Jews in the East End, Jews in the Polity, 'The Jew' in the Text
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I

The East End of London resisted liberalism. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, East End constituencies were bastions of apathy and Conservatism, friendly to electoral candidates who advertised their imperial patriotism, support for protection from cheap foreign imports and vigorous opposition to Jewish immigration. While free trade and the industrial revolution had ameliorated living conditions for workers and their families in factory towns, the East End remained a sink of chronic underemployment and low wages, not least in the docks and the sweated trades. Socially, the district attracted a legion of reformers and social workers who set up in settlement houses such as Toynbee Hall and Oxford House to spread the gospel of moral improvement. Their influence on individual lives could be significant but their aggregate impact on the area was neither extensive nor deep. Culturally, the East End remained associated with Godlessness, violence (not least against women), and either the remorseless gloom of Arthur Morrison's *A Child of the Jago* (1896) or the vulgar pleasures of music hall and drink.[1]

Seen in this light, the Jews of the East End were strikingly anomalous. In their heartland of Whitechapel they consistently helped to return Liberal members of parliament: Samuel Montagu from the 1885 election to 1900, and then his nephew Stuart Samuel from 1900 to 1916. The immigrant population and their English-born children, according to many contemporaries, were hard-working and upwardly mobile. Jewish philanthropists made a significant impression on social conditions and created bonds of community that some Christian reformers self-consciously strived to emulate. In contrast to their Gentile neighbours, Jewish immigrants, in general, were seen to cleave to religious piety, home, family-life, and the law of the land.[2] While the East End's challenge to the progress and improvement apparent elsewhere in the country was one puzzle that fascinated contemporaries, the Jews' apparently successful adaptation to conditions that demoralized others provided another.

The picture of the Jewish East End projected by contemporaries informed those scholars who, in the 1950s and 1960s, wrote pioneering social histories of Jewish immigrants and the Jewish community.[3] However, it is an image that has been subject to

criticism and revision over the last twenty-five years. Even before this time, Bill Fishman had rescued *East End Jewish Radicals* (1975) from oblivion. From the 1990s Fishman's was no longer a lone voice and others too reoriented their attention to the history of Jewish labour and the labour movement; the histories of Jewish crime and prostitution were acknowledged; and the social, cultural, and political conflicts between rich and poor, East End and West End, anglicized and foreign within the Jewish community often became the focus of attention.[4]

This new historiography of the Jewish East End developed alongside a second sort of revisionism. Here scholars interrogated the received account of Jewish integration in the period and in doing so they took a critical distance from the liberal tradition. Whereas the conventional view had narrated and celebrated the 'alembic of English tolerance' and had focussed on the relative absence of antisemitism in Britain, historians now argued that nineteenth-century liberalism was allergic to cultural difference. In an important essay which first set out this interpretation Bill Williams coined the striking term 'the anti-Semitism of tolerance.' Williams' focus was relations between Jews and non-Jews in Manchester in the second half of the nineteenth century. 'Jews were validated', he argued, 'not on the grounds of their Jewish identity, but on the basis of their conformity to the values and manners of bourgeois English society.'[5] This view has been reproduced by others, though usually without the Marxist flourish. Geoffrey Alderman proposes that after emancipation British Jews 'felt that they were on trial, that they had to prove, and to continue to prove that they were worthy of the rights and freedoms Anglo-Christian society had extended to them'. David Cesarani argues that 'the majoritarian Christian, utilitarian ethos [of Victorian England] marked out the Jews as different. When the state acted in accordance with these values there was inevitably friction between it and the Jews'.[6]

The dark side of liberalism is now a familiar theme in writing on the long nineteenth century. The treatment of the working class in factory towns, of the criminalized underclass, of women belonging to all social classes and of colonized peoples, have all been examined to highlight the self-interestedness, hypocrisy, and coercive capacity of men and institutions that espoused liberal principles. In this body of work, liberalism is sometimes understood capaciously: not merely as the creed of a political party or even an ideology but as a set of values and a political culture that traversed parties or even states. It is revealed as a doctrine that valorized and promoted a

set of freedoms but also as one which, on closer inspection, promoted a series of exclusions.[7]

It is this same estimate of liberalism as intolerant of difference which underpins recent analyses of how Jews were represented in Victorian and Edwardian culture. Liberals, it is suggested, embraced and vaunted Jews to the extent that they carried forward the values and behaviours of which they approved; but in so far as Jews and Jewishness did not conform to this standard they were deprecated or even condemned. In his path-breaking study, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society* (1993), Bryan Cheyette writes as follows:

> The confident Victorian expectation that 'culture' can modernize and order an 'anarchic' reality underpins this study […]. We shall deliberately foreground this Arnoldian ideal of 'culture' where Jews, newly assimilated into the nation-state, exemplify the Enlightenment virtues of tolerance, justice and equality. This liberalism, however, is always ambivalent because it is buttressed by a spurious universalism which assumes 'the Jew' will be transfigured in a higher realm. Within an increasingly exclusivist nation-state, that is, Jews are constructed in equivocal terms as both the embodiment of a transformable cultural Hebraism and, at the same time, as an unchanging racial 'other'.[8]

More recent work extends this approach. Notably, Nadia Valman reveals that Victorian ambivalence was articulated through a gendered bifurcation:

> The fundamentally contradictory place occupied by Judaism and Jews in both Christian and secular culture […] was inscribed into nineteenth-century narratives in gendered terms. Repeatedly, the figure of the Jewess marked the bifurcation between the discursive denigration and idealization of Judaism. The Jew was represented as archaic, legalistic, materialistic, intolerant, superstitious and primitive; Judaism itself was masculinized. The Jewess, by contrast, was spiritual, cultured, patriotic, emotional and modern. While the Jew was irredeemable, the Jewess represented the capacity of the Jews to transcend their spiritual and social narrowness.[9]

Since the early 1990s innovative work such as this has turned away from 'antisemitism' and instead has used 'ambivalence' as a term that can illumine our understanding of how Jews have been represented. This turn to ambivalence is not restricted to the long nineteenth century yet some of the most sustained work developing this theme has focussed on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century culture. In doing so it draws upon and also reinforces an interpretation of the interaction of liberalism and the Jews in which the universalism of the former generates hostility to the particularism of the latter.[10]

I have noted two strands of revisionist writing which have developed over the last twenty years: one deals with the history of the Jewish East End, the other with the relationship between the Jews and liberal culture. Although they emerged almost simultaneously, these two lines of thought rarely intersected. This essay is an attempt to experiment with just this sort of crossing. In doing so I will focus first on aspects of the social and institutional history of the Jewish East End in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, specifically, the treatment of poverty and the politics of education; and, second, I will examine representations of East End Jews in the same period in the writing of social investigators and reformers.

II

Between 1850 and 1914 the relationship between Jewish philanthropy and state activity developed along divergent paths in the fields of poor relief and education. In matters of poor relief, Jews largely eschewed the resources administered and disbursed by a nationwide, locally administered system of support and discipline for paupers. With few exceptions, the Jewish poor remained the responsibility of the Jewish community. Yet at the same time, Jews in London became ever more dependent on support from taxpayers for education, even in schools that were designated 'Jewish' and had their origins in the Jews' own philanthropic activity. At first sight, the practice of poor relief appears to confirm critical assessments of Jewish integration in the face of liberal norms. Jews declined to use public resources in an effort to keep impoverished and dependent Jews away from public attention. At the same time, however, the Jews' willingness to take public funds for education suggests a different dynamic between Jews and political culture.

The Jewish population in London grew dramatically in the mid- and late nineteenth century. At the same time, it became both more foreign and, taken as a whole, significantly more poor. In 1851 there were roughly 35,000 Jews in England and the greater part of them, some 20,000, lived in London, mostly east of Aldgate. Immigration enlarged London's Jewish population in the middle decades of the century but the levels of immigration from Russia leaped following the pogroms and exodus of 1881–82 and continued to rise steadily until the Aliens Act of 1905 both curtailed and deterred the influx. By then, however, London Jewry had been transformed. At the turn of the century

there were 144,000 Jews in the capital, roughly 83 per cent of them living in the East End. Not only the size but also the social profile of London Jewry changed radically. At the start of the 1880s, just before the onset of large-scale immigration from Eastern Europe, roughly one quarter of the capital's Jews made do with an income below one hundred pounds per annum — and so fell below a rough and ready threshold for a precarious lower-middle-class existence in the capital. Immigration greatly enlarged the proportion of the poor among London's Jews. At the turn of the century, more than 70 per cent of adult male immigrants were wage earners, striving to earn a living in the workshop trades — principally tailoring, cabinet making, and boot and shoe making.[11]

The growing number of poor and foreign Jews in the East End of London presented a huge challenge to communal philanthropies. Following its creation in 1859, the Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish Poor immediately became the chief source of support for needy Jews in the capital. The Board's capacity to raise and disburse funds grew rapidly as East European Jews arrived in London. Its expenditure, which stood at £3000 per annum in 1861 had grown by almost 800 per cent to reach £27,500 in 1908.[12] The Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish Poor existed alongside English poor law institutions. It even took its name from the local institutions — the boards of poor law guardians — that raised funds from the poor rate and spent the proceeds on relieving the poor. The Jewish Board of Guardians (as it became known) thus not only provided assistance for the Jewish poor but in doing so it kept needy Jews away from the English poor law. The burden of maintaining the Jewish poor fell almost wholly on the Jewish community and not on local taxpayers.

This is all the more striking since those Jews who gave philanthropic support to the Jewish Board of Guardians inevitably paid twice: once for the support of the poor in their locality and a second time for the Jewish poor. Yet there were no legal barriers to prevent the Jewish poor — even the immigrants among them — from receiving assistance from the local poor law. Despite this clear legal entitlement to relief and despite the chronic and occasionally critical financial difficulties that the Jewish Board of Guardians faced, the leaders of London Jewry continued to treat the Jewish poor as a communal responsibility.[13]

Why did they do so? Some scholars have drawn attention to a culturally specific, religiously enjoined, and centuries-old Jewish tradition of charitable giving as well as to the legacy of communal self-governance framed in medieval and early modern Europe.[14]

A different or complementary explanation draws attention to the dynamic created by the conditional toleration of the Jewish minority. This line of analysis argues that communal leaders were fearful that Jews would provoke hostility if they became a charge on the ratepayers. These concerns became all the more sharp as, by stages, Jews were allowed equal status within the polity: a process termed 'Jewish emancipation' and in which the admission of the first Jew to Parliament in 1858 is conventionally instated as the crowning moment. David Cesarani argues that the acute sense among English Jews that they had to prove themselves worthy of equal citizenship, accounts 'for the anglicising strategies that were put in place with regard to East European immigrants […] and their desperate efforts to eradicate Jewish poverty and criminality'. According to this view, Jewish practices of poor relief developed as a defensive strategy in face of the pressures created by liberal intolerance.[15]

We can find some evidence for both of these arguments. On one side, Jewish charitable giving was often solicited and described in terms of Jewish tradition; on the other, there are many examples of leading communal figures and philanthropists, as well as newspapers such as the *Jewish Chronicle,* expressing alarm at the impact of the Jewish poor in general and the immigrant poor in particular, on the image and well-being of British Jews.[16] However, neither separately nor together do these arguments add up to a satisfactory explanation. This becomes clear if we compare the relationship of the Jewish community in London to the poor law with its relationship to state-funded education. For in the same decades that Jews were anxious to distance themselves from the poor law, they were content to consume ratepayers' and taxpayers' money and become heavily dependent on state support for education.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century London Jewry had created a network of seven schools to educate the capital's Jewish children but after 1870 the capacity of this network was outstripped by the natural increase of the Jewish population, by immigration, and by changes in the law which after 1880 made school attendance compulsory for children aged between five and thirteen.[17] For the Jews themselves to meet this demand for education would not only have led to increased running costs — the employment of more teachers, for example — but would also have required the erection of several new school buildings and hence major capital expenditure. In fact, Jews in London did nothing of the sort and developed a growing dependence on the public purse. Equally significant is that they did so openly and without apology.

The first grants of money to schools from parliament were made in 1833 and just twenty years later the Council on Education issued the first grant to a Jewish school. By the 1890s the state's financial contribution to these Jewish schools had become so large that it exceeded the income from endowments and charitable contributions in every case except one. This reliance on government funding increased further with the Education Acts of 1902 and 1903.[18] Jewish denominational schools, along with Anglican and Roman Catholic schools, now sustained their day-to-day running costs with funds raised from local taxation. The Jewish community remained responsible only for capital costs and the maintenance of the schools, albeit to standards set by local authorities. Notwithstanding this financial support from ratepayers, the Jewish community continued to have the right to nominate a majority of the management board for these schools. It also retained complete control over the religious curriculum taught in the schools where several hours each week were set aside for Hebrew language training and Jewish religious instruction.[19]

But this was not the only way in which Jews used state funds to support the education of Jewish children in London. The Jewish community had never been able to provide resources to educate all the capital's Jewish children. The 1870 Education Act provided a solution. The Act established a dual system of, on one side, voluntary denominational schools (such as the Jewish schools eligible for parliamentary grants), and on the other side, what were called board schools, financed by local taxes and subject to control by locally elected school boards. The 1870 Act, therefore, allowed the Jewish community to pass the costs of educating the greater number of Jewish children on to local taxpayers. By 1901, 60 per cent of Jewish children in London were educated at board schools. Jewish parents, moreover, were allowed to remove their children from classes in religious instruction, and Jews were allowed to withdraw their children from school on the Jewish Sabbath and on Jewish festivals.[20]

In the East End of London, Jewish demands and special attention to Jewish needs went far beyond these merely negative allowances. By 1902 there were as many as sixteen board schools in the East End of London, containing 15,000 pupils, which educated their children along what were called 'Jewish lines'. This meant that the schools observed Jewish holidays; Jewish ladies and gentlemen sat on their boards of management; in some cases the schools had a Jewish head teacher, and in all cases at least one of the teachers in the school was Jewish. Indeed, the London School Board advertised specifically for

'Yiddish-speaking' school teachers. Religious education in these schools was organized around curricula especially designed for the schools by the Chief Rabbi.[21]

Why was it that at the same time as it repudiated the poor law for most practical purposes, despite the strain this placed on its resources, the Jewish community was eager and willing to accept the state's help in the field of education? The emphasis placed by some historians on the conditional character of Jewish emancipation and the resulting desire of communal leaders to efface Jewish interests and visibility, and hence their reluctance to be seen to receive public funds, is little help here. For Jews made no attempt to hide their use of government money to promote education in Jewish schools. When denominational education became a point of bitter controversy Jews did not avoid the fray. In the first years of the twentieth century, when policy towards voluntary schools was at the centre of political debate, many Jews stated openly that they would use their vote to promote the interests of Jewish voluntary schools. In Whitechapel in 1904, Henry Gordon, a Jewish communal activist, stood for election to the London County Council as an Independent candidate with the avowed aim of defending the status of denominational schools under the 1903 Education Act. He did so in opposition to the Progressives' campaign to place these schools under public control and gathered the support of significant religious and lay leaders, including Lord Rothschild. Gordon was elected triumphantly at the top of the poll and won the support of the Jewish and Roman Catholic vote.[22] Jews defended their schools in the early twentieth century even though these were years in which they figured prominently and unfavourably in political debate both as a result of the war in South Africa — in which many opponents of the war understood the conflict to have been engineered by sinister Jewish interests — and the controversy over Jewish immigration.[23]

We will be able to understand better this contrast between the Jews' relationship to poor relief and education, if we set it within a broader social and political terrain. In the case of education the funding of Jewish schools and the special consideration for Jewish children in board schools arose as one strand within a larger history of the relationship between the state and religious diversity. In the case of the Jewish poor, the policies of the Board of Guardians developed in interaction with the debate on poverty in England, and especially in the East End.

At the start of the nineteenth century the British state had a semi-confessional character. The established Church was fundamental to the constitution and gave religious

sanction to the social as well as the political order. In theory, Anglicans alone were entitled to sit in Parliament and only the Church of England received financial support from Parliament. The parish church remained the only place where births, deaths, and marriages could be registered officially. By the mid-1830s all these privileges had been dismantled. Disabilities imposed on dissenting Protestants were removed in 1828 and the following year, with the admission of Catholics, Parliament ceased to be an exclusively Protestant assembly. The last grant of parliamentary funds to the Church of England was made in 1824.[24] Henceforth the Church would depend on its own efforts and resources. Acts of Parliament in 1835 and 1836 legislated for the civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages. At the same time as its monopoly status was undermined in law, the Church of England was challenged by competitors for the religious allegiance of the people and by the apparent indifference of large numbers of the working classes. The result, confirmed by the religious census of 1851, was that just 40 per cent of the English population attended a Sunday church service and that half of those attending belonged to denominations dissenting from the Church of England.[25]

Henceforth, the Anglican Church had to make its way in a society that was diverse in religious terms and in the face of governments that wanted to acknowledge this diversity. The pluralism promoted by the state went beyond removing the religious disabilities which prevented individual Protestant dissenters, Catholics, or Jews from participating as equals in a system of representative government. It extended to acknowledging those religions in law and administrative practice and offering them financial support for some of their secular activities. This was the case in the field of education above all others. Here the Church enjoyed a vast infusion of funds but on condition that it did not enjoy exclusive rights over them. When education grants were first disbursed in 1833 they were distributed through two educational agencies, the National Society, established and run by Anglicans, and the dissenters' British and Foreign Society. Grants were distributed according to the level of voluntary contribution and this enabled the National Society, which was able to draw on Anglican and gentry financial support, to take 80 per cent of the funds. Thus pluralism was inscribed in the system from the outset but on terms that favoured the Church of England. These terms were further reinforced in the 1840s when the Church won control of the inspectorate for state aided schools and forced the Whig government to abandon its plan to establish non-sectarian teacher training colleges.[26]

Far from expressing a policy of liberal or Christian universalism, state education policy promoted diversity in such a way that pluralism reinforced the position of the Church of England. John Bright, a leading radical and dissenter, characterized the new system as one that had 'a tendency to aggrandize the Established Church'. Increasingly, mid-nineteenth-century nonconformists took the view that education should remain free of all state support because only in this way could religious freedom be sustained.[27] However, despite the nonconformists' well-founded grievances and opposition, the state's pluralism was real enough. In 1847 state funds were disbursed to Roman Catholic schools for the first time, and in 1853, after persistent lobbying by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, this policy was extended to Jewish schools as well. This policy reached its apotheosis in the 1902 Education Act, which extended rate-payer support from the non-denominational board schools to encompass the denominational voluntary schools as well. By this time, Anglican voluntary schools were in profound financial difficulty. Their future was secured by the Conservative Party, for whom Church schools were of fundamental importance, but the same support was also extended to Catholic and Jewish Schools.[28]

Pluralism was the predominant political response to religious diversity in England and shaped education policy.[29] This had important consequences for Jews. First, it created a framework within which Jews were able to pursue and accept taxpayers' money for educational purposes. Second, the controversial nature of the state's involvement in denominational education meant that heated debate on the subject was woven into the texture of British political life. When they advocated state funding of Jewish schools, as well as Jewish interests in education more broadly, Jews were intervening in an area of policy and debate in which it was customary and legitimate to promote non-Anglican and, indeed, non-Christian interests.

In contrast, the intersection of Jews with the politics of poverty was a point of abiding difficulty. Following the end of the Napoleonic Wars the debate on poverty in Britain was characterized by repeated attempts to distinguish the deserving from the undeserving poor. This distinction took institutional form as a result of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. Henceforth, able-bodied males who had recourse to the poor law were seen as undeserving. Life in the poor law workhouse, according to the architects of the 1834 reform, was intended to be 'less eligible' than life outside of its walls. That is to say, workhouse inmates were provided with a meagre standard of comfort and a

disciplinary regime such that they would feel their lives in the institution were less agreeable than if they were self-supporting within the labour market beyond its walls. The deserving poor, so the theory went, were to be supported not by the state but by private charity.[30] The Jews' self-exclusion from the poor law was not from an aversion to accept money from the state in principle — as their willingness to take money for education illustrates — but it reflected the ideological terms on which this money was offered to its recipients. Jewish recipients of poor relief would by definition have become members of the undeserving poor.

These problems only became more acute from the 1880s. This was not only on account of the influx of thousands of poor Jews from Eastern Europe but also because of the economic crisis that hit London in these years. One effect of the crisis was that it became hard to discern a line between the deserving and undeserving poor. The distinction was mocked by high levels of male unemployment that denied work to skilled and steady labourers. Yet the division was so central to the practice of both poor law officials and philanthropists that their predominant response to the crisis was to try to redraw the distinction more clearly. Poor Law officials, philanthropists, and social investigators alike sought to identify and isolate what they called 'the residuum': the lowest stratum of the population who were irredeemable and whose poverty stemmed from social pathology.[31] The chief site for this dangerous class was said to be the East End of London, precisely the place where Jewish immigrants congregated. In this context of social crisis it became more important than ever to keep Jews — Jewish immigrants in particular — away from the poor law.

Nevertheless, the Jewish Board of Guardians *was* content for the Jewish poor to use the poor law for medical assistance. The exception in this case proves the rule. By the 1860s receipt of medical relief had lost the stigma attached to poor relief in general. The report of the Poor Law Board for 1869–70 concluded that

> the economical and social advantages of free medicine to the poorer classes generally, as distinguished from actual paupers, and perfect accessibility to medical advice at all times [...] may be considered as so important in themselves, as to render it necessary to weigh with the greatest care all the reasons which may be adduced in their favour.[32]

The Jewish Board of Guardians did not build a workhouse and used the Poor Law workhouse rarely and, then, as a disciplinary last resort. Instead of the workhouse, it used repatriation to Eastern Europe to discipline the Jewish poor and to rid itself of those

classes it regarded as hopeless. Leonard Cohen, the President of the Jewish Board of Guardians, explained in 1903 what normally happened in these cases:

> He [the applicant] tells us he cannot succeed without charity. He has been here say nine months. We say "if you cannot succeed here, and as you had nothing to bring you here you had better go back." He rather demurs the first time but the second time he agrees and goes.

His colleague, N. S. Joseph, agreed that the applicants chosen for repatriation were 'starved' out of the country.[33] The development of a specifically Jewish sphere of welfare and poor relief empowered Jewish charities to repatriate thousands in a manner that was far beyond the state's legal capacity.

What do the divergent histories of the Jews' interaction with state-provided education and poor relief tell us about the interaction of Jews, political culture, and the state in this period? It suggests, firstly, that we should understand this interaction as something that was fractured and which operated differently in different contexts. There was not a single relationship between Jews and the dominant political culture. The historical critique of liberalism as intolerant of difference, which I discussed at the outset of this essay, is too capacious. Liberals cared deeply both about the politics of religion and the treatment of poverty yet the Jews' integration operated on different lines in each context. This becomes clear once we examine the social and institutional history of Jewish integration as it took shape in the East End. The ways in which Jews were included within or excluded from institutional practices differed according to the question at hand. There was, I have argued, greater accommodation of the Jews' difference than many scholars allow. Where we *have* found Jews effacing themselves in public life, this arose from the collision of Jews with the problems of poverty. This does indeed reveal something important about the political culture of the period as it confronted a body it could not assimilate — but that body was not, in the first instance, the Jews but the 'residuum' — the underclass of 'outcast London', in the public imagination, of the East End above all other locations. Unlike the British state and philanthropists, the Jewish elite was fortunate enough to be able to ship its own underclass back to Eastern Europe. Indeed, one thing that a focus on the East End does reveal is that it was easier to integrate 'Jews' than it was to accommodate 'destitute' immigrants in Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whereas the problem of accommodating religious minorities generated a civic

space within which the articulation of particular religious interests was legitimate, the problem of poverty, and the fears and fantasies connected with the poor, remained acute.

III

At the beginning of this essay I drew attention to recent work that highlights ambivalent representations of 'the Jew'. The significance of this departure can be understood when it is noticed that, traditionally, representations of 'good' and 'bad' Jews have not been yoked together but have been assigned to two distinct and opposite lineages: dividing the antisemitic sheep from the philosemitic goats. Some new scholarship, by contrast, scrutinizes the interaction of 'good Jews' and 'bad Jews', bound together within a single structure generating the discursive examination of real Jews.[34] This approach is valuable because it derogates from a moralizing inquiry and leads scholars to ask instead how Jewish difference was represented.

Other aspects are less helpful, however. First, the current fascination with ambivalence threatens to reproduce a problem that bedevils many accounts of antisemitism. For a number of the best-known accounts of antisemitism see the phenomenon as an ingrained hatred that forever mutates and recurs; beneath the surface differences that distinguish distinct manifestations of the phenomenon lies an essential similarity. Interpretations such as these are at one level historical — they trace changes — but at another they are resolutely ahistorical in their core understanding of antisemitism. The cumulative effect of the current interest in ambivalence can erect a similar ahistorical edifice. For it seems that whether we look to the Middle Ages or to the twentieth century, or to the spaces in between, we find beneath the discursive froth an equivalent identification of similarity — that is to say ambivalence.[35] The discovery of ambivalence has opened the way to appreciating the complexity of texts and has revised our understanding of the place of 'the Jew' in non-Jewish culture, but there is danger that just as narratives of antisemitism erect a story that stays the same just as it changes, so too will accounts of ambivalence.

Second, work on 'ambivalence' and 'the Jew' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century reproduces a partial assessment of liberal culture; one predicated on something like 'the antisemitism of tolerance'. In these decades, ambivalence is said to signal the desire of liberal culture to encompass and embrace the Jews and its

simultaneous incapacity to accommodate their particularity. For example, if we return to the earlier quotation from Cheyette we can note his crucial characterization of liberalism as 'buttressed by a spurious universalism'. However, this depiction appears fatally one-sided in the face of the pluralism evinced by education policy and practice both nationally and in the East End.[36] I do not mean to suggest that Cheyette and others have invented a phantom liberal culture but it is my argument that they have mistaken one or two elements for the whole. As we shall see if we turn to the East End, 'The Jew' did not figure solely in political discourse or in the culture wars dissected by Cheyette, in the course of which Matthew Arnold and others unfavourably juxtaposed Hebraism to Hellenism. In what follows I will examine some of the writings on East End Jews produced by social investigators in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

By the mid 1880s the East End had become a focal point for the fear, guilt, and hope engendered by poverty, protest, and campaigning journalists and reformers. The gaze that fell on the East End inevitably encompassed its rapidly growing Jewish population. As they became subjects for scrutiny and analysis, one, perhaps *the* central concern for social investigators, especially in the late 1880s and early 1890s, was the Jews' behaviour in the local economy and their impact on the standard of life of the labouring poor in the East End. It was as masters and workers within what many termed the 'sweating system' that Jewish immigrants received sustained attention.

Jewish immigrants worked predominantly in workshop-based trades: in boot and shoe making, cabinet making, and, above all, in tailoring garments for both men and women. Increasingly, these trades were associated with a set of debased working conditions given the label 'sweating' and which formed one component of investigations into social conditions in the East End of London. The term 'sweating' dated from the 1840s if not earlier and certainly preceded the large influx of East European Jews. Moreover, it was applied widely beyond the East End to trades, such as chain making, that were wholly untouched by Jewish immigration. As trade unionists strived to demonize hard-driving employers and poor working conditions, the terminology of 'sweating' was pressed into service.[37] Despite the term's wide usage, and despite acknowledgment that the evils of 'sweating' were not restricted to trades occupied by Jews and immigrants, there was also a broad consensus, maintained over a period of decades, that the Jews' behaviour and success in the East End economy was determined by the existence of a 'Jewish type'.

Beatrice Potter's writings on 'the Jewish community' and 'the tailoring trade', produced by her while working as one of Charles Booth's investigators for his monumental survey of *Life and Labour of the People in London*, played a vital role in establishing the contours and authority of this construction. Potter was born in 1858, and in the early 1880s, having been influenced by the writings of Auguste Comte, she determined to place herself in the service of humanity. Initially, service took the form of philanthropy as Potter worked for the Charity Organisation Society but by the middle of the decade she had become more drawn to 'social diagnosis': the field in which she rose to eminence.[38] When Beatrice Potter examined 'the Jewish community' of the East End she had two main questions in mind: first, what were the causes of the Jews' success; and second, why did they engender antagonism from their Gentile neighbours. In fact, these turned out to be one and the same question: the causes of Jewish success were also, in Potter's view, the root cause of their unpopularity.[39]

Scholars have puzzled over Potter's writings on the Jewish East End because they appear to contain both philosemitic and antisemitic elements: almost at the same moment Potter appears to vaunt her Jewish subjects and at other moments she damns them.[40] The Jews' mental and physical qualities are understood by Potter in an irreducibly two-sided way. Her Jews possess a superior intellect, trained by generations of talmudic study, while persecution, attention to the dietary and health regulations prescribed by Jewish law, as well as to its moral precepts, had nurtured physical endurance. Simultaneously, home life among them had been perfected by social isolation. As a result, Potter argued, poverty did not demoralize the Jews as it did their Gentile neighbours in the East End.[41]

But alongside these virtues Jews carried corresponding vices. Persecution had 'forced the untiring energies' of the Hebrew race into low channels of parasitic activity, undermining the morality and well-being of their Christian fellow subjects. The Jewish religion had not fostered spirituality: 'The Polish Jews have centred their thoughts and feelings in the literature of their race — in the Old Testament with its magnificent promises of universal dominion; in the Talmud with its minute instructions as to the means of getting it.' Inevitably, embodying this cultural formation, the foreign Jew had but narrow sympathies and 'totally ignores all social obligations other than keeping the law of the land, the maintenance of his own family and the charitable relief of co-religionists.' His moral and physical constitution allowed him to take advantage of the low barriers to petty entrepreneurship in the workshop trades and behave as the incarnation of

economic man, fulfilling Ricardo's 'strange assumptions'. (David Ricardo, of course, as Potter's readers would have known, was born a Jew.) 'The strongest impelling motive of the Jewish race', according to Potter, is 'love of profit as distinct from any other form of money earning'.[42] The consequences of all this were good for the Jews but bad for everyone else:

> Contractors and workers alike ascend in the social scale; taken as a mass they shift upwards […]. On the other hand, the prices at which work are taken are constantly reduced by a race of workers who have neither the desire nor the capacity for trade combination, and who are endowed with a standard of life that admits of an almost indefinite amount of work in the worst possible conditions.[43]

The authority of Potter's characterization can be seen in the way it became the template for a succession of subsequent observers. J. A. Hobson echoed his predecessor in 1891 when he turned to look at the problem of sweating. The Jews' virtues were also their 'chief faults'. On one side, the Jew was 'quiet, sober, thrifty, quick to learn and tolerably honest, […] admirable in domestic morality and an orderly citizen', but on the other he was 'almost devoid of social morality […]. The superior calculating intellect which is his national heritage, is used unsparingly to enable him to take advantage of every weakness, folly and vice of the society in which he lives.'[44] Three years later in his *Report on the Volume and Effects of Recent Immigration from Eastern Europe*, Hubert Llewellyn Smith, another of Booth's co-workers and who would go on to become a key figure at the Board of Trade, produced, perhaps, the most neutral exposition of the bifurcated Jewish type:

> This double life of the Jew, the concentration of half his thoughts on material gain and the other half on his race, its history and its literature must be understood to grasp his place in the industrial world. He is thus enabled to survive and find an interest in life under conditions which to an English workman would be intolerable, while the continual study of the rabbinical law, in the opinion of those who are entitled to speak with greatest authority on the subject, has been no mean instrument in sharpening those faculties which make him so formidable a competitor in industry.[45]

The recurrence of the same two-sided image of the Jewish immigrant in these and other contemporaneous texts is striking. Yet in addition to identifying this recurrent construction of the Jew we should also ask to what use it was put by these authors. An emphasis on ambivalent images and tropes circulating within the culture and available to authors should be joined to an attention paid to the analysis in which these images of 'the Jew' were embedded and the work that these images were being made to perform. Not least

among the problems with 'ambivalence' is the implication carried by the term that divergent representations of 'the Jew' provide a response by authors to the problem of understanding the Jews' simultaneous difference from and similarity to the non-Jews among whom they lived. However, there is no reason to assume that this was always (or even generally) the case. Often 'the Jew' was interpolated within arguments that were not, in the first instance, about Jews. If we are to understand this we need to attend not only to the recurrent two-sidedness of 'the Jew' but also to the argument within which writers enlisted this construction. In the cases of Potter, Hobson, Llewellyn Smith and others we need to turn away from preconceptions about liberalism and universalism to the way in which 'the Jew' functioned within a broader debate about the sweated trades.

For Potter the fundamental cause of sweating was the absence of the factory and, following from this, the absence of a responsible employer. In this respect she departed from what had been the accepted view of the evil, namely, that low wages and long hours could be attributed to the role of middlemen who contracted for work and then sub-contracted it, supplying neither labour nor capital themselves. The conviction that 'sweating' was the creation of this economic parasite had, for example, been central to John Burnett's 1887 *Report to the Board of Trade on the Sweating System in East London*.[46] Potter, by contrast, noted that the conditions associated with sweating — low wages, excessive hours, and insanitary conditions — were not restricted to trades with middlemen and she did not find this figure in the clothing trade, for instance. Instead, Potter blamed these industrial ills on the proliferation of small masters and the absence of factory production or the large industrial unit: sweating was a vicious anachronism in the modern industrial economy:

> The elaborate organisation of modern industry is replaced by a near approach to that primitive higgling of the market between producer and consumer to that primaeval trial of struggle and endurance, in which the weakest and most necessitous invariably suffers […]. One feature stands out clear and distinct, as persistently characteristic of all sweated industries — *the absence of a responsible employer*.[47]

In contrast to the small master working in a hidden garret, mill-owners, iron masters, and coal-owners, Potter claimed, all had to assume some degree of 'guardianship' for their workers, not on account of their kind hearts but because they were compelled to do so by legislation, trade unions, and being subject to the gaze of public opinion.[48] But in the East End the Darwinian 'extinction' of sweating in the face of the superior factory system had

been arrested by 'an apparently inexhaustible supply of two distinct classes of workers: Jews and semi-dependent women'. In the case of the women the economics of sweating was simple and easy to comprehend: 'married women working at unskilled labour in their own home […] and not wholly supporting themselves, can afford to work at what would be starvation wages to unmarried women.' In these cases, therefore, sweated trades survived profitably, despite the competition of factory production, by paying their workers less than subsistence.[49]

This argument, however, gave rise to a problem in the case of the Jews. For here most workers were men — not married women — and their rates of pay, in general, reflected the privileges of their sex. On occasion both Potter and Hobson denied this. At one point, Potter asserts that there was significant competition between Jewish labour and English working women. Hobson made a similar point when he said that the lowest part of the trade depended on the presence of Jews and women, workers 'with an indefinitely low standard of life'.[50] However, with the exception of the newly arrived 'greeners' who did work for a pittance, this attempt to erase the economic differences between Jewish male and Gentile female labour did not convince even Potter who wrote of the Jews 'as a mass they shift upwards'.[51] A different explanation was required. Indeed over time, as 'sweating' became increasingly associated with female labour, the anomalous role of the Jewish male worker became increasingly apparent. It was here that the construction of the Jewish worker was so useful. Hobson explained that but for the Jews' flexible standard of life, want of social morality and superior intellect, the goods they made 'would be produced by native workers under better industrial conditions'.[52] This analysis was reproduced down to the First World War and beyond. In 1915 R. H. Tawney conceded that the survival of the Jews' workshops in the face of factory competition provided a conundrum. The answer he proposed was 'racial'.[53] In 1912 the Fabian writer Barbara Drake, who was also Beatrice Potter's niece and who worked at the London School of Economics under the supervision of Potter's husband, Sidney Webb, adapted and reproduced her aunt's two-sided characterization:

> The patient endurance and nervous apprehension of the Jew are qualities weak to resist industrial pressure which his facile and indefatigable industry are quick to evade. The Jew is the despair of the trade union official […]. But in the pliability of the Jew is strength as well as weakness and the Jewish branch of the trade has shown a vigorous growth in recent years.[54]

The bifurcated 'Jew' was thus also a useful figure. The sweated workshops of the East End appeared to many observers an anomaly amidst the forms of modern industry. The presence of married women as its labour force was entirely in keeping with this assessment. A backward form of production could survive only by paying its workforce less than they needed to survive. In effect the sector continued to survive, if not thrive, on the basis of a subsidy from other parts of the community: husbands, charities, and the poor law. The Jewish workshops, employing Jewish men and, as Potter well knew from her extensive research for Booth, often doing so at decent rates of pay (by the standards of the East End), were a far more troubling presence. In theory these debased workshops could not exist, let alone compete and thrive, while employing adult men and paying them men's customary wages. The attraction of 'the Jewish type' was that it accounted for this anomaly by representing the Jews as a special case. The strategic function of this racialized construction of the Jew was to allow social investigators and economists to place to one side a troubling case that otherwise would disrupt one of their fundamental assumptions about economic life: the superiority of factory production.

IV

In the same way as this analysis of texts draws attention to the uneven way in which liberal culture treated 'the Jew', so too does the account of the institutional and discursive integration of Jews within the British polity which precedes it. For here we found that the contours of Jewish integration varied according to the issue at hand. Integrating Jews as members of a religious minority generated a relationship to late-Victorian political culture different from the one created by their interpolation as potential paupers. This variation in the place of 'the Jew' in public discourse comes sharply into view once we ask how the great and growing concentration of Jews in the East End of London was integrated within some of the key practices promoted by the Victorian state and civil society: education and poor relief. The variation itself is, perhaps, not unexpected but its implications for our understanding of the interaction of Jews with liberal political culture have not yet been recognized. There was no single discursive relationship between liberal culture, the East End, and the Jews. Rather than seeking a single and capacious characterization, future research might seek to identify and analyse the dimensions and limits of diversity and change over time.

Recent scholarship has emphasized the contradictory images of 'the Jew' that proliferated in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century texts, and has analysed this as (yet further) evidence of the limits and false promise of 'liberalism' when confronted with the Jews' obstinate alterity. The occurrence of multiple good and bad Jews here is seen to carry a single message about the Jews. Here, I have suggested that we should also attend to the particular analytic content and purpose of writing about Jews. Writers such as Potter were able to employ a repertoire of Jewish characteristics to address an issue that was not, in the first instance, a 'Jewish' problem. This was the case when Potter addressed the sweating system. What we find here is a repertoire of bifurcated images of 'the Jew' being pressed into service to patch up a creaky argument about the superiority of factory production. In this light, it may be useful for us to distinguish between 'ambivalence' and 'bifurcation'. The former term suggests that contradictory images of 'the Jew' are held together so that they form a single, protean response to real Jews. The latter term, by contrast, draws attention to complex and divergent representations, such as those used by Potter and Llewellyn Smith, in arguments that were not, in the first instance, about Jews.

Potter and others were fascinated by what they presumed to be the qualities of Jewish life in East End. The Jews' work ethic, their responsiveness to the market in general and the profit motive in particular, their cohesive communal life, their piety, sobriety, and purposefulness, all appeared to stand in stark contrast to the 'demoralized' poor whom they lived alongside in the East End of London. In this vision, both the English and Irish poor of the East End and the Jews defied the rules of prescribed 'normal' development as it was seen by late-Victorian reformers, albeit in quite different ways: the English and Irish in their demoralization, the Jews in their sweatshops. The exceptionality of the Jewish East End and the idea that the district as a whole constituted the dark heart of 'outcast London' were thus yoked together. Attending to 'the Jew' in the writings of Potter and other investigators and reformers can tell us a great deal about how they regarded both the problems of the East End in particular and social progress in general.

[1] On politics see Henry Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections, 1885–1910* (London: Macmillan, 1967); on the economy and working-class culture see Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), and by the same author, 'Working-Class Culture and Working-Class

Politics in London, 1870–1900; Notes on the Remaking of a Working Class', *Journal of Social History*, 7.4 (1974), 460–508; on settlement work see Standish Meacham, *Toynbee Hall and Social Reform: The Search for Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), and Seth Koven, *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); on violence against women see Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (London: Virago, 1992); and on the perceived dreariness of the East End and an attempt to ameliorate this see Deborah Wiener, 'The People's Palace: An Image for East London in the 1880s', in *Metropolis London: Histories and Representations since 1800,* ed. by David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 40–55.

[2] On Whitechapel politics see David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture 1849–1914* (London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 325–26, 373; on Jewish philanthropy see Eugene C. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880–1920* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988). Some contemporary views on the Jews' qualities are discussed later in this essay.

[3] Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1970–1914,* 2nd edn (London: Simon Publications, 1973).

[4] William J. Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals, 1875–1914* (London: Duckworth, 1975); Jerry White, *Rothschild Buildings: Life in an East End Tenement Block, 1887–1920* (London: Routledge, 1980); *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, ed. by David Cesarani (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990); Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, pp. 215–57, 291–352; Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight against White Slavery 1870–1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 18–20, 236–37.

[5] 'The alembic of English tolerance' comes from Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England,* 3rd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 270; Bill Williams, 'The Anti-Semitism of Tolerance: Middle-Class Manchester and the Jews, 1870–1900', in *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Cultural Production and Social Policy in Manchester*, ed. by Alan J. Kidd and K. W. Roberts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 74–102.

[6] Geoffrey Alderman, 'English Jews or Jews of the English Persuasion?: Reflections on the Emancipation of Anglo-Jewry', in *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States and Citizenship*, ed. by Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 128–56 (pp. 138–39); David Cesarani, 'British Jews', in *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation-State in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. by Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wenderhorst (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 33–55 (p. 39).

[7] See for example Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland, and Jane Rendall, *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the British Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000); for critical comments in relation to writings on liberalism and empire see Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

[8] Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of the 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 5–6.

[9] Nadia Valman, 'Bad Jew/Good Jewess: Gender and Semitic Discourse in Nineteenth-Century England', in *Philosemitism in History*, ed. by Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 149–69 (p. 167).

[10] The turn to ambivalence has resonated widely. Writing on judicial discourse in the twentieth century the legal scholar Didi Herman observes, 'I do not find the term "antisemitism" helpful […]. My analysis is more in keeping with critical Jewish studies scholars who describe the relationship between Jews, Jewishness and English culture as one of ambivalence.' See *An Unfortunate Coincidence: Jews, Jewishness and the Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 25. A similar emphasis is present in Anthony Bale's recent study of *The Jew in the Medieval Book: English Antisemitisms, 1350–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 19. Here Bale complicates the picture when he points out, 'Jews and Judaism were in fact objects of a discursive scrutiny rather than simply of repulsion' and could be 'praised or slandered, esteemed or disesteemed'. On the nineteenth century see Nadia Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[11] Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, pp. 21–22, 166–72.

[12] Vivian D. Lipman, *A Century of Social Service: The Jewish Board of Guardians, 1859–1959* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), p. 30; Black, *Social Politics*, pp. 80, 101.

[13] Many non-Jewish ratepayers also donated to charities that served the poor but in their case they supplemented the poor law; they did not seek to replace it. On the entitlement of 'aliens' to poor relief see *Ninth Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners* (London: House of Commons, 1843), p. 30.

[14] Lipman, *Century of Social Service*, pp. 8–9; Gartner, *Jewish Immigrant*, p. 20.

[15] Cesarani, 'British Jews', pp. 53–54; Williams, 'Anti-Semitism of Tolerance', pp. 91–92.

[16] Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, pp. 292–99.

[17] Black, *Social Politics*, pp. 104–12; White, *Rothschild Buildings*, pp. 145–46; James Murphy, *Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800–1970* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971).

[18] *Minutes, Correspondence and Financial Statements of the Committee of the Council on Education* (London: House of Commons, 1852), pp. 31–39; Black, *Social Politics*, pp. 105–06.

[19] *Return Showing by Counties for each Public Elementary School in England and Wales Particulars of School Income and Expenditure for the Year ended 31st August 1893* (London: House of Commons, 1894), pp. 400–01; Black, *Social Politics*, pp. 105–06; Geoffrey Alderman, *London Jewry and London Politics, 1889–1986* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 45.

[20] *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration* (London: House of Commons, 1903), qq. 10281–82.

[21] *Jewish Chronicle*, 16 June 1893, p. 17; 28 July 1893, p. 10; 10 November 1893, p. 11; Greater London Record Office, SBL 793, Minutes of a Meeting of the Special Sub-Committee on Religious Instruction of Jewish children, 25 April 1894; *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration* (London: House of Commons, 1903), q. 10284.

[22] Alderman, *London Jewry*, pp. 47–49.

[23] Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876–1939* (London: Arnold, 1979).

[24] Stewart Brown, *The National Churches of England, Ireland and Scotland, 1801–1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 1–2, 136–49, 181–82, 208, 405.

[25] Eric J. Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State: Early Industrial Britain, 1783–1870* (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 426–27.

[26] Evans, *Forging of the Modern State*, pp. 232–33; Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, pp. 27–35.

[27] John Lawson and Harold Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (London: Methuen, 1973), p. 269; Timothy Larsen, *Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), pp. 138–45.

[28] *Minutes, Correspondence and Financial Statements of the Committee on Education* (London: House of Commons, 1852), pp. 31–39; Black, *Social Politics*, p. 105; Murphy, *Church, State and Schools*, pp. 35–37, 87–88, 92–95.

[29] For an analysis that traces conservative pluralist policies such as this over three centuries see David Feldman, 'Why the English like Turbans: Multicultural Politics in British History', in *Structures and Transformations in British History*, ed. by David Feldman and Jon Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 281–302.

[30] The literature here is immense but see Alan Kidd, *State, Society and the Poor in Nineteenth-Century England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 31–33.

[31] Stedman Jones, *Outcast London*, pp. 152–55, 281–314.

[32] Ruth Hodgkinson, *The Origins of the National Health Service: The Medical Services of the New Poor Law, 1834–1871* (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1967), pp. 332–33.

[33] *Royal Commission,* qq. 15691, 16234.

[34] For an important statement of this position see Bryan Cheyette and Nadia Valman, 'Introduction: Liberalism and Anti-Semitism', in *The Image of the Jew in European Culture*, ed. by Cheyette and Valman (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2004), pp. 1–22. For recent examples of the former tendency see William Rubinstein and Hilary Rubinstein, *Philosemitism: Admiration and Support in the English-Speaking World for Jews, 1840–1939* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), and Anthony Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Antisemitism in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[35] See note 10. See too Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz, 'Introduction', in *Antisemitism and Philosemitism in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), pp. 7–17 (pp. 15–16), where the authors call for analyses which 'historicize' attitudes to Jews and Jewishness but at the same time use terms such as 'antisemitism' and 'philosemitism' in a manner that places these terms outside of history.

[36] Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew'*, pp. 5–6. We should add too that the characterization of Britain as a 'nation-state' is also unhelpful. For the United Kingdom, as its name suggests, was (and is) not a nation state but a multi-national conglomerate, albeit one in which England was (and is) dominant. Indeed, the last decades of the nineteenth century saw increasing recognition of Scottish, Welsh, and Irish nationhood, not least from Liberals for whom Irish Home Rule became a cardinal point of policy. At the very least, we must

acknowledge that Cheyette's 'increasingly exclusivist' state displayed significant countervailing characteristics. On this see Feldman, 'Why the English like turbans.'

[37] Sheila C. Blackburn, '"Princesses and Sweated Wage-Slaves Go Well Together": Images of British Sweated Workers, 1843–1914', *International Labor and Working-Class History,* 61 (2002), 24–44; Sheila C. Blackburn, 'Working-Class Attitudes to Social Reform: Black Country Chain Makers and Anti-Sweating Legislation', *International Review of Social History,* 33 (1998), 42–69.

[38] John Davis, 'Webb, (Martha) Beatrice (1858–1943)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2nd edn (2004) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/36799>

[accessed 14 December 2011].

[39] Beatrice Potter, 'The Jewish Community', in *Life and Labour of the People in London,* ed. by Charles Booth, 2 vols (London: Williams and Norgate, 1889), I, 564–90 (p. 585).

[40] See Bernard Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905* (London: Heinemann, 1972), p. 88; David Englander, 'Booth's Jews: The Presentation of Jews and Judaism in *Life and Labour of the People in London*', *Victorian Studies*, 32.4 (1989), 218–42.

[41] Potter, 'The Jewish Community', pp. 577–80, 586–88.

[42] Potter, 'The Jewish Community', pp. 579, 588–90.

[43] Beatrice Potter, 'The Tailoring Trade', in Booth, *Life and Labour,* I, 209–40 (p. 233). Not only is the Jews' difference seen in both positive and negative terms, at the same time it is understood to be both 'a concentrated essence' and evanescent in the face of English liberality: 'The Polish or Russian Jew represents to some extent the concentrated essence of Jewish virtue and Jewish vice; for he has, in his individual experience, epitomised the history of his race in the Christian world. But he can in no sense be considered a fair sample of the Jews who have experienced the freedom, the culture and the public spirit of English life.' (Potter, 'The Jewish Community', p. 580.) Here we do find that variant of liberal culture that Cheyette singles out. For the capacity of English life, characterized here by individual liberty and disinterestedness, to assimilate Jews whose 'concentrated essence' is characterized by neither, is a moment for self-congratulation.

[44] John A. Hobson, *Problems of Poverty* (London: Methuen, 1891), p. 59.

[45] *Report on the Volume and Effects of Recent Immigration from Eastern Europe* (London: House of Commons, 1894), p. 42.

[46] *Report to the Board of Trade on the Sweating System in the East End of London* (London: House of Commons, 1887).

[47] Beatrice Potter, 'The Lords and the Sweating System', *Nineteenth Century,* 160 (1890), 885–905 (p. 889) (emphasis in original); see too Potter, 'The Tailoring Trade', p. 232.

[48] Potter, 'The Lords', pp. 889, 903.

[49] Potter, 'The Lords', p. 893; Potter, 'East London Labour', *Nineteenth Century,* 138 (1888), 161–83 (pp. 178–80, 182–83).

[50] Potter, 'The Tailoring Trade', pp. 213, 238; Hobson, *Problems of Poverty*, p. 59.

[51] Potter, 'The Tailoring Trade', p. 233.

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[52] Hobson, *Problems of Poverty*, p. 63.

[53] Richard H. Tawney, *Minimum Wage Rates in the Tailoring Industry under the Trade Boards Act of 1909* (London: Bell, 1915), pp. 15–16.

[54] Barbara Drake, 'The West End Tailoring Trade', in *The Seasonal Trades*, ed. by Arnold J. Freeman and Sidney Webb (London: London School of Economics, 1912), p. 77.