social discourse was repeatedly used to decipher the Jewish home in the *shtetl*, the East End ghetto, and, more recently, within the North London *eruv* – translations which, at different moments, have hugely simplified, disparaged and celebrated the dynamics of the Jewish family. Thus a sensitive

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[378] Hubbard *et al*, *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, p. 5.
[379] Cole, *Holocaust City*, p. 40.
[380] D. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 177

gendered reading of immigrant space and place will be a crucial tool for gaining a more nuanced understanding of British collective identity.

Through a methodological approach that combines geography and chronology – space and time – this section will trace the multiple representations of the 'alien' habitat, charting the complex and uni-directional journey of the alien Jew from *shtetl* to suburb. It will thus begin with an exploration of the *shtetlekh,* or small 'Jewish' towns of Eastern Europe, suggesting that, whilst discourses of 'the Jew' in the urban environment predominated, a subtle counter discourse also briefly emerged which entertained the idea that Jewish life was also compatible with, and indeed flourished in, the rural milieu. The subsequent chapter will then follow the routes of Jewish migration from East to West, exploring accounts of Jewish journeys overland, across borders, at sea and upon arrival in the 'new world', conceptualising those transitory spaces as distinctive 'alien' spaces within the British cultural imagination. Thus, within the third chapter, the intense fascination with London's Jewish 'ghetto', (a fascination which has largely dictated academic approaches to questions of Jewish immigrant space in the *fin de siècle* period), will be treated within, and as part of, the evolving public and literary discourses on Jewish spatiality and territoriality rather than as a curious and decontextualised phenomenon. What is more, however, Jewish spaces which have existed in the shadow of the ghetto will also be explored and exposed as spaces deserving of attention in their own right. Hence with that objective in mind, to trace representations of the geographic progression, experientially and imaginatively, of the immigrant Jew from 'place' of origin to current and literal 'resting place', this section will conclude by discussing the multiple conceptualisations of, and conflicts within, Britain's 'Jewish' provinces and suburbs in history, fiction and memory.

Chapter Four

Beyond the Pale: 'Western' Representations of Jewish Space

In Eastern Europe[381]

In recent years, fascination with the Jewish *shtetl*, or small town, rooted in Russia's imperial age, has abounded.[382] Indeed so numerous have been the scholarly, and not so scholarly, treatments of 'the *shtetl*' that it has led certain academics to condemn the discussions as largely characterised by 'gross generalisations and romanticised nostalgia'.[383] In the wake of the Holocaust, such treatment of Eastern Europe, with the *shtetl* as its central motif, took on a particular poignancy. As Steven Zipperstein has persuasively shown, for American Jewry, the tendency towards nostalgia regarding the European past by the mid-twentieth century can be understood as 'part of an effort to say something coherent about this now-obliterated world in the terms available to them: sentimental rather than commemorative or horrified'.[384] Interest in Yiddish literature and *shtetl* culture began to flourish, both within and beyond the American Jewish community, culminating in the enduring success of the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, débuted on Broadway in 1964.[385] The play, adapted from

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[381]   The terms 'western' and 'eastern', 'West' and 'East', used frequently throughout this chapter, when expressed in parentheses is used to indicate that, in this context, they are not used as purely geographical terms, but also as discursive constructs. The term 'Eastern Europe' (likewise the 'East End') is also problematic, but, for the sake of consistency throughout the thesis as a whole, shall not be encased in parentheses despite it similarly constructivist character, but shall, instead be capitalised. To return then to Eastern Europe, it is a commonly contested term amongst academics, who, although rightly accept that Eastern Europe is itself an invented and fluid construct with mutating boundaries, fail to agree as to when Eastern Europe was invented, and by whom. L. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilisation on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994) is perhaps *the* key text in recent times on this, arguing that the French Enlightenment gave rise to the concept of Eastern Europe. However his conclusions have been contested, most notably by Adamovsky in *Euro-Orientalism*, pp. 245-247.

[382]   Some of the key academic texts on the *shtetl* include D. K. Roskies and D. G. Roskies, *The Shtetl Book: an introduction to East European Jewish life and lore*, (New Jersey: Ktav Publishing House, 1979); G. Estraikh and M. Krutikov (eds.) *The Shtetl: Image and Reality: papers of the second Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish*, (Oxford: Legenda, 2000); D. Miron, *The Image of the Shtetl and Other Studies of Modern Jewish Literary Imagination*, (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000); J. Neugroschel, *The Shtetl: A Creative Anthology of Jewish Life in Eastern Europe*, (New York and London: Turnaround, 2002); S. T. Katz (ed), *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, (New York and London: New York University Press, 2007).

[383]   S. Kassow, 'Introduction', *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, pp. 1-28.

[384]   S. J. Zipperstein, *Imagining Russian Jewry: Memory, History, Identity*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1999), pp. 29-30.

[385]   Examples of this new-found interest include M. Zbrowski and E. Hertog, *Life is with People: The Culture of Shtetl Life*, (New York: Schocken, 1995), [originally published 1952] and I. Howe and E. Greenberg (eds.), *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories*, (New York: Viking Press, 1953). Both of these examples, together with others, are given by Zipperstein, *Imagining Russian Jewry*, pp. 30-31.

Sholem Aleichem's *Tevye and his Daughters*, revolved around the universally familiar themes of family, community and their decline. In doing so, it appealed to a broad audience. What is more, as Zipperstein has argued, in the conceptualisation of Tevye's *shtetl* and in the very character of Tevye himself, there were many striking parallels between the imagined Eastern European past and the American present. 'Tevye's foremost concerns – his children, their marriages, his role in a mostly female world, negotiating life in a Gentile milieu, building and sustaining community, the wages of prestige [...] – also figure among the chief concerns of postwar, suburban Jewry'.[386] Thus the *shtetl* and the people who were imagined to populate it were designed as much in the context of, and in response to the present, as they were to reconstruct a vanished past. Hence, even beyond this American context, the longevity of the *shtetl's* discursive representation by both the Jewish and non-Jewish world provides the contemporary observer with an enthralling insight into changing conceptualisations of this Jewish space across time; conceptualisations which track and reflect the varied historical landscape of the Jewish people and those who attempt to imagine it.

Certainly 'the *shtetl*', even in its mythologised incarnation, remains a hugely important symbol of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. This chapter, however, shall not only dwell upon perceptions of 'the *shtetl*' within Britain during the period under consideration. For one thing, that Yiddish delineation of urban space, and the cultural perspective which invariably accompanied it, were simply not part of the British cultural vocabulary. During the years in which the large-scale persecution of Jews in Russia was widely reported, namely from 1881-1906, the popular label for the Eastern European Jewish milieu was 'The Pale of Settlement'.[387] 'The *shtetl*', in British discourse at least, was a much later invention for which literature and Jewish memoirs were largely responsible. That said, representations at the turn-of-the-century within literature, travel narratives, political discourses and newspaper reports of urban locales in Russia seen to be occupied by Jews, shall form the core of the analysis. However, counter narratives which expose the rural environment as a significant, if much overlooked, backdrop for the Jewish experience in Eastern Europe – both lived and imagined – shall form a crucial antithetical perspective to that of

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[386] Zipperstein, *Imagining Russian Jewry*, p. 36.

[387] The term 'Pale' to denote a boundaried area under the control of an external force was first applied to the English Pale in eastern Ireland in the late Middle Ages. It was later used by the English to refer to other colonized areas and thus was readily at hand to utilise in reference to the Jewish 'Pale of Settlement' in western Russia.

'the Jew' and 'the urban'. Importantly, however, both of these threads of analyses shall be grounded in the longer discursive tradition of representing Eastern Europe by its 'western' counterpart, as well as the contemporary concerns of the day.

Foregrounding the Imaginative Landscape: Eastern Europe in Context

In Britain, as elsewhere in the 'western' world, the lands to the 'East' had long been a source of fascination and revulsion, often in equal measure. However, in many of the earliest accounts, Russia itself was frequently not the primary subject of interest. Sixteenth century English merchants, eager not to be outdone by their Spanish and Portuguese counterparts, formed an alliance under the title 'The Society for the Discovery of Unknown Lands', and ventured to penetrate the Great Russian Empire with the hope of 'opening a new route to China'.[388] In 1575 one of their agents, Michael Lock, wrote to the company advising them of the lucrative, commercial potential of using Russia as a trading route to the 'East':

> the traffyke of Percia through Russia wolde be of exceeding greate importaunce unto England, for jewels, spyces, silks, drowgges, gawlles, allam and other marchanise theare to be had at ther fountayne; all the which might passe saiflie, without dainger of the Turk and without knowledge of Italy and Spayne, and without any lycens of the King of Portugale.[389]

Thus the exploration of Russia itself was, for these merchants, at least initially, simply a means to an end. As a geographical space for these Elizabethan adventurers, Russia did not represent a 'destination' – a locale implicitly imbued with value by those travelling to reach it – but rather served only as the land through which they journeyed. Russia, for all of its imperial might, was

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[388] Edward A. Bond, assistant keeper of the sixteenth century manuscripts, *Of the Russe Common Wealth*, (1591) by Giles Fletcher, and *The Travels of Sir Jerome Horsey*, (unpublished manuscript, 1590-1) provides a helpful overview of Elizabethan envoys in Russia and of Anglo-Russian relations in his introduction to *Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century*, (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1856). The quotation is taken from page iii of the introduction.
[389] M. Lock, 8 May 1575, reprinted in Bond, *Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century*, p. xi.

conceptualised by those merchants as a land with fluid, transgressable boundaries, and, moreover, as the geographical 'link' between 'East' and 'West'. Yet as a locale in its own right, it occupied neither 'East' nor 'West', but was instead imagined as an ambiguous spatial environment. It was visualised as an 'in-between' land.[390]

That ambiguous depiction went deeper than simply the geographical. As Elizabethan envoys to Russia increased in frequency, and the Muscovite empire gradually became a 'known entity' amongst the higher echelons of English society, purely geographical representations of Russia were complimented and compounded by observations of its governance and by commentaries on the character of its people. Perhaps the best known of these accounts, *Of the Russe Common Wealth* (1591), was penned by Cambridge scholar and diplomat Dr Giles Fletcher, in his role as ambassador to Russia in 1588. Written across 28 chapters, Fletcher declared his objective 'was to note thinges for mine owne experience, of more importaunce then delight, and rather true then strange'.[391] His conclusions which he summarised for the benefit of the Queen, established an image of Russia which, at least superficially, typified the largely negative representations of that empire propounded by European writers and thinkers of that era:

> In their maner of government, your Highnesse may see both a true and a strange face of a tyrannical state (most unlike to your own), without true knowledge of God, without written lawe, without common justice, save that which proceedeth from their speaking lawe – to wit, the magistrate – who hath most neede of a lawe to restraine his owne injustice.[392]

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[390] Wolff uses this phrase to describe the perspectives of eighteenth century travellers such as Count Louis-Phillippe de Segur who saw Russia's great city, St Petersburg 'as a confused combination of "the age of barbarism and that of civilisation, the tenth and the eighteenth centuries, the manners of Asia and those of Europe, coarse Scythians and polished Europeans"'. See Louis-Philippe, comte de Segur, *Memoires, souvenirs, et anecdotes, par le comte de Segur*, vol. 1, *Bibliotheque des memoires: relatif a l'histoire de France: pendant le 18e siecle*, vol. XIX, ed. M. Fs Barriere, (Paris Librairie de Firmin Didot Freres, 1859), pp 329-30, quoted in Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 13.

[391] Fletcher, 'The Epistle Dedicatorie', *Of the Russe Common Wealth*.

[392] Ibid.

Fletcher's very pointed comparison between Russia as a 'tyrannical state', and England as its antithesis – presumably as a beacon of civility – drew upon a tradition, which was to endure into the modern era, which set Russia apart from its western neighbours. Ezequiel Adamovsky has suggested that Fletcher and other 'western' European writers of the age, including the two great Italian philosophers Giovanni Botero and Machiavelli, 'referred to Russia and the Russians in similar terms, often excluding that country from the European space'.[393] Certainly the tendency to identify Russia as deficient in the mainstays of a 'civilised society' – Christianity, Law and Justice – accentuated that process of spatial and cultural 'othering' which is only too evident within Fletcher's narrative. Yet, what is interesting to note is that Fletcher does not condemn Russian society as completely devoid of all civilising infrastructure, but rather suggests that its premises are simply insufficiently followed. Thus, within this sixteenth century account, one can observe the seeds of a conceptualisation of Russia which was to evolve throughout the course of the Enlightenment and to predominate in the modern age: Russia possessed the *potential* for 'an emergence from barbarism'.[394]

It was not only philosophers and thinkers who were responsible for the development and dissemination of this conceptualisation of Russia. By the eighteenth century, travel narratives were an increasingly popular way for the British public to vicariously visit Eastern Europe. Although the lands to the East of modern-day Germany had, by no means, become typical destinations on 'the grand tour', Russia and Poland in particular exercised an ever-greater pull upon the more adventurous traveller as the century progressed. As Larry Wolff has observed,

The lands of Eastern Europe were sufficiently unfamiliar in the eighteenth century, still such unusual destinations, that each traveller carried a mental map to be freely annotated, embellished, refined, or refolded along the way. The operations of mental mapping was above all association and comparison: association among the lands of Eastern Europe,

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[393]   Adamovsky, *Euro-Orientalism*, p. 30.
[394]   This is a concept explored at great length by Larry Wolff in his stimulating study *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 11.

intellectually combining them into a coherent whole, and comparison with the lands of Western Europe, establishing the developmental division of the continent.[395]

Certainly travel narratives from that period make clear that the experience of journeying through those lands were often a highly personal, exploratory one – something of a modern day odyssey. Despite its physical nearness, the lands in the East of Europe were virtually an unknown entity to travellers from the West. Many of those travellers encompassed the established intellectual treatment of those lands into their accounts by conceiving of it as space – geographically, culturally, philosophically – beyond the boundaries of 'Europe'. Hence Count Louis-Philippe de Segur, envoy to Catherine II from Louis XVI, noted in his memoirs from his trip in 1784 that, 'when one enters Poland, one believes one has left Europe entirely'.[396] For Segur, very much a child of the Enlightenment, the experience of traversing a border was not simply a matter of moving from one land into the next but was indicative of passing from modern civilisation into a world which both the beauties bestowed by nature and the advantages born of a 'perfected civilisation' had not touched.[397] According to Segur, Poland was doubly damned.

Segur's sense of passing through a land forsaken by nature and modernity alike was compounded still further by the situation of the Polish population, whom he deemed to be 'enslaved' and living in 'dirty villages; cottages little different from savage huts'.[398] Here, then, Segur's perception of Poland's spatial otherness is also bound up with his revulsion for the peasantry's pre-modern existence. According to Segur, who would declare himself sympathetic to the objectives of the French Revolution just a matter of years later, the peasants lived in a world beyond 'western' Europe both spatially and temporally: 'everything makes one think one has been

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[395]   Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 6.
[396]   Segur, *Memoires, souvenirs, et anecdotes*, p. 300, quoted in Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 19.
[397]   This metaphorically laden 'treatment' of 'entering' Eastern Europe became a common staple in western literary representations, most famously, perhaps in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). The novel opens with Jonathan Harker's journal entry upon arriving in Budapest: 'The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East'. Scholar Jason Dittmer provided a useful summary to the appropriation of this East/West border both in a historic context and within academic discourse. See J. Dittmer, '*Dracula* and the Cultural Construction of Europe', *Connotations*, vol. 12, pp. 233-48, (pp. 236-39).
[398]   Segur, *Memoires, souvenirs, et anecdotes*, in Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 19.

moved back ten centuries'.[399]   Moreover, even the peasants' relationship to place is unfamiliar, even paradoxical to the French traveller. 'Home' lacks any of the basic comforts, cleanliness, or even ownership which Segur evidently associated with 'home' in Enlightenment France. Here the geographical is clearly bound up with the cultural. The 'East' – epitomised by savagery and servitude – is imagined in opposition to the 'West'. Even the universally familiar concept of 'home' appears, to the western observer, spurious and alien.

Terrorising and Territorializing: Locating the Eastern European Jew

What, then, of the Jews of Eastern Europe? How were they, and the spaces which they inhabited, represented and imagined by 'western' Europeans? Since the Polish invitation of admittance to the Jews in the fourteenth century, the Jewish population had steadily grown and spread until, by the mid eighteenth century, the lands in the East of Europe were 'home' to the world's largest Jewish community.[400] Their lives there, however, were dominated by hostility and prejudice from their Christian neighbours, and frequent and rapid changes in the policy of the state towards them. Under one ruler their position as subjects might be safeguarded, whilst under another all pretences of being a 'normal' subject were stripped away and replaced with pogroms and violence. As Bernard Weinryb has written, 'Jewish life [in Poland] was fraught with danger, catastrophes, and persecution to an even greater extent than that of the general population'.[401] Attempts to convert the population to Christianity, especially during the eighteenth century, were rife.[402] However, it was under Catherine the Great that the boundaries of Jewish existence in Eastern Europe were, literally, and interminably, marked out. In 1791 the Russian ruler sought to limit Jewish participation within the economic life of the empire and, subsequently, within the growing middle classes, by restricting the area in which they were allowed to reside. The Pale of Settlement, as this area became known, stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, and,

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[399]   Ibid.
[400]   A. Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, 1350-1881*, vol. 1, (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilisation, 2010), p. 7.
[401]   For a thorough discussion of state legislation towards the Jewish population, as well as its practical implementation across seven centuries see B. D. Weinryb, *The Jews of Poland: A Social and Economic History of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100 – 1800*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), pp. 35-48, (p. 46).
[402]   Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia*, pp. 22-3.

between the second partition of Poland in 1793, and the 1897 Russian census grew to contain an estimated five million Jews.[403] Within that area of residence, restrictions were also placed upon industry and occupation. Jews were banned from owning or working the land, or, as a means to prevent their alleged domination of commerce, from dwelling in cities.[404] Thus, as a consequence of these residential and occupational restrictions, Jews settled in villages and small towns, which, in the Yiddish linguistic tradition, became known as *shtetls*.

This history is well known. As Larry Wolff points out, 'the idea of the Jews of Eastern Europe is perfectly familiar to the twentieth century, receiving its most emphatic formulation with their near extinction'.[405] However, as Wolff goes on to explain, 'in the eighteenth century the Jews of Eastern Europe awaited discovery along with Eastern Europe itself'.[406] And 'discovered' they were, although perhaps with some degree of distaste which, at least upon first examination, appears evocative of long-entrenched anti-Semitic attitudes. Count Segur, the eighteenth century traveller, for example, makes passing reference to an 'active crowd of avid Jews' engaged in trade in Poland; a sneering and undisguised denigration of 'the Jew' as a villain of commerce.[407] The published accounts of Anglican clergyman, William Coxe, a contemporary of Segur although of a lower social 'rank', whose *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*, as the tutor of an aristocratic charge, went into several English editions by the close of the eighteenth century, replicates Segur's somewhat disdainful gaze:

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[403] However Israel Bartal also points out the difficulty of drawing accurate conclusions as to the Jewish population of Eastern Europe, reminding the reader that 'we have to bear in mind that tens of thousands, and perhaps even more, were never registered and were in a sense "unknown"'. See I. Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772-1881*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), p. 39.

[404] On this see Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia*, pp. 327-337. As Polonsky points out, however, although an edict of 7 May 1786 did result in the establishment of a region of permanent Jewish settlement and the restriction of the Jewish community's free movement by 1791, 'in this respect [...] they were in the same position as everyone else in Russia' who were also denied that right.

[405] Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 28.

[406] Ibid.

[407] Segur, *Memoires, souvenirs, et anecdotes*, quoted in Wolff, p. 20.

In our route through Lithuania we could not avoid being struck with the swarm of Jews, who, though numerous in every part of Poland, seem to have fixed their head-quarters in this duchy.[408]

Coxe's powerfully illustrative reference to the numerousness of the Jews was not an uncommon response from travellers traversing those lands.[409] However, his chosen metaphor with which he couples that observation, that Jews 'swarm', anticipated an image of the Eastern European Jew which was to infiltrate narratives about those people throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.[410] Indeed, as already seen in the first section, the tendency to liken a collective of Jews to a swarm of insects, most particularly bees, becomes such an enduring and hugely provocative representation that, as a metaphor, it is worth closer scrutiny. Whilst in this context the metaphor is suggestive of the observer's ambivalence towards Jews, evoking an image of a vigorous, fortified community, mixing with and yet apart from the wider community, within the distant past the bee prompted distinctly positive connotations.[411] In ancient Aegean culture, for example, the bee was cherished as a sacred insect able to traverse the boundaries between the natural world and the underworld.[412] Intriguingly, the Jewish diaspora, one might feel inclined to suggest, has also historically demonstrated that ability to occupy two worlds, geographically, culturally, or imaginatively, yet one would be hard pushed to claim that the outside world ever cherished them for this 'attribute'.

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[408] William Coxe, *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*, (London, 1785), vol. 1, p. 201.

[409] In fact it is the one common feature which draws together the literary representations of Eastern European Jewry within 'western' accounts.

[410] As just one example of this, see Joseph Pennell's disturbingly vitriolic tract *The Jew at Home: Impressions of a Summer and Autumn Spent with him in Russia and Austria*, (London: William Heinemann, 1892), p. 44. Interestingly, British MP William Evans Gordon also includes a passing reference to this metaphor in his travelogue of 1903 by reproducing a letter written by Roumanian Jewry to Lord Montefiore: 'The deputies have declared exultingly, 'Behold! The time has come to take away the honey, and the bees will fly away of themselves.' From this, it seems that the tendency to utilise the bee as a metaphor for 'the Jew' and the Jewish community was not exclusively 'western' but also had a tradition within 'eastern' racial discourse. See W. Evans Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, (London: Williams Heinemann, 1903), p. 169.

[411] For a detailed discussion of the historical conceptualisation of the bee and the beehive in human thought see B. Wilson, *The Hive: The Story of the Honeybee and Us*, (London: John Murray, 2004), and for an exploration of the usage of the beehive within architectural design see J. A. Ramírez, *The Beehive Metaphor from Gaudí to Le Corbusier*, trans. by A. R. Tulloch, (London: Reaktion Books, 2000).

[412] A. B Cook, 'The Bee in Greek Mythology, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. 15, (1895), p. 21, cited in Wilson, *The Hive*, p. 194.

It is in the writings of Homer, however, that a signification of the bee more akin to our modern imagining, or usage, of the insect begins to emerge. Homer saw the bee as wild and untameable, likening these characteristics to men in battle.[413] Yet, perhaps the most pervasive treatment of the bee is to commend that insect community for its productivity, diligence, and communal infrastructure, as a model for human society.[414] Thus perhaps it is this metaphor, taken together with Homer's, which provides a helpful reading of this image of Eastern European Jewry which so seemed to preoccupy the western 'gaze'. Whilst by no means do I wish to suggest that the Jewish Eastern European community was either idealised, or conceived of as 'battle-worthy' by its western European counterpart, the communal infrastructure maintained (or, perhaps, 'defended', is more apt here) by the Jews across centuries was something which both perplexed and fascinated the Christian world. One might surmise that what Coxe, and, indeed, later observers, wished to imply through the use of the insect metaphor, was the sense that, as a consequence of this communal strength, Eastern European Jewry had territorialized an otherwise seemingly hostile space.[415] Certainly that conclusion seems borne out as Coxe's observations of the Jews continue, shifting to an anecdotal style:

If you ask for an interpreter, they bring you a Jew; if you come to an inn, the landlord is a Jew; if you want post-horses, a Jew procures them, and a Jew drives them; if you wish to purchase, a Jew is your agent: and this perhaps is the only country in Europe where Jews cultivate the ground: in passing through Lithuania, we frequently saw them engaged in sowing, reaping, mowing, and other works of husbandry.[416]

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[413] See Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. by M. Hammond, (London: Viking Penguin, 1987), pp. 21-2.
[414] Wilson, *The Hive*, pp. 2 - 4.
[415] Tristram Hunt discusses the popularity in nineteenth century British literary culture of using animal metaphors, including the bee, to refer to 'the nameless and faceless masses' of the London poor who were thought to have overrun an area. Such references would almost certainly have included Jews in London within their remit. Thus, there seems a case to argue that a similar usage is intended here. See T. Hunt, *Building Jerusalem: The Rise and Fall of the Victorian City*, (London: Phoenix, 2005), pp. 391- 93.
[416] Coxe, *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*, p. 201.

Thus, this perception of Jewish ownership of the space in which they inhabit, if only achieved through business acumen, prompted Coxe to express a begrudging respect for the apparent malleability and resourcefulness of Eastern European Jewry. As a working man himself, and a proponent of the Protestant ethic of self-help, these were surely attributes which Coxe, if not Segur, could admire.

Of course, it seems something of an irony that, in reality, the Jews of Eastern Europe neither had, nor even felt they had, any claim over that land. Stringent and commonly erratically enforced state laws together with frequent pogroms and displays of violence prevented the Jews of Eastern Europe from ever truly feeling that their existence was a secure one. For the majority of onlookers by the nineteenth century, perceptions of 'Jewish' spatiality in Eastern Europe seemed anything but indicative of territorialized landscape. Rather for the British observer by the close of that same century, an image of the Jews of Russia existing under extreme persecution in a 'landscape of exclusion',[417] had emerged as a concept of enormous power and ubiquity. In the heightened media attention paid to Jewish life in Russia throughout the final decades of the Victorian era and beyond, references to the 'Jewish pale' became common currency, and linguistic shorthand for discrimination and segregation. However during some of the earliest responses to the reports of atrocities in Russia, the idea of a distinctly 'Jewish' space of residence had yet to fully form in the British consciousness. Whilst it was known that Jews were suffering outrages in 'various parts of Russia and Russian Poland', perceptions of those locations lacked any clear definition either geographically or in relation to each other as a collective of places demarcated as a specifically 'Jewish' area of residence. [418] Instead it was Russia itself which was deemed to lie 'beyond the pale of Western civilisation',[419] relegated to a socio-cultural 'pariah-scape'[420] within the British spatial imagination.

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[417]   Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion*, p. ix.
[418]   *Report of the Public Meeting at the Mansion House*, 1st February 1882, (Published by Direction of the Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association), p. 3.
[419]   *Report of the Public Meeting at the Mansion House*, 1st February 1882, (Published by Direction of the Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association), The Hon. Lyulph Stanley, M. P., p. 23.
[420]   R. Hartmann, 'Dealing with Dachau in Geographic Education', in H. Brodsky (ed.), *Land and Community: Geography in Jewish Studies*, (Bethesda: University of Maryland Press, 1997), pp. 357-369, (p. 366). Tim Cole makes use of Hartmann's spatial phrase 'pariah-scape' in relation to W. A. Douglas Jackson's work on Nazi ghettos and concentration camps as 'pariah landscapes'. See Cole, *Holocaust City*, p. 21.

This image of Russia as a land apart of course drew upon existing narratives of Europe as a divided continent. Whilst this perception of Eastern Europe endured as a potent backdrop against which atrocities against Jews were understood and conceptualised, awareness of those atrocities in Britain increased, and so too did a more definitive and sympathetic understanding of the demarcated Jewish 'habitat' in Russia. A 'Map of Russia, showing the Pale of Settlement', for example, was included as an appendix to the published report of a public protest meeting against the atrocities, which took place in London's Guildhall on 10 December 1890; a detail which was missing from the report of the previous meeting of 1882.[421] Moreover, the very dialogues and exchanges throughout the course of the Guildhall meeting vigorously exposed and condemned the Pale as a 'grievous and oppressive' system of governance.[422] The growing understanding that Jews in Russia were subject to physical separation from the rest of Russian society in the main, exiled into a 'landscape of exclusion',[423] was repeatedly demonstrated through keen, and frequently impassioned, displays of indignation. Furthermore, that dialogue gave a very clear sense of how, within British cultural discourse, space, and more especially land, was invested with an explicit socio-nationalistic value, seen to be the very essence of the people who lived upon it, and they, reciprocally, imagined as the essence of the land. The obstruction of such a relationship between man and nature was, for some Britain's leaders, unthinkable. 'How can citizens, who are denied the rights of naturalisation, be patriotic?' exclaimed Cardinal Henry Edward Manning, the long-standing head of the Catholic Church in England, in a letter to the meeting. His letter continued,

How can men, who are only allowed to breathe the air, but not to own the soil under their feet, to eat only a food that is doubly taxed, to be slain in war, but never to command – how shall such a homeless and exiled race live of the life of the people among whom they are despised, or love the land which disowns them?[424]

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[421] *Report of the Guildhall Meeting*, 10 December 1890, (London: Wertheimer, Lea and Co, 1891).
[422] Ibid., p. 32.
[423] Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion*, p. ix.
[424] Cardinal Manning, *Report of the Guildhall Meeting*, p. 35.

For Manning, a committed proponent of social justice, it was not only the Jews of Eastern Europe who were dislocated from the land, but the land itself which had betrayed its inhabitants. According to Manning, the land as well as the Russian people had acted unjustly by disowning and repudiating the Jews.

The personification of the Russian landscape, an approach which Manning clearly employed, was a not uncommon feature of *fin de siècle* discussions of the Jewish pale. In an address to the third, and final, public protest meeting against the treatment of Jews in Russia at London's Queen's Hall in January 1906, the long-serving Bishop of Ripon, Sir William Boyd Carpenter, imbued the Russian pale with the qualities of a warrior. 'The mountains can repel their foes, or the sea can defy the invader', declared the Bishop. Yet whilst 'other races can dwell within the frontier which nature and man have drawn out for them', Carpenter concluded, 'the Jews have no frontier'.[425] Indeed it was this very sense of vulnerability that dispossession from the land seemed to impel which appeared to unsettle the British commentator to the greatest degree. The Jews may come adorned 'by the picturesque and royal story of their past' as Carpenter valiantly insisted. [426] Yet, without land, without a territory to call their own and without a spatial identity of their own making, which, in turn, shaped them reciprocally, the Jews were, it seemed, 'the weakest of races'.[427]

Certainly the question of Jewish territoriality and land ownership was an especially pertinent one by the early twentieth century. The Zionist Organisation (ZO), under the leadership of Theodore Herzl until his death in 1904, was a growing force on the world stage, troubling western governments with the politics and practicalities of a Jewish return to their biblical homeland.[428] From 1903, however, another idea for Jewish settlement preoccupied and divided Zionists worldwide – the British offer for the establishment of a Jewish colony in a region of East Africa. First proposed by Joseph Chamberlain, then Colonial Secretary, to Leopold Greenberg, Herzl's British representative, Herzl raised the proposal at the Sixth Zionist Congress in Basel in

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[425]   Bishop of Ripon, *Report of the Queen's Hall Meeting*, 8 January 1906, from the papers of Carl Stettaeur, (MS 127 AJ 22), Hartley Library, University of Southampton, p. 17.
[426]   Ibid.
[427]   Ibid.
[428]   For a classic overview of the activities and reception of the Zionist Organisation at the turn of the century and beyond see D. Vital *The Origins of Zionism*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); D. Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

August 1903.   The suggestion, which became known as the Uganda Scheme, was met with both deep distain from those who declared themselves to be 'Zionists of Zion' (*Ziyyonei Zion*), and with wild enthusiasm from 'Territorial Zionists' – a group who stressed the urgency of establishing a Jewish land wherever that might be.   The savage Kishinev pogrom within the Russian empire earlier that year, which resulted in the displacement of thousands of Jews, made the need for a Jewish land evermore pressing – a point which the territorialists were not afraid to stress. 'Without a land we are liable to lose everything and by acquiring land we can save everything' the territorialists argued.[429]   Nevertheless, the scheme faced protracted and increasingly embittered resistance from the *Ziyyonei Zion*, leading to a split at the heart of the Zionist Organisation which an investigative expedition to East Africa by representatives of the ZO only served to exacerbate rather than appease.   The territorialists condemned the resulting report, which was delivered to the Seventh Zionist Congress in August 1905, as an 'act of deceit' contrived by the 'Zionist scoundrels who wanted to bury the plan from the start'.[430]   Whilst the expedition had certainly been inconclusive, those resistant to the scheme had been able to generate enough opposition to ensure that the entire plan was rejected once and for all by the congress in 1905, effectively leaving the Jews in Russia to their fate.   Although a break-away group known as the Jewish Territorial Organisation (ITO), headed by Anglo-Jewish writer Israel Zangwill, tried to perpetuate the territorialist agenda by negotiating for other possible regions for Jewish settlement, their efforts were wholly unsuccessful.[431]   Nevertheless with the creation of the vocal ITO together with the continued efforts of the ZO to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, the question of Jewish territoriality – spurred on by the plight of Eastern European Jewry – was on the political agenda in Britain and elsewhere as never before.   Thus, at the time of the Queen's Hall protest meeting in 1906, there can be little doubt that British responses to Jewish persecution in Russia were distinctly informed by the especially current question of Jewish territoriality.

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[429]   Proclamation of the Territorial Zionists, 5664 (1903/4), Central Zionists Archives, A36, folder 8, p. 2, cited by G. Alroey, 'Journey to New Palestine: The Zionist Expedition to East Africa and the Aftermath of the Uganda Debate', *Jewish Culture and History*, vol. 10, no. 1, (Summer 2008), pp. 23-58, (p. 26).
[430]   'Di ITO Konferents', *Der Nayer Veg*, 15, 16 August 1905, p. 1, cited by Alroey, 'Journey to New Palestine', p. 24.
[431]   For more on Israel Zangwill and the ITO see D. Glover, 'Imperial Zion: Israel Zangwill and the English origins of Territorialism' and M. J. Rochelson, 'Zionism, Territorialism, Race, and Nation in the Thoughts and Politics of Israel Zangwill' both in E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman (eds.), *'The Jew in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 131-143; pp. 144-160.

Earlier schemes championed by western philanthropists, had also conceptualised the 'Jewish question' in Russia as intricately bound up with spatiality, or, more precisely, territoriality. However, it was the aristocratic Bavarian-born Jewish philanthropist Baron Maurice de Hirsch who attempted to reawaken Jewish affinity with the land not simply in terms of ownership but by making the land the very lifeblood of Jewish existence. His Jewish Colonization Association (JCA), which was established in 1891, strove to assist Eastern European Jewry to emigrate and re-settle on agricultural colonies in North and South America. With Hirsch's substantial financial backing, the JCA sculpted a solution to the 'Jewish question' by forging a mutually dependent relationship between 'the Jew' and the soil.[432] However, the scheme also faced considerable challenges from the moment of its conception. Contrary to the opposition voiced to Zionism, there was no explicit opposition brought by governments or empires against the requisition of land itself for Jewish colonization, but rather doubts raised as to whether the Jews were capable, even compatible as a race, with the demands of working the land for yield.

Undoubtedly William Coxe, the eighteenth century clergyman, was surprised to witness Jews occupied in agricultural tasks, defining Lithuania as 'the only country in Europe where Jews cultivate the ground', qualifying the sighting as a rare spectacle indeed.[433] Yet Coxe's astonishment testifies to the pervasiveness of Semitic representations within 'western' discourse which imagined 'the Jew' as an urban being, possessing neither aptitude nor enthusiasm for working on the land.[434] Certainly, 'the Jewish ghetto' was a far more recognisable and pervasive symbol of Jewish habitation in 'other' lands, within the British popular imagination of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, than was 'the *shtetl*'. Indeed it was perhaps the dominance of the urban association that prompted Hirsch to commission Arnold White, the outspoken opponent of alien immigration into Britain, to visit Russia in 1891, prior to the foundation of the scheme to 'inquire on the spot how far the Jews [...] are adapted for agricultural pursuits', explained the *St James's Gazette* in July of that year to its readers.[435] That 'inquiry' was made at existing Jewish agricultural

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[432]   For a history of the JCA see T. Norman, *An Outstretched Arm: A History of the Jewish Colonization Association*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985).
[433]   Coxe, *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*, p. 201.
[434]   The assertion made by the British politician and anti-Alien campaigner, William Evans-Gordon, in his account of his travels in Eastern Europe, *The Alien Immigrant*, p. 143, is just one example of this perception. He wrote that 'it is unquestionable that their [the Jews] tendency is in Poland, as elsewhere, to crowd into the cities.'
[435]   'The Persecution of the Russian Jews', *St James's Gazette*, 16 July 1891, p. 11.

colonies in southern Russia which the JCA proposed to take as their model. However, as a 'workable' scheme, it nevertheless prompted a minor furore in the British press, putting the question of Jewish compatibility with agriculture, at least for a short time, at the very centre of a very public debate. Whilst the shrewdest journalists were quick to point out the mutual benefits of the scheme for the persecuted Jews and the anti-immigration camp in Britain alike, others found themselves jumping to the defence of Russian Jewry against 'statements recently made as to the unfitness of Jews for field work'.[436] It was to this end that the Odessa correspondent for *The Daily Chronicle,* a Liberal newspaper, rather indignantly declared in July 1891 that 'I have it on the best authority that the 12 existing Hebrew colonies of South Russia, in which Jews actually conduct their own agricultural operations, are in a most flourishing condition'.[437] The two Conservative and, in the case of the latter, anti-alien, newspapers, the *Times* and the *St James's Gazette,* begrudgingly reiterated the sentiments of *The Daily Chronicle* by reporting Arnold White's main findings. Yet the latter newspaper concluded, with a degree of affected surprise and with something of a backhanded compliment that 'it appears that a considerable proportion of the Jews in Russia are far better adapted for agricultural pursuits than has hitherto generally been supposed'.[438]

Thus throughout 1891, via the voluminous reports which emerged in Britain on the Baron de Hirsch scheme, the British reading public were prompted to confront and moderate what had long existed as a staple strand of Semitic representation; the presumption that Jews and agriculture were completely incompatible. That image had become so pervasive that, by the late nineteenth century, it had even been internalised by European Jewry, who, under the guidance of the Zionist movement, struggled against the spectre of 'physical degeneracy' in a bid to 'reclaim' their agricultural heritage. The Jewish 'return to the land' became a key principle of Zionist ideology. However, within the British context, that readjustment in perception also impelled a re-conceptualisation of the spatial environment of the 'Eastern European' Jew.

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[436] 'Jew-Harrying in Russia', *Daily Chronicle*, 11 July 1891, p. 5. It was reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on 30 April 1891 that the *Bradford Observer* had also cast doubt upon the suitability of Jews to agricultural labour: 'The Jews have for so many centuries been confined to trade and finance […] that their aptitude for Adam's vocation must be very deeply overlaid, and it does not seem that they would take kindly to the hard work of subduing the soil.'

[437] 'Jew-Harrying in Russia', *Daily Chronicle*, 11 July 1891, p. 5.

[438] 'The Persecution of the Russian Jews', *St James Gazette*, 16 July 1891, p. 11.

Yet, it was not only the persistent press coverage of the alien Jew's 'habitat', nor Zionist propaganda, which challenged the previously monolithic, if somewhat paradoxical, image of Jewish spatiality in Eastern Europe. From the 1890s, a subtle discourse had also begun to emerge within 'western' writing, which implicitly challenged the formerly pervasive association of 'the Jew' with urbanity. The 1890 novel, *By Order of the Czar*, by English journalist, novelist and playwright Joseph Hatton, offers an interesting case study for just such a treatment of 'the Jew' within the Eastern European milieu. Hatton, a long-standing foreign correspondent for numerous British and American papers, introduced his seventh novel by relating the events which had inspired it:

> In the summer of 1887 I came upon a pamphlet published by the *Times* five years previously, giving an account of the persecution of the Jews in Russia in 1881. At about the same time I found in the *Brooklyn Times* (U.S) a tragic incident in the alleged career of a Jewess, which recalled to my mind a grim passage of Russian history [...] It occurred to me to find in the one village of Russia where the Jews had for a time lived unmolested, a heroine who, falling under the lash of Russian persecution, should survive the keenest of human afflictions, to become, under very dramatic and romantic circumstances, the instrument of Divine vengeance upon her enemy [...].[439]

Thus Hatton, the *fin de siècle* transatlantic intellectual, was drawn to engage sympathetically with narratives of Jewish persecution which appeared in the pages of the well-regarded 'western' press, yet to rearticulate them through the medium of fiction. Moreover, rather than drawing upon the established trope of 'the Jew' in the territorialised urban context, Hatton deliberately situated the protagonists of his novel in a harmonious village setting. However, besides the influence of a humanitarian instinct, or perhaps simply the instinct for a good story, there seems to be little other explanation for Hatton's compassion and empathy for the Jewish plight in Russia. None of the novelist's other works seem to address Jewish themes, and it is doubtful that Hatton visited Eastern Europe during his lifetime, either for purposes of research or pleasure. Nevertheless,

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[439]   J. Hatton, *By Order of the Czar*, (New York: John W Lovell Company, 1890), p. iii.

Hatton's lengthy periods of residence in London and New York must surely have brought him into contact with Jews, whilst his involvement with the press left him well positioned to observe the reports of atrocities in Russia and the debates concerning immigration which followed.[440] We can only presume that it was these experiences, together with the novelist's professed studious approach to Russian history, literature and landscape, which informed the philo-Semitic tone which Hatton adopts in *By Order of the Czar*.[441]

The novel's opening setting is the village of Czarovna, 'the most contented, the happiest, the most flourishing of the Jewish towns of Southern Russia'.[442] There, however, the Jews are still confined to a ghetto, although the narrator quickly reassures the reader that 'under the unusually mild governorship of General Poltava the strict limits of the ghetto have been practically wiped out'.[443] Relations between the Jews and Gentiles of Czarovna have also flourished under the tolerant and liberal gaze of the governor. The two communities live 'if not in harmony' then 'at least without the miseries of a perpetual feud', trading with each other, and freely moving between the Christian and Jewish spheres of existence within the village.[444] This transcendence of geographical and cultural boundaries, although identified as an exception rather than the rule by the narrator, nevertheless invites the reader from the very outset of the novel to confront their understanding of life in the Pale of Settlement as dominated by racial division and segregation. Instead Jews pass freely between Czarovna's (urban) centre and (rural) periphery; a metaphor, perhaps, for the malleability of the Jewish diaspora and a suggestion of their potential to transgress the divide between barbarism and civility, between 'East' and 'West'. Indeed, Hatton not only delineates the breakdown of these 'traditional' spatial boundaries as the backdrop for his novel, but, in sketching the layout of the village, completely reverses the 'typical' areas of residence occupied by Jew and Gentile:

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[440] See A. Sanders' entry for Joseph Paul Christopher Hatton in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, < www.oxforddnb.com/view/printable/33758>.
[441] Hatton, *By Order of the Czar*, p. vi-vii.
[442] Ibid., p. 4.
[443] Ibid., p. 6.
[444] Ibid., p. 4.

Czarovna chiefly consisted of one long, broad street, with houses and shops in a strange, picturesque jumble, a fine church, and in this case a more or less dilapidated palace on the outskirts, in which the governor [...] resided, and the barracks where there were generally quartered a troop of Hussars. At the northern end of the town, creeping up from the rocky bed of the river, that wound its way into the distant forest, was the Jewish quarter [...].[445]

In contrast to many travelogues of the era, and to images of the *shtetl* depicted within Yiddish literary traditions, Hatton relocates the Jewish quarter from the village centre to its outskirts, unequivocally disassociating Jewish space with urbanity but instead identifying it with nature and the world beyond the village. [446] The image which Hatton creates of the Jewish quarter nestled between the river and the forest, delineates that Jewish space not simply co-existing with its rural surroundings, but being wholly organic to it. The quarter seems to grow from the river, taking from it both strength and sustenance to stretch out its limbs to the shade and shelter of 'the distant forest'.

Hatton plays upon this theme of Jewish affinity with nature still further as his novel progresses. The mild governor Poltova is deposed and replaced by the brutal Petronovitch who unleashes a campaign of violence and persecution upon the Jews within hours of his arrival. The previously placid Gentile community turn upon their Jewish neighbours 'in the red excitement of the moment', transforming into 'mad, wild, irresponsible savages'.[447] This animalisation of the Russian peasantry both reflects 'western' discourses on Russian barbarity, as well as providing a counter-image to 'the Jew' as synonymous with a harmonious, peaceful, even maternal 'mother nature'. Indeed it is 'mother nature' who provides shelter for a small number of Jews in Czaraovna, who take refuge in a concealed cave from their Gentile neighbours who beat at their

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[445] Hatton, *By Order of the Czar*, p. 6.
[446] The *shtetl*, both real and imagined, was, and remains, a central theme for many Yiddish authors. Contemporary authors such as Sholom Aleichem, Smolenskin Perez and Mendele Moykher Sforim offered some of the best-known representations of this Jewish 'place' in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. See I. Bartal's chapter 'Imagined Geography: The Shtetl, Myth and Reality', in *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, pp. 179-192 for a helpful introduction to these three authors and their work on the *shtetl*.
[447] Hatton, *By Order of the Czar*, p. 62; p. 63.

door. The cave has a 'natural warmth' which comforts and envelops the Jews, sheltering and protecting them as a mother would a child – a sign once more perhaps of Hatton's sympathetic framing of his Jewish subjects.[448]

However, this emerging trend within the 'western' cultural imagination to re-locate Jewish spaces in Eastern Europe from the urban to the rural, or at the very least to associate 'the Jew' more readily with agriculture, was not always used to construct a philo-Semitic representation for the British public's consumption. In December 1890 the *Daily Chronicle,* for example, explicitly linked and legitimised Russian persecution of its Jewish inhabitants with the Jews' proficiency with the farming of rural areas. 'It is not religious intolerance that prompts the measures taken against the Jews', explained the paper, 'but the absolute necessity of saving and protecting the rural population from becoming a source of profit to the Jews who have already ruined the peasants in Galicia, in Roumania, and even in Pomerania'.[449] As often typifies an anti-Semitic attack, the Jews themselves were blamed for evoking hostilities. Yet what is really significant here is the implicit assumption that the Jewish community not only excelled at 'working' the land (if only in a detached sense, by exploiting the peasants to do so for them), but that they had come to absolutely dominate it. Once again, the 'western' gaze constructs an image of the Eastern European Jew as having territorialized the landscape. They are not so much despised guest as despised colonist.

MP for Stepney between 1900 and 1907, and proponent of restrictions on immigration into Britain, Major William Evans-Gordon, replicated this image of the Eastern European Jew, timing the publication of his observations to coincide with the Royal Commission investigation into the alien question. The accounts of his travels through the Russian empire, entitled *The Alien Immigrant* (1903), provided crucial 'evidence' for the anti-alien campaign:[450]

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[448] Ibid., p. 32; 71-2.
[449] 'Jewish Persecution in Russia', *Daily Chronicle*, 15 December 1890, p. 5.
[450] As a member of the Royal Commission of 1903, Evans-Gordon submitted a 'very valuable report' with the commission's report, based upon his travels through Russia and Poland and upon which his 1903 publication *The Alien Immigrant* was based. He also referred to that trip in support of his anti-alien stance numerous times throughout parliamentary debates at which the recommendations of the Royal Commission and the subsequent aliens bills were discussed. See, for example, Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*), House of Commons: Official papers; vol. 133, 25 April 1904, col. 1083-6; vol. 149, 3 July 1905, col. 863. Ironically, Evans-Gordon's findings were actually used against him by the pro-alien camp who implied that the Stepney MP's report was incomplete and his conclusions contradictory. See Sir Charles Dilke, *Hansard,* vol. 132, 29 March 1904, col. 1994; vol. 133, 25 April 1904, col. 1063-75.

The trade in the agricultural produce of the country is largely in their [the Jews] hands. Some of the principal grain merchants and exporters are Christians, but the middlemen and agents are almost exclusively Jews. They have an elaborate organisation throughout the empire, and they know within a trifle how the produce of the country stands, whether it be timber, flax, cattle, horses, eggs, or anything else.[451]

Here Evans-Gordon delineates a very powerful and provocative illustration of a far-reaching and all-encompassing Jewish trade network which clearly rivals and out-performs its Christian counterpart. Gentile involvement in the agricultural industry, so suggests the MP, was virtually subordinate to Jewish control. The land – a terrain which signifies the very essence of its people and is the core motif for the construction of a shared national identity – has, according to this representation, been colonized. Thus the implicit paradox of the Pale of Settlement, as a space intended *for* the colonization of the Jews yet instead colonized *by* them, becomes abundantly clear. 'The Jew' transgresses the boundary between colonized and colonizer, transforming a Jewish 'space' into a Jewish 'place' by taking ownership of it. Evans-Gordon's artful, yet unspoken suggestion that the admittance of Jews into Britain would create a similarly perilous scenario for Britain's agricultural industry, proved to be both a timely and persuasive message for those engaged with the Royal Commission investigations. On 10 August 1903 the commission delivered its report, complete with a special report from Evans-Gordon, both of which recommended the restriction of 'undesirable' aliens into Britain.[452]

This unequivocally negative representation of 'the Jew' as possessing a fluid, indefinable identity, of being beyond straightforward categorisation, was, as I have previously shown, a prominent feature of Semitic discourse within Britain during this period. It is of some significance to thus locate the root of that treatment of the alien Jew in depictions of that community in their previous 'habitat'. What is more, this observation of the ambiguous character of Jewish spatiality

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[451] Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, p. 95.
[452] PP 1903 Cd. 1741 ix, 1, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration. The Report*, pp. 1; 42-3.

within the 'western imagination' can be drawn out further. In Evans-Gordon's account in particular, the Russian landscape not only becomes territorialized by the Jewish 'occupier', but was also conceptualised as both occident and orient. The town of Dvinsk in the province of Minsk, for example, is likened to 'the slums of Bombay and Calcutta', however in its Sabbath peacefulness it evokes for Evans-Gordon 'a quiet country town in England on Sunday'.[453] Whilst this imposition of multiple, cultural readings of the Russian landscape is reminiscent of the tendency by Enlightenment thinkers to imagine Russia as a *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet upon which they could project their 'philosophic geographies', it also accentuates the fluidity and indeterminable nature of the Jewish space and its inhabitants. By simultaneously occupying both orient and occident – East and West – Dvinsk, as a Jewish space, becomes a metaphor for 'the Jew' as both and yet neither 'self' and/nor 'other'.

However, this manner of spatial conceptualisation, within Evans-Gordon's account at least, is not reserved solely for observations of the *shtetl*. The city, and more particularly the familiar and unequivocally 'Jewish' space within the city – the ghetto – is also both simultaneously normalised and exoticised. Of his visit to Vilnius, Evans-Gordon wrote,

> There are few better places than Vilna in which to study a Jewish ghetto in all its original picturesque squalor. In many parts the streets are so narrow that only one vehicle can pass at a time. They are crowded with foot passengers, and the shops and stores on either side form a truly oriental bazaar.[454]

This paradoxical visualisation of the ghetto as 'picturesque squalor' immediately reinforces the sense of mutability of Jewish space which, according to the western perspective, seems to be absolutely central to its representation. This image of the orient, however, smoothly transforms into the occident, as Evans-Gordon declared 'little in Vilna more horrible than I have seen in

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[453] Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, p. 85.
[454] Ibid., p. 106.

Whitechapel and St George's-in-the-East'.[455] Yet although the politician recognised his own capital in the then Polish city, it is not the triumphant recognition of the imperialist surveying his colony but rather the dismayed realisation that the colonialist has himself become colonized. Appalled at his observation, Evans-Gordon chided the British government for 'sitting inactive while the horrors of these oriental slums are being steadily reproduced in the capital of the Empire'.[456]

This chapter began by tracking the dominant trends within 'western' intellectual and literary discourse of representing Eastern Europe. I have shown how, from Elizabethan envoys of the sixteenth century, to British politicians of the twentieth century, the lands in the East of Europe were conceptualised as transitory space, culturally as well as geographically, between 'East' and 'West'. Imagined within these accounts as a homogenous space, separate both spatially and temporally from the 'West', Eastern Europe was, and perhaps still continues to be, constructed as 'the other' within the philosophic geography of the West. However, as Larry Wolff has argued, this conceptualisation can be better understood not as an expression of full-scale Orientalism, but rather as 'an intellectual project of demi-Orientalization'; in short, that Eastern Europe possessed the potential to emerge from barbarism.[457]

Representations of 'the Jew' and his habitat within Eastern Europe were thus part of a far larger project by enlightenment and post-enlightenment writers, travellers and intellectuals to conceptualise people and places which, geographically and philosophically, lay beyond the bounds of 'the West'. That 'the Jew', however, as the archetypal 'other' within the 'western' imagination, posed a very particular challenge for the virtual and actual traveller in Eastern Europe crucially informs both my analysis and the observations of 'western' writers. The author Joseph Hatton, for example, astutely observed the fragility of Eastern European Jewry's relationship with place in his novel *By Order of the Czar*. Whilst the novel's heroine, Anna Klosstock, articulates the eternal

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[455] Ibid., p. 108.
[456] Ibid. Certainly the requisition of the Eastern European cityscape and landscape, for the purposes of constructing a commentary on contemporary concerns in Britain, was a narrative devise utilised by other writers, intellectuals and commentators at the turn of the twentieth century besides Evans Gordon. Bram Stoker's gothic horror novel *Dracula,* for example, which takes the Balkans, and specifically Transylvania as one of its central backdrops, has widely been interpreted as a metaphor for British anxieties over racial and physical degeneracy.
[457] Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 7.

optimism of diaspora Jewry, that 'home is a paradise wherever it is', the author speaks through the revolutionary character Andrea Ferrari who questions: 'Is it good after all, a Providence that gives the children of the desert a proverb instead of a home?'[458] This subtle acknowledgement by Hatton, of the perpetual Jewish conflict between diaspora and Israel, between home and homeland, reveals a surprising perceptivity and sensitivity towards the Jewish subject, which, though hinted at in the report of the three London protest meetings, remains, for the most part, absent from other observational accounts.

However, acknowledgement of the particularity of Jews in their Eastern European surroundings was a frequent feature of literary accounts. Despite the late 'discovery' of Eastern European Jewry by 'the West', representations of those people were, by no means, indistinguishable from the overall cultural tapestry woven by the 'western' observer. Instead, pre-conceived assumptions of the Jewish character as well as contemporary Semitic discourse were, it seems, ever ready to hand. Just like his 'western' counterpart, the Eastern European Jew was both unscrupulous businessman and lazy, unskilled worker, successful cosmopolitan and pre-modern ghetto-dweller. In short, 'the Jew' was defined through paradox.

Indeed, it is a paradox – that Eastern European Jewry had territorialized the landscape and yet were simultaneously and repeatedly imagined as utterly without territory – that resides at the very crux of *fin de siècle* Semitic spatial discourse. The eighteenth century accounts of Count Segur and William Coxe painted strong linguistic images of Jews existing in tight-knit communities, inward looking and hostile to the world beyond them. These residential and occupational locales were illustrated as spiritually and culturally, if not physically, fortified spaces. In this small way, at least, the Jews of Eastern Europe were seen to have territorialized their immediate surroundings. Yet both Segur and Coxe implied that Jewish territorialization stretched beyond 'the local' onto the very land itself. Through their numerousness and tenacity, suggested these 'western' narratives, the Jews had overcome and outdone their would-be oppressors, and had assumed spatial control.

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[458] Hatton, *By Order of the Czar*, p. 11.

Later accounts picked up the threads of this idea of Jewish territoriality in Eastern Europe, although, as I have suggested, this conceptualisation of Jewish 'investment' in, and ownership of, their surroundings vacillated throughout the *fin de siècle* and beyond. Although the image of Eastern European Jewry as a territorializing people scored occasional points as a powerful piece of propaganda for the anti-alien camp in Britain, the intermittent yet potently illustrative press coverage of pogroms and persecution against Jews in Russia fully initiated the British public to the notion that Jews were confined to a 'landscape of exclusion'.[459]

However, I have also attempted to show that, for a short time, a trend within 'western' accounts emerged which challenged traditional representations of Jewish space and place. Prompted, at least in part, by the Baron de Hirsch scheme to establish Jewish agricultural colonies, 'western' images of the Eastern European Jewish habitat began to revise the entrenched association of 'the Jew' with urbanity. This new tendency to picture 'the Jew' occupying the rural landscape was, however, for some 'western' writers, just that: a straightforward way to once again reiterate an image of Jews as a territorializing people. However, by the close of the century, the 'Jewish question' was no longer a problem in the abstract, occurring in the far-off lands of Eastern Europe. Large-scale migration would bring the 'problem' home. The Jewish journey to Britain had begun.

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[459] Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion*, p. ix.

Chapter Five

Between Daydream and Nightmare: *Fin de Siècle* Jewish Journeys
and the British Imagination[460]

In July 2009, a play entitled *The Container* by innovative British playwright Clare Bayley was shown in London for the first time. It is, according to the *Guardian*, 'a daring play about human trafficking', relating the story of five migrants journeying surreptitiously to Britain mile by harrowing mile.[461] Performed in complete darkness inside a forty foot freight container, the director devised the provocative staging to make the unimaginable imaginable. Without such heady stimuli, the *Guardian* review suggests, the migrant journey would remain illusive, unknowable, inconceivable, to the average Briton. Certainly whilst the play won awards during its brief run at the Edinburgh Festival in 2007, it faced a considerable battle to source both financial backing and sustained support for its politically-charged humanitarian message required to make a more mainstream debut. Even with its experiential approach, and the pressing relevance and topicality of its subject matter, the play ran for just two weeks in London before its dismissal from the West End stage.[462] Seemingly, the clandestine migrant journey is not a journey which either the British public or its cultural leaders wish to experience or contemplate, even if only from the safe spectatorial distance facilitated by theatre and the limits of ones own imagination.

This chapter will argue that, far from being a recent or singular phenomenon, the marginalisation and fantastical fictionalisation of migrant journeys within the British cultural imagination can be traced back beyond the modern, multicultural age of high-speed travel and communication to a period when the mass movement of people across the globe was no less a feature of national life. Colin Matthew has estimated that between 1815 and 1914, twenty two million people emigrated from the British Isles to begin new lives in Britain's colonies and in other

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[460]   This chapter has been published within the volume G. Alderman (ed.), *New Directions in Amglo-Jewish History*, (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2010), pp. 1-24. It has been reproduced here with the permission of Academic Studies Press.
[461]   S. Moss, 'The Container's Captive Audience', *Guardian*, G2, 8 July 2009, p. 22.
[462]   Ibid.

lands of 'white' settlement.[463]   The flow of people travelling to and through Britain throughout the long nineteenth century was no less significant, although an accurate estimate as to the magnitude of immigration is far harder to gauge. One group alone – Jews fleeing Eastern Europe for the refuge of the West in the final decades of the nineteenth century and beyond – are thought to have been, at its peak, at least half a million strong.[464]

It was an epoch in which mankind's endeavour to tame the earth's vast seas and lands through exploration, colonization and commercialisation was beginning to be realised. The engineers of the railways and modern shipping were as much the heroes of the nineteenth century as were the imperial adventurers who thrilled British society with accounts of their exotic expeditions. Yet despite the constant ebb and flow of human traffic, treatment of the journey – and more especially the journey of the alien Jew – through the rationale of realism, or as an experience distinct from the processes of departure and arrival were, across the *fin de siècle* period as now, few and far between. For the vast majority, the migrant journey was, as Clare Bayley observes of today, an 'invisible' human narrative.[465]

Yet whilst the marginalisation of that narrative in the twenty first century may, as Bayley suggests, be attributable to the exculpatory position the vast majority of society adopts towards the lives and plights of others, the same may not be said of the earlier period.[466] The ethos of the Victorian age encouraged philanthropic ventures and was yet to be immune to tales of human experience and human suffering. As the news of pogroms and sustained persecution against Jews in Russia reached British ears in 1882, thousands gathered at London's Mansion House in protest.[467] For many, however, protest quickly turned to alarm as the association between the

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[463]   C. Matthew, *Short Oxford History of the British Isles. The Nineteenth Century: The British Isles, 1815-1901*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 139.
[464]   This figure is based on Lloyd Gartner's estimate that there were '400,000 to 500,000 Jews who crossed the Atlantic as English natives or as East Europeans having passed two or more years in the British Isles.' See 'North Atlantic Jewry', published in *Migration and Settlement: Papers on Anglo-American Jewish History,* (London: The Jewish Historical Society of England, 1971), pp. 118-127, whilst N. Green, 'The Modern Jewish Diaspora: East European Jews in New York, London, and Paris', in *Comparing Jewish Societies,* (ed.) T. Endelman, (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1997), pp. 113-134 has concluded that by 1925 the Jewish immigrant population of Britain was 210,000.
[465]   C. Bayley interviewed in the *Guardian*, 8 July 2009.
[466]   Ibid.
[467]   See Mansion House Fund, 'Outrages upon the Jews in Russia: Report of the Public Meeting at the Mansion House', Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association, (1882).

persecution of Eastern European Jewry and their mass migration to the new world was forged in the press and in parliamentary debates.[468] The arrival of those who were perceived by many as 'dark', 'shabby' and incomprehensible foreigners at Britain's ports captured the headlines and by-lines of the national and metropolitan press and flavoured the rhetoric of anti-alien campaigners with an urgency which had previously been lacking. Jewish migrants were condemned as 'alien invaders' and 'undesirable imports' – hyperbole that reacted to the *entrance* of aliens into Britain and which rapidly incited calls for legislation to restrict further migration.[469]

However, in an era of fascination with, and the growing availability of commercial travel, the gritty realities of *how* the Jewish migrant journeyed to Britain were seemingly of little interest. Instead, when the migrant journey *was* subject to treatment within literature or the press – albeit infrequently – that treatment persistently mined the darkest, yet most chimerical recesses of the cultural imagination. *Fin de siècle* representations of the migrant journey drew upon a cache of fantastical narrative devices, creating an imaginative geography of dark, menacing landscapes, vacillating and mutating borders, places and people, and characters and narratives conjured from legends and folklore. Indeed, narratives of the Jewish migrant journey were so deeply entrenched in the fictitious and fantastical, that they drew upon their own myths as they created them.

The Fallacy of Arrival as Deliverance

A propensity for myth and (d)illusion coursed throughout Jewish treatment of the migrant journey as frequently as they were indulged or entertained by others. One convention featured with particular regularity in narratives of nineteenth century journeys: to diminish the practical difficulties of the journey by foregrounding a beguiling vision of the destination. Prolific Anglo-Jewish novelist Israel Zangwill, ever the realist, seized upon and ridiculed as fallacy this emphasis within migrant narratives on arrival, at the expense of the journey, in a short story published in

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[468]   Greg Smart has traced this growing correlation forged in the British press in his 'From Persecution to Mass Migration: The Alien in Popular Print and Society, 1881-1906', Unpublished PhD Thesis, (University of Southampton, 2008).
[469]   The tendency to conceptualise the arrival of Jewish migrants in Britain as an 'alien invasion' was made popular with the publication of William Henry Wilkins monograph *The Alien Invasion,* (London: Methuen and Co., 1892). The rhetoric was taken up by The *Daily Chronicle*, 'Alien Invaders', 28 April 1892, p. 3, by the Earl of Dunraven, 'The Invasion of Destitute Aliens', The *Nineteenth Century*, (June 1892), p. 987, and, a little later resurfaced in a full-page sketch entitled 'Undesirable Imports', The *Daily Express,* 20 November 1901, p. 4.

1899. In "The Land of Promise", Zangwill sketched the tragic, clichéd tale of a young Jewish couple betrothed to each other, yet separated by the Atlantic. Srul, a young weaver from the Pale, emigrates to America – a land he declares to be 'overflowing with milk and honey'– to build a new life for himself, his mother, his fiancée Biela and her two sisters, whom he intends to send for once the passage money for their voyage has been earned.[470] Although 'nearly three years oozed by before Srul began to lift his eyes towards [buying] a store', the drudgery of the lives of the women left behind are relieved by the vision Srul's letters depict of the New World.[471] As the time to depart finally arrives the women set before them the conjured 'image of Srul waiting on the Transatlantic wharf in hymeneal attire'.[472] Essentially, it is this image, a fantasy fashioned for the sake of self-preservation, rather than an honest confrontation with the hardships the journey will require them to overcome, which dictates how the women anticipate the experience of migration. They are seduced by Srul's easy assurances and fleeting mention of his own voyage into assuming that the journey to the 'land of promise' will be a mildly unpleasant, transitory phase to be quickly compensated by the joy of arrival. However Zangwill promptly dashed such delusions, unleashing the full horror of the migrant journey upon the four women:

> Days and nights of travelling, packed like "freight" in hard, dirty wooden carriages, the endless worry of passports, tickets, questions, hygienic inspections and processes, the illegal extractions of petty officials, the strange phantasmagoria of places and faces – all this [...] left them dazed.[473]

For the Jewish women, the overland journey quickly mutates from dream into nightmare: an unreal ordeal which pertains to the fantastical. The sea voyage itself is little better. The migrant

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[470] Israel Zangwill, 'The Land of Promise', *Ghetto Tragedies*, [Originally published in 1899], (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1938), pp. 127- 155.
[471] Ibid., p. 137.
[472] Ibid., p. 141.
[473] Ibid.

party are once again treated as 'freight', 'accommodated in hammocks swung over the very dining-tables, so that they must needs rise at dawn and be cleared away before breakfast'.[474]

Yet it is as their journey ends that the illusion of arrival as deliverance is exposed. Biela and her elder sister Leah are rejected by the medical inspectors at Ellis Island, charged with having 'granular lids – contagious'.[475] The two sisters are 'driven back among the damned', forced to return to Hamburg.[476] The joyous arrival becomes an agonising departure, the emblems of hope for a new life, now seen in reverse, become the symbols of despair. '[W]hen the dock receded and the cheers and good-byes faded, and the waving handkerchiefs became a blur, and the Statue of Liberty dwindled, and the lone waste of waters faced them once more', the narrator disclosed, 'Leah's optimism gave way [...], some ominous intuition traversed her like a shudder, and she turned away lest Biela should see her tears.'[477]

Leah's 'ominous intuition' is tragically verified. The two sisters finally gain covert entry to America by way of Canada only to find that Srul has made a quick marriage to their younger sister Tsirrele. 'In all that long quest of the canopy, Leah had never come so near fainting as now', the narrator observes. 'The horror of Ellis Island was nothing to this. That scene resurged, and Tsirrele's fresh beauty, unflecked by the voyage, came up luridly before [Leah]'.[478] It is, according to Zangwill, the journey rather than the arrival which has the potential both to create and destroy opportunities. Indeed, by exposing the inherent ambiguities and contradictions of the migrant journey – as marking both a beginning and an end – Zangwill rightly problematises an experience which had all too frequently been conceptualised as linear and wholly uplifting.[479] For Biela and Leah, the migrant journey is from its outset an all-consuming nightmare from which they can find no escape. Instead, now estranged from their sister and turned away by Srul, they are forced to

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[474] Ibid., p. 142.
[475] Zangwill, 'The Land of Promise', p. 143.
[476] Ibid., p. 146.
[477] Ibid., p. 149.
[478] Ibid., p. 153.
[479] The nineteenth century collection G. Poulett Scrope, (ed.), *Extracts of Letters from Poor Persons who Emigrated Last Year to Canada and the United States*, (London: James Ridgway, 1831) provides multiple examples of this tendency by migrants to marginalize or idealise the journey. Most of the extracts barely mention the journey at all, instead waxing lyrical about the virtues and advantages of their lives in the new world, thereby inadvertently indicting the editorial agenda to encourage emigration amongst the British working classes.

travel on further in search of lodgings and a living – their own point of arrival – a place and a purpose which will deliver them from their relentless journeying.

Certainly Zangwill's conceptualisation of the migrant journey as shifting between dream and nightmare closely mirrors the 'typical' narrative of the Eastern European migrant experience – a narrative which, even by the close of the nineteenth century, had become firmly entrenched and wholly mythologised in the collective memory of the Jewish immigrant community. Countless novels and memoirs recount the excitement of the departure, often long-anticipated, when the lucky emigrants were lauded by the community as 'the heroes of the hour', those feelings quickly quashed as the familiar landscape of home was transposed by the alien geography of foreign lands.[480] Yet, within such narratives it was human agency rather than environment which most frequently ruptured the dream scenario of departure, transforming it into the living nightmare of the journey. The exploitation of Jewish migrants attempting to leave Eastern and Central Europe, whether in possession of valid exit documents or otherwise, was depicted as endemic. Unscrupulous border guards, train guards, medical inspectors and inhabitants of border towns and port cities, it seems, regularly made a good living from extracting bribes from 'helpless' migrants desperate to leave the continent. It was not uncommon, so the story goes, for migrants to reach their final destination without money or possessions, despite their painstaking efforts before departure to save a sum in excess of the anticipated costs of the journey.[481]

Mary Antin, a Jewish American authoress and memoirist who achieved considerable fame in the early twentieth century, emigrated as a young girl from Plotsk in Poland to Boston in 1894 with her mother and siblings. In her letters to her family written after her arrival, which would later form the principal part of her memoir, Antin poignantly captured the harrowing essence of the journey, relating a climactic moment when, despite their careful and diligent preparations, a

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[480] This is a phrase which the young Jewish emigrant Mashke Antin – later and better known as Mary Antin – used to describe the mood of the community towards her family's departure. See *From Plotzk to Boston*, (New York: Philip Cowen Press, 1899), p. 5. Besides Mary Antin see also A. Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917); S. Blumenfeld, *Phineas Khan* (1937) and J. Cohen and D. Soyer's edited collection *My Future is in America: Autobiographies of Eastern European Jewish Immigrants*, (New York: New York University Press, 2005) as an introduction to published literature in this area.

[481] Although I am suggesting that Jewish memoirists were complicit in the act of constructing and perpetuating myths of the Jewish migrant journey across the *fin de siècle*, I do not mean to suggest that hardship, disorientation and exploitation were not very real grievances which many migrants experienced to a lesser or greater degree throughout their journey to the West.

doctor forbade their passage through Germany. 'We were homeless, houseless and friendless in a strange place', Antin lamented. 'We had hardly money enough to last us through the voyage for which we had hoped and waited for three long years. We [...] had parted with those we loved, with places that were dear to us in spite of what we passed through in them, never again to see them, as we were convinced – all for the same dear end. With strong hopes and high spirits that hid the sad parting, we had started on our long journey. And now we were checked so unexpectedly.'[482] The disruption of Antin's expectations of the journey is indicative of migrant narratives. Whilst a myth of the journey certainly developed after arrival in the 'new world', expectations of the journey were also subject to mythologisation by migrants before their departure. As with Zangwill's female protagonists, Antin had similarly invested in a myth which romantisied and marginalized the journey largely because no counter-narrative had been disseminated in the *shtetl* to contradict it. Instead, the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe were nourished on 'glowing tales [of] America' by those who had reached her shores.[483] Thus it is only 'in transit' that Antin's own investment in a myth formulated before departure is disrupted and replaced by a narrative of the journey held in common by those who had undertaken it. In this way, her account both anticipates and echoes the anguish which resonates throughout Jewish travel narratives. As the family's ordeal continues and the migrants find themselves trapped in between departure and arrival, location and dislocation, joy and despair, Antin lets her 'mind lose itself in a queer sort of mist', escaping the horrors of reality in the calming depths of her imagination.[484]

Imperial Fantasies and Invasion Fantasies

Yet fantasy as escapism – a very clear strategy in Antin's narrative – was, I will show, often the vehicle that transported the interested British observer *into* the experience of the journey rather than out of it. The popularity of the accounts of imperial adventurers, such as Henry Stanley, who repeatedly penetrated and conquered 'the dark continent', thrilled British society with their

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[482] Antin, *From Plotzk to Boston*, p. 9.
[483] Ibid., p. 5.
[484] Ibid., p. 11.

vicarious quality.[485] Stanley, an illegitimate child brought up as an orphan in a Welsh workhouse, shot to international fame in the summer of 1872 after discovering the whereabouts of explorer Dr David Livingstone. After news of the success of his mission broke, newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic featured Stanley and Livingstone incessantly, feeding the reading public's insatiable appetite for adventure and triumph in far-off lands.[486] In Britain, the *Graphic* ran a double page spread, complete with illustrations, celebrating 'Stanley's narrative of his search [...] as full of romance and strange and perilous adventure as any fairy tale or Arthurian legend'.[487] Stanley was lauded as a modern-day hero, yet his image and the setting for his 'adventure' were firmly cast in the realm of myth and folklore. For the nineteenth century observer, Africa was conceptualised as both a far-off land and a far-off time. Travels across its inhospitable landscape signified a temporal expedition as much as it represented a geographical journey.

Stanley revelled in such iconographic, evocative discourse, exaggerating his own conduct towards 'the natives' to indulge Briton's imperial fantasies of the 'dark continent'.[488] He nurtured the image that his journeying brought the light of civilisation to the darkest recesses of the African landscape. For the most part, the reading public endorsed that image, enthralled with Stanley's vivid chronicles of his imperial journeying, making his 1890 account of his final African expedition to rescue the Governor of Equatoria, Emin Pasha, an immediate bestseller.[489]

Significantly, the popularity of Stanley's lucid and redolent expedition narrative inspired others to similarly utilise the fantasy genre as a strategy to infuse their own writing with more 'spice'. General William Booth, the Christian philanthropist and founder of the Salvation Army, alluded directly to Henry Stanley and his African adventures in his own work – *In Darkest England*

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[485]   Henry Stanley was a prolific chronicler of his expeditions in Africa and elsewhere, publishing ten works in total between 1872 and 1898. The most notable of these were *How I Found Livingstone in Central Africa*, (1872); *Through the Dark Continent*, 2 vols, (1878) and *In Darkest Africa, or the Quest, Rescue and Retreat of Emin Governor of Equatoria*, 2 vols, (1890) which was an immediate bestseller.
[486]   Tim Jeal has produced a stimulating biography of Henry Stanley which thoroughly documents the media response to Stanley upon his return from Africa in 1872, which, although plentiful, was also mixed. See T. Jeal, *Stanley: The Impossible Life of Africa's Greatest Explorer*, (London: Faber and Faber, 2007), pp. 133-148.
[487]   'How I Found Livingstone', The *Graphic*, 9 November 1872, pp. 448-450.
[488]   This is a claim made by Jeal in *Stanley: The Impossible Life of Africa's Greatest Explorer*, pp. 1-16, (p. 11).
[489]   Stanley entitled that publication *In Darkest Africa, or the Quest, Rescue and Retreat of Emin Governor of Equatoria*, drawing upon the popular representation of Africa as the 'dark continent'. The same reference had also been made in a previous publication *Through the Dark Continent* (1878).

and the Way Out also published in 1890.[490] As Booth explained, 'while brooding over the awful presentation of life as it exists in the vast African forest, it seemed to me only too vivid a picture of many parts of our own land. As there is a darkest Africa, is there not also a darkest England?'[491] The allusion did not end there. Booth wrote at length of the impressions Stanley's narrative had left upon his imagination, emulating Stanley's vision of dark, barbaric spaces illuminated and thus redeemed by the light of western civilisation, in his depiction of, and agenda for the English urban milieu. In this sense, Booth's account was no less a fantasy narrative than Stanley's had been. Booth's representation of the English city as African jungle – certainly a neat metaphor – required an even greater capacity for imagination than had Stanley's many literary efforts of rendering Africa's likeness for the curious masses. In truth it required a virtual suspension of belief. Yet the Christian philanthropist utilised the trope of 'the expedition' to its fullest, implicitly styling his tract as a travel narrative. In the book's first part, for example, Booth acted as gallant guide to the nervous reader, chaperoning them on a journey through subterranean England, eventually facilitating their 'deliverance' in the book's second part into the light of Christian salvation.[492]

Certainly, then, by the *fin de siècle*, a discourse had been established within the British cultural imagination that heavily indulged the fantasy genre when treating 'the journey'. Moreover, as the success of Stanley and Booth's publications makes clear, a popular conceptualisation of the imperial mission characterised the journey inherent within it in ambivalent terms, as shifting between dark and light, dream and nightmare. In this sense, the vacillating nature of 'the journey' – essentially its potential to deceive, to transform, and to seemingly assume dual, conflicting forms – echoed the dominant and highly ambivalent representation of 'the Jew'. However, despite this clear parallel between treatment of 'the journey' and treatment of 'the Jew' at the turn-of-the-century, the two were infrequently imagined together. Although the prominence of the 'aliens question' at that time occasionally assisted in placing the image of journeying Jews at the forefront of the public consciousness, Jews on journeys – as opposed to the closely monitored departure and arrival of aliens – received little attention within

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[490] William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1890).
[491] Ibid., p. 18.
[492] Booth appropriately entitled the first part of *In Darkest England* 'The Darkness' whilst the second part, which details Booth's proposals for the 'rescue' of the urban population, was entitled 'Deliverance'.

cultural discourse.[493]   Unlike the firmly grounded setting in which the episodes of departure and arrival took place, 'the journey' was enacted within a de-territorialized 'no-man's-land' – a space which was both the prologue and the epilogue to territorialism but was, by no means, the arena in which the *main* action was played out. Perhaps because of this comparatively subordinate spatial conceptualisation, the migrant journey garnered, for the most part, little interest.

Nevertheless, some literary approaches to the two themes of Jews and journeys, when periodically treated, propelled representations of travelling aliens beyond the objective or even the rational, exploiting the realm of fantasy to create images of journeying Jews which stretched the *fin de siècle* imagination to its very limits. Bram Stoker's gothic horror masterpiece of 1897, *Dracula,* which, as I have suggested in chapter three of the first section, can be read as a figurative commentary on Eastern European immigrant Jews arriving in Britain, makes for an important case study.[494]   Whilst some recent treatments of the novel have stressed the universality of the fears which *Dracula* encodes, I wish to suggest that it is the Victorian context which provides the narrative with such a heady potency.[495]   The reviewer for the *Pall Mall Gazette* delighted in the novel's contemporary setting: 'That is the way to make a horror convincing. The medieval is well enough in its way, but you don't care what sort of bogeys troubled your ancestors all that way back.'[496]   Certainly many 'bogeys' of all shapes and sizes were troubling British society by the close of the nineteenth century. Capitalising upon the resurgence of popularity in the gothic horror

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[493]   Newspaper articles devoted entirely to the topic of Jews on journeys, although reasonably rare, were the medium which most frequently provided a platform for such images. See, for example, 'So-Called Refugees', *Daily Mail*, 3 February 1900, p. 3 which detailed 'disgraceful scenes on the Cheshire'. The article, already discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, received two indignant and lengthy replies from the *Jewish Chronicle*, 'Jewish Refugees from South Africa'; 'Sober Facts versus Sensational Exaggerations', 9 February 1900, pp. 9-10; 10-11. As the aliens debate intensified two articles appeared which sought to fully comprehend the experience of the migrant journey by undertaking it: '"Out of the House of Bondage": A Day with Alien Immigrants', *Jewish Chronicle*, 12 February 1904, pp. 22-23; Albert Kinross, 'At Sea with the Alien Immigrant', *Pall Mall Magazine*, September – December 1904, pp. 126-132.
[494]   This reading of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has been offered by Howard L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth –Century Britain*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 148-66; Judith Halberstam, 'Technologies of Monstrocity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Cultural Politics at the Fin de Siècle*, (eds.) S. Ledger and S. McCracken (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 248-66; and Carol Margaret Davison, 'Britain, Vampire Empire: Fin-de-Siècle Fears and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature*, (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 120-157.
[495]   See, for example, John Allen Stevenson, 'A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of *Dracula*', PMLA, vol. 103, (1988), pp. 139-149. Stephen Arata also discusses this in the introduction to his essay, 'The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization', *Victorian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4, (Summer 1990), pp. 621-45, (pp. 621-3).
[496]   'For Midnight Reading', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1 June 1897, p. 11.

genre in the late nineteenth century, Stoker manipulated the ambitions of a crudely grotesque anti-hero, Count Dracula, to exploit those anxieties to their fullest. They were anxieties – of imperial and racial decline, social unrest at home and in the colonies, alien immigration, and the growing commercial threat of the United States and Germany – which were only too real.

Indeed Stoker's novel, which encapsulated these fears, was characteristic of a growing fascination within literary circles with the fantasy of invasion.[497] The spectre of territorial infiltration by a powerful, degenerate 'other', both thrilled and repulsed the British readership. Dracula was a monster for the modern age. Herein lay his power and allure. Count Dracula, the consummate foreigner, was simultaneously beguiling and detestable. Stoker successfully personified the powerfully sexualised allure of the exoticised and dangerous unknown in the figure of the Count, echoing the prevalent representation at the *fin de siècle* of the darkly sexualised and subversive Jew.[498] Captivated, the *Daily News* implored its readers to 'surrender their imaginations into the novelist's hands'.[499]

Yet, whilst *Dracula* is a key example of the gothic sub-genre of invasion fantasy, academic treatment has tended to conceptualise the Count's breach of Britain and Britishness as beginning with his chilling, yet covert, arrival at Whitby. This absence once again appears to mirror the neglect of the migrant journey within contemporary sources. However, Dracula's journey to Britain marks a vital process which transposes Jonathan Harker's experiences in Transylvania from a medieval-esque framing into a clear, contemporary focus. Dracula travels not only from East to West but from barbarism to civilisation, from an imagined Middle Ages to the Modern Age. He is a literary anti-hero in transit across time as well as space. It is the journey – by transposing the

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[497] Popular or notable titles in this literary sub-genre which explicitly identified Jews as the invading force include Matthew Phipps Shiel *The Lord of the Sea* (1901); Violet Guttenberg *A Modern Exodus* (1904); James Blyth *The Tyranny* (1907) and *Ichabod* (1910). Texts which discuss the sub-genre more broadly include Cecil D. Eby, *The Road to Armageddon: The Martial Spirit in English Popular Literature*, (Durham: Duke University, 1988) and Arata in 'The Occidental Tourist', pp. 621-7.

[498] Across the *fin de siècle* the figure of the dangerously sexualised male Jew featured in the works of popular and influential novelists, including Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, (London: Simpkin, 1910), [first published1891] and George du Maurier's *Trilby* (London: G. Bell, 1895), [first published 1894], as well as being a common theme in the work of Anglo-Jewish writer Julia Frankau, who wrote under the pseudonym Frank Danby. See, in particular, *Dr Philips: A Maida Vale Idyll*, (London: Keynes Press, 1989), [first published 1887] and *Pigs in Clover*, (London: William Heinemann,1903).

[499] 'Mr Bram Stoker's New Story', *Daily News*, 27 May 1897, p. 6.

setting from archaic Transylvanian castle to modern metropolis by way of Whitby – which seemingly authenticates the surreal episodes of the novel's opening chapters.

Initially even the novel's narrative circumvents the journey, instead drawing the reader in to anticipate the climactic crescendo of Dracula's arrival. 'The sea is tumbling in over the shallows, and the sandy flats with a roar, muffled in the sea-mists drifting in-land', Mina Murray confides uneasily to her journal. 'The horizon is lost in a grey mist. All is vastness; the clouds are piled up like giant rocks, and there is a brool over the sea which sounds like a presage of doom.'[500] The ship on which Dracula is secretly stowed away is sighted shortly after 'with all sails set' rushing with full speed towards the harbour.[501] 'The searchlight followed her, and a shudder ran through all who saw her', reports a correspondent from the *Dailygraph*, 'for lashed to the helm was a corpse, with drooping head, which swung horribly to and fro at each motion of the ship.'[502] The coastguard allows the journalist to board the ship but, with each observation, the mystery of the 'strange schooner' deepens, luring the reader to imagine, with increasing ghoulishness, the journey which had preceded this frightful arrival.

The journalist is allowed access to the log of the *Demeter*, and, through the records kept by the ship's captain, the narrative of the journey is told in retrospect. For seven days, the ship follows her usual course and all is well onboard, but on the eighth day the captain reports that 'the crew [are] dissatisfied about something. Seemed scared, but would not speak out.'[503] Finally, on the twelfth day, one of the crew confides in the captain that, during his night watch, he had seen 'a strange man aboard the ship [...] who was not like any of the crew'.[504] Stoker's play here upon *fin de siècle* fears of the unknown 'other', completely unlike the collective 'self', is obvious. Yet as the narrative continues, and one crew member after another mysteriously disappears, the captain's rationale gives way to an ominous foreboding which is fed not by the manifestation of the 'other' but by the threatening menace of anticipation. The narrative of the journey becomes fractured by changes in the weather, which fluctuates erratically between raging storms and peaceful calm, rather than by the advent of a new day. The captain's mood and the ship's fortunes become

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[500] Bram Stoker, *Dracula*, (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 1993), [first published 1897], p. 62.
[501] Ibid., p. 65.
[502] Ibid., pp. 66-7.
[503] Ibid., p. 70.
[504] Ibid.

increasing tethered to the primitive and uncontrollable forces of nature. Rational thought gives way to hysteria – an implicit suggestion of the gradual feminisation of the maritime space. The voyage is transformed from its initial representation as a steady dream to a fragmented nightmare, a phantasmagoria of shifting scenes swiftly transposed by the next. As the ship's store of visceral and able men are rapidly weakened and feminised by their superstitions, and then stealthily dispatched by Dracula, the captain's authority over the ship – previously his unequivocal territory – diminishes. In a final bid to wrest back control, the captain lashes his hands to the wheel but still the threat advances and overcomes him, simultaneously taking ownership of the ship and yet condemning it to wander listlessly upon the seas. The wandering ship, the prose implicitly suggests, has become judaised; condemned to eternal journeying, in search of, but denied its deliverance through arrival. The sea is the crew's, and by extension, Britain's final line of defence. The first mate throws himself into the water, crying out, 'The sea will save me from Him, and it is all that is left!'[505]

Maritime Nightmares

Although only a transitory setting for the action in *Dracula,* the sea often featured ubiquitously in both invasion fantasy literature and in press treatment of the alien migrant journey. The futuristic novel *The Lord of the Sea* by prolific British science fiction writer M. P. Shiel, published in 1901, for example, imagined a Britain which has been overwhelmed by Jews after their widespread expulsion from continental Europe:

> And streaming they came, from the Leopoldstadt, from Bukowina, from the sixteen Provinces, from all Galicia, from the Nicolas Colonies, from Lisbon, with wandering foot and weary breast – the Heines, Cohens, Oppenheimers – Sephardim, Aschkenasim. And Dover was the new Elim. With alarm Britain saw them come! But before she could do anything, the wave had overflowed it.[506]

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[505] Stoker, *Dracula*, p. 72.
[506] Shiel, *The Lord of the Sea*, (London: Souvenir Press, 1981), [originally published 1901], p. 9.

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Shiel's use of a maritime metaphor that likened Jewish migrants to an untameable force of nature is both evocative and powerfully descriptive. Moreover, that metaphor drew upon the commonplace rhetoric of anti-alien campaigners at the turn-of-the-century who frequently sensationalised the 'alien invasion' as an incursion of biblical proportions. 'The alien is invading London and the country generally, not in single spies, but in battalions', insisted the *Daily Express* in January 1903. That apocalyptic warning was accompanied by an illustration of the seas of northern Europe filled with ships all heading to the British Isles.[507] The sea, once Britain's bulwark against attack, implied the newspaper, was now the means of its infiltration. What is more, the attack was conceptualised as an invasion of military precision, force and nature – an offensive reminiscent of imperialist aggression.

In *The Lord of the Sea* Shiel crudely articulated the transformation of the sea from friend into foe. After the alien invasion of Britain has taken place, and partially in response to it, the novel's protagonist, Richard Hogarth – an Englishman who does not know he is of Jewish decent – establishes vast, armoured island fortress ships which are anchored in strategic positions on the world's main waterways. Initially, few properly gauge the threat. 'Is she a whim, a threat or a tool?' statesmen ask at the launch of the fleet's flagship, the *Boodah*.[508] At first it seems that Hogarth's intentions are entirely benevolent. His fleet merely provide a meeting place for the wealthy and well to do; it is a home away from home. '[T]o have been invited to those revels of taste and elegance became a superiority', the narrator confirms.[509] The ships assume the form of cultured and cultivated 'islands' in the middle of the untameable seas. Yet:

> [h]ardly anything in her interior suggested *the ship*: no hammocks for mariners, rolling-racks, sick-bay, lockers, steam-tables, wash-rooms, she being just a palace planted in the Atlantic, her bottom going down to a layer of comparative calm, so that hardly ever, in a

507 'Alien Undesirables', *Daily Express*, 21 January 1903, p. 6.
508 Shiel, *The Lord of the Sea*, p. 170.
509 Ibid., p. 174.

storm, when the ocean robed her sides in white, washed abroad her slippery plateau, and drenched with spray her lighthouse tops, did the ballroom below know shock or motion.[510]

All signs of utilitarian function and appearance are shed, the pelagic landscape bent to the will of the seemingly altruistic imperialist. Hogarth's ship becomes a maritime space in disguise, Shiel posing it as a metaphor for 'the Jew' – a figure conceptualised within Semitic discourse as capable of similarly chameleon qualities, underscored by the motive to deceive.[511]

It quickly transpires that both Hogarth – the veiled Jew – and his camouflaged ships, are of sinister intent. Hogarth eventually uses his wealth and influence to expel the Jews from Britain, thus repelling the invading force, yet his island fortress ships also enable him to successfully colonize the world's seas and oceans. 'Like the despair of Samson awaking manacled and shaven', dramatically observes the narrator, 'an occasional shriek would go up from some lone thinker, who perceived that the kingdoms of the world had lapsed into a single hand.'[512] After an initial period of grace, Hogarth ruthlessly exploits the strategic positions of his floating islands to levy tolls on the shipping of all nations, including Britain, transforming himself into the omnipotent Lord of the Sea. Hogarth proves himself to be the consummate imperialist and the consummate Jew (according to anti-Semitic rhetoric), remorselessly carrying out his project of territorialism and thus enacting a transformation from the beleaguered colonized subject to supreme, all-powerful colonist.[513]

For Britons, this act of Semitic territorialization of the seas would have conjured an especially frightening fantasy drawn from a very tangible reality. Since the Elizabethan era, the idea of Britain's maritime dominance had been assured. Moreover, as the nation's imperial

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[510] Shiel, *The Lord of the Sea*.
[511] The notion of the deceitful Jew came to particular prominence during the Second Boer War (1899-1902) when politicians, journalists and academics alike accused the Conservative government of fighting a 'Jewish war' for the interest of Jewish capitalists in South Africa. For more on this see Eitan Bar-Josef and Nadia Valman, 'Between the East End and East Africa: Re-thinking Images of 'the Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture', in *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, (eds.) Bar-Josef and Valman, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1-27.
[512] Shiel, *The Lord of the Sea*, p. 177.
[513] Bryan Cheyette has highlighted the frequently conflicted dual images of 'the Jew' within imperialist discourse in his important study *Constructions of 'the Jew': Racial Representations, 1875-1945*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 9.

strength and reach grew rapidly throughout the nineteenth century, largely uncontested, an awareness as well as a culture which nurtured Britain's identity as an 'Island Nation' began to materialise. As Robert Colls has noted, 'New stories about 'an island race' emerged – half-maritime, half-rural. Although the vast majority of the population was neither, the blue-green Island-fortress idea came to order their every other modern location'.[514] Thus Britain's maritime character became a crucial thread of national identity which both linked the nation to a heroic past as well as projecting an image of Britain's successful, imperial future. Yet the protracted and bloody resistance Britain faced in some of her colonies by the *fin de siècle* as well as the steady trickle of non-white or non-European immigrants to her shores dented this image in the public consciousness of Britain as an impenetrable 'island-fortress'. Shiel's invasion fantasy, which prophesised the colonisation of the seas by a clandestine Jewish 'other' who had constructed his very own island-fortresses was both the greatest insult and the greatest fear.

Journeying Jews and Wandering Jews

However, not all narratives concerned with the alien interloper unequivocally demonised the Jewish migrant, or viewed the migrant journey as a threatening one. An age-old allegory for the Jewish 'other', the legend of the Wandering Jew – an allegory which laid emphasis upon the Semitic proclivity for motion, for perpetual restlessness and rootlessness – presented itself as an obvious, yet multifaceted metaphor for migrating Jews at the *fin de siècle*. Prompted by a revival of interest in the legend, largely as a consequence of Eugene Sue's best-selling mid-century novel *The Wandering Jew* (1844), the legend provided a more moderate and moderating cultural narrative, albeit infrequently utilised, for the influx of alien Jews into Britain.[515]

Depicted as a cursed biblical figure, doomed to relentlessly roam the earth until the Second Coming for refusing Jesus a moment's rest on his way to the cross, the legend of the Wandering

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[514] Robert Colls, *Identity of England*, (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 239. On this topic see also Ken Lunn and Ann Day, 'Britain as Island: National Identity and the Sea', in *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, (eds.) Helen Brocklehurst and Robert Phillips, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 124 – 136.
[515] Eugene Sue, *Le Juif Errant* was published as a magazine serial in France in 1844, and translated into English that same year as *The Wandering Jew*, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1844).

Jew was a ubiquitous feature of medieval Christian anti-Semitic discourse.[516] Negative imagery which delineated the Wandering Jew as a sinister and disruptive force, existing on the peripheries of Christian society – indeed as its potential saboteur – characterised such rhetoric. The Wandering Jew was the alien 'other' *par excellence*. Yet the influence of Romanticism as well as greater fidelity to secularist thought by the mid-eighteenth century prompted responses to the legend to become tinged with ambiguities. European intellectuals and writers began to re-engage with the legend, grappling with moral judgements which had previously appeared to be clear cut.[517] Was the Wandering Jew villain as Christiological anti-Semitism would have it, or was he victim of history, religion, and the 'curse' of immortality? As Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes have rightly observed, even into present times '[t]he Wandering Jew evokes both sympathy and scorn'.[518]

Certainly such conflicted duality characterised *fin de siècle* depictions of the Wandering Jew on the rare occasions that the legend was evoked as an analogy or cultural 'reference point' for migrating Eastern European Jews. The evocation of the Wandering Jew legend simultaneously lent an air of mysticism and romance to accounts of migrant journeys, whilst facilitating a ready narrative for exploitation by anti-alien campaigners and anti-Semites alike. Indeed, the very ambivalence of nineteenth century Semitic discourse was expressed through the figure of the Wandering Jew – a legend constructed and wholly dependent upon the certain, yet 'indispensable', nature of Jewish 'guilt' within Christian tradition.[519]

In a rare piece of empiricist travel journalism, written aboard 'The Immigrant Ship' in May 1905, for example, a correspondent for the outspoken anti-alien organ the *Daily Mail* seized upon the legend, attempting to invert its pathos as a vehicle for ridicule. The journalist recounts his

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[516]   The pre-eminent scholar of the legend, G. K. Anderson, concluded in an early essay 'Popular Survivals of the Wandering Jew in England', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 46, (1947), pp. 367-82 that the legend was 'based on a combination of older legends which were current in many regions of the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East' and 'took definite shape in the later Middle Ages', p. 367. One of the earliest recorded references to the legend appears in the *Flores Historiarum* by Roger of Wendover in 1228.

[517]   For a useful survey of literature which featured the Wandering Jew in one form or another through the ages consult Joseph Gaer, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew*, (New York: New American Library, 1961).

[518]   Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes, (eds.), *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. viii.

[519]   Regine Rosenthal discusses the 'ambivalent' nature of Jewish guilt within the legend, arguing that 'the Wandering Jew as symbol of the Jewish people is performing a task that the Christian faith depends upon. […] Thus for centuries, the religious discourse of the dominant Christian culture has constructed the Wandering Jew as its necessary, if detestable Other'. See Regine Rosenthal, 'Inventing the Other: Ambivalent Constructions of the Wandering Jew/ess in Nineteenth Century Literature', *Representations of Jews Through the Ages*, (eds.) L. J. Greenspoon and B. F. Le Beau, (Omaha, Nebraska: Creighton University Press, 1996), pp. 171-188, (p. 173).

meeting with 'an elderly Hebrew with a patriarchal beard', whom he mockingly dubbed 'The Wanderer'. The Jew's life story, which he relates to the journalist, is framed as a desperate and pathetic tale of continual migration from one land to the next in search of a living. 'About the age of seventy, which he regarded as early manhood', the correspondent snidely remarked, 'he had betaken himself from Russia to the Klondike, where he peddled needles at a shilling apiece and amassed several hundred dollars. Thence he went to St Louis, opened a fruit store, failed, and now, eager as a young man to see the world, was bound for the goldfields, where he hoped to peddle fruit.'[520] It is, despite the journalist's antagonistic intentions, a remarkable account of tenacity and endurance, of movement – a life in flux. Moreover, through that ceaseless movement – signification of the perpetual punishment of the Jewish people – the very foundation of the Christian faith is ratified. In this way, the legend of the Wandering Jew serves as a neat, and rather romantic allegory for the contemporary migrant Jew, traversing the lands and seas from East to West, provoked to restlessness and condemned to rootlessness, yet nevertheless gifted with the enthusiasm of many lives as yet unlived. It is, inadvertently, a wholly ambivalent representation which although alludes to the negative connotations of the Wandering Jew image, nevertheless imbues that same image and the accompanying narrative with a certain vital spirit and romantic exhilaration.

It is this absence of attachment to place – a spatial manifestation and signifier of the person – which, I would suggest, unsettled the journalist. Within the article the journeying Jew was encountered as a being in transit, an individual observed outside of the 'context' of place. The article's recourse to casual anti-Semitism by way of the legend both obscured and inadvertently exposed the insecurities that such a sense of uncertainty provoked. For the journalist, migrating Jews in the modern era existed outside of time and place, and were instead the manifestation of the past in the present. 'For them geography is non-existent, time has no value, persons, not laws, control events, and steam and electricity are so many mysterious agencies which transport them from one inhospitable country to another over a strange world.'[521] Here, the journalist's lazy contempt for the 'pre-modern' Jews, or 'pithecanthropoi' as he names them – a term given by

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[520] 'The Immigrant Ship: Human Flotsam and Jetsam', *Daily Mail*, 29 May 1905, p. 4.
[521] 'The Immigrant Ship: Human Flotsam and Jetsam'.

scientists in 1891 to the discovery of fossilised human remains – is crudely obvious.[522] The journalist disdainfully relegates the journeying Jews he encounters to a deeply fabled and fantastical folklore narrative.

The evocation of the Wandering Jew in another of Israel Zangwill's short stories, 'The Model of Sorrows', published in 1907, surprisingly reinforces the *Daily Mail's* rather scathing abhorrence for the migrant Jew. In a striking departure from the sympathetic, if somewhat exasperated, tone of his earlier treatment of the journeying alien in 'The Land of Promise', Zangwill exposed the narrative of the typically traumatic migrant journey as deeply and knowingly mythologized. The story's protagonist and narrator, a young, unnamed artist and the son of a Vicar, longs to find a model to assist him to paint 'a realistic Christ, the Christ who sat in the synagogue of Jerusalem'.[523] Eventually, during a weekend trip to Brighton, the artist spots in a crowd 'a frowsy, gaberdined Jew' which evokes for him the image of Christ.[524] The Jew, Israel Quarriar – an impoverished, recent migrant from Russia – readily agrees to model for the artist who quickly takes a personal interest in the Jew. Soon, the artist invites Quarriar to relate the story of his journey from Russia. It is a tale of misery and exploitation. The Jew tells how he was forced to sell all of his worldly possessions to take himself and his family to England, but, during his desperate attempts to smuggle across the Russian border, he fell into the unscrupulous grasp of a Jewish border agent. The agent cons Quarriar out of virtually all of his money as well as all of his luggage, and, when the migrant becomes suspicious, the agent has the whole family arrested. After many days, and after the payment of hefty bribes, Quarriar and his family gain their release and finally arrive in England, penniless and destitute. The Gentile artist is both horrified and deeply moved by Quarriar's story:

Such was my model's simple narrative, the homely realism of which appealed to me on my most imaginative side, for through all its sordid details stood revealed to me the tragedy of the Wandering Jew. Was it Heine or another who said, 'The people of the Christ is the

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[522] For a full definition see *Oxford English Dictionary,* 2nd edn., vol. xi, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 927.
[523] Israel Zangwill, 'The Model of Sorrows', *Ghetto Comedies*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1938), [originally published in 1907], pp. 3-55, (p. 4).
[524] Ibid., p. 6.

Christ of peoples'? At any rate, such was the idea that began to take possession of me as I painted away at the sorrow-haunted face of my much tried model – to paint, not the Christ that I had started out to paint, but the Christ incarnated in a race, suffering [...][525]

Quarriar's tale of inexorable suffering conjures, for the artist, the legend of the Wandering Jew. Yet here, there is little of either the sinister or ridiculous in the characterisation of the legend's protagonist. Instead, the legend is re-cast by the artist as a tragedy with the journeying Jew its wretched and pitiable hero. Zangwill's re-conceptualisation of the Wandering Jew at this stage of the narrative, and indeed the functionality of that figure as a strategy to evoke sympathy, appears to mark a clear departure from the tone of the *Daily Mail* article.

Yet as the story continues, the sympathetic framing of the Wandering Jew is exposed as fallacy. The artist vows to help the Jew and his family from their poverty, and finances Quarriar in his venture to become a sorter of cloth cuttings. However, despite the artist's generous efforts and investments, the scheme fails and Quarriar is once again destitute. The artist continues to finance the Jew, but still Quarriar pleads poverty. Finally, after much intrigue and still further investment, Quarriar is revealed as a conman. The Jew's tale of suffering and victimisation during his journey to England are proved to be false, and his endeavours to start himself up in business as fabricated. The artist is stunned by Quarriar's deception, reluctantly refashioning his perception of the migrant, and, indeed, of the Wandering Jew. 'And so the new Man of Sorrows shaped himself to my vision', admits the artist. 'And, taking my brush, I added a touch here and a touch there till there came into that face of sorrows a look of craft and guile. And as I stood back from my work, I was startled to see how nearly I had come to a photographic representation of my model; for those lines of guile had indeed been there, though I had eliminated them in my confident misrepresentation.'[526] The short story climaxes with the journeying Jew's transformation from victim to villain. The façade of the Wandering Jew, romanticised by the artist as a non-threatening, redemptive emblem of the Jewish race, crumbles before the protagonist's eyes and is exposed as a romantic illusion.

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[525] Zangwill, 'The Model of Sorrows', p. 30.
[526] Zangwill, 'The Model of Sorrows', pp. 54-55.

What is more, however, by ultimately disparaging the figure of the Wandering Jew, Zangwill also casts ridicule upon the quintessential narrative of the Jewish journey. The tragedy of departure, the perpetual exploitation and corruption, the misery of the voyage, the uncertainties of arrival – all familiar episodes in a ceaseless Jewish saga – are thrown into sharp relief by Zangwill's cynical perspective. According to the British Jewish novelist, the migratory journey had itself become exposed to mythologisation and exploitation. Certainly, as Irving Howe observed in his seminal study of Jewish *fin de siècle* migration, *World of Our Fathers*, 'the imagery of the journey as ordeal was deeply imprinted in the Jewish folk mind – admittedly, a mind with a rich training in the imagery of ordeal'.[527] Thus according to Zangwill and Howe, on some level, even by the first decade of the twentieth century, a narrative of 'the journey' had been constructed and disseminated widely enough to become common currency across and beyond the Jewish diaspora. As Howe implies, that narrative crucially drew upon a rich heritage of Jewish travel narratives which were ingrained within the very Jewish psyche. As contemporary British Jewish writer Howard Jacobson has wittily and perceptively observed, 'wherever there is a Jew, there is a journey'.[528]

However, the Anglo-Jewish press, and indeed, a less cynical Zangwill of earlier times, remained eager throughout the final decades of the nineteenth century to counter cynicism regarding the 'authenticity' of the plight of journeying Jews. It was to further this venture that the legend of the Wandering Jew – as a discreet metaphor for journeying migrant Jews – initially found its way into the aliens debate at the turn-of-the-century. The *Jewish Chronicle* published a letter from a correspondent in July 1887 who was distressed at news of the perpetual exploitation of Jewish migrants arriving at German ports. 'From the experience of immigrants which I have obtained, and it is no small one, I learn that a large number are robbed of almost everything they possess. [...] Is it not possible', mused the correspondent, 'for some Jewish body in Hamburg to take steps for the protection of these wanderers, to give them information, and prevent their being imposed upon?'[529] For the correspondent, the Jewish 'wanderers' are both passive and wholly un-threatening, assuming the form of the victim rather than villain. It was a view which the *Jewish*

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[527] Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers*, (New York: Galahad Books, 1976), p. 39.
[528] H. Jacobson, *Roots Schmoots: Journeys Among Jews*, (London: Penguin, 1993).
[529] 'Jewish Immigrants at Hamburg', *Jewish Chronicle*, 29 July 1887, pp. 6-7.

Chronicle, by printing the letter, readily endorsed. In a bid to 'drive home' that image of the harmless journeying migrant, the correspondent concluded his indignant tirade by citing the example of 'a poor Jewish woman and her child' who, as a consequence of their ill treatment in Hamburg, were forced to spend consecutive nights sleeping 'in the open streets'.[530] Hence the construction of 'the Jew' as victimised traveller rather than a threatening or sinister presence was further augmented through the feminisation of the alien. By making explicit the plight and victimisation of female Jews, the figure of the Jewish wanderer was rendered pathetic. The sinister undertones typically imbibed in the legend of the Wandering Jew were inverted to suggest, instead, an effeminate protagonist.[531]

Israel Zangwill also subtly invoked the feminised Wandering Jew in 'The Land of Promise'. The eventual fate of the two sisters, Leah and Biela, who are divested of home, family and purpose by a series of powerful and purposeful men, has many parallels with the plight of the poor woman and child in Hamburg. All set out on their journey with clear purpose and agency but fall victim to the greed and ambition of a preying masculine 'other'. All implore a sympathetic response, and all not only invoke the Wandering Jew legend but invest it with an endearing vulnerability which fully negates any negative connotations which the image of the journeying Jew may have evoked elsewhere. This sympathetic framing of the Wandering Jew is thus also explicitly gendered. Zangwill and the correspondent to the *Jewish Chronicle* clearly, if implicitly, engage female versions of the Wandering Jew in a bid to recast Jewish difference in sympathetic rather than repugnant terms. Indeed, as Regine Rosenthal has suggested, the Wandering Jewess – in the form of the beautiful and alluring Jewish woman – was frequently employed as a foil to 'the accursed Wandering Jew' in nineteenth century literature. Stemming from Sir Walter Scott's depiction of Rebecca in his 1819 romance *Ivanhoe* as 'a model of female beauty, maidenly innocence, and daughterly affection' yet nevertheless precluded from a 'happy ending' due to her inescapable

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[530] Ibid.

[531] A female version of the Wandering Jew had made an appearance just a few years prior to the publication of this letter, in Richard Wagner's final opera *Parsifal* (1882). In the second act, the audience is introduced to Kundry, a beautiful and spirited woman, who has been cursed for all eternity for laughing at Christ on his way to the cross. Although she repents of her crime and is remorseful, she remains bound and outcast by a force beyond her power. It is only through her baptism in the opera's final scene that Kundry in finally released for the curse, transforming into a white dove. *Parsifal* was performed to great acclaim in Bayreuth, Germany in 1882, and in London in 1884. See L. Beckett, *Richard Wagner: Parsifal*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) for a comprehensive introduction to the opera.

racial 'otherness', Scott's Rebecca established a tradition which typecast the Jewish woman as 'a curious adaptation of the Wandering Jew type'.[532] Whilst the examples cited in this chapter only hint at the perpetuation of this tradition in turn-of-the-century British cultural discourse, they crucially demonstrate the malleable and polymorphic character of the Wandering Jew(ess) as an analogy for Jews on journeys.

'Wherever there is a Jew, there is a journey', but where there is a journey it seems, at first glance, that there is rarely a narrative. A combination of apathy, lack of empathy and a failure of imagination might account for this neglect. Yet the perception of a *complete* absence of the migrant journey from the British discursive arena of the *fin de siècle* obscures a small, yet rich body of material which explored and articulated the journey as a transformative, surreal and fantastical drama. Gothic horror novelists and the press alike conceptualised journeying Jews as 'invading aliens', and the seas around Britain as the tempestuous battleground. Within this imaginative sub-genre, the process of arrival transmogrified into the advent of Armageddon. These exceptional texts both borrowed from established and topical cultural discourses of the era as well as crafting their own to insist that the story of journeying Jews was newsworthy. That such endeavours seemed to intensify in the press as the aliens debate escalated attests to the political agendas which frequently underlay journalistic treatment. Whilst the occasional account attempted to construct a more balanced and sympathetic image of migrant Jews and the experiences of travel, they too were drawn into the realm of fantasy, appropriating and feminising the legend of the Wandering Jew to counter perceptions of the sinister, territorializing alien. Thus the tendency for fantasy, myth and legend as key politicised representational devices within narratives of the journey, transcended both pro-Jewish and anti-alien sentiment.

What is more, however, those seemingly conflicting perspectives shared a vision of the migrant journey, if not of 'the Jew', as a volatile, threatening 'other world', existing outside of place and time. The utilisation of fantasy facilitated and augmented the unreal quality of such visions,

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[532] This final quotation refers to a comment made by Alide Cagidemetrio in 'A Plea for Fictional Histories and Old-Time Jewesses', in *The Invention of Ethnicity*, (ed.) W. Sollors, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 21, and is cited by Rosenthal in 'Inventing the Other: Ambivalent Constructions of the Wandering Jew/ess in Nineteenth Century Literature', p. 171; 173.

drawing upon very real anxieties of crisis and a fast approaching 'end' to tug at the outer edges of the *fin de siècle* imagination. Narratives of the journey thus thrilled the British public with a dreadful delight, daring to imagine what was, for the majority of the population, unimaginable. It was only with the arrival and settlement of the alien Jew in Britain, however, that many of these dreams and nightmares would come to be realised.

Chapter Six

Behind the Spectre of the Ghetto:

A Jewish London in Shadows

In August 1881 an indignant correspondent by the name of Arthur Klein of Belsize Park begged the liberal metropolitan newspaper, the *Daily News* 'the space for a few lines, in order to draw attention to the state of lawlessness, and, consequently, misery, degradation, and vice, in which thousands of this city [of London] are plunged.'[533] Klein had reached these sobering conclusions, he informed the paper, after undertaking lengthy inspection of 'a notoriously bad quarter' known as Petticoat Lane, whose fetid aesthetic he grimly likened to a Dickensian slum. Poverty and depravity co-existed, claimed Klein, one seeping from the other, 'in as dark colours as it ever did'.[534] For the North Londoner, as for many others by the closing decades of the nineteenth century, Petticoat Lane was the very nexus of this evil union of pauperism and immorality, and, in name, had become a by-word for poverty – a spatial signifier of urban degeneration.

Perhaps even more disturbing for the anxious Victorian observer was the overwhelming sense that 'the Lane' was distinctly 'foreign' territory – a place of fearful encounter, and, indeed, a place in which races, cultures and histories suffused, creating a collective of monstrous, unfamiliar 'others'.[535] Klein – a surname which gave away his own 'unEnglish' heritage – was 'shocked' to witness a myriad of exchanges of the 'vilest character' amongst the people – both 'native' and 'alien' poor – of 'the Lane'; exchanges of language, of violence, of goods, and of a way of life. In foreboding tones, Klein's narrative cast an image of Petticoat Lane as a formidable network of urban depravity, strengthened and fortified by the multitude of 'evil' interactions. In essence, the correspondent fearfully envisaged the district as the hub of a far greater network of misery,

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[533] 'Petticoat Lane', *Daily News*, 12 August 1881, p. 7

[534] Ibid.

[535] The street life of London's East End, and in particular its markets, was the main arena in which the two distinct communities – the 'native' working class and the Jews – encountered each other. It was a 'meeting place' of sorts for otherwise separate communities who occupied distinct 'territories' within the district. It was unusual for the boundaries of those territories to be casually crossed by a member of the opposite community. This was in contrast to the West End which was, instead, a hybridised space, in which the two communities lived virtually side-by-side, divided by economics rather than race. Unlike Klein, some commentators embraced the East End's 'multi-culturalism' (to use a modern term). See, for example, the opening scene in Margaret Harkness' [John Law], *In Darkest London: A New and Popular Edition of Captain Lobe, A Story of the Salvation Army*, (London: William Reeves, 1891), p. 3-4.

degradation and vice reaching out across East London and beyond. '[E]ach feels himself nearer than he thought [to] the assassin's grasp', Klein uneasily observed. '[H]is eyes are opened to the danger lurking near him in the proximity to him of places where the law has no power'.[536] For Klein, Petticoat Lane was an anarchic space *par excellence* – 'the great capital of theifdom' – reaching and grasping beyond its own boundaries, threatening the borders of 'respectable' London.[537] Certainly the district had long-since held that reputation, Klein acknowledged. Yet, in an effort to disentangle the 'true' other from the 'native' slum-dwellers, Klein identified Jews as those who should be held accountable for the perpetuation of the area's 'vile' subterranean character. The Jewish community's refusal to adhere to British laws as well as to Christian values, the correspondent concluded, had propelled the district virtually beyond salvation.

However, Mr Klein's acrimonious letter was not to be the last word on the subject. The very next day's edition of the *Daily News* brought a reply from a Mr Maurice H. Levirton, a solicitor from Devonshire Square, who contested Klein's depiction of Petticoat Lane and of its Jewish community on virtually every count. Levirton's fierce defence began with the cutting remark,

> I cannot make out why he [Mr Klein] should have gone all the way from Belsize Park to Whitechapel [...] to discover London slums. He might have gone to Lisson Grove, or just at the back of Westminster Abbey, or the Seven Dials, or the New Cat, and found all the exaggerated horrors which he has cruelly endeavoured to show belong peculiarly to Whitechapel, a quarter in which a number of Jews reside.[538]

The *Jewish Chronicle* – the mouthpiece of the Anglo-Jewish community – hastily reprinted Levirton's letter, keen to express their allegiance with his point of view.[539] The looming spectre of London slums, the newspaper implicitly protested, was certainly nothing new. Neither were they confined to the East End nor to the Jewish community alone. Social investigators and philanthropists, most notably Henry Mayhew, the co-founder of the satirical magazine *Punch*, had drawn attention to the severe overcrowding, housing shortages, poverty and crime of certain

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[536] 'Petticoat Lane', 12 August 1881.
[537] Ibid.
[538] 'Petticoat Lane', *Daily News*, 13 August 1881, p. 3.
[539] 'Petticoat Lane', *Jewish Chronicle*, 19 August 1881, p. 6.

London districts throughout earlier decades of the nineteenth century.[540] Slums and slum-dwellers had also been a favourite theme of popular Victorian novelist Charles Dickens, who painted the prevalence of urban poverty across the capital in brutally honest brushstrokes.[541] Indeed the novelist's fictionalised treatment of urban slums, as is evident from Klein's Dickensian conceptualisation of Petticoat Lane, came, in large part, to shape the public's response to scenes of urban poverty in the decades which followed.

Yet, despite such efforts to dispel, or at least nuance the correlation, Klein's pointed focus upon East London, and Petticoat Lane in particular, replicated and anticipated a preoccupation and an association with the East End and alien Jews which would come to dominate urban discourse across the *fin de siècle* and beyond. So pervasive was that preoccupation that, not only did it dictate contemporary responses but, to a great extent, has also become for present-day scholars, *the* urban landscape most readily identified with the Jewish immigrant community in turn-of-the-century Britain.[542] What is more, the value and versatility of the East End, as cultural and spatial signifier of the urban 'other', and indeed as a metaphor for a distinctly 'colonial' landscape at the heart of the imperial metropolis – a use which has long been explored by urban scholars and historians of Anglo-Jewry alike – has deflected attention away from the presence of alternative interpretations.[543] Whilst there is no denying the importance of the imperial context for understanding representations of the immigrant Jew and his urban habitat, there is a strong case for asserting that other discourses were also crucial in shaping responses to the 'alien' in London.

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[540] See, for example, H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor: A Cyclopaedia of the Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work, Those That Cannot Work, and Those That Will not Work*, (London: Griffin, Bohn and Company, 1861-2); B. Jerrold and G. Dore, *London: a pilgrimage*, (London: Harper and Brothers, 1890), [Originally published 1872]; O. Hill, *Homes of the London Poor*, (London: Macmillan, 1875).

[541] *Oliver Twist* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), [first published 1838] is the most obvious example of this, although Dickens also frequently explored social injustices closely aligned to 'the city' in many of his other novels including *Dombey and Son* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), [first published 1846-8] and *Little Dorrit* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), [first published 1855-7].

[542] There are too many examples of works that centralise this association between the immigrant Jew and the East End in their works to name here. However, two of the better known works are C. Bermant, *Point of Arrival: A Study of London's East End*, (London: Eyre Methuen, 1975) and A.J. Kershen, *Strangers, Aliens and Asians: Huguenots, Jews and Bangladeshis in Spitalfields, 1660-2000*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

[543] Despite this complaint, a recent publication which makes excellent use of metropolitan geography in an imperial context is E. Bar-Yosef and N. Valman, (eds.), *'The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture: Between the East End and East Africa*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

This chapter will argue that a protracted fixation with the East End, and, more especially with the spectre of the colonial slum or oriental ghetto within that district, has both obscured and prevented a more sensitive engagement with 'other' Jewish immigrant spaces within the East End. The chapter shall open with a brief exploration of the dominant image of the Jewish ghetto at the *fin de siècle*, followed by a careful consideration of how distinct spaces within the ghetto 'interior' of the East End were represented. This approach shall hope to 'liberate' those spaces from the shadow cast by the spectre of the ghetto, showing them to be significant discursive constructs in their own right.

The Ghetto

'In modern times', Louis Wirth noted in 1928, 'the word "ghetto" applies not specifically to the place of officially regulated settlement of the Jews, but rather to those local cultural areas which have arisen in the course of time or are voluntarily selected or built up by them'. [544] Ghetto living had become for Jews by the modern period a voluntary act of confinement – a means of self-regulation and an expression of self-determination. Yet in turn-of-the-century London, ghetto living, for the most part, held deeply negative connotations for the 'outside' observer. American author Jack London's 'descent' into the 'abyss' of the East End in 1902 confirmed his suspicions, widely shared by the curious and concerned amongst the middle and upper classes, that the ghetto quarter in which many of the metropolis' poorest inhabitants were confined, deserved the title 'The City of Degradation'. 'For here, in the East End, the obscenities and brute vulgarities of life are rampant. There is no privacy. The bad corrupts the good, and all fester together.'[545] As a spatial category constructed within popular philanthropic discourse, 'the ghetto' became synonymous with 'the urban slum' and slum conditions indicative of physical and moral depravity. By the *fin de siècle*, East London was despised as its very heartland.

Crucially, however, the term was used not only to suggest the depravity of that quarter but, more specifically, to point to its very separateness from the world which lay beyond its bounds. The ghetto was delineated within the popular imagination as 'a world apart', a notion compounded still further by the foreignness of its inhabitants. It was a spatial conceptualisation

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[544] L. Wirth, *The Ghetto*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 4.
[545] J. London, *The People of the Abyss*, (London: Arco, 1962), [originally published by Macmillan, 1903], p. 88.

irrevocably associated with 'the Jew'. George Sims, the inveterate social reformer and journalist, reinforced this association in an article penned for the *Strand Magazine* in 1904. 'In Alien-Land', one article in a series of six entitled 'Off the Track in London',[546] followed, in essence, the same formula of 'visiting strange quarters inhabited by strange people' as Sims' earlier and better-known studies *How the Poor Live* and *Living London*.[547] However Sims' journey into London's East End was framed not simply as an excursion into an unfamiliar corner of the city but as an expedition into another world. Upon coming to Wentworth Street, Sims assumes the gaze of a tourist, delighted and yet a little overawed as 'the strangeness of the scene reveals itself':

> Here all the shops are open and the narrow thoroughfare is packed with the stalls of Jewish hawkers. We hear a little English at the top of Wentworth Street, but as we push our way through the seething crowd and get nearer to Brick Lane the English words become rarer and rarer, and presently only the German Hebrew jargon known as "Yiddish" reaches our ears.'[548]

Sims has consciously crossed the border into 'Alien-Land', and knows himself to be 'in the heart of the old Ghetto'.[549] 'Oriental' characters populate the thronging streets which are lined by make-shift shops and market stalls. The profits from the goods sold will eventually help the trader to begin the slow climb out of the ghetto for a better life in North and North West London. Here then, the ghetto is depicted as a space with the potential to liberate: it is an enclosure which nurtures the budding commercial promise of its inhabitants. Paradoxically Sims also notes that, for women, it is also a space which limits and restricts: 'Most of the older women came into the Ghetto straight from the ship that landed them in the Thames, and they rarely go beyond its

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[546] The series was published in six parts, between April – September 1904: G. R. Sims, 'In Alien-Land', *Strand Magazine*, vol. 27, (April 1904), pp. 416-423; 'In the Royal Borough of Kensington', *Strand Magazine*, vol. 27, (May 1904), pp. 545-551; 'In Hidden Camberwell', *Strand Magazine*, vol. 27, (June 1904), pp. 666-672; ' "Downtown" in Rotherhithe', *Strand Magazine*, vol. 28, (July 1904), pp 34-40; 'In the Shadow of St. Stephens', *Strand Magazine*, vol. 28, (August 1904), pp 152-158; 'Round Hackney Wick', *Strand Magazine*, vol. 28, (September 1904), pp. 323-329.
[547] G. R Sims, *How the Poor Live: With Sixty Illustrations by Frederick Barnard*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883), and (ed.), *Living London: Its Work and its Play, its Humour and its Pathos, its Sights and its Scenes*, (London: Cassell and Company, 1902-3).
[548] Sims, 'In Alien-Land', p. 416.
[549] Ibid.

boundaries', explains Sims. 'Many of them would not if they had the chance.'[550] The ghetto, it seems, operates to 'institutionalise' these women, pacifying them with the illusion of extended 'private' (safe) space which the ghetto boundaries appear to facilitate. Yet Sims, the male outsider, is able to penetrate to the very centre of that quarter, exposing the ghetto's illusionary spatial quality. It is not an infallible haven from the outside world, but one that is both deceptive and gendered – perhaps even, if Sims is to be believed, a misogynistic space which deludes its female inhabitants to perpetuate a self-imposed confinement for a false reward. According to Sims then, the ghetto is a paradox: it both liberates and limits its inhabitants. The ambivalence which characterised Sims' attitude towards the ghetto, and towards the immigrant Jew, also typified the responses of other commentators. For 'native' Londoners, the deliberate construction of a ghetto in the midst of the most modern metropolis in the world both fascinated and appalled in equal measures. That the Jewish quarter could be lauded for being enterprising and excitingly 'exotic' in the same breath as it was denigrated as 'thrusting', territorializing and degenerate, was a defining feature of popular discourse. In this context – perhaps as a response to the classification confusion which the ghetto's presence invoked – it is little wonder that the Jewish quarter was commonly conceptualised as an 'anachronistic space', outside the remit of present time. [551] What is more, that seemingly negative charge of archaism with which the whole of the Jewish quarter was all too frequently condemned, came also to colour readings of Jewish life and culture itself. The ghetto was instrumental in mediating an image of 'the immigrant Jew' to the wider society. Yet as the occasionally positive contemporary images of the Jewish quarter showed, the ghetto of East London was also read as far more than an anachronistic space.[552] As Israel Zangwill implied in his best-selling novel *Children of the Ghetto* (1892) – albeit a view coloured by sentiment and nostalgia –

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[550] Sims, 'In Alien-Land', p. 418.
[551] Anne McClintock coined the phrase 'anachronistic space' in her excellent study *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), p. 40-2. Although McClintock's reading of those who were conceptualised as existing in anachronistic space – women, the colonised and the industrial working class – excludes Jews, Tobias Metzler has recently demonstrated the applicability of the term to depictions of Jewish space in London. See T. Metzler, 'Jews in the Metropolis: Urban Jewish Cultures in London, Berlin and Paris, c 1880-1940', Unpublished PhD Thesis, (University of Southampton, 2008), pp. 45-8.
[552] Although the ghetto failed to make an entirely favourable impression on Beatrice Potter during her observations of it for Charles Booth, she did concede 'Social isolation has perfected home life; persecution has intensified religious fervour; an existence of unremitting toil, and a rigid observance of the moral precepts and sanitary and dietary regulations of the Jewish religion have favoured the growth of sobriety, personal purity, and a consequent power of physical endurance'. See B. Potter, 'The Jewish Community', in C. Booth (ed), *Life and Labour of the People in London*, vol. 1, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1889-91), pp. 566-90, (p. 579).

ghetto-living had much to recommend it. It was a self-regulating space in which family and community thrived, and, in this sense, the novelist insinuated, it could equally serve as a model for the future as much as symbolise a relic from the past.[553]

Few of Zangwill's contemporaries supported this romantic notion of the ghetto. It was, according to them, the ghetto's very isolation which was its greatest flaw rather than its most profound asset. Unlike the slum districts of the 'native' poor, which all too frequently threatened to 'leak' into the 'respectable' quarters of the city, the Jewish East End ghetto was typically conceptualised as an enclosed world unto itself, impenetrable from the outside and incomprehensible to the outsider. Herein lay its greatest threat, and, for Anglo-Jewry, the greatest problem. 'If poor Jews will persist in appropriating to themselves whole streets, in the same districts', admonished the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1888, 'if they will conscientiously persevere in the seemingly harmless practice of congregating in a body at prominent points in a great public thoroughfare like the Whitechapel or Commercial Road, drawing to their peculiarities of dress, of language and of manner, the attention which they might otherwise escape, can there be any wonder that the vulgar prejudices of which they are the objects should be kept alive and strengthened?'[554] For the newspaper, the immigrants' insistence upon physical and cultural apartness was a recipe for disaster. Far from easing anti-Semitic tensions by way of urban containment, the presence of a Jewish ghetto, feared by the paper and the Anglo-Jewish establishment alike, would instead provoke an increase in racial hostilities.

The Sweatshop

Deeply negative images of the inner workings of the London ghetto had already captured the attention of the general public by the close of 1888 which probably accounts for the *Jewish Chronicle*'s testy tone. Prompted by the revelations in a report to the Board of Trade in 1887 regarding the operation of sweatshops across London's East End,[555] two Select Committees to

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[553] I. Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto A Study of a Peculiar People*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), [first published 1892]. This 'reading' of the ghetto becomes apparent after the novel's protagonist, Esther Ansell, rejects the trappings of a bourgeois lifestyle in London's West End, instead returning to the 'warmth' of the ghetto environment.

[554] 'Jewish Gregariousness', *Jewish Chronicle*, 28 September 1888, pp. 8-9.

[555] J. Burnett, *Report to the Board of Trade on the Sweating System at the East End of London by the Labour Correspondent to the Board*, (P.P., 1887, vol. LXXXIX), p. 256.

inquire into the sweating system and alien immigration had been commissioned by the government in February 1888.[556] Following the lead of these Select Committees which, inevitably, commenced their investigations in the East End, the evils of sweating – the latest form of urban vice, to be catalogued with all the others – quickly became associated in the Victorian imagination with the alien Jew and with *the* alien Jewish habitat. That is to say, despite the conclusions eventually delivered by the committee to the contrary, sweating was to become conceptualised as an evil both particular to the alien Jew and to the East London ghetto.[557]

A piece of investigative journalism published in *The Nineteenth Century* in September 1888 went some way towards forging this association between sweatshop and depravity in the public consciousness, timed as it was to coincide with the government commission into sweating. The article, entitled 'Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary', documented the experiences of the sociologist and reformer Beatrice Potter as she worked undercover in an East End sweatshop.[558] In the article's opening paragraph, Potter set the scene for her 'descent' into subterranean London.

> It is midday. The sun's rays beat fiercely on the crowded alleys of the Jewish settlement: the air is moist from the heavy rains. An unsavoury steam rises from the down-trodden slime of the East End streets and mixes with the strong odours of the fried fish, the decomposing vegetables, and the second-hand meat which assert their presence to the eyes and nostrils of the passers-by.[559]

It was a sensual image evocative of a tropical and primitive cityscape, detached and antithetical to the ordered, sanitised and wholly familiar vista of 'overground' London.

The sweatshop itself, at first a haven for the weary journalist from the heady and ceaseless ebb and flow of the ghetto streets, quickly transformed from welcome refuge into a den of despair.

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[556] PP 1888 Cd 305, ix 419, Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners); PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Sweating System. The two Select Committee produced two and five reports respectively before concluding their investigations.

[557] See PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, *Select Committee of House of Lords on Sweating System, First Report*, p. iii. In this report – the first of five – the committee informed the house that they 'had reason to believe that the same or similar evils prevail in other parts of the Metropolis as well as in other Towns and Cities' and thus requested that they be allowed to extend their inquiries to the whole of the United Kingdom.

[558] B. Potter, 'Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary', *The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 14, no. 139, (September 1888), pp. 301-314.

[559] Potter, 'Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary', p. 301.

Potter wrote of the workers who laboured in a crowded, dimly lit room for long hours and little pay. Even those who worked at frantic pace without rest, observed the journalist, earned a pitiable amount, eventually sacrificing both health and humour for scant reward. There was neither time nor inclination for betterment. The women, Potter lamented, spoke as roughly as the men, cursing and howling, gossiping and slandering. It was, according to Potter, a hopeless scene – a scene presided over by the 'missus', a corpulent 'Jewess'. 'She has strongly marked Jewish features', remarked Potter, 'and, as I see now, she is blind of one eye. The sardonic and enigmatic expression of her countenance puzzles me with its far-off associations, until I remember the caricatures, sold in City shops for portraits, of the great Disraeli'.[560]

Potter's orientalisation of the Jewish manageress was certainly a familiar strategy for representing the alien Jew and their alien habitat to a curious British public. Jews were, after all, it was assumed, of 'Semitic' rather than 'European' extraction and thus, for the Victorians, far more closely aligned with 'Eastern' appearance and habits. However, Potter's explicit 'masculinisation' of the 'missus' through the stark comparison between the manageress and Disraeli, introduced the reading public to a largely new conceptualisation of the sweatshop as a space with the power to masculinize – to make men of women. Exemplified through the figure of the 'Jewess', as well as through the female workers, the sweatshop seemingly ridiculed what were, for Potter, stable gender categories, provoking women to transgress the boundaries of femininity and to act as men. Coarse exchanges dominated the scene while barely suppressed violence simmered beneath, threatening at one point to boil over into an all-out brawl as a workshop disagreement caused tempers to flare. The manageress' husband stepped in to calm the fray, but he too had been 'de-gendered', emasculated and feminised by the sweatshop environment: '"Why, if you were only a bit of a man", cries the mistress, raising her voice so that all may hear, "you'd throw those two bl--y rascals out. I'd throw them out at any price, if I were a woman's husband"'.[561]

The dual purpose of many sweatshops as 'home' and 'factory' – a set up which blurred the boundaries between the private and the public, between female space and male space – had already begun to cause consternation amongst propriety-conscious onlookers. The Bishop of Bedford, Reverend R. C. Billing, in his testimony to the Select Committee on sweating in 1888,

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[560] Ibid., p. 304.
[561] Potter, 'Pages from a Work-Girl's Diary', p. 308.

condemned family workshops as 'the greatest evil that we have to contend with' whilst the committee members themselves were shocked to learn of the prevalence of women and children working amongst men in dingy, unsanitary, and hastily converted living rooms and parlours. [562] All too frequently, born of necessity, the immigrant home doubled as the sweatshop, effectively transforming an unequivocally female space into a male space on a daily basis. Perhaps, in light of this, it is unsurprising that Potter implicitly suggested in her article that gender 'norms' were under threat.

Yet not only was such spatial duality seen as an affront to Victorian standards of propriety, it also reinforced the perception that the sweatshop was a place inhabited by 'victims' and 'perpetrators' – more specifically female victims and male perpetrators. The author and journalist Margaret Harkness seized upon this gendered conceptualisation of the sweater and the sweated in her 1890 novel *A Manchester Shirtmaker: A Realistic Story of To-day*.[563] Written under the pseudonym John Law, Harkness exploited the repulsive 'Shylock' caricature in her depiction of the sweater Joseph Cohen. 'He had been born and bred in Manchester, and could speak the Lancashire dialect, but he preferred a sort of heathen gibberish, because he thought that it impressed his hearers with a sense of his importance as an employer of labour.'[564] Cohen, the narrator explains, has 'greasy hair' and 'closely screwed up eyes', aesthetic signifiers of his deceitful, cowardly and money-grabbing nature.[565] Moreover, it is though his encounter with the novel's protagonist, a virtuous yet impoverished widow, that the 'true' character of the sweater is revealed. The widow approaches the sweater for work but is told '"no vork vithout monish!"'[566] In her desperation to earn money to feed her baby, the widow entrusts the sweater with her rent money as a 'guarantee' for the quality of her work. When she attempts to reclaim the money, however, upon completion

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[562] PP 1890, Cd 169, xvii 257, *Select Committee of House of Lords on Sweating System, First Report*, Q 5125.

[563] M. Harkness [John Law], *A Manchester Shirtmaker: A Realistic Story of Today,* (London: Authors' Co-operative Publishing Co., 1890).

[564] Harkness, *A Manchester Shirtmaker*, p. 71. S. Gilman's study on 'The Jewish Voice: Chicken Soup or the Penalties of Sounding Too Jewish' in *The Jew's Body*, (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 10-37, is particularly relevant here. Harkness uses the sweater's voice to indicate not only his Jewishness but his difference. As Gilman observes, '[w]ithin the European tradition of seeing the Jew as different, there is a closely linked tradition of hearing the Jew's language as marked by the corruption of being a Jew. In the British fin-de-siècle journal *The Butterfly* there are images which associate a specific Jewish physiognomy with a specific manner of speaking. Not merely a "Jewish" accent, but an entire discourse about capital and trade which was supposed to characterise the Jew'. (pp. 11-12).

[565] Harkness, *A Manchester Shirtmaker*, p. 73.

[566] Ibid., p. 71.

of the work, the Jew refuses her both the guarantee and her wages, claiming that her work is substandard. This deception precipitates the widow's tragic demise into extreme poverty and mental illness.

Although such a repugnant and highly sensationalised caricature of the Jewish sweater and the sweating trade became common cultural currency as the nineteenth century came to a close – a caricature which rendered the sweater and the sweatshop as unequivocally 'masculine' – such depictions did not go entirely unchallenged.[567] The publication of Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* in 1892, offered an almost immediate rebuff to Harkness's deeply negative image of the sweater, albeit underscoring the idea of the strongly gendered sphere in which the trade operated. In an early chapter, Zangwill delineates the character Bear Belcovitch thus:

> In parliamentary blue-books, English newspapers, and the Berner Street Socialist Club, he was called a "sweater", and the comic papers pictured him with a protuberant paunch and a greasy smile, but he had not the remotest idea that he was anything other than a God-fearing, industrious and even philanthropic citizen. The measure that had been dealt to him he did but deal to others. He saw no reason why immigrant paupers should not live on a crown a week while he taught them how to handle a press iron or work a sewing machine. They were much better off than in Poland.[568]

This largely sympathetic depiction of 'the sweater' – an extract already discussed in chapter three in terms of the distinctly humanising capacity of fiction – was compounded by the scene which whirls around Belcovitch as he is first introduced to the reader. It is the night of his eldest daughter's engagement celebrations. The sweater, tonight first and foremost a father and husband, plays the benevolent and jovial host, moving amongst his guests congregated in his living room which had, for the evening, undergone a spectacular 'transformation' from workshop to 'hall of dazzling

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[567] The most 'notorious' of those accounts on the sweating system was A. White's 'Report of the Lancet Special Sanitary Commission on the Polish Colony of Jewish Tailors', *The Lancet*, no. 3166, (3 May 1884), pp. 317-8. Shelia Blackburn discusses Arnold White's role in forging the association between Jews and sweating in *A Fair Day's Wage for a Fair Day's Work: Sweated Labour and the Origins of Minimum Wage Legislation in Britain*, (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), pp. 51-56.
[568] Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto*, p. 84.

light'.[569]   Here, then, neither the sweater nor the sweatshop's duality is conflicted.   Instead the author problematises the perception that the sweater and the family man, the sweatshop and the home, the public and the private are diametrically opposed. As Meri-Jane Rochelson has observed, 'Zangwill as a novelist was able to convey the complexities that were not represented in official statements. His depiction of religious rituals and celebrations that connected owners to workers in *Children of the Ghetto* was a way to demystify the Jewish experience and create a basis for sympathy.'[570] Zangwill, as an 'inside' observer, thus achieved a degree of nuance in his depiction of the sweater which had, until that point, eluded other cultural treatments of the figure.

That predilection for nuance, perhaps influenced by the popular reception of Zangwill's largely compassionate novel, was also to be found in George Sims' later portrait of the Jewish sweater which he included in the first volume of his *Living London* series of 1902-3. After careful observation of the trade and of those who operated within it, Sims concluded that the sweater 'is not always the wealthy spider sucking the life blood from the flies he has caught in his web. He is not a gorgeous Hebrew with diamond rings and a big cigar. He is frequently a worker also, a man sweating because he is himself sweated.'[571] The powerful rebuttal of the stereotype of the voracious sweater – a wholly virile image of the predatory Jew preying upon the passive (feminised) victim – was instead inverted by Sims to suggest the bi-gendered character of the sweater, and indeed to 'undemonise' the sweatshop itself. The sweater becomes both victim and villain – a sympathetic figure who, Sims and Zangwill both insist, deserved far more sensitive treatment than that typically accorded him. However, despite the two writers' goodwill, these more measured delineations of the sweater and the sweatshop by Zangwill and Sims was not enough to fully dismantle the widely held and largely negative association between the 'evils' of the sweating trade and the alien (male) Jew. The image of the sweatshop had begun, and remained, a ubiquitous feature of the aliens debate even beyond its apparent legislative resolution by passage of the Aliens Act of 1905.

The Synagogue

However, not all 'alien' spaces were so heartily condemned. Whilst non-Jewish commentators engaged with, and readily critiqued, the 'infamous' sweatshops of the East End – critiques which

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[569]   Ibid.
[570]   M.J. Rochelson, 'Introduction' to Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto*, pp. 11-44, (p. 22).
[571]   Sims, 'Sweated London', *Living London*, vol. 1, pp. 49-55, (pp. 53-4).

clearly forged an association between 'the sweater' and 'the Jew', often for political ends – the British public demonstrated far greater reticence when addressing the most identifiable of Jewish urban spaces: the synagogue. Indeed, the synagogue's conceptualisation in non-Jewish discourse throughout the nineteenth century typically delineated it as a largely arcane space, its boundaries rarely breached by 'outsiders'.[572] Although the reading public expressed an appetite to be made better acquainted with these most 'Jewish' of Jewish spaces, an appetite which the illustrated press in particular frequently obliged, depictions of the synagogue compounded the sense that this place of worship was both temporally and spatially apart.[573] 'We found it absolutely impossible to divest ourselves of the idea that we were in some far-off foreign land', disclosed the *Illustrated Times* in 1855 upon visiting the synagogue in Great St Helen's. 'We felt as though we had been suddenly transported into the midst of some unknown race, or that the centuries had retrograded, and we were living with a people of the past.'[574] Numerous lengthy articles, often commissioned to mark a consecration, repeatedly indulged the notion that the synagogue was 'anachronistic space'[575] – a space out of time and incongruent with its surroundings. In minute detail – both word and image – the interiors of one synagogue after another were catalogued, a tone of hushed reverence maintained throughout.[576]

This detached and orientalised conceptualisation persisted despite the concerted efforts of Anglo-Jewry throughout the nineteenth century to erect synagogues which 'conformed' to British notions of religious spatiality. The design of 'cathedral' synagogues – vast, cavernous and ornate spaces, able to hold hundreds of people, and configured to encourage 'decorous worship' rather

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[572] Publications such as *The Home and the Synagogue of the Modern Jew: Sketches of Modern Jewish Life and Ceremonies*, from the Religious Tract Society, (London, 1872) contributed to an image of the synagogue as a 'world apart'.
[573] See, for example, 'Consecration of the Western Synagogue', *The Illustrated London News*, 19 April 1851; 'Scene at the Consecration of the Chief Rabbi – The Law Carried Round the Synagogue', *Pictorial Times*, 1844, and 'A London Synagogue – The feast of Tabernacles', *The Graphic*, 2 November 1872. These articles have all been reprinted by A. and R. Cowen in *Victorian Jews through British Eyes*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 101-2; 104; 112-3.
[574] 'The Synagogue in Great St. Helen's, Bishopsgate Street', *Illustrated Times*, 8 December 1855, reprinted by Cowen and Cowen in *Victorian Jews through British Eyes*, pp. 102-5.
[575] McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, p. 40-2.
[576] A significant number of these newspaper articles have been reprinted by Cowen and Cowen in *Victorian Jews through British Eyes*, pp. 101-16.

than serving as a space for social interaction – clearly borrowed from the church model.[577]   The Central Synagogue on Great Portland Street, consecrated in 1870, was a good example of just such a model, drawing upon grand, imposing 'moorish and Italianate styles', and seating 860 people.[578] In design then, the 'West End' synagogue was a synthesis of 'East' and 'West', Jew and Gentile. The *Builder* magazine declared of the Liverpool synagogue in 1874, a building which would set the precedent for London buildings, that the synagogue was designed 'with the sole view of producing a pleasing composition, with enough of the Eastern feeling to render it suggestive and enough of the Western severity to make it appropriate for a street building in an English town'.[579] Conformity was key. Although discreet 'oriental' emblems could be included in the design, the building's exterior in particular, should attempt to 'blend in' to its occidental surroundings as far as possible. The synagogue exterior, after all, was Anglo-Jewry's public face to the outside world, and played a central role in mediating Jewish diasporic identity.

However, with the arrival of thousands of visibly devout Jews towards the end of the century from the 'darkest' recesses of 'darkest' Russia, the perception that Jews were an anachronistic people was brought to the fore once again. It was a perception which unsettled the established Jewish community: 'They have brought with them from Eastern Europe the hard-shell orthodoxy of the ghetto', lamented the Anglo-Jewish journalist and historian Lucien Wolf in *The Graphic* in 1889.[580] Those differences were manifest most particularly in the synagogues which the immigrants established – synagogues markedly different from the frequently lavish buildings erected by their forefathers. They were often makeshift spaces in the heart of the East End slum, assembled in shabby outhouses, or from two dilapidated rooms knocked together, and came to be known as *shtieblekh* (small rooms) or *chevras* (literally, societies). 'To reach the entrance you stumble over broken pavement and household debris; possibly you pick your way over the rickety bridge connecting it with the cottage property fronting the street', Beatrice Potter reported in her account of 1889 for Charles Booth's extensive survey *Life and Labour of the People in London*. 'You

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[577]   On this, see J. Glasman, 'Assimilation by Design: London Synagogues in the Nineteenth Century', *The Jewish Heritage in British History: Englishness and Jewishness*, (ed.) T. Kushner, (London: Frank Cass, 1992), pp. 171-211, (p. 173; pp. 178-9).
[578]   Ibid., p. 210.
[579]   *Builder*, 12 September 1874, p. 773.
[580]   L. Wolf, 'The Jews in London', *The Graphic*, 16 November 1889, reprinted by Cowen and Cowen in *Victorian Jews through British Eyes*, pp. 91-101.

enter; the heat and odour convince you that the skylight is not used for ventilation', Potter sardonically concluded.[581]

However whilst these 'ghetto' synagogues were materially poor, they were, both Wolf and Potter conceded, spiritually rich. Wolf, a well-respected advocate of Jewish rights, wrote, with no small degree of respect, of the 'humble "House of Learning", in which the Talmud may be studied all day long', acknowledging the centricity of the synagogue to the fabric of immigrant life.[582] Yet whilst his reverence for the spiritual home of the Jews was deep-seated, Wolf was far less complimentary of the ethos in which the ghetto synagogue was established. '[W]ith the suspiciousness of an oppressed people', he critically observed, 'they show a decided tendency to flock together, and keep up their institutions apart from those of their English brethren.'[583] For Wolf, the immigrants' orthodoxy, and the synagogue as its spatial manifestation, was at the heart of their ghetto mentality – a mentality which the immigrants would do well to shed. Wolf was not alone in this attitude. Indeed, amongst certain sections of the Anglo-Jewish community, the synagogue had come to represent the arena in which the project of anglicization would be played out. From the first months and years of the newcomers' settlement in London, the United Synagogue, together with the Federation of Synagogues after its foundation in 1887, pursued a deliberate policy of 'assimilation by design'[584] – a policy of directing resources away from *shtiebekh* and *chevras*, as a means to instead encourage the establishment and patronage of synagogues based upon the 'West End' model. As Judy Glasman has argued, '[t]he placement, design and staffing of these synagogues were calculated to act as aids to migration, effecting large, orderly congregations and bringing them [alien Jews] into the Anglo-Jewish fold. Religious, racial and class unity were to be accomplished by educating immigrants in the ways of British citizenship.'[585] Religious space was manipulated to control – space that functioned not only to spiritualise but to anglicise.

However, the use of the synagogue as an agency of assimilation seems to have been a ploy limited to the Anglo-Jewish communal agenda. Potter, after her initial shock at the building's

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581   Potter, 'The Jewish Community', p. 568.
582   Wolf, 'The Jews in London', p. 95.
583   Ibid.
584   Glasman, 'Assimilation by Design'.
585   Ibid., p. 191.

unsanitary prospect, was far more appreciative of the *chevra* synagogue for its own sake, conceptualising it as a haven from, rather than a perpetuation of, the ghetto environment.

> A low, monotonous, but musical-toned recital of Hebrew prayers, each man praying for himself to the God of his fathers, rises from the congregation, whilst the reader intones, with a somewhat louder voice, the recognised portion of the Pentateuch. Add to this rhythmical cadence of numerous voices, the swaying to and fro of the bodies of the worshippers – expressive of the words of personal adoration: "All my bones exclaim, Oh! Lord, who is like unto Thee!" – and you may imagine yourself in a far-off Eastern Land.[586]

Potter's rather romantised image of the *chevra* as a space with the power to transport its occupants across time and space was certainly reminiscent of earlier depictions of the synagogue as anachronistic space. Yet, unlike previous accounts which questioned the absence of modernity within the synagogue, Potter resented the presence of symbols of the contemporary world, which 'roused' her from her 'dream'. 'Your eyes wander from the men, who form the congregation', she wrote, 'to the small body of women who watch behind the trellis. Here, certainly, you have the Western world, in the bright-coloured ostrich features, large bustles, and tight-fitting coats of cotton velvet or brocaded stainette.'[587] Potter's equation of modernity with 'the West' is explicit, framing her account with a casual cultural imperialism.

Yet what is also striking about Potter's account, not least that she acknowledges the deeply gendered character of the synagogue space, is that her own conceptualisation placed the men, rather than the women, as the focus of her orientalist gaze. Although it was the women who were confined behind the trellis, veiled from the view of the men and restricted from participating in the public performance of the sermon, it was the men who, for Potter, evoked a 'far-off Eastern Land', the men who were imbued with a spirituality which rendered them suspended in time and space. The women, however, were the foil for the celebrated oriental qualities of the men, personifying 'the West' in its most vulgar form. Here one might discern an implicit misogynistic strain within Potter's rhetoric which echoes the construction of womanhood within Orthodox

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[586] Potter, 'The Jewish Community', p. 568.
[587] Potter, 'The Jewish Community', p. 568-9.

Judaism – a construction that condemns women as a corrupting, disruptive force who, in the synagogue especially, need to be controlled and 'contained' to prevent them from 'contaminating' the 'divine' and exalted male sphere. It is intriguing to note that Potter appears to have internalised the gender order which underscores Orthodox Judaism in one brief visit.

The picture of the immigrant synagogue environment offered by Israel Zangwill in *Children of the Ghetto* just a few years later similarly noted the gendered spatiality of the synagogue. In typically mocking tone, however, the author showed little patience for the romantic sentiment espoused by Potter, instead condemning the men as ridiculous for their adherence to archaic, even extreme traditions of propriety. 'The "Sons of the Covenant" sent no representatives to the club balls, wotting neither of waltzes nor of dress-coats, and preferring death to the embrace of a strange dancing woman', the narrator comments derisively. 'They were the congregation of which Mr Belcovitch was president and their synagogue was the ground floor of No. 1 Royal Street – two large rooms knocked into one, and the rear partitioned off for the use of the bewigged, heavy-jawed women who might not sit with the men lest they should fascinate their minds away from things spiritual.'[588] Thus the synagogue, a place of repressed sexual encounter, and a space in which artificial gender boundaries had been constructed and maintained, mirrored the ethos of the men's lives. Yet the women, according to Zangwill, are as unalluring as the men are farcical. In scathing tone, Zangwill achieved what other nineteenth century commentators had failed to do – he demystified the synagogue.

That objective becomes clearer still as the narrative continues, made explicit by a humorous aside. 'The back window [of the synagogue] gave on the yard and the contiguous cow-sheds, and "moos" mingled with the impassioned supplications of the worshippers', the narrator playfully observes.[589] It is a scene imbued with the author's ridiculing tone: Zangwill exposed the synagogue's corporality whilst dispelling its façade of mysticism. Yet the image of the synagogue as a highly anachronistic space is reinforced rather than dispelled, likening the East End synagogue, and indeed the East End itself, to the primitive environment of the Eastern European *shtetl*. In this, the best-selling Anglo-Jewish novel of its age, Lucien Wolf, a fellow Jew, found support for his conceptualisation of the immigrant urban synagogue as an extension of, even a catalyst for, the

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[588]   Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto*, p. 182.
[589]   Ibid.

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construction of the London ghetto itself. Orthodoxy, Zangwill agreed, sucked the life from those men as the 'greedy company of wax-candles' placed around the synagogue 'sucked up' the air from the room. 'And so', Zangwill lamented, 'the stuffy room with its guttering candles and its chameleon-coloured ark-curtain, was the pivot of their barren lives'.[590]

Despite Zangwill's – and indeed Anglo-Jewry's – best efforts at 'demystification', as the nineteenth century came to a close and a new century began, for the British observer the synagogue seemed as esoteric as ever. Although the East End was rapidly becoming something akin to a tourist destination for the curious middle classes, sympathetic intellectuals and well-meaning philanthropists, the synagogue, by unspoken agreement, largely remained 'off-limits'.[591] As a space which promised to provide insight into the strange 'hinter-lives' of the acutely private immigrant community, the bounds of the synagogue were breached far less frequently than those of the other distinctly private Jewish urban space – the home. Even when established urban adventurers, such as George Sims during his 1904 expedition in 'Alien-Land', dared to penetrate the synagogue interior, it was with a significant degree of trepidation. It was only with an immigrant escort, 'a Jewish clergyman's son', that Sims and the illustrator who accompanied him, dared to do so.[592] Once inside the synagogue's 'ante-room', the journalist seemed briefly beguiled by the bookshelves 'packed with ancient-looking volumes', and by the studious and reverential mood of the Jews inside, but fascination quickly turned to unease.[593] Unsettled by the 'pious' scenes, Sims condemned the devout Jews as a 'strange group' and the synagogue itself as 'weird and mystic'.[594] He quickly took his leave – 'we do not care to linger' – blaming his hasty departure upon the agitation his presence had provoked among the Jews within rather than admitting his own discomfort with his act of trespass.[595]

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[590] Ibid., p. 182; 185.

[591] Seth Koven addresses the phenomenon of 'slumming' in which 'fashionable Londoners left their elegant homes and clubs in Mayfair and Belgravia and crowded into omnibuses bound for East London', in his stimulating study *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London*, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004). Although Koven limits his treatment of the phenomenon to the 1880s, it was certainly a practice which continued well into the twentieth century, as the wealth of material published by observers throughout the period attests.

[592] Sims, 'In Alien-Land', p. 420.

[593] Ibid.

[594] Ibid., p. 420; 421.

[595] Ibid., p. 421–2.

Although the synagogue – unlike the sweatshop, the ghetto and, and we shall see, the Jewish home – was never an explicit feature of either pro-Jewish or anti-alien politicised rhetoric in the heated debates of the *fin de siècle*, its spatial image was, nevertheless, a contested concept. Across the period, the synagogue became a crucial battleground for British Jewry in particular, precisely because it was a 'Jewish' urban arena – for the most part under the socio-political radar – in which, if victorious, the image of the immigrant Jew could be appropriately moderated and then mediated to the outside world, as part of the war to anglicise, and to make the 'question' of alien Jews obsolete.

The Home

Although the Jewish home was at least as valuable as the synagogue as a space with the power to mediate a certain image of the immigrant Jewish community to curious and critical onlookers, its spatial representation required far less cultivation by British Jewry. Perhaps this was because far fewer scruples than those which surfaced in the case of the synagogue seem to have troubled urban 'adventurers' in their quest to gain access to the interior of the Jewish home. For a time, such an experience was hailed as virtually a 'rite of passage' for any self-respecting philanthropist or social commentator. Nevertheless, by the close of the nineteenth century, the Jewish immigrant home too, as a spatial concept, also required a degree of 'demystification'.

Within debates regarding urbanity and its consequences in Britain, 'the home' had long been a highly loaded term, seen to convey indicators not only of the financial circumstances of its inhabitants but also a sense of their moral character.[596] The standards of homes and home-life in London's slums were frequently equated not with the economic state of the nation, or the neglect of the nation's living conditions within government policy, but with the perceived 'degenerate' nature of the slum dwellers themselves. The image of the Jewish home, then, quickly became a crucial conceptual weapon in the campaigns of those both for and against alien immigration. Representations were habitually polarised, and textual and visual images proved to be both powerful and persuasive tools in both pro-Jewish and anti-alien rhetoric.

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[596] D. Feldman addresses this briefly in his excellent article 'The Importance of being English: Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England', *Metropolis – London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, D. Feldman and G. Stedman Jones (eds.), (Routledge: London and New York, 1989), pp. 56-84, (p. 72-3).

The notion that the Jewish immigrant home and family were, in essence, a model of morality, sobriety, liberality and thrift was a particularly potent idea which took hold at an early stage in the aliens debate. By the time Charles Booth had commissioned Beatrice Potter in 1889 to investigate the Jewish community of the East End for his extensive survey of the people of London, this image of the Jewish family as a model family, had already passed from hearsay to established paradigm. Potter's treatment of the family and home, described as part of a narrative which traced the 'typical' story of an upwardly mobile Jew 'from their first appearance in the port of London' to relative prosperity in the East London slum, thus drew upon a formulaic rather than empirical perception of the Jewish home.

> [T]he walls of his parlour are decked with prints of Hebrew worthies, or with portraits of prize-fighters and race-horses [...]He treats his wife with courtesy and tenderness, and they discuss constantly the future of the children. He is never to be seen at the public- house round the corner; but he enjoys a quiet glass of "rum and shrub" and a game of cards with a few friends on the Saturday or Sunday evening [...][597]

Potter's 'vision' depicted an image of the Jewish home as a space imbibed with goodwill, moderation and the ethos of self-help. Moreover, the family's moral credentials – measured somewhere safely between modest spirituality and 'harmless' secular interests – hung on the walls of the home for all to see.

Yet what is especially intriguing about Potter's account is the subtle gendered position which her narrative adopts. The Jewish home and its inhabitants are visualised from the perspective of the head of the household. That is to say, the perspective is distinctly masculine. The pictures hang on the walls of *his* parlour, the happiness of the wife and children depend on *his* goodwill, whilst the honour of the whole family rests on *his* conduct outside of the home. This unequivocal masculinisation of the domestic space – a space conceptualised as wholly feminine in traditional Victorian discourse – was also echoed in an account of 'The Jewish Colony in London' published in *The Sunday Magazine* in 1892. In the article, the authoress, Mrs Brewer, visited a number of Jewish families in the immigrant quarter in her quest to uncover a 'true' picture of

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[597]   Potter, 'The Jewish Community', p. 584.

Jewish life. 'In every case I found the husband at home in the midst of his family', she wrote admiringly.[598]   For Brewer, as for Potter three years previously, the Jewish home, and its moral credentials, was determined by the pro-active role played by the man within it.   Both Potter and Brewer agreed that the Jewish man existed – and quite happily so – at the centre of the home and family.[599]

Importantly, however, that gendered conceptualisation of the home was not at odds, but rather complimented a parallel, and equally positive, image of the Jewish family which featured powerfully in later debates.   The idealisation of the Jewish immigrant mother as a figure of exemplary maternal conduct – a notion which intrigued and fascinated political commentators as the aliens debate intensified in the early twentieth century – was actually facilitated by the apparently domesticated and liberal character of the Jewish husband.[600]   Jewish mothers, the Medical Officer of Health for Liverpool informed the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in 1903, 'devote a great amount of care and attention to their children'.[601]   That attentiveness, he and other commentators agreed, was directly related to the Jewish tendency to keep women out of the workplace.   Indeed, as Beatrice Potter had already observed in her account from 1889, 'The poorest Jew cherishes as sacred the maternity of the woman, and seldom degrades her to the position of a worker upon whose exertions he depends for subsistence'.[602] When taken together, this apparent consensus on the gendered character of the Jewish immigrant home, and the happy equilibrium that its gendered composition seemed to nurture, is remarkable because it directly challenges essentialised notions of the home as a distinctly feminine space, and, what is more, it celebrates that difference.

Not everyone was so enamoured with the presence of Jewish immigrant families in London.   The 'native' population of East-Enders, when given a mouthpiece to do so, frequently

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[598]   Mrs Brewer, 'The Jewish Colony in London', *The Sunday Magazine*, XXI, (1892), pp. 16-20; 119-23, reprinted in D. Englander (ed.), *A Documentary History of Jewish Immigrants in Britain, 1840-1920*, (Leicester, London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1994), pp. 69-75, (p. 72).
[599]   This view of the immigrant home was also echoed in S. Gelberg's chapter 'Jewish London' which appeared in George Sims' *Living London*, vol. 2, pp. 29-35, in 1902. In an appraising tone Gelberg wrote, 'East-End or West-End, the Jew is still the family man among the nations, delighting keenly in the joys of domesticity.' (p. 33).
[600]   Lara Marks has written at length on this conceptualisation of the Jewish mother throughout the aliens debate in her monograph *Model Mothers: Jewish Mothers and Maternity Provision in East London, 1870-1939*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
[601]   PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, 61, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration. Minutes of Evidence*, Q. 21,412.
[602]   Potter, 'The Jewish Community', p. 587.

complained that they had been 'displaced' by the newcomers, interpreting the East End housing crisis through the prism of increased immigration. 'The great influx is driving out the native from hearth and home', remonstrated a labourer from Stepney, William Johnson, to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in 1903. 'Some of us have been born here, others of us have come into it when quite young children, have been brought up here, educated here; some of us have old associations here of such a nature that we feel it a hardship to be compelled to be parted from.'[603] The East End, then, was a battleground in the great struggle for physical territory and 'cultural inheritance', and the home was at its epicentre.[604] As David Englander has observed, 'House and home were emotive concepts with great resonance in the vocabulary of anti-alienism'.[605]

In a bid to win the war for restrictionism, negative images of the Jewish immigrant home constructed by the anti-alien camp were not only repugnant, but legitimately countered the many positive perceptions of the alien home and family which were in circulation across the *fin de siècle*. Where the pro-Jewish campaign saw a rich tradition of mutually supportive family and community, anti-alien rhetoric complained of overcrowding and the proliferation of unsanitary conditions as a result. As we have already seen in chapter two, Mrs Ayres, an East End mid-wife, typified such a response in her testimony to the Royal Commission:

> Whole families, with elders and grown-up sons and daughters, exist in one room – it is not living, it is existing; I have seen four bedsteads for adults and a heap on the floor in one room [...] they live like pigs in a sty, many of them, and are as dirty.[606]

Here, the construction of the immigrant home as an anachronistic space – a space 'uncivilised' in the extreme – is clearly evident. Moreover, the working classes, through their participation in anti-alien movements, such as the British Brothers' League, and their dissemination of disparaging images of the Jewish home, showed themselves to be as equally complicit as the intellectual classes

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[603] PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 8,558, cited by Feldman in 'The Importance of Being English', p. 72.
[604]   Feldman discusses the association made by 'native' East-Enders' between their perceived 'displacement' and the loss of their 'cultural inheritance' in his article 'The Importance of Being English', p. 72.
[605]   Englander, *A Documentary History*, p. 90.
[606]   PP 1903 Cd. 1742 ix, Q. 9408-9.

in the project of 'discrediting' the alien Jew. Ironically, however, the homes of the 'native' East-Enders were rarely better and frequently far worse.

Certainly, however, the charge of overcrowding was a legitimate one. Demands on limited housing in what was a compact urban area were intense. Conditions were terrible yet rents nevertheless remained high. Immigrants regularly 'got by' by sub-letting space to other families within their already crowded homes, or by taking in lodgers. The walls of the urban Jewish home were 'porous' and frequently breached as some people left and yet more arrived. The streets commonly became an extension of the home, displacing and exposing the private interior of the home to the scrutiny of the public thoroughfares of the urban ghetto. George Sims took full advantage of the glimpses of Jewish life such circumstances afforded, photographing a group of Jewish women and children congregated, both sitting and standing, on the pavement and in a doorway, for his *Living London* project in 1902.[607] The image, included with the chapter 'Jewish London' penned by S. Gelberg, was entitled 'Jewesses taking the air by their doors' – a title which ascribed the scene with an ironic gentility which the realities of living conditions in the East End made necessary rather than voluntary. It also acted as a metaphor for the typically ambivalent tone which characterised attitudes towards the Jewish 'habitat' throughout *Living London.* Sims and his contributors constructed multiple, often conflicting images of Jewish space which envisaged it as familiar yet alien, vibrant and cosmopolitan, yet dangerous and anarchic.[608] Here, in the textual 'framing' of the image, even Sims' seemingly genuine attempt to directly engage with, and to articulate a more measured conceptualisation of the home environment of 'the alien' failed to assess that space on its own terms but was, instead, overshadowed by the author's rather confused agenda. Thus the Jewish immigrant urban home continued to be shrouded behind both well meaning and disparaging rhetoric, which contributed to its mythologisation – a mythologisation which continues into the present day.[609]

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[607] Gelberg, 'Jewish London', p. 35.

[608] Mention is made of a selective sample of 'Jewish' urban spaces in *Living London*. See, for example, Mrs Belloc, 'Marrying London', vol. 1, pp. 19-23, (p. 23); G. Sims, 'Sweated London', vol. 1, pp. 49-55; A. St John Adcock, 'Sunday Morning East and West', vol. 1, pp. 279-285, (p. 281-3); E. Pugh, 'Representative London Streets', vol. 1, pp 363-370, (p. 365); E. A. Carr, 'Criminal London', vol. 3., pp. 15-21, (p. 21).

[609] Memoirs penned by second or third generation Jews have been particularly instrumental in perpetuating the myth of the 'model Jewish family and home'. See, for example, E. Cowan, *Spring Remembered: A Scottish Jewish Childhood,* (Edinburgh: Southside, 1974). Some scholars, such as J. Weissman Joselit, 'Telling Tales: Or, How a Slum Became a Shrine', *Jewish Social Studies,* vol. 2, no. 2, (Winter 1996), pp. 54-63 have been especially critical of this tendency for nostalgia and romantization. However, there is a body of memoirs which offer a counter

It is a great irony that it was only after German bombs and communal embarrassment of an immigrant past had virtually destroyed the Jewish East End that commentators began to celebrate it. Indeed, the fear now is that the 'real' Jewish East End will, through perpetual romantizisation, be rendered as illusive as ever.[610] Certainly its 'true' likeness will not be uncovered in memoirs, as surely as it will not be discerned in the narratives and rhetoric of *fin de siècle* journalists, novelists and commentators. Yet, to search for realism and 'authenticity' is perhaps to miss the point. What is more significant to note is that the imaginative delineation of Jewish urban life at that 'moment' in history reflected the far larger project of (re)negotiating collective and national identity. In the proliferation of – often negative – representations of Jewish urbanity in London, contemporary anxieties came into sharpest focus. Fears of degeneration, territorialization, and the disruption of gender norms played out through the multiple, and often conflicting depictions of the Jewish urban habitat.

However, it is only by contemplating the dominant conceptualisations of immigrant spaces separately that the whole picture can be better understood. By adopting this approach it becomes clear that whilst a prominent discourse conceptualised the East End ghetto as anachronistic space, that conceptualisation was neither wholly negative, nor wholly relevant to each and every space within the ghetto interior. Hence whilst the synagogue was frequently depicted as an archaic environment, by the non-Jewish observer at least, the sweatshop was not. Perhaps this response was in part thanks to the gradual shift in focus by the turn-of-the-century away from things spiritual in favour of large-scale industrialisation. The sweatshop, as repugnant as it was, was necessary. The emphasis, therefore, was on the need to find a means to regulate it rather than dismantle it altogether. The synagogue, on the other hand, was perceived as a relic of a past age, and, whilst it served as a fascinating curiosity, had little purpose in the modern era. Perhaps this, then, accounts for its persistent esotericism. There was neither need nor desire for it to be 'de-mystified'.

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narrative. See C. Rayner, *How Did I Get Here From There?* (London: Virago, 2003); R. Glasser, *Growing Up in the Gorbals,* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1986) and W. Goldman, *East End, My Cradle: Portrait of an Environment,* (London: Robson Books, 1988), [first published by Faber and Faber, 1940].
[610] Tony Kushner discusses this in 'The End of the 'Anglo-Jewish Progress Show': Representations of the Jewish East End, 1887-1987', in *The Jewish Heritage in British History: Englishness and Jewishness,* (ed.) T. Kushner, (London: Frank Cass, 1992), pp. 78-105.

The dichotomy between these two spaces can be taken further. Whilst the synagogue effectively reinforced gender norms, the sweatshop, and even, to an extent, the Jewish home disrupted them. The clearly gendered spatiality of all three environments represented for commentators a clash between 'East' and 'West', modernity and barbarism, the public and the private. In this way, the preoccupations of imperial Britons at the *fin de siècle* collided and became manifest in the gendering of Jewish urban space. The frequently conflicted duality of such spaces mirrored the duality of 'the Jew'. In representations of both were embodied the inherent ambivalence of Britons to the prospect of change, if not least to modernity itself.

Even without the Jewish context, what becomes abundantly clear from even the briefest of glances at the intellectual output of the era is that the association between East London and depravity was firm and abiding.[611] Certainly that this conceptualisation of the East End continues to endure, enthralling with its promise of 'dreadful delight', and, indeed, is now celebrated, is more than evident in the continued proliferation of works on the district.[612] Jews were just one group of many who roamed its streets and occupied its buildings, yet, as both contemporary and present-day fascination makes clear, their presence left a lasting impression.

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[611] C. Black, 'London's Tailoresses', *The Economic Journal*, vol. 14, no. 56, (Dec. 1904), pp. 555-567, (p. 558).
[612] As indicated, the number of works published on the East End is vast and growing. However, to list a few: E. Glinert, *East End Chronicles: Three Hundred Years of Mystery and Mayhem*, (London: Allen Lane, 2005); Kershen, *Strangers, Aliens and Asians*; R. Lichtenstein, *On Brick Lane*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2007). A large part of the continued fascination with the East End can also be attributed to the Whitechapel, or 'Jack-the-Ripper' murders of 1888. Madam Tussaurds, on London's Baker Street, continues to run their 'Chamber of Horrors' exhibition, which draws heavily on the legacy of those murders, perpetuating an image of the East End as a place of 'dreadful delight'. On this see Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*.

Chapter Seven

Moving 'out' to be 'in': Jewish Journeys to Suburbia

'Until I was sixteen I lived in the East London borough of Bethnal Green, in a small street that is now just a name on the map. Almost every house in it has gone and it exists, if at all, only in the pages of this book.'[613]

So begins the preface to Anglo-Jewish novelist, Emanuel Litvinoff's 1972 memoir, *Journey Through a Small Planet*. It is a now familiar lament for a bygone age, bitter memories sweetened by the hand of nostalgia. Certainly by the latter decades of the twentieth century, the Jewish East End of the *fin de siècle* was in terminal decline, weakened in the inter-war years by northerly out-migration to surrounding inner-lying suburbs, and then almost fatally wounded by incessant German bombing assaults during the Second World War.[614] Confidence in the district as a site for sustained Jewish life waned, 'destroyed as much by the cultural amnesia of those who left as by the bombs of the German luftwaffe'.[615] As Litvinoff concedes, 'Those of us who survived [the war] and were still young were moving eagerly into the universe of the future and had no wish to look back at the retreating past'.[616] Thousands sought to put both physical and psychological distance between the lives they and their predecessors had lived in the squalid, smothering confines of the East End – a process mirrored in the Gorbals in Glasgow, the Leylands in Leeds and Manchester's Cheetham Hill. The children and grandchildren of immigrants – English-born Jews – rejected place in favour of prospects, confident that relocation would not mean dislocation but would instead bring, or at least give the impression of bringing, upward social mobility.[617]

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[613] Emanuel Litvinoff, *Journey through a Small Planet*, (London: Robin Clark, 1972), p. 9.

[614] Although 30,000 Jews still lived in the East End in 1945, the population was never again to recover to its peak at the turn-of-the-century, estimated to have been as numerous as 200,000 strong.

[615] B. Cheyette, 'Introduction', *Contemporary Jewish Writing in Britain and Ireland: An Anthology*, B. Cheyette (ed.), (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. xiii-lxxi, (p. xxx).

[616] Litvinoff, *Journey through a Small Planet*, p. 9.

[617] David Cesarani has challenged the broadly held assumption that migration to the suburbs was indicative of prosperity arguing instead that, 'the belief in upward social mobility is cherished in Anglo-Jewry today, but it is

In some regards, their gamble was a successful one. The mass Jewish out-migration from inner-city London from the 1920s onwards 'resulted in the wholesale colonization of new districts in the suburbs'.[618] What community had been lost in the exodus from the East End had seemingly been recovered and reformed elsewhere. What is more, these newly formed suburban communities prospered, relocating, often within a generation, from the inner suburbs of Hackney, Dalston and Canonbury, to the affluent, firmly middle-class North London suburbs of Golders Green, Hampstead and Hendon. Jewish inhabitants of those districts became suburbanites *par excellence* – husbands commonly commuting into the city to work whilst wives looked after the home and children, careful to foster the appearance of respectability and prosperity for the neighbours. As Vivian D. Lipman wrote of the early Jewish suburban dweller, '[a]s so often, we find the Jew is like his neighbour, only more so'.[619]

Whilst the Jewish journey to the suburbs for all intents and purposes mirrored the broader demographic and cultural shift 'from the heart to the limbs' of the urban milieu, it was neither a seamlessly linear process nor a wholly uncontested one.[620] In the early years of the twentieth century, individuals and organisations had worked tirelessly to encourage suburban and provincial Jewish migration, often with little success. The *Jewish Dispersion Committee* (JDC) set up in 1902 by the Federation of Synagogues to relieve 'the overcrowding of Jews in our large towns' battled steadfast resistance from Jewish East Enders in their efforts to persuade them to exchange the squalor of that unequivocally urban district in favour of 'healthier' surroundings.[621] The efforts of others to promote the benefits of semi-urban or even rural living to the Jewish immigrant community, through schemes such as Henrietta Barnett's country holiday fund (established in 1877 to send slum children on holidays to the countryside), were typically more positively received

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substantially a myth […] for a […] significant section of the Jewish population, the experience was one of stasis or sideways movement'. See D. Cesarani, 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Suburbs: Social Change in Anglo-Jewry Between the Wars, 1914-1945', *Jewish Culture and History*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1998), pp. 5-26, (p. 5).

[618] Ibid., p. 7.

[619] V. D. Lipman, 'The Rise of Jewish Suburbia', *Transactions: Jewish Historical Society of England,* vol. 21, (1968), pp. 78-103, (p. 93).

[620] Sidney Low observed in 'The Rise of the Suburbs', in *Contemporary Review*, vol. 60, (1890), pp. 545 – 558, (p. 545) 'The centre of population is shifting from the heart to the limbs. The life blood is pouring into the long arms of bricks and mortar and cheap stucco that are feeling their way out to the Essex flats and the Hertfordshire copses.' Cited by Lipman in 'The Rise of Jewish Suburbia', p. 92.

[621] Minutes of the Federation and the Provinces, J. E. Blank (ed.), *The Minutes of the Federation of Synagogues: A Twenty-Five Years' Review*, (London: Rabbinowicz Printers, 1912), p. 57.

in the short term, but had little effect in the longer term. In truth, the parents of those children lucky enough to enjoy a holiday had neither the means nor the inclination to leave the city. Becoming a suburban pioneer or country dweller was an enticing idea in theory, but in reality was simply not sustainable. Industry, but above all, the comfort of the Jewish community itself, together with the necessary provisions for Jewish life, remained in the inner city.

Even during the inter-war years, as suburban migration became a more appealing and realistic prospect to some, for others such relocation was seen as nothing short of a wholesale rejection of Jewish life in favour of a vapid, sanitised alternative. Simon Blumenfeld captured the essence of such inter-communal conflict in his 1935 novel *Jew Boy* in which the sister of the protagonist's girlfriend marries a non-Jew and moves to the suburbs:

> At least the Jewishness she had discarded, for all its faults, its turbulent excitable people and habits, had life and colour, throbbed with vitality. He couldn't for the life of him understand how any intelligent person could exchange that for the anaemic narrow-minded dreariness of suburbia.[622]

Suburban living, then, was fast becoming indicative of not only a physical departure from the urban centre to its peripheries, but also signified a spiritual and cultural de-centring of the self – the ebbing away of one's vivacity and verve for life. In such narratives the city became cherished as the lifeblood of Jewishness, without which one became sickly and weak, a shadow of one's former self – in essence, assimilated. Of course, such derisory attitudes also mirrored responses from the wider British society towards suburban living. As early as 1876 an anonymous contributor to *Architect* magazine cynically observed that 'A modern suburb is a place which is neither one thing

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[622] S. Blumenfeld, *Jew Boy*, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1986), [first published by Cape, 1935], p. 143.

nor the other; it has neither the advantage of the town nor the open freedom of the country, but manages to combine in nice equality of proportion the disadvantages of both.'[623]

Yet within a Jewish context the paradox of the suburb was, and is, perhaps particularly pertinent. Its popular conceptualisation as a transient space, neither 'here' nor 'there', seems to echo the typically diasporic Jewish dilemma of how to satisfactorily reconcile the dual identities of Jewishness and Englishness which has plagued Anglo-Jewish thought since the age of emancipation. If Englishness was bound up in the pastoral images of its countryside, as numerous academic observers and literary commentaries would have us understand, then, equally, 'the Jew' has been, and continues to be, associated with 'the city'.[624] The suburb is nowhere, and yet today, has become the everywhere – the very heartland – of Anglo-Jewish society. It is this ironic spatial condition (and conditioning), from which the community has emerged, and most particularly the nature of that emergence, which forms the core of discussion in this chapter. By tracing the journey of the immigrant Jews of the East End, and their decedents, to the suburbs and by considering the reception that their presence received both within and without the Jewish community across the twentieth century and into the twenty first, I intend to expose the complexities inherent in that journey, as well as to stress the highly ambivalent light in which 'the suburb' as an imaginative concept and lived reality, has been, and continues to be, regarded.

This chapter is organised around a loose chronology which, although not always strictly linear, crucially facilitates a nuanced view of the evolving historical and literary narrative of Jewish life in, or at least in sight of, the suburbs from the late nineteenth century to the present day – a view which a more uniform approach would have obscured. In turn, this framework facilitates a multi-thematic approach to the topic, organised into three sections. The first of these sets out the

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[623] Anonymous contributor, *Architect*, vol. 16, (1876), cited in F.M.L. Thompson, (ed.), 'The Rise of Suburbia', *The Rise of Suburbia*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 1 – 25, (p. 2).
[624] On the association of 'Englishness' with the countryside see C. Berberich, '"I was Meditating about England": The Importance of Rural England for the Construction of 'Englishness', *History, Nationhood and the Question of Britain*, (eds.) H. Brockenhurst and R. Phillips, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 375-385 and P. Ward, *Britishness since 1870*, (London: Routledge, 2004). On the association of 'the Jew' with 'the city' see K. Kautsky, *Are the Jews a Race?* trans. from the 2nd German edn., [1921], (Westport, Conneticut: Greenwood Press, 1972), and more recently, E. Mendelsohn (ed.), *People of the City: Jews and the Urban Challenge*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). J. Schlör, 'Jews and the Big City: Explorations on an Urban State of Mind', in J. Brauch, A. Lipphardt and A. Nocke (eds.), *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, (Aldershot: Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 223-238 attempts to deconstruct the association between Jews and urbanity, asking 'Is the city […] a special kind of *Jewish* space more so than the countryside, the village or the small town?' (p. 224).

early efforts of the Anglo-Jewish establishment and philanthropists at the *fin de siècle* to seek alternative spatial solutions to the overcrowded, nefarious environs of the East End despite the resistance they faced from that quarters' inhabitants. From the inter-war years onwards, however, as the second section shows, that quarter was readily abandoned for the more salubrious surroundings of North and North West London. Suburban living, I argue, had become and remains today something of a status symbol as well as the perceived route to assimilation and acceptance, but was and is a locale not without its communal tensions. Yet in an effort to problematise the narrative of such spatial conflict, in the final section I show how such tensions towards 'the Jew' in the suburbs have frequently been articulated within, as well as beyond, the British Jewish community. Through an exploration of a selection of novels, I suggest that fiction has long been a medium complicit in the act of rejecting the suburb: a tradition which has its roots in the nineteenth century and its legacy in the twenty first. When taken together, these sections, although of value in their own right, are united by an objective to explore how the suburb has been differently conceptualised across time, space and genre. This chapter exposes how, similarly to 'the Jew', the suburb has become an empty signifier onto which the anxieties of the day were, and continue to be, projected.

Provincial Jews, Rural Jews and Reluctant Jews

Certainly the malleable functionality of the suburb was recognised at an early stage by the Anglo-Jewish establishment at the *fin de siècle* as they searched for a spatial solution to solve the problem of Jewish overcrowding in the slum areas of London and other large metropolitan centres. Initially, however, they looked not to the suburb but to the countryside, the provinces and the empire for answers. At that time, the suburbs were still largely exclusive locales reserved for the wealthier sections of society. Although Anglo-Jewish residents had been enjoying the benefits of suburban living since at least the early nineteenth century, the newly arrived working class Jews of the East End were not encouraged to move in.[625] Instead, the established Jewish community debated how best to neutralise the urban immigrant 'problem' whilst simultaneously making

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[625] V.D. Lipman dates 'the movement of middle-class Jewish families out the City of London and its adjacent streets to the more spacious areas of the suburbs' to the 1830s and 1840s. See 'The Rise of Jewish Suburbia', p. 78.

useful citizens of their impoverished brethren. 'With some training in practical agriculture, these immigrants might make welcome colonists', suggested an anonymous correspondent to the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1886:

> a system might be devised for 'passing them on' to places where their skilled labour would be valuable. Jewish enterprise, grafted on Jewish capital, might give an impetus to the present depressed state of farming interests even in this country. London, certainly in their own interests should be tabooed to the emigrants, but it seems not impossible to formulate a plan by which Ireland and some of the provinces might be the better for them.[626]

Urban living, then, was seen as detrimental to the successful integration of the immigrant community into British life. It was, however, through engagement with 'the rural' – the perceived essence of Englishness – that the immigrant Jew could instead achieve the transition from trespasser to welcome and valued guest, a guest who contributed to Britain's imperial dominance.[627]

Whilst there was general agreement amongst Jew and Gentile alike that the countryside could provide the necessary antidote to the 'evils' of slum living, there was far less consensus about relocating Jews to the provinces. Some non-Jewish onlookers received such schemes, which promoted the establishment and growth of Jewish communities outside of London, with horror. 'Many towns in the midlands and northern counties have, in the past decade, become the seats of Jewish pauper colonies, the members of which are to be reckoned not by hundreds but by thousands' anxiously reported the *St James Gazette* in 1887.[628] 'The spectacle presented by the east-

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[626] 'Our Foreign Poor', *Jewish Chronicle*, 17 December 1886, p. 5.
[627] Similar thinking, which celebrated the 'advantages' of country living, had partially guided the decision in 1860 to relocate the Jews' Hospital from Mile End to eight acres of land at West Norwood, South London – at that time still virtually open countryside. The hospital was amalgamated with the Jews' Orphan Asylum in 1877 with both institutions sharing the site. See E. Conway, 'The Origins of the Jewish Orphanage', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society*, vol. 22, (1968-9), pp. 53-66; London Museum of Jewish Life, *What about the Children? 200 Years of Norwood Child Care, 1795 – 1995*, (London: London Museum of Jewish Life and Norwood Child Care, 1995), pp. 10-11.
[628] 'The Jewish Colonies in the Provinces', *St James Gazette*, 29 April 1887, pp. 5-6, (p. 5).

end settlement finds it exact counterpart in the provincial "Jewries", which are crowded with Russo-Polish immigrants, unclean, untaught, who bring with them to this country all that is evil in the foreign Ghettos whence they spring.'[629] Far from ridding the immigrant Jews of their Eastern European lifestyles and ghetto mentalities, life in the provinces, the newspaper lamented, was being infected by the very behaviour which it sought to keep out. Towns were becoming congested and colonized by 'nests' of 'pauper' aliens – an avian species content to live in inhuman conditions. What is more, provincial living had only served to reinforce the Jewish 'tendency' for 'clannish' behaviour:

> People who think it easy to Anglicise the immigrant Jew of the kind we are now describing would do well to make themselves acquainted with certain of the practices of idiosyncrasies which mark him out not so much as one apart from his fellow-man, but as one determined to keep apart.[630]

In a critique reminiscent of those levelled at the suburb, even rural and semi-rural living was, at least as far as immigrant Jews were concerned, conducive to creating insular pockets within society. Such parochialism, claimed the *St James Gazette*, was, in actuality, distinctly threatening and was to be discouraged. Left to their own devices, the paper claimed, immigrants performed superstitious practices: 'In their rooms one will find charms against witches and formulas against witchcraft', which were indicative of their 'many other strange prejudices' and would not be tolerated in the provinces.[631] Instead, implied the paper, the Jews should strive to be open with their neighbours and open to English influences. With or without invitation, however, the neighbours would be watching.

This sense of the provincial towns as a surveillance society in microcosm, which the two articles in the *St James Gazette* unintentionally conveyed, became a very real feature, whether

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[629] Ibid.
[630] 'The Provincial Jewries', *St James Gazette,* 6 May 1887, p. 6.
[631] Ibid.

intended or not, of Jewish life outside of the city across and beyond the turn-of-the-century. With the work of the *Jewish Dispersion Committee*, established under the leadership of Sir Samuel Montagu in 1902, the successes and failures of Jewish families and communities relocated to the provinces were subject to close monitoring. Yet, it was through the inquiries of the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in 1903 that the presence of Jews in provincial towns across Britain was once again raised. In the spring of 1903, the commission heard evidence on the Jewish communities of Glasgow, Leeds and Sheffield, all of which was dutifully reported in the *Jewish Chronicle*.[632] However, it was the case of the Jewish community in Reading which received the most protracted attention. On 30 April 1903, the Mayor of Reading was called before the commission to give evidence as to the Jewish community of the town:

About two years ago a Jewish synagogue was opened in Reading for the first time [...] The synagogue met with considerable local support from non-Jews, the ground being that they were felt to be good townsmen; they took part in the political and social life of the town just as the townsmen of other denominations did.[633]

In fact, according to the Mayor, the Jewish communal members had proved themselves to be 'good townsmen' in every sense; there were law-abiding, engaged in charitable and philanthropic ventures, abstemious, thrifty, and most certainly did not show a tendency to 'deal exclusively with their own people'.[634] Life in the provinces had proved to be mutually beneficial to Jew and non-Jew alike. Further testament to this was the lengthy and glowing report on the consecration of the newly built Reading synagogue which appeared in the *Reading Standard* on 3 November 1900, in which the Mayor, speaking on behalf of the townspeople, expressed his wishes that the new synagogue would encourage still more Jews to move to the town.[635]

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[632] 'The Alien Immigration Commission: The Jewish Communities in Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds and Sheffield', Supplement to the *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 May 1903, pp. I-IV.
[633] PP 1903 Cd. 1741 ix, vol. 2, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*, Q. 20468.
[634] Ibid.
[635] 'Reading Hebrew Congregation: A Day of Rejoicing and Thanksgiving', *Reading Standard*, 3 November 1900.

However, despite the obvious success of the scheme to encourage and nurture Jewish life in Reading – a community which, by the early twentieth century, appeared to have contributed to a rich and tolerant small-town multiculturalism – descendents of those pioneering Jews still remain largely perplexed as to why that community prospered, and, most specifically, why it prospered in that location. 'Why should anyone come to Reading or stay in Reading away from the large established Jewish centres?' questioned Sue Krisman in her history of the *Reading Hebrew Congregation* (1989).[636] Nevertheless, the present-day community are proud of their long residency in Reading, defining themselves as 'the spiritual and communal centre for Jews in Berkshire and the surrounding area'.[637] Indeed, as in the early twentieth century, it is the synagogue which continues to signify the community's presence – a visual online tour available on the congregation's website intersects images of the exterior and interior of the synagogue with more banal shots of the river Thames and the newly-opened shopping centre. The synagogue clearly remains the only physical manifestation of the community's existence and thus is the symbol – the one space – through which Reading Jewry both define and explain themselves to the wider community.[638] It is the only space visible and made available to the outside world, even to fellow Readingites, which endeavours to articulate their difference. In all other regards, as the congregation's selection of filmed images shows, the community continue to cultivate the reputation propounded by Mayor Bull in 1903 that they are fully integrated into provincial life. The shots of the town's communal spaces within the marketing video are clearly indicative of this endeavour.[639]

Although the dispersion of Jewish immigrants to Reading certainly was, and continues to be, framed as something of a success story, for the most part the efforts of the *Jewish Dispersion Committee* to relocate Jews from the East End to communities outside of London were largely frustrated. Even by summer 1903, just a year after the JDC's establishment, uptake from provincial congregations to join the Federation of Synagogues remained so low – a sign of the

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[636] S. Krisman, *Reading Hebrew Congregation*, (Reading: Reading Hebrew Congregation, 1989), p. 7.
[637] 'Reading Hebrew Congregation', <www.rhc.org.uk>.
[638] There is not, and never has been a Jewish cemetery or place of burial for the Jewish community of Reading, according to the International Jewish Cemetery Project database. The closest one to Reading is located in Maidenhead. See International Jewish Cemetery Project, < http://www.iajgs.org/cemetery/england-other-than-london/index.html#cemeteries>.
[639] 'Reading Hebrew Congregation: Take a Tour', <www.rhc.org.uk/rhc/Tour.html>.

continued paucity of provincial Jewry – that the Federation called a public meeting 'for the purpose of encouraging and stimulating removals from the congested area to Tottenham and surrounding districts'.[640]

Thus despite Anglo-Jewry's best efforts to promote provincial, even semi-rural living as *the* alternative to the inner-city slums, by the early twentieth century, the suburbs as a destination for immigrant Jews were very firmly back on the agenda. An advertisement placed in the *Jewish Chronicle* in July 1904 by the Dispersion Committee, for example, continued to promote migration to the provinces yet nevertheless conceded that relocation to the suburbs would also be supported:

> Capable Artizans desirous of settling in the provinces (Birmingham, Dublin, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester excepted), or needing facilities for transfer to the suburbs are invited to communicate (giving particulars) with Mr J. E. Blank, Club Rooms, 15, Gt. Alie-street, Aldgate, E.[641]

This concession complimented a parallel movement to encourage suburban migration amongst the inner-city working classes. Hampstead Garden Suburb (HGS), the vision of social reformer and activist Henrietta Barnett, officially came into being in 1907, but in its essence as a residential, quasi-rural space which rejected the many disadvantages of urbanity, it far pre-dated its inauguration.[642] As the wife of clergyman Samuel Barnett, the long-serving vicar of the Parish of St Jude's, Whitechapel, Henrietta had witnessed at first-hand the poverty and depravity which was endemic to the turn-of-the-century overcrowded East End. Her scheme to provide holidays in the countryside for East End people was just one idea to relieve the burden of life in the London slums. 'For people spending long years in the close courts and streets of ugly towns, the mere sight

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[640] Federation of Synagogues public meeting, (June 1903), cited in G. Alderman, *The Federation of Synagogues, 1887-1987*, (London: The Federation of Synagogues, 1987), p. 38.

[641] 'Jewish Congregational Union: Dispersion Committee', *Jewish Chronicle*, 22 July 1904, p. 2.

[642] The inspiration for Hampstead Garden Suburb drew heavily upon Ebenezer Howard's Garden City Movement which had been detailed in his *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* (1898), republished with slight revisions as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (1902), and then realised in the creation of Letchworth Garden City (1903) and Welwyn Garden City (1920). Henrietta Barnett also asked Raymond Unwin, the principle Urban Planner involved with the project at Letchworth to oversee the plans for HGS.

of nature is startling, and may awaken longings, to themselves strange, to others indescribable, but which are the stirrings of the life within.'[643] A glimpse of rural landscapes, then, not only offered a welcome respite from the relentless claustrophobia of the urban milieu, it acted as a stimulant for the soul. Yet not content with the temporality of the relief provided by the Country Holiday Fund, Barnett began to conceive of a scheme which, for a lucky few, would provide a lasting antidote to the deficiencies of city life. In 1905, Barnett publicly declared her intentions in the *Contemporary Review*. The Garden Suburb Trust, she wrote, 'have joined together in the hope of establishing a suburb where the aim will be to house people of many different incomes, and which will be free, it is hoped, from the evils of monotony and inertia which invariably exist where one class only congregate'.[644]

Barnett's Hampstead project proposed to re-invent the suburbs as a socially mixed space – a spatial dynamic which would dilute and destroy 'the evils of monotony and inertia' which had become emblematic of suburban living. What is more, Barnett's re-imagined suburb was a space in which religious, as well as social difference would be respected. According to Henrietta Barnett's biographer, at the time of Hampstead Garden Suburb's establishment, Barnett insisted that the words 'Good is Greater than the Creeds' be carved on the cornerstone of the Free Church, a sentiment for which she sought and gained royal approval.[645] Did HGS then, with all its extraordinary ideals as a tolerant, multicultural, semi-rural, socially transgressive space, provide a new home for Jewish immigrants and their descendants? The *Jewish Chronicle* commented in August 1909 and again in September 1912 on the protracted interest shown in the establishment of the suburb by one of the Jewish community's most dynamic leaders, Carl Stettauer, speculating that the ethos upon which HGS had been founded may, at the very least, lead to calls for an improved 'aesthetic' in the East End.[646] Hence, the paper reported with excitement the visit of

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[643] H. Barnett, 'Passionless Reformers', *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xxxii, (July-December 1882), pp. 226- 233, (p. 231).
[644] H. Barnett, 'A Garden Suburb at Hampstead', *Contemporary Review*, vol. 87, (1905), pp. 231 – 237, (p. 232).
[645] M. Watkins, *Henrietta Barnett in Whitechapel: Her First Fifty Years*, (London: Hampstead Garden Suburb Archive Trust, 2005), p. 104.
[646] 'From the East End', *Jewish Chronicle*, 6 August 1909, p. 20; 'With the "Children of the Ghetto"', *Jewish Chronicle*, 6 September 1912, p. 32. Incidentally, Carl Stettauer was not only interested in the well being of East End Jewry but was also heavily involved in drawing attention to the plight of Jews in Eastern Europe before their arrival in the East End. In 1905, Stettauer headed a delegation to Russia to organise relief work for those Jewish communities affected by pogroms. The papers generated on that trip, including eye-witness accounts of the pogroms, harrowing photographic evidence of the death and destruction wrought, as well as the detailed diary of

'German garden city enthusiasts' to the London 'ghetto' in September 1912, (presumably under the guidance of their fellow German garden city enthusiast Carl Stettauer), and outlined with keen interest the many changes the group would implement in that quarter, replacing slum terraces with newly sown ground, were they given the opportunity.[647] For a fleeting moment, Hampstead Garden Suburb seems to have been an inspiration for a re-appraisal and re-modelling of the East End. Yet despite such promising signs the *Jewish Chronicle* was forced to concede in the very same issue that the wholesale migration of East End Jews to the newly-established suburb was unlikely: '[A]s far as can be observed these projects do not appeal to the individual Jew, who much prefers to dwell among his brethren and to whom the comparative isolation of a garden suburb is abhorrent'.[648]

For all of Henrietta Barnett's ideals, and indeed for all of the *Jewish Chronicle*'s excited speculation, when the suburb was eventually completed in the 1930s, its construction having been interrupted by the First World War, it had firmly established itself as 'a middle class enclave' in which few working class families could afford to live, whether they wanted to or not.[649] Not only that, but Barnett's dream of HGS nurturing social integration found little favour with the wealthy inhabitants who, from the outset, complained about her 'obsession with the idea that [Suburb] residents should be grateful to be placed in such close touch with […] rescues homes'.[650]

Hampstead Garden Suburb, then, may not have been the *immediate* solution to the overcrowding of London's East End, nor to the Jewish immigrant 'problem'. As the late twentieth

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Jack Myers, secretary of the delegation, are all now held in the Special Collections archive at the University of Southampton, MS 128.

[647] 'With the "Children of the Ghetto"', *Jewish Chronicle*.

[648] 'With the "Children of the Ghetto"', *Jewish Chronicle*. 'But if the ideal village be not to their liking', continued the article, 'they are flocking in ever-growing numbers to Golder's Green and the surrounding district'. Indeed by 1916, Golder's Green had become such a popular destination for Jews leaving the more crowded areas of the metropolis that a campaign to erect a synagogue in the district was in full swing. See 'Golder's Green Synagogue', *Jewish Chronicle*, 16 July 1916, p. 14. The newly-formed community eventually got their wish with the establishment of a synagogue on Dunstan Road in 1922, replacing the temporary synagogue, housed in St Alban's Church Hall, North End Road, which had been in use since 1913.

[649] M.K. Smith, 'Henrietta Barnett, social reform and community building', *The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education*, (2007), <www.infed.org/thinkers/henrietta_barnett.htm>

[650] Letter to *Hendon and Finchley Times*, 5 December 1913, cited by A.A. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London: Suburban Developments, Life and Transports, 1900-1939*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1973), p. 82, and by A. Creedon, 'A Benevolent Tyrant? The Principles and Practices of Henrietta Barnett (1851-1936), Social Reformer and Founder of Hampstead Garden Suburb', *Women's History Review*, vol. 11, no. 2, (2002), pp. 231 – 252, (p. 246).

century memoir of the Anglo-Jewish poet and theatre critic, Anthony Rudolf, makes clear, Jews, and only prosperous Jews (although many of whom had originated in the East End), arrived later, settling in large numbers in Hampstead Garden Suburb by the 1940s.[651] However, what the movement does show was that the suburb, even when re-imagined and re-shaped to accommodate 'difference' still largely remained fixed and unyieldingly prosaic, despite the efforts to pastoralise its aesthetics. Ironically, in the decades which followed, despite the largely ineffectual schemes to encourage migration from London's East End, the suburb, and not just Hampstead Garden Suburb, became, of its own accord, an increasingly desirable concept to second and third generation Jews.

Staking a Claim: Suburban Territorialism

Thus in contrast to attitudes in the early decades of the century, by the 1940s and 1950s, life in the suburbs – albeit the 'right' suburb – had become such an alluring idea, even such a crucial component of one's identity to British Jews that it was considered to be a topographical commodity worth fighting for. The suburb had become a status symbol, an external signifier of one's worth, whilst the old area of settlement, the East End, was relegated to its antithesis. '[T]he most fundamental index of the decline of the East London ghetto', wrote the sociologist Howard Brotz in 1955, 'is the widespread agreement in the Jewish world of its low prestige value. A failure is a person who "can't even get out of the East End"'.[652] Instead North London, or better yet North West London, had become the district to which all socially ambitious Jews aspired. 'When I buy a parcel in a West End store to be sent, and they ask for the address, I feel much prouder that it goes to N.W.4 than to E.1', admitted J.G in an interview with Brotz in the early 1950s. 'It's a nicer feeling'.[653]

A similar attitude was echoed within Clare Rayner's 2003 memoir of her long and frequently tortuous journey out of the East End and away from the grasp of her abusive parents to

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[651]   A. Rudolf, *The Arithmetic of Memory*, (London: Bellew Publishing, 1999).
[652]   H. M. Brotz, 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London', *A Minority in Britain: Social Studies of the Anglo-Jewish Community*, M. Freedman (ed.), (London: Vallentine, Mitchell and Co., 1955), pp. 137 – 197, (p. 142).
[653]   Interview with J.G, cited in Brotz, 'The Outline of Jewish Society in London', p. 143.

a happy and successful career as a nurse, writer and broadcaster. On searching for her first martial home in the late 1950s, Rayner recalled, rather humorously, that her new husband 'blenched' at the suggestion that they settle in South London for the area's proximity to a promising job prospect. 'I had to agree' with him, Rayner conceded, 'That would be like emigrating' – an attitude which casts North London not simply as a space of aspiration but as a *place* of belonging, a place already invested with socio-cultural meaning and imbued with the power to both anchor and define individual and collective identity.[654] In this way, the suburb seems to act as a microcosm of, or indeed a substitute for, the nation. The writer Al Alvarez, a son of a wealthy Hampstead family, has similarly interpreted his ambivalent sense of belonging in terms of his attachment to place rather than citizenship: 'the self-deception I call my provenance is a city, not a nation. I am a Londoner, heart and soul, but not quite an Englishman'.[655] The suburb has become the place of 'provenance' – it facilitates the illusion of Jewish 'rootedness'.

Thus for these newly forming North London Jewish communities, the 'other' was no longer the non-Jew but was now the Jewish non-suburbanite.

> In the East End today, the people are *grob* [coarse], very rough, swear, don't have any manners. But they can't help it. It's the environment [...] You know it sounds a bit snobby but I went to visit somebody who was sitting *shiva* in the East End, very nice people, but I couldn't help thinking how we've grown apart.[656]

Testimonies from the 1950s convey a very real sense of the communal fractures brought about through suburban migration. The East End had become the hazy landscape of the past – a foreign country, a curiosity – peopled by those who were strangely familiar yet nevertheless 'peculiar'. The whole became viewed with a nostalgic detachment.

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[654]   C. Rayner, *How did I get Here from There?*, (London: Virago Press, 2003), p. 271.
[655]   A. Alvarez, *Where did it all go right?*, (London: Richard Cohen Books, 1999), p. 7.
[656]   J.G, cited by Brotz, 'The Outline of Jewish Society in London', p. 143.

In contrast, those Jews who had 'made it' to the suburbs viewed their new landscape as the pinnacle, the very physical manifestation, of their achievements as a diaspora Jew. The suburbs signified acceptance. By conforming to the restrictive norms of suburbia, essentially white and middle class, these Jews felt they had transgressed the boundaries of 'difference' which had previously separated them from the wider non-Jewish community. Of course, the irony is that as more and more Jews moved 'out' of the city to the suburbs as a means to be 'in', North and North West London began to resemble concentrated Jewish areas not so dissimilar from the Jewish quarter of the East End that they had been so eager to leave behind. As Brotz observed, 'the ghetto, that is the voluntary ghetto in the technical sociological sense, has not vanished at all. It has simply moved north and north-west'.[657] By mid-century, the suburbs of North London had become intrinsically linked with their Jewish residents – a spatial association to which some Jews were particularly sensitive. 'Ha! This isn't such a marvellous place any more', complained a resident doctor who had been born in the East End. 'You know what they're calling it now? Goldstein Green.'[658]

Thus the appeal of the suburbs seems to have been bound up in their perceived exclusivity. Migration to the urban peripheries was regarded with a growing ambivalence as confidence in that exclusivity – an enforced yet nevertheless welcomes 'apartness' – diminished. The suburbs, when 'unspoilt' by the presence of fellow Jews, was for the socially ambitious, modern Jew, 'the promised land' – a fabled terrain which pledged to facilitate tolerance, even acceptance. Far from being a confined and confining locale, as the dominant anti-suburban ethos of the twentieth century has suggested, for some Jews in Britain the suburbs were idealised as the path to freedom.

Yet certain moments of tension in the recent history of the Anglo-Jewish suburban community have shown that hopeful, even confident conceptualisation to be illusionary. Whilst the London suburbs have, by no means, exposed themselves as hotbeds of racial intolerance, expressions of ambivalence towards their increasingly multi-cultural demography – especially when signs of such 'diversity' has dared to map themselves onto the suburban landscape – have been

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[657] Brotz, 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London', p. 149.
[658] Interview with S. R., cited in Brotz, 'The Outlines of Jewish Society in London', p. 149. Similarly derisive renaming occurred in other British cities also. The 'desirable' South Manchester suburb of Didsbury, for example, quickly became known as 'Yidsbury', and its main thoroughfare Palatine Road as Palestine Road – crude references to the large Jewish presence in the area by the mid-twentieth century.

voiced.[659] The first of those moments occurred in the immediate post-Second World War period, and related not directly to the presence of Anglo-Jewish residents in the suburbs, but to the predominantly Jewish community of refugees from Nazism. In October 1945 two women from Hampstead in North West London, Margaret Crabtree and Sylvia Gosse, articulated their 'concerns' about the ramifications of allowing refugees to settle in the borough. The pair drew up an 'anti-alien' petition which stated,

> We the undersigned petition the House of Commons in a request that aliens of Hampstead should be repatriated to assure men and women of the Forces should have accommodation upon their return.[660]

On 12 October, the local newspaper, the *Hampstead and Highgate Express* carried the story for the first time, indicating that the Conservative MP for Hampstead, Charles Challen, as well as two thousand residents had pledged their support for the petition. The paper regarded the expulsion of aliens as a necessary measure to 'help ease the housing shortage' in the borough.[661] The destruction wrought upon London by bombing raids during the war had, without doubt, brought unprecedented pressure to bear upon the housing market. As Graham Macklin has pointed out, 'for both Labour and Conservatives, housing constituted the most pressing concern of the 1945 general election'.[662]

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[659] Within literature, this animosity towards the Jewish social climber was a particular feature of Howard Spring's *Shabby Tiger* (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1958), [first published 1934] and its sequel *Rachel Rosing* (Glasgow: Collins, 1977), [first published 1935] which both feature the anti-heroine Rachel Rosing, the beautiful yet devious 'Jewess' desperate to secure her permanent release from the Manchester slums of Cheetham Hill – an equivalent to London's East End – by any means. The anti-Semitic and deeply misogynistic tone of both novels rests upon the assumption that Jews (excepting those who have wholly transcended their Jewishness) simply do not 'belong' amongst wealthy and cultured non-Jews and thus will always do something to 'unmask' themselves.

[660] '2,000 Residents Will Send Petition: "Aliens should quit to make room for Servicemen"', *Hampstead and Highgate Express*, 12 October 1945, p. 1.

[661] Ibid.

[662] G. Macklin, 'A quite natural and moderate defensive feeling'? The 1945 Hampstead 'anti-alien' petition', *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 37, no. 3, (September 2003), pp. 277 – 300, (p. 278).

Yet hostilities towards 'foreigners' in Hampstead did not begin in 1945, nor were they solely founded upon, nor justified only by the perceived relationship between the presence of aliens in the borough and the housing crisis.[663] The increased visibility of Jews – the existing population of Jewish suburbanites enlarged by new arrivals from the continent – alone seems to have been unwelcome to some North Londoners as well as to the Anglo-Jewish community resident in the area. Al Alvarez recounts in his autobiography that although his parents felt sympathy towards the refugees, they did not welcome 'this alien intrusion into their own delicately balanced lives'. [664] Attitudes towards the refugees from non-Jewish onlookers were typically less diplomatically articulated. One Hampstead resident submitted a letter to the *New Statesman* in 1943 complaining that the 'foreign Jews' held 'noisy parties late at night, from which, petrol shortage not withstanding, their cars depart, engines racing and doors slamming, in the small hours'.[665] Such behaviour was condemned as 'ill-mannered' and was 'to the detriment of the ordinary English family', impinging upon the ordered respectability of the English home by means of a disruptive alien presence.[666] Tensions ran high not only because space was considered to be at a premium, but also because the refugees were accused by some of misusing and inverting the purpose of that limited space – residential space which should reflect 'English' sensibilities – by allowing their activities to spill over its boundaries. Of course such accusations of 'un-neighbourly' behaviour were all the easier to direct at 'foreign' (or simply 'foreign-looking') residents, particularly those with German accents and of 'Jewish' appearance. Anti-alien (and, at times, clearly anti-Semitic) rhetoric provided an outlet through which wider anxieties and uncertainties during wartime could be expressed – anxieties bound up with the war effort, the state of the nation and with the health of the British stock.[667] In their anti-alien campaign, Crabtree and Gosse made

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[663] Tony Kushner argues in *Patterns of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British society during the Second World War*, (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 118, that in North West London during the war 'there was enormous hostility to alleged refugee behaviour' which deemed the newcomers as 'rude and aggressive'. More seriously than this, however, was the frequent accusation levelled at refugees of being 'foreign agents' – accusations played up in thrillers and spy scare novels of the 1940s (pp. 117-8) which in part contributed to the widespread internment of refugees from Nazism in 1940.

[664] Alvarez, *Where did it all go right?*, p. 4.

[665] *New Statesman and Nation*, 27 January 1943, cited in Macklin, 'The 1945 Hampstead 'anti-alien' petition', p. 281.

[666] Ibid.

[667] Kushner has convincingly shown that, for large sections of British society, Jews were considered to be neither 'victims' nor deserving of sympathy. That perspective which suggested that Jews had brought Nazi persecution

use of such anxieties and of the existence of hostile feeling. Whilst the shortage of accommodation in the borough was utilised as the headline for the campaign, it was the implicit repercussions of that crisis which lent the campaign its weight. 'We are not anti-Semitic and we are strictly non-political', declared Crabtree and Gosse in 1945. 'Our only interest is to see that fair play is given to our dear boys when they come back for houses in Hampstead.'[668] Loaded phrases which exploited the patriotic mood of the era accompanied explanations of the pair's grievances: the presence of refugees in Hampstead would cause the 'native' population to be displaced.

Such emotive rhetoric – rhetoric which certainly existed prior to the 'official' launch of the campaign, as the letter to the *New Statesman* makes clear – suggested that the provision of housing to needy refugees was seen less as an act of charity on the part of the British government than as a full-scale attempt to destroy the homogeneity of a community. For Crabtree and Gosse, it was not only the government but the refugees themselves who were responsible for enacting such destruction. In the language of the campaign the refugees were depicted not as destitute victims so much as a menacingly assiduous force, intent upon disrupting the very fabric of the community. As a statement prepared by Mrs Crabtree made clear, the refugees were slowly but surely 'infiltrating' the borough, buying up shops and restaurants, turning homes into 'factories and workshops', and assuming British names in the process.[669]

Of course the parallels between the discursive conventions of the anti-alien petition of 1945 and the anti-alien campaign at the *fin de siècle* are striking. The Jewish immigrant was once again condemned for encroaching upon an area, even accused of 'having designs' upon an area, which they had no claim to. Indignant protests against such spatial manipulation were couched in fiercely territorialist rhetoric. Unlike the 'native' Hampstead resident, the refugees had no 'natural' tie to the borough. For them, so claimed those against their presence, Hampstead was merely a transient locale to which they neither felt nor demonstrated respect or loyalty. However, unlike the earlier period, the Anglo-Jewish community were unreserved in their condemnation of

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upon themselves through their 'odious' behaviour, was also echoed in literary representations of Jewish refugees in Britain. See Kushner, *Patterns of Prejudice*, pp. 117.

[668] M. Crabtree and S. Gosse speaking to the *Hampstead and Highgate Express*, 12 October 1945, p. 1.

[669] Crabtree and Gosse speaking to the *Hampstead and Highgate Express.*

the campaign, wholly unapologetic for the presence of the newcomers. Instead, by way of the community's leading newspaper, the *Jewish Chronicle*, they ridiculed the anti-alienists for their jealous regard for what the paper churlishly described as 'a slightly decaying suburb' which few people, either rich or poor, wanted to live in. 'Owners of cars would not be attracted to the stately houses, for the simple reason that having been built in an earlier age, they are mostly without garages', declared the *Jewish Chronicle* on 19 October, a week after the petition was announced. 'Nor is their spacious disregard for labour saving likely to tempt even the car-less in the existing inadequacies of domestic staffs.'[670] Yet the newspaper was not alone in expressing indignation towards the anti-alien campaign, reporting that many Hampstead residents, joined by outspoken supporters of the refugees' cause, most notably the Independent MP Eleanor Rathbone, had condemned the petition sponsors as 'fascists'.[671] A 'petition against the petition' was started and quickly gathered more than two and a half thousand signatures, prompting the borough council to pass a resolution condemning the original, anti-alien petition. By December 1945, the furore surrounding the issue had all but fizzled out, although there were attempts by nationalists and fascists alike to revive the issue in the months and years that followed, without much success.[672] Yet, for a few short months, Hampstead, an affluent, highly desirable North West London suburb, had found itself at the epicentre of 'a crisis which might lead [...] either to the re-establishment of humanity and civilisation or to the total destruction of civilisation', dramatically observed Victor Gollancz, the humanitarian and long-time campaigner for the plight of European Jewry.[673] The suburbs had become the battle ground upon which the bloody war for racial tolerance was fought and, briefly, won.[674]

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[670] 'UN'APPY 'AMPSTEAD', *Jewish Chronicle*, 19 October 1945, p. 10.
[671] 'Alien Scare in Hampstead: Petition Sponsors Accused of Fascism', *Jewish Chronicle*, 26 October 1945, p. 1; 5.
[672] These included the 'Face the Facts Association', a group with a nationalist agenda headed by Mrs Eleonora Tennant, and the Union Movement, a post-war reincarnation of Oswald Mosley's BUF. See C. Shepherd, 'Fascism in Hampstead, 1945-1949', (Unpublished MA Dissertation, Birkbeck College, 2001).
[673] Victor Gollancz, cited in 'Alien Scare in Hampstead', *Jewish Chronicle*.
[674] Yet within the year, hostility towards Jews in the borough was once again making the news. On 20 December 1946, the *Hampstead and Highgate Express* ran an article with the headline 'Why another synagogue in Hampstead?', p. 1. Protests against repairs and alterations being made to a former Congregational church to transform it into a synagogue, led by the local MP Charles Challen, again rested upon the rationale that such work would detract funds and resources from the pressing issue of the housing crisis. It was, in effect, a thinly veiled anti-Semitic attack which effectively objected to appropriation of a formerly 'English' space by Jews.

Recent, high-profile events, however, have once again exposed the rigid, even reactionary character of the metropolitan suburbs as profoundly territorialized residential terrain seemingly suspended in time and space. In February 2003, after more than a decade of dispute, the Orthodox Jewish community of North West London were finally able to make use of their *eruv* – a 'symbolic enclosure' which allows observant Jews to 'carry' on *Shabbat*.[675] According to Jewish law, it is forbidden to undertake any form of labour, which has been interpreted in the Orthodox world to include 'carrying' even the smallest item on the Sabbath outside of the home. Those laws have meant that those unable to walk – young children, the elderly, and the disabled – are housebound for the entirety of that day as pushing a pram or wheelchair also constitutes 'carrying'. Such laws can be circumvented, however, by figuratively extending the boundaries of the home, transforming and incorporating previously 'public' space into the domestic sphere. Whilst the creation of such boundaries implicitly operates to differentiate between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbours, within a historical context as today, *eruv* boundaries are typically discreet, even invisible to the uninformed. In North West London, the *eruv* makes use of pre-existing markers such as roads and railway lines, and, when no border can be found within the urban architecture, a series of poles joined by thin wires designed to emulate utility poles, are erected.

Yet, even before the North West London *eruv* became physically manifest, the Orthodox community faced considerable opposition from Jewish and non-Jewish neighbours who objected to the very concept of what the construction of an *eruv* would constitute.[676] 'It is a physical claim of territory which the majority of people find inappropriate', angrily explained Elizabeth Lawrence of the Barnet *eruv* objectors' group to the *Guardian* in August 2002. 'We should try to live together, not split the community. This has been a harmonious area but the eruv will cause trouble.'[677] The *eruv* was regarded as an inevitably divisive practice which, far from binding the community

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[675] The phrase 'symbolic enclosure' is used by S. H. Lees in her article 'Jewish Spaces in Suburbia: Interpreting the Eruv Conflict in Tenafly, New Jersey', *Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 27, no. 1, (2007), pp. 42 – 79, (p. 42).

[676] Within the Jewish community, opposition to the *eruv* came not only from secularised Jews but also from some far-right Ultra-Orthodox Jews who feared that the construction of an *eruv* would result in the loosening of strict social codes which operated on the Sabbath to maintain the social order. See *Hampstead and Highgate Express*, 5 February 1993. The same section of the Orthodox community in Manchester have also be instrumental in blocking the construction of an *eruv* in the north of the city. See O. Valins, 'Institutionalised Religion: Sacred Texts and Jewish Spatial Practice', *Geoforum*, vol. 31, (2000), pp. 575-586, (pp. 582-584) and O. Valins, 'Stubborn Identities and the Construction of Socio-Spatial Boundaries: Ultra-Orthodox Jews Living in Contemporary Britain', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 28, no. 2, (June 2003), pp. 158-175.

[677] E. Lawrence speaking to S. Morris, 'Testing the Boundaries of Faith', *Guardian*, 10 August 2002.

together in a display of multi-ethnic tolerance, would impose relationships of hierarchy and power between those who had a claim to 'use' the *eruv* and those who did not. Within such rhetoric, the *eruv* became denigrated as a quasi-colonial project. Consequently, as Jennifer Cousineau has observed, 'In articles, maps and sketches, the eruv was represented as a highly visible, public, physically daunting, symbol of Jewish presence, to be tended and repaired when damaged by subservient gentiles, a hazard to animal life, and a blight on what was once a pastoral scene.'[678] Thus the *eruv*, as a spatial expression of Jewish life and difference mapped onto the pre-existing non-Jewish milieu, was perceived as distinctly threatening, as a subversive force which would disrupt the English essentialism of the suburb. It was, according to that thinking, a triumphant assertion of socio-cultural dominance and spatial acquisition which rendered the non-Jew 'subservient'.[679]

Certainly rabbinic conceptualisations of urban space, evident within the *eruv* dispute, differ markedly from how space is perceived and used within modern western society. The practice of blurring or re-drawing the boundaries between public and private space, for example, is wholly foreign to the western tendency to celebrate the home as unbreachable territory and a haven from the 'outside world'. The perceived purpose of the *eruv*, to effectively bring the 'outside world' into the home not only deeply offended 'British' constructions of spatial practice, but was seen as an affront to a sense of community cohesion because of its imagined 'exclusionary' nature. 'If "eruv" refers to the amalgamation of private and public space, then what the establishment of an eruv does is privatise, in a sense, public space, and this is something that eruv opponents vociferously oppose', rightly insists Susan H Lees.[680] Many opponents were disgruntled because the creation of the North West London *eruv* signified the construction and privitisation of a formerly public space through which they could still pass but whose 'benefits' of sanctuary and spiritual virtuousness they could not enjoy.[681]

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[678] J. Cousineau, 'Rabbinic Urbanism in London: Rituals and the Material Culture of the Sabbath', *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3, (Spring/Summer 2005), pp. 36 – 57, (p. 52).

[679] Of course, in view of such imperialistic interpretations of the *eruv*, parallels were readily drawn with Israel and the West Bank by *eruv* opponents. See D. Cooper, 'Talmudic Territory? Space, Law, and Modernist Discourse', *Journal of Law and Society*, vol. 23, no. 4, (December 1996), pp 529-548, (p. 542).

[680] Lees, 'Jewish Space in Suburbia', p 51.

[681] This view is evident in a letter written by an opponent to the editor of *Local London*, 5 December 2000: 'Eruv-believers would happily pass through their symbolic gateways in the streets, but everyone else would be compelled

However, to other opponents, the semblance of domesticity and refuge offered by the *eruv* enclosure was something to be reviled rather than coveted. In some of the most bitter exchanges between supporters and opponents, the *eruv* was likened to a ghetto – a space which would encourage 'dangerous' insularity, slum lifestyles and, more sinisterly still, was reminiscent of the Nazi ghettos of Central and Eastern Europe. In typically sensationalist style, the *Daily Mail* published an article in 1994 with the headline 'The Danger of Creating your own Ghettos', accompanied by film-stills from Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*, depicting frightening images of impoverished and terrified ghetto inhabitants.[682] The analogy – although noxiously crude – was nevertheless clear: the depravities and horrors of enforced confinement during the years of the Holocaust were being resurrected in the leafy suburbs of North London. Anti-*eruv* campaigners were quick to pick up on the grotesque parallel, taking it upon themselves to speak on behalf of all Jews who, they feared, would be offended by the proposal. 'The poles and wires are very distasteful – especially to a certain generation of Jews that escaped from the camps', insisted Elizabeth Lawrence, alluding to the negative symbolism of the wires as evocative of concentration camps.[683] The *eruv*, designed as a space which would be conducive to the continuation of Jewish life within the diaspora was instead inverted to an abominable, bordered terrain in which the very opposite would occur. As Cousineau has pointed out, '[a]lthough eruv makers argued for the eruv as a space of liberation, opponents choose to interpret it as one of restriction'.[684]

Of course, the idiosyncratic conclusion of such representations, that Orthodox Jewry had now resorted to imprisoning themselves within walls of their own making, in a terrifying re-enactment of the Holocaust, seems thoroughly ridiculous. Nevertheless, one opponent, Alan Jacobs, a secular Jew and member of the Barnet *Eruv*'s objectors group, argued that those in favour of constructing the *eruv* had an agenda besides their liberation from the Sabbath law, which actually *depended* upon the perceived 'ghettoisation' of the Jewish quarter:

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to do so without such a benefit'. Cited in B. Smith, 'On Place and Space: The Ontology of the Eruv', <www.ontology.buffalo.edu/smith/articles/eruv.pdf>, pp. 403-418, (p. 407).
[682] 'The Danger of Creating your own Ghettos', *Daily Mail*, (1994), cited by Cousineau, 'Rabbinic Urbanism in London', pp. 51-2.
[683] E. Lawrence speaking to S. Manning, 'Plans for a new Eruv sparks fresh debate', *Hampstead and Highgate Express,* 7 January 2010.
[684] Cousineau, 'Rabbinic Urbanism in London', p. 52.

By saying this is an eruv – this is where orthodox Jews live – their hope, in my opinion, is that the orthodox will be less pressured by the community on the other side of the line to be integrated and assimilated.[685]

The *eruv* then, was depicted paradoxically as a space of restriction and a space through which Jews sought to liberate themselves not from the confines of Sabbath regulations but from the demands of the wider society in which they lived. In Jacobs' wholly ego-centric view, therefore, Orthodox Jewry were defined, and defining themselves solely in relation to the outside world, and thus acted not for their own sake but in response to the 'pressures' of modernity.[686] This response seems to get to the very crux of the conflict: the *eruv* dispute exposed anxieties about the changing and diversifying character of communities – communities which many of those opposed to the *eruv* continued to idealise as, at least historically, ethnically and culturally homogenous. Such images carried particular weight in the suburbs, especially in those areas which identified strongly with the romanticized notion of what a suburb should be: a genteel and aesthetically pleasing retreat from the frantic, rambunctious city. Nowhere was such a notion more apparent than in the neat, pastoralised lanes of Henrietta Barnett's Hampstead Garden Suburb, and nowhere else was opposition to the *eruv* fiercer.[687] In that quarter of the borough, arguments against the planned *eruv* rested largely upon the issue of visibility – explicitly the visibility of the purpose-built *eruv*

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[685]   A. Jacobs speaking to J. Meek, ''Ghetto' boundary will free Orthodox Jews', *Guardian*, 9 July 1999.

[686]   Peter Vincent and Barney Warf provide a compelling reading which partially complements this interpretation of the pro-*eruvist*'s agenda, arguing that the upsurge in the popularity of *eruvim* nationally and internationally can be explained as a form of localised resistance to globalisation: 'Opposition to globalization is generally rooted in appeals to a mythologized pre-modern past and centres around ethnic and religious identity, in effect celebrating the local and traditional as an antidote to the global and modern.' In this way then, *eruvim* are 'defiant assertions of pre-modern lifestyles in a hyper-modern world'. Thus although Orthodox Jewry are responding to external pressures, they are also acting with agency. See P. Vincent and B. Warf, 'Eruvim: Talmudic Places in a Postmodern World', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 27, no. 1, (2002), pp. 30-51, (pp. 47-48).

[687]   This correlation between 'ideal' suburban living and opposition to the *eruv* was made clear in a BBC documentary entitled 'Omnibus: Dame Henrietta's Dream', shown on BBC 1 in July 1997. The documentary traced Henrietta Barnett's legacy of social and racial harmony, and the strong anti-*eruv* feeling in the modern-day Suburb.

boundaries, implicitly the increased visibility of 'difference', namely Jewish difference, from the 'cultural status quo'.[688] As Susan H. Lees has noted,

> Political cartoons in the British media opposing the eruv depicted a brash contrast between the image of the Orthodox Jew (urban and foreign, men dressed in long black overcoats, wearing wide black hats, with side curls hanging down, accompanied by their wives and large numbers of children, conspicuously "different" and conspicuously unconcerned to be so) and the genteel cottage-like houses and gardens of the Suburb.[689]

In contrast then, to the celebrated 'function' of the suburb in the 1940s and 1950s as a space which facilitated Jewish assimilation, the *eruv* – a space within that space – seemingly orchestrated the very opposite. Furthermore, it is this interpretation of the *eruv* as a space which threatened to wholly disrupt the project of assimilation with which many suburban Jews had engaged, which explains the fierce, even bitter opposition mounted amongst local secular Jews. The *eruv* would not only mark out Jewish 'territory' – it would also mark out Jews. Opposition to the proposal, then, was a desperate attempt by the British Jewish community to not only protect and preserve the fragile communal image which they had toiled so long to construct, but was also a move to keep that image away from public scrutiny. Jewish matters, so the thinking goes, are private matters. Thus, as the following discussion of British Jewish fiction and the suburb shows, the response to the proposed *eruv* mirrored a firm and abiding determination within the community that they be the ones to shape and regulate their own self-image.

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[688] Davina Cooper has argued that inherent to such rhetoric was the conviction that 'public expression of difference contravenes the right of the dominant/universal community not to confront cultural otherness'. See Cooper, 'Talmudic Territory?', pp. 537-8.
[689] Lees, 'Jewish Space in Suburbia', p. 62.

Rejecting the Suburb: Anglo-Jewish Literary Perspectives

An assiduous foreboding about the existence, let alone the visibility of Jews in the suburbs – a foreboding which both pre-dated and superseded the *eruv* dispute – was echoed by Jews in fictionalised accounts of Anglo-Jewish suburban life. Even before the mass urban migration of Jews from the East End to London's northern suburbs, the presence of Jews in 'genteel', firmly middle-class surroundings, indeed as incongruous to those surroundings, was the subject of satire and of despair, to a new wave of Anglo-Jewish novelists in particular. Julia Frankau's *Dr Phillips: A Maida Vale Idyll* (1887) – the novel immediately proceeding *Pigs in Clover* (1903) – and Amy Levy's *Reuben Sachs: A Sketch* (1888), challenged the traditions of nineteenth century literary 'apologetics' who had striven 'to promote the liberal image of the Jew as a good British citizen in the decades leading up to emancipation', and had continued to dominate Anglo-Jewish fiction in the years afterwards.[690] Both novels offered scathing critiques of middle-class Anglo-Jewish life, dwelling at length on the materialistic concerns and vulgar lifestyles of that community.

Frankau's novel, published under the pseudonym Frank Danby, traced the downfall of the wealthy Jewish physician Benjamin Phillips, who succumbs to his lust for his gentile mistress – a metaphor for his yearning for acceptance and assimilation – and thus murders his wife so that they can be together. The eventual discovery of the protagonist's crime, and his subsequent expulsion from the Anglo-Jewish community, ridiculed the appetite amongst Jews for acceptance as voracious and destructive. Indeed it is the novel's very setting, the inner-lying London suburb of Maida Vale, a then fashionable district for families, especially Jewish families, wishing to live in more salubrious surroundings, which fore-grounded the plot's pathos so successfully. The suburban backdrop is represented as the pinnacle of social ascendancy, as a space which promises to liberate Phillips from the narrow confines of Semitic identity for the allure of an accommodating Englishness. Yet for all of the suburb's supposedly emancipative and 'elevative' qualities, it is, nevertheless, a hothouse – the very breeding ground – for Jewish opulence and immorality. Maida Vale signifies only a false 'arrival' for Dr Phillips. In the protagonist's downfall, Frankau swiftly exposes the illusionary character of the suburb as a space which represents not the 'grand finale' for Jews in

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690   B. Cheyette, 'From Apology to Revolt: Benjamin Farjeon, Amy Levy and the Post-Emancipation Anglo-Jewish Novel, 1880-1900', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England,* vol. 29, (1982-1986), pp. 253-265.

Britain but rather the beginning of the end. Jewish suburban life is, Frankau insists, 'a society worth describing before, as must be in the natural order of things, it decays or amalgamates'.[691]

That powerful and provocative image of the rotting suburb – a space colonized by Jews, and thus now infected and festering – was replicated in Amy Levy's novel *Reuben Sachs* which followed just a year after *Dr Phillips*. The novel opens with the return of the protagonist, Reuben, to the London family home in Lancaster Gate, after some months spent recovering his fragile health in the 'antipodes'. He is a young man who has enjoyed early success in his career, but whose 'health had broken down suddenly'.[692] By escaping the confines of the suburban milieu, Reuben's health is gradually restored, but from the moment of his return, any semblance of masculine vigour is slowly unpicked once more. Reuben 'was of middle-height and slender build. He wore good clothes but they could not disguise the fact that his figure was bad, and his movements awkward; unmistakably the figure and movements of a Jew.'[693] The protagonist's extended family are similarly drawn in vulgar, even animalistic caricatures that draw attention to their abundant material possessions yet illuminate still more clearly their general deficiency in bodily and spiritual health. The Jewish home – far from providing a refuge from the 'dangers' of the outside world – is a space which contaminates.

Unsurprisingly, neither *Dr Phillips* nor *Reuben Sachs* were well-received by the *fin de siècle* Anglo-Jewish community they claimed to portray. Whilst the *Jewish Chronicle* spoke cryptically of 'critical Jews' as a destructive, yet inevitable force within the Jewish communal psyche,[694] it was Levy's novel rather than Frankau's which left the *Jewish World* utterly incensed, damning its author for refusing to 'hide her blushes' behind a gentile pseudonym as Julia Frankau had done. 'She [Levy] is not ashamed of playing the *role* of accuser of her people', stormed the paper in February 1889.

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[691]   F. Danby [J. Frankau], *Dr Phillips: A Maida Vale Idyll*, (London: Keynes Press, 1989), [first published 1887], p. 140.
[692]   A. Levy, *Reuben Sachs: A Sketch,* (London and New York: Macmillan and Co., 1888), p. 3
[693]   Levy, *Reuben Sachs*, p. 11.
[694]   'Critical Jews', *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 January 1889, p. 11.

She apparently delights in the task of persuading the general public that her own kith and kin are the most hideous types of vulgarity; she revels in misrepresentations of their customs and modes of thought, and she is proud of being able to offer her testimony in support of the anti-Semitic theories of the clannishness of her people and the tribalism of their religion.[695]

Levy, in short, was condemned as a 'self-hating' Jew whose malicious rhetoric jeopardised Anglo-Jewry's fragile and hard-won position in British society. Yet what offended the newspaper most deeply was the authoress' scathing depreciation of her fellow English Jews as a ghettoised people suspended in time and space – a people both unable and unwilling to assimilate. According to Levy, the suburb as a space of liberation and assimilation had failed. In response, the *Jewish World* declared that perspective, and indeed the novel itself, as symptomatic 'of moral disease' which might only be explained by 'the neglected state of specifically Jewish female education among the middle classes in our community, and the consequent deterioration of the English Jewess'.[696] Ironically, although the jibe was, of course, levelled at Levy herself – incidentally the first Jew to be admitted to Newnham College, Cambridge – this was a conclusion with which Levy seems to have wholly agreed. In *Reuben Sachs*, Levy shows, through the tragic figure of Judith Quixano, a beautiful, intelligent, yet woefully naïve young Jewish woman, that the Anglo-Jewish middle class suburb *was* an utterly confining and corrosive space for women. Judith, the daughter of a noble, but impoverished Sephardic Jew, lives with the Leunigers, Reuben's cousins, and follows the frivolous, irreligious and insular lifestyles which the women of the family are encouraged to adopt. Although some of her peers 'showed symptoms of a desire to strike out from the tribal duck-ponds into the wider and deeper waters of society',

as for Judith Quixano, and for many women placed as she, it is difficult to conceive a training, an existence, more curiously limited, more completely provincial than hers. Her

[695] 'The Deterioration of the Jewess', *Jewish World*, 22 February 1889, p. 5.
[696] 'The Deterioration of the Jewess', *Jewish World*.

outlook on life was of the narrowest; of the world, of London, of society beyond her own set, it may be said that she had seen nothing at first hand; had looked at it all, not with her own eyes, but with the eyes of Reuben Sachs.[697]

Judith personifies the intrinsic gendering of suburban space – a parody of private space – which offers a glimpse of the outside world to its female captives in the guise of neatly tended gardens and the buzz of its shopping streets, and yet provides access to the world beyond, to 'authentic' public space, only through male eyes. Reuben, at first, is the willing facilitator of that access, delighting Judith with stories of his travels and then of his hopes and triumphs in his promising career. Quickly the two become infatuated with each other, Judith realising that her salvation from the narrow confines of her current existence might be found in Reuben. Reuben, however, harbours dreams of a political career, a career for which Judith, as the 'poor relation', is not a 'suitable' marriage proposition. For Judith, the moment of realisation comes as she stands in a near-embrace with Reuben at a society party. Through the open window they hear a cry rising up from the street below:

"What is it they are saying?" he [Reuben] cried, dropping the flowers, springing to the aperture, and pulling back the curtain. Outside the house stood a dark figure, a narrow crackling sheet flung across one shoulder. A voice mounted up, clear in discordance through the mist:

"Death of a Conservative M.P.! Death of the member for St Baldwin's!"

"Ah, what is it?"

Cold, white, trembling, she [Judith] too heard the words, and knew that they were her sentence.[698]

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[697] Levy, *Reuben* Sachs, pp. 37–38.
[698] Levy, *Reuben* Sachs, p. 173.

Reuben hurriedly leaves Judith to put himself forward for the now vacant post, believing that, having been prevented from fully confessing his love for her, he had 'escaped a great danger'.[699] Judith, once again captive in her small world, is a powerless entity cast adrift by a thoughtless and selfish man. Here, Levy's feminist agenda, an agenda much overlooked and overshadowed thanks to the attention given to her cynical and negative Semitic representations, is made abundantly clear.[700] Judith's vitality and passion to break free of the shackles of Anglo-Jewish suburbia, so briefly lighted by Reuben's attentions, flick and die, and she finds no strength to resist the marriage proposal of a wealthy but rather idiotic recent convert to Judaism – a convert who seeks to bind her ever closer, and ever more passively, to the suburban milieu. It is a space which deadens her senses and stifles her modest ambitions. It is a space from which Judith never again escapes.

The asphyxiating, misogynistic suburb appeared once again in Anglo-Jewish literature exactly sixty years after the publication of *Reuben Sachs*. Within Brian Glanville's *The Bankrupts* (1958) were echoes of Amy Levy's novel which seemed to utterly belie the passage of time and change, expect, perhaps, for the altered location. The hated suburban milieu is, in Glanville's novel, 'somewhere between Hampstead and Hendon' – an accurate reflection of Anglo-Jewry's continued journey North and North West of the urban centre.[701] It is a migration 'straightforward and familiar, in all but detail, the story of a thousand other Jewish immigrants'.[702]

The Bankrupts tells the story of Rosemary Frieman, a young Jewish woman, who has grown to despise the world of her wealthy, yet spiritually bankrupt, parents whose god, 'and the god of their friends, is much less the God of Moses than the God of Mammon. In their houses, in their bridge and golf clubs, in their lavish receptions, money is what counts'.[703] Yet it is in her revulsion of the suburb itself that Rosemary's hatred of their vulgar lifestyles becomes acutely manifest:

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[699] Ibid.
[700] M. J. Rochelson has levelled this criticism of popular readings of *Reuben Sachs* in 'Jews, Gender, and Genre in Late-Victorian England: Amy Levy's *Reuben Sachs*', *Women's Studies*, vol. 25, (1996), pp. 311 – 328, (p. 312).
[701] B. Glanville, *The Bankrupts*, (London: Secker and Warberg, 1958), extract from the novel synopsis inside the book's front cover.
[702] Ibid., p. 16.
[703] Ibid., inside front cover.

New and sterile and expensive, the road seemed to epitomize her whole environment. It was without a tradition, too bright, too smug, too solid. The houses themselves, outside at least, were not definably vulgar, but their message repelled her. Here we are, they said. Here we are. And what are you going to do about it? [...] What goes on elsewhere doesn't concern us. We're good, and we know it, and if you can't afford a house like us, you can keep your mouth shut.[704]

For Rosemary, the suburb is a pestiferous creature willed to life by shallow and materialistic people, wholly naïve to the dangerous power such a creature possesses. It is a vital yet destructive space which soothes as it smothers, excludes as it confines. Fundamentally for Rosemary, as for Judith Quixano, it is a space in which her past, present and future has been mapped out, and shall be secured through marriage. Her parents have every intention that the suburb should be Rosemary's whole world. Rosemary rails against her parents' designs for her, attempting to fashion her escape by attending art school – a minor victory – although the Frieman's refuse to compromise on their demands that Rosemary needs to find 'a nice boy' – 'you mean [...] he's got lots of money and a big car!' – to marry.[705]

It is something of an irony, then, that Rosemary meets her future fiancé and her eventual means of escape, Bernard Carter, at a wedding. Within moments there is an affinity between the pair, as Bernard expresses his own, rather more light-hearted mockery of society's proclivity for typecasting people: '"My name is Bernard Carter." [...] "But then you've seen, haven't you? We're all labelled. Sometimes I want to arrive at one of these affairs early and change all the cards, putting all the wrong people next to one another, or writing down names of people who don't exist, and never turn up. Don't *you*?"'[706] Rosemary and Bernard soon begin a relationship but it is opposed by the Friemans virtually from the outset because Bernard lacks the material advantages which they crave for their daughter. The relationship quickly becomes the source of contention which drives the family apart, until eventually, in a fit of passion, Rosemary runs away to live in

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704 Ibid., p. 21.
705 Ibid., p. 10.
706 Glanville, *The Bankrupts*, p. 48.

Bernard's bed-sit and to find work in a department store in the city. Her actions, although somewhat petulant, are also cast by Glanville as an act of desperate liberation, a heady and wholehearted rejection of the suburb which, in consequence of that repudiation, causes the urban – the very antithesis of the suburban – to be born anew:

> Now, even the city was new to her, a different, complex, unexpected London seen, not from the inside of motor-cars but from buses, on pavements, in the Bedlam of "rush hour" Tubes. She realised more sharply and immediately than before how confined her life had previously been, confined in space as well as in society, limited to indulgent North-west London and the West end, her art school running through it as a welcome but irrelevant *motif*.[707]

Rosemary's rediscovery of the city seems to anticipate the large-scale reclamation and celebration of all that is urban, which has been such a feature of contemporary society.[708] Although the city had been cast aside by her parents' generation as an emblem of gritty, congested and rambunctious space – reminiscent of the ghetto of their ancestors – it is, for Rosemary, its very meretricious quality which exposes its authenticity and heightens its appeal. In the city, unlike the desensitising suburb, life's abrasions are raw and felt. Rosemary welcomes them.

The Bankrupts is, in its own way, a 'coming of age' novel which sees its protagonist throw off the shackles which bind her to her parents, to strike out on her own, unconventional path. Significantly though, in what is a book deeply hostile to modern Anglo-Jewry, Rosemary's unconventional path is one which leads her to (re)embrace her Jewish identity – an identity which, ironically, the stiflingly 'Jewish' surroundings of her upbringing, had only caused her to resent.

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[707] Ibid., p. 194.
[708] The most obvious example of this is the 'gentrification' of London's East End in recent years which has been celebrated by some as part of a nation-wide 'Urban Renaissance' and lamented by others as disastrous for the historical and cultural 'authenticity' of such places. See the White Paper 'Towards an Urban Renaissance' (1999) compiled by the Urban Task Force headed by Richard Rogers which, on the behest of the government, set out a vision of regeneration for British towns and cities, and, in opposition to this R. Lichtenstein, *On Brick Lane*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2007).

Although it is through Bernard that Rosemary is both galvanised into action and reconciled to her Jewishness – a strikingly anti-feminist message when held against Levy's *Reuben Sachs* – by the conclusion of the novel, in response to Bernard's sudden and unexpected death, Rosemary demonstrates the full measure of her new-found maturity by leaving for Israel alone, regardless. 'She was a woman, now', the narrator insists. '[P]etulance and resentment had no place in what she was doing'.[709] Thus in finding liberation from the suburb, Rosemary secures release from her own youthful shortcomings and feels pity, rather than anger, for her parents who neither can, nor want, to secure their own liberation.[710]

By the mid-twentieth century, then, the suburb as a literary setting for Anglo-Jewish life had become firmly emblematic of confined and confining lifestyles and realms of experience, indeed as a space which bred a fatally self-perpetuating insularity. Of course, that deeply hostile image of the suburb echoed the broader trend within popular Western culture to conceptualise that space negatively.[711] Yet the continual use of the suburb when depicting minorities in Britain, as a narrative devise which conveyed the unequivocal message that 'small communities foster small-mindedness' led one recent commentator to wonder '[w]ell, what else is new?'[712] Dina Rabinovitch's weary cynicism, articulated in the *Guardian* in 2006, was in response to the release of a much-publicised debut novel from a young Anglo-Jewish author. Naomi Alderman's *Disobedience* (2006), acclaimed and denigrated in equal measure as an 'exposé' of the Orthodox community, the community from which the author in fact hailed, relates the return of Ronit, a career-driven, feminist, secular Jewish woman, to the deeply conservative community of her youth in Hendon,

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[709]   Glanville, *The Bankrupts*, p. 237.

[710]   Interestingly, Andy Medhurst has pointed out that, within British popular culture – namely film and television culture – men rather than women have typically been portrayed as the individual who seeks to 'liberate' themselves from the confines of the suburb, whereas women are seen to embrace or even 'embody' the stifling conformity which the suburb is commonly thought to represent. The very clear inversion of this trend, and the reasons for that inversion, within British Jewish literature illuminates just one of the many areas in which research on the representation of minorities in the suburbs still needs to be conducted. See A. Medhurst, 'Negotiating the Gnome Zone: Versions of Suburbia in British Popular Culture', in R. Silverstone (ed.), *Visions of Suburbia*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 240 – 268, (p. 241).

[711]   Some mid-century examples include Richard Yates' highly-acclaimed debut novel *Revolutionary Road* (1961) and Ira Levin's *The Stepford Wives* (1972), both of which were made into films: Bryan Forbes, *The Stepford Wives* (1975); Frank Oz, *The Stepford Wives* (2004); Sam Mendes, *Revolutionary Road* (2008). The recent re-incarnation of both these novels as successful Hollywood films is indicative of the persistence of 'suburb-phobia' within Western culture to the present day.

[712]   D. Rabinovitch, 'This is Hendon: Disobedience by Naomi Alderman gives Dina Rabinovitch the small-town blues', *Guardian*, 4 March 2006.

North West London, after the death of her father.[713] The suburban setting, as Rabinovitch insists, acts as 'shorthand' for the insularity and reserved traditionalism of the community. Hendon, the reader is reminded, 'is a village. It exists within a city, certainly, one of the greatest in the world. It has links to this city, people travel to and fro between them. But it is a village. In Hendon, people know one another's business'.[714] Ronit, having once fled the suffocating parochialism of 'the village', returns from New York – the 'liberated' and liberating urban milieu not so dissimilar from Rosemary Frieman's London – with much trepidation. Quickly she once again feels 'the thin sticky strands' of the place 'encircle and engulf' her, and she longs to break free.[715] Only the hunt for her mother's Sabbath candlesticks – a thinly veiled metaphor for her own lost Jewishness – keeps her there.

Essentially at first glance, *Disobedience* continues the tradition of the mildly feminist, Anglo-Jewish novels of revolt, acted out in the hated confines of the modern-day London suburb. Esti, Ronit's childhood friend and adolescent lover, serves as Ronit's doppelganger, as the self who failed to escape Hendon and all that it represents, and has, instead, settled for a loveless marriage with Ronit's cousin Dovid. Esti, as Ronit's timid and introverted alter ego, assumes the role of the passive, incarcerated female in need of rescue, a role so central to the narratives of both *Reuben Sachs* and *The Bankrupts*. Yet in an inversion of that theme, it is Esti who ultimately liberates Ronit – the supposed liberator – from her insidious resentment of her now-deceased father, and of the lonely upbringing that was hers. By forcing Ronit to re-engage with her old life, and indeed by confronting her own sexuality, Esti successfully defuses the powerful hold which the suburb and its inhabitants wield over them both. Ronit learns to view Hendon in a new light, and, in the closing chapter she reveals,

Last night I dreamt that I flew over Hendon. The wind was around me, above and below and filling my lungs. And beneath me, Hendon was spread out. At first, I saw its dried

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[713] See, for example, C. Wides, 'Naomi Alderman Interview', *Something Jewish*, 24 March 2006, < http://www.somethingjewish.co.uk/articles/1819_naomi_alderman_inter.htm> ; G. Alderman, 'Disobedience of an obedient girl', *Jewish Chronicle*, 3 March 2006, p. 31 and M. Shaviv, 'Hendon Forbid!' *Jewish Chronicle*, 3 March 2006, p. 43.

[714] N. Alderman, *Disobedience*, [first published by Viking, 2006], (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 123.

[715] Ibid., p. 142.

streets, the identical mock-Tudor houses. I saw the fitted wardrobes, the two-car families, the jobs for life in accountancy or law. [...]

And I said, "Lord, can there be passion in Hendon? Can there be desire or despair, can there be grief or joy, can there be wonder or mystery? Lord", I said, "can this place live?"

And the Lord said to me, my child, if I will it, it will live.[716]

Ronit comes to recognise that 'God is in Hendon',[717] that the suburb *has* a spiritual core and a purpose, but that it is only by disentangling oneself from 'the sticky thin strands' of the place, that one can gain an 'authentic' perspective. Certainly, it is a quiet spirituality – despite all of the 'performance' of orthodoxy – but is nevertheless a spirituality in keeping with 'the natural British reticence' of the wider society.[718] In this way then, Hendon appears to Ronit no longer a 'world unto itself' but a community imbedded within a larger community. Jewish Hendon has roots.

Thus *Disobedience* masquerades as a novel of revolt but ultimately reveals itself as a narrative fraught with the anxieties of (be)longing: not merely a meditation on inclusion within the community, nor even a desire for communal acceptance, or acknowledgment of homosexuality, but rather a longing for a firm sense of belonging in Britain. Throughout the novel, although Hendon is ever-present, its Jewish inhabitants 'wear it lightly'; afraid to articulate affinity with place, let alone claim ownership. 'Hendon does not exist', the narrator explains. 'It is only where we are, which is the least of all ways to describe us'.[719] Gardens are overgrown, homes are shabby and unloved, and British shops go unpatronised. Instead the Jewish community establish their own shops as an act of self-sufficiency, ready to 'depart for other shores' at a moment's notice.[720] Thus this pervasive sense of insecurity – a typical trait of the diasporic imagination – is articulated through a hesitancy to engage with suburban space. 'We who live in Hendon like to imagine ourselves elsewhere', the narrator insists. 'We carry our homeland on our backs, unpacking it

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[716] Alderman, *Disobedience*, pp. 253–4.
[717] Ibid., p. 217
[718] Ibid., p. 55.
[719] Alderman, *Disobedience*, p. 216
[720] Ibid., p. 124.

where we find ourselves, never too thoroughly or too well, for we will have to pack it up again one day.'[721] Yet there is a lack of conviction in such sentiment which is quickly conceded:

> [T]here is a kind of beauty here, in the scratched open places and the remains of agriculture [...] Why should we regret that we find a sort of kindness in the tamed land of Hendon? It is not our place, and we are not its people, but we have found affection here.[722]

It is this reticence to wholly relinquish attachment to the suburban landscape that has become the community's home, an attachment expressed through an idealising, and, ironically very 'English' pastoral rhetoric, which Ronit eventually discerns. It is that discovery, that the suburb kindles rather than extinguishes feeling, that it is not the desensitising space of Amy Levy and Brian Glanville's imagination, which brings her greater understanding and a certain peace. Ronit, the personification of 'the urban', ultimately becomes reconciled to 'the suburban' as a space where her Jewishness and her Britishness are not at odds, but might happily converge.

In keeping with the somewhat halcyon concluding tone of *Disobedience*, the twenty first century has witnessed something of a cultural reconciliation with suburbia which became manifest not only in fiction but also in museum exhibitions,[723]art galleries and academic ventures alike, all of which sought to celebrate rather than denigrate the suburbs.[724] As the by-line to a press review of the recent *Suburbia* exhibition at the London Transport Museum explained, with something akin to

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[721] Ibid., p. 216.
[722] Ibid., p. 216 – 217.
[723] Although, intriguingly, the expedition to the suburbs barely features at all in the recently re-furbished Jewish Museum in London.
[724] Some examples of this 'cultural reconciliation' include the *Suburbia* exhibition at the London Transport Museum (2010), the launch of the 'Centre for Suburban Studies' at the University of Kingston in 2004, and, in the United States, a recent art exhibition entitled 'Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes' at the Carnegie Museum of Art (2008/9), as well as a special issue of the Rutgers University Journal *Cross Ties*, 'Celebrate the Suburbs: Four Retroactive Cheers for the Humanities in Westchester', vol. 1, no. 4, (Winter 2006) which reviewed a series of exhibitions and programs which had taken place in the area to celebrate the suburbs.

surprise, 'Once a place to escape to, the suburbs became a byword for conservatism. But as a new exhibition shows, they can be as rich and strange as the inner city'.[725] For a new generation of the open-minded, and not only those who live there, the suburbs have once again 'come alive' as a space of adventure and possibility – a space imbued with the promise to both fascinate and delight.

Of course, such 'liberated' perspectives still confront a strong barrage of anti-suburban sentiment which has been, and continues to be, a defining feature of modern western popular culture. A recent article in the *Wall Street Journal*, from December 2008, lays the blame at Hollywood's door, citing one filmic example after another which has contributed to the long history of casting 'the American suburbs as the physical correlative to spiritual and mental death'.[726] The effect has been cross-cultural and has, undoubtedly, been felt across the Atlantic, not least in the continual vilification of suburban living as an expression of youthful rebellion in pop music.[727]

Yet where does this obsession with defining suburbia as the epitome of conformity leave British Jewry? As the archetypal outsider, can 'the Jew' ever belong in the suburbs? It seems clear that the answer lies not with the spatial configuration of the urban peripheries – the 'multi-cultural' character of the modern day suburb, after all, still remains (except, perhaps for the novels of Zadie Smith) a footnote to popular notions of what constitutes suburbia – but with the malleability of the Jewish community itself.[728] Certainly British Jewry's long, frequently agonised relationship with the suburbs, a space which has proved to be, for them, both divisive and unifying, gives some sense of how closely the community's responses to, and representations of, suburban living have paralleled its treatment within British society itself. As 'native' Britons

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[725] O. Hatherley, 'Come Out to Live', *Guardian*, 21 November 2009, p. 18.

[726] L. Siegel, 'Why Does Hollywood Hate the Suburbs?: America's long artistic tradition of claiming spiritual death by station wagon', *Wall Street Journal*, 27 December 2008.

[727] The most recent example that comes to mind is British band, The Enemy's 2007 album entitled *We'll live and die in these towns*, which includes the lyrics 'stop living your life by the alarm /that wakes you up everyday at eight/ leave your Peugeot on the forecourt/ its all too much for you to take', and 'we'll live and die in these towns/don't let it drag you down'.

[728] Celebrated novels which address the theme of 'multi-cultural Britain', namely Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (London: Doubleday, 2003) and Andrea Levy's *Small Island* (London, Review, 2004) are both firmly set in urban surroundings. Conversely, the suburbs, for the most part, still remain popularly conceptualised as ethnically homogenous and as the heartland of wealthy, 'white' Britons, the semi-urban descendants of the virtually extinct country-dwelling aristocracy. The exception to this is Zadie Smith, whose novels *White Teeth* (London: Penguin, 2000) and *The Autograph Man* (London: Penguin, 2002) are set in London's suburban districts and, in many ways, are a celebration of the diversity and cultural fluidity of the suburbs.

embraced the pastoral dream of house-and-garden at the end of the Tube line, so too did many in the British Jewish community. As a cultural ethos descended on the nation which denounced the suburbs as a soulless, asphyxiating world – a dream gone horribly awry – so too did that ethos seep into the British Jewish cultural imagination. Thus the suburbs have been, and continue to be, a barren landscape, an empty signifier, onto which the socio-cultural mood of the day has been mapped. When viewed in this light, 'the suburb' shares something with 'the Jew' – both have been constructed through paradox and are subject to the whims of those who choose to communicate with and through them. Perhaps it is an awareness of these shared qualities, a sense of affinity, which has led contemporary British Jewry to make the suburbs their home.

<u>Conclusion</u>

How should one go about trying to draw conclusions from such a long, winding and, as yet, incomplete migrant narrative which, at least within the bounds of this study, began in the nineteenth century and ended in the twenty first? Should it be cast as a tale of endurance and fortitude, hardship and suffering, or perhaps better yet, as the dramatic chronicles of a long-fought, but ultimately triumphant, journey from the *shtetl* to the suburbs in which poverty and prejudice have eventually and wholeheartedly been overcome? But that of course, would not be honest or accurate, as pleasingly 'polished' though such an ending would be. It would neither reflect the reality of the lived experience of the British Jewish community past and present, nor the principle arguments which, within this section, I have attempted to articulate.

Perhaps the most significant of these arguments is that the longer 'story' of the Jewish migrant experience is one which, for the most part, still remains to be written.[729] This conclusion might seem a little surprising, given not only my own efforts here, but the prolific academic output on the subject in the past thirty years. Yet few have attempted to trace the migrant experience from its beginnings in nineteenth century Russia to its (current) endpoint in the affluent suburbs of Britain's largest cities. What is more, fewer still have paid heed to the spatial dynamics of that migrant journey, especially in regard to the interplay between space, gender and ethnicity. However this is an approach which is surely crucial for discerning and accurately deciphering not only the context around the text, the continuity besides and amidst the turmoil and change, but also how and why Britons formulated and shared ideas about the Jewish alien environment. Without that approach, for example, one might fail to detect the persistence of the gendered discourse (and paradox) of Jewish territoriality – a discourse which repeatedly rendered the (male) alien Jew a territorializing force as well as a (feminised/effeminate) deterritorialized victim. Such contradictorily rhetoric, I have shown, weaves its way across this time period with surprising frequency, surfacing in the accounts of visitors to the Russian Pale, in the invasion fantasies of *fin de siècle* literature, in press representations of the Jewish East End, and, most recently in the bitter conflict over the construction of the North West London *eruv*. All of these examples, although

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[729] One cross-Atlantic exception to this is Irving Culter's coincidently titled *The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996) – an illustrated account of Jewish life in Germany and Eastern Europe and later in Chicago from the early nineteenth century to the present day.

framed by a particular set of socio-historical circumstances, nevertheless point to an enduring trend within British Semitic spatial discourse which perceives 'the Jew' as irrevocably bound up not with space *per se* but with the question of its ownership. Unsurprisingly this would seem, once again, to be an offshoot of the age-old anxiety of the Jew in the diaspora. That is to say, Jewish affinity with, and notions of, space is always a question of belonging.

Yet if that is the case, why is it that, as we have seen, this discourse has been articulated primarily by non-Jews? The answer lies, I feel, in the very British context which has produced these multiple cultural representations of alien Jews and the habitat which they were, and are now, perceived to occupy. The creeping tone of disquiet which seems to accompany, or indeed to define, the cultural output within Britain which has attempted to contend with the spatial presence of the alien Jew, seems indicative of a pervading discomfort within the British psyche itself. It is a discomfort which suggests apprehension about diminished spatial control. In an age of imperial decline, tales of adventure, conquest and dominance in far-off lands, as the overarching narrative of this section has shown, have slowly receded across the twentieth century to be replaced by more modest territorial claims over 'the quite street and privet hedge' of the present day suburbs.[730] Britishness is no longer defined by symbols of empire and concern for the nation, but has become encoded in regard for the pastoral aesthetic of residential space and anxiety for the community. Thus these visions of Jewish space, place and territoriality which this section has charted reflect not (or not only) a very 'Jewish' anxiety, but also a decidedly 'British' one – an anxiety both implicitly and explicitly suggestive of an imperialist mentality and its legacy in the post-colonial age.

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[730] W. Webster, *Imagining Home: Gender, 'Race' and National Identity, 1945-64*, (London: UCL Press, 1998), p. xiv.

Conclusion

Placing and Replacing the Other: The Legacy of Imperialism

In the age of David Cameron's 'Big Society' – a manifesto designed to devolve power from 'the nation' and government to the community – a study concerned with how national identity in the recent past has been constructed, utilised and articulated, might seem to be out of place. Perhaps, as Cameron implicitly suggests, the abstracted idea of 'Britishness' is now not nearly so important as that of individual and communal responsibility to the nation proper, nor so robust as to ward off the threat posed by our own destructive consumerism. Yet for all of this apparently 'fresh' thinking, at the core of such rhetoric still resides the anxiety that Britain is a beleaguered nation under attack from within – the threat no longer posed by the alien Jew, but, ironically, by ourselves. The character and quality of 'Britishness', the Prime Minister would, paradoxically, have us believe, never seemed so important as now, nor so in need of societal investment.

Yet, as this thesis has shown, such anxieties about the state of the nation are nothing new, and were, in fact, absolutely central to the reception and representation of immigrant Jews across the *fin de siècle*. Fears of physical and moral degeneracy at the end of the nineteenth century were compounded by challenges brought against the gender, social and imperial order. The idea of 'Britain' then, as now, felt distinctly fragile. The national press, and indeed the newly-established popular press in particular, played up that image of the nation as a means to paint Britain as the victim in a struggle between the colonized and the colonizer – a contrived yet nevertheless effective ploy to prevent further immigration. Within the realms of politics and literature too, similar fictions were perpetuated, with the potent image of the territorializing Jew reaching full force in Bram Stoker's gothic horror masterpiece of 1897, *Dracula*, before becoming enshrined in legislation with the passage of the 1905 Aliens Act.

However, the aliens debate which took place at the turn of the twentieth century was not only characterised by imperial spatial discourse or, to speak colloquially, 'turf war' narratives – although these, as I have shown, were key . It was also bound up with questions of how Britain

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should (re)define herself in response to the pressures of an ever-diversifying social landscape. How might 'the Jew' as neither 'black' nor 'white', 'oriental' or 'occidental' come to belong in a nation which prided (and deceived) herself as ethnically homogenous and racially fixed? More worryingly still, was integration even a priority for the seemingly vast, virtually impenetrable and wholly unfathomable community of immigrant Jews residing in the East London 'ghetto'? These were concerns which the established community of Jews in Britain were only too eager to temper, so irrevocably linked were they with these largely unwelcome newcomers. In that objective, the Anglo-Jewish press led the way, capitalising upon the early and heartfelt outcry from the general populous as the initial reports of persecution in Eastern Europe reached British ears. These sentiments also found their way into the political arena with the momentum generated by the public protest meetings of 1882 and 1890 as well as the mollifying words of Israel Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto* going some way towards placating the cries for restrictive legislation.

Yet it was the careful gendering of these Semitic representations which played the most crucial role in moderating the more sensational elements of the aliens debate. Thus whilst the male Jew in Eastern Europe was presented by certain sections of the press, Arnold White, William Evans-Gordan, and others as threatening and degenerate, his wife and daughters were simultaneously depicted as innocent victims whose virtue had been violated and who were in need of Britain's protection. As these families began to journey to Britain, such gender dynamics were further affirmed through fictional portrayals of their migration. The figure of the male Jew featured repeatedly in these travel narratives as deceitful and cunning whilst the Jewish woman became incarnate as the Wandering Jewess – a foil for 'the accursed Wandering Jew'.[731] Such gendering of the alien continued to operate unabated within popular socio-political discourse even after the immigrants had arrived in Britain. Within the ghetto interior of London's East End, the Jewish male was observed by veterans of urban exploration such as George Sims, as well as the less experienced Beatrice Potter, as a curious relic of a mystical time and place – as an anachronistic and rather emasculated being. In contrast, within comparable accounts and novels of the era, as well as the testimony provided to government commissions, Jewish immigrant women were widely

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[731]   R. Rosenthal, 'Inventing the Other: Ambivalent Constructions of the Wandering Jew/ess in Nineteenth Century American Literature', in L. J. Greenspoon and B. F. Le Beau (eds.), *Representations of Jews through the Ages*, (Omaha, Nebraska: Creighton University Press, 1996), pp. 171-188, (p. 171).

congratulated for their resourcefulness, the high standard of their maternal care, and their hard-working natures. As Israel Zangwill so convincingly demonstrated through his female protagonists in *Children of the Ghetto,* the literary tradition of depicting Jewish women as redemptive, wholly sympathetic figures with the capacity to mediate between the old world and the new, between Jew and Gentile, persisted within and beyond fiction across the *fin de siècle.*

Gender, then, was fundamental within the aliens debate as both a moderator and mediator of racial difference. But every rule has its exceptions, and thus there are examples highlighted within this thesis which might seem to call this conclusion into question. Numerous social commentators were both surprised and delighted to observe the diligent thoughtfulness and sobriety of the Jewish man within the immigrant home, for example, whilst Sims and Zangwill were both keen to debunk the image of the unscrupulous Jewish male sweater. Yet even within these anomalies was encoded a perception of Jewish masculinity as distinctive and unassimilable to 'Britishness'. Hence whilst the Jewish male's domesticity may have been praised by some British onlookers – especially women – it was simultaneously sneered at as 'unmanly' by others. So too was the Jewish sweater both revered and reviled in equal measure, even when revised as a sympathetic figure. During her visit to an East End sweatshop in 1888, Beatrice Potter could barely contain her contempt for its emasculated and weak owner, tellingly introduced as the husband of the 'missus' – a domineering, masculinised figure.

However gender operated not only to diversify, vilify and humanise Semitic difference, it was also implicit in the construction and perception of so-called 'Jewish' space. This was especially apparent in the earliest accounts of the Jewish habitat in Eastern Europe, where the conceptualisation of the alien Jew as a territorializing force compounded an image of the fortified, hostile *shtetl.* The virility of that distinctly urban space, however, was established as a contrast to the Jews' decidedly more ambivalent relationship with the land – a relationship, or lack of, which was used to call Jewish masculinity into question. As the alien Jew migrated from Eastern Europe to Britain, the idea of the Jewish urban habitat as fortified and impenetrable persisted, finding its echo firstly in the East London 'ghetto' and then later in rhetoric surrounding the North West London *eruv.* Both of these spaces were depicted as emphatically masculine, imbued with opportunities for financial and spiritual growth, and characterised chiefly as territorialist in

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ambition. In contrast, these same onlookers perceived both of these environments as spaces of restriction for women, and indeed as deeply misogynistic. The reality for many Jewish women was, however, often vastly different with both the ghetto and the *eruv* providing greater freedom from the confines of the family and home. Ironically, it has been the suburb – visualised and idealised by many within the Jewish community as the space with the greatest power to 'liberate' – which has been experienced, particularly by women, as the most confining and asphyxiating of 'Jewish' spaces. What is more, it is this theme which extends across the entire chronological landscape of this thesis, binding two of the earliest novelists under discussion – Amy Levy and Julia Frankau – with the most recent – Naomi Alderman.

Yet despite the longevity of such narratives, the experiences of minorities in the suburbs still remain at the margins of academic inquiry.[732] The post-war period has witnessed the remarkable rise of the British suburb, fuelled in part by immigration and the social mobility of minority communities – Jews amongst them – migrating from the urban centre to its peripheries. However little previous research has acknowledged the role that the presence of minorities – in terms of their built heritage, and culture and socio-political contributions – has played in forging the present-day suburb. Their histories have been marginalized or simplified to promote the sanitised notion that 'ascension' to the suburbs led to the levelling of difference and, ultimately, contentment. Yet as this thesis has shown, British Jewish literary accounts have offered a striking counter-narrative to such assumptions. It is these types of assumptions, however, which hint at the legacy of an imperialist mentality in Britain. That the nation's racial 'others' could be anything other than satisfied to have been granted admittance into 'white' spatial territory, and indeed that they may have been formative in the development of those areas, is not a conjecture which has, as yet, received significant scrutiny. Yet in an age when concern for the nation has been reformulated as concern for the community, challenging such assumptions seems of paramount importance.

In twenty first century Britain, the 'other' is no longer the alien Jew. Instead, the dubious honour of fulfilling that role has been taken up by asylum seekers, the foreign worker, media

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[732] An exception to this rule of neglect is P. Panayi, *An Immigration History of Britain: Multicultural Racism since 1800*, (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2010), pp. 85-135, which devotes a chapter to the demographics, economics and patterns of migration to the suburbs by immigrants and minorities. However, the emphasis still remains upon how far ghettoisation and integration occurred amongst these communities.

celebrities, even ourselves. This is who the government now looks to regulate, and who the press –
especially the tabloid press, like to casually demonise. It is still literature which plays a crucial role
in humanising and giving voice to these marginalized sections of society as they seek to move from
their own landscapes of exclusion and cultural ghettos to the suburbs of the British imagination.
In a post-modern society which thus thrives on media caricature and image management at the
expense of 'authenticity', a historical study of how representations of immigrant Jews were
constructed and disseminated in the recent British past might not be out of place after all.

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