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**The Jewish Other:
Christian Constructions and Literary Representations
(1790-1830)**

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Abstract

This thesis explores Christian constructions of the Jewish Other in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century British and Irish literature. Although there have been critical studies on aspects of Jewish representation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, existing research focuses on Anglo-Jewish history or specific areas of Jewish representation, such as the Jewess, or particular genres such as the Gothic. The aim of this thesis is to build upon and move beyond the established work, focusing in particular on the ways in which Christian constructions of Jewish Others engage with established antisemitic and emerging philosemitic traditions, reflect Christian anxieties, and ultimately exploit such representations to uphold Christian hegemony. Uncovering the religious, theological, cultural, and literary foundations that underpin Christian constructions of Jewish otherness in the fiction of the period, this thesis examines a range of genres and discusses well-known novels alongside critically understudied texts. It does so in conversation with a number of other cultural productions including poetry, drama, and sermons. Each chapter focuses on a specific facet of the Jewish Other including the monstrous supernatural Other, the racial Other, the benevolent Jew and his loving daughter, and the palimpsestic spectre of the Wandering Jew. Examining the tension inherent in a literary construction that could be either 'Brother' or 'Other', this thesis will argue that representations of Jewishness in this period ultimately reflect anxieties about the British Christian Self acted out through constructions of the Jewish Other.

Table of contents

Introduction

Setting the Stage and Conjuring Ghosts of Britain's Antisemitic Past

..... p. 7

Chapter 1

Tales of Terror: Traditions of the Demonisation of Jews, Vampiric Usury, and Monstrous Jewishness

..... p. 29

Satan, vampiric usury, and Shylock: Biblical, cultural, and literary foundations

..... p. 30

"Beware my fangs": Charlotte Smith's *Mr Vampyre* and the shadow of Jewish, vampiric usury

..... p. 41

Conclusion

..... p. 48

Chapter 2

The Racial Question: Representing the Jewish Other

..... p. 50

"A Jew innate": distorted representations and *Melmoth the Wanderer*

..... p. 57

"This house of horror": The Spanish Inquisition and Protestant representations of Jewish Others

..... p. 63

"A dreadful blot in our 'scutcheon': *The Spanish Campaign* and representations of polluted ancestry

..... p. 75

"Oh, child of my sorrow!": *The Surgeon's Daughter* and representations of uncertain Otherness

..... p. 83

Conclusion

..... p. 91

Chapter 3

Exorcising Shylock and Jessica: The Benevolent Jew, His Loving Daughter, and a Christian Suitor

..... p. 92

"The benevolent Israelite and his tender daughter": George Walker's *Theodore Cyphon; or, the Benevolent Jew*

..... p. 100

"And why not a good Jew?": Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*

..... p. 109

"Daughter of Israel": Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*

..... p. 120

Conclusion

..... p. 132

Chapter 4**The Wandering Jew: A Palimpsestic Spectre**

.....	p. 133
From the Wandering Jew's Origins to his Romantic and Gothic Wanderings	
.....	p. 136
<i>St. Leon</i> , alchemy, and the alchemical wanderer	
.....	p. 148
<i>Melmoth the Wanderer</i> , transgression and punishment, and the Doubling of the Wandering Jew	
.....	p. 154
<i>Salathiel</i> , Theological Supersession, and a New Israel	
.....	p. 162
Conclusion	
.....	p. 169

Conclusion**Haunting Afterlives of the Imagined Jewish Other**

.....	p. 171
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Bibliography

.....	p. 176
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Declaration

I, the author, confirm that this thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Mary Going

05 02 2022

Introduction

Setting the Stage and Conjuring Ghosts of Britain's Antisemitic Past

And now, *Englishmen* and Countrymen, judge ye, What Advantage it can be to you to have these *Jews* naturaliz'd! What can you get by *them*? They are all griping Usurers. And what can they get out of you, but your very Blood and Vitals. It can never be your temporal Interest to see such Persons made *Englishmen*, and I am certain it can never be the Interest of your Religion; because they are its open professed Enemies. They are a Nation of Infidels. They blaspheme and curse your Saviour with the most dreadful Imprecations, and their TALMUD, which they revere as much as the Law of Moses, allows them to hold no Faith with us, to cheat us, and even to murder us, is doing God Service. Such are the vile People whom you are persuaded to take into your Bosoms; But from such Bosom-Friends, *Good Lord deliver us*.¹

In 1753, Britain was saturated with political pamphlets, satirical columns, impassioned letters, and countless articles that permeated the nation's newspapers, all of which fiercely criticised, mocked, and opposed the Jewish Naturalization Act, or the 'Jew Bill' as it came to be known. G. A. Cranfield identifies such publications as part of a campaign against the 'Jew Bill' that unfolded in print, and singling out in particular the *London Evening-Post* for playing a leading role, Cranfield establishes this trend as 'one of the most remarkable propaganda campaigns in English history.'² Though just one publication among many, the *London Evening-Post* alone was responsible for conjuring antisemitic³ portrayals of Jews as 'griping usurer[s]'⁴, 'ravening Wolves, the devouring blaspheming Jews'⁵, 'a cunning politick People'⁶, and 'that

¹ J. E. Gent, *Some Considerations on the Naturalization of the Jews* (London: J. Leage, 1753), pp. 20-21.

² G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (9).

³ In this thesis I will be using unhyphenated spellings 'antisemitism' and 'antisemitic' rather than the hyphenated spelling 'anti-Semitism' and 'anti-Semitic' to refer to opposition or hatred towards Jews as recommended by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The IHRA states that 'The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) would like to address the spelling of the term 'antisemitism', often rendered as 'anti-Semitism'. IHRA's concern is that the hyphenated spelling allows for the possibility of something called 'Semitism', which not only legitimizes a form of pseudo-scientific racial classification that was thoroughly discredited by association with Nazi ideology, but also divides the term, stripping it from its meaning of opposition and hatred toward Jews.' You can read the full IHRA explanation here: [holocaustremembrance.com/antisemitism/spelling-antisemitism](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/antisemitism/spelling-antisemitism).

⁴ *London Evening Post*, 30 July, quoted in: G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (21).

⁵ *London Evening Post*, 14 July, quoted in: G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (22).

⁶ 'To the Author', *London Evening Post* (24-26 May, 1753).

abandon'd Race of Murderers and Crucifiers'⁷ to list only a few examples. Successfully passing in both the House of Lords and the House of Commons before receiving royal assent on 7 July 1753, the 'Jew Bill' was intended to remove some, but not all, political disabilities faced by Jews in Britain in this period. It was also intended to allow some Jews, upon application, to become naturalised British citizens. Though the Bill itself received little attention until its passage, with the 1754 general election on the horizon it was seized upon by the *London Evening-Post* and a multitude of other publications and exploited for partisan electoral politics.

Placing Jews and Britain's Jewish community front and centre, this propaganda campaign established a 'happy connection between religious and economic fears,'⁸ and as W. D. Rubinstein notes the Bill was used by Tory opposition 'as a stick' with which to beat the government, while this opposition was further 'aided and abetted by conservative and provincial leaders of the Anglican church and by civic officials of the City of London.'⁹ Again and again, articles and letters claiming that the 'Jew Bill' threatened the body politic of Protestant Britain appeared in Tory newspapers such as the *London Evening Post* and also the *London Magazine* and *The Craftsman*. Subsequently, as Alan H. Singer notes, this political campaign sparked a 'virulent pamphlet war' with approximately eighty pamphlets debating this issue published on the Spring and Summer of 1753,¹⁰ and the conversation spread further into the pews and the pulpits of Britain's established church. 'As to our Religion,' one letter in the *London Evening Post* argues, 'nothing can be more clear, than that it will be in the utmost Danger from such a Multitude of its inveterate Enemies',¹¹ while another laments that 'Our God and our Religion are to be quite out of the question, and Money, ALMIGHTY Money, is to be the basis of our State.'¹² The chosen pen names of many writers include aliases such as 'A Briton', 'Britannicus', and 'Old England', names that emphasise the claim that this Bill threatened the nation of Protestant Britain itself. Revealing the entanglement of national and religious identities, one writer named 'John Christian' concludes his letter with a verse that muses 'BRITANNIA's Fate in doubtful Scales is weigh'd.'¹³ Further demonstrating this entanglement are letters purportedly penned by members of England's established Church who drew on their authority as clergy within the Church of England to criticise the Bill and revive the cry of 'The Church in Danger.'¹⁴ After stating that the Bill directly contradicts

⁷ *London Evening Post*, 19 July, quoted in: G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (22).

⁸ *London Evening Post*, 19 July, quoted in: G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (18).

⁹ W. D. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English-Speaking World: Great Britain* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p. 56.

¹⁰ Alan H. Singer, 'Great Britain or Judea Nova? National Identity, Property, and the Jewish Naturalization Controversy of 1753' in *British Romanticism and the Jews: History, Culture, Literature*, ed. Sheila A. Spector (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp.19-36 (p. 20).

¹¹ 'To the Author', *London Evening Post* (24-26 May, 1753).

¹² 'Free and Candid Remarks', *London Evening Post* (28-30 June, 1753).

¹³ 'To the Author' *London Evening Post* (8-11 September, 1753).

¹⁴ G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (28).

‘the Decrees of the God, recorded both in the Old and New testament’, one letter, for example, declares with confidence that ‘I am a Clergyman of the Church of England, and am persuaded in my Conscience that it is not consistent with its Principles to grant them [Jews] a Settlement by Law.’¹⁵ The prevalence, volume, and violence of the rhetoric promoted and popularised as part of this campaign were, as Cranfield states, remarkable. There were also, however, many individuals in Britain who supported and defended the Bill, and who were vocal in their criticism of the campaign against it. Opposing the Bill, for example, Horace Walpole — a prominent Whig MP, writer and progenitor of the Gothic genre with his novel *The Castle of Otrano* (1764), and also son of Britain’s first de facto Prime Minister Robert Walpole — argued that the ‘Jew Bill’ exposed that ‘the age, enlightened as it is called, was still enslaved to the grossest and most vulgar prejudices.’¹⁶ Nonetheless, despite such support for the Bill, the campaign against it triumphed, and the ‘Jew Bill’ was repealed in December 1754.

As swiftly as the ‘Jew Bill’ and the subject of Jewish naturalisation appeared in Britain’s popular press, it disappeared. Noting that ‘the whole subject of the Jews and their Bill now disappeared with almost startling suddenness’¹⁷ from the pages of the *London Evening-Post*, Cranfield further asserts that the propaganda campaign against the ‘Jew Bill’ left ‘no lasting effects.’¹⁸ However, this latter point is not born out in history or in the literature that emerged in the decades that followed: having roused a vast collection of antisemitic ghosts from Britain’s past, these ghosts, along with the anxieties and fears that accompanied them, did not so easily leave the British imaginary. The 1753 ‘Jew Bill’ is thus important in establishing and *re-establishing* traditions of antisemitism in the eighteenth century, but this thesis is not about the ‘Jew Bill.’ Rather, this thesis seeks to uncover the legacies of the ‘Jew Bill’, of the many antisemitic ghosts the Bill helped to manifest, and also the legacy of Britain’s historical antisemitic traditions that were, in part, resurrected by the Bill as these legacies appeared within late eighteenth and early nineteenth century literature. Reflecting cultural, religious, and economic anxieties, these antisemitic traditions are continually refreshed, revived, and reimagined throughout history, and this thesis will examine the ways that fictional narratives and literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century revealed, engaged with and propagated societal fears and anxieties surrounding the Jewish Other and the various ghosts of Britain’s antisemitic past. These ghosts, stories, and constructed Others were partially conjured by the Bill, but significantly they had never truly been laid to rest in Britain’s cultural imagination. While such ghosts were revived and popularised by the ‘Jew Bill’, this was not the sole channel through which they entered the bloodstream of Britain’s political, cultural or literary spheres, nor were they created by it.

Britain’s antisemitic roots extend back to Shakespeare, to the Early modern and medieval period that preceded Shakespeare, and further back still to the theological divergence of Christianity from Judaism.

¹⁵ ‘News’, *London Evening Post* (November 20, 1753).

¹⁶ Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of King George II. I: January 1751–March 1754*, vol. 1, Henry Richard Vassall Holland (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), online access via *Project Gutenberg*, www.gutenberg.org [accessed 10 May 2021].

¹⁷ G. A. Cranfield, ‘II. The “London Evening-Post” and the Jew Bill of 1753’, *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (28).

¹⁸ G. A. Cranfield, ‘II. The “London Evening-Post” and the Jew Bill of 1753’, *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (30).

Christianity is fundamental to the self-conception of British national identity, and the construction of the Christian Self in opposition to the Jewish Other is key both to the initial formation of Christianity during the Roman Empire, but also to the construction of the British Christian Self in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Born out of the formation of Christianity as a new religion seeking to establish and distinguish itself as separate from Judaism, Christian thought fashions a dichotomy of difference that is rooted in a theological divergence and that manifests in bodily difference. Pauline formulations of Judaism contain the seeds for the beginning of this new dispensation that would eventually manifest as a moment of rupture, or a teleological break where Christianity diverges from Judaism, a new covenant supersedes the old, life supersedes death, and the spiritual supersedes the carnal. Looking back, this break perhaps appears more distinct and unequivocal than it was in actuality. As Paula Fredriksen discusses in *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* (2017), Paul was in fact a committed Jew who lived in a 'Jewish world incandescent with apocalyptic hope' that the establishment of God's Kingdom was at hand.¹⁹ However, later traditions 'displace him from this context', and thus, as Paul and his works are considered retrospectively throughout history, and in particular within Christian traditions that are temporally and theologically moving further away from Paul's Jewish world, Paul is 'transformed into a "convert," an ex- or even an anti-Jew; indeed, into the founder of Gentile Christianity.'²⁰ Over time, this theological difference born out of Paul's work has also become intertwined with Christian constructions of the Jewish Other.

As Steven Kruger notes, within Christianity the historical Jewishness of the Christian Messiah is expunged to present Christ as 'divine and *human*', but not 'divine and a *Jewish male*.'²¹ This position consequently reconstructs Jewish bodies as representing, or literally embodying, the past, the old covenant, and an immutable carnality. Yet despite efforts to distinguish and separate Christianity from its religious predecessor, Christianity is inextricably connected to its Jewish origins, and theological attempts to supersede and subsume this Jewish past necessarily conjure it. Whether in absentia (for example in the period between Jewish expulsion from Britain in 1290 until Jewish readmission in 1656, a period where relatively few Jews lived in Britain²²) or coexisting side by side, Jews are positioned differently to other groups in relation to Christianity and the Christian Self within Britain because of this entangled relationship. Judaism exists as a religion that Christianity is founded upon, and that Christianity seeks to move beyond and supersede in order to substantiate its theological tenets, but it is also something that Christianity cannot fully move beyond or relegate to the past because Judaism continues to be practiced and Jews continue to exist in the present, and also because, within eschatological interpretations, Judaism and Jews are believed to be integral to Christianity's imagined future.

¹⁹ Paula Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017), p. xii.

²⁰ Fredriksen, *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017), p. xii.

²¹ Steven F. Kruger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. 3.

²² Although there were few Jews living in Britain in this period, antisemitic Jewish characters were still given prominence on stage in medieval and Renaissance drama. See for example medieval mystery, miracle, and morality plays, or later Renaissance plays such as Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* or Christopher Marlow's *The Jew of Malta*, which featured stock Jewish characters such as poisoners and moneylenders.

Underpinned by claims of scientific truth that were combined with theological notions of religious difference, the medieval period saw a rise in myths where Jewish people and the Jewish body were increasingly defined as being ethnically or racially different in comparison to Christians and the 'perfect' Christian body. One result of this de facto racial categorisation is the creation of the 'imagined Jew', a fictional construction that is an amalgamation of pseudo-scientific myths and popular religious and cultural stories, and that represents Jewish identity almost exclusively through the body of the male Jew.²³ Discussing Aristotelian categorical inversion (where for each category, there must also exist the opposite) Brenda Gardenour highlights that the medieval paradigm of Christian perfection was the sanctified Christian male, and in this dichotomy the body of the imagined Jew is constructed to counter and invert the perfect male Christian body as it becomes a 'polluted female body that, in the absence of divinity, was a likely vessel for evil.'²⁴ The construction of the Jewish Other in opposition to Christian self-construction is, as Kruger notes, an opposition enduringly persistent throughout history from the Middle Ages to Nazi Germany.²⁵ Geraldine Heng observes that within canonical race theory the European Middle Ages has not traditionally been considered as a 'time of race', but she argues that there are benefits to considering concepts of race and racism within this period because 'the term "race" continues to bear witness to important strategic, epistemological, and political commitments not adequately served by the invocation of categories of greater generalities (such as "otherness" or "difference").'²⁶ Considering this period as a moment in which racial categories were invented, or where the foundations of the social construct of racial categorisation was laid, Heng further identifies the ways that concepts of race merge with other hierarchical systems such as class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexuality.²⁷ Thus, we can see the ways that previous understandings of religious, ethnic, and national identities, along with other concepts of social difference such as gender, fed into this period of proto-racial categorisation occurring in the Middle Ages that subsequently influenced our modern understandings of race, racism, and racial difference.

While race theory is, as Heng discusses, a useful lens through which to view similar instances of group identification and modes of difference that appear throughout history, it is important to note that terminology relating to difference or otherness (particularly with regards to the identification of in and out groups along with their inclusion and exclusion within society) as well as the cultural meanings attached to such terminology do not remain the same within different historical periods. Acknowledging the complex,

²³ In his introduction to *The Spectral Jew*, Steven Kruger discusses critical discourse regarding the fantasy construction of the Jewish Other or 'imagined Jew', referencing the prevalence of terms such as 'hermeneutical Jew' and 'theological Jew' alongside his own term, 'the spectral Jew'.

²⁴ B. Gardenour, 'The Biology of Blood-Lust: medieval Medicine, Theology, and the Vampire Jew', *Film & History, An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies*, 41.2 (2011) 51-63 (56).

²⁵ Kruger, p. xxiii.

²⁶ Geraldine Heng, 'The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages I: Race Studies, Modernity, and the Middle Ages', *Literature Compass*, 8.5 (2011) 315-331 pp. 319, 322.

²⁷ Heng, 'The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages I: Race Studies, Modernity, and the Middle Ages', *Literature Compass*, 8.5 (2011) 315-331 (319).

overlapping, blurry and contested nature of terms such as ethnicity, race, and religion, David G. Horrell notes that ‘these concepts are themselves social constructions, with their own particular histories and associations, which people invoke, in varied ways, to identify themselves, sometimes over against others, to create or maintain a sense of group, and to organize the social world in ways that are meaningful.’²⁸ As works such as Katherine M. Hockey and David G. Horrell (2020), Shaye J. D. Cohen (2001), and Matthew Thiessen (2011) argue, within Ancient Judaism the concept of Jewishness was fluid and continually being redefined. Jewishness was connected to the Greek term *ethnos* which refers to a tribe, a nation, or a people, but it later came to be associated with ideas of geographical ethnicity, or what Cohen describes as ‘Judaeaness’ (which was a function of both birth and geography), while also absorbing more permeable identifications relating to religious and political identities.²⁹ The definition of Jewishness remains fluid: throughout history, Jewishness has been continually contested and subjected to redefinition both by Jews debating within Jewish communities, and also by others imposing identifications onto Jews and creating imagined Jewish Others.

Such definitions often encompass and overlap with permeable concepts of ethnicity, race, and religion, and imagined constructions of Jews and Jewishness manifest this fluidity and multiplicity. Typically such constructions within the Middle Ages emphasise physical characteristics and natural biomarkers of Otherness such as the nose and beard; symbolic biomarkers such as the circumcised penis; and also unnatural or supernatural biomarkers such as horns, tails, and even the myth of Jewish male menses.³⁰ While Christians are afforded personhood and wholeness, Jews are dismembered into parts and represented only as bodies, as vessels for evil, and as ethnic, religious, and racial Others who pose a threat to the very existence of Christians and Christianity. Jews were not exclusively perceived as a racial Other, though they were nonetheless subjected to what we can consider to be racial categorisation and persecution; they were also othered through their perceived religious, ethnic, and monstrously supernatural characteristics. In particular, supernatural biomarkers draw in part from the association of Jews with Satan and consequently fuelled medieval stories of Blood and Ritual Murder Libel.³¹ Both the imagined Jew and Satan were said to have similar biological characteristics such as ‘spooky horns’ and a ‘pungent smell,’³² as well as ‘a tail, a goat’s beard, and a black colour,’³³ and this association underscored

²⁸ David G. Horrell, ‘Introduction’, in *Ethnicity, Race, Religion: Identities and Ideologies in Early Jewish and Christian Texts, and in Modern Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Katherine M. Hockey and David G. Horrell (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020), pp. 1-20 (p. 2).

²⁹ Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 109.

³⁰ For details about the myth of Jewish male menses see: Sharon Faye Koren, ‘The Menstruant as “Other” in Medieval Judaism and Christianity’, *A Journal of Jewish Women’s Studies and Gender Issues*, 17 (2009) 33-59.

³¹ Together with Host Desecration Libel, Blood and Ritual Murder Libels contributed to the expulsion of Jew from England in 1290 and also the expulsion of Jews from other European countries in the Middle Ages.

³² Lawrence Osborne, *The Poisoned Embrace* (London: Bloomsbury, 1993), p. 129.

³³ David S. Katz, ‘Shylock’s Gender: Jewish Male Menstruation in Early Modern England’, *The Review of English Studies*, 50.200 (1999) 440-462 (440).

the view that Jews are inherently evil and that Jewish communities were periodically abducting, torturing, and murdering Christian children as part of their black masses. Together with Host Desecration Libel, Blood and Ritual Murder Libels alleged that Jewish communities in Britain, as well as those across Europe, were guilty of kidnapping and murdering Christian children, of profanely using the blood of their Christian victims as part of satanic rituals, and of desecrating the Host. Used in the Roman Catholic ceremony of the Eucharist, the Host is a consecrated wafer that is believed to be transformed within the Eucharist into the literal body of Christ through the act of transubstantiation, and thus in these antisemitic Libel stories the imagined Jewish Other threatens Christian bodies, the body of Christ, and consequently the nation of Christian Britain itself.

These theological and historical roots are present in the campaign against the 'Jew Bill', and they similarly haunt the fiction published decades later. Along with previously mentioned constructions of Jews as usurers, dishonest merchants, and as blasphemers and Christ-killers, medieval myths depicting Jews as satanic, cannibalistic murderers of Christian children were conjured throughout the campaign. As part of their argument against the 'Jew Bill', one letter published in the *London Evening-Post* quotes at length from *Epistolæ ho-elianæ or Familiar Letters* (a seventeenth century travel literature publication by Anglo-Welsh historian James Howell) in order to resurrect antisemitic myths of well-poisoning and the belief that Jews possess a distinct, foul odour known as *foetor judaicus*.³⁴ Another letter revives the medieval Blood and Ritual Murder Libels as its author 'Philo Liberatus' claims that, 'I have heard of them crucifying Christian Children.'³⁵ In a similar vein, *The Merchant of Venice* and Shakespeare's infamous and bloodthirsty Jewish merchant, Shylock, were also a constant presence. Almost a hundred and fifty years after the first recorded performance of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1605 at the court of King James, J. E. Gent's 1753 pamphlet *Some Considerations on the Naturalization of the Jews* focuses in particular upon scenes portraying Shylock's usury and his bond of flesh, while Gent quotes at length from Shakespeare's play in order to demonstrate the 'exorbitant Avarice' of Jews who are, he claims, 'all griping Usurers. And what can they get out of you, but your very Blood and Vitals.'³⁶ While Gent looks to the past and exploits *The Merchant of Venice* to inform his present opposition to the 'Jew Bill', the popular anti-Whig and anti-Walpole political journal *The Craftsman* used this play to instead look to the future in their parodic article titled 'News from One Hundred Years hence, in the Hebrew Journal, by Authority.' Imagining what Britain could look like one hundred years after the passage of the Bill, this article satirises a future where the crucifixion of the Christian Messiah is celebrated annually, children are publicly circumcised, and 'a certain scandalous play titled *The Merchant of Venice*' is banned.³⁷ As opposition to the 'Jew Bill' reveals, antisemitism is not confined to one moment in

³⁴ 'Nor were they exterminated these Countries for their Religion, but for Villainies and Cheating, for clipping Coins, poisoning of Water, and counterfeiting of Seals. They are accounted the subtlest People upon the Earth; by their Profession they are for the most Part Brokers and Lombardeers, yet by that base and servile Way of strippery Trade they grow Ruch wheresoever they nest Themselves. As they are the most contemptible People, and have a kind of fulsome Scent no better than a Stink, so they are the most timorous People upon Earth.' ('News', *London Evening Post* (16-18 August, 1753).)

³⁵ Quoted in: G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (20).

³⁶ Gent, pp. 17; 20-21.

³⁷ Quoted in: G. A. Cranfield, 'II. The "London Evening-Post" and the Jew Bill of 1753', *The Historical Journal*, 8. 1 (1965), 16-30 (22).

time, and often imagined constructions of Jewish Others draw on earlier antisemitic traditions together with imagined versions of the past, the present, and the future simultaneously.

Shakespeare's play and medieval myths thus joined numerous other established antisemitic traditions as they were called forth by the the propaganda campaign against the 'Jew Bill', and once conjured, these figures, myths, and stories were not easily exorcised from Britain's cultural landscape. It is also important to note that these ghosts were conjured in parallel to increasing Jewish immigration to Britain, the appearance of prominent Jewish figures in public spaces, and emerging discussions surrounding British national identity in relation to developing trends of proto-zionism and philosemitism. A century after the readmission of Jews was granted in 1656 under the Cromwellian Protectorate, Britain's Jewish population remained small and numbered only 8000; yet, although Britain's Jewish population in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was never high, the late eighteenth century witnessed a small but significant rise in Jewish immigration, a trend that continued into the following century.³⁸ Such immigration was typically centred within Britain's cities, and Todd M. Endelman notes that London in particular was a 'major center of urban Jewish life', while during the French Revolution 'more Jews lived in London than in any other European city except Amsterdam.'³⁹ Juxtaposing Jews as an 'utterly insignificant minority'⁴⁰ in contrast to the prevalence and overrepresentation afforded to Jews in British literature within this period, Rubinstein further notes that the socio-economic and class status of Jewish communities was typically bifurcated into two distinct groups: the first being 'a small, often very wealthy and sometimes powerful elite,' and the second comprising of 'a larger lower class of hawkers, pedlars, agents and small tradesmen, often at the fringes of respectable society.'⁴¹ While wealthy Jewish businessmen like Nathan Mayer Rothschild were afforded prominence within society, the increasing presence of poor Jews led to the creation of negative stereotypes such as the street pedlar or the Jewish old-clothes man, a 'proverbial London figure' who frequently appeared in cartoons and illustrations.⁴²

Similarly, the perceived criminality of London's Ashkenazi Jews was a particularly 'widespread belief', and Rubinstein remarks that even among informed educated observers such as Patrick Colquhoun (a London magistrate and sociologist writing in this period) there existed the belief that 'there was a vast Jewish underworld embracing most of London's Jewish poor, with a mafia-like code of criminality.'⁴³ Within Jewish diaspora there are two major ancestral groups and subcultures: Ashkenazi refers to Jewish individuals who trace their ancestry back to Central and Eastern Europe (for example Germany, Poland, or the Netherlands), while Sephardic Jews originate from Spain, North Africa, and the Middle East. Following

³⁸ Rubinstein, p. 6.

³⁹ Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 4.

⁴⁰ Rubinstein, p. 63.

⁴¹ Rubinstein, p. 68.

⁴² Rubinstein, p. 69. For more details about old-clothes men in this period see: Betty Nagar, 'Old-clothes men: 18th and 19th Centuries', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 31 (1988) 171-191.

⁴³ Rubinstein, p. 69.

the readmission of Jews to England in 1656, the first wave of Jewish immigrants were primarily wealthy Sephardic Jews, and although later waves of Sephardic immigrants consisted of poor and lower class individuals — and thus shared the same poverty-stricken reality as the growing Ashkenazi immigrant population — curiously, the Sephardim ‘seldom or never figured as itinerant pedlars.’⁴⁴ Stereotypes of poor, criminal Jews were thus primarily connected to Ashkenazi communities in contrast to the perceived wealth and elite status afforded to Sephardi Jews. Discussing the regular and systemic ‘trading in base money’, Colquhoun declares that, ‘In this nefarious traffic a number of the lower order of the Jews in London assist the dealers in an eminent degree’, and he goes on to describe the organisation of this perceived Jewish criminal underworld where stolen goods found a ‘ready vent through the extensive connections of the Jew dealers both in this country and upon the Continent.’⁴⁵ In response to Britain’s increasingly visible Jewish population, new characters, types, and figures were thus added to an already vast array of antisemitic ghosts and constructed Jewish Others that were conjured in social commentary and fiction. The wealthy Sephardic gentleman is, for example, central to novels such as Maria Edgeworth’s *Harrington* (1817), while the idea of the poor and criminal Ashkenazi underclass is explored in George Walker’s *Theodore Cyphon; or, the Benevolent Jew* (1796).

Capturing the attention of politicians, theologians, authors, social commentators and the public alike, by the end of the eighteenth century, Britain’s cultural landscape was populated by Jews in both its popular imaginary and small but notable spaces within society itself. Alongside conjurations of established and emerging Jewish Others, including the bloodthirsty merchant, satanic murderers and Christ-killers, the old clothes man, and underground criminals, the figure of the Jewish convert also became prominent, and particularly as an abstract site of contested identity in relation to discussions surrounding national, racial and religious identity in Britain. This figure was especially central to debates surrounding what became known as the ‘Jewish Question.’ The ‘Jewish Question’ emerged in the eighteenth century alongside similar debates relating to the ‘Catholic Question,’⁴⁶ and Michael Ragussis notes that by the nineteenth century the ‘Jewish Question’ had developed several key variations and was reframed into *Jewish Questions* that each

⁴⁴ Rubinstein, p. 69.

⁴⁵ Patrick Colquhoun, *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*, second edition (London, H. Fry, 1796), pp. 122, 191. The perception of Jews as criminals was not new. In 1528, Germany saw the republication of an anonymous volume entitled *Liber Vagatorum, or Book of Thieves*. This volume was republished by Martin Luther, who writes in his introduction that ‘Truly, such Beggar’s Cant has come from the Jews’, and the book itself includes a list of the vocabulary of thieves containing many words supposedly derived from Hebrew. As Sander Gilman highlights, Luther’s introduction exists as one of the first claims in print that the ‘language of the thief is the language of the Jews’ (Sander L. Gilman, *Jewish Self-Hatred* (London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 68.) Although an English translation was not available until 1860, the views put forward by this volume — namely the association of Jews with criminality and the perception of Hebrew as the language of thieves and also a universal language among Jews — evidently spread into England’s public consciousness as demonstrated by Colquhoun. A further example of this association in the 1790s can be seen in a 1792 publication entitled *The New Cheats of London Exposed*. Like *The Book of Thieves*, this publication lists and describes different types of criminals, although in this case thieves specifically encountered in London. Its title page declares Jews to be one of these types, and the book itself describes, for instance, that ‘gangs of swindlers are composed chiefly of Jews’ (p. 59). A later representation of this association between Jews and criminality can be seen in Charles Dickens’ popular novel *Oliver Twist* (1838) through the character of Fagin, a Jewish criminal living in London who exploits children to aid his criminal activity through pickpocketing and other illegal activities.

⁴⁶ The Catholic Question in eighteenth century Britain and Ireland referred to Catholic emancipation and the readmission of Roman Catholics to civil, religious, and political equality in society. This was following many restrictions placed upon Catholics that had been introduced by political bills such as the 1662 Act of Uniformity and the Test Acts (1673). These bills imposed civil disabilities upon Catholics and also created religious tests (based on the taking of communion in the Church of England) for public office.

had the ideology of conversion at their centre: ‘a theological question (based on arguments over scriptural exegesis), a political question (based on the parliamentary debates over the civil and political disabilities of the Jews), and a racial question (based on racial theories of the new science of ethnology).’⁴⁷ The potential conversion of Jews evinced ideas of religious tolerance, evangelical possibilities, and even Christian eschatological developments. Yet debates surrounding the multifarious Jewish Questions also revealed Christian and nationalistic anxieties that had been conjured by the Jew Bill and that related to the potential assimilation, and therefore contamination, of foreign, Jewish Others into the body politic of Protestant Britain. As an abstract figure, but also a figure existing within society too, the Jewish convert threatens the constructed perfection and purity of the white, British, and Christian Self through the threat of contamination through conversion. While refusal to convert to Christianity challenges the veracity of Christianity’s truth claims, the act of conversion, in giving Jewish converts access to Christian and British national identities and societal spaces, brings with it racist, xenophobic, and nationalistic concerns tied to the threat of foreign and religious Others. To that end, conversion itself was viewed with suspicion. If Jews could convert to Christianity, could they not later convert back to Judaism? Similarly, if Jews could convert to Christianity, then perhaps British Christians could convert to Judaism too? Furthermore, there also remains racial questions raised in relation to Judaism as an ‘ethnic religion’⁴⁸ where perhaps conversion did not fully erase an individual’s racial or ethnic Jewishness (an anxiety that I will explore in Chapter 2). Embodying, therefore, an elasticity and impermanence in relation to conversion, but also an immutability with regards to the perception of Jewishness, the Jewish convert was an uncertain figure who, like the medieval Jewish spectre that kidnapped and murdered Christian children in Satanic rituals, also possessed the potential of polluting and contaminating the body and purity of British Christians.

Theological publications concerned with Jewish conversion and Christian millenarianism often attempted to discuss Jewish converts as an abstract part of larger eschatological narratives. Such publications were popular in this period, and as a study by John Feather reveals during the eighteenth century religious books, and especially sermons, formed the largest group of publications.⁴⁹ Significantly, Feather notes that within such sermons there was ‘a strong element of awareness of public affairs’ and that the French Revolution especially ‘sent pamphleteers to their pens and the preachers to their pulpits.’⁵⁰ This can be seen in the strand of religious publications concerned with millenarianism and that discussed Jewish conversion as an abstract, theological idea: reading the violent, revolutionary events occurring in France in the 1790s as signs of the approaching End Times and the prophesied Second Coming of the Christian Messiah, publications such as James Bicheno’s *Signs of the Times* (1793) introduce an association between

⁴⁷ Michael Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion: “The Jewish Question” and English National Identity*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 8.

⁴⁸ Yael S. Feldman, *Glory and Agony: Isaac’s Sacrifice and National Narrative* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), p. 43.

⁴⁹ John Feather, ‘British Publishing in the Eighteenth Century: a preliminary subject analysis’, *Library*, s6-VIII.1 (1986) 32-46 (35).

⁵⁰ Feather, 32-46 (35, 37). Other notable publications considering Jewish conversion and Christian interpretation of End Time prophecy include Bicheno’s later *A Word in a Season* (1795) which updates his prophetic interpretation in *Signs of the Times*, and also the anonymously published *The Illuminator, or Looking-Glass of the Times; Being a Selection of Wonderful Predictions and Prophecies, Past, Present, and to Come* (1797).

real events and the expected Christian apocalypse, together with the return of Jews to Palestine and the anticipated eventual conversion of the Jewish nation to Christianity. A year later, the self-proclaimed Prince of the Hebrews, Richard Brothers, published *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times* (1794), a work responding to the expected apocalyptic aftermath of the French Revolution and inspired by the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation. Brothers drew great crowds as he publicly declared that he would lead Jews back to Israel and thus end Jewish exile in preparation for the beginning of the End Times. However, *A Revealed Knowledge* also depicted Brothers's 'king-killing' visions, and as a result of the recent violent regicide and Reign of Terror in France, these regicidal prophecies were deemed to be treasonous and Brothers was eventually incarcerated in 1795 on the grounds that he was criminally insane.⁵¹ Despite this, Brothers's arrest did not stem the flow of millennial publications. In the following year, 1796, the Norrisian prize at Cambridge was awarded to Charles Jerram for his 'Essay tending to Shew the Ground contained in scripture for expecting a Future Restoration of the Jews,' while such publications continued into the following century. The ideology of conversion in these publications moved the ultimate site of conversion and the Jewish convert away from the geographical locale of Britain and concurrently tied it to a political foreign policy objective of Jewish restoration to Palestine, as well as a theological narrative of impending apocalypse predicated by such restoration. While the conversion of Jews to Christianity was important in these religious expositions, so too was the eventual displacement of Jews from Britain, thus excluding the figure of the Jewish convert from any claims to British nationality.

Notably absent in these principally Christian discussions are Jews themselves, while the figure of the Jewish Other or the Jewish convert serves only as an abstract part of the larger interpretation of religious texts and wider Christian eschatology. There were, however, inter-religious debates regarding Jewish conversion taking place between Jews and Christians in this period, the most prominent of which was a conversation that occurred between famed English scientist, philosopher, and theologian, Reverend Joseph Priestley, and Anglo-Jewish immigrant and Hebraist, David Levi. Responding to Priestley's *Letter to the Jews* (1786), a publication that attempted to persuade its intended Jewish reader to convert to Christianity, Levi penned a reply:

As you have invited our nation to an amicable discussion of the evidences of Christianity, I shall endeavor to answer what you have advanced in behalf of your doctrine, as far as the extent of my abilities, and the little time I have to spare from my other avocations, will permit. [...] I mean to confer, and reason freely with you on the subject, and candidly consider your arguments; but not with a view of converting either you, or any other Christian, to the Jewish faith, I assure you. No sir, we never attempt it; we do not think ourselves bound (as the Christians) to propagate our religion, either by arguments, or persecution.⁵²

Addressing Priestley directly in order to refute his theological claims, Levi focuses on the ideology of conversion to highlight a key difference between Christians and Jews. This difference hinges on views

⁵¹ Deborah Madden, 'The religious politics of prophecy: Or, Richard Brothers's *Revealed Knowledge* confuted', *History of European Ideas*, 34 (2008) 270-284 (271).

⁵² David Levi, *Letters to Dr. Priestly, in Answer to those he addressed to the Jews*, (London: J. Johnson; 1787), pp. 4, 10.

towards conversion and professed notions of religious tolerance, but where evangelical conversionist pursuits emanate only from one group, namely Christians. Such pursuits towards Jewish conversion often engender and contribute towards oppression of Jews while also stoking a sort of conversion-phobia where Jewish converts, despite professing a new and Christian identity, continue to face persecution as if they are inextricably tainted by their Jewish heritage. Levi's response sparked a short exchange of letters between himself and Priestley that unfolded in the public arena of theological publications from 1786 to 1789.⁵³ This exchange further inspired several other responses. Levi's second and final reply to Priestley published in 1789 includes responses to Dr. Cooper, Mr. Bicheno, Dr. Krauter, Mr. Swain, and 'Anti-Socinus', and the title page proclaims that these five additional letters were 'occasioned by their remarks on Mr. David Levi's Answer to Dr. Priestley's First Letters to the Jews.' Reviewing the response to Levi's letters penned by 'Anti-Socinus' — a pseudonym that Levi and *The Monthly Review* reveal to be the alias of Anselm Bayly, a churchman who also published critical theological works — the *Monthly Review* defends Levi and criticises Bayly for participating in antisemitism: 'in these *Remarks*, [Bayly] very rudely treated and abused Mr. David Levi, because he is a Jew, and has chosen to give his reasons for not being a Christian. Of Mr. Levi's character, we have heard a good report.'⁵⁴ As Levi had highlighted in his original response to Priestley, and as demonstrated by the exchange with Bayly, Christian endeavours towards the conversion of Jews typically propagate critical theological arguments, often directed towards abstract Jewish converts (or potential converts), but these endeavours also engender antisemitic persecution and abuse directed towards Jews in society.

Priestley's initial conversionist attempts and his public dialogue with Levi and wider Jewish communities are not tied to apocalyptic designs, but Levi continued to publish responses engaging with Christians who were espousing prophetic narratives that often centred on the conversion of Jews. Significantly, some publications further reveal a political dimension that ties abstract ideas of conversion and restoration to political influences and practical pursuits within society. In 1795 Levi published another volume of letters, and capitalising on his now well-established literary credentials in the theological field by declaring on the title page of this publication that he is the author of *Lingua Sacra, The Ceremonies of the Jews*,⁵⁵ and also *Letters to Dr. Priestley*, this time Levi directs his writings towards sitting MP Nathaniel Brassey Halhed. *Letters to Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, M.P., in Answer to their Testimony of the Authenticity of the Prophecies of Richard Brothers and his pretended Mission to Recall the Jews* (1795) is a response to Halhed's own work, *Testimony of the Authenticity of the Prophecies of Richard Brothers* (1795) that bears witness to the prophecies of Richard Brothers. As a serving member of Parliament Halhed was one of

⁵³ The exchange of letters between Levi and Priestley include: Priestley's *Letters to the Jews* (1786); Levi's *Letters to Dr. Priestley, in Answer to those he addressed to the Jews* (1787); Priestley's *Letters to the Jews. Part II. Occasioned by Mr. David Levi's Reply to the Former Letters* (1787); and Levi's *Letters to Dr. Priestley, in answer to his Letters to the Jews, Part II* (1789).

⁵⁴ 'Art 52. *Remarks on David Levi's second Letter to Dr Priestley*', in *The Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal*, Vol. 78 (London: R. Griffiths, 1788), p. 170.

⁵⁵ Levi's first published work, *A Succinct Account of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Jews* (published in 1782) is in part a defence of his Jewish faith, but it also attempts to educate both Jews and Christians in England about Judaism, and in particular to correct specifically Christian misconceptions about Judaism. As a result of this work, and his later three-volume and self-published *Dissertation on the Prophecies of the Old Testament* (1793–1800), Levi was well-known and well-respected within Christian circles. He also published *Lingua Sacra*, a Hebrew dictionary and grammar in three volumes.

Brothers' most prominent disciples in Britain. Deeming Brothers' work to be unworthy of his attention, it is notable that Levi instead responds to the conversionist and restorative traditions and scriptural interpretations espoused by his parliamentary disciple, Halhed. While Brothers' prophecies were dismissed by Levi as absurd and ridiculous,⁵⁶ or ridiculed as the work of a madman and a traitor by some parts of Britain's political establishment, Halhed, as a respectable gentleman and MP, lent credence to Brothers' abstract scriptural interpretations and also revealed the political potential lurking within: 'We all know, that when men are once steadily persuaded of the authenticity of a prophecy, they are almost involuntarily led to perform their part towards its completion. The present moment teems with these anticipations of futurity, beyond the example of every former period.'⁵⁷ Falling under the spell of this self-styled millenarian prophet and anticipating the future End Times, Halhed's defence of 'The Prince of Hebrews' ultimately led to end of his own political career, and after petitioning parliament in response to Brothers' incarceration, Halhed resigned with his reputation in ruins. Yet, his discussion surrounding the performance of actions that could lead to the completion of prophecy, regardless of the scriptural accuracy of such interpretations, exposes a kernel of self-fulfilment as the abstract interpretation of scripture intersects with a reading of key events delineated in Christian eschatology that were seen to play out in the material world. Motivated by conversionist traditions in order to bring about the awaited Christian apocalypse, the restoration of Jews to Israel became not just a religious venture but a political concept that could be achieved through societal efforts and practical, material means. The Jewish Other and the Jewish convert remained central to restorationist and conversionist traditions, and the political and societal momentum towards the completion or realisation of an awaited futurity continued to develop in the following century.

Conversionist pursuits were not, therefore, simply confined to the pages of political pamphlets, letters, and theological expositions. While many millenarian publications of the 1790s prophesied that the turn of the century would usher in the End Times, as the year 1800 passed without any notable apocalypse, sermons and discussions such as those championed by Priestly, Brothers, and Halhed continued in print, while scriptural interpretation also provided a fertile foundation for the establishment of conversionist organisations that once more underscored the importance of the Jewish convert to evangelical endeavours. Demonstrating conversionist ideology in practice, efforts to convert Jews also exposed conversion-phobia existing within society as Jewish converts were viewed with suspicion by both their former Jewish communities and their new Christian ones. The most prominent and influential of these groups was the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Amongst the Jews, popularly known as the London Jews' Society. Established in 1809, the evangelical mission of the London Jews Society encompassed an educational objective to teach Christianity to Jews as well as efforts promoting the physical restoration of the Jewish people to Israel. The Society hosted monthly lectures that, as Mel Scult notes, indicate a clear relationship with conversionist-restorationist traditions, and while the group's focus was initially on Jewish immigrant communities in the East End, the Society soon began to focus its efforts beyond England as it established international operations in Europe, Africa, and Palestine, and consequently became one of the

⁵⁶ David Levi, *Letters to Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, MP* (London: 1795), p. 37.

⁵⁷ Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, *Testimony of the Authenticity of the Prophecies of Richard Brothers* (London: 1795), p. 5.

'first societies of its kind to operate globally.'⁵⁸ Jewish converts were central to its educational and restorationist missions, and Jewish converts were also integral to its creation. The London Jews Society boasted among its founding members Joseph Frey, a prominent Jewish convert to Christianity. Born Joseph Samuel, Frey converted from his Jewish faith in his home country of Germany before travelling to England as a missionary, and he discloses in *Narrative of the Rev. Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey* (1834) that he chose the names Christian Frederick Frey following his conversion and baptism into Christianity as it was 'an ancient practice in Germany, for a converted Jew to receive new names at his baptism.'⁵⁹ These names speak to both Frey's Jewish heritage and his new Christian identity, but they also expose tensions at play between these identities and his transformation into a Jewish convert. The Jewish convert occupies a transitional space between Christian and Jew and, because converts could never fully be considered to be Christian or Jewish by their former or their new communities, they were often viewed with suspicion and experienced discrimination as a result of conversion-phobia.

Despite his continued involvement with the conversionist society that he helped to establish, and his own 'useful' efforts to educate Jewish and Christian communities including his lectures for the London Jews' Society and his Hebrew Grammar published in 1813, Frey was aware of the unique outsider status afforded to Jewish converts.⁶⁰ Possessing a 'single eye to promote the spiritual welfare of my brethren according to the flesh,' Frey thus professed an evangelical, Christian mission in parallel his own unchanged racially or ethnical Jewish identity.⁶¹ On the one hand, as Scult highlights, Frey never seemed to escape the feeling that he was Jewish 'even though he had accepted the Christian faith,⁶² and this is demonstrated throughout *Narrative of the Rev. Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey* as Frey frequently refers to his Jewish brethren as his 'kinsmen after the flesh' suggesting a biological connection that conversion could never sever.⁶³ This perception was shared by detractors of the London Jew's society who believed that many impoverished Jews were 'rogues and opportunists' who outwardly professed conversion for material gain,⁶⁴ with one critic turning to poetry in order to delineate in verse their distrust of conversion and suspicion of Jewish

⁵⁸ Mel Scult, *Millennial Expectations and Jewish Liberties* (The Netherlands: Leiden, 1798), p. 98. Scult presents examples of lectures that include: 'The Study of the Prophecies Relative to the Jews, in Connection with Passing events — recommended to Christians', 'Christian Love, the Most Powerful Motive to Attempt the Conversion of the Jews', and 'Our Sing and Danger — Greater Than Those of Our Forefathers in Neglecting the Jews'.

⁵⁹ Joseph Frey, *Narrative of the Rev. Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey* (New York: D. Fanshaw, Printer, 1834), p. 26.

⁶⁰ 'ART. 21.-A Hebrew Grammar in the English Language, by Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey', *The Critical review, or, Annals of literature*, 4.3 (1813) 329-330 (330). This review describes the grammar exercises Frey provides in his Hebrew Grammar in order to show and facilitate the pronunciation of Hebrew works in English as the 'useful part of the work.'

⁶¹ Frey, p. 112.

⁶² Mel Scult, *Millennial Expectations And Jewish Liberties* (The Netherlands: Leiden, 1978), p. 95.

⁶³ Frey, p. 16. See also pp. 20, 24, as well as 'my kinsmen according to the flesh' (p. 58), and 'my sister according to the flesh' (p. 70).

⁶⁴ Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1999), p. 74.

converts: ‘ ’Tis true, ’tis strange, and strange ’tis true, / Cash *buys* but cannot *keep* a Jew.’⁶⁵ On the other hand, Frey was himself critical of the provisions and financial support provided by his society to recently converted immigrant Jews, deeming such provisions to be inadequate because, due to familial rejection and ‘the prejudices of the older Jewish community and unsympathetic Christians’, Jewish converts struggled to find proper employment.⁶⁶ Drawing insights from one community in order to educate and influence the other, while also attempting to maintain his connection with both, Frey exemplifies the evangelical ideology of conversion in practice. As a prominent Jewish convert, Frey’s experience reveals the ongoing difficulties Jewish converts faced in this period. Such struggles also expose the suspicion surrounding Jewish converts, and this conversion-phobia fed into a society already occupied with Jewish Questions and growing trends of both antisemitism and philosemitism.

Of course, not all prominent converts in Britain were Jewish converts to Christianity. Exposing the earlier surfacing of religious tension existing not between Jewish and Christian communities, but between the nation’s Catholic and Protestant communities, in 1780 the destructive and violent anti-Catholic Gordon Riots swept across London. Born out of a campaign against the Papists Act of 1778, this campaign was spearheaded by Lord George Gordon, the head of the Protestant Association and who also lent his name to the riots. Gordon was charged with High Treason for his role in instigating the riots, and later, in 1786, he was excommunicated from the Church of England, though for reasons unrelated to the riots, and he briefly left Britain for Holland.⁶⁷ Yet returning to Britain a few years later, this prominent Protestant luminary, known for his extreme and often violent religious convictions, discreetly revealed that he had converted to Judaism in his brief absence from his home nation:

He retired *incog.* to Birmingham, and he resided at the house of a Jew, disguised by a long beard and a broad shaded hat, after the Polish fashion. He strictly adhered to the religious ceremonies of his new brethren, underwent the *holy operation of circumcision*, and was called by the name of *Israel Abraham George Gordon*; but though he was much admired by many of his associates, and looked upon by some as a *second Moses*, he was not allowed to enjoy repose; for his landlord, like another *Judas*, betrayed him for *thirty pieces of silver*.⁶⁸

Gordon’s conversion was soon well-known, and his new identity as an Orthodox Jew — a conversion that, like Frey’s conversion to Christianity in the following century, involved his acquisition of new names representing his converted identity — was the subject of several publications including a report in *The Bristol Journal* (15 December 1787), a satirical print by William Dent titled ‘The Birmingham

⁶⁵ P. Pasquin, *Jewish Conversion: A Christianical Farce* (London, 1814), p. 4; quoted in: Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830*, p. 74.

⁶⁶ R. H. Martin, ‘United Conversionist Activities among the Jews in Great Britain 1795-1815’ in *Church History*, 46.5, (2009) pp. 437-452 (442).

⁶⁷ Gordon’s excommunication was due to his refusal to bear witness in an ecclesiastical suit.

⁶⁸ Robert Watson, *Life of Lord George Gordon: With a Philosophical Review of his Political Conduct* (Paternoster-Row: H. D. Symonds, 1795), p. 83.

Moses' (1797),⁶⁹ as well as a biography of Gordon (quoted above) that appeared in 1795. Interest in Gordon the anti-Catholic campaigner turned convert to Judaism along with the historical moment of violent religious conflict encapsulated by his riots soon spilled into the pages of literary fiction. Transplanting the Gordon Riots to the 1790s and therefore after Gordon's prominent conversion, George Walker's anti-Jacobin novel *The Vagabond* (1799) memorialises Gordon and his anti-Catholic cries: 'in the street were more than a thousand strong, and the shouts and vociferations of No Popery! Lord George Gordon for ever! rent the air.'⁷⁰ Although Gordon is not mentioned in Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington* (1817), the Gordon Riots feature prominently in the narrative, and significantly this novel also depicts the earlier antisemitic campaign against the 'Jew Bill'. Linking the two events through a critique of religious intolerance, *Harrington*, as I will discuss in Chapter 3, further ties this critique to its philosemitic portrayal of Jewish characters who offer their assistance to the Catholic victims of the destructive riots.⁷¹ Gordon's conversion did not deliver him from prison or public ridicule as Dent's satirical print demonstrates, but it did offer the seeds to rehabilitate his public image away from one of religious intolerance and violence, and, through the growing trend of philosemitism, into one of Jewish benevolence.

Decades after the rise and fall of the 'Jew Bill', and following the Gordon riots that violently turned the nation's focus onto anti-Catholicism, British society and its fiction remained fascinated with Jewish Others and Jewish Questions. British writers of the Romantic period, including Maria Edgeworth, Walter Scott, William Wordsworth, William Blake, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and George Croly to name but a few often turned to Israel, Palestine, and Jewish conversion within their works. Yet, as Judith Page observes, many authors such as these faced a major problem as they were themselves not Jewish, and furthermore did not know any Jews personally, and as a consequence misrepresented Jewish practices, idealised Jewish characters, or merely used Jewish themes to explore their own alienation.⁷² Similarly N. I. Matar outlines

⁶⁹ In this etching Gordon is represented as a Jew with a long beard, wearing long robes and a wide-brimmed hat, while he holds a book inscribed with 'Mosaic Law.' At his feet is a torn scroll that reads 'Protestant Association,' and the print also includes the following inscription:

'To Law & Presbyters he bid adieu,
To save his Soul & Body in the Jew;
And wonder not he stole to misbelievers,
Since they of stolen things are oft receivers;
But Justice their strange Proselyte found out,
And lodg'd the Runaway in prison stout,
Lest he, mad flaming Bigot, should surprise
The Christians his new friends to nat'ralize.'

This print is currently part of the British museum's 'Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum' Collection (www.britishmuseum.org).

⁷⁰ George Walker, *The Vagabond, a Novel*, vol. 1, 3rd edition (London: 1799) p. 132.

⁷¹ Similarly, Charles Dickens's 1841 novel *Barnaby Rudge* centres on the Gordon Riots. In the final chapter of this novel, Dickens immortalises not only Gordon's anti-Catholic prejudice, but the charity and benevolence he was reported to have performed following his conversion to Judaism: 'though his means were not large, his charity was great, and in bestowing alms among them he considered the necessities of all alike, and knew no distinction of sect or creed. There are wise men in the highways of the world who may learn something, even from this poor crazy lord who died in Newgate.' (Charles Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge* (London: Vintage, 2019), p. 715).

⁷² Judith W. Page, *Imperfect Sympathies: Jews and Judaism in British Romantic Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), pp. 15-16.

the lack of concern for 'Jews *qua* Jews' among the Romantics.⁷³ Citing Blake's second preface to *Jerusalem* as an example, Matar notes that the address 'To the Jews' should not be understood literally: rather than addressing Jews, it instead speaks more generally to 'the prophetic poets of human history.'⁷⁴ First published in 1808, *Jerusalem* is best known today as a popular hymn and the adopted national anthem of England following its revival in 1916 when Hubert Parry composed music to accompany the poem. *Jerusalem* famously concluded with a lament that the speaker will not rest 'Till we have built Jerusalem, / In England's green and pleasant Land': transforming Jewish suffering and displacement into a universal experience, though one rooted in England, this poem presents the idea that although both spaces are significant, England will succeed Israel as the home of Jerusalem.

Following the publication of *Jerusalem*, and almost a hundred years before it was set to music, Lord George Gordon Byron (descendant of the infamous convert to Judaism, Lord George Gordon) collaborated with Jewish musician Isaac Nathan on *Hebrew Melodies*. Published in 1815, this collection contains thirty poems each accompanied by music composed by Nathan who claimed the melodies were 'upward of 1000 years old and some of them performed by the Ancient Hebrews before the destruction of the Temple.'⁷⁵ This claim frames the collection as, to some extent, authentically Jewish, connecting it to the Temple of Jerusalem and Jewish history. David Conway, however, notes that this claim is probably inaccurate, further stating that Nathan was primarily commercially motivated, and that *Hebrew Melodies* was created to exploit a niche but growing market interest in Jewish melodies as well as Byron's own fame.⁷⁶ It also capitalised on increasing interest in Israel and Jewish diaspora, including several proto-Zionist poems such as 'The Wilde Gazelle' that laments 'Israel's scattered race', and also 'Oh! Weep for Those', a poem that asks 'when shall Zion's song again seem sweet?' Omitting reference to England, these poems focus on Israel, but like many Romantic works that focus on Jews and Israel, Byron's poems are distilled through a non-Jewish voice and reveal the author's complicated relationship with Britain's Jewish communities. *Hebrew Melodies*, as Page discusses, can be read as demonstrating an 'affinity between Byron and Judaism' through Byron's 'identification with the outcast,'⁷⁷ and it was also criticised for exhibiting Byron's 'alleged Jewish sympathies.'⁷⁸ However, as Page further argues, it also reveals Byron's contempt for contemporary Jews and his distrust of this community as a result of his own financial dealings with Jewish moneylenders.⁷⁹

⁷³ N. I. Matar, 'The English Romantic Poets and the Jews', *Jewish Social Studies*, 50.3/4 (1993) 223-238 (223).

⁷⁴ Matar, 223-238 (223).

⁷⁵ 'Review of New Musical Publications', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 83.1 (May, 1813), 459-461 (461).

⁷⁶ David Conway, *Jewry in Music: Entry to the Profession from the Enlightenment to Richard Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 88.

⁷⁷ Page, p. 30.

⁷⁸ Page, p. 31.

⁷⁹ Page, p. 30.

The figures of the convert and the 'imaginary Jew' are thus multifaceted: an abstract site of scriptural interpretation; an example of the evangelical and political ideologies of conversion and proto-zionism; but also an example of the construction of the Jewish Other within fiction. As Jews were becoming increasingly visible in the public and political spheres, literary representations of the Jewish Other formed a key part of the cultural hegemony of British society. Exploring a variety of imagined Jewish Others that manifest antisemitic and philosemitic anxieties, this thesis will consider representations of imagined Jewish Others conjured in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century literature. This period is crucial to the transfiguration of myths and legends, biblical traditions, cultural reproductions, and the many antisemitic ghosts that have been created and invoked across history into a now established literary tradition of Jewish representation in British literature. In particular, this is a literary tradition of Jewish representation and stories told by Christian authors. Constructed in opposition to the Christian Self, the Jewish Other reconstructs various versions of antisemitic ghosts and established Jewish characters, and within the pages of this period's literary productions new ghosts are also created in response to or alongside old ghosts. In these narratives, diverse threads of established antisemitic traditions and new traditions (both antisemitic and philosemitic) were consolidated and disseminated through the emerging medium of the novel and other prose literary forms such as novellas and chapbooks that were commercially popular and affordable. The construction of Jewish Others demonstrates the relationship between society and its literary productions, and as the Jewish Other is conjured by Christian authors who ventriloquize Jews in their tales, this fictional construct thus necessarily reflects Christian, and not Jewish, anxieties.

Concurrently occupying the uncertain spaces of 'Brother' and 'Other' in relation to the British, Christian Self, the Jewish Other is a key oppositional figure in this period against which the boundaries of the Christian Self and the British nation are constantly defined in opposition to, and perceived to be in contention with. As Linda Colley discusses in her monograph *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, the invention of Britishness, the British Self, and British national identity forged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a reactionary movement responding to fears of alien and foreign Others. However, though Colley acutely considers the importance of fears surrounding European Others as British identity is solidified against a backdrop of war, and further highlights the gulf between Protestants and Catholics within the religious landscape,⁸⁰ the role of Jews and the Jewish Other in shaping British identity is largely omitted. Cecil Roth's seminal work on Anglo-Jewish history brought to light the importance of Jews to British history, and historical scholars such as Rubinstein and Endelman have continued to examine Anglo-Jewish history, discussing in particular the importance of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in relation to the social history of Jews in Britain and Western Europe. Unearthing important strands relating to Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jewish communities that flourished across Britain in this period, these historical studies highlight the growing importance of Jews in British society in terms of employment, education, immigration, politics, and culture.⁸¹ In response to questions surrounding Jewish naturalisation

⁸⁰ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 19.

⁸¹ See for example: Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (1764); Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English-Speaking World: Great Britain* (1996); Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (1979) and *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (2002).

such as those sparked by the 'Jew Bill,' Endelman notes that 'Jews' represented in discussions of British nationality were typically 'imaginary creatures, constructed to represent threats to British national traditions, Christianity, manhood, and landed property.'⁸² Building on Linda Colley's argument within *Britons*, Endelman adds the stereotype of the Jewish Other as another key component of British self-construction. While Colley and Endelman focus on the historical perspectives of this construction in Anglo-Jewish history and the creation of an English national identity, this thesis aims to explore the literary manifestations of the imaginary Jewish Other.

The importance of cultural representations of the Other has already been well established by postcolonial scholars such as Edward Said, whose work questions the orthodoxy of established ontological concepts and categories such as the West, the Orient, and the Other, and redefines the 'Other' as an artificial, fictional construct. In his seminal work *Orientalism*, Said acknowledges the similarities between antisemitic depictions and portrayals of the Orient, highlighting the fictionality and artificiality of such representations that should be viewed as 'representations, not as "natural" depictions'⁸³:

The idea of representation is a theatrical one: the Orient is the stage on which the whole East is confined. On this stage will appear figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate. The Orient then seems to be, not an unlimited extension beyond the familiar European world, but rather a closed field, a theatrical stage affixed to Europe.⁸⁴

Nourished by Britain's extensive cultural repertoire pertaining to Jews, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Jewish Others were represented on the imaginary stage of British fiction and often conjured into narratives taking place on Britain's shores. Sometimes manifesting versions of notable figures like Gordon, but typically creating fictional versions of established and newly emerging characters such as Jewish converts, merchants, old clothes men, Jewish fathers and daughters, benevolent Jews, or even medieval monsters and supernatural villains, these Jewish Others were exploited in order to act out societal discussions regarding national, racial, and theological anxieties along with the many Jewish Questions raised by antisemitic and philosemitic traditions. Such representation is fundamental to constructions of those deemed to be Other within cultural hegemonies, because, as Said notes to 'have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it';⁸⁵ to represent the Other is therefore to redress the perceived threat posed by such imagined creatures.

More recently, scholarship has expanded upon Said's foundations, and Tabish Khair's study *The Gothic, Postcolonialism and Otherness* further explores representations of alterity and otherness with a particular focus upon representations in Gothic colonial texts. While these works do not address Jewishness or the Jewish Other directly, there is nonetheless a kinship between depictions of postcolonial or Oriental

⁸² Endelman, p. 76.

⁸³ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 21.

⁸⁴ Said, p. 63.

⁸⁵ Said, p. 32.

Others and Jewish Others in that these figures are constructed in opposition to 'the West', to whiteness, and to the (Christian) European Self. Turning to the Jewish Other and drawing on Jacques Derrida's theoretical framework of spectralization and hauntology,⁸⁶ Kruger's *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* focuses on the theological foundations of this figure and explores the Christian construction of the Other and Jewish alterity in relation to the 'spectral Jew.' It is this critical foundation of the Other that this thesis seeks to expand upon in its examination of Christian constructions of the imagined Jewish Other in British fiction between 1790 and 1830.

While studies by Rubinstein and Endelman reveal the importance of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to Anglo-Jewish history, literary studies including Ragussis's *Figures of Conversion: "The Jewish Question" and English National Identity*, Page's *Imperfect Sympathies: Jews and Judaism in British Romantic Literature and Culture*, and Nadia Valman's *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture*, along with two collections exploring Jews and British Romanticism edited by Sheila A. Spector⁸⁷ have similarly established the significance of this period in terms of its literary productions and cultural movements. What these works acknowledge are the ways that literary and cultural traditions in this period from the novel, conversion narratives, and also Romanticism prominently incorporate Jewish representation and explore themes relating to Anglo-Jewish relations. In *Imperfect Sympathies* Page argues that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed 'a "cultural revolution" of sympathy and sentiment' that influenced depictions of Jews, further suggesting that such depictions of Jews in particular 'also represents the limitations of ideal sympathy.'⁸⁸ This trend often manifested within philosemitic works that portrayed benevolent Jews and idealised inter-community relations between Britain's Jewish and Christian communities. Focusing on the Gothic as an antisemitic tradition, Carol Margaret Davison's 2004 monograph *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* contends that the Gothic, a genre arising from the eighteenth century, embodies an antisemitic 'spectro-poetics,'⁸⁹ becoming a site for spectres of Jewish difference that haunted Jewish Questions and British national identity in this period. Yet, though the Gothic conjured antisemitic myths and demonic Jews, it was not the only genre to do so. While Gothic texts such as *The Inquisition* (1797) and *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) function within a Gothic literary tradition, novels such as *Ivanhoe* (1819), *The Spanish Campaign* (1815), and *Salathiel* (1827) draw on other literary genres such as the historical and romance novel. Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* and George Croly's *Salathiel* are further influenced by their author's professional identities as Anglican clergymen and engage with contemporary theological traditions and debates. Moreover, philosemitic and proto-zionist literary works also manifested monstrous Jews, although often with an aim to exorcise these monsters and reveal a more authentic, though equally constructed and artificial, version of Jewishness tied to benevolence. In

⁸⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge Classics, 2006).

⁸⁷ Spector's two collections, *British Romanticism and the Jews: History, Culture, Literature* (2002) and *The Jews and British Romanticism: Politics, Religion, Culture* (2005) explore the mutual influences of Britain's Jewish and Christian communities on each other during the Romantic period, and the ways in which this was reflected across culture, literature, and politics.

⁸⁸ Page, p. 3.

⁸⁹ Carol Margaret Davison, *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 7.

conversation with poetry and dramatic works, the depiction of Jewishness and the Jewish Other in literary fiction is thus one of generic cross pollination, and a cross pollination that further merges with historical, theological, and mythical foundational contexts that are interwoven into such depictions.

This thesis will explore Christian representations of the Jewish Other through the limits of sympathy and tolerance but also the ways that established antisemitic traditions and emerging philosemitic traditions of Jewish representation are exploited to uphold Christian hegemony. To date there has been no study devoted to uniting theological, historical, mythical, and literary threads in this representation, and that analyses the interconnection of these threads in the ways that Christian constructions in particular emerged in this period and contributed to antisemitic and philosemitic traditions. These traditions are rooted in Christian theology, the infusion of cultural Christianity into political and societal spaces, and Christian perceptions of Judaism and the Jewish Other. Examining the tension inherent in a literary construction that could be either 'Brother' or 'Other', this thesis will suggest that representations of the Jewish Other in this period ultimately reflect anxieties about the British, Christian Self acted out through constructions of Jewish Otherness. This thesis also argues that Christian traditions of philosemitism and proto-zionism could be just as harmful as antisemitic traditions in perpetuating racist stereotypes, fetishising Jewish women, and promoting Christian supremacy and supersessionism. Conjuring established antisemitic ghosts and developing new traditions and literary constructions, such texts reflect contemporary Christian anxieties. What this thesis seeks to do is to undertake an original and interdisciplinary approach to examining Christian constructions of the Jewish Other in British fiction, drawing on a range of historical, theological, mythic and folkloric, cultural, and literary approaches and traditions to uncover Christian anxieties at the heart of these representations and underpinning both antisemitism and philosemitism.

Chapter 1 will establish the construction of the imagined Jew as monstrous and Other in relation to the Christian, British Self through exploring tales of terror, charting the development of theological, religious, historical, and literary traditions. Such traditions associate Jewishness with monstrosity, cast Jewish practices — including both religious rituals and economic occupations such as moneylending — as demonic and vampiric, and frame Jews as foreign or even (metaphorically) supernatural threats to Britain's body politic. Underpinned by theological and religious interpretations of the difference between Jews and Christians, cultural and literary stories of Satan along with medieval myths of Blood and Ritual murder libel fed into Britain's cultural and literary traditions that represent Jews as monstrous bogeymen, and that were conjured and resurrected in the eighteenth century. First exploring how these foundations spread through the bloodstream of Britain's political and literary imaginary, this chapter will then focus on Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and the legacy of Shylock, the European vampire craze, and the metaphorical use of vampirism in eighteenth century political and cultural discourse before turning to discuss the shadows of the monstrous Jewish Other in Charlotte Smith's 1796 novel, *Marchmont*. Read in the context of Shylock, and against the backdrop of the ghosts of Blood Libel, medieval stereotypes of ethnic and demonic Jewishness, and also antisemitic prejudice against usury, though Smith's vampire-lawyer Mr Vampyre is not explicitly Jewish, this chapter will suggest that his depiction contributes to Bryan Cheyette's definition of

'semitic discourse' where Jewish Otherness is constructed as indeterminate, fluid, and ambivalent.⁹⁰ Ambivalent Otherness allows for characteristics typically associated with Jewish archetypes, and particularly identified with Shakespeare's Jewish characters, to be exploited in the construction of non-Jewish characters, reinforcing the association of these characteristics and stereotypes with a (Jewish) monstrosity without interrogation. Casting an unacknowledged Jewish shadow, this chapter will examine how Smith's tale of terror and her depiction of Mr Vampyre draws on antisemitic traditions to suggest that, though ambivalent and not immediately recognisable, monstrous Jewishness may be lurking in British society in the dark caverns of lawyers' chambers.

Moving from metaphorical monstrosity, Chapter 2 will continue to examine the imaginary Jewish Other by focusing on the fictional construction of Jews as racial Others, or rather as ethnic-religious Others, and considering the ways that literary representations reflect societal anxieties of race and national purity that underpin a key aspect of the period's preoccupation with the Jewish Question. Unlike many other national or religious Others against which the British, Christian Self was defined in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the Catholic or European Other, Judaism exists as a 'special brand of ethnic religion'⁹¹ and as such the construction of the Jewish Other unifies ideas of religious and theological difference, but also national and racial Otherness. Using Edward Said's critical lens of *representation*, where cultural constructions of the Other should be viewed not as 'natural' depictions but as examples of artificial representation,⁹² together with Geraldine Heng's discussion of race as a structural relationship that relies on community fictions, community consent, and also biomarkers to define and mark distinct groups as racially different,⁹³ this chapter will provide a theological and historical framework for the Christian representation of Jews as racial Others that is then resurrected in literature. From the biblical foundation of circumcision that marks a community identity in the flesh of male Jews, through medieval Blood Libel and myths of Jewish male menses, the persecution of Jews enacted by the Spanish Inquisition, and the emergence of pseudo-scientific racial categorisation together with biological reproductive racism, Jewish difference has always been constructed in terms of blood and flesh, natural and external biomarkers, and polluted genealogies that manifest an intrinsic racial difference. Following a discussion of these foundations, this chapter will use a selection of popular texts from the period — including critically understudied texts such as the anonymously published *The Inquisition* (1799) and Mrs Meeke's *The Spanish Campaign* (1815) — to explore how fictional narratives contribute to the discourse and cultural exchange surrounding representations of Jews as racial Others. As ethnic-religious Others, Jews are particularly viewed with suspicion within a Christian hegemony that seeks to protect the perceived racial and religious purity of the British body politic from polluting entities. Conjuring and reviving previous antisemitic traditions of race,

⁹⁰ Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of "The Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial representation 1875-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 8.

⁹¹ Feldman, p. 43

⁹² Said, p. 21.

⁹³ Geraldine Heng, 'The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race', *Literature Compass*, 8.5 (2011) 332-350 (335-336).

some narratives turn to the prominent and salacious horrors of the Inquisition in order to transform depictions of persecution against Jews into examples of Roman Catholic depravity that contrast with portrayals of Protestant mercy and tolerance. Moving away from horror and the Inquisition, other narratives explore Jewishness through societal, familial, and romantic relationships. This chapter will question how concerns regarding racial purity inform Christian construction of Jews and manifest distorted representations within the literature of the Romantic period.

Building on ideas of British tolerance in relation to Christian constructions of Jewishness, Chapter 3 turns to the stage, the legacy of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, and ideas of philosemitism to examine the rise in sympathetic depictions of Jewish fathers and daughters in the Romantic period. This trend developed across stage plays and novels in parallel as works attempted to redress or correct previous traditions of antisemitism and also to exorcise in particular the harmful stereotypes of Shakespeare's Shylock and Jessica. Established within Shakespeare's play, antisemitic stereotypes of a monstrous Jewish moneylender and his disobedient daughter were further cultivated through subsequent productions of *The Merchant of Venice* and performances such as Charles Macklin's acclaimed portrayal of Shylock. However, towards the close of the eighteenth century and the end of Macklin's fifty year theatrical run performing Shylock, a series of plays and novels emerged transforming these stereotypes into new characters and creating new archetypes: the benevolent Jew and his loving daughter. Constructed by Christian authors ventriloquizing Jewishness, these characters embody Jewish exceptionalism, and this chapter will interrogate the significance and limits of such portrayals. The potential romantic union between the Jewish daughter and a Christian suitor promotes ideas of British tolerance and acceptance of Jewish Others, but the hesitation in realising an inter-faith marital union reveals that this tolerance is conditional and limited. Expanding upon Page's discussion of 'the "cultural revolution" of sympathy and sentiment'⁹⁴ that took place in this period, this chapter will focus on three novels that exemplify the trend of the benevolent Jew: George Walker's *Theodore Cyhon; or, the Benevolent Jew* (1796), Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington* (1817), and Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820). In conversation with plays such as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* (1782), Richard Cumberland's *The Jew* (1794), and Thomas Dibdin's *The Jew and the Doctor* (1799), as well as Edmund Kean's pivotal stage metamorphosis of Shylock from monster to a figure of sympathy in 1814, this chapter will consider the ways that these novels contributed to and upheld Britain's political and cultural hegemony. As these Jewish archetypes developed as part of trends of Christian sympathy and tolerance, this chapter will question notions of philosemitism and interrogate the connection between benevolent or fetishistic depictions of Jewish characters with Christian supremacy.

Finally, Chapter 4 will undertake an extensive analysis of Romantic and Gothic conjurations of the supernatural figure of the Wandering Jew. Using Derrida's theoretical framework of spectralisation and the production of the ghost, this chapter will argue that the Wandering Jew myth can be read as a palimpsestic Derridean spectre, where each new iteration conjures and expropriates new ideas, characteristics, and

⁹⁴ Page, p. 3.

contexts, reconstructing previous versions and interpolating new parts.⁹⁵ Established as a Christian legend that retroactively inserts a spectralised Jewish Other into the Passion and Resurrection narratives, the Romantic period was a particularly productive historical moment for literary manifestations of the Wandering Jew. Charting the development of this myth across Europe as it wandered into medieval chronicles and early modern broadside ballads, and then wandered into British Gothic literature through Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* and Romantic poetry, this chapter will turn to examine three key conjurations of the Wandering Jew and Wandering Jew-type figures that emerged in this period. In *St. Leon* (1799) William Godwin weaves together the traditions of the Wandering Jew and alchemy to create a Wandering Jew-type figure who passes on his alchemical secrets and the mantle of alchemical wanderer. This chapter will suggest that Godwin manifests the key tropes associated with the Wandering Jew outside of an explicitly religious narrative. The chapter will then turn to examine two novels written by Irish clergymen: Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) and George Croly's *Salathiel* (1827). Infusing their novels with their own Christian theological interpretations, this chapter will consider these texts as sermons in fiction.⁹⁶ Maturin's novel doubles the story of the Wandering Jew with his eponymous wanderer and also a Jewish character, Adonijah, to create a Christian warning against temptation and transgression. Returning to depict the biblical period of the Passion narrative and the decades that followed, and engaging with emerging proto-zionist traditions, Croly exploits the story of the Wandering Jew to represent his own eschatological and supersessionist beliefs. Though each iteration is distinct, what each conjuration shares, this chapter argues, is the manifestation of Christian anxieties that are at the heart of the Wandering Jew stories: anxieties relating to the (as yet unrealised) promises of the Christian Messiah and the prophesied apocalypse, and also to death and the awaited end of the world.

As Judaism and Jews continued to cause deep anxiety theologically, racially, politically, and nationally to Christian Britain within the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the literary depiction of Jewishness and the Jewish Other was in response versatile, and at time disparate, messy and contradictory. These facets and threads have been touched on by studies interested in Anglo-Jewish relations and literary fiction in this period, or explored in isolation, but this thesis aims to draw these threads together to demonstrate the significance of Christian constructions of Jewish representation in literature. Bolstered by theological interpretations, the construction of borders by nation states and the conception of the Self galvanised by national identity and shared religious community is driven by a desire to define and control. That is, where national and religious identity is concerned, to control and define the Other in terms of race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and theological heritage and traditions, and consequently to control and define the Self in order to erect and preserve borders that separate Self and Other. Conjuring old ghosts and reflecting anxieties old and new, through their representation of Jewishness these texts portray a desire to define and control the British, Christian Self in relation to the Jewish Other, reflecting Said's idea that, 'To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it, to have authority over it. And authority here means

⁹⁵ Derrida, p. 157.

⁹⁶ Dale Kramer, quoted in: Marie Mulvey-Roberts, *Gothic Immortals: The Fiction of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (New York: Routledge, 2016) p. 131.

for “us” to deny autonomy to “it”.⁹⁷ Who is seen as a monster, or perceived as monstrous, and who needs to have monstrousness exorcised from them to be tolerated and viewed with sympathy, depends largely upon who is telling the story.

⁹⁷ Said, p. 32.

Chapter 1

Tales of Terror: Traditions of the Demonisation of Jews, Vampiric Usury, and Monstrous Jewishness

Salanio: Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross
my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

(*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 1, lines 19-20)

Shylock: I'll have my bond. Speak not against my bond.
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou calledst me dog before thou hadst a cause
But since I am a dog, beware my fangs.

(*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 3, lines 4-7)

The imagined Jew often conjures old ghosts in order to reflect existing and new anxieties. One influential and enduring strand of ghosts imagines the Jewish Other as an evil, monstrous, or demonic bogeyman who threatens the bodies and lifeblood of British Christians. Repeatedly conjured throughout history to reflect anxieties relating to the imagined Jew and to construct boundaries between the Christian, British self and the Jewish Other, supernatural and metaphorical narratives of Satan, vampirism, and monstrous Jewishness are employed to chronicle perceived threats against the body politic of Christian Britain by a foreign, or perhaps even non-human, figure. From the Bible and theological interpretations, to medieval myths and literary representations, the figure of the imagined Jew that appears in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is thus multifaceted, drawing on various religious, cultural, and literary traditions of Jewish alterity and antisemitism. While some narratives align Jews with Satan and engender a demonisation of Jewish communities, others chronicle tales of murder, Satanic rituals, and acts of cannibalism and vampirism that place Jews, Jewish practices, and especially Jewish moneylenders at the centre of these tales of terror. Such representations all contribute to a tradition of literature Bryan Cheyette defines as 'semitic discourse' where Jewish Otherness is constructed as indeterminate, fluid, and ambivalent.⁹⁸ Within semitic discourse, the ambivalent Otherness of semitic representation can result in a variety of contradictory representations, where the imagined Jew can signify a monstrous or an amiable Other, or an 'incommensurable number of subject positions' in between.⁹⁹ I will discuss some of the other subject positions through which the imagined Jew is constructed in the following chapters — including representations of the racial Jewish other and the creation of the benevolent Jew archetype — but here I want to focus on constructions of Jewish alterity and monstrous Otherness that draw on traditions of Satan and vampiric usury. First tracing these

⁹⁸ Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of "The Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial representation 1875-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 8.

⁹⁹ Cheyette, p. 8.

antisemitic traditions from their roots in theological interpretation (or misinterpretation), and their subsequent development within Christian thought, medieval narratives and libels, folklore, and literature, I will then turn to an examination of Charlotte Smith's 1796 novel *Marchmont* and consider her villain Mr. Vampyre as a version of Shakespeare's Shylock.

The ambivalent Otherness of the imagined Jew represented in semitic discourse allows for characteristics typically associated with Jewish archetypes, such as Shylock's vampiric usury, to be exploited in the construction of non-Jewish Others. Thus, through their association to representations of Jewish Others, these non-Jewish characters reinforce certain stereotypes which link Jewishness to a particularly monstrous Otherness. In her essay on Wickedness, Mary Midgley writes that the 'acknowledged shadow may be terrible enough. But it is the unacknowledged one which is the real killer.'¹⁰⁰ Visible shadows and manifestations of figures like Shylock can be challenged, as I will discuss in chapter 3, and indeed Edmund Kean's sympathetic portrayal of Shylock in the nineteenth century is in part a corrective to Charles Macklin's earlier monstrous version, but unacknowledged shadows, because they are not immediately evident, can perpetuate Jewish stereotypes through the construction of non-Jewish Others without similar interrogation. In examining Smith's Mr. Vampyre, this chapter will explore the unacknowledged Jewish shadow of Shylock and legacy of antisemitic tales of terror. Using the foundation of *The Merchant of Venice*, and exploiting the popularity of the term 'vampire' together with contemporary discussions of metaphorical vampirism, Smith draws on the ambivalent Otherness at the heart of Shakespeare's Jewish merchant and capitalises on established antisemitic traditions of a bloodthirsty, or rather flesh-thirsty, usury that is constructed as Jewish. In emphasising undesirable characteristics associated with Shylock in particular, and engaging with notions of Otherness and traditions of monstrous Jewish usury, Smith's novel can thus be considered as contributing to the tradition of semitic discourse. Though not Jewish, Mr. Vampyre casts a Jewish shadow, and within her tale of terror Smith's villain continues to perpetuate associations of Jewishness with monstrous Otherness, and where the very lives of British Christians are at stake.

Satan, vampiric usury, and Shylock: Biblical, cultural, and literary foundations

Discussing the character or idea of Satan in *Facing the Fiend: Satan as a Literary Character*, Eve Marta Baillie asserts that Satan cannot be adequately discussed in terms of theology, but rather should be considered with regards to literature and art. The survival of this character, Baillie argues, depends primarily on the literary, adding that as the literary, cultural, and theological landscapes change, and as our perceptions of evil also develop, so too the satanic character must change in parallel to such evolutions.¹⁰¹ Theological and biblical foundations are important, but our contemporary conception of Satan is rooted in literary and cultural representations of the figure that have developed in conversation with these foundations. While

¹⁰⁰ Mary Midgley, *Wickedness* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 122.

¹⁰¹ Eva Marta Baillie, *Facing the Fiend: Satan as a Literary Character* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2014), pp. 1-2.

Satan emerged within Christian theology as the ultimate scapegoat and embodiment of evil, it is John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*, first published in 1667, whose revolutionary Satan became a role model for the Romantics.¹⁰² A fallen angel reinvented as the self-titled King of Hell and named Lucifer after Isaiah 14:12,¹⁰³ the protean body of Milton's Satan is initially portrayed as being sublimely terrifying and 'of monstrous size.'¹⁰⁴ Later, Satan is also depicted in the Garden of Eden where his body metamorphoses into the serpent and tempter. Hiding in the guise of the 'subtlest beast of all the field,'¹⁰⁵ Satan thus plays his role in defiance of God and 'with serpent tongue [...] his fraudulent temptation thus begun.'¹⁰⁶ The legacy of Milton's Satan in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries cannot be overstated, and the influence of Milton's Devil can be discovered in the Gothic and Romantic works of William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Godwin, Mary Shelley, and Percy Bysshe Shelley to name but a few. Lucy Newlyn states that the 'formation of Romantic aesthetics is bound up with Miltonic influence in ways that are indirect, and possibly incalculable,'¹⁰⁷ although, as Glen Brewster notes, Newlyn omits discussion of Miltonic allusions in the Gothic beyond *Frankenstein*.¹⁰⁸ What Baillie and Newlyn demonstrate, however, is the influence of Milton's retelling of the myth of Satan during this period, a retelling that doesn't simply provide an 'anthropomorphization of evil,'¹⁰⁹ but that also transforms the Christian myth into a compelling literary narrative of personal struggle respecting the expression of identity.

Paradise Lost is a specifically Christianized epic drawing on the roots of Satan that extend back to early Christian theology and antisemitic constructions of the imagined Jew. While Milton amalgamates the Devil with the serpent in the creation narrative, this connection is not located in Genesis or the Hebrew Bible, but one created ex post facto to tie a Christian narrative to earlier theologies. There are references to Satan within the Hebrew Bible, but these individuals are different from our concept of Satan and vary from identifying a specific worldly opponent (1-2 Samuel; 1 Kings) or a supernatural satan (Job; Numbers). This figure is initially a member of God's royal court often identified as ha-satan ('the satan') or the adversary, but later the name Satan is appropriated by authors of the Christian Gospels and New Testament texts, and reconstructed in opposition to Jesus and the Christian God. This reconstruction makes explicit an alignment with Satan and the power of darkness in contrast to God, Jesus, and the light. In particular, the Gospel of John establishes the narrative of Jesus as part of a cosmic battle between good and evil: 'John takes the

¹⁰² Baillie, p. 5.

¹⁰³ Popularized by the King James version of the Bible first published in 1611, the Latin translation of Isaiah 14:12 describes the morning star fallen from heaven: 'How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning'.

¹⁰⁴ John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Book 1, line 197.

¹⁰⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book 9, line 86.

¹⁰⁶ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book 9, lines 529-531.

¹⁰⁷ Lucy Newlyn, *Paradise Lost and the Romantic Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ Glen Brewster, 'Monstrous Philosophy: Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*', *Literature Compass*, 8.9 (2011) 609-619 (610).

¹⁰⁹ Baillie, p. 19.

primordial elements separated in creation – light and darkness – and casts them in a human drama, interpreting them simultaneously in religious, ethical, and social terms.¹¹⁰ Whereas other Gospels portray a physical manifestation of Satan who tempts Jesus (for example in the desert, see: Matthew 4:1-11; Mark: 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) John's Gospel never depicts Satan as an independent character; instead, as Elaine Pagels notes, within John's Gospel 'it is *people* who play the tempter.'¹¹¹ Satan therefore functions as the personification of evil and darkness, but also the personification of Christianity's main social rival, namely the Jewish community.

The Gospel of John forges an association between Satan and the Jewish community, and Pagels argues that John implicates Judas, the Jewish authorities, and then 'the Jews collectively' as Satan's allies.¹¹² Detailing a hostile exchange between Jesus and the Pharisees, John 8:44-45 relates an episode where Jesus declares:

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!

This passage exemplifies the hostility towards Jews presented throughout John, and along with the implication that Jews are collectively responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus (see: John 5:18, John 7:1, John 8:37), John 8:44-45 portrays several tropes that would become foundational to the construction of the imagined Jew. These tropes include framing the imagined Jew as Satan's offspring, as Satan's conspiratorial ally or agent, and as sharing his infernal desires and predisposition to lie. John also unmistakably transforms an identifiable, ethnic group into a symbol of evil and, as Pagels further observes, this decision brings with it religious, social, and political implications.¹¹³ Re-establishing the narrative portrayed in the New Testaments from one of intra-community conflict (Jews debating among themselves) into one of inter-community opposition (Jews versus emerging Christians) the Jewish community was thus placed alongside the Devil as evil, demonic, and Other in contrast to Christians. Highlighting the continued performance of this role designated to the Jewish community by New Testament authors, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 affirms that 'such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness.' Here, themes of disguise, performance, and masquerade are introduced to create the idea that appearances, physical identities, and professions of faith can be performed, and therefore are not always to be trusted. The Book of Revelation, too, continues to connect Jews with Satan and ideas of demonic duplicity, and Revelation 2:9, for example, explicitly proclaims that 'I know the

¹¹⁰ Elaine Pagels, *The Origin of Satan* (Vintage Books: New York, 1996), p. 100.

¹¹¹ Pagels, p. 101.

¹¹² Pagels, p. 105.

¹¹³ Pagels, pp. 104-105.

blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.’¹¹⁴ Thus, as the Jewishness of Jesus himself was excised to present the Christian Messiah as ‘divine and human’ rather than ‘divine and a male Jew,’¹¹⁵ the imagined Jew was consequently constructed as the antithesis of the divine: ethnically different and, like Satan, never to be believed. Moreover, such false apostles can be hidden in plain sight, and allies of Satan may even be masquerading within society which heightens the danger they pose if they are not identified.

The New Testament provides a theological foundation for how Christianity perceived its relationship with the Jewish community, and the consequences of antisemitism in the New Testament, and the Gospel of John in particular, are still being realised today.¹¹⁶ Part of this legacy is, as David Goldenberg observes, the postbiblical phenomenon that associates the Devil with specific races and feeds into the racist dichotomy associated with good and evil.¹¹⁷ The developing narrative of Satan conforms to Lawrence Osborne’s notion of an apocalyptic-counter culture, or a culture of nostalgia, that springs from nostalgia for the Garden of Eden and that worships everything that the imagined Jew is not: ‘And what,’ Osborne writes, ‘is the Jew if not the serpent who handed over the apple?’¹¹⁸ Physically aligned with Satan and the demonic while also linked to this moment of transgression and original sin in Eden, the imagined Jew is typically constructed as male and possessing distinct physical characteristics. Though to a lesser degree and not necessarily constructed as the devil incarnate, the imagined Jewess is also, like the imagined Jew, associated with an ambivalent Otherness that is tied to her perceived relationship with the devil and the demonic. Like Eve who accepted the forbidden fruit from the serpent and enticed Adam to join her in her transgression, the Jewess embodies a dangerous carnality that threatens the body politic of Britain. I will explore the representation of Jews as racial Other in the following chapter, but here I want to explore the association of Jews with the devil, and the subsequent depiction of Jews, and in particular the imagined male Jew, as demonic, monstrous, or at times vampiric. Exploited as a devilish foil in the early days of Christianity, the continued existence of Jewish communities complicated matters for Christian ideology that paradoxically needed to supersede the religious claims of Judaism while also depending on Jewish history to affirm its own theological claims. However, as a theological abstraction, the imagined Jew proved a useful figure in medieval Christian thought onto which formulations of difference could be explored and against which the boundaries of Christian identity solidified. The imagined Jew thus became, Trachtenberg writes, ‘the black

¹¹⁴ See also Revelation 2: 13 and 3: 9.

¹¹⁵ Steven F. Kruger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. 4.

¹¹⁶ For a discussion of antisemitism in the New Testament and Christian antisemitism, see *Jesus, Judaism, and Christian Anti-Judaism: Reading the New Testament after the Holocaust*, ed. Paula Fredriksen and Adele Reinhartz (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

¹¹⁷ David Goldenberg, ‘Racism, color symbolism, and colour prejudice’ in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, eds. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 88-108 (p. 94).

¹¹⁸ Lawrence Osborne, *The Poisoned Embrace* (London: Bloomsbury, 1993), p. 132.

beast of Europe', portrayed simultaneously as a 'sorcerer, murderer, cannibal, poisoner, blasphemer, the devil's disciple in all truth.'¹¹⁹

Another figurative role given to the imagined Jew is that of the vampire, and in response to the perceived pervasiveness of Jewish usury in England, medieval Christian thought further turned to the imagined Jew and stories of Blood Libel, Host Desecration Libel, and Ritual Murder Libel. One of the few occupations permitted to the real Jewish community in England was moneylending, and exemplifying the status of Jews across Europe in this period, W. D. Rubinstein writes that the presence of Jews in medieval England had only one purpose: 'to act as money-lenders to the king and as what Roth has termed "treasury agents."¹²⁰ Fulfilling the role of 'treasury agent,' Jewish moneylenders were thus viewed as agents of the state, but concurrently separate from it, and Rubinstein further notes that 'popular odium at the burden of tax collection and interest payments was always directed at a hereditary race of outcasts and "Christ-killers", rather than at the king or his circle for whom these monies were chiefly collected.'¹²¹ The monstrous possibilities of the imagined Jew soon reflected this aversion, especially within the superstitious myths of medieval libels in which associations with Satan were interwoven with accusations of murder, blasphemous cannibalism, and vampirism. As well as bleeding Britain financially, these libels charged Jews with abducting (Christian) children, acting as agents of Satan, performing black masses and ritual sacrifice, and also eating the flesh or drinking the blood of their victims.

Transforming the notion that Jews were financial parasites draining the wealth of England into the idea that they were also literally consuming Britain's flesh and blood, Jules Zanger highlights that in depicting the Jewish community as bloodsucking, the Blood Libel had both literal and figurative dimensions.¹²² Written in 1173, Thomas of Monmouth's hagiography *The Life and Miracle of St. William of Norwich* is the first recorded case of Blood Libel in Britain, and helped to popularize and propagate allegations of Blood and Ritual Murder Libels.¹²³ This multi-volume work details the story of a young Christian boy, William, and his alleged abduction and crucifixion in 1144 by the Jewish community of Norwich for ostensibly religious reasons. Echoing William's story, Blood Libel was invoked again in the following century with the story of another child, Hugh, whose death is equally bloody and violent. Cults of martyrdom flourished around these stories; William and Hugh were both revered as local saints (although never officially canonized), and Hugh was even venerated in the ballad 'Sir Hugh', as well as in Chaucer's

¹¹⁹ Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 159.

¹²⁰ W. D. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English Speaking World: Great Britain* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp. 36-37.

¹²¹ Rubinstein, pp. 36-37.

¹²² J. Zanger, 'A Sympathetic Vibration: Dracula and the Jews', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 34/1 (1991), 33-44 (38).

¹²³ Irvn M. Resnick, 'Medieval Roots of the Myth of Jewish Males Menses', *The Harvard Theological Review*, 93.3 (2000) 241-263 (242).

Canterbury Tales.¹²⁴ Thus often parodying the accusation that Jews were Christ-killers, Blood Libel stories personified the Body politic of Britain as a young innocent child who was being devoured by the vampiric imagined Jew. Although the word 'vampire' never appears in these stories, they can be considered in terms of metaphorical vampirism that imagines literal acts of parasitic consumption. Speculation surrounding the imagined uses of Christian blood, for example, includes the consumption of blood, while the Host Desecration Libel cultivated cannibalistic ideas that Jews were consuming the flesh of the Christian Messiah. It was believed that Jewish communities baked blood from their Christian victims into Passover matzot or Purim cakes, as well as using it as an aphrodisiac, and the Blood Libel also fuelled the myth of Jewish male menses as Christian polemicists argued that only Christian blood could 'replace and stem their monthly blood loss.'¹²⁵ In such superstitious accounts, the body and blood of Christians, whether that be Christian children or the transubstantiated flesh of the Christian Messiah, is threatened by Jewish practices that are evil, murderous, and vampiric. Of course, the falsity of the Blood Libel should be clear not least because such myths ignore, misinterpret, and contradict the biblical declaration 'the blood is the life' (Deuteronomy 12:23; see also Leviticus 17:11) which functions as a prohibition against eating (or drinking) blood. However, it provided a convenient scapegoat within Britain, and for the Jewish communities of Britain the consequences of the Blood Libel were violent, and ultimately concluded with their expulsion from the country in 1290.¹²⁶

The Blood Libel myth popularized stories of Jewish communities kidnapping, torturing, and murdering Christian children as part of their black masses, devilish deals, and Satan worship, and these stories continued to play a part in Britain's literary, cultural, and theological landscapes post expulsion. Although not all Jews were expelled, and many avoided expulsion by converting to Christianity, Jewish communities that remained were largely absent in Britain following this expulsion. Nonetheless, the figure of the imagined Jew endured in Britain's popular consciousness. The Blood Libel, for example, was chronicled in poems, folk songs, and popular legends, while medieval and Elizabethan drama also propagated stories of devilish Jews: onstage in mystery, miracle, and morality plays, the imagined Jew appeared again and again as the Devil's creature. Cast as poisoners, performing occult magic, summoning demons, and plotting against Christians, this fictional tradition was so persuasive that the word sorcerer became synonymous with Jew.¹²⁷ The perceived ontological difference of the imagined Jew was therefore inextricably linked to an innate ability to perform devilish magic and to deceive. Positioned as ethnically different and aligned with the demonic, the imagined Jew not only threatened the fixed boundaries of Christian identity, but also constituted a tangible threat to Britain's body politic as satanic rituals, magic, or

¹²⁴ 'O younge Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn eke by cursed Jewes' (Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, ed. P. Mackaye (New York: Duffield & Company, 1914), p. 78).

¹²⁵ Resnick, 243; 244. Other imagined uses include using blood to anoint doorposts during Passover, or anointing the bodies of Jews to protect against death (243).

¹²⁶ Rubinstein also observes that throughout this period there were 'many massacres of Jews in England, each more horrifying than the last' (*A History of the Jews*, p. 38).

¹²⁷ Trachtenberg, p. 67.

poison threatened the life of Christians. Moreover, popular images and stereotypes continued to circulate promoting ethnic, monstrous, and demonic Otherness, castigating Jewish usury as demonic or vampiric, and often exaggerating specific characteristics. One example of this is the well-known vista on top of a government Exchequer roll from 1233 that caricatures the Jewish moneylender Moses Mokke. Framing a document noting payments made by Jewish people in Norwich, this cartoon portrays Isaac of Norwich and his debt collector Moses Mokke who is being taunted by devils. Moses Mokke is depicted wearing a Jewish spiked hat while all the devils in the image have horns, emphasising the physical affinity between the Jewish moneylender and the devils. Moreover, the devil next to Moses Mokke is depicted with a goatish beard as he points to the moneylender's crooked nose, his own finger resembling this supposedly characteristically Jewish physical trait. As Robert Bartlett states, in this period hair and clothing choices are important ways of signalling ethnic identity.¹²⁸ Best known through Michealangelo's horned sculpture of Moses (1513–1515), Joshua Trachtenberg notes that 'the figure of the horned Jew was not uncommon during the middle ages.'¹²⁹ The cartoon of Moses Mokke illustrates this trope, presenting a figure identified as belonging to a separate social or ethnic group while sharing physical traits with devilish figures. Blurring the boundaries between human and demonic, in depicting both Jews and devils as horned, with goatish beards, or as racially not-white, images such as this cartoon reinforce the belief that Jews are not only in league with the Devil, but that Jews and the devil are kin. And, to find biblical justification for such a charge, one need only refer to John 8:44-45.

Elizabethan drama was saturated by Jewish characters playing the stock role of poisoner,¹³⁰ but the presence of the imagined Jew is nowhere better illustrated than in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and the creation of Shylock. Invoking a Jewish merchant onstage with each performance, Shylock (presumably portrayed by a Christian actor) epitomises the vampiric and bloodthirsty Jewish usurer. He is also frequently aligned with the Devil throughout the play, and Lancelot's remark that 'Certainly / the Jew is the very devil incarnation' conjures the association between Jews and the Devil.¹³¹ As James Shapiro discusses in *Shakespeare and the Jews*, there were few Jews living in early modern England, but it was nonetheless 'a society surprisingly preoccupied with Jewish Questions,' and emerging as 'a touchstone of

¹²⁸ Robert Barlett, 'Illustrating ethnicity in the Middle Ages', *The Origins of Racism in the West*, eds. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 132-156 (p. 137).

¹²⁹ Trachtenberg, p. 44.

¹³⁰ Trachtenberg, p. 99.

¹³¹ William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Act 2, Scene 3, lines 24-25. Other examples include Salanio's remark prior to Shylock's entrance, 'Let me say "amen" betimes, lest the devil cross my / prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew' (Act 3, Scene 1, lines 19-20), and also a passage that recalls the idea of the false apostle in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 as Antonio responds to Shylock's use of scripture:

'Mark you this, Bassanio,,

The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.

An evil soul producing holy witness

Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,

A goodly apple rotten at the heart:

O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!' (Act 1, Scene 3, lines 94-99).

cultural identification,' Shakespeare's play reflects this.¹³² When the introduction of Protestantism brought with it a lift on the prohibition of usury in England, it became important to distinguish between the established Jewish moneylending (which had contributed to the expulsion of Jews) and Christian moneylending in a way that signalled the former as merciless and immoral in comparison to the latter. Once more, the imagined Jew proved a convenient scapegoat as it allowed 'the English to imagine a villainous moneylender whose fictional excesses overshadowed their own very real acts of exploitation.'¹³³ Exemplifying this is a 1594 pamphlet entitled *The Death of Usury*, which outlines two distinct types of usury, one proper and one improper. Proper usury does not demand more than ten percent interest on loans, but improper and specifically Jewish usury demanded much more: 'If our *Usurie* in money were all one with that of the Jews, the question were soone answered: for they tooke after 60.70.80. in the 100.'¹³⁴ Appearing a few years after this publication, *The Merchant of Venice* also makes this distinction. Antonio's approach to moneylending immediately contrasts with that of Shylock, who relies on charging interest as his only income, and discussing Antonio in an aside, Shylock critically states: 'He lends out money gratis and brings down / The rate of usuance here with us in Venice.'¹³⁵ Notoriously, Shylock demands much more than monetary interest on his loans, and he insists upon the bond of a pound of flesh from Antonio as part of their contract. Though the contract is rendered invalid due to arguments that Shylock is legally prohibited from spilling any blood as his bond was exclusively for flesh, his bond nonetheless associates blood and flesh with money, and presents the collection of this debt as monstrous and vampiric. While never realised, Shylock's demand for Antonio's flesh as payment recalls the medieval Blood Libel as again the appetite of the imagined Jew, and that of the Jewish usurer, is characterised as vampiric.

Keeping *The Merchant of Venice* in the public eye through the latter half of the eighteenth century, Charles Macklin revived and popularised Shakespeare's bloodthirsty, or rather flesh-thirsty, Jewish Merchant, and with it historical associations of Jewish usury with monstrous Otherness and vampirism. Moreover, first assuming the role of Shylock onstage in 1741, Macklin's revival of Shakespeare's Jewish merchant occurred almost concurrently to the entrance of the vampire into Britain, and as the term 'vampire' and folkloric accounts of Eastern European vampires began to enter the bloodstream of Britain's body politic. Published in Britain in 1739, the *Jewish Spy* featured a letter detailing 'a new Scene of Vampirism' occurring in Eastern Europe.¹³⁶ Purporting to be a work containing the philosophical, historical, and critical correspondence between distinguished Jewish rabbis and translated by Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens (French author and critic, and the presumed author of the *Jewish Spy* letters¹³⁷), this letter quotes at length from an earlier article that appeared in the French journal *Mercure Historique et*

¹³² James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 1; 10.

¹³³ Shapiro, p. 99.

¹³⁴ *The Death of Usury* (Cambridge: 1594), p. 10.

¹³⁵ Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 1, Scene 3, lines 41-42.

¹³⁶ Marquis d'Argens, *The Jewish Spy*, vol. 4 (London: 1739), p. 122.

¹³⁷ *The Jewish Spy* also appeared as *Lettres Juives* and *Jewish Letters*.

Politique that discussed vampiric activity in Poland and Russia at the end of the seventeenth century. Bringing Eastern European folklore to a British audience, the letter in the *Jewish Spy* references the case of Arnold Paole, a Serbian hajduk (a type of irregular infantry found in central and southeastern Europe) who was believed to have become a vampire:

forty Days after his Death, all the marks of a notorious Vampire were found [...] The *Hadnagy* or *Bailiff* of the Place, who was present at the taking of him up, and who was a Person well acquainted with Vampirism, caused a sharp Stake to be thrust, as the Custom is, through the Heart of *Arnold Paul*. [...] They took the same Measures with the Bodies of those Persons who had died of Vampirism, for fear that they should fall to sucking in their Turns.¹³⁸

Sensational reports of Eastern European vampires appeared in Britain as early as 11 March 1732 in the *London Journal*, and as Paul Barber observes, the case of Arnold Paole represents ‘the first of a series of vampires that finally attracted the attention of the authorities,’ sparking a vampire craze or vampire hysteria that Barber equates with an early media event.¹³⁹ Paralleling the spread of Arnold Paole’s vampirism to others,¹⁴⁰ reports of vampirism spread across Europe, and five years after the initial incident, Austrian authorities and several medical professionals conducted a second investigation due to a second outbreak. Those investigating included Johann Flückinger, a military surgeon whose official report was first sent to Belgrade, then published in Vienna, before it was republished in the French journal *Glaneur Historique*.¹⁴¹ Nick Groom documents that Flückinger’s original report and translations appeared in Vienna, Nuremberg, Leipzig, Tübinge, Berlin, Paris, and London, while in the three years following ‘twelve books and four dissertations on vampirism appeared’ and ‘a further 22 treatises were published in European cultural and intellectual centres.’¹⁴²

Unearthing Eastern European vampire folklore, these initial reports constructed a semblance of credibility surrounding stories of the apparent undead through the use of medicalised and scientific language, but also through appealing to government and medical authorities. With an epidemic of publications seeming to provide proof of vampires and thus legitimizing their possible existence, interest in the vampire spilled into religious, political and public spheres, although not everyone was necessarily convinced. French Benedictine monk Don Augustine Calmet investigated Eastern Europe’s apparent outbreak of vampirism, his research eventually becoming his *Dissertation Upon the Apparitions of Angels, Daemons, and Ghosts and on Revenants or Vampires of Hungary, of Bohemia, of Moravia and of Silesia*, first

¹³⁸ Marquis d’Argens, vol. 4, p. 122.

¹³⁹ Paul Barber, *Vampires, Burial, and Death* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 15, 5. Other notable cases include that of Peter Plogojowicz, also from Serbia, who died in 1725.

¹⁴⁰ Arnold Paole’s vampirism is shown to spread to humans, but also to sheep, thus representing cross-species contamination. The letter details that Arnold Paole had ‘not only suck’d the four Persons before mentioned, but likewise several Beasts, of whome the new Vampires had eaten’ (vol. 4, p. 126). Vampirism is therefore depicted as being spread not simply through bloodsucking, but by eating the contaminated meat of animals who have also been infected.

¹⁴¹ Nick Groom, *The Vampire* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018), p. 40.

¹⁴² Groom, pp. 36-37

published in 1746, then expanded and republished in 1751, with an English translation appearing in 1759. Similarly, Italian archbishop Giuseppe Davanzati also researched this phenomenon. Davanzati composed his own *Dissertation Regarding the Vampire* in 1739, although it was not published until 1774. While remaining sceptical regarding the legitimacy of supernatural vampires, in examining and discussing the possibility, works such as these nonetheless conferred official recognition of the vampire by the Church, although perhaps unintentionally.

In a similar vein, Britain's monarchs, politicians and prominent social figures were enthralled by this vampire epidemic. In his correspondence with the Countess of Ossory in 1785, Horace Walpole – not only the author of *The Castle of Otranto* but an antiquarian, a man of letters, and a Whig MP – writes: 'I know that our late King, though not apt to believe more than his Neighbours, had no doubt of the existence of Vampires & their banquets on the dead.'¹⁴³ Demonstrating the pervasiveness of this monster, the Earl of Sandwich even chose 'Vampire' as the name for his racehorse in the 1750s.¹⁴⁴ Yet it is in open letters to Robert Walpole, Horace Walpole's father and the de facto first Prime Minister of Britain, that the spread of this new monster into politics, and especially its use in political metaphors and allegories relating to money, are exposed. Writing several open letters to Robert Walpole in 1733, political pamphleteer Charles Forman framed war, foreign trade deals, and taxes as potentially depleting the blood and money of Britain, and he turned to the metaphorical vampire to highlight his criticism. In his second letter, Forman represents the cost of taxation as 'to indulge the Luxury, and gratify the Rapine of a fat-gutted *Vampire*,'¹⁴⁵ while his third letter, published posthumously, similarly condemns foreign merchants:

Our Merchants, indeed, bring Money into their Country, but, it is said, there is another Set of Men amongst us who have as great an Address in sending it out again to foreign Countries without any Returns for it, which defeats the Industry of the Merchant. These are the *Vampires* of the Publick, and the Riflers of the Kingdom.¹⁴⁶

Criticising Dutch merchants and trade agreements in particular, the use of the vampire metaphor in Forman's later letters realise as vampiric the threats against Britain discussed in his first letter to Robert Walpole: the cost of war to Britain is 'Blood and Treasure,' while a trade deal with Holland would bring '*new Taxes, new Excises, new Debts, more Wounds*.'¹⁴⁷ As J Gordon Melton writes, some of the most popular metaphorical extensions of the vampire have been 'in the political realm in which governments and other powerful social structures have been seen as vampires sucking the life out of people.'¹⁴⁸ Satirist and political writer D'Anvers (or Nicholas Amhurst) likewise promoted a figurative reading of vampirism, and Groom

¹⁴³ Horace Walpole, *Letters Addressed to The Countess of Ossory*, vol. 2, ed. Vernon Smith (London: 1848), p. 212.

¹⁴⁴ See the 21 October, 1751 edition of *The sporting calendar*.

¹⁴⁵ Charles Forman, *A Second Letter to the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole* (London: 1733), p. 38.

¹⁴⁶ Charles Forman, *Some Queries and Observations Upon the Revolution*, 2nd edition (London: 1741), p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ Charles Forman, *A Letter to the Right Honorable Sir Robert Walpole*, (London: 1733) pp. 14; 13.

¹⁴⁸ J. Gordon Melton, *The Vampire Book*, 3rd edition (Canton: Visible Ink Press, 2011), p. 543.

outlines that political commentators like Forman and D'Anvers were among the first to analyse outbreaks of vampirism and read such accounts allegorically.¹⁴⁹ D'Anvers, for example, considered all 'usurers, corrupt officials, and promoters of the South-Sea Bubble as vampiric,'¹⁵⁰ while Oliver Goldsmith, in his satire *The Citizen of the World* (1762) not only included a character named 'Major Vampyre', but also depicts a corrupt magistrate who 'at last sucks blood like a vampyre.'¹⁵¹ Making Britain's body politic corporeal and thus a body that could be wounded and drained of blood and money, the vampire put a monstrous face on a foreign, but also financial, political, and legal threat. It also resurrects the metaphorical aspects of medieval libels where Jewish usury is equated with the literal and figurative dimensions of vampirism, and the Jewish community is constructed as an evil, foreign threat that desires the the wealth, flesh, and blood of British Christians in order to satiate their non-human appetites.

However, by the end of the eighteenth century the threat of vampires was no longer kept entirely at a distance from the British public by existing solely on stage, in England's medieval past, or in Eastern Europe. This threat was, in some incarnation, already present in Britain. In his *Philosophical Dictionary*, Voltaire includes an entry on vampires which states:

What! is it in our eighteenth century that vampires exist? [...] We never heard a word of vampires in London, nor even in Paris. I confess that in both these cities there were stock-jobbers, brokers, and men of business who sucked the blood of the people in broad daylight; but they were not dead, though corrupted.¹⁵²

While detailing the vampires of Eastern Europe, along with other legends of the undead, it is clear that, like many others who recognised the metaphorical and figurative use of vampirism, Voltaire remains unconvinced of the supernatural merits of such accounts, and the only vampires he acknowledges as real include merchants, traders, and moneylenders. Discussing the perception of Jewish merchants in particular, Judith Page remarks that the literature and culture of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries are filled with depictions of Jews that do not fit the model of fair and free trade within commercial exchange: instead, 'Jewish merchants and financiers always appear self-interested, avaricious, and cheating, and still tainted by medieval usury and shady dealings.'¹⁵³ Tied to a perception enduring throughout history that Jews are moneylenders, or usurers to invoke D'Anvers (and therefore by extension moneylenders are Jewish), the association of a particularly bloodthirsty usury with Jews persisted throughout the eighteenth century as Macklin's Shylock, the imagined Jewish usurer, and the metaphorical, political vampire were all exploited to expose and castigate a foreign, financial, and sanguinary threat. In part fuelled by fictional

¹⁴⁹ Groom, p. 39.

¹⁵⁰ Groom p. 37.

¹⁵¹ Oliver Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World*, (Bungay: J. and R. Childs, 1820), p. 109.

¹⁵² François Voltaire, 'Vampires', in *A Philosophical Dictionary* [1770], vol. 10, trans. William F. Fleming (Paris, London, New York, Chicago: E. R. Dumont, 1901) [online access via Project Gutenberg: www.gutenberg.org].

¹⁵³ Judith Page, *Imperfect Sympathies: Jews and Judaism in British Romantic Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 14.

examples such as Shakespeare's Shylock, this association was also sustained by prominent stories of Jewish moneylenders in the popular press, and it should come as no surprise that one of the most notorious moneylenders of this period, John King, was also Jewish.

Frequently lambasted, rebuked, and satirised by the press both for his reputation as a moneylender and for his Jewish identity, King became known by the moniker 'Jew King' and was one of the most well-known Jews in London between 1780 and 1820.¹⁵⁴ Born Jacob Rey to the Jewish street trader Moses Rey (believed to be of North African or Gibraltar origin and described as a Turkish Jew¹⁵⁵), John King anglicized his name after he left school – a charity school for Spanish and Portuguese Jews – and Todd Endelman contends that this decision should be viewed as a 'self-conscious move to deemphasize his Jewish background.'¹⁵⁶ If this was his intention, then King's attempt failed. As Endelman highlights, "'Jew" King's conduct in money matters is known to us largely through the eyes of his enemies,' and his Jewish identity and occupation as a moneylender are inextricably linked and capitalized on by his opponents to emphasize their aversion to him.¹⁵⁷ King, or rather the construction of the 'Jew King' character, can thus be read as a manifestation or embodiment of a version of Shylock. *The Scourge*, for example, published a caricature of King in 1811 lampooning King and his son Charles for belonging to 'the collective tribe of moneylenders,' and proclaiming their influence to be 'more extensive and their plans more dangerous than those of all the other money-lenders collectively.'¹⁵⁸ King is one of many Jewish merchants, traders and brokers (both real and fictional) who prospered in a period where moneylending and similar employment remained some of the few occupations available to Jews in Britain who still faced many political disabilities. Flourishing alongside Shylock and the metaphorical vampire, King's prosperity and notoriety contributed to the prominence of the 'Jew King' character.

Moving from a theological abstraction that constructed the imagined Jew as demonic, monstrously and physically Other, and aligned with the Devil, into medieval libels and tales of terror that figuratively chronicled Jews as literal and financial vampires and agents of Satan, the Jewish moneylender emerged in the eighteenth century as a continuation of this tradition: constructing Jews in opposition to,

¹⁵⁴ Todd M. Endelman, 'The Checkered Career of "Jew" King: A Study in Anglo-Jewish Social History', *AJS Review*, 7 (1982) 69-100 (71).

¹⁵⁵ Endelman, 'The Checkered Career of "Jew" King: A Study in Anglo-Jewish Social History', 72.

¹⁵⁶ Endelman, 'The Checkered Career of "Jew" King: A Study in Anglo-Jewish Social History', 73.

¹⁵⁷ Endelman, 'The Checkered Career of "Jew" King: A Study in Anglo-Jewish Social History', 78.

¹⁵⁸ *The Scourge*, vol. 1 (London: W. N. Jones, 1811), p. 457. While his son Charles joined him in this profession, his daughter, Gothic novelist Charlotte Dacre, did not, and instead Dacre's authorial personas (including her chosen moniker 'Rosa Matilda') eschews any connection with her father. That Charlotte Dacre is in fact Charlotte King is, however, exposed by Byron in his poem *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809). Writing about 'The lovely ROSA's prose in masquerade', Byron connects Charlotte Dacre to her father in a footnote that also references her two volumes of poetry (the first of which, *Trifles of Helicorn*, was written by Charlotte and Sophia King and dedicated to their father): 'This lovely little Jessica, the daughter of the noted Jew K[ing], seems to be a follower of the Della Cruscan School, and has published two volumes of very respectable absurdities in rhyme'. For more information about Charlotte Dacre's biography please see: Lisa M. Wilson, 'Female pseudonymity in the romantic "age of personality": The career of Charlotte King/Rosa Matilda/Charlotte Dacre', *European Romantic Review*, 9.3 (1998) 393-420.

and as a threat towards, British Christians. Though not supernatural, these stories and associations emphasise the alterity of the imagined Jew through metaphorical vampirism and a demonisation of Jewish communities and practices. Eighteenth century stock-brokers, moneylenders, and men of business including prominent individuals such as the 'Jew King' were thus cast as real examples of a monstrous threat, while Shylock and his bond of flesh continues to be the paragon of moneylending that is both Jewish and vampiric. It is against this backdrop of vampires and bloodthirsty, immoral, and Jewish moneylenders that Smith creates her novel *Marchmont* and Mr. Vampyre. In the 1790s when *Marchmont* was first published, there was no established literary tradition of vampires. *Dracula*, arguably the most famous vampire novel to date and whose eponymous bloodsucker has since become synonymous with the word 'vampire' itself, was not published until over a century later in 1897. Similarly, other notable examples did not appear until the nineteenth century, including: Samuel Taylor Coleridge's narrative poem *Christabel* (written in 1797, published in 1800); Robert Southey's epic poem *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801); John Stagg's poem 'The Vampyre' (1810); John Polidori's short story *The Vampyre* (1819); James Malcom Rymer and Thomas Peckett Prest's serialised chapbook *Varney the Vampire*; and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's novella *Carmilla* (1871-72). Smith therefore had to turn to other traditions to construct her villain, including established antisemitic traditions and emerging political and cultural considerations of vampirism that I have discussed. Consequently, though Mr. Vampyre is not explicitly Jewish, he casts an unacknowledged Jewish shadow and reveals the pervasiveness antisemitic tropes and the association of monstrousness with Jewishness within society.

“Beware my fangs”: Charlotte Smith's Mr. Vampyre and the shadow of Jewish, vampiric usury

Charlotte Smith's literary career was enveloped by poverty. An influential and critically acclaimed Romantic poet and novelist, throughout her lifetime Smith published ten novels, as well as several novellas, children's books, and collections of poetry, but discussing the composition of her ninth novel in a letter she reveals that 'I am writing (pour vivre) another Novel which I hope will be the last.'¹⁵⁹ It was well known at the time that Smith lived by the pen, and that she wrote 'pour vivre', or to live, is also acknowledged by Smith herself both privately within many of her letters and publicly in the prefaces to her works. Like many of her previous publications and numerous editions of her poetry collections (that Smith frequently petitioned to be republished with new sonnets and updated versions), Smith wrote *Marchmont* (1796) for the purpose of supporting herself and her children financially following her separation from her husband. Critics soon devoured *Marchmont*, and one reviewer professed that 'The respectable place which Mrs. Smith holds as a novel-writer entitles any new production of hers to our particular attention.'¹⁶⁰ Moreover, allowances were made for the novel's apparent defects on account of Smith's personal and financial circumstances:

¹⁵⁹ Charlotte Smith, 'Letter to Joseph Cooper Walker', in *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Judith Phillips Stanton (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 235-237 (p. 237).

¹⁶⁰ 'Marchmont: a Novel.', *The Critical Review*, 19 (1797) 256-260 (256).

If the iniquities committed by means of our system of laws occupy a large part, and perhaps encroach too much on the conclusion of the story, the author's personal circumstances and misfortunes may well form a sufficient apology; while they give rise to scenes and situations much more interesting than the vaulted galleries and castle dungeons of some modern romances, by chilling the heart with the dreadful conviction that, even in this land of comparative freedom, similar acts of cruelty and injustice not only *may be* but actually *are* perpetrated.¹⁶¹

There is no profession more vilified in Smith's work than that of the lawyer. *Marchmont* is a novel that excoriates lawyers and moneylenders by painting them as monstrous and Other. Undoubtedly stemming from Smith's own experience with lawyers, Loraine Fletcher outlines that Smith had 'little respect for lawyers,' viewing them as 'active parasites' within society.¹⁶² While Smith's pecuniary difficulties galvanised the publication of *Marchmont*, it is also notable that her financial situation was tied to her interactions with lawyers. Asserting in the preface of the novel that her depictions are constructed *ad vivum*, or from life, Smith highlights the monstrosity of one fictional lawyer in particular: Mr. Vampyre. Functioning as the apogee of Smith's vilification of lawyers, she writes that Mr. Vampyre 'represents a reptile whose most hideous features are too offensive to be painted in all their enormity,' and that 'as a specimen of a genus extremely poisonous and noxious he becomes an object to be held up to detestation.'¹⁶³ Constructed from life, and perpetrating cruel acts that may correspond with those actually perpetrated in Smith's contemporary society, Mr. Vampyre is Other, almost supernaturally monstrous, and significantly he engages in vampiric usury.

At the heart of *Marchmont* is money and financial need, themes that are reflected in Smith's own financial situation that prompted the novel's creation and that are also inextricably linked to the character Mr. Vampyre. In order to exaggerate the monstrosity of her fictional lawyer, Smith capitalised on the name 'vampire' which had become, as a result of the eighteenth century vampire craze, a term that was 'contemporary, modish, edgy and alluringly dangerous.'¹⁶⁴ Though not fully inviting her readers to engage in a suspension of belief in such a way as to truly render Mr. Vampyre a supernatural vampire, Smith nonetheless plays with this boundary in order to heighten her critique of lawyers and to satirise their actions while further exploiting the versatility of the in vogue term 'vampire' to signify a supernatural threat, but also the metaphorical threat of foreign agents feeding financially on Britain's body politic. Smith thus unites the literary vampire with both the vampire of Eastern European folklore and the antisemitic tradition representing the imagined Jews as a financial bloodsucker. *Marchmont* is unique within Smith's corpus due to the characterisation of Mr. Vampyre, and though often over-looked within the sphere of Gothic criticism and the tradition of the fictional vampire, the novel represents an important contribution to

¹⁶¹ 'Marchmont. By Charlotte Smith.', *Monthly Review*, 22 (1797) 468 (468).

¹⁶² Loraine Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 1998), p. 92.

¹⁶³ Charlotte Smith *Marchmont: A Novel*, vol. 1 (London: Sampson Low, 1796), p. xii.

¹⁶⁴ Groom, p. 40.

the emergence of the vampire in literature. *Marchmont* lacks the realised supernatural and does not manifest supernatural vampires within its pages, but nonetheless Smith's vampire lawyer metaphorically embodies many features that have come to characterise the fictional, supernatural vampire we recognise today, such as the vampire's fangs and unnatural appetite.

While Mr. Vampyre is the villain of *Marchmont*, the primary narrative of the novel focuses on his victims, Althea Dacres and the Marchmont family, who fall prey to the monstrous and financial proclivity of Smith's vampire-lawyer. The daughter of Sir Audley Dacres, Althea, is banished from her parental home after refusing to comply with her father's wishes and accept his marital choice for her, and she is then further punished after his death as her stepmother withholds her rightful inheritance. The place of Althea's exile is Eastwoodleigh: recently acquired by Althea's father, Eastwoodleigh had previously been the ancestral home of the Marchmonts, and as we follow Althea through the novel we are introduced to the Marchmont family and their story of political, legal, and financial persecution. Vilified for being Jacobites, Sir Armyn Marchmont and his family inherited a fortune 'sapped by the loans of his predecessors,' while persecution ensured they were also cut off from the advantages of public life that would have enabled them to increase their fortunes.¹⁶⁵ Thus compelled to mortgage their family estates, Sir Armyn Marchmont propels his loyalist family further and further into poverty and financial destitution, a trajectory only accelerated following his death. It consequently falls to Sir Armyn's son, the eponymous Marchmont, to answer for his father's debts and face the threat of Mr. Vampyre, and it is at Eastwoodleigh that Althea first encounters Marchmont, dispossessed from his family home but secretly using it as an asylum from the power and authority of Mr. Vampyre. The paths of Althea and the Marchmont family continue to cross throughout the novel, allowing Althea to witness and experience the legal persecution of this family first hand, while connections between the two families are further exposed as Althea learns of her father's role in the Marchmont's current situation. Althea relates to Marchmont, for example, that 'this Vampyre was, I fear, *first* empowered to pursue and oppress you [Marchmont] by my father,' and it is also revealed that 'the villain was one of many of those agents whom the father of the present Lady Dacres [Althea's stepmother] was used to employ in his money transactions.'¹⁶⁶ Critical of the part played by her own family in such oppression, Althea decides to unite herself and her interests with the Marchmonts, though in a very different manner: first, by boarding with Lady Marchmont and her daughter, and then later through her marriage to Marchmont.

Ideally situated to witness and experience the legal and financial persecution of the Marchmonts, Althea's marital union with Marchmont legally binds her to his family's entanglements with Mr. Vampyre. Such scenes of persecution are often presented through Althea's perspective, and the first depiction of Mr. Vampyre and his 'inhuman satellites of the law'¹⁶⁷ in the novel places Althea in the role of his next potential victim:

¹⁶⁵ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, pp. 51-52.

¹⁶⁶ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, p. 128.

¹⁶⁷ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 14.

One of them was a short mean figure between fifty and sixty, wrapped in an old blue great coat with a red cape, and he wore a carroty scratch wig pulled forward over a face which could not, without an affront to the species, be called human. Squalid and despicable as this wretch was, he seemed to be invested with some authority over the other; whose great athletic figure impressed terror, while that of his companion raised abhorrence. [...] The man, who found by the trembling of her [Althea's] voice that she was terrified, now thought that he should prevail by mere dint of fear: striking therefore his cane against the ground; he said in a still louder tone – "Understand, Madam, that I am *authorised* in what I demand [...]"¹⁶⁸

Described with reference to the human/monster dichotomy, as if his existence as an affront to the human species threatens to transgress this boundary, the unnamed figure here is none other than Mr. Vampyre. Exploiting Althea's ignorance to highlight her terror and the abhorrence of Mr. Vampyre, his identification is deferred until the next chapter where Althea and the reader are informed that 'Hedbury says his name is Vampyre; that he is an attorney, and has been the ruin of a great many families.'¹⁶⁹ While Smith's novel is not an adaptation of *Merchant*, Mr. Vampyre can be read as an unacknowledged version of Shylock: Smith's villain is not, like Shylock, a merchant or a moneylender, nor is he explicitly Jewish, but nonetheless Mr. Vampyre and Shylock share several key characteristics. Both Shylock and Mr. Vampyre work within interpretations of the law to ensure their demands are legally authorised; they are both driven by malice and revenge; and they are both associated with a bloodthirsty usury viewed as odious and distinctly Jewish. Smith was herself no stranger to Shakespeare, and Fletcher writes that Smith 'read Shakespeare extensively,' further emphasising that 'some of Shakespeare's phrasing passed so deeply into her consciousness she was unaware she was quoting him.'¹⁷⁰ Shakespeare's plays appear again and again throughout Smith's oeuvre as epigraphs, in-text quotations, or references, and *Marchmont* is no exception. Yet, while she references various works such as *The Comedy of Errors*, *Timon of Athens*, and *King Henry VI* within *Marchmont*,¹⁷¹ it is Smith's overt invocation of Shylock that is the most significant. Transforming characteristics associated with Shylock into traits that suggest a monstrous, supernatural Otherness, Mr. Vampyre is equipped with legal contracts, a monstrous appetite, and a bond that recalls Shylock's infamous bond that equates money with flesh.

Inviting the suggestion that the norms of legal, financial contracts and the boundary between payment taken as money and payment taken as flesh may be transgressed, *Marchmont* discusses Mr. Vampyre's pursuit and persecution of his family and asks, 'suppose that the inveterate malignity of these men, who, like Shylock, insist upon their bond, which they know I cannot pay – suppose it urges them to

¹⁶⁸ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 1, pp. 64-65; 68.

¹⁶⁹ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 1, p. 80.

¹⁷⁰ Fletcher, pp. 18; 37.

¹⁷¹ Along with *As You Like It*, Smith uses quotes from these Shakespeare plays as epigraphs within *Marchmont*, as well as quoting other literary works.

the greatest extremities?’¹⁷² By directly referencing Shylock, Marchmont also echoes Antonio’s fear in *Merchant* that ‘I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh / Tomorrow to my bloody creditor.’¹⁷³ Here, the suggestion is that both Shylock and Mr. Vampyre would carry out any means necessary to collect their payment, even if their actions lead them to the greatest extremities of acceptable human behaviour. A warning to Marchmont further establishes this association:

Beware of Vampyre, and of the unadjusted claims of Messrs. Spriggins and Scrapepenny – I have a horror of these usurious fellows, but still more of the instrument they employ. Their answers to me were so evidently evasive, and they have both so much of Shylock about them, that my daily dread is of their enforcing their bonds.¹⁷⁴

Employed by Mr. Spriggins and Mr. Scrapepenny, and empowered by Sir Audley, Sir Audley’s father-in-law, and also Mr. Mohun, Mr. Vampyre is a ‘diabolical instrument’ used to enforce their monstrous bonds.¹⁷⁵ Participating in, or rather directly implementing legal persecution, Mr. Vampyre emulates a tradition of moneylending typically represented as being distinctly Jewish. Recalling the perception that Jewish moneylenders in the medieval period acted as ‘treasury agents,’ Mr. Vampyre similarly functions as the agent or instrument of various social elites and he absorbs much of the degradation moneylending elicits. Smith represents Mr. Vampyre as a shield for his employers and insulating them from exposure. Althea, for example, is even kept in the dark with regards to her family’s connections with Mr. Vampyre, and it is only when she witnesses his actions and then becomes herself entangled in his persecutions that she discovers her family’s involvement with individuals constructed as reprobate, potentially criminal, and perhaps even vampiric.

Echoing Shylock’s bond, the methods employed by Mr. Vampyre are born out of self-interest, potentially criminal behaviour, and suggest vampiric monstrosity through their enforcement. Associated with yet separate from his employers, Mr. Vampyre is depicted as ‘a wretch so stained with crime’ that he possesses cunning to even avoid the gallows, yet while his actions often fall into the sphere of criminality, he is also at times fuelled by personal revenge.¹⁷⁶ A key motive for Shylock demanding his bond is revenge for his own mistreatment and the betrayal of his daughter, and while revenge is not the initial motive for Mr. Vampyre, as the narrative progresses he is increasingly motivated by his need for vengeance. In a warning against Mr. Vampyre, Marchmont’s friend entreats him not to expose himself to this ‘*legal monster*,’ or,

¹⁷² Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, p. 158.

¹⁷³ Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 3: 33-34.

¹⁷⁴ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 276.

¹⁷⁵ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 182.

¹⁷⁶ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 411.

[To] the attempts that might still be made by a wretch, who, to the basest and most sordid cupidity of the lowest of his profession, added the desire of personal vengeance for the expence he had been put to, or rather which he had put his clients to, in a fruitless pursuit, as well as for the buffets he had received. [...] these two men were already weary of continuing a persecution that promised so little advantage, as such an expence as he knew Vampyre had put them to already [...] they had found Vampyre, who hesitated not at perjury, where he could venture it, or even forgery in the same case, a very useful though diabolical instrument.¹⁷⁷

Throughout the novel, various interactions between Mr. Vampyre and Marchmont only serve to infuriate the former as his attempts to arrest Marchmont are continually frustrated. His first attempt to search Eastwoodleigh for the fugitive is prevented by Mr. Wansford (the housekeeper), and his second attempt is equally futile; although he successfully gains admittance to the house through deception, force, and ‘an illegal act,’¹⁷⁸ Marchmont has already left the house, and in fact he has also left England itself. In another incident, Marchmont describes his reaction to Mr. Vampyre’s arrival at his lodgings: as Marchmont kicks Mr. Vampyre downstairs and into the street, a mob gathered outside ‘determined to add an epilogue to my figure-dance, by no means to the taste of Mr. Solicitor Vampyre.’¹⁷⁹ As a direct consequence of this incident in particular, Mr. Vampyre’s zeal for pursuing Marchmont is ‘re-activated by resentment for this personal disgrace. He now added a fresh cause of vengeance to his native diabolical malignity.’¹⁸⁰ Like Shylock and other contemporary depictions of Jewish moneylenders, Mr. Vampyre tests legal boundaries, manipulating and even threatening to transgress cultural norms with his criminal or diabolical actions. His crimes include perjury and forgery, along with forced entry, chicanery, and fraud. Ultimately, what separates Mr. Vampyre from his employers is his willingness to perform criminal and immoral acts, and this allows for the suggestion that his reach or his influence can appear supernatural while his malignancy is characterised as diabolical and monstrous.

While the principal purpose of usury is monetary profit, Mr. Vampyre’s acts appear motivated by a need to satisfy appetites of a very different nature: a vampiric appetite fuelled by revenge. Again, Mr. Vampyre echoes Shylock, and parallels Shylock’s declaration that ‘If it [the bond] will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.’¹⁸¹ Although the word ‘vampire’ does not appear in *Merchant*, the legacy of the medieval Blood Libel that equates flesh and blood haunts the play, and we can therefore read Shylock’s appetite in terms of metaphorical vampirism. Moreover, though metaphorical, the threat that it could be manifested and made real persists throughout the play: ‘I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond. / Thou called’st me dog before thou hast a cause, / But since I am a dog, beware my fangs.’¹⁸² Shylock’s

¹⁷⁷ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, pp. 180-182.

¹⁷⁸ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, p. 214.

¹⁷⁹ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, p. 231.

¹⁸⁰ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, p. 231.

¹⁸¹ Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 1: 50-51.

¹⁸² Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 3: 5-7.

appetite is monstrous and animalistic, and it is represented by his metaphorical fangs. Immediately identifying her lawyer as a vampire through his name, Smith constructs Mr. Vampyre in Shylock's shadow and brings the latent vampirism of Shylock and Mr. Vampyre to the surface, playing with the suggestion that the threat of their vampiric, vengeful appetite is, perhaps, supernatural. In particular, Smith exploits the motif of metaphorical fangs, writing that 'certain ruin followed wherever this disgrace to his profession and to human nature once infixed his empoisoned fangs; and that his insidious friendship was not less fatal to his employers.'¹⁸³ Emphasising this nonhuman characteristic, the fang motif is used again as Marchmont states the difficulty of escaping from the 'fangs of that wretch Vampyre,'¹⁸⁴ and through synecdoche 'fangs' thus represent Mr. Vampyre's vampiric whole, his unnatural appetite, and his seemingly supernatural reach. By using a Gothic tone to construct Mr. Vampyre and appealing to a suspension of belief regarding his nature, Smith creates a space within the novel where his monstrosity is explored, albeit metaphorically, in terms of monstrous and supernatural Otherness.

Marchmont is not Mr. Vampyre's initial victim, and originally his fangs were directed towards Sir. Armyn, Marchmont's father. Kate Davies and Harriet Guest note that in 'the novel's ultimate act of authorized inhumanity lawyers attempt to snatch Sir Armyn's corpse before his funeral in part-payment for his debts. The revisiting of this incident, in all its grim repetition, says something about just how bleak this novel is.'¹⁸⁵ Occurring before the narrative itself, this incident is recounted retrospectively three times throughout the novel. The first revisiting of this scene states that 'creditors had threatened to arrest the remains of his father as they were proceeding towards the parish church.'¹⁸⁶ Constructing this scene through personal, familial remembrance, in the second revisiting, Marchmont recounts how 'that *fiend*, in the shape of an attorney, embittered the last sad moments of my father; and, before his poor remains were conveyed to their place of rest [...] advised them to stop the cold ashes of my parent in their way to interment; and to accept no terms but those of my binding myself for the debt.'¹⁸⁷ The third and final revisiting of this scene is again recollected by Marchmont: 'My dying father surrounded by the inhuman satellites of the law, from whom I could hardly rescue his poor remains – my mother pale and silent with terror and anguish, seem again before me.'¹⁸⁸ The 'grim repetition' of this episode haunts the reader throughout the text just as it haunts Marchmont, while the act of demanding the remains of Sir. Armyn as payment for his debts almost realises the flesh-thirsty fulfilment of Shylock's bond. However, Davies and Guest's description of the act as 'part-payment' is apt: a dead corpse can offer neither money nor blood, and therefore cannot be seen as 'full-payment.' Shylock desires the flesh of the very much alive Antonio as

¹⁸³ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, pp. 98-99.

¹⁸⁴ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 152.

¹⁸⁵ Kate Davies and Harriet Guest, 'Introduction' in *The Works of Charlotte Smith, vol. 9. Marchmont*, ed. Kate Davies and Harriet Guest (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006), p. xi.

¹⁸⁶ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 1, p. 17.

¹⁸⁷ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 2, pp. 127-128.

¹⁸⁸ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 141.

payment for his bond, and Mr. Vampyre, too, desires a living victim. Compelled to accept the terms of Mr. Vampyre, Marchmont is, at his father's funeral, transformed into Mr. Vampyre's next victim as he binds himself to the debts of his father. As the repetition of this scene underscores, payment or part-payment of this debt can be fatal, but the debt can also be viewed as contagious and if not stopped, it could spread throughout society. First fixed upon the father, Sir. Armyn, Mr. Vampyre's empoisoned fangs soon ensnare the son, and further infect those close to him including his mother, his sister, and Althea. The symptoms of Mr. Vampyre's bite are poverty and financial destitution as he drains the wealth of his victims, and the potential consequence is death.

Resolving the legal entanglements of Shylock's bond, Shakespeare's Jewish merchant is eventually defanged as he is prohibited from spilling one drop of Christian blood; his bloodthirsty appetite is exposed but subjugated. Similarly, Marchmont, Althea, and the Marchmont family are freed from the clutches of Mr. Vampyre when his fraudulent legal attempts are overruled and as a consequence 'the fiend, disappointed in his infernal malice, had fled.'¹⁸⁹ The Gothic tone of *Marchmont* and Smith's use of diabolic and vampiric descriptors emphasise the monstrousness of Mr. Vampyre, but, like Shylock, he is not a supernatural vampire and his vampirism is instead portrayed as metaphorical. However, the real terror of this novel is that such monsters, though figurative, do exist in society, and *Marchmont* reveals that vampires do in fact live among us, residing in 'dark caverns of iniquity, called lawyers' chambers where the very air seemed to be infected by the poison of the reptiles who inhabited them, and where the registers of the victims they had devoured, or were devouring, were the only furniture of the walls.'¹⁹⁰ Here Smith's vampire-lawyers foreshadow Bram Stoker's infamous vampiric count who is in one scene depicted descending from his castle in 'lizard fashion,'¹⁹¹ while his resting places (consisting of dank, derelict chapels and coffins filled with grave dirt) omit a 'deathly, sickly odour' that 'might 'ave smelled ole Jerusalem in it.'¹⁹² Associating Mr. Vampyre and his colleagues with reptiles also serves to emphasise their abject bestiality. Reptiles are amphibians who can live equally on earth and in water, and thus reptilian, vampiric lawyers further threaten to infect society as they not confined to traditional boundaries of nature or living spaces. These vampires are usurers, moneylenders, brokers, merchants, and lawyers, and as they flourish in the dark caverns of the lawyers chambers they also seek sustenance from society beyond these chambers as they threaten to drain the blood and money of Britain's body politic. Drawing on the antisemitic traditions of the medieval Blood Libel and Shakespeare's Shylock, and capitalising on the vampire craze and the use of the vampire in political allegories, Smith creates her own version of the vampire that unites the fictional vampire with these traditions. Although not explicitly Jewish, Mr. Vampire casts an unacknowledged Jewish shadow as his monstrosity is aligned with and heightened through the use of antisemitic traditions, stereotypes, and characteristics.

¹⁸⁹ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 433.

¹⁹⁰ Smith, *Marchmont*, vol. 4, p. 74.

¹⁹¹ Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 56

¹⁹² Stoker, *Dracula*, pp. 56; 243.

Conclusion

The potential danger lurking within society in the dark caverns of lawyers' chambers, or within cities that are, in broad daylight, filled with stock-jobbers, moneylenders, and business men, might not be immediately recognisable or explicitly Jewish, but the construction of such individuals as vampiric or monstrous draws on established antisemitic traditions that connect Jewishness with a monstrous Otherness. In these tales of terror, while the monster may not necessarily be Jewish, the threat they pose to Britain's body politic is nonetheless connected to antisemitic monstrousness and the demonisation of Jewish communities where such individuals are perceived to threaten the bodies and lifeblood of British Christians. Manifesting unacknowledged shadows of Shylock and the demonic or vampiric Jewish bogeyman, non-Jewish characters such as Mr. Vampyre perpetuate the association of characteristics typically associated with Jewishness with ambivalent yet potentially monstrous Otherness. Alongside literary works, religious narratives, medieval myths and libels, and also newspaper articles such as those I discussed in the introduction and that conjure tales of terrifying Jewish Others, semitic discourse thus encompasses literature that depicts unacknowledged Jewish Otherness. This is not, however, the only subject position afforded to imagined Jewish Others within semitic discourse. As Cheyette observes, these subject positions are 'incommensurable,'¹⁹³ and, as I will discuss in the following chapter, includes not only constructions of a supernatural bogeyman but also representations of Jews as racial Other. Rooted in perceptions of bodily difference between Jews and Christians, these works of literature present Jewishness as something innate, unchangeable and inherited. Though not a supernatural threat, racial otherness nonetheless poses challenges to the body politic of Christian Britain.

¹⁹³ Cheyette, p. 8.

Chapter 2

The Racial Question: Representing the Jewish Other

If you prick us, do we not bleed?
(*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 1)

We know that the black blood of Grenada flowed in the tainted veins of your ancestry, and that not more than four centuries have elapsed since your forefathers trampled on that cross before which you are now prostrate.
(Charles Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, p. 260.)

This chapter will examine fictional constructions of the imagined Jew in relation to racial otherness. From its beginnings as chronicled in Genesis, the nation of Israel is established through a covenant with God that is marked on the bodies of male Jews through the ritual of circumcision: ‘And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you [...] my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.’ (Gen. 17:11, 13). Though it is not a biological marker of perceived racial difference, circumcision functions as an external marker that is literally cut into the body, and that distinguishes Israelites from non-Israelites through a ritual that is repeated and passed down from generation to generation. Still practiced today, the covenant of circumcision (*brit milah*) involves removing the entire foreskin from the penis of new-born males on the eighth day after birth (Genesis 17: 12: ‘And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you’).¹⁹⁴ Thus marking and memorialising God’s promise to Abraham and his descendants, circumcision is an enduring symbol of Jewish identity and shared kinship inscribed in the flesh. As well as the cut itself, blood is central to this ritual too. Symbolising life, the blood of circumcision is holy, covenantal blood, but it is also *Jewish* blood ritually spilled from Jewish bodies, and blood that connects the individual, through a theological and biological bloodline, back to Abraham. The ritual of circumcision is thus a symbol of God’s covenant and Jewishness in both flesh and blood, merging together perceived notions of religious and racial identity. Although circumcision is a tradition of Jewish identity and kinship that remains ostensibly exclusive to male Jews, several Jewish exegetes and scholars have addressed this gender disparity by exploring the idea that men and women possess a blood marker that serves as covenantal blood. Joseph Bekhor Shor suggests in the twelfth century, for example, that menstrual blood is covenantal blood, while centuries later anti-Christian polemicist Yom Tov Lipmann Mühlhausen revises this idea and equates covenantal blood with the blood of childbirth.¹⁹⁵ Amy Greedstadt further notes the similarities between circumcision and marriage, and in particular the

¹⁹⁴ The tradition of circumcision exists in several cultures beyond Judaism, the most notable being Egyptian circumcision. For a discussion of the history of circumcision see: Shaul G. Massry, ‘History of circumcision: a religious obligation or a medical necessity’, *Origins of Nephrology*, 24 (2011) S100-S102 (especially p. S101) and Leonard B. Glick, *Marked In Your Flesh*.

¹⁹⁵ David Biale, *Blood and Belief: The Circulation of a symbol between Jews and Christians* (California: University of California Press, 2007), p. 104.

breaking or ‘sacrifice’ of the woman’s hymen during marital consummation.¹⁹⁶ Referring to medieval Jewish practices, Greenstadt highlights that the tradition of displaying the blood of circumcision on a cloth draped upon the synagogue’s entrance mirrors the tradition of the groom displaying bloodstained sheets the morning after his wedding night.¹⁹⁷ While circumcision and therefore representation of male Jews are typically privileged in the construction of Jewish identity — and particularly the construction of Jewish Others in fiction — the rituals of circumcision and Jewish marriages, together with the physical experiences of menstruation and childbirth, can be viewed as transformative rituals that bind individuals in religious and community kinship. Significantly, such transformative rituals encompass a centrality of blood that is recognised to theologically symbolise and literally manifest Jewish difference, but they also function as an enactment of racial difference that is ineradicable.

As the foundation and enduring marker of Jewish identity, circumcision was seized on by early Christian writers as a physical mark of theological difference between Jews and the emerging community of Christians: ‘For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God’ (Rom. 2:28-29¹⁹⁸). Pauline theology or Pauline Christianity interprets such passages within Romans as a rejection of the physical ritual of circumcision, eventually leading to the excising of Jewish traditions and perceived notions of physical or outward Jewishness from early formulations of Christianity. This prefigures the eventual erasure of the historical Jewishness of Christ, as over time the Christian Messiah is, as I discuss in the Introduction, represented as human and divine but not *Jewish*.¹⁹⁹ However, critics such as Karin B. Neutel and Ryan D. Collman highlight that such readings of Paul’s writings are often the result of interpretations that, as Neutel notes, rely on and privilege Christian perspectives that do not fully represent Paul’s first-century Jewish perspective.²⁰⁰ Ryan D. Collman further argues that such interpretations flatten Paul’s writings into a single maxim in which circumcision and foreskin become nothing but a flesh wound, while in actuality Paul is instead contending that ‘the commandments of God are not monolith amongst all people’, and that ‘Jews in the Jesus movement are still responsible for keeping the traditional law of their ancestors, and gentiles — although

¹⁹⁶ Amy Greenstadt, ‘The Kindest Cut: Circumcision and Queer Kinship in *The Merchant of Venice*’, *ELH*, 80 (2013) 945-980 (948, 953).

¹⁹⁷ Greenstadt, 953.

¹⁹⁸ In the King James version of Romans, as in other translations, the use of ‘Jew’ in these verses is supersessionist in nature, suggesting a difference between ‘outward Jews’ and ‘inward Jews’, or in other words Jews who do not accept the Christian Messiah or changes to Jewish traditions, beliefs, and rituals (‘outward Jews’), and Jews who do accept these changes and thus later become Christians. As in supersessionist theology, here Christianity supersedes Judaism, Christians or ‘inward Jews’ supersede Jews, and the old covenant, with its laws, letters, and rituals like circumcision, is replaced by a new covenant established by the Christian Messiah.

¹⁹⁹ Steven F. Kruger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. 3.

²⁰⁰ Karin B. Neutel, ‘Restoring Abraham’s Foreskin: The Significance of ἀκροβυστία for Paul’s Argument about Circumcision in Romans 4:9-12’, *JMJS*, 8 (2021), 53-74 (60).

not responsible for the Jewish law — must keep the commandments that pertain to them.’²⁰¹ Rather than devaluing the ritual of circumcision, Collman maintains that for Paul circumcision remained an important commandment for the nation of Jews, and at the same time other commandments were important to non-Jewish nations.

Paul is a Jew writing about Judaism, but the perception of circumcision as a sign of community belonging or difference was fundamental to the development of Christianity. Marking a theological divergence between Judaism and Christianity, the foundation of Christian and Jewish difference thus hinges on bodies and transformative rituals that are perceived to manifest bodily, religious, and even racial difference. Initiating an individual into a covenant with God, circumcision marks a shared religious heritage and shared bonds of community, kinship, and family between those transformed into, or identifying as, Jews. Yael S. Feldman highlights the difficulty within Judaism of distinguishing the ‘national-secular from the religious’, and identifies Judaism as a ‘special brand of ethnic religion.’²⁰² Paul’s writings do not speak to racial identities or race, which are concepts that develop centuries later, but rather of *ethnos* that relates to nations, peoples, and tribes. However, over time the tension between nation, religion, and ethnicity becomes increasingly present within Jewish and Christian constructions of Jewishness where Jewish identity embodies both religious and racial identities. It is therefore not necessary to be a practicing religious Jew to be Jewish, or to be considered as Jewish. Although transformative rituals such as circumcision remain central as symbols of an individual’s ties to the Jewish community across the ‘national-secular’ and the religious, Jewishness is as much about how individuals identify themselves as it is how individuals are identified by others. Nonetheless, the ritual of circumcision manifests a symbolic significance that is constantly open to interpretation. In Christian thought, the cut of circumcision is transformed into a marker of difference between the uncircumcised Christian self (or the Christian self who is not necessarily outwardly marked by circumcision, but rather marked by a symbolic, inward, and *Christian* version of circumcision) and the circumcised Jewish Other. Circumcision is further reconstructed from a ritual of Jewish belonging and kinship into a physical mark designating Jews as religious and racial Others. Marking into flesh an identity constructed as religious *and* racial, or as an ethnic-religious identity, racial constructions in particular view Jewishness as innate, unchangeable, and inherited by blood. As a transformative ritual, circumcision is thus both theological and symbolic in that it inscribes but also *re*-inscribes an ethnic-religious identity.

By moving away from Jewish rituals and practices, Christianity developed its own transformative rituals: the ritual of circumcision that is cut into flesh is replaced by baptism, and the covenantal blood of the cut is substituted by baptismal water that symbolises an individual’s conversion to Christianity without any lasting physical marks. Christian baptism is not an exact equivalent to circumcision, and there are also

²⁰¹ Ryan D. Collman, ‘Just A Flesh Wound? Reassessing Paul’s Supposed Indifference Towards Circumcision and Foreskin in 1 Cor 7:19, Gal 5:6 and 6:15’, *JMJS*, 8 (2011), 30-52 (42-43).

²⁰² Yael S. Feldman, *Glory and Agony: Isaac’s Sacrifice and National Narrative* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), p. 43.

several parallels between baptism and the Jewish ritual of immersion (mikveh) that similarly involves the use of water to achieve ritual purity. Unlike circumcision or baptism, however — which are singular rituals that mark the locus point of an individual’s religious and community transformation — ritual immersion is performed periodically to ritually purify an individual following menstruation or illness, or prior to conversion. But, if Jewish identity is constructed as not simply religious, but also as racial, or as an ethnic religion, this poses questions regarding the efficacy of transformative rituals, and the power of Christian transformative rituals that converge with identities constructed as racially different. Anxieties and contradictions regarding perceived and constructed identities are, therefore, at the heart of transformative rituals. Doubts surrounding the perceived success of baptismal conversion in reconstituting Jewish bodies manifest in the tension between blood (both covenantal and biologically inherited) and water. Discussing the medieval myth of *foetor judaicus* (the racist belief that Jews possess a distinctive foul odour or stench), Francesca Matteoni writes that this odour was believed to vanish after baptism and conversion to Christianity (such converted Jews were subsequently called ‘conversos’ or New Christians), and therefore functions an example of the professed transformative power of the baptism ritual to reconstruct identity and expunge purported racial characteristics.²⁰³ However, Biale disputes this claim, suggesting that for many Jews and Christians blood triumphed over water: ‘just as the Christians held that the water of baptism could not really expunge Jewish blood, so Jews themselves believed that the conversos remained true Jews “under the skin” even if they had sinned.’²⁰⁴ The symbolic aspect of such rituals thus challenge their transformative power and the notion that an individual’s innate, racial identity can truly be changed, converted, or transformed. While circumcision symbolically marks Jewish identity, and Christian baptism symbolically denotes conversion to Christianity or a kind of rebirth into the Christian religion, such rituals also engender uncertainty and anxieties regarding the efficacy of such transformation in relation to racial or ethnic-religious identity.

These anxieties remain central to Christian constructions of Jewishness where the boundaries between the Christian Self and Jewish Other are continually reconstructed, redefined, and reinterpreted through Christian perspectives. Christian identity, however, was not constructed as being ethnic or racial in this way because within Christian hegemony, Christianity, whiteness, and even male identity is perceived to be the norm against which the racial or ethnic religious Other is measured and marked. From the initial emergence of Christianity as a religion that is theologically different from Judaism, constructions of the Jewish Other appear across a range of mediums including myths, medieval libels, and tales of terror (supernatural or almost supernatural) that I discussed in the previous chapter, but stories of religious, racial, and national identity, political propaganda, and literary fiction also developed ideas of Jewish Otherness. Significantly, many of these representations and stories return again and again to a perceived difference that is located in Jewish flesh and blood. Fictional representations of Jewishness are expressions of dominant cultural discourse, and Edward Said argues that such ‘*representation*’ of the Other should be

²⁰³ Francesca Matteoni, ‘The Jew, the Blood and the Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe’, *Folklore*, 119. 2 (2008) 182-200 (194).

²⁰⁴ Biale p. 97.

viewed not as 'natural' depictions but as examples of artificial representation.²⁰⁵ Reflecting an imagined reality, fiction thus plays a key role in upholding and perpetuating social-cultural hegemonies while reflecting cultural traditions of racial persecution and cultural perceptions of race. The fictional representation of racial Jewishness depicted within eighteenth and nineteenth century literature as it relates to cultural constructions of race will be the focus of this chapter, but first I will trace the historical development of ideas surrounding race, racial persecution, and the cultural representation of Jews as racial Others.

Race can be characterised as 'fundamentally a political and not a scientific idea,'²⁰⁶ and it is also defined as 'an ideology which claims to be based on scientific truth.'²⁰⁷ Perceived and constructed upon erroneous claims to scientific truth, racism asserts that physical characteristics or markers of different races are biologically determined, and such characteristics are 'unalterable and passed on from one generation to the next.'²⁰⁸ Circumcision, though an external and not a biological marker, thus becomes a symbolic representation of Jewishness while biological bloodlines manifest a racial Jewish Otherness that is seen to be innate. Like baptism and also marriage ceremonies, the ritual of circumcision is a cultural marker and a transformative ritual that is considered to reconstitute the body of an individual into a religious identity and community, and the lasting cut of circumcision on the bodies of male Jews memorialises this transformation and irrevocably establishes in the flesh an individual's connection to this cultural, religious tradition. Although circumcision and the transformative ritual of circumcision symbolically represent Jewishness, this ritual and physical marker ultimately enacts a biological, racial, or ethnic religious identity that is perceived to be ineradicable. Blood and biological heritage are thus also important to representations of Jews as not simply a religious Other, but as a racial or an ethnic-religious Other. Geraldine Heng's definition of race as a constructed structural relationship created within societies in order to maintain socio-cultural order is particularly useful to understand the historical foundations of traditions, including Christian traditions, that represent Jews as racial Others. Heng defines race as a '*structural relationship for the articulation and management of human differences*,'²⁰⁹ where '*community fictions and community consent, periodically refreshed, augur performances that are ritually productive of race*,'²¹⁰ and where distinct groups are '*systemically defined and set apart via biomarkers*.'²¹¹ As discussed in the Introduction, biomarkers include physical characteristics such as the facial somatic phenotypes including the hooked nose, symbolic

²⁰⁵ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 21.

²⁰⁶ Richard S. Cooper, 'Race in Biological and Biomedial Research', *Cold Spring Harb Perspect Med*, (2013) 1-10 (1).

²⁰⁷ Benjamin Isaac, Joseph Ziegler, and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, 'Introduction', in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, eds. Benjamin Isaac, Joseph Ziegler, and Miriam Eliav-Feldon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 1-31 (p. 1).

²⁰⁸ 'Introduction', in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, p. 12.

²⁰⁹ Geraldine Heng, 'The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages I: Race Studies, Modernity, and the Middle Ages', *Literature Compass*, 8.5 (2011) 315-331 (325). (Original emphasis.)

²¹⁰ Geraldine Heng, 'The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race', *Literature Compass*, 8.5 (2011) 332-350 (336). (Original emphasis.)

²¹¹ Heng, 'The Inventions of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race', 335.

biomarkers such as the circumcised penis, or imagined or supernatural biomarkers such as horns and tails that often associate Jews with Satan and contribute to the demonisation of Jewish communities. Such biomarkers were popularised in the Middle Ages and widely disseminated in representations of Jewishness, perpetuating Said's concept of artificial *representation*. Existing as a structural relationship, racial categories are thus constructed as part of societal hegemonies where bodies classified by the dominant classes as Other and racially or biologically distinct are viewed and *represented* as 'polluting entities' that are 'thought to disrupt social-cultural order.'²¹² This imposition of racial categories is 'one of the most enduring historical forces' and underpins cultural, fictional, and pseudo-scientific constructions of racial Others.²¹³

Constructed in opposition to Christian self-construction, the body of the racial Jewish Other is depicted as biologically impure and antithetical to the perfect male Christian body. Discussing the medieval construction of the Jewish Other, Brenda Gardenour states that the body of the imagined Jew is represented as a 'polluted *female* body that, in the absence of divinity, was a likely vessel for evil,'²¹⁴ while Steven F. Krueger further notes that the lack of foreskin effectuated through circumcision can be equated with lacking a penis, and thus constructions of circumcised Jewish men often feminized them.²¹⁵ Lacking a penis, the polluted female body of the imagined Jew is further associated with the Christian myth of Jewish male menses.²¹⁶ Distorting Jewish practices and the reality of Jewish bodies, this myth epitomises the tradition that constructs the imagined Jew as female and physically and biologically Other. Menstrual blood in both Judaism and Christianity signifies the unclean and the impure, and as Sharon Faye Koren highlights, the myth of Jewish male menses 'took the idea of menstruation as an allegory for moral impurity and literalized it.'²¹⁷ Where the female body is impure through menstruation, the male body represents purity and perfection. In this context, the feminine and the female body, with which the Jewish male body is associated, is viewed as being inferior to the perfect masculinity and male body of the Christian male; in opposition to the Christian male body, the body of the imagined Jew is thus presented as different, inferior, and both morally and literally impure. Along with covenantal blood of circumcision and childbirth, the blood of menstruation thus became a symbol of difference between the perfect Christian male and the racially different Jewish Other. Moreover, as David Biale argues, in this period the beliefs of both Christians and

²¹² Kruger, p. 12.

²¹³ Cooper, 1. Christian persecution against Jews in the Middle Ages and later by the Inquisition are key historical periods that demonstrate the continuing cycle of racial persecution against Jews, and we can also look back to other period in history such as the Holocaust, South African Apartheid, and slavery and segregation in the United States to identify periods and events that exemplify, mirror, and foreshadow contemporary concepts of race and racism. See also *The Origins or Racism in the West*.

²¹⁴ B. Gardenour, 'The Biology of Blood-Lust: medieval Medicine, Theology, and the Vampire Jew', *Film & History, An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 41.2 (2011) 51-63 (56). Emphasis my own.

²¹⁵ Kruger, p. 81.

²¹⁶ See, for example, David S. Katz, 'Shylock's Gender: Jewish Male Menstruation in Early Modern England', *The Review of English Studies*, 50. 200 (1999) 440-462.

²¹⁷ Sharon Faye Koren, 'The Menstruant as "Other" in Medieval Judaism and Christianity', *A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues*, 17 (2009) 33-59 (45).

Jews were shaped by what each knew of the other, with blood at the centre of this opposition.²¹⁸ In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council declared that the wine and wafer of the Eucharist was the literal blood and flesh of Christ, and this doctrine of transubstantiation consequently superseded other sacraments and transformative rituals such as baptism. Mirroring the now literal consumption of blood in the Eucharist, the Jewish practise of *metzitzah* or *metzizah b'peh*, a circumcision practice that involves the *mohel* (men trained in the practice of circumcision or *brit milah* and with necessary surgical skill and religious knowledge) sucking drops of blood from the circumcision wound, also emerged in this period.²¹⁹ Justified within Jewish communities by the belief that such practices prevent infections, Christians conversely perceived this custom as a *source* of infection, and also a biological contamination that served as punishment for Jewish blasphemy against Christ. The imagined Jewish Other is thus represented as feminine, inferior, morally and literally impure, and racially different in contrast to the perfect male, Christian body, while Jewish blood was considered to be unclean, spiritually and biologically polluted, and associated with disease and infection.

Representations of Jews as polluted, racial Others continued to develop in fiction and pseudo-scientific racial categorisation, and the discourse surrounding Jewish blood and structural relationships within society that create and uphold racial difference found a stronghold in the Spanish Kingdom post-1209. Amidst civil wars in Castille as well as increasing discrimination and violence against Jewish communities, 1391 saw the forced mass conversion of Jews, but these new Christian converts were nonetheless still viewed as Other and identified as 'conversos' or 'New Christians.'²²⁰ These terms are used to refer to Jewish (and Muslim) converts to Christianity, but they were also used to refer to their descendants as well, as if reflecting Christian anxieties that Jewish descendants were permanently tainted and contaminated by their biological heritage even if their family professed conversion. Whether visible or not, Jewish blood was a biomarker that signalled racial and polluted otherness. The widespread belief that conversion 'could not expunge Jewish blood'²²¹ undermined the transformative power of baptism, the Eucharist, and Christian conversion, and instead led to the racial persecution of those suspected to be Jewish. Writing later in the eighteenth century, Turkish Rabbi Isaac Magrisso, for example, suggests that such conversion was simply an illusion, and that transformative rituals like religious conversion could not erase the Jewish covenant of blood.²²² Following societal unrest in Spain, the Tribunal or the Holy Office of the Inquisition was established in 1478 under the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in order to investigate heretics and judaizers (that is Jews or crypto-Jews believed to teach and spread Judaism), and threatened

²¹⁸ Biale, p. 83.

²¹⁹ Biale, p. 83. This practice is still considered to be controversial today, and linked to the transmission of tuberculosis and syphilis (see Leonard B. Glick, *Marked in Your Flesh*, p. 6).

²²⁰ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: An Historical Revision*, fourth edition (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 16.

²²¹ Biale, p. 97.

²²² Biale, p. 95. Rabbi Isaac Magrisso completed the eighteenth century Ladino commentary on Exodus, *Me-am Loez*, begun by Rabbi Yaakov Culi in 1730. In his part of the commentary, Magrisso proposes that the covenant of blood at Mount Sinai depicted in Exodus created a pure nation of Israel, and Biale notes that in this idea Magrisso appropriates a 'classic Christian topos' and 'protoracial ideas of Christian Iberia' to present Jews as an ethnic-religion possessing superior blood (p. 95).

its victims with imprisonment, torture, or even death.²²³ As a result, communities of Jewish converts to Christianity, also known as New Christians or conversos and including crypto-Jews who merely pretended conversion while still practicing Judaism in secret, were viewed with suspicion and persecuted by the Inquisition. This religious-political body facilitated the state-sanctioned surveillance, persecution and exile of Jews and other minorities, and further engendered the threat or realisation of imprisonment, torture, or even death in its prisons.²²⁴ Such racial persecution requires both the hegemonic management of racial difference from government bodies, but also community consent within societies through the participation of individuals in the surveillance, discrimination, and proliferation of community fictions that repeatedly uphold racial difference. Moreover, a key function of the Inquisition is racial persecution of Jews, and as David Katz remarks, the Inquisition would pay particular attention to the bodies of those they were interrogating. Katz notes that in the search for biomarkers and physical signs of religious and racial Otherness, 'Circumcision was only one of the marks that could be used to catch a Jew.'²²⁵

By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, and as the Inquisition's influence was beginning to decline, post-Enlightenment European debates surrounding race were still turning to pseudo-science to support claims that Jews are racially different. Seminal to these debates is German anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, whose 1795 doctoral thesis, *On the Natural Variety of Mankind*, asserts that there are five distinct racial categories of the human species. Significantly, while Blumenbach categorises Jews within the 'white' or 'Caucasian' category, he also details in a footnote an exchange between Benjamin West, President of the Royal Academy of Arts, where West remarks upon the categorised racial character of Jews: West 'thought that it [Jews] above all other had something particularly goat-like about it, which he was of the opinion lay not so much in the hooked nose as in the transit and conflux of the septum which separates the nostril from the middle of the upper lip.'²²⁶ Here, we can see the vestiges of medieval myths haunting pseudo-scientific racial claims that amalgamates within scientific and artistic perspectives centuries later, while notions of nominal or conditional whiteness founded upon racial anxieties are also established. Emulating earlier persecution enacted by the Inquisition, racial categories like these and developing pseudo-scientific considerations of race encourage the examination of individuals for clues, physical characteristics, or biomarkers in order to investigate and uncover racial identities.

Racial persecution enacted within society, together with racist pseudo-scientific ideas, develop alongside and in conversation with fictional constructions of racial difference, and these constructions reflect contemporary anxieties regarding blood, biomarkers, transformative rituals, bodily difference, familial ancestry, and polluted otherness that underpin notions of race. Using Edward Said's critical lens of *representation* and Heng's definition of race as a social construct that delineates and manages human

²²³ Kamen, p. 12.

²²⁴ Kamen, see chapters 2 and 3.

²²⁵ David S. Katz, 'Shylock's Gender: Jewish Male Menstruation in Early Modern England', *The Review of English Studies*, 50 (199) 440-462 (451).

²²⁶ Terence Keel, *Divine Variation: How Christian Thought Became Racial Science* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), p. 23.

differences through community fictions and a focus on biomarkers, this chapter will now turn to examine literary representations of Jewishness within late eighteenth and early nineteenth century fiction. Representations of Jewish rituals distorted by Christian authors feed into and influence artificial, fictional *representations* of Jews as ethnic-religious Others, and I will first examine a brief passage in Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820) as illustrative of this distortion in its depiction of the ritual of circumcision. I will then turn to explore depictions of Jewishness and Jewish Others within the anonymously published 1797 Gothic novel *The Inquisition*, Richard Cumberland's 1799 chapbook *The History of Nicholas Pedrosa*, Mrs Meeke's 1815 novel *The Spanish Campaign; or, The Jew*,²²⁷ and finally Walter Scott's 1827 novella *The Surgeon's Daughter*. Representing the Other is a way to define perceived racial difference, maintain social-culture order, and also to contain (within fiction) bloodlines constructed as racially polluted, whether through social hierarchies or, as is the case with many of the texts I will discuss, through the death of the Jewish Other. Reflecting contemporary Christian anxieties surrounding Jewish difference, and haunted by theological and historical ghosts of previous Jewish Others, these narratives manifest and perpetuate ideas of racial Otherness where Jewishness is constructed as an ethnic-religious identity, and demonstrate the racial concerns of this period's Jewish Questions.

“A Jew innate”: distorted representations and *Melmoth the Wanderer*

A lasting product of early Christian theology was the perception of Jews as religious *and* racial Others, a belief that remained fundamental to representations of Jews throughout history and that influenced the persecution of Jews in society as well as depictions of Jewish Others in fiction. From the creation of antisemitic myths and the persecution of Jews in medieval Britain, and also later religious and racial persecution of Jews in Europe as enforced by the Spanish Inquisition, such representations, rooted in ideas of both religious and racial difference, were eventually conjured into fictional texts such as Maturin's Gothic novel *Melmoth the Wanderer*. Ordained into the Church of Ireland in 1803, Maturin became curate of St. Peter's Church, Dublin in 1805 and remained there until his death in 1824. But, alongside his religious career, he also pursued a career in the world of literature. Like many clergyman in this period, Maturin published collections of his sermons – *Sermons* (1819) and *Five Sermons on the Errors of the Roman Catholic Church* (1824) – and alongside these religious works he also published seven novels and four plays. Following the success of his first play *Bertram* – first performed, with the assistance of Walter Scott and Lord Byron, at Drury theatre in 1816, and with Edmund Kean in the starring role – he revealed his true identity, having published his early literary works under the pseudonym Dennis Jasper Murphy. Despite *Bertram*'s success, critics including Samuel Taylor Coleridge castigated the play as being ‘melancholy proof of the depravation of the public mind,’²²⁸ and with such criticism now publicly associated with Maturin, the

²²⁷ The author of works published by Mrs Meeke have formerly been identified as Mary Meeke, although Simon Mcdonal persuasively argues against this identification in his essay: ‘Identifying Mrs Meeke: Another Burney Family Novelist’, *The Review of English Studies*, 64.265 (2013) 367-385.

²²⁸ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions*, vol. 1 (London: Rest Fenner, 1817), ch. 23.

Church of Ireland barred Maturin from any further clerical progression. Though never relinquishing his Dublin curacy, this decision possibly served to embolden Maturin in his pursuit to become a successful novelist, and in particular his enthrallment with the popular Gothic genre, while his religious and theological beliefs permeated many of his fictional works including *Melmoth*. I will discuss this novel in more detail in chapter four in relation to the Wandering Jew myth, but here I want to focus on Maturin's retelling of Exodus 4:24-26, a biblical passage depicting a performance of the ritual of circumcision, and the ensuing scene involving Spanish Jews that occurs in a brief moment in the narrative. Narrated by a Catholic monk, Alonzo Monçada, just after his recent escape from the Spanish Inquisition and as he encounters a Jewish family, this moment is a snapshot that demonstrates Said's notion of an imagined and artificial *representation* of racial otherness.

As Biale notes, 'Christians knew of Jewish circumcision practices, at least in some distorted way,'²²⁹ and certainly the Christian Bible, which includes Jewish sacred texts repackaged as 'the Old Testament,' records the creation of the Jewish nation as distinct, as well as containing details of Jewish rituals as chronicled in books such as Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus. Such knowledge, though distorted through Christian scriptural interpretation, includes, for example, Exodus 4:24-26, a passage depicting a curious moment where Moses is almost punished by God for his failure to circumcise his son:

And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

Highlighting the importance of inscribing and *re*-inscribing God's covenant in flesh and blood through this ritual, Zipporah's quick thinking saves her son and her husband from God's wrath, and this story consequently serves as what Carol Meyers describes as 'an object lesson for later generations who wavered at the use of circumcision as an ethnic marker.'²³⁰ It is never made explicit as to why Moses failed to circumcise his son, but this passage demonstrates the important role played by women in the preservation of rituals relating to Jewish identity: Zipporah's words express anger that such a ritual is necessary within the community she has married into, yet her act ensures that this ritual is performed.²³¹ Further emphasising the importance of blood, the repetition of the phrase 'bloody husband', which is also translated as 'bridegroom of blood,' refigures God's covenant enacted through the ritual of circumcision as being like a marital union, and thus brings to the fore the importance of marriage as a transformative ritual that reconstitutes the bodies and bloodlines of women into the ethnic-religious community of their husbands. As the bride and bridegroom are bound together through the marriage ritual, so too the circumcised individual is bound to God and the nation of Israel through the ritual of circumcision, the ethnic

²²⁹ Biale, p. 99.

²³⁰ Carol Meyers, *Exodus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 63.

²³¹ Margaret Murray Talbot, 'Tsipporah, Her Son, and the Bridegroom of Blood: Attending to the Bodies in Ex 4:24-26', *Religions*, 8.205 (2017) 1-15 (12).

marker it leaves, but also the covenantal blood of both rituals and the biological bloodlines inherited from both parents. For example, though circumcision is a tradition relating only to male Jews, the use of the determiner 'her' highlights the continued presence and importance of women and mothers as 'her son' denotes the matrilineal bloodline, while in this story it is the mother who performs the act of circumcision. As Matthew Thiessen discusses in *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (2011), Jewish self-identity, the importance of circumcision, and in particular the precise details of the ritual of circumcision itself (including when it should take place, how it should take place, and who should perform the ritual) have been heatedly debated and disputed within Judaism from ancient Judaism to the present day, where such debates continue to be considered and contested.²³² Yet, fixating upon circumcised bodies and circumcision as a ritual performed by men upon male bodies, representations of Jewish Others typically focus on the imaged Jew as male while the bodies of Jewish woman remain unmarked physically by circumcision and thus are unseen or displaced from narratives altogether.

This is the case in *Melmoth*, a novel which features a reimagined version of the Exodus passage and that centres on a Spanish crypto-Jew Solomon (who publicly professes a Christian identity while practicing his Judaism in secret for fear of anti-Jewish persecution) and his failed attempt to ritually circumcise his son. Solomon's wife and the mother of their son is absent from this narrative and the only Jewish woman present is Solomon's servant, Rebekah. Here, the ritual of circumcision appears intended to involve only father and son. Though a brief passage that spans only pages in a four-volume text, this moment dramatically stages the ritual of circumcision and the introduction of an ethnic-religious identity against the backdrop of Jewish persecution enacted by the Spanish Inquisition. Heightening the theatricality of this scene is Monçada's interruption of this ritual at the exact moment that Solomon is about to reveal to his son their secret Jewish heritage and Jewish identity that had, until this moment, been hidden from him. Genesis 17:12 outlines that boys should be circumcised when they are eight days old, and Solomon's failure in carrying out this act echoes Moses's neglect in Exodus. Yet while Moses's failure to perform this ritual is not explained in the biblical text, Solomon's delay in circumcising his son is linked to his own identity as a crypto-Jew and the historical setting of Inquisitorial Spain. In order to escape violent persecution, crypto-Jews like Solomon thus possessed two identities simultaneously: an outward, Christian identity, and a secret, or crypto, Jewish identity.

With the ritual of circumcision at its centre, this private revelatory moment of the secret Jewish identities of father and son is told through the perspective of a Catholic monk, but it reflects the anti-Catholic and antisemitic views of its author, Maturin. Adapting the Exodus story of circumcision, the depiction of this ritual in *Melmoth* is distorted:

There was a table covered with a cloth; on it were placed a vessel of a singular construction, a book, into whose pages I looked, but could not make out a single letter. I therefore wisely

²³² Matthew Thiessen, *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 4.

took it for a book of magic, and closed it with a feeling of exculpatory horror. (It happened to be a copy of the Hebrew Bible, marked with the Samaritan points). There was a knife too; and a cock was fastened to the leg of the table, whose loud crows announced his impatience of further constraint. [...] I felt that this apparatus was somewhat singular – it looked like a preparation for a sacrifice.²³³

Following the gaze of the escaped monk who observes the items on table before hiding behind a curtain to watch the unfolding scene as Solomon enters and calls for his son, the ritual of circumcision is initially reconstructed as a moment of horror. Indeed, Maturin presents the reader with a tableau that, at first glance, appears to resemble a satanic black mass or sacrifice and evokes historical stories of medieval Blood Libel such as those chronicled by Matthew Paris in his influential work *Chronica Majora* (1259). Paris was a thirteenth century Benedictine monk and historian who set out to record a universal history of the world from the Creation to his contemporary period in this work. The third volume of *Chronica Majora* includes a passage relating a version of Britain's Jewish communities that characterises Jewish practices as violent and satanic:

[T]he Jews of Lincoln stole a boy of eight years of age, whose name was Hugh [...] and summoned some of their sect from each city to be present at a sacrifice [...] the boy was subjected to divers [sic] tortures. They scourged him till the blood flowed, they crowned him with thorns, mocked him, and spat upon him. Moreover, he was pierced by each of them with a wood knife [...] After the boy expired, they took his body down from the cross and disembowelled it; for what reason we do not know, but it was asserted to be for the purpose of practicing magical operations.²³⁴

Seeming to await only the arrival of violent practitioners and their sacrificial human victim, the scene presented in *Melmoth* further engenders ideas of animal sacrifice and the violent rituals associated with medieval Blood Libel stories that I discussed in the previous chapter. The inclusion of the cockerel in Maturin's scene directly following the reference to the knife functions as a stand-in for the missing human sacrifice, and the cries of the cockerel thus seem to foreshadow those of the imagined human victim and the bloody sacrificial act. However, events do not proceed as Monçada *unwisely* 'imagined'²³⁵: it is soon revealed that this is not a depiction of an imagined satanic sacrifice, but rather preparation for the Jewish ritual of circumcision.

Monçada's initial misreading of this scene as satanic is corrected within the text through parenthetical explanations voiced by the narrator that disclose the book of magic to be, in fact, a Hebrew Bible, and similarly Solomon's own divulgence of his intentions to circumcise, not sacrifice, his son further redress this mistake. This misreading is still further corrected paratextually through a footnote that makes reference to Johannes Buxtorf, a German, Protestant Hebraist whose *De Synagoga Judaica* (1603) details the religious practices of German Jews, and also William Magee, a professor and later Archbishop of Dublin

²³³ Charles Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 245, 246.

²³⁴ Matthew Paris, *English History. From the Year 1235 to 1273*, vol. 3, trans. J. A. Giles (London: H.G. Bohn, 1854), pp. 138-139.

²³⁵ Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, p. 246.

who published *Discourse on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice* in 1801. This is not a depiction of a satanic, Jewish bogeyman, but rather a representation of Jews as racial Other, though an artificial and distorted representation nonetheless. Exposing this ritual to be Jewish, and referring the reader to two Protestant sources that detail Jewish religious practices, the ritual nonetheless still appears as violent, horrific, and un-Christian. Exodus 4:24-26 details a ritual that signifies community kinship and a covenant with God that is marked on the bodies of male Jews, but Maturin's distorted version of circumcision presents this ritual as something strange and suspect. Moreover, as the cockerel functions as a substitute for the potential human victim, the pun of 'cock' suggests both an animal sacrifice and also the un/circumcised penis: hinting at the imminent completion of the ritual of circumcision that is distressful and violent, Jewish bodies are dismembered to focus only on the un/circumcised penis. Thus, stripping away the unknown horror of circumcision when glimpsed from the outside, what remains within this passage, once the false inference of satanism is corrected, is an anxiety surrounding Jewish ritual practices and the bodies of both circumcised and uncircumcised Jewish Others. Maturin's own ambivalence is also revealed as he exposes Monçada's ignorance as superstition and bigotry, yet continues to represent Jewish Others and the ritual of circumcision with uncertainty, fear, and equivocal suspicion. Solomon laments the consequences for his son, and also himself, if the ritual is not performed, although Solomon's fears relating to the afterlife, what could happen if his son dies uncircumcised, and questions regarding his son's potential access to either salvation or God's wrath remain unanswered. In contrast, his son struggles with the revelation of his newly discovered ethnic-religious identity: he is no longer Antonio, but Antonio/Manasseh ben Solomon; he is no longer Catholic but, like his father, Catholic/Jewish. Suddenly confronted with the prospect of circumcision and a newly uncovered Jewish identity, Solomon's disclosure retroactively transforms his son's understanding of his Self and his biological, cultural, and familial heritage. For Solomon, circumcision would complete the transformation of his son into a male Jew, but for his son this transformation has already occurred whether he is circumcised or not. Presented as a moment of poignant horror, the revelation of their previously hidden ethnic-religious identity reconstitutes Solomon from a privileged Catholic into a racially persecuted Other, and as this intimate scene is interrupted by the escaped monk Monçada, so too the threat of racial persecution quickly follows.

A few pages after this revelatory scene and failed circumcision attempt, the importance of biological bloodlines to the construction of Jewish Others is also revealed. Depicting the constant surveillance and suspicion that Solomon endures as a New Christian or a crypto-Jew, biological bloodlines are exposed as a site of racial anxiety as an Inquisitor, searching Solomon's home for the escaped monk, declares to Solomon: 'We know that the black blood of Grenada flowed in the tainted veins of your ancestry, and that not more than four centuries have elapsed since your forefathers trampled on that cross before which you are now prostrate. You are an old man, Don Fernan, but not an old Christian!'"²³⁶ Playing on the historical dichotomy that existed within Spain of New and Old Christians, where new Christians or conversos are viewed with suspicion because they have only recently converted from Judaism or Islam, the Inquisitor suggests that though Solomon is a religious convert to Christianity, he is still racially Jewish and

²³⁶ Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, p. 260.

thus will always be observed by the community for his inevitable relapse and return back to his biological identity that was never fully excised. Linking Solomon to the historical Jewish community blamed by Christians for the death of the Christian Messiah, the Inquisitor emphasises the racial component of Solomon's Jewishness by highlighting his black blood and tainted veins. Such ancestral blood, the reader can discern, also flows in the veins of Solomon's son. The Inquisitor's statement employs the vocabulary of race that further reinforced exclusionary concepts as they developed under the Spanish Inquisition. David Nirenberg writes that 'words like "raza," "casta," "linaje," and even "natura" ["race", "breed", "lineage", and "nature"] were applied to converts and their descendants,' while the term 'cristiano de natura' or Natural Christian became a 'common (though by no means exclusive) term of reference for "Old Christians."²³⁷ Solomon's son remains uncircumcised in Maturin's text, yet in the eyes of the Inquisition, the blood of his Jewish ancestors condemns him anyway. When the Inquisition threatens Solomon that 'You will be conveyed to our prisons under the suspected character of a relapsed Jew. Your son will be committed to a convent, to remove him from the pestilential influence of your presence,' Solomon loses 'all self possession' and exclaims 'Oh Father Abraham, and all the holy prophets.'²³⁸ These words betray to the Inquisition Solomon's continued secret practice of Judaism, and as Solomon's external religious expression appears to confirm his ineradicable, racial identity his words thus seal not only his fate but that of his son. Monçada quickly exits this scene, and the reader is left to imagine what becomes of Solomon and his son.

Removed entirely from the polluting presence of his father, Solomon's son is nonetheless condemned because his own blood inextricably connects him to a Jewish ancestry, and he is therefore similarly perceived to be tainted and racially Other. While the distorted representation of the ritual of circumcision is depicted as a moment of horror that is violent and un-Christian, this is ultimately an enactment of an ethnic-religious Jewish identity that is perceived to be ineradicable, and the real horror of this passage is the discovery made by Solomon's son that he is not Christian, as he had believed, but racially Jewish. Marked as Other within Christian society, Solomon and his son are consequently viewed with suspicion. *Melmoth* thus portrays in fiction Heng's notion of the structural relationship that exists within societies to maintain socio-cultural order and to manage human difference. A key part of this structural relationship is community consent that ritually performs racial difference.²³⁹ Like communities of Jews in Spain, or rather communities of crypto-Jews, conversos, and New Christians, Solomon and his son are placed under constant surveillance by the Spanish Inquisition and the Catholic community of the city they reside in, a community that is familiar with fictions defining Jewish Otherness and that closely observes Solomon for signs of his Jewish alterity. Interrupting the ritual of circumcision, Monçada uses his discovery (that Solomon must be a circumcised Jew and that he is practicing and therefore spreading Judaism in secret) to his own advantage, while Solomon's lexicon exposes his secrets to the Inquisition. These outward markers and signifiers unmask what is represented as an innate, racial Jewishness, leaving Solomon and his

²³⁷ David Nirenberg, 'Was there race before modernity? The example of 'Jewish' blood in late medieval Spain', in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, eds. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 232-264 (p. 253).

²³⁸ Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, p. 261.

²³⁹ Heng, 'The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race', 336. (Original emphasis.)

son vulnerable to racial persecution. The Spanish Inquisition was not formally abolished until 1834, and the last prosecution of a crypto-Jew by this body occurred as late as 1818 with the case of Manuel Santiago Vivar, two years before the publication of *Melmoth*.²⁴⁰ Maturin's novel is one of many Gothic narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that capitalised on the terror and horror of the Inquisition, and other notable examples include Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1797). However, what is frequently omitted from these other texts is the Inquisition's original purpose: to investigate, identify, and punish heretics, and Jews or crypto-Jews in particular. This original purpose, and a *representation* of Jewish racial Otherness is depicted briefly within Maturin's novel, and I now want to turn to two earlier texts that also portray the Inquisition and racial persecution of Jewish Others.

“This house of horror”: The Spanish Inquisition and Protestant representations of Jewish Others

Anxieties and fixations upon notions of race were reflected in Britain throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Britain's Jewish communities were growing in part due to rising Jewish immigration, while political disabilities of Jews were being debated in Parliament in response to the 1753 'Jew Bill', within the popular press, and also across society; thus the *representation* of Jews as a religious and racial or ethnic-religious Other was continually brought to the fore. Haunted by the antisemitic legacies of racial persecution of Jews in the Middle Ages, and also the more contemporary persecution engendered by the Inquisition, literary narratives lack the overt and unnatural antisemitic biomarkers that emerged in medieval Europe (such as horns, tails, and the idea of Jewish male menses) but they nonetheless participate in this tradition and continue to manifest and perpetuate ideas of racial Jewish Otherness that is located in transformative rituals, physical biomarkers, and racial bloodlines. Encompassing doubts surrounding transformative rituals that mark perceived boundaries of the (Christian) Self and (Jewish) Other, while further presenting anxieties surrounding the efficacy and potential transgression of such boundaries, literary constructions distort Jewishness through a Christian perspective. Though not as well known as *Melmoth*, earlier works such as *The Inquisition* (1797) and *Nicolas Pedrosa* (1799) also use the backdrop of the Inquisition to represent Jewish difference and perpetuate imagined, artificial *representations* and Christian distortions of the Jewish Other. Reflecting Christian anxieties regarding Jews, these texts further promote Christian hegemony within the fictional spaces of their narratives through re-establishing Protestant social-cultural order and extirpating, or keeping separate, the polluted, racial Other.

While their readers were safe in their homes in Protestant Britain, newspapers, chapbooks, and Gothic novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took their readers into the dark depths of the Inquisition, as we have seen with *Melmoth*. News reports and eyewitness accounts of the real horrors of the Inquisition circulated throughout Britain, and in parallel, fictional narratives including *Melmoth* frequently conjured foreign, Catholic Others amidst an Inquisitorial backdrop. Noting the prevalence of such

²⁴⁰ Kamen, p. 379.

accounts in this period, Diane Long Hoeveler argues that representations that 'repeat recognizable and repetitious scripts' appear within dozens of Gothic novels and chapbooks including, for example, type-scenes involving the Inquisition's prisons, subterranean passageways, interrogation rooms, torture chambers, and also the corrupt, diabolical Inquisitors themselves.²⁴¹ Reflecting the historical persecution enacted by the Inquisition, publications were filled with purportedly real accounts of the suspicions afforded to those determined to be religious and racial or ethnic-religious Others, and the violent mistreatment directed towards these groups. The prominent inclusion of accounts featuring discrimination and violence directed towards Jews reveals the Inquisition's antisemitic persecution of Jews. Moreover, such accounts also function to establish a disconnection between Catholicism and Protestant Christianity: the former is portrayed as violent and barbaric towards its Jewish victims while, in contrast, the latter is presented as critical of such persecution and offers instead a Protestant, British model of tolerance and mercy. Published in 1798, *The History of the Inquisition*, for example, details the suspicion afforded to recent Jewish converts to Christianity who were believed to be 'secretly guilty of Judaism'²⁴² and who 'used secretly in their houses, the Jewish rites, and taught Christians the old law.'²⁴³ This account and other similar texts paint a picture of Catholic Spain that perpetuates persecution and views Jewishness as a crime that, once suspected, is to be investigated, and if found guilty, punished accordingly. Originating within Seville following the 1391 pogroms and mass conversion of Jews, such suspicion soon spread across Spain, and this publication notes that individuals found to be 'most guilty were burnt after long imprisonment and torture,'²⁴⁴ while the Inquisition itself is presented as a structural, and specifically Catholic response born out of petitions to Catholic monarchs: 'they earnestly besought their majesties, out of their catholic piety, to put a stop to these growing evils, lest the poisonous contagion should every day spread farther; for otherwise, unless a remedy was immediately applied, greater inconveniences would accrue to the church of God.'²⁴⁵ The first tribunal of the Inquisition took place in Seville in 1478 in order to investigate individuals suspected of secretly practicing Judaism. Documenting the continuation of this religious and racial persecution in the centuries that followed, *The History of the Inquisition* turns to the purported eye-witness account of Isaac Orobio de Castro, a Portuguese Jewish philosopher and physician who was imprisoned, tortured, and then released from the prisons of the Inquisition in the seventeenth century. In an attempt to exploit the authenticity associated with eye-witness accounts, the anonymous author of *The History of the Inquisition* writes that 'I will here give the account of his torture, as I had it from his own mouth,'²⁴⁶ although of course this 1798 publication is not itself an eye-witness account, but simply a retelling of one, and moreover a retelling recounted centuries after the original events took place. Orobio de Castro's

²⁴¹ Diane Long Hoeveler, *Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780-1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014), p. 93.

²⁴² *The History of the Inquisition* (Dublin: J. and J. Carrick, 1798), p. 5.

²⁴³ *The History of the Inquisition*, p. 4.

²⁴⁴ *The History of the Inquisition*, p. 3.

²⁴⁵ *The History of the Inquisition*, p. 4.

²⁴⁶ *The History of the Inquisition*, p. 50.

experience is mediated through the Christian perspective of this text, and his story also appeared as evidence of the Inquisition's crimes within several other publications in this period that conjured historical accounts to reinforce contemporary criticism of this religious institution. These publications includes *The book of the martyrs* (1800) that notes Orobio de Castro was imprisoned on the accusation of 'professing Judaism.'²⁴⁷ Such accounts and references to the Inquisition's antisemitic persecution uphold two ideas: the Catholic Other is responsible for violent and inhuman persecution, while the Jewish Other is the victim of this specifically *Catholic* persecution.

Mediated through Protestant authors, the propagandistic nature of these narratives is encapsulated in an 1815 article published in *La Belle Assemblée* that states, 'Surely no institution was ever more opposite to the Christian religion than that of the Inquisition.'²⁴⁸ Translated from accounts of Don Juan Antonio Llorente (a Spanish historian who was a former commissary and general secretary of the Inquisition), this article, like *The History of the Inquisition* and *The book of the martyrs*, similarly critiques the institution of the Inquisition as un-Christian in its persecution of Jews. Moreover, these accounts, presented as historical narratives that draw upon evidence and eye-witness reports, provided ample inspiration for scenes involving the Inquisition that permeated fictional narratives. We can look, for example, to Maturin's *Melmoth*, for a representation in fiction of the Inquisitorial accusation against Solomon that his Jewish blood is a 'poisonous contagion', as well as the accurate suspicion that he practices Judaism in secret. Like Orobio de Castro and other Jewish victims, Solomon is persecuted for being Jewish and later taken to the Inquisition's prisons, and while we are not told what happens to him following his arrest, the proliferation of comparable Inquisition type scenes allows the reader to imagine what Solomon's experience might be. Not every novel that features the Inquisition depicts the persecution enacted by this religious-state authority against Jews, but when such moments are incorporated into fictional narratives, Catholic characters are typically constructed as villains while Jewish characters are presented as their victims. Although constructing Jewish victims in order to demonstrate anti-Catholic prejudice, these texts also reflect Protestant anxieties surrounding Jews. Rooted in Christian anxieties, violent persecution of Jews enacted by the Catholic Inquisition and Protestant fictional constructions of this religious body reveal the ways that both Catholic and Protestant societies manage the relationship between the Christian Self and Jewish Other through perceptions of racial difference and ineradicable Jewishness. Another novel that can also be considered as part of this trend exploiting Inquisitorial narratives and type scenes is the aptly named two volume novel *The Inquisition*, which depicts violent moments of Jewish suffering within the Inquisition's prisons. Like *Melmoth*, this novel demonstrates Said's idea of artificial *representation* of Others, and the Jewish Other is presented as a victim of the Inquisition's racial persecution, but also imagined as an Other against which the tolerant, British Self is constructed. Moments representing Jewish suffering are not the primary narrative of the novel, which instead focuses on the story of its illegitimate Protestant protagonist Ophelia, but the inclusion of two Jewish characters whose torture is witnessed by Ophelia demonstrates the propagandistic nature of these depictions and the horror and spectacle of Jewish suffering.

²⁴⁷ *The book of martyrs; or, Christian martyrology* (Manchester, 1800), p. 144.

²⁴⁸ 'Annals of the Spanish Inquisition', *La Belle Assemblée*, 79 (1815), 321-323 (321).

Recounted through a third person narrative, Ophelia's story in *The Inquisition* begins with her being orphaned and then adopted by Lady Spellingbrooke. When she is old enough, Ophelia is sent to France by her guardian to be educated at a convent in Bordeaux, a decision made by Lady Spellingbrooke in part to stop the developing romance between Ophelia and Lady Spellingbrooke's son, Henry — believing their marriage to be inappropriate due to Ophelia's lower class status — but also to protect her adoptee from her libertine husband, Lord John. Thus protected, Ophelia later leaves France with her friend Eulalia to visit Eulalia's family in Spain, and here Ophelia becomes prey to Eulalia's uncle, Iago del Puzella.²⁴⁹ However, the sexual threat posed by Iago del Puzella proves to be more dangerous than that of Lord John because he is the Grand Inquisitor of the Inquisition and can therefore wield the power of this body over his victims. In the dead of night, the Inquisition arrives at Eulalia's family home to arrest Ophelia as 'an English heretick,'²⁵⁰ and despite the futile protest of her friend's family, she is taken as a prisoner into the Inquisition's 'living tomb.'²⁵¹ In the second volume of the novel, and after witnessing and experiencing some of the horrors of the Inquisition, Ophelia manages to escape and is rewarded with a happy ending as she safely returns to England and marries Henry Spellingbrooke with the blessing of his mother and her guardian. However, Ophelia continues to be haunted by the memories of what she has witnessed:

imagination's fraudulent [sic] power combined with memory suffused their light with gloom, and bade the direful Inquisition rise in all its horrid forms to her mental eye; lost in painful reveries, she thought Henry, the idolised Henry was now suffering every evil from which she had escaped; the iron coffin, and the slow consuming fire, the lacerated Jew, the dread abyss, the soul-expelling rack, the vaulted dungeon.²⁵²

Unable to escape the horrors conjured by her imagination, Ophelia is permanently affected by what she has seen, and this includes her memories of the torture of the Inquisition's Jewish victims. The inclusion of her encounters with not one but two Jewish victims, first a young Algerine Jewish boy who is condemned to be burnt alive, and then a Jew lacerated within an iron maiden, demonstrates both Ophelia's sympathy with these victims, in contrast to the cruelty of the Catholic Inquisitors, and also underscores the possible punishment she may have experienced had she not escaped. The horror of these moments is therefore not

²⁴⁹ Referencing well-known Shakespearean characters, the name 'Iago', taken from *Othello*, immediately signals the villainy and manipulation of the novel's antagonist, Iago del Puzella, while the name 'Ophelia' recalls the tragedy of Ophelia in *Hamlet*. Discussing *Hamlet*'s Ophelia, Elaine Showalter writes that the story of Shakespeare's tragic heroine is rather the 'history of her representation,' arguing that representations of Ophelia across literature, popular culture, and visual media work to liberate Ophelia from the original text and 're-appropriate her for our own ends.' ('Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism', in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, eds. Geoffrey H. Hartman and Patricia Parker (New York and London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 77-94 (p. 79). Original emphasis.) Though the Ophelia depicted within *The Inquisition* is not an explicit version of Shakespeare's heroine, we can consider her in relation to this history of representation. Shakespeare's Ophelia becomes mad as she suffers throughout the play, experiences grief as a result of her father's violent death at the hands of Hamlet (whom she is in love with), and then poignantly drowns, and the cultural mythology of Ophelia often fixates on her madness and her death. Drawing on this well-known cultural history, the spectre of madness and death haunts Ophelia throughout *The Inquisition* as she suffers and becomes a foil for the tortures of others, and this spectre heightens the terror of Ophelia's incarceration.

²⁵⁰ *The Inquisition*, (London: Vernor and Hood, 1797), vol. 1, p. 193.

²⁵¹ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 194.

²⁵² *The Inquisition*, vol. 2, pp. 159-160.

simply the Inquisition's persecution of Jews, but that this persecution could ensnare Protestant, British victims like Ophelia, and perhaps even Henry too. Indeed, in this imagined scene of horror, Henry takes the place of the Jewish victims as the torture Ophelia witnessed being carried out against them is now directed towards a Protestant, British man, and the reader can return to Ophelia's previous encounters with the Inquisition's Jewish victims to flesh out this imagined scene.

The inclusion of Ophelia's encounters with two different Jewish victims serves to unite her suffering with theirs, and further encourages the reader to share in Ophelia's sympathy for these characters. As Ophelia witnesses the interrogation of the Algerine youth, he is depicted as a 'heroic boy'²⁵³ who was as 'beautiful as the fabled Ganymede,'²⁵⁴ and who resisted submitting to the Inquisition's examination through his 'fascinating eloquence of pure simplicity and irresistible truth.'²⁵⁵ Presenting a fictional example of the Inquisition's racist pursuit of bloodlines determined to be religiously and racially polluted, the youth is tortured for information regarding his mother's secret retreat because 'the whole family were ordered to be seized by the Inquisition.'²⁵⁶ Protecting his family and refusing to answer, the youth is consequently sentenced to death:

'Away with him this instant! Our holy mother the church, by the hands of her beloved Inquisitors, doth, in mercy to the soul of so young an heretic, command that his body be burned unto ashes, so may the eternal soul be purified from its ghostly pollutions.' At these words the sable curtain was slowly withdrawn, and revealed another apartment, at the bottom of which, opposite the Judge, was a charcoal fire, on which was placed an iron coffin, large enough for the tallest man. At the sight of this dreadful apparatus of death, the strength of human nature shrunk aghast; — The youth on his knees in the piteous accents, implored their mercy, and the agitated Ophelia joined in the cry. In vain their flowing tears bathed the feet of this inhuman monster [...] Ophelia fled shrieking towards him, and would have torn him from the ruffian's grasp.²⁵⁷

In the face of the inhuman persecution enacted by the Catholic Inquisition, the cries and flowing tears of the novel's Protestant protagonist unite with those of this Jewish youth. Ophelia admires, sympathises with, and wants to save the youth from an undeserving and violent death, and his transformation through death from victim to martyr emphasises his heroism and innocence. His punishment also echoes similar accounts such as those published in *The History of the Inquisition* and *La Belle Assemblée* which state that individuals found guilty of Judaism and heresy were burnt for their crimes: 'it is best to burn them by a slow fire, in order to give them time for their conversion, and also to cut out their tongues to prevent them from

²⁵³ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 216.

²⁵⁴ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 215.

²⁵⁵ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 216.

²⁵⁶ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 216.

²⁵⁷ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, pp. 218-219.

uttering blasphemy during the time of their punishment'²⁵⁸ Underscoring the cruelty of this practice, this later account in *La Belle Assemblée* is more graphic than the scene depicted in *The Inquisition*, which leaves more to the reader's imagination. However, accounts like this together with fictional depictions in works such as *The Inquisition* represents the concept that death caused through torture and suffering was perceived to be itself a transformative ritual that purportedly, like conversion, purifies the 'ghostly pollutions' of the individual. While doubts surround the efficacy of religious conversion, whether professed or forced, death is presented as a way to permanently extirpate those who pose a danger to social-cultural order. Here such violent forced conversions form a part of the Inquisition's structural racism and demonstrates Heng's idea of race as a structural societal relationship that systemically defines and sets apart racial Others. Though in life such individuals were viewed as polluting religious or racial others, in death they are considered to have been converted to Christianity, their bodies transformed and purified into Christian bodies, and consequently their dead bodies are no longer viewed as ghostly pollutants.

Uniting the grief and suffering of the novel's Protestant protagonist and Jewish youth also unites their potential fates as the youth's punishment foreshadows Ophelia's own violent death sentence, albeit a fate that Ophelia providentially avoids. Indeed, the words of the Inquisitor condemning the Jewish youth as 'an heretic' echo the earlier accusation directed towards Ophelia during her arrest that she is 'an English heretick.'²⁵⁹ With their bodies seized by the Inquisition, Ophelia and the youth are both labelled as heretics, imprisoned, and condemned to die; and as the youth's cries are 'stopped by an infernal instrument thrust into his mouth'²⁶⁰ Ophelia shrieks for him, as if the mantle of persecution is now passed to a new victim. Thus, a cycle of persecution is presented: beginning first with suspicion and accusations of heresy or Otherness, then arrest, examination and torture, and finally culminating with death, this cycle repeatedly plays out for the Inquisition's victims for whom its fatal culmination is often inescapable. As this cycle is advanced within the novel, the scenes of persecution are presented voyeuristically, and as Ophelia watches the Jewish youth's suffering and then his death, the reader observes Ophelia's suffering and anticipates her death. However, though paralleling the youth's suffering it is notable that Ophelia in *The Inquisition* does not die, although she is traumatised by what she has seen and experienced. Sentenced to be thrown to her death in an underground chasm beneath the Inquisition, one gaoler of the Inquisition grants her the option of secretly living in the subterranean passages that lead to the abyss, and thus enables her survival until she eventually escapes to England. Thus deviating from the cycle of persecution enacted against racial Others, Ophelia emerges from the Inquisition's prisons and escapes her seemingly inevitable death.

Within a narrative that chronicles in fiction the horrors of the Inquisition, Ophelia is characterised as an English, and not a Jewish, heretic, and therefore she represents the Protestant, British Self that is pure, innocent, and deserves to be saved. In contrast, the two Jewish victims she encounters are represented as Other and function merely as examples of Catholic depravity. To this end, however, the

²⁵⁸ 'Annals of the Spanish Inquisition', *La Belle Assemblée*, 79 (1815), 321-323 (322).

²⁵⁹ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 193.

²⁶⁰ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 219.

depiction of these Jewish characters also reveals underlying Protestant anxieties towards Jews who are not afforded similar salvation in the face of Catholic persecution. Following the death of Jewish youth, Ophelia attempts to escape her incarceration that would necessarily, it appears, culminate with her death. Fleeing through subterranean passages, she is drawn towards a terrifying, deep groan in the darkness of the Inquisition's prisons, and this groan leads to her encounter with the novel's second Jewish victim:

Inclosed [sic] in a kind of iron cage, the interior of which was filled with pointed probes, that every moment lacerated the unhappy victim, whose feet were goaded by the same instruments, was fixed what had been a *man*, but was now so bloody, wounded, and scarified, that the human form was scarce distinguishable through its miseries. Already he was putrid with partial death, yet with the dread prospect of a protracted life, eagerly praying for a moment which he knew not how to accelerate.²⁶¹

In death, the youth's martyrdom illustrates the depravity of this Catholic state authority, while the foreshadowed death of this second Jewish victim demonstrates Ophelia's mercy as she is able to grant his prayer by giving him a knife and thus the means of his death. Within the novel, the bodies of the two Jewish victims are presented as objects of Ophelia's gaze: stripped of their individuality and remaining unnamed within the text, these bodies are used as part of a horrific spectacle revealing, in gory detail, the Inquisition's violence. This second victim is especially associated with death and decay through sensory details that emphasise his unpleasant smell and physical appearance, and the use of italicisation of '*man*' questions what humanity is left following the Inquisition's torture. Significantly, however, while Ophelia is afforded personhood and salvation through life and liberty away from the jurisdiction of the Inquisition, the Jewish victims are reduced to their physical bodies and parts, dismembered, and presented only with the options of violent torture or violent death.

Reduced to mere flesh and blood, the second Jewish victim reveals to Ophelia before his death that his 'enormous crime' is merely that he is 'a descendent of Abraham, of the tribe of Levi, dedicated to the Priesthood of my church.'²⁶² Emphasising his Jewishness in terms of religion and ethnicity as established by God's covenant with Abraham and the nation of Israel, this partially dead man traces his Jewish identity, bloodline, and religious heritage back to one of the twelve biblical tribes of Israel,²⁶³ and in particular to the tribe of Levi associated with priesthood and the preservation of religious practices. Racially persecuted by the Inquisition, his Jewishness is determined to be a crime: his body is used as evidence against him, and it is also his body that is physically punished through torture. With its reliance on blood-based identity, the Inquisition's persecution makes such racial or ethnic-religious identities more visible, and this depiction further represents an example of Catholic state-sponsored antisemitism that reflects antisemitic beliefs

²⁶¹ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, pp. 233-234.

²⁶² *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 234.

²⁶³ Established in the Torah, the twelve tribe of Israel denote the twelve descendants of the biblical patriarch Jacob, and who are collectively considered to form the nation of Israel. Affiliation with a specific tribe often denotes specific practices, such as the tribe of Levi's connection with priesthood. See also the 'Blessing of Moses', a prophetic poem in Deuteronomy 33:2-27 that lists the twelve tribes.

permeating wider society. Again, as with the Jewish youth, the ethnic-religious bloodline and racially Jewish identity of this individual is perceived to be a disrupting threat to Catholic social-cultural order, yet while the family of the youth is pursued by the Inquisition and the youth himself is killed, this second Jewish victim is punished with a tortuous protracted life. Thus, as Ophelia gives him the means of ending his own life, his death is represented an act of mercy. As the last drops of blood flow from the veins of this Jewish victim, he uses his last breath to declare to his Protestant rescuer: ‘May the God of our Father’s reward thee!’²⁶⁴ The last utterance of this victim also points to a kinship and closeness brought about through shared suffering and merciful responses. His corpse remains in the Inquisition, as a lifeless object that stands as testament to the Inquisition’s inhumanity, while Ophelia is eventually rewarded for her mercy by gaining her freedom and returning to England. Ophelia’s sympathy for the suffering and torture of the two Jewish victims she encounters contrasts with the violent cruelty of the Inquisitors, and as her tears and cries united with the Jewish youth, here, through the use of the collective ‘our’, the second Jewish victim professes a shared element within the Jewish and Protestant faiths that further unifies these communities in opposition to Catholicism.

Though demonstrating commonalities between Jews and Christians, *The Inquisition* ultimately maintains social hierarchies as only Ophelia, the British, Protestant victim, is saved. Though haunted by her traumatic experience within the Inquisition and the horrors she has witnessed, England is presented as ‘the unhappy’s only refuge’ and thus a safe asylum free from Catholic persecution.²⁶⁵ This construction of England as a safe asylum also appears in Richard Cumberland’s 1799 chapbook, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa, and his Escape from the Inquisition in Madrid*. As the title suggests, this text details the story of Nicolas Pedrosa, a crypto Jew living in Spain who is incarcerated within the Inquisition. However, unlike the two Jewish victims portrayed in *The Inquisition*, Pedrosa manages to escape from the Inquisition by leaving Spain and emigrating to England. Cumberland was an eighteenth-century English dramatist who found acclaim through the sympathetic characters of his plays, including Abraham Abrahams and Sheva who were influential to the development of the benevolent Jew archetype. I will discuss this archetype and Cumberland’s plays in the following chapter, but here it is worth noting that as well as being a writer, Cumberland was also a civil servant who was involved in secret negotiations with Spain during the American war of Independence. Writing in his memoirs, Cumberland observes that his commission in Spain ‘very strongly contrasted and changed the complexion of my latter days from that of the preceding ones,’²⁶⁶ and although his chapbook *Nicolas Pedrosa* is a work of fiction, he is perhaps also drawing on his own knowledge and experience of Spain in crafting this ‘History’.

The Inquisition’s persecution against Jews is a central part of Spain’s history, and Cumberland’s chapbook represents this through chronicling the history of its protagonist Pedrosa, a crypto Jew described in the opening line of this text as ‘a busy little being, who followed the trades of shaver, surgeon, and man

²⁶⁴ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 235.

²⁶⁵ *The Inquisition*, vol. 1, p. 208.

²⁶⁶ Richard Cumberland, *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland. Written by Himself*, vol. 1 (London: 1807), p. 415.

mid-wife, in the town of Madrid.²⁶⁷ We are introduced to Pedrosa during his duties as ‘man mid-wife’ as he visits a patient in childbirth, but unfortunately for our hero he is overheard en route uttering blasphemies by a group of monks; for this crime an order is given for his arrest, and he is then imprisoned in the dungeons of the Inquisition. Musing over his arrest, however, it is revealed that Pedrosa is guilty of another crime, and one worse than blasphemy: ‘He was a Jew.’²⁶⁸ Immediately, the representation of Pedrosa as a ‘man mid-wife’ appears odd and equivocal, inviting suspicions regarding his masculinity and conjuring the spectre of antisemitic traditions that feminize constructions of Jewish men. Though midwifery was still primarily viewed as a female occupation, the eighteenth century saw a rise in the professionalisation of midwifery as male midwives or accoucheurs were introduced into the field and male surgeons brought technical training and tools such as forceps.²⁶⁹ There was, however, resistance from female practitioners who viewed male-midwives as a threat to women’s modesty and labelled some as ‘boyish Pretender[s]’ who caused harm through the ‘too common use of instruments’,²⁷⁰ while other doctors further criticised the ‘new-fangled obstetric butchery lately invented’ and categorised male midwifery as an ‘indecent and effeminate employment.’²⁷¹ Pedrosa is associated with the instruments of male-midwifery as, for example, his medical forceps are discovered when he is later searched by the Inquisition, but he is not associated with the butchery these instruments evoke. Instead, Pedrosa is depicted as prioritising saving life, and not causing harm or facilitating the murder of his patients. Like male midwives working in this emerging profession, Pedrosa is pejoratively effeminized, although in a way that suggests he is not a threat to women or his patients. However, when considered alongside his Jewish identity, this lack of masculine employment invites uncertainty and suspicion surrounding the potential lack of physical masculine characteristics associated with the bodies of circumcised male Jews, such as the lack of foreskin or even the lack of the penis itself, and thus emphasises Pedrosa’s status as feminised, Jewish Other.

Occupying the border of male and female midwife, and soon identified to the reader as a crypto-Jew, suspicions hinting at his circumcised and feminised body are seemingly confirmed and the danger of Pedrosa’s imprisonment thus becomes clear. With his blasphemy declared a violation against ‘the body of God,’²⁷² the discovery of Pedrosa’s secret Jewish identity would all but seal his fate and condemn him to death because, constructed as religious and racial Others, Jews were considered by the Inquisition to be polluting entities that threatened the Catholic body politic of Spain and thus needed to be expunged. Alone in his cell, Pedrosa searches for any item on his person that might prove him guilty of the crime of being a Jew and notes with satisfaction that, along with his medial equipment, his possessions comprise only of ‘three little medals of the blessed virgin, two Agnus Deis, a saint Nicolas de Tolentino, and a formidable

²⁶⁷ Richard Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa and his Escape from the Inquisition in Madrid. A Tale* (1799), p. 1.

²⁶⁸ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 5.

²⁶⁹ See for example: Adrian Wilson, *The making of man-midwifery: childbirth in England, 1660-1770* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

²⁷⁰ Sarah Stone, *A Complete Practice of Midwifery* (London: T. Cooper, 1737), pp. vii; xiii.

²⁷¹ John Blunt, *Man-Midwifery Dissected; or, the Obstetric Family-Instructor* (London: S. W. Fores, 1793), pp. xii; 50.

²⁷² Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 3.

string of beads [...] “and let him make the most of them,” said he to himself, “they can never prove me an Israelite by a case of razors.”²⁷³ Together with professional items necessary for his trade, Pedrosa carries with him objects or props that signify a Catholic identity including rosary beads and devotional items incorporated within Catholic and not Protestant religious customs, as well as a symbol of saint Nicolas de Tolentino who was canonised by the Catholic Church in 1446. Seemingly by design, this saint is also Pedrosa’s chosen namesake (his assumed Catholic name Nicolas hiding his original Jewish name) and functions, like the other items, to link Pedrosa to an unequivocal Catholic identity that shields or displaces suspicion of his secret Jewish identity. Moreover, the possession of these items, and the comfort Pedrosa derives from them, demonstrate his awareness and preparation for the possibility that his identity could be challenged by the Inquisition, and his physical person examined. While Jewishness is not the only crime one could be found guilty of, suspicion, arrest, and examination are presented as an everyday possibility for crypto Jews living within Spain and under the Inquisition’s structural management and surveillance of perceived racial difference.

Yet, as Katz notes, there were many physical marks, pieces of evidence, and methods used by the Inquisition to identify or expose those guilty of being Jews.²⁷⁴ Foreshadowing the later moment in *Melmoth* where Maturin’s escaped monk misreads the circumcision ritual as satanic, the Inquisitors in Cumberland’s chapbook are depicted misinterpreting Pedrosa’s medical possessions as they interrogate their subject:

‘Monster,’ resumed the aforesaid puisny judge taking up the forceps, ‘what is the use of this diabolical machine?’

‘Please, your reverence,’ replied Pedrosa, ‘*apturn est ad extrabendos foetus.*’ —

‘Unnatural wretch,’ again exclaimed the judge, ‘you have murdered the mother.’²⁷⁵

Unfamiliar with the medical purpose of forceps and failing to comprehend Pedrosa’s Latin explanation, the Inquisitors turn to charges of diabolism and murder while further denouncing their prisoner with the labels ‘monster’ and ‘unnatural wretch.’ This moment echoes the tradition of medieval myths of Blood Libel and Ritual Murder where the unfamiliar practices of England’s Jewish community were misinterpreted as satanic and used as evidence or propaganda that Jews were kidnapping and murdering Christians as part of Jewish black masses. However, these erroneous conclusions are rendered absurd to the reader who may recognise Pedrosa’s Latin medical explanation, or, at the very least and with the context of Pedrosa’s identity as a midwife, would recognise the charge of murder as histrionic and misguided. Rather than committing murder or satanic acts, Pedrosa instead, through his profession, helps to deliver Catholic children and heal sick people within the community. There is, of course, another mark that would immediately reveal Pedrosa’s Jewish identity if it were discovered, although it is strangely absent from Cumberland’s text, and

²⁷³ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 5.

²⁷⁴ Katz, 451.

²⁷⁵ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 9.

that is his circumcised body. Although his own circumcision is not discussed explicitly in relation to his secret Jewish identity, Pedrosa demarcates a boundary between himself and his Catholic custodians by labelling them 'uncircumcised sons of Dagon.'²⁷⁶ Suggesting that if the Inquisitors are *uncircumcised*, he is therefore circumcised, Pedrosa's statement implicitly insinuates that his body may expose what his medical items and Catholic props do not, and thus the potential danger he faces within the Inquisition is heightened. Due to the prevalence of such Inquisition narratives, the reader would be aware of this possibility while the omission of explicit confirmation of Pedrosa's circumcision creates another mode of comparison between Catholic persecution and Protestant tolerance: whereas Catholic institutions are fixated upon the bodies of Jews to discover evidence of their guilt, in this text Pedrosa's intimate body parts remain private and unviolated.

Unusually, however, Pedrosa's interrogation is cut short when he is released by the Inquisitor General on the promise that he will help the Inquisitor General to commit murder, and ironically to murder the same woman he was accused of diabolically murdering in his examination. Pedrosa is a Jewish doctor who escapes imprisonment from the Inquisition and then leaves Spain altogether (without fulfilling his promise to commit murder), and his story thus mirrors the account of Orobio de Castro, a Jewish physician who escaped the Inquisition and whose stories is documented in several publications as I have noted. Orobio de Castro eventually settled in Amsterdam where he publicly and safely confessed his Judaism, but Pedrosa finds refuge in England following an encounter in Portugal with the British navy. Trying to evade the expansive reach of the Inquisition's persecution in Spain and Portugal, Pedrosa is afforded a 'secure asylum' on British naval ships where the captain asserts that 'whilst the British flag flies over thy head, neither Spain nor Portugal, nor Inquisitors nor devils, shall annoy thee under its protection: but if thou ever ventures over the side of this ship, and rashly settest one foot upon Catholic soil when we arrive at Lisbon, thou art a lost man.'²⁷⁷ Unlike many Inquisition narratives of this period, Cumberland's chapbook does not depict a spectacle of horror where tortured Jewish bodies are the objects of Protestant Britain's sympathetic gaze, but this scene does exploit Jewish bodies to demonstrate the villainy of Catholicism and the Inquisition in contrast to the benevolence, mercy, and protection offered by Britain. Here the naval ship can be viewed as analogous to the British state, where Jews are afforded safety and protection within the physical boundary of the ship and the British nation. Representing the British state, Pedrosa is thus granted protection and his freedom as long as he remains physically on the naval ship, while in Catholic Europe Pedrosa is vulnerable to persecution, imprisonment, and possibly torture.

²⁷⁶ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 6.

²⁷⁷ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 18.

The propagandistic import of this text centres on Cumberland's inclusion of the navy and his depiction of Britain.²⁷⁸ In the eighteenth century the Royal Navy was celebrated in Britain as a symbol of the nation's political and colonial power, its growing empire, and also its national honour.²⁷⁹ Cumberland recounts his own experience with the British navy in his *Memoirs*, noting a moment during a particularly violent storm where only 'the confidence I had reason to place in British seamen [...] stood between me and absolute despair,'²⁸⁰ and further observing that his own wife, though she was pregnant, was not afraid: 'We are in a British ship of war, manned with British seamen, and, if we are in danger, which I conclude we are, I don't doubt but they know how to carry us through it.'²⁸¹ Emulating Cumberland's British seamen, the captain and crew of the ship depicted in his chapbook stand between Pedrosa and the danger of the Inquisition. For its British crew but also for its passengers including Jewish people like Pedrosa and the Catholic prisoners later detained in Lisbon, the British naval ship thus symbolises protection, safety, and honour offered by the British nation state. Epitomising the honour and generosity of Britain, and also justifying the confidence placed in British seamen, the ship's captain offers Pedrosa protection along with a fair share of the ship's reward, while later his Catholic prisoner describes the captain as 'an honourable enemy.'²⁸²

In the British imaginary, the Inquisition is constructed as a house of horrors, while Britain emerges in these narratives as a safe asylum for Britons and Jews alike who are protected by the might of Britain's military and naval power. Closing the curtain on the history of his Spanish crypto-Jew, Cumberland concludes his chapbook with his protagonist safe on British, and not Catholic, soil:

As for little Nicolas, whose prize money has set him up in a comfortable little shop in Duke's place, where he breathes the veins and cleanses the bowels of his Israelitish brethren in a land of freedom and toleration, his merry heart is at rest, save only when with fire in his eyes and vengeance on his tongue, he anathemizes the Inquisition, and struts into the synagogue every Sabbath with as bold a step and as erect a look, as if he was himself High Priest of the Temple going to perform sacrifice upon the reassembling of the scattered tribes.²⁸³

Rescued from antisemitic persecution enacted against crypto-Jews like Pedrosa or Maturin's Solomon in Catholic Europe, Britain affords Pedrosa the freedom and tolerance to practice his Judaism openly.

²⁷⁸ Curiously, M. Rymer's 1806 novel *The Spaniard* appears to be a retelling of Cumberland's chapbook, but while there are many similarities between the texts (Rymer's protagonist, also named Pedrosa, shares the same profession as his fictional predecessor, and is also imprisoned in the Inquisition before escaping and finding refuge in a Protestant country) there are two notable differences: Rymer's protagonist is not Jewish, and he escapes the persecution of the Spanish Inquisition by immigrating to Holland, not England.

²⁷⁹ See for example: Clive Wilkinson, *The British Navy and the State in the Eighteenth Century* (Boydell Press, 2004).

²⁸⁰ Cumberland, *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, vol. 1, p. 419.

²⁸¹ Cumberland, *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, vol. 1, p. 420.

²⁸² Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 15.

²⁸³ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 24.

However, even in tolerant Britain Pedrosa still remains constructed as an ethnic-religious Other, and the depiction of Pedrosa illustrates Said's concept of imagined, artificial *representation*. Describing the construction of the Oriental Other, Said further writes that the 'Oriental is irrational, depraved, (fallen), childlike, "different": thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, "normal."' ²⁸⁴ Though not depicted as a dangerous polluting entity to be expunged from the nation state through transformation rituals such as conversion or death, actions pursued as part of the Inquisition's persecution of those deemed to be Other, Pedrosa is nonetheless portrayed as a Jewish Other who is different from the 'normal' British Self. Living amongst Britain's Jewish community in London's Jewish quarter, and participating in the religious practices of Judaism, Pedrosa is kept, to some extent, socially separate from the dominant culture of Protestant Britain. Moreover, the threat of Pedrosa's Otherness is neutralised through his continual infantilisation. Throughout the chapbook, Pedrosa is described as 'a busy little being,' ²⁸⁵ 'Little Pedrosa,' ²⁸⁶ or 'little Nicolas,' and his profession as a male midwife, too, further contributes to this infantilisation and even feminisation. The imagined threat of the male Jew is therefore not expunged, but rather nullified and disempowered through the construction of Pedrosa as different, childlike, and a feminised Jewish Other who, because he does not threaten the lives of Christians, is able to strut into his synagogue in safety due to the protection and tolerance of the Protestant, British state.

Contributing to a trend of Protestant Propaganda, *The Inquisition* and *Nicolas Pedrosa* exploit narratives of Jewish persecution in order to demonstrate the monstrous villainy of the Inquisition while concurrently presenting Protestant heroines, British naval captains, and the British nation state itself as sympathetic, tolerant, and merciful to Jewish Others. Yet this construction of tolerance also reveals Christian anxieties regarding the perception of Jews as racial Others, along with anxieties regarding the inclusion of Jews within British society. Constructions of English tolerance, sympathy and mercy — while contrasting with and denouncing the racism established by the Inquisition and the Spanish state — simply offer a different kind of society where the relationship between the (Protestant) Christian Self and Jewish Other are still managed by perceptions of racial difference rooted in Christian anxieties. The horrific death of *The Inquisition's* second Jewish victim stops the bloodline he inherited from one of the twelve tribes of Israel, while the death of the Jewish youth similarly brings an end to the biological continuation of his family, and this concern regarding racial and familial bloodlines will be discussed in more detail in the next section. Lacking moments of horror, Cumberland's chapbook ends without providing any detail regarding the familial status of Pedrosa, and instead humorously equates Pedrosa's newfound religious fervour to archaic aspirations within Judaism regarding the reassembly of the scattered tribes of Israel. Thus, omitting specific details regarding Pedrosa's presence within Britain, beyond his existence in spaces delineated as Jewish, Cumberland's readers might assume that Jewish Others pose no threat to the established hegemony of Protestant Britain. However, as novels such as *The Spanish Campaign* reveal, fictional

²⁸⁴ Said, p. 40.

²⁸⁵ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 1.

²⁸⁶ Cumberland, *The History of Nicolas Pedrosa*, p. 14.

depictions of Britain's professed tolerance manifest anxieties towards Jewish Others and Jewish bloodlines that were perceived to contaminate British social-culture order.

“A dreadful blot in our ‘scutcheon’”: *The Spanish Campaign* and representations of polluted ancestry

The nations of Spain and Britain are again used as the backdrop for the 1815 novel *The Spanish Campaign; or, The Jew*, but while the Inquisition is alluded to as part of the history of persecution relating to the eponymous Jew of the novel's title, Mr Levi, the novel's Jewish storyline primarily focuses on bloodlines, family, and community. This novel was one of about thirty written by or attributed to Mrs Meeke, whose works (which also include translations and children's fiction) were published by the Minerva Press using either the name Mrs Meeke — as *The Spanish Campaign* does — the pseudonym Gabrielli, or published anonymously.²⁸⁷ The novels published under this name are evidence that her writing career was ‘unapologetically commercial in motivation,’²⁸⁸ and the publications of Mrs Meeke span from 1795, with her novel *Count St. Blancard, or the Prejudiced Judge*, into the nineteenth century with her final novel *What Shall Be, Shall Be*, published in 1823. One early twentieth century assessment of her novels by Robert Chambers in his *Cyclopaedia of English Literature* dismisses them as ‘worthless’ texts that ‘would be forgotten but for the mention of them in *The Life of Macaulay*,’ further citing their formulaic structure as reason for this assessment: ‘According to Macauley's sister the most of them turn on the fortunes of some young man in a very low rank of life who ultimately proves to be the son of a duke.’²⁸⁹ The formulaic structure of Meeke's novels facilitates a more commercial focus, as it allows for quicker production of texts and therefore more potential income. However, *The Spanish Campaign* is notable within Meeke's oeuvre in its deviation from this identified formula, which hinges on the novel's depiction of its Jewish merchant Mr Levi, his granddaughter Victoria, and their relationship with the novel's Christian protagonist, Charles Franklin.

The Spanish Campaign follows the story of Charles Franklin, the third son of a baronet who is taken in and educated by his uncle before embarking on a career within the army to seek his fortune. Charles is caught between the wishes of his parents, who want him to become the heir to his rich but childless uncle Mr Franklin, and his own desire for independence. Questioning his uncle's morals and refusing to comply with his uncle's diktat over whom he should marry, Charles decides to leave the security of his uncle and his home nation and join the British army as a soldier. Fighting in Spain as part of the British war against France,

²⁸⁷ Identifying Mrs Meeke, Simon Macdonald rejects previous speculation that she was Mary Meeke, the obscure wife of a Staffordshire vicar, and instead convincingly argues that she was Elizabeth Meeke, the step sister of Frances Burney. That little is known about this additional Burney family novelist is, Macdonald suggests, due to an ‘overexposure of the “Mrs Meeke” brand’ (Simon Macdonald, ‘Identifying Mrs Meeke: Another Burney Family Novelist’, *The Review of English Studies*, 64.265 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 367-385 (372).)

²⁸⁸ Macdonald, 383.

²⁸⁹ Robert Chambers, *Cyclopaedia of English Literature*, vol. 3 (1903), p. 178.

Charles is praised for his heroism and bravery, and these qualities are epitomised through the prominent role he plays in liberating Victoria d'Aranza from her captors, recovering the Castle D'Aranza and her father's property from French control, and leading his regiment as they successfully capture their French opponents. Disconnected from the rank and wealth of his family, Charles possesses only his earned reputation as a soldier, and thus is of a much lower social class than Victoria who is the daughter of a wealthy Spanish duke. Nonetheless, following typical romance plot conventions, the pair fall in love. Victoria and Charles eventually decide to marry in Spain, and their marital union facilitates the rise of Charles's wealth and rank in British society later in the novel and in lieu of the conventional plot device of the hero's newly discovered wealthy and upper class relative. However, this is not a typical romance: before their marriage, Victoria reveals that there is 'a dreadful blot in our 'scutcheon, particularly in mine,'²⁹⁰ and eventually discloses that her grandfather, Mr Levi, is a crypto Jew formerly known as Mr Levingstone. Though Victoria is never explicitly characterised as Jewish within the text, the potential contamination of her bloodline through her biological connection to her Jewish grandfather engenders questions and anxieties surrounding her racial identity and Otherness. That this polluted ancestry is passed to Victoria by her mother, who is not characterised as Jewish within the text, demonstrates the importance not just of circumcision, but of bloodlines and matrilineal descent to the construction of Jewish identity. Here, and to refer again to Said's definition of the imagined construction of the Other, Jewishness is *represented* as a racial identity passed through the blood, and thus Christian marriage and Christian patrilineal descent do not, in this representation, expunge biological racial heritage. The perception of the social rank of Victoria's family, the different national or ethnic-religious identities present in her maternal family, and the difference in social status of Charles the British soldier and Victoria as both the daughter of a duke but also the granddaughter of a Jew influence anxieties regarding Victoria's bloodline within the text, and are central to the depiction of their romance, their marriage, and Victoria's untimely death.

Victoria does not immediately reveal her Jewish lineage to Charles, but rather waits until the confirmation of her father's death before disclosing her family's secret, albeit one that appears to be somewhat of an open secret within her native Spanish society. Detailing that her grandfather had kept his Jewish identity hidden from her family as well as the wider community, Victoria states that the revelation that Mr Levi was a Jew came as a shock to her parents:

My father was deeply mortified when the discovery took place; and my mother, who was dotingly fond of Mr. Levi, never recovered the shock. Fearful of being implicated in the suspicions now afloat, the duke ceased to correspond with my excellent grandfather, and has merely since heard of him through the medium of lord Melvin and Mr. Donaghue.²⁹¹

Following the public exposure of Mr Levi's Jewish identity, Victoria's father, fearful that suspicion and therefore persecution would fall upon their family as well, cut off all communication with him and kept information regarding their Jewish relation as suppressed as possible. Such behaviour suggests that

²⁹⁰ Mrs Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign; or, The Jew*, (London: J. Darling, 1815) vol. 2, p. 89.

²⁹¹ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 90.

Victoria's father the Duke d'Aranza was concerned about and afraid of consequences should he or his family be considered as Jewish themselves, or of having knowingly harboured a Jewish relative. It also reflects the Duke's own antisemitic prejudice and his professed 'insuperable aversion to a Jew.'²⁹² Moreover, while Victoria and her mother may not share his antisemitic prejudice, their silence and compliance with acts disassociating them from Mr Levi demonstrate their complicity and implicit consent. The role of the wider community in contributing to antisemitic persecution is also revealed as Charles learns, for example, that Mr Levi's Jewish identity was betrayed by the testimony of a Dominican monk:

I, wretch that I am, was once his confessor! [...] He placed utmost confidence in me, and he made it, it might have been supposed, to my interest to keep his secret; and till I was tempted by increasing avarice, to covet his possessions, I felt that I was doing right in favouring the innocent deception of such a man; but when I resolved to be a rogue, I fancied it was my duty to betray him to the Holy Office.²⁹³

Mr Levi is initially able to rely on his Catholic confessor to aid his performance as the Christian Mr Levingstone, but his safety is ultimately threatened by the financial reward offered by the Inquisition. Offering monetary incentives and promoting the religious, national, and moral duty of their citizens, the religious-state authority of the Inquisition cultivated community consent and participation by encouraging individuals to surveil and report their neighbour, friends, and family members. Mr Levi's former confessor states he was rewarded by the church 'for my zeal,'²⁹⁴ and although he subsequently declares his remorse, this does not undo the consequences of his actions that necessitate Mr Levi leaving his family and Spain in order to escape persecution.

Evoking the many deaths of Jews at the hand of the Inquisition, Victoria notes that repercussions for her grandfather could have been fatal because, 'had he fallen into the hand of the Inquisition, he would have perished in the flames.'²⁹⁵ Britain is again positioned as a safe refuge for Jewish people, and the conditional 'would' in Victoria's statement encourages a comparison between Catholic Spain and Protestant Britain regarding Jewish persecution. The pinnacle of the Inquisition's persecution was violent death, but Meeke's novel depicts other consequences of such persecution that proliferated throughout society through other means. Mr Levi evades imprisonment and death by escaping to England, but the shock caused by the sudden revelation of his Jewish identity is suggested to be the cause of his daughter's premature death: 'my mother,' Victoria recalls, 'who was dotingly fond of Mr Levi, never recovered the shock,'²⁹⁶ further elaborating that 'indeed I fear it shortened her days.'²⁹⁷ Surveillance, suspicion, and

²⁹² Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, pp. 90-91.

²⁹³ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, pp. 152-153.

²⁹⁴ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 153.

²⁹⁵ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 89.

²⁹⁶ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 90.

²⁹⁷ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 89.

indirect discrimination perpetuated throughout Spain also continue to fall upon Victoria due to her familial connection with Mr Levi. Victoria's status as a wealthy heiress should ensure her desirability in the marriage market, but as she divulges the secret of her grandfather's Jewish identity to Charles, Victoria confesses that 'I know [My father] has all along supposed it prevented my being sought in marriage by a man of equal rank.'²⁹⁸ The absence of marriage proposals solicited for Victoria thus demonstrates an anxiety surrounding Victoria herself, while the self-styled 'blot' of Jewishness present in her family's bloodline intersects with Victoria's race and class identity. Serving as a barrier to past marriage proposals, Meeke's narrative reveals Victoria's apprehension that this 'blot' could be a barrier to her potential romantic relationship with Charles as it 'reduced her almost beneath his level.'²⁹⁹ While Victoria is not explicitly identified as Jewish, her capital and desirability within the marital market along with her social status are decreased because of the perceived contamination engendered by her biological familial connections, and implicitly such family connections further threaten to contaminate her potential future children. Such insidious and covert forms of discrimination feed into more visible forms of persecution within society, sanctioning and empowering wider systems and institutions that enforce the persecution of those deemed to be racially Other. Acts such as the imprisonment and murder of Jews do not exist within society in a vacuum, but are supported by smaller acts of discrimination and imagined *representations* of uncertain, racial otherness and biologically polluted bloodlines.

Overlooked by men of equal rank in Spain, and desired by the French General Roncevalles (who is perhaps unaware of Victoria's Jewish grandfather) in order to secure the D'Aranza property and inheritance through marriage, it is Charles, the British soldier, who falls in love with Victoria and marries her 'for *better* or *worse*.'³⁰⁰ Charles epitomises British tolerance in contrast to Catholic prejudice, and his decision to marry this Spanish heiress for reasons other than his own personal gain and in spite of her uncertain race and class identity demonstrates his superiority as a marriage suitor. Highlighting this cultural difference, Victoria states that 'My father did not possess your liberality, my friend, he would have taught me to hate a *Jew* — but I felt I loved my *grandfather*.'³⁰¹ The use of italicisation here, which is frequently though not exclusively used throughout the novel to refer to Mr Levi as Jewish, visually demarcates on the page his status as different and racially Other. Participating in the cultural and literary tradition that *represents* Jews as racial Others, *The Spanish Campaign* exploits the history of violent persecution enacted by Catholic state authorities and Victoria's uncertain Jewishness to reinforce the hegemony of Protestant, British social-cultural order. Establishing a contrast between Victoria's Spanish father and her British lover reveals, on the one hand, the taught nature of antisemitic prejudice that can therefore be unlearned. But, on the other hand, this contrast also specifically associates tolerance and liberality with British nationality. While her father used Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, a play notorious for its monstrous depiction of a Jewish merchant, to foster hateful prejudice against her grandfather, Charles turns to a different literary example to

²⁹⁸ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 89.

²⁹⁹ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 65.

³⁰⁰ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 71.

³⁰¹ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 92.

characterise Mr Levi: Cumberland's Sheva, a Jewish character appearing in his 1794 play *The Jew*. Diverging from the duke's use of Shakespeare's play as a teaching tool for hate, Charles states his belief that Mr Levi is 'The very one, by your account, who sat for Cumberland's masterly portrait of the benevolent Israelite — *he was the Jew of Cadiz*.'³⁰² Cumberland's play contributes to a trend of sympathy and tolerance in which Christian authors attempt to exorcise the monstrousness of Shakespeare's characters, as I will discuss in more detail in the following chapter. Using Cumberland's Sheva as an example of Jewish benevolence, Charles also advances this association beyond mere resemblance by linking the fictional Sheva to Victoria's own grandfather. Encouraged by the tolerance displayed by her British suitor, Victoria is free to express her own love for her grandfather in direct contradiction of her father's instruction and further acknowledges that her own mother was English. Biologically connected to a bloodline that is considered to be polluted and racially contaminated, Victoria is concurrently associated with a British lineage and a nationality that embodies tolerance rather than racial persecution, although her British heritage does not fully expunge Victoria's perceived Jewishness.

The marriage between Charles and Victoria marks the culmination of Meeke's representation of British tolerance depicted within *The Spanish Campaign*. Yet, enduring under the surface of this tolerance, and exemplified through the initial secrecy surrounding their marriage, is an anxiety surrounding Victoria's racial identity, an anxiety regarding the uncertain efficacy of marriage as a transformative ritual, and therefore an anxiety regarding the potential biological contamination of Charles's bloodline through their future children. Nirenberg argues that 'All racisms are attempts to ground discriminations, whether social, economic, or religious, in biology and reproduction,'³⁰³ and this biological, reproductive racism is the unspoken legacy of Charles and Victoria's marriage that requires Victoria's death. Not long after their marriage, Victoria is killed in a bizarre coach accident:

The shock proved fatal, as she never spoke again; indeed, owing to her position, her death was instantaneous [...] [Charles] stood silently gazing upon the lifeless form, and there was a mournful eloquence in his speechless grief [...] all secrecy was now at an end, and every soldier participated in their commander's sorrow.³⁰⁴

Victoria is not killed at the hands of the Inquisition, or as a result of state-authorised persecution, but the result is the same: her existence as a polluting entity is extirpated, and her contaminated bloodline unable to continue flowing in the veins of the children that she will now never have. As a transformative ritual, marriage legally binds individuals together in kinship and community, but for Victoria it is only in death that she is truly transformed into Charles's wife and their marriage publicly acknowledged. Though marriage, like baptism and circumcision, is viewed as a transformative ritual that reconstitutes an individual's body into a

³⁰² Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 98.

³⁰³ David Nirenberg, 'Was there race before modernity? The example of 'Jewish' blood in late medieval Spain' in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, Eds. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 232-264 (p. 235).

³⁰⁴ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 125.

new religious community and identity, ultimately there remains an anxiety regarding the efficacy of such transformative rituals to truly expunge bloodlines perceived to be racially polluted, and to convert absolutely bodies considered to be racially Other. Just as in the Middle Ages the efficacy of baptismal water was questioned in regards to expunging Jewishness, as Solomon's son in *Melmoth* is removed from his father's 'pestilential influence' and immured within a convent, and as the two Jewish victims in *The Inquisition* are killed, here Victoria's death reveals the idea that racial difference cannot be expunged, and this idea is at the heart of biological, reproductive racism. Jewishness is therefore constructed as ineradicable, and though Victoria is transformed into a Christian wife, her marriage does not convert her biological Jewishness that manifests in her blood. As I will discuss in the next chapter, many authors in this period manifest this anxiety through the representation of 'almost marriages' where the romantic union of a Jewish woman (or a woman connected to a Jewish ancestry) and her Christian suitor is never realised within the text. However, in Meeke's novel, while such a marriage does take place in order to demonstrate Charles's tolerance, Victoria, inevitably, must die in order to put an end to her racially Jewish bloodline.

Following Victoria's death, Charles and the narrative return to England. In contrast to the persecution enacted within Spain by the Inquisition, England is presented as tolerant and a safe asylum for Jews, but Victoria, and the *representation* of her family's Jewishness, continues to haunt the narrative. Though in part arising from a desire to adhere to appropriate social conventions respecting the very recent death of Victoria's father, the secrecy surrounding their marriage functions in a similar way to the duke's attempts to conceal the 'blot' in his family in that it hides Charles's connection with Victoria, her family, and thus also to Mr Levi and her Jewish heritage. Learning of his estranged nephew's marriage along with the vague account of the bride's untimely death, Mr Franklin encounters Mr Levi in London and discovers the familial connection between his nephew's now deceased wife and his own professional rival: 'Your granddaughter! What! Was she a Jew? [...] I suppose the mother turned Catholic when she married.'³⁰⁵ Mr Franklin's shock at learning of Victoria's Jewish identity betrays an aversion to inter-faith, or rather inter-racial marriage between Christians and Jews. This shock soon transforms into an uneasy relief that Victoria is not, in fact Jewish, as Mr Levi asserts that neither his daughter nor his granddaughter shared his faith, but the speculative 'I suppose' reveals a lingering uncertainty. Victoria and her mother may not share Mr Levi's faith, but perhaps they do share his ethnic-religious lineage. Moreover, while the Catholic marriage of Victoria's mother, and then the Christian marriage between Victoria and Charles may, on the surface, alleviate doubts regarding Victoria's Jewishness, Mr Franklin's statement suggests that suppositions and assumptions regarding her ethnic-religious bloodline and Jewish ancestry will leave room for doubts to resurface, no matter what Mr Levi may say to the contrary. Similar prejudices are echoed by Charles's family as they consider his marriage in terms of his social and financial capital. His brother Sir George Franklin declares that 'certainly his late marriage was both imprudent and impolitic; but he will be the sufferer,'³⁰⁶ while his mother and sister agree that 'His romantic marriage was another proof of his folly, though they

³⁰⁵ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 143.

³⁰⁶ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 154.

were both very anxious to learn whether he had been a real gainer by that connexion.'³⁰⁷ Charles does not share his family's prejudices, nor does he rejoice in his wife's death like his uncle, but nevertheless he benefits from this bereavement. As a result of his marriage, and in particular the death of his wife that followed soon after their marital union, Charles is depicted as a 'gainer' financially and socially, inheriting not only Victoria's wealth (which includes the estate of the Duke d'Aranza) but also the assurance that he will assume the place of Victoria as her grandfather's heir. This inherited wealth serves to alleviate some of the censure Charles faces for his imprudent marriage, along with improving his own social connections and his status in British society, with the implication being that without these advantages Charles's societal status would have suffered as a direct consequence of his marriage. Thus, while Charles and Victoria's marriage demonstrates British tolerance, conversely Victoria's death and the societal response to these events exposes British racism that 'had more reason to rejoice than to grieve at her death.'³⁰⁸

Victoria's death further demarcates a boundary between Charles and his his 'Jew relative[s]' that serves to preserve the perceived racial purity of Charles and England.³⁰⁹ Though castigated for his marriage, Charles escapes anti-Jewish discrimination because the transformative ritual of his marriage did not, in fact, transform his own religious or racial identity. Patriarchal assumptions of marital transformation typically focus on the transformation of the wife into the family and religious community of her husband, and thus Charles's connection to Mr Levi, Victoria's grandfather who has now become his '*Jew Grandfather*,'³¹⁰ is one of marriage not biology. Moreover, because of Victoria's death, their marriage resulted in no children and Charles's bloodline consequently remains unpolluted from the self-described 'blot' present in Victoria's biological ancestry. In a similar vein, any potential threat perceived to derive from Mr Levi's Jewish identity and bloodline is abrogated through his decision to make Charles, the British soldier, his heir, as well as the death of Victoria, his sole remaining blood relative. As a grandfather and not, like Charles, a young man just starting his family, Mr Levi manifests the qualities of his false Christian name and functions within the text like a 'living stone' whose biological bloodline ends with his granddaughter. Removing the disruptive biological threat arising from Victoria and Mr Levi through their construction as polluting entities, the social-cultural order of Protestant Britain is restored through the novel's conclusion and Charles's second marriage to a woman with no blots in her lineage. Victoria's body is not marked with biomarkers that unequivocally establish her Jewish identity, nor is she explicitly constructed as Jewish within the text like her grandfather, but her construction reveals that intrinsic markers such as biological bloodlines and ancestry are fundamental to the fictional construction of Jews, and particularly Jewish women, as racially Other. The structure of Meeke's narrative emulates the societal structures and hegemony of Protestant, Britain where, as Francesca Matteoni writes, 'society is mirrored in the body and it must, therefore, be kept closed — that is, safe from external influences and attacks — just as life must be kept strictly detached from any source of

³⁰⁷ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 3, p. 89.

³⁰⁸ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 142.

³⁰⁹ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 3, pp. 47-48.

³¹⁰ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 3, p. 49. Original emphasis.

death, in order to be preserved.³¹¹ Charles's marriage with Victoria, the granddaughter of a Jewish merchant, along with his relationship with Mr Levi are accepted because the potential biological threat posed by such connections is extirpated with Victoria's death, their childless marriage, and Charles's subsequent marriage to Lady Susan Delaney. Charles's second marriage thus accomplishes what his first cannot: the preservation of British societal order. The institution of marriage is a central link within society that marks shared bonds of community, kinship, and family, particularly through the heteronormative convention that marriage will cultivate future generations through biological descendants. This possibility is denied to Victoria, but not to Charles and Lady Susan whose marital union functions to preserve British hegemony, and to keep British society and the bodies of their future children separate and closed off to the external contamination of a bloodline determined to be impure and racially Other.

Events within the narrative, including Victoria's liberation, her marriage, and her death, are presented as providential ('Providence orders things for the best'³¹²) and heavenly sanctioned ('he [the duke d'Aranza] fell upon his knees, to return thanks to Heaven for his daughter's safety'³¹³), and significantly this divine order and protection is associated with Charles: 'most grateful, therefore, did she [Victoria] feel towards heaven and our hero.'³¹⁴ Like *The Inquisition* and Cumberland's *Nicolas Pedrosa*, Meeke's *Spanish Campaign* can be viewed as part of a literary trend of Protestant propaganda. Promoting tolerance while criticising the violent antisemitic persecution enacted in Catholic Spain, ultimately Meeke's narrative preserves and endorses Protestant, British hegemony. Depictions of antisemitic racism perpetuated by the Inquisition forms an integral part of this literary trend, but although the Inquisition continued to be placed centre stage in novels such as *Melmoth* — where the horrors of the Inquisition are interwoven with Maturin's story of crypto Jews — this was not always the case for texts representing racial, Jewish Otherness. The Inquisition does not feature prominently in *The Surgeon's Daughter*, for example, but nonetheless Scott's novella explores Christian anxieties surrounding the Jewish Other through the construction of its protagonist, Richard Middlemas, and his converted Jewish mother, Zilia Monçada, later Mrs Witherington. Thus emulating the *representation* of racial Otherness in *The Spanish Campaign*, the construction of Jewish Others in Scott's novella does not focus on the body of the imagined male Jew and the circumcised penis, but rather depicts Jewishness as uncertain, located in biological ancestry, and unerasable.

“Oh, child of my sorrow!”: *The Surgeon's Daughter* and representations of uncertain Otherness

³¹¹ Matteoni, 183.

³¹² Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 3, p. 49.

³¹³ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 53.

³¹⁴ Meeke, *The Spanish Campaign*, vol. 2, p. 55.

Integral to the creation of the historical novel genre, Walter Scott is perhaps best known today for *Ivanhoe*, his 1819 chivalric romance set in twelfth century England, along with his acclaimed portrayal of Rebecca who is the daughter of the novel's Jewish moneylender. I will discuss *Ivanhoe* in the following chapter, but it is worth noting that this is not the only one of Scott's novels to prominently feature Jewish characters, and in the final section of this chapter I will consider his 1827 novella *The Surgeon's Daughter*. Published as part of the first of two series in Scott's *Chronicles of the Canongate* collection — a collection of shorter fictional works published primarily as a result of Scott's financial ruin in 1826 — *The Surgeon's Daughter* was initially conceived by Scott as 'a small Eastern Tale.'³¹⁵ This novella chronicles the life of Richard Middlemas from his scandalous birth in Scotland to his violent death in India. Richard is the illegitimate son of Zilia Monçada and her Catholic lover Richard Tresham, and the novella begins as a pregnant Zilia and her lover seek assistance at the door of Doctor Gray, a Presbyterian doctor in Scotland, as they are pursued across Britain by her father. Richard Tresham quickly flees after the birth of his son so as to avoid being arrested, while Zilia's father Matthias de Monçada arrives in the company of a king's messenger, and with a warrant for the arrest of Zilia and her lover. Mr Monçada returns to England with his daughter, leaving her newborn child in the care of Doctor Gray and with the assurance that Mr Monçada will 'pay for whatever the wretched child may require.'³¹⁶ Relinquished by his mother, forsaken by his father, and disowned by his grandfather who offers only monetary provision in place of familial love and support, Richard is raised by his adoptive father, Doctor Gray, but as a child, Richard's nurse fills his imagination with romantic stories about his father the soldier and his rich, merchant grandfather: 'Methinks I have a natural turn for India, and so I ought. My father was a soldier, by the conjecture of all who saw him, and gave me a love of the sword, and an arm to use one. My mother's father was a rich trafficker, who loved wealth, I warrant me, and knew how to get it.'³¹⁷ Richard never lets go of his feelings of familial abandonment or his wish to reconcile with his biological roots, and although he is trained in the medical profession by Doctor Gray, as an adult Richard chooses to leave Scotland and join the army instead, before seeking his fortune in India. Pursuing his biological ancestry and claiming an inherited affinity or natural turn for his pursuits, Richard's story concludes in India: disconnected from his biological and adoptive family, he finds not wealth or loving parents, but death.

While Richard imagines tales of riches and adventure tied to his ancestry, Scott's 'Eastern Tale' is a story that imagines Jewish Otherness. Born of a Jewish mother and a Catholic father, with ties to the nations of England and Catholic Europe, and raised by a Presbyterian doctor in Scotland, Richard's identity is presented as ambiguous and uncertain, and while the question of his identity is never answered within the text, this uncertainty functions to emphasise his Otherness in terms of race. Edgar Rosenberg characterises Richard as a 'dark Israelite' who is 'like a male counterpart to the exotic Jewess,'³¹⁸ and throughout the novella Richard is frequently associated with his Jewish mother and grandfather particularly through

³¹⁵ Anthony Jarrells, "'Associations Respect[ing] the Past': Enlightenment and Romantic Historicism", in *A Concise Companion to the Romantic Age*, ed. Jon Klancher (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 57-76 (p. 68).

³¹⁶ Walter Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, The Melrose Edition (Edinburgh: T. C. & E. C. Jack, undated). p. 16.

³¹⁷ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 35.

³¹⁸ Edgar Rosenberg, *From Shylock to Svengali: Jewish Stereotypes in English Fiction* (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1961) p. 105.

descriptions of their physical characteristics and traits. In order to decipher the ambiguous construction of Richard, it will therefore be helpful to first examine the construction of Zilia and Mr Monçada. Indeed, the entrance of Zilia into the narrative and also into Doctor Gray's home presents her identity as a puzzle to be solved. Zilia is pregnant but wears no marriage ring. She is introduced as being 'of rank' and a 'foreigner,'³¹⁹ but though she speaks Portuguese, Spanish, and imperfect French, Zilia 'cannot speak a word like a Christian being.'³²⁰ Moreover, while her lover is a Catholic, she spurns the attentions and consolations of a Catholic priest to the evident displeasure of this priest. These ambiguous details are presented to the reader as clues, and Doctor Gray deciphers the mystery: 'Our Doctor began at length to suspect his fair guest was a Jewess, who had yielded up her person and affections to one of a different religion.'³²¹ Zilia cannot speak a word like a Christian being because she is not Christian herself. The languages that she speaks reveal her foreign, non-English identity, but the ambiguous, mysterious sentences Zilia murmurs to her newborn child, the 'very sound and accents of which were strange'³²² to Doctor Gray, further heightens suspicion surrounding her ethnic-religious identity. Like Pedrosa's use of Latin to describe medical procedures that is misinterpreted as murderous and threatening, and also the Hebrew Bible in *Melmoth* misread as a magic book, such strange words and accents emphasise Zilia's otherness. Though these unnamed strange sounds and accents are never identified in the text, we can consider them as perhaps being Hebrew, a language that would have been strange and undecipherable to the ears of a Presbyterian Scottish Doctor, and thus would be an ideal vernacular for an intimate, private moment of familial bonding between a Jewish mother and her son. Doctor Gray reinforces his deduction that Zilia is Jewish with reference to her physiognomy and the 'peculiar stye of her beautiful countenance.'³²³ While Zilia is frequently depicted as fair throughout the novella,³²⁴ her racial identity is nonetheless tied to a 'peculiar' physicality. The question of Zilia's identity is therefore tied to her *representation* as an ethnic-religious Other, and in particular a constructed brand of exotic and Jewish Otherness.

The representation of Zilia draws on what Said describes as the 'cultural discourse and exchange within a culture' that circulates not 'truth' but 'representations.'³²⁵ Within the tradition of Christian constructions of Jewishness, this cultural exchange emphasises the racial alterity of both Jewish men and women, but as Nadia Valman highlights, while 'the body of the male Jew is 'indelibly marked by the sign of his religious or racial difference, the body of the Jewess is unreadable.'³²⁶ Though I would not suggest that

³¹⁹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 5.

³²⁰ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 6.

³²¹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 10.

³²² Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 9.

³²³ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 10.

³²⁴ As well as being described by Doctor Gray as 'his fair guest' (p. 10), Richard's nurse describes Zilia to him and emphasises 'the fairness of her skin' (p. 23), and Zilia is later portrayed as being 'beautiful as an angel' (p. 83).

³²⁵ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 21.

³²⁶ Nadia Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 3.

the body of the Jewess is constructed as unreadable, I agree that there is a difference in representation: where the bodies of male Jews are explicitly and physically marked as other in the flesh, the Otherness of Jewish women is represented as more implicit, intrinsic, and uncertain. However, in this uncertainty is an anxiety regarding the unerasability of racial bloodlines and Jewishness that, though different, is similar to the anxiety surrounding the physical, and at times ambiguous and feminized, construction of Jewish men. Drawing on a range of established antisemitic tropes enduring within the cultural exchange of *representing* Jewish Otherness in history, culture, and fiction, *The Surgeon's Daughter* manifests both traditions of constructed Jewishness through its depiction of Richard's mother and grandfather, and also Richard himself.

While Zilia's Jewishness is ambiguous and not immediately identifiable, the Otherness of Mr Monçada is established through descriptions of his physical features. Though he lacks the stereotypical 'lang beard'³²⁷ often associated with Jewish characters within literature, and a discussion of whether or not he is circumcised is omitted (possibly due to the brevity of his appearance in the novella) Mr Monçada appears as a 'dark featured elderly man, with an eye of much sharpness and severity of expression,'³²⁸ and who 'seemed as if he would willingly have thrown the power of the fabled basilisk' into his scowl.³²⁹ Once again, the reader is presented with clues surrounding the identity of an ambiguous Other, and once again it is Doctor Gray who deciphers the mystery and concludes 'that both the father and daughter are one of the Jewish persuasion.'³³⁰ Yet, differing from the construction of Zilia, the depiction of Mr Monçada is rooted in racist biomarkers; his identity physically marked into his body, or at least the perception of his body as constructed through the perspectives of the Christian Doctor Gray and the novella's narrator. Mr Monçada's dark features suggest a foreign, non-white identity. The name 'Monçada' is also distinctly European in its origin and echoes the name of Maturin's Spanish monk Alonzo Monçada from his novel *Melmoth the Wanderer* published a few years before *The Surgeon's Daughter*.³³¹ Although Maturin's monk is Catholic and not Jewish, Scott's re-use of this name is notable, and its appearance serves to heighten the ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding the racial identity of Mr Monçada and his daughter. We later learn that Zilia's father is a wealthy Portuguese Jew who had immigrated to London, and this account mirrors the reality of many Sephardi Jews who fled antisemitic persecution in Spain and Portugal for safety in Britain. This enables an ambiguity surrounding Mr Monçada when he is first introduced: he may be Catholic, and Spanish or Portuguese, or he may be a different kind of foreign, racial Other. Scott also resurrects historical antisemitic tropes that align Jewish Others with the monstrous through physical associations. Describing Mr Monçada's basilisk-like stare, a comparison further underscored through the sharpness and severity of his expression, Scott draws on a distinctly antisemitic trope associating Jews with basilisks that developed as

³²⁷ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 18.

³²⁸ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 11.

³²⁹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 14.

³³⁰ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 14.

³³¹ Scott and Maturin mutually admired each other's work and the pair frequently corresponded through letters, and so Scott may have been inspired by Maturin's use of the name Monçada, or it may be an intentional allusion to *Melmoth*. See: *The Correspondence of Sir Walter Scott and Charles Robert Maturin*, eds. Fannie E. Ratchford, William H. McCarthy, Jr (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2018).

part of Christian antisemitism. For example, identifying this trope as a medieval legend, Martin Luther writes in his 1543 antisemitic and anti-Judaic treatise *The Jews and Their Lies* that 'Wherever you see or hear a Jew teaching, do not think otherwise than that you are hearing a poisonous Basiliskus who with his face poisons and kills people,'³³² while earlier the twelfth century Benedictine monk Peter the venerable established this association as he wrote 'You [Jews] hatch basilisks' eggs, which infect you with the mortal poison of ungodliness.'³³³ Mr Monçada is not represented as supernaturally monstrous, but in referencing, through simile, this historical antisemitic trope alongside other antisemitic biomarkers, his depiction exploits the cultural exchange of constructed Jewishness and racial alterity that promotes not truth, but a *representation* of dangerous Otherness. Recognising these clues, the perceptive reader would suspect, like Doctor Grey, that Mr Monçada is Jewish, but also that this ethnic-religious identity is potentially threatening.

In contrast, no authoritative declarations are offered within the text with regards to the racial or ethnic-religious identity of Richard, and his identity is left ambiguous and uncertain. However, questions relating to his identity are implicit throughout the narrative, while many clues or characteristics of his uncertain Otherness are highlighted, thus inviting the reader to solve this puzzle. This uncertainty and questioning of Richard's identity is exemplified in a series of events that lead to the brief reunion of the absent parents with the now adult son they had abandoned in Scotland as a baby, before culminating with the sudden and dramatic death of Zilia. Conversing with Richard's father, formerly Richard Tresham but who is now known as General Witherington, Richard's friend Hartley describes the abandoned son turned soldier, unknowingly but with suspicion, to an eager father, remarking that Richard's complexion is 'Rather uncommonly dark [...] darker, if I may use the freedom, than your Excellency's.'³³⁴ Associated with a foreign, and non-white Otherness, the use of the comparative 'darker' emphasises the ambiguity of Richard's racial identity that is not simply located in his Catholic patrilineal genealogy. Richard is physically dark like his Catholic father, but he is also dark like his Jewish grandfather, and the use of 'darker' encourages a stronger emphasis on Richard's racial Otherness. Moreover, while Zilia is typically described as fair (which can also simply mean beautiful), there is one moment in the novella in which she is depicted as dark and that is in relation to her son who is 'dark like his father and mother, with high features, beautifully formed, but exhibiting something of a foreign character.'³³⁵ Highlighting Richard's dark and unusual, or uncommon, physical features, this description suggests an exotic aspect to his Otherness and further creates an affinity between Richard and his Jewish lineage. Later in the novella, as he assumes the character of a Black servant in India, Richard is depicted as 'the seeming black,'³³⁶ and although he is never described as Black within the text, the ease with which he assumes, performs, and passes as a Black character again intimates Richard's

³³² Martin Luther, *The Jews and Their Lies*, trans. (Los Angeles: Christian Nationalist Crusade, 1948), p. 22.

³³³ Peter the Venerable, quoted in: *Dictionary of Antisemitism from the Earliest Times to the Present*, eds. Robert Michael and Philip Rosen (Maryland: The Scarecrow press, 2007), pp. 48-49.

³³⁴ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 71.

³³⁵ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 32.

³³⁶ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 106.

racial Otherness. Richard is not Black, but nor is he constructed as white, and instead, Richard's body is indelibly marked by this uncertain and ambiguous racial difference that ties him to his Jewish mother and grandfather. Self-identifying with both his biological father and grandfather in his pursuit of adventure and wealth in India, if we return to Richard's reunion with his parents it is notable that in the moments following his mother's death Richard also draws upon the same trope used earlier in the narrative to describe his grandfather as he states that 'No wonder that my look was that of a basilisk.'³³⁷ Finally reunited with his parents, although he is unaware of their true identities until after Zilia's death, Richard's accusations of child abandonment are quickly followed by the dramatic death of his mother and accusations from General Witherington to his son that 'thy ill-omened presence has now brought death itself.'³³⁸ If looks could kill, and if there were any truth behind the antisemitic trope of the basilisk, Zilia surely would have been killed by Mr Monçada long ago as punishment for her original transgression, but there is, of course, no truth underpinning this trope. Richard is not responsible for his mother's death, and the Jewish people do not possess the deadly and poisonous gaze of the basilisk. It is nonetheless significant that here, albeit with an undertone of bitter irony, Richard turns to this representation established within the cultural discourse of constructed Jewishness to frame his supposed crime, and also his identity. Abandoned by his parents, rejected by his grandfather, and now emphatically forsaken by his father who blames him for Zilia's death, Richard acknowledges his connection to a potentially dangerous Jewish ancestry, and this trope functions as another clue demonstrating Richard's status as racial Other.

Boundaries of identity demarcating the Self and the Other are often established through transformative rituals such as baptism, conversion, circumcision, or marriage. We are told that Richard is christened in a Catholic ritual performed at the insistence of his Catholic father, but here the narrative appears deliberately vague. Though constructed through a third person narrative, Scott's novella is initially focalised through the perspective of Doctor Gray, and then later through the perspective of Richard's friend Hartley whose story converges with Richard's reunion with his parents and then his ventures in India. This establishes a Christian perspective throughout the text, and also frames the story and constructs characters such as Zilia and Richard through a Christian gaze. As a Presbyterian, Doctor Gray responds to Tresham's desire to christen his son by stating 'I do not desire to be thought an abettor or countenancer of any part of the Popish ritual,'³³⁹ and the narrator follows this declaration with an ambiguous account of this transformative ritual: 'it may be presumed that the solemnity of baptism was administered to the unconscious being, thus strangely launched upon the world.'³⁴⁰ The performance of the Catholic baptismal rite is shrouded in secrecy, leaving Doctor Gray, the narrator, and the reader in ignorance as to how it was performed or even whether it was performed at all. The ambiguity of 'it may be presumed' leaves room for doubt regarding the fulfilment, but also the efficacy, of this transformative ritual, and as a result invites further questions in relation to Richard's strange and uncertain identity, particularly as he is never

³³⁷ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 81.

³³⁸ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 77.

³³⁹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 7.

³⁴⁰ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 7.

characterised as a Catholic within the text following this ritual. In other words, Richard cannot be viewed as a Christian Self like Doctor Gray and Hartley, but rather he is an ambiguous Other, and Richard's Jewish lineage traced through his maternal line further promotes questions surrounding his identity and Otherness.

Richard is not a circumcised male Jew, but the construction of Jewishness as an ethnic-religious identity, together with the uncertainty and anxiety surrounding transformative rituals such as a baptism, allows for Richard's potential Jewish identity to occupy the space created by the doubt of his Catholic baptism. Jewish women play a key role in continuing and passing on ethnic-religious identity and community ties to their children, and it is Richard's connection to his mother that further augments the doubts surrounding his own identity. Zilia apparently does not advocate for her son to be circumcised, but she does bequeath to him, through Doctor Gray, a ring that functions as an external signifier of his ties to his maternal Jewish ancestry and as a symbol of his own identity and genealogy: 'This valuable ring was forced upon me by your unfortunate mother. I have no right to it.'³⁴¹ Identified as a 'precious relic,'³⁴² Doctor Gray gives Zilia's ring to Richard as 'his mother's last gift,'³⁴³ and this ring later forms part of Hartley's 'little experiment'³⁴⁴ through which he confirms that General and Mrs Witherington are in fact the former Richard Tresham and Zilia Monçada, and therefore also Richard's parents.³⁴⁵ Discussing the significance of rings within *The Merchant of Venice* — and particularly Leah's turquoise, a ring stolen from Shylock by his daughter Jessica that previously belonged to her mother, Leah — Greenstadt draws parallels between the mark of circumcision and familial rings as symbols of belonging: 'the sign of circumcision is also a cipher — both an inscrutable code and, graphically, a ring, a zero. Although the mark is made as part of a naming ceremony (the *brit milah*), it does not signify the boy's name, nor does it carry the mystery of god's unpronounceable one. Instead, it is a sign of belonging, but one whose meaning is constantly open to interpretation.'³⁴⁶ While Richard's parentage is obscure and mysterious to him for much of his childhood, Zilia's ring, passed from mother to son, functions as a substitute for the circumcision cut that marks Richard as belonging to his maternal, Jewish family. Moreover, and again in a similar way to the circumcision cut, Zilia's ring also marks Richard as Other. This ring exemplifies Richard's lack of belonging within Scotland, to Doctor Gray's family, and also within Christian Britain because it symbolically manifests his biological and ethnic-religious ties that exist elsewhere. Like the circumcision cut that reveals a Jewish identity when it is discovered, this ring reveals Richard's identity to his parents, while in the moment of discovery it also embodies his own intrinsic and uncertain Otherness.

³⁴¹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 53.

³⁴² Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 53.

³⁴³ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 61.

³⁴⁴ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 72.

³⁴⁵ This trope in which an object such as a ring or a portrait is used to reveal parentage is often employed in the novels of this period, and particularly within Gothic novels such as Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian* where a locket is used to identify and unite the novel's heroine Ellena with her mother.

³⁴⁶ Greenstadt, 972.

Sparked by Hartley's experiment with Zilia's ring, this moment of discovery is tied to Richard's own self-identification, but also to his mother's identity; both of which are constantly open to interpretation. Richard meets Zilia as an adult when Hartley facilitates his introduction to Mrs Witherington: a Christian convert, wife of General Witherington, and a mother grieving the recent death of one of her three young children. After her death, he learns of Mrs Witherington's true identity and is later given a letter written from mother to son before their reunion:

'Oh, Benoni! Oh, child of my sorrow! [...] why should the eyes of thy unhappy mother be about to obtain permission to look on thee, since her arms were denied the right to fold thee to her bosom? May the God of Jews and of Gentiles watch over thee, and guard thee! May He remove, in His good time, the darkness which rolls between me and the beloved of my heart — the first fruit of my unhappy, nay, unhallowed affection. Do not — do not, my beloved! — think thyself a lonely exile, while thy mother's prayers arise for thee at sunrise and at sunset, to call down every blessing on thy head — to invoke every power in thy protection and defence. [...] Oh, child of my sorrow! Oh, Benoni! let thy spirit be with mine, as mine is with thee.' Z. M.³⁴⁷

Speaking from beyond the grave, in this letter Zilia asserts her identity as Richard's mother; she professes her love for her son and the guilt she feels because she abandoned him; and she testifies to their intrinsic and lasting connection. Though dead, Zilia's spirit lives on in her written word and also within her son Richard whom she establishes as the child of her sorrow, and repeatedly referring to her son as 'Benoni' ties mother and son together through a reference to a story of childbirth and death in the Hebrew Bible. Chronicling the story of Jacob, one of the three biblical patriarchs, Genesis 35: 16-18 details the tragedy of his wife Rachel who dies in childbirth to their only son Benjamin: 'And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni' (Gen. 35: 18). Signifying 'son of my pain', Benoni is an intimate name shared between mother and son that highlights their physical connection and foreshadows the mother's sudden death; yet even in death, their spirits remain connected. This name, like Zilia's letter, also makes no reference of Zilia's other children, and notably, the 'Self' that Zilia chooses to memorialise here is not Mrs Witherington the 'beautiful convert,'³⁴⁸ but Zilia Monçada. She writes not as the wife of a General and the mother of their young children, but as the young Jewish daughter who was forced to abandon her first born son. Evidently, this rupture is a grief that Zilia has not forgotten, and even in death and exile Zilia embraces her connection to her son as their spirits are, she hopes, united. Hartley narrates Zilia's story to Richard as she had previously told it to him, stating that Zilia's transformation into Mrs Witherington was achieved through her marriage and her conformity to 'the established religion of her husband and country.'³⁴⁹ As I have discussed, marriage and conversion to Christianity are both transformative rituals that reconstruct identities, however Zilia's letter exposes the potential falsity of such transformations. Publicly Zilia appears as the British, Christian wife of General Witherington, but privately

³⁴⁷ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, pp. 85-86.

³⁴⁸ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 84.

³⁴⁹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 84.

she maintains her previous identity as this letter reveals. Moreover, in contrast to the novella's earlier depictions of Zilia who speaks exclusively in foreign, and non English languages, here Zilia is portrayed speaking and writing in English, however her English speech is represented through an archaic lexicon consisting of 'thy' and 'thee' in the place of 'your' and 'you', together with religious phrases that, though ambiguous, suggest a Jewish, and not Christian, religious conviction: 'May the God of Israel bless thee, young man!'³⁵⁰ Religious conversion and even marriage have not converted away, transformed, or reconstructed Zilia's Jewishness, or her identity as Richard's mother, and she signs her letter not with her new name, but with her old initials: Z. M. Reflecting her enduring ethnic-religious identity, Zilia thus reveals the limits of transformative rituals as her spirit remains Jewish.

Exposing anxieties surrounding transformative rituals and the perception that racial Others cannot be converted, transformed, or reconstituted, Zilia's death emphasises her Jewish identity and associates Richard with his mother, and therefore also with his maternal genealogy. Though Richard is not a circumcised Jew and is instead, as we are told, christened as a Catholic, he is nonetheless constructed as a racial Other, and his uncertain Otherness is frequently tied to his Jewish ancestry throughout the novella. While Richard's Otherness is left open to interpretation, the reader is presented with clues that invite suspicion and speculation regarding his Otherness in a similar way to Doctor Gray's speculation about the identities of Mr. Monçada and Zilia. *The Surgeon's Daughter* is a novella about Richard Middlemas, and as the narrative begins with his birth it concludes with his death:

Curling his long trunk around the neck of the ill-fated European, the monster [an elephant] suddenly threw the wretch prostrate before him, and stamping his huge shapeless foot upon his breast, put an end at once to his life, and his crimes [...] The courtiers preserved profound silence; but Tippoo, upon whose muslin robe a part of the victim's blood had spirited, held it up to the Nawaub [...] 'Know, foolish boy,' said Hyder Ali, 'that the carrion which lies there was in a plot to deliver Bangalore to the Feringis and the Mahrattas. [...] Hence with the lump of bloody clay, and the Hakim Hartley and the English Vakeel come before me.'

They were brought forward, while some of the attendants flung sand upon the bloody traces, and others removed the crushed corpse.³⁵¹

Ambiguously identified as the 'ill-fated European', in the moment of his death Richard is not bestowed the identities of a Christian or Englishman, but rather he occupies the unspecified role of Other. Constructed against the exotic backdrop of India, the violent spectacle of Richard's death echoes the images of violent horror perpetuated by the Inquisition against their Jewish victims as had previously been immortalised in the pages of English newspapers, chapbooks, and Gothic narratives. Reduced to flesh and blood like the Jewish victims in *The Inquisition*, Richard's crushed corpse becomes a violent spectacle of Otherness constructed for the gaze of the British reader, and this spectacle further encourages speculation regarding his identity: who is, or was, Richard Middlemas? Yet it also reveals, like *The Spanish Campaign*, an anxiety

³⁵⁰ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 68.

³⁵¹ Scott, *The Surgeon's Daughter*, p. 129.

surrounding Jewish bloodlines and a hesitancy regarding British, Christian tolerance towards the Jewish Other. Focusing on the (im)purity of a body in terms of religious and racial Otherness — where impurity can be visibly identified through racist biomarkers, physical characteristics, or more intrinsically as invisibly present through polluted bloodlines — is a way to equate the individual body with the purity of the national body politic. Any contamination is viewed with suspicion and uncertainty, and leads to anxieties surrounding further contamination or threats to what is deemed to be pure. Once again, such perceived threats and contamination result in the death of a character associated with Jewishness and thus the termination of their bloodline.

Conclusion

Zilia and Richard are constructed as racial Jewish Others, and as such their bloodlines are viewed with suspicion within a Christian hegemony that requires the extirpation of polluting entities: like Meeke's Victoria, Zilia and Richard cannot continue to live. Though the texts discussed in this chapter are varied in genre and the central focus of their narratives, each story manifests anxieties surrounding Jewish Others that are rooted in perceived racial or ethnic-religious alterity. Drawing, to greater or lesser degrees, upon the legacies of Christian narratives and theologies that developed throughout history in relation to the Jewish Other, to racial persecution established through societal structures and bodies like the Inquisition, and racist pseudo-scientific ideas of race, biomarkers, and bloodlines together with contemporary considerations of Jewish Questions, these texts contribute to the cultural exchange and discourse surrounding imagined *representations* of the Jewish Other and reflect underlying anxieties surrounding racial alterity and Jewishness. Whether depicted as polluted or feminized, threatening or infantilised, in terms of horror or potential romance, the Jewish Other is ultimately always constructed as racially different, and typically, in order to maintain a (Protestant) Christian hegemony within the textual narrative, this culminates with their death or an abrogation of the possibility that they will pass on their biological bloodlines to their potential future children. Such racial anxieties are similarly reflected in narratives that focus upon the potential marriage of Jewish women and their Christian suitors, and in particular a trend of novels that portray benevolent Jewish fathers and daughters as I will discuss in the following chapter. Demonstrating a tension between reproductive biological racism and the construction of philosemitic tolerance, this trend of literature depicts a conditional tolerance that continues to reveal Christian, British anxieties surrounding Jewish Others while attempting to exorcise the monstrousness of antisemitic representations.

Chapter 3

Exorcising Shylock and Jessica: The Benevolent Jew, His Loving Daughter, and a Christian Suitor

Shylock: My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! The law! My ducats and my daughter!
(*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 2, Scene 8, lines 15-17)

I take the liberty humbly to request that you will tell me how the case truly stands, and whether we must of necessity own this Shylock; also I should be glad to know of which tribe this fellow was, for if such a monster did exist, I have strong suspicion he will turn out a Samaritan.
(Richard Cumberland, 'Number XXXVIII', *Observer*.³⁵²)

This chapter charts the rise in sympathetic representations of Jewish fathers and daughters during the Romantic period. On 12 February, 1741, Charles Macklin walked on stage at the Drury Lane theatre to perform a role that would establish his reputation as an actor, portraying a character that he would inhabit until his retirement almost fifty years later: Shylock. Received, in Macklin's own words, to 'the loudest thunders of applause I ever before experienced',³⁵³ his portrayal of Shylock was subsequently praised for returning the character to a semblance of authenticity and historical accuracy, as well as for depicting not a comic pantaloon, but a terrifying and vengeful monster.³⁵⁴ In the decades preceding this 1741 revival, performances of *The Merchant of Venice* typically used a popular adaptation of Shakespeare's play written by George Granville. Titled *The Jew of Venice*, in Granville's version Shylock's role is shortened and reduced to a comic part, the actor often donning a red wig and large nose which were established and recognisable antisemitic characteristics of the stage Jew.³⁵⁵ Macklin, however, 'saw this part with other eyes.'³⁵⁶ Prior to his stage debut, Macklin conducted his own research in order to make his portrayal as accurate and realistic as possible. William Appleworth notes that at home Macklin frequently 'pored over a prized and much-

³⁵² Richard Cumberland, 'Number XXXVIII', in *The British Essayists*, vol. 26, ed. Bob Lynam (London, J. F. Dove, 1827) pp. 192-198 (p. 195).

³⁵³ William Cooke, *Memoirs of Charles Macklin*, 2nd edition (London: 1806), p. 92.

³⁵⁴ Judith W. Page, *Imperfect Sympathies: Jews and Judaism in British Romantic Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 60.

³⁵⁵ Frank Felsenstein, for example, discusses how dramatic representations of Judas often incorporated a red beard to portray Judas as Jewish. For audiences, a red beard would have been a recognisable characteristic of the stereotypical 'Jew' while a red beard and 'peculiar nose' were typical features of the traditional stage Shylock (see: *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes* (John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London, 1999, p. 31; 163). Judith Page also discusses 'markers of Jewish mockery' onstage that included the 'typical Yiddish accent of the stage Jew' (see *Imperfect Sympathies*, p. 35).

³⁵⁶ Cooke, p. 90.

thumbed copy of Josephus's *History of the Jew*', while he also made 'daily visits to the center of business, the 'change, and the adjacent coffee-houses' to study and converse with Jews in London.³⁵⁷ Macklin's self-professed authentic costume included a red hat, and he explained this choice to Alexander Pope proclaiming that he 'had read that Jews in Italy, particularly in Venice, wore hats of that colour.'³⁵⁸ In the decades that followed, Macklin became synonymous with Shakespeare's bloodthirsty Jewish Merchant, and reenacting again and again his acclaimed and reputedly authentic performance he earned the reputation as 'the Jew / that Shakespeare drew.'³⁵⁹ Revolutionising theatre through his introduction of a natural style of acting, Macklin's legacy is rooted in reviving Shylock from relative obscurity in theatres, and returning him to the public consciousness. Soon, Shylock was everywhere: not just on stage, but infused into political debates, newspapers and satirical publications, and frequently referenced in literature. As a result of Macklin's performance, Shylock was thus transformed into an easy shorthand for the monstrous Jewish Other or the Jewish usurer, and it wouldn't be until the following century that another actor would pick up the mantle of Shylock and gain prominence through an equally transformative performance. In 1814, and again at the Drury Lane theatre, Edmund Kean chose an experimental interpretation of Shylock as his London debut, transforming Macklin's monstrous merchant into a character who, while flawed, was nonetheless deserving of sympathy. Like Macklin, Kean's fame and legacy were thus also tied to Shylock. Recalling this inaugural performance, theatre critic William Hazlitt writes 'Here, it was quickly recognised, was not only a new face but a new Shylock.'³⁶⁰ Kean's radical interpretation is part of what Judith Page identifies as 'the "cultural revolution" of sympathy and sentiment.'³⁶¹ Developing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this sympathetic revolution influenced representations of Jewish characters in fiction and on stage. Yet, while Kean turned to Shylock himself, reimagining and reinterpreting his monstrous characterisation, others constructed an alternate archetype in opposition to Shylock: the benevolent Jew.³⁶²

Years before audiences were introduced to Kean's Shylock, dramatist Richard Cumberland introduced the character of Mr Abraham Abrahams. First published in 1785, Cumberland creates a series of nine fictional letters in which his Jewish merchant makes the observation that 'the odious character of Shylock has brought little less persecution upon us poor scattered sons of Abraham, than the Inquisition

³⁵⁷ William Appelpworth, *Charles Macklin: An Actor's Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 46. Here Appelpworth erroneously records the title of Flavius Josephus's work as 'History of the Jews' rather than *Antiquities of the Jews*.

³⁵⁸ Cooke, p. 94.

³⁵⁹ This couplet ('That is the Jew/ That Shakespeare drew') is often attributed to Alexander Pope, although it may be apocryphal (Herbert W. Kline, 'The Jew That Shakespeare Drew?', *American Jewish Archives* (April, 1971), 63-72 (63).

³⁶⁰ Richard Findlater, *Six Great Actors: David Garrick, John Philip Kemble, Edmund Kean, W. C. Macready, Sir Henry Irving, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson* (London, Hamish Hamilton, 1957), p. 74. Following in Kean's footsteps later in the nineteenth century, and openly professing his admiration for Kean, Henry Irving famously continued this sympathetic trend through his own portrayal of Shylock as benevolent, not monstrous.

³⁶¹ Page, p. 3.

³⁶² Although not depicting an example of a Jewish father and daughter, *The Spanish Campaign's* Mr Levi can also be viewed in the tradition of the benevolent Jew.

itself.³⁶³ Contrasting with Shakespeare's monstrous merchant, Mr Abrahams is depicted as charitable, benevolent, and a 'worthy friend.'³⁶⁴ His name signals to one of the three Jewish patriarchs not once but twice, and professes the appearance of an authentic Jewish identity, but, like Shylock, this character is ultimately a fictional construction that merely ventriloquizes a Jewish voice and identity. Later, Cumberland further fleshes out this archetype in his 1794 comedy *The Jew* through Sheva, another benevolent Jewish moneylender. Cumberland's Jewish characters function, Page argues, as reverse-Shylock types,³⁶⁵ while Michael Ragussis considers this stereotype not as a reversal of Shylock, but as a subversion that transforms the financial debt owed to the Jewish merchant into moral debt.³⁶⁶ Undoubtedly, however, Mr Abrahams and Sheva contributed to the creation of a new branch of Jewish representation in fiction. The benevolent Jew character is simultaneously separate from but connected to depictions of Shakespeare's Jewish merchant, and whether reversing or subverting the Shylock stereotype, the benevolent Jew must first conjure Shylock in order to exorcise him. Manifesting onstage the par exemplar of this new benevolent Jew type, Cumberland proclaims the importance of his play in his memoirs:

The benevolence of the audience assisted me in rescuing a forlorn and persecuted character, which till then had only been brought upon the stage for the unmanly purpose of being made a spectacle of contempt, and a butt for ridicule. In the success of this comedy I felt of course a greater gratification, than I had ever felt upon a like occasion.³⁶⁷

Cumberland's play is significant in that it portrays a Jewish moneylender as its hero. As with Mr. Abrahams, central to Sheva's construction are charity and displays of benevolence to Christians: audiences witness Sheva using his money to restore a poor Christian family to their rightful place in English society, as well as his facilitation of the marriage between two Christian lovers through his monetary assistance. There are, however, limits to Cumberland's benevolent and tolerant depiction. Promoting a cultural revolution of tolerance, Cumberland's representation privileges the audience's benevolence along with his own personal gratification, and Page notes that Cumberland does not consider the Jewish Other as 'having a voice, a consciousness, or a perspective from which to view that culture.'³⁶⁸ Laying the foundations for the archetypal benevolent Jew in Mr Abrahams and Sheva, Cumberland nevertheless ventriloquizes a Jewish voice and endorses conditional tolerance. Though no long a spectacle of *contempt*, the benevolent Jew emerges as a spectacle of Christian tolerance and virtue.

³⁶³ Richard Cumberland, 'Number XXXVIII', in *The British Essayists*, vol. 26, ed. Bob Lynam (London, J. F. Dove, 1827) pp. 192-198 (p. 195).

³⁶⁴ Richard Cumberland, 'Number XLI', in *The British Essayists*, vol. 26, ed. Bob Lynam (London, J. F. Dove, 1827) pp. 209 - 215 (p. 210).

³⁶⁵ Page, p. 16.

³⁶⁶ Michael Ragussis, *Theatrical Nation: Jews and Other Outlandish Englishmen in Georgian Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), p. 110.

³⁶⁷ Richard Cumberland, *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland. Written by Himself*, vol. 2 (London: 1807), p. 279.

³⁶⁸ Page, p. 36.

Constructed not by Jewish authors but by Christian authors, the benevolent Jew must embody Jewish exceptionalism, and while his existence and participation in society is tolerated and encouraged within fictional narratives, his story nonetheless upholds Christian hegemony, that is the political and cultural dominance of Christianity within British society. Conditional tolerance reflects societal structures of tolerance created and preserved by the ruling classes, and where fictional narratives join with ‘a multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities’ to form the ‘apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes.’³⁶⁹ As Antonio Gramsci observes, such initiatives contribute to the same end: to raise the general population to a universal cultural and moral level that ultimately benefits the interests of the ruling classes, and maintains the values, norms, and authority of this hegemony.³⁷⁰ Promoting tolerance of Jewish people, the construction of Jewish Others and their stories in the sympathetic tradition of this period is thus created, controlled, and disseminated by the dominant Christian class for the benefit of this group. Embodied first through the construction of the benevolent Jew, and then later the benevolent Jew’s loving daughter, the creation of such characters reflects anxieties within traditions of tolerance, sympathy, and also philosemitism. Though professing to reject or even counter traditions of antisemitism, philosemitism is connected, as Bryan Cheyette observes, with an “inherent moralising” that illustrates an individual’s avowed affinity towards Jews as evidence of the individual’s virtue.³⁷¹ Through Cumberland’s Mr Abrahams and Sheva, for example, diverse communities and specifically Jewish Others are sanctioned, tolerated and even venerated for their exceptionalism, and as a result Christian characters (along with the audience and Cumberland himself) are rewarded with a sense of moral gratification and also economic compensation, while the dominance of Christian society is upheld.³⁷² Exploring the history of this term in *Philosemitism in History*, Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe highlight that philosemitism should not be reduced to either the opposite of antisemitism or being itself a form of antisemitism, but nonetheless, they acknowledge that it can appear as a ‘counterfeit benevolence,’ while the philosemitism enacted by Christians in particular is often ‘motivated by a conversionist desire ultimately to erase Jewish distinctiveness altogether.’³⁷³ Though different to antisemitism, philosemitism can itself be viewed as harmful and prejudicial as Jews are considered not as individuals but as spectacles showcased, consumed, and exploited to advance the interest of those professing philosemitism or benevolence. Within some strains of philosemitism, therefore, the ‘good’ Jews are separated from ‘bad’ Jews as Jewish exceptionalism is celebrated and sometimes, particularly with regards to the benevolent Jew’s loving daughter, fetishised and eroticised. Though often presented as examples of tolerance or acceptance of groups perceived to be Other, eroticisation and the fetishisation of the exotic, Jewish Other is itself a form

³⁶⁹ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections From The Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, eds. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 341.

³⁷⁰ Gramsci, p. 341.

³⁷¹ Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of ‘The Jew’ in English Literature and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) p. 8.

³⁷² This trend of tolerance directed towards deserving or persecuted Jewish Others can also be seen in works such as *The Inquisition* and *The Spanish Campaign*, as discussed in chapter 2, where the Christian protagonists Ophelia and Charles are rewarded for their benevolent actions while Christian hegemony is preserved.

³⁷³ Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe, ‘Introduction’, in *Philosemitism in History*, eds. Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 1-26 (pp. 9; 11).

of racism as it privileges sexual desire for the Other while constructing the racial or ethnic-religious Other primarily as a sexual, erotic object that manifests a sexual exoticism or a dangerous sexual impurity. It is thus important to recognise the significance of depictions that challenge stereotypical portrayals of Jews as monstrous, such as Shylock, but also note the connection between benevolent or fetishistic depictions of Jewish characters and Christian supremacy.

Lacking a Jewish voice and perspective, there is also something else missing in Cumberland's correctives to Shylock: Jessica. Overshadowed by the spotlight first fixed upon Macklin and then transferred to Kean, Jessica is rarely mentioned in reviews of *The Merchant of Venice* in this period, though the depiction of Shylock's daughter is central to the reception of Shylock as either monstrous or sympathetic. Irene Middleton notes that 'in performance, demonizing Jessica is a logical way to increase sympathy for her father,'³⁷⁴ but this is not the strategy employed by texts within the tradition of sympathy as it relates to representations of Jewish fathers and daughters. Following Cumberland's attempt to rescue, or counter, Shakespeare's constructions of Jewish characters, this sympathetic tradition of texts takes the foundations of Shakespeare's play and reimagines the story of Shylock and Jessica. Transforming a tale about a monstrous Jewish moneylender and his disobedient daughter into one depicting a Jewish father and daughter who are loving, benevolent and worthy of sympathy, it is this tradition that will be the focus of this chapter. For instance, Thomas Dibdin's 1799 farce, *The Jew and the Doctor*, presents its audience with a benevolent Jew named Abednego and his daughter Emily. Abednego is a moneylender, and emulating Cumberland's earlier play, Abednego is shown to use his money to benefit Christian characters and facilitate the marriage of two lovers. Significantly, this marriage is between Abednego's daughter and a Christian suitor, but this is not an interfaith marriage because Emily is not Abednego's biological child. Raised by her adoptive father as a Christian in order to respect her indisputable Christian identity,³⁷⁵ Abednego further uses his resources to find and unite Emily with her biological father, and also bestows upon her a substantial dowry and the promise of inheriting his wealth upon his death. The love and care displayed by father and adopted daughter towards each other demonstrates the importance of the daughter in this tradition, but this play evades confronting Christian anxieties, and in particular anxieties relating to biological reproductive racism, that surround interfaith marriage and the perception of Jews as racial and polluted Others by simply removing the daughter's Jewishness entirely. Similarly, *Nathan the Wise* features a benevolent Jewish merchant, Nathan, his adopted daughter, Recha, and her Christian suitor, Templar Knight Conrade. Written by German dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in 1779, *Nathan the Wise* is a play advocating for religious tolerance, and it was first performed in Berlin in 1782; but again, the narrative stops short of realising the marital union between its Jewish daughter and Christian suitor. Though adopted and therefore not biologically Jewish, Recha is raised as a Jew, however it is not her Jewish identity that stands as an obstacle to her marriage with Conrade, but the revelation that he is in fact her brother. As these plays

³⁷⁴ Irene Middleton, 'A Jew's Daughter and a Christian's Wife: Performing Jessica's Multiplicity in *The Merchant of Venice*', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 33.2 (2015), 293-317 (294)

³⁷⁵ Abednego explains to Emily why he raised her as a Christian: 'There was some paper vit your name, vat said "This shild is christened Emily" [...] So I prought you to England, and put you to a christian school; for as your father and moder made you a christian, for vat should I make you a jew, ma tear?' (Thomas Dibdin, *The Jew and the Doctor* (Dublin: T Burnside, 1799), p. 8).

reveal, the daughter becomes central to the construction of the benevolent Jew character, but she also reveals the limits of toleration within this tradition through her almost marriage: a potential interfaith union that is not entirely condemned, but that nonetheless is also never fully sanctioned.

The father-daughter relationships depicted in Lessing's and Dibdin's plays reflect familial bonds established through adoption. While this adopted relationship functions, to some extent, to increase sympathy for the Jewish father as he cares for and raises a child that is not biologically his, several novels in this period do explore biological father-daughter relationships, and this chapter will consider this relationship within three novels: George Walker's *Theodore Cyphon; or, the Benevolent Jew* (1796), Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington* (1817), and Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820). In these novels, Walker, Edgeworth, and Scott reimagine Shakespeare's Shylock and Jessica to construct their own versions of the benevolent Jew and his loving daughter. It is important to note that these are texts written by Christian authors predominantly for Christian audiences, and in some cases, as with Edgeworth's *Harrington*, as an explicit corrective act for past antisemitic depictions. Unlike Dibdin's farce and Lessing's play, these texts engage with Christian anxieties surrounding interfaith marriages, and especially those involving Jewish women and their Christian suitor. However, although the daughter's biological connection to her father is not erased, these novels still fall short in fully realising interfaith marriages. Promoting religious and racial tolerance, this tolerance is conditional, and unrelated obstacles or revelations of identity interrupt the fulfilment of such unions.

Shylock's story in *The Merchant of Venice* is one of persecution and revenge, but at the heart of Jessica's story is marriage and conversion. Exemplified through her familial relationship to Shylock, Jessica's Jewish identity is depicted as an obstacle preventing her marriage with Lorenzo, her Christian suitor, and it is only following Jessica's rejection of her father and religious conversion to Christianity that she can 'Become a Christian and thy loving wife.'³⁷⁶ As a transformative ritual, this act of becoming, it is implied, reconstitutes her body from that of a Jewish daughter into a Christian wife, although Jessica's multiplicitous nature ensures that the success of this transformation subsequently remains in doubt. Like conversion and baptismal water, the efficacy of marital consecration in expunging Jewishness is questioned. Productions of *Merchant*, and particularly those performed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, often struggle to reconcile Jessica's betrayals with portraying her as a sympathetic character,³⁷⁷ but the sympathetic tradition of texts first established in the late eighteenth century solve this problem by transforming Jessica's betrayal into acts of love and devotion performed by the daughter towards her father. Using *Merchant* as an ur-text, this tradition attempts to exorcise the monstrous and deceptive nature of Shylock and Jessica, depicting instead not just a benevolent Jew but a Jewish daughter whose love for her father supports and encourages a sympathetic reading of both. Like *Merchant*, the conventional marriage plot device is, to some extent, exploited in these narratives, but the romantic and potential marital union of the Jewish daughter and Christian suitor is, unlike its depiction in Shakespeare's play, sanctioned without explicitly necessitating the

³⁷⁶ William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), Act 2, Scene 3, line 21.

³⁷⁷ Middleton, 296.

daughter's conversion or the reconstitution of her body. The Christian suitor also performs a dual role as both the daughter's potential love interest and the father's friend, an interfaith relationship established upon mutual tolerance that, in some narratives, develops into a nominal familial bond between the Jewish father and Christian suitor. As Ragussis notes, the centrality of the Jewish daughter in these texts reflects a cultural preoccupation in this period with Jewish Questions — that is, theological, political, and racial questions — and this centrality is inextricably linked with anxieties surrounding British and Christian identities, notions of tolerance, and also conversion.³⁷⁸ Beginning in the late eighteenth century, and following Cumberland's play that notably lacked a reformed Jessica figure, the Jewess became a vessel in fiction employed to complete the sympathetic transformation of Shylock into the benevolent Jew.

Yet also central to these texts, and integral to the sympathetic transformation of the Jewish father and daughter, is the Christian suitor himself. His friendship with the Jewish father within these novels chronicles the acts of a 'good' Jew, while his own actions, including saving the Jewish father and daughter from violence, rescuing the Jewish father from being assaulted and robbed, or simply acting as a shield so that the Jewish daughter doesn't have to watch Macklin's antisemitic performance of Shylock, contribute to his depiction as a hero, or even, in some texts, as a divinely sanctioned protector of Jews.³⁷⁹ As the titles of *Theodore Cyphon*, *Harrington*, and *Ivanhoe* attest, these are the stories of the novel's eponymous Christian protagonist, and as such the virtue and benevolence of the Christian suitor, demonstrated through his relationships with Jewish characters and his potential romantic union with the Jewish daughter, is a fundamental part of the story. Navigating anxieties and tensions engendered by Jewish Questions, these texts portray Jewish benevolence in a way that also emphasises Christian benevolence. The exceptionalism and benevolence of Jewish characters thus becomes a spectacle of 'good' Jews used to celebrate Christian tolerance and virtue. Moreover, through her potential marital union with the Christian suitor, the Jewish daughter is further objectified and at times also functions as a sexual object and exotic spectacle that holds the male gaze within the text.³⁸⁰ Each novel depicts other suitors who desire the Jewish daughter — whether sexually or for her wealth — and these suitors act as a foil for the Christian suitor, providing a contrast that again emphasises his virtue. Where other suitors view the Jewish daughter as an object to be assaulted, kidnapped, or married simply for her wealth, the Christian suitor does not treat the Jewish daughter as a commodity and instead rescues her from sexual violence, considers marriage with her in terms of mutual affection and not personal financial gain, and, if he does desire her, he does not act improperly on such desires.

³⁷⁸ Michael Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion: "The Jewish Question" and English National Identity: "The Jewish Question" and English National Identity* (London: Duke University Press, 1995), p. 38.

³⁷⁹ The Christian hero/saviour in these novels functions in a similar way to that of the White Saviour, a trope that is often associated with Africa and that centres on the depiction of a white person offering help to or rescuing non-white people in a way that is often self-serving, counter-productive, or patronising and offensive. Though the White Saviour may have good intentions, these narratives typically focus on a redemptive or self-aggrandising journey of a white person while, purposely or otherwise, evoking racist stereotypes such as the 'noble savage'.

³⁸⁰ First coined by Laura Mulvey in relation to film theory, the male gaze identifies the construction of women as sexual objects and an erotic spectacle that 'holds the look, plays to, and signifies [heterosexual] male desire.' ('Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) pp. 833-844 (p. 837).

Hinging on the potential marriage of the Christian suitor and the Jewish daughter further enables these texts to sanction a consensual romantic relationship without manifesting such a union within the text. While the Jewess contributes to the transformation of her father, she is also a potential means through which the Jewish Other can be transformed from Other to what Tabish Khair describes as the 'self-same' or 'essential sameness.'³⁸¹ More so than the imagined Jew typically constructed as male and immutably Jewish — whether imagined as the feminised and racially Other male Jew discussed in chapter 2, or the benevolent Jew stereotype discussed here — the otherness of the Jewess is waiting to be transformed and assimilated through marriage and conversion. The perceived difference of the Jewish daughter thus holds the potential to be eradicated and assimilated into essential sameness with the Christian self, although this transformation and conversion remains uncertain, and her moment of becoming always remains in doubt. As with Jessica's moment of becoming in *Merchant*, the moment of the Jewish daughter's transformation, or rather lack of transformation, in relation to the interfaith romance plots depicted within this sympathetic tradition reveals enduring anxieties concerning Jewish Otherness. In *Merchant*, this transformation is depicted through Jessica's conversion to Christianity and her marriage to Lorenzo, although the threat remains that having disobeyed one patriarchal figure, her Jewish father, she may similarly disobey her Christian husband in the future and return to her former Jewish identity. This is also a racial anxiety, where the transgression of the converted wife and possible restoration of her previous identity is not in fact a return, but rather a demonstration of her unerasable ethnic-religious identity. Eliding this transformation and the uncertainty it engenders, novels depicting the benevolent Jew and his loving daughter instead construct instances of *almost* marriages, where the marital union between the Christian suitor and Jewish daughter very nearly occurs, and in a way that would not require the religious conversion of the daughter into essential sameness with her suitor, but ultimately fails to take place within the text due to reasons unrelated to the daughter's Jewish identity such as a prior romantic relationship. While the Jewishness of both father and daughter is connected to their benevolence, and the daughter's Jewish identity is not presented as a barrier to interfaith marriage, these novels ultimately contain a hesitation in depicting interfaith marriage without conversion.

Reimagining this moment of assimilation, the texts explored in this chapter contend with Christian anxieties surrounding the dangerous and uncertain potential of the Jewess to conversion and assimilation, as well as Christian constructions of tolerance and acceptance. To require the daughter's conversion in these texts is to uphold the inherent antisemitism of Jessica's becoming; but, on the other hand, to depict the successful marital union of the Jewish daughter and Christian suitor is evidently beyond the limits of toleration possessed by authors in this tradition. Though sanctioning such intermarriage hypothetically, the novels hesitate to manifest such marriages within their stories, and in the end portray only almost marriages. Consequently, the Jewishness of the daughter is preserved, and thus also her love and devotion to her father and her faith, while the tolerance of the Christian suitor is presented and celebrated, but without threatening the racial purity of British society through their marriage. This hesitation is similar

³⁸¹ Tabish Khair, *The Gothic, Postcolonialism and Otherness* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 4.

to the death of Victoria in *The Spanish Campaign* in that it reveals implicit racial anxieties rooted in social, biological, and reproductive discrimination that seeks to preserve the Christian suitor's biological bloodline from perceived contamination.³⁸² Moreover, this hesitation is exemplified through Scott's response to the conclusion of Edgeworth's *Harrington*. The Jewish daughter in this novel, it is revealed, is not in fact Jewish, but Christian like her mother, and Scott writes in a letter that 'I own I breathed more freely when I found Miss Montenero was not an actual Jewess.'³⁸³ Though in the end Berenice is not considered to be a Jewish daughter within the narrative, the true identity of Berenice is kept secret from the reader so that she can, for the majority of the novel, function like a Jewess, and readers like Scott are therefore kept in a state of anticipation and apprehension that Berenice the *Jewess* may marry Harrington her Christian suitor. This chapter will explore this hesitation in each novel as it encompasses Cumberland's act of Christian benevolence and moral philosemitism in rescuing the persecuted characters of Shylock and Jessica, but also Scott's breath of relief. Ultimately, though contributing to a sympathetic tradition that works to exorcise the monstrous characteristics of Shylock and Jessica, these novels reveal the limits of toleration in this period. Privileging the Christian Self, the Christian perspective, and a celebration of Christian virtue, Jewish characters are depicted as benevolent but still Other and thus not quite equal yet within narratives that uphold Christian hegemony.

“The benevolent Israelite and his tender daughter”: George Walker's *Theodore Cyphon; or, the Benevolent Jew*

Born in Cripplegate, London in 1772, George Walker was a prosperous bookseller, music publisher, and also a relatively popular author. Walker published twelve novels between 1792 and 1815, and many of his books capitalised on popular trends, themes, and societal debates of the period, while several also drew upon and exploited the success of works published by writers such as Ann Radcliffe and William Godwin. In particular, Walker often made use of the growing popularity of the Gothic throughout his literary corpus, and his first novel, *The Romance of the Cavern* (1792) is essentially an unofficial adaptation of Radcliffe's *A Sicilian Romance* published two years earlier. Critics such as A. D. Harvey and A. A. Markley similarly identify Walker's engagement with Godwin's political philosophies through his fiction. As Walker's only novel to reach three editions, *The Vagabond* (1799) is arguably his most successful novel, and Harvey asserts that it is not only the best anti-reform novel of the 1790s, but it stands as a 'merciless lampoon of Godwin's doctrine that man has no right to anything of which another man has a greater need, so that to give to the

³⁸² David Nirenberg, 'Was there race before modernity? The example of 'Jewish' blood in late medieval Spain' in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, Eds. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac, and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 232-264 (p. 235).

³⁸³ Walter Scott, *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. Herbert Grierson, Vol. 4 (London: Constable, 1932-37), p. 478.

needy is not a kindness deserving praise but merely the recognition of another's superior claims.'³⁸⁴ Walker's novels have also been identified within other emerging literary traditions such as the Historical Gothic, through his novel *Haunted Castle: A Norman Romance* published in 1794,³⁸⁵ and Gothic works that prominently feature witches, through his novel *The Three Spaniards* published in 1800.³⁸⁶ Significantly, his fourth novel *Theodore Cyphon; or, the Benevolent Jew* engages with another emerging literary trend in this period: the benevolent Jew and the sympathetic tradition reimagining Shylock and Jessica.

Theodore Cyphon draws on the works of Godwin and the principles of benevolent charity. Godwin's *Things as They Are; or, the Adventures Caleb Williams* (1794) explores a master-servant relationship in the context of persecution, legal prosecution, and societal responsibilities to others, and *Theodore Cyphon* addresses these contexts through the story of his eponymous protagonist and in relation to the father-son relationship of the primary narrative. This was noted by contemporary reviewers, who remarked upon the resemblance between Walker's novel and Godwin's, but there was another work that reviewers also cited in terms of its similarity to *Theodore Cyphon*: Cumberland's *The Jew*. Commending the novel for being well-written, one reviewer writes that 'We discover in Shechem, the benevolent Jew, an exact copy of the Israelite in Mr Cumberland's comedy; and we also can trace a similitude in many parts to Mr. Godwin's Caleb Williams.'³⁸⁷ Echoing this appraisal, another reviewer states with regret that 'a writer, who gives proofs in various parts of his book, of possessing no common powers, should have allowed himself the servile imitation he has so glaringly practiced towards two different works — the popular novel of Caleb Williams, and Cumberland's comedy of the Jew.'³⁸⁸ The two distinct parts of Walker's title ('Theodore Cyphon' and 'the Benevolent Jew') thus represent the two narrative strands contained within his novel inspired by *Caleb Williams* and *The Jew*. However, *Theodore Cyphon* is not simply an imitation of *Caleb Williams*, nor is Walker merely planting Cumberland's Sheva into his novel through his construction of his benevolent Jew, Shechem Bensadi. Instead, drawing on the sympathetic tradition of the benevolent Jew, Walker contrasts the cruel persecution enacted by father upon son in the primary narrative through his depiction of an altruistic Jewish moneylender in the secondary narrative, while continually interweaving these two narrative strands to emphasise this contrast. Moreover, Bensadi is not a benevolent Jew in isolation. Eve, Bensadi's Jewish daughter, is praised as 'one of the most amiable and interesting of the daughters of Jerusalem,'³⁸⁹ and it is through Eve that Walker introduces a character absent from Cumberland's play while also exploring the limits of toleration through her potential romantic relationship with Cyphon. Primarily, though, Bensadi and Eve demonstrate the construction of Jewish exceptionalism.

³⁸⁴ A. D. Harvey, 'George Walker and the Anti-Revolutionary Novel', *The Review of English Studies*, 28.111 (1977) 190-300 (292; 295).

³⁸⁵ Rictor Norton, *Gothic Readings* (London: Continuum, 2006), p. 2.

³⁸⁶ Diane Long Hoeveler, *The Gothic Ideology: Religious Hysteria and anti-Catholicism in British Popular Fiction, 1780-1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2014), p. 21.

³⁸⁷ 'Theodore Cyphon; or, The Benevolent Jew: a Novel' *The Critical Review*, 17 (1796, p. 28).

³⁸⁸ 'Theodore Cyphon; or, The Benevolent Jew' *The Analytical Review*, 23.6 (1796), pp. 600-601 (600).

³⁸⁹ 'Theodore Cyphon; or, The Benevolent Jew' *The Analytical Review*, 23.6 (1796), pp. 600-601 (600).

Manifesting the ghosts of Shakespeare's Jewish characters, the secondary narrative attempts to exorcise both Shylock and Jessica through the depiction of a loving father-daughter relationship. While Bensadi's benevolence expunges the monstrousness of Shylock's moneylending, Eve supplants the filial disobedience of her predecessor as she is reimagined as a loving and respectful daughter.

Paralleling the framing of *Caleb William* as a novel depicting things as they are, Walker writes in his preface that *Theodore Cyphon* will not conform to the 'common practice, in compliance with the feelings of a reader, to distort the natural progression of incidents.'³⁹⁰ There will be no contrived happy ending in which virtue is rewarded, he tells his readers, and similarly his novel will not simply conclude by conveniently punishing or reforming vice: 'I would rather the reader, at the conclusion, should say — I am shocked at the consequences of passion; I will endeavour to overcome myself, and act as I ought.'³⁹¹ Holding a mirror up to the reality of society's failings, Walker's preface articulates his attempt to engender self-reflection and reform in his readers through the story of Cyphon. Constructed through a combination of third person narration and several first person accounts, Cyphon's tale of persecution begins with his opposition to the marriage plans contrived for him by his father and uncle. Cyphon plans to marry for love, but his choice is a woman deemed by his father to be beneath his social station. His father had, along with his uncle, formed 'plans of grandeur,' and 'fixed on a young lady for your wife [...therefore] the heirship of the manor, is fixed, and firm, and secure.'³⁹² These plans do not consider *Theodore* Cyphon's personal wishes, and instead precedence is given to securing and continuing the Cyphon inheritance and 'heirship' within the social sphere deemed appropriate by Cyphon's father and uncle. Hoping to compel Cyphon's compliance, they imprison Cyphon in a mad house. When he escapes, Cyphon runs from his paternal estates and seeks out his lover, Eliza, in order to secure their marriage.³⁹³ However, the legality of this marriage is challenged by his father: Cyphon is briefly imprisoned, then pursued by his father across Britain while his wife is abducted and raped by his uncle, and then left to die as a prostitute. *Cyphon* culminates in the violent, public death of its eponymous protagonist for the murder of his uncle, but only after he exposes the cruelty of his relatives. Cyphon is legally prosecuted, found guilty — an act of compassion within the novel as the jury refuses a sentence of insanity that would return him into his father's power — and then hanged. Fulfilling the assurances of his preface, Walker does not hide or diminish the shocking aspects of Cyphon's story, and this approach is also reflected in the secondary narrative of Walker's benevolent Jew.

Beginning in *medias res*, the opening scene of *Theodore Cyphon* depicts a moment of Jewish persecution, and introduces both Cyphon and the novel's benevolent Jew, Bensadi. On a 'dark winter night, when the wind howled along the streets of London, beating the descending rain in oblique follies against

³⁹⁰ George Walker, *Theodore Cyphon; or, The Benevolent Jew* (Ludgate Street: B. Crosby, 1796), vol. 1, p. vii.

³⁹¹ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. viii.

³⁹² Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, pp. 197-198.

³⁹³ Notably, Eliza is also the name of the woman at the centre of the marriage plot in Cumberland's *The Jew*. Deemed unsuitable by her potential father-in-law because she is poor, Sheva's money restores her family to their rightful place in society and thus engenders the play's happy ending, unlike *Theodore Cyphon* which ends in tragedy with the death of Eliza and Cyphon.

the sides of the houses,³⁹⁴ Cyphon rescues Bensadi from the attacks, antisemitic abuse, and attempted robbery of two thieves. Realising that his liberator has no where to go, Bensadi reciprocates this act of kindness: “Peradventure thou mayest stand in need of a friend, then make thyself known to Shechem Bensadi, of the Minorities.” [...] Though his doors were not open to everyone, he invited him [Cyphon] to enter.³⁹⁵ Echoing Cumberland’s act of ‘rescuing a forlorn and persecuted character,’³⁹⁶ Walker simultaneously reimagines the stereotypical monstrous Jewish moneylender through the figure of Bensadi, while also depicting the deliverance of this Jewish character through the deeds of a British, Christian man. Highlighting and advocating for sympathy and tolerance towards Jewish Others, it is important to note that this is constructed through the framing of a Christian saviour narrative. Distinguishing the roles of Christian and Jew in terms of the (Christian) hero and the (Jewish) victim who needs to be saved, Cyphon is cast in the role of righteous Christian saviour, and the reframing of the fictional Jew from monster to victim is consequently dependent on this relationship. Publicly shaming the thieves Cyphon asks ‘where [...] is the distinction? Is not a Jew a man?’³⁹⁷ In the context of persecution against Jews, Cyphon’s rhetorical questions explicitly emphasise common humanity while implicitly appealing to a notion of essential sameness. Moreover, through this address to the thieves and also the readers of the novel, Cyphon evokes the unspoken response that yes, Jews are humans too, thus dissolving Jewishness into a universal humanity. Cyphon’s questions also echo, to some extent, the sentiment of Shylock’s ‘Hath not a Jew eyes’ speech, which consists of similar rhetorical questions. The transformation of this speech is central to the stage tradition that Kean begins in the following century and that reforms Shylock from monster to sympathetic victim, but here appeals to common humanity are conveyed through the British, Christian saviour. Promoting religious and racial tolerance, *Theodore Cyphon* nonetheless reveals a tension between the Christian self and the Jewish Other, and also the anxieties inherent within the idea of a universal humanity that seeks to collapse difference into essential sameness. Within the novel, for example, a Christian perspective is privileged, while Jewish characters, though not monstrous, remain Other, not quite ‘self-same,’ and dependent on Christian saviours. This is reflected through the construction of the novel’s narrative layers where only Christian characters — first Cyphon and then later his brother-in-law Jason Hanson — are able to tell their own stories through written manuscripts and oral tales. Cyphon begins his manuscript: ‘I now repose in you and your daughter what I had resolved my tongue should never utter to any breathing the breath of existence.’³⁹⁸ Quite literally, Cyphon and then Hanson embody the ‘I’ within the novel, while Bensadi and Eve are perpetual Others, occupying the ‘you’ and ‘your daughter’ in Cyphon’s statement. Bensadi and Eve are recipients of such narratives, or potential victims within such stories to be rescued by a Christian saviour, but they never chronicle their own lives. In order for the remnants of Shylock

³⁹⁴ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 1.

³⁹⁵ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, pp. 6; 9.

³⁹⁶ Cumberland, *Memoirs of Richard Cumberland*, vol. 2, p. 279

³⁹⁷ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 4.

³⁹⁸ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 145.

and Jessica to be exorcised, a Christian protector is thus required to rescue Jews from persecution and tell their stories.

Cyphon's actions are rewarded by Bensadi, who offers him hospitality, friendship, and then employment, and under Bensadi's roof Cyphon finds, albeit temporarily, respite from the rain as well as from the legal pursuit of his father. Later we are introduced to Bensadi's daughter, Eve, who is recently returned from staying with friends in the country. However, it is revealed that for Cyphon and Eve this is not an introduction, but a *reintroduction*. Prior to his encounter with Bensadi, Cyphon had chanced upon Eve in the countryside as she had been deceptively led into the woods to be raped by a man named Romer:

In this moment, before his servants could arrive, a young man, which was Theodore, forced his way through the bushes, torn by the thorns in the haste he had made. — His eyes flashed fury. His whole countenance glowed with an expression, which to me appeared more than human, it was humanity exalted to avenging divinity. He spoke not, but with a stroke like lightning brought Romer to the ground.³⁹⁹

In another moment of persecution interrupted by deliverance, Cyphon is characterised as Eve's 'generous deliverer'⁴⁰⁰ while Bensadi proclaims with emotion 'I must embrace the deliverer of my daughter, and thank him for services I cannot pay.'⁴⁰¹ Here, we can identify Ragussis's notion of the transformation of monetary debt into moral debt. While the relationship between Shylock and his Christian clients in Venice is primarily one of finance, the relationship between Cyphon and Bensadi, analogous to the relationship between Christians and Jews in Britain, is reframed into a social contract founded on ethical responsibilities within society. Such social contracts cannot be performed or repaid through material means alone, but they can be mutually beneficial. Moreover, through the use of simile, Eve's account compares Cyphon's physical actions to lightning and recalls instances in both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament in which God's avenging power is symbolised through lightning and precedes deliverance: 'When Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, the Lord sent thunder and hail, and lightning flashed down to the ground' (Exodus 9:23).⁴⁰² Walker thus presents his protagonist as heaven's avenger, while his acts of deliverance and protection of Jewish characters are framed as being as divinely sanctioned (an idea that returns in Scott's *Ivanhoe*). This moment in the novel thus emphasises the benevolent Jew's love for his daughter, the potential for the Jewish daughter to be viewed through the male gaze as a sexual object, and the Christian suitor's benevolence and role as protector of Jews.

³⁹⁹ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, pp. 70.

⁴⁰⁰ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 72.

⁴⁰¹ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 85.

⁴⁰² See also: Psalm 18:14; Zechariah 9:14; Matthew 24:27; Luke 17:24.

As the novel progresses, the role of Christian saviour is extended to Hanson, who assumes Cyphon's place as beneficiary of Bensadi's benevolence in Cyphon's absence.⁴⁰³ Awaiting news of their friend, Hanson narrates his own history to his Jewish hosts, but unexpectedly delivers a part of Bensadi's history too. Years previously, Bensadi's wife had been kidnapped and was presumed to have been murdered, although her fate was unknown. Hanson rescues the fate of Bensadi's wife from obscurity, revealing her recent death and delivering to her husband her most valuable possessions that she had entrusted to her saviour, Hanson: 'this was the present I gave my wife on the day of our espousals [...] I am satisfied, since I know her fate, though it was terrible.'⁴⁰⁴ Bensadi, his daughter Eve, and his wife are all victims of persecution and violence. Condemning antisemitic and gendered violence, Walker's novel promotes tolerance for the Jewish Other as part of a moral social contract, but this is portrayed through a story of moral philosemitism that centres on the British, Christian redeemer and thus endorses Christian supremacy and hegemony.⁴⁰⁵ Though Bensadi, Eve, Cyphon, and Hanson all share mutual tolerance and respect, the Jewish characters are represented as victims to be saved, while the Christian men are celebrated for their virtue, benevolence, and acts of deliverance extended towards Jews.

These constructed portrayals are not displaced temporally or geographically, and thereby kept separate and at a distance from the society of Walker and his readers, but instead are tied to a recognisable, contemporary London setting. Cyphon first encounters Bensadi sheltering from the rain 'under a gateway in Whitechapel,' and later he is introduced to a communal Jewish locale as he 'accompanied his friend [Bensadi] into a narrow winding alley in Rosemary Lane,' and then into a house adjoining a courtyard.⁴⁰⁶ Referencing genuine locations and streets in London's East End, Walker establishes his narrative in London's Jewish quarter known as the Minories. Todd M. Endleman writes, for example, that 'London was a major center of urban Jewish life from the late eighteenth century,'⁴⁰⁷ and W. D. Rubinstein highlights that 'From the earliest days, London Jewry had always congregated in the eastern parts of the City of London and the adjacent districts of Whitechapel, Finsbury Square and Houndsditch.'⁴⁰⁸ Significantly, located near Whitechapel and Aldgate, and accessible via Rosemary Lane, was the Great Synagogue of London, the earliest Ashkenazi synagogue constructed following the readmission of Jews into Britain, and built at Duke's Place north of Aldgate. This area may have been familiar to some of Walker's readers, and even Walker himself, while in the sympathetic tradition of the benevolent Jew that first developed in the 1790s the

⁴⁰³ While Hanson denounces Christianity and argues that 'My religion is universal' (vol. 3, p. 198) he can be considered to be culturally Christian, and benefitting from the privilege afforded to white, British, Christian men in this period that are denied to Jews and people of other races and faiths.

⁴⁰⁴ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 2, p. 237.

⁴⁰⁵ See also Mark Canuel's monograph *Religion, Toleration, and British Writing, 1790–1830*. Though Canuel focuses on societal division between Protestants and Catholics, he argues that religious tolerance emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in order to promote ways in which 'different beliefs could be *governed* under the auspices of tolerant institutions' (*Religion, Toleration, and British Writing, 1790–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 2).

⁴⁰⁶ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, pp. 1; 90.

⁴⁰⁷ Todd M. Endleman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 4.

⁴⁰⁸ W. D. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English Speaking World: Great Britain* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p. 64.

association between this specific part of London's East End with London's Jewish community was promoted in fiction and on stage. Prior to the publication of Walker's novel, Duke's Place is presented as the home of Cumberland's Sheva ('if you will come to my poor cabin in Duke's Place, you shall have the monies'⁴⁰⁹), while later in the decade Dibdin references Duke's Place as the dwelling place of Abednego's friend: 'I vent to-day to make some bargains, with my friend Shadrack, vat lives at top of Duke's place.'⁴¹⁰ Identified in both plays as the home of London's Jewish community, but also a place of business, and specifically Jewish trade and moneylending, this multifaceted association is similarly reflected in Walker's novel. Like Cyphon, Walker's reader may, perhaps, encounter a Jewish individual such as Bensadi in London, and this novel provides both an example for how his reader *ought* to act through Cyphon, the Christian saviour, but it also exposes a representation of this community and its monetary practices. Following Cyphon and Bensadi through Rosemary Lane and into this Jewish house, the reader is led into a scene of private Jewish moneylending that is not usurious, but admirable in its benevolence.

Promoting a consideration of common humanity, or Khair's notion of essential sameness,⁴¹¹ albeit a sameness that remains uncertain and secondary, the potentially dangerous or monstrous alterity of the Other is transformed in Bensadi and Eve through continual emphasis of their exemplary benevolence and their heavenly-sanctioned protection. Like Shylock, Bensadi is a merchant and a moneylender, but although he does extort the rich — though always within legal boundaries — this is revealed to be for benevolent intentions, not revenge: 'I take to give to him who hath need. Every farthing I extort from the profligate, is a farthing less in the sum which was to destroy the innocent, to oppress the needy, to be squandered in luxurious and baneful profusion, or lost to sharpers and villains. I sit in the seat of distributive justice.'⁴¹² In *Merchant*, Shylock legally pursues Antonio in order to collect his bond of flesh and satiate his revenge. The construction of Bensadi as an altruistic moneylender, however, challenges the stereotype of the monstrous Jewish moneylender exemplified through Shylock. Whereas Shylock's usury is cruel and bloodthirsty, and would have resulted in Antonio's death if Shylock's bond had been upheld, Bensadi manifests a radical practice of moneylending rooted in benevolence. This radical practice is inextricably tied to Bensadi's Jewish identity, and epitomised in a scene depicting a charitable Jewish institution:

"I borrowed of thee," said the Jew, "a sums which trade hath enabled me to repay with interests, and may all the childrens of the Hebrews be so prospered." — Shechem smiled, and taking the money, counted it over whilst another made an entry in a large book. — Another Jew advanced, his want was to borrow; he stated the advantage he expected, and received the sum. Many more followed on the same ground, and then advanced others who had so much trusted to them per month, with which they bartered, provided for their families, and for its use, till trade enabled them to return the principle, deducted to Shechem a dividend of their gain. This class was those who hawk about the streets, and trade on a scanty foundation. The

⁴⁰⁹ Richard Cumberland, *The Jew* (London: Booksellers, 1794), p. 8.

⁴¹⁰ Thomas Dibdin, *The Jew and the Doctor* (Dublin: T Burnside, 1799), pp. 6-7.

⁴¹¹ 'an essential sameness, a difference waiting to be remedied into the Self-same' (Khair, *The Gothic Postcolonialism and Otherness*, p. 4).

⁴¹² Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 41.

last, was a number of the most miserable, together with boys and girls, who not being entrusted with cash, received daily from the treasure a quantity of goods, for which they accounted at night, and also divided their gains. By this Theodore learnt, that the whole house was a store, and an institution worthy to be imitated.⁴¹³

Contrasting with Shylock's bloodthirsty moneylending, Bensadi sits at the head of a Jewish establishment located in the house off of Rosemary Lane dispensing distributive justice to its community. This practice differs from charitable subscriptions fashionable in this period, and instead extends community support through lending money and goods, and where the profits benefit not simply the moneylender but the community as a whole. Criticising charitable subscriptions for prioritising public praise of the individual giving money, Cyphon applauds this private Jewish practice for elevating those in need, and offering a comprehensive system of charity in response.⁴¹⁴ Taking payment only when all other needs of the individual or the family have been met, Bensadi's share of the profit can thus be fed back into the community through the repetition of this practice.

Moreover, as Cyphon's story demonstrates, Bensadi extends such acts of kindness and support to strangers outside of his own community. Bensadi frequently offers his home, employment, and monetary assistance to those in need within his own Jewish community, but also within the wider Christian society of Britain. We learn, for example, that prior to his encounter with Cyphon he helped an individual charged with stealing from him to escape Britain in order to spare the man from the death penalty. Eve also emulates her father's practice by using her influence to help those in need, and in one instance offers to Cyphon 'my watch and my jewels to free those for whom you plead, from distress.'⁴¹⁵ Tied to a specifically Jewish institution of charity, the exceptional benevolence of Bensadi and Eve demonstrates, as Cyphon contends, an exemplary model worth imitating, but here the narrator interjects and censures Cyphon: 'Theodore might be right, but he was a little enthusiastic.'⁴¹⁶ The lesson, it would appear, is that although such practices are beneficial to society and deserving of praise, there is still a place for conventional charitable subscriptions, and any imitation of Jewish practices within British society will necessarily be modulated by the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes. Filtered through Cyphon's perspective, and regulated by the narrator, the benevolence of Bensadi and Eve marks them as exceptional, worthy of tolerance and deliverance from persecution, and almost self-Same with Christian characters, but this is nonetheless an uncertain essential sameness that is celebrated whilst being kept separate.

Cyphon functions as witness to Bensadi's altruism; his perspective attests to the truth of such practices while refuting traditional depictions of Jewish fathers and daughters as monstrous and disobedient. Another aspect of this of role is established as Cyphon is witness to the loving familial

⁴¹³ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, pp. 92-93.

⁴¹⁴ "'Strange," thought he, "that actions like these should be buried in oblivion, and lost in a corner, while the charity of subscription, blazes not indeed on the house top, but in the kitchens of taverns.'" (*Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 93).

⁴¹⁵ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 101.

⁴¹⁶ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 94.

relationship that exists between Bensadi and Eve: a familial relationship soon extended to Cyphon himself and that starkly contrasts with the cruel and unjust actions of his own biological relations. Together with Bensadi's exemplary practice of benevolent moneylending, the cultivation of such loving and benevolent relations embodies a model for inter-community tolerance and friendship established through the depiction of Jewish exceptionalism that is wholly non-violent. In contrast to the violent methods of Cyphon's father and uncle, Bensadi pursues friendship, solidarity, and justice through peaceable means. Acts of rape and violence are transferred away from Bensadi and the Jewish community, and as a result Bensadi's non-violence contrasts with the violence perpetrated by Cyphon's father and uncle, and also Romer.⁴¹⁷ Where Bensadi offers protection, employment, and friendship to a Christian stranger, Cyphon's father pursues him legally in order to imprison his son or condemn him to death, his uncle perpetrates sexual violence upon Cyphon's wife that results in the murder of Cyphon's unborn child, and Romer attempts to sexually assault Eve (who is rescued by Cyphon similarly offering protection to a stranger). Thus established as the antithesis to Cyphon's parental figures, Bensadi is depicted as a 'tender parent' whose 'chief concern was for Eve.'⁴¹⁸

Bensadi and Eve's father-daughter relationship is shown to be founded on mutual love, care, and respect, and the construction of Eve as a loving daughter who 'knows her duty' to her parent thus reimagines the rebellious and disobedient acts of her predecessor, Jessica, into acts of love and reverence.⁴¹⁹ In *Merchant*, Jessica's disobedience hinges on her relationship with her Christian suitor, Lorenzo, and her decision to escape both father and religion to 'Become a Christian and thy loving wife.'⁴²⁰ Discussing the rehabilitation of Shylock within sympathetic performances of *Merchant*, Middleton highlights that the 'more callous Jessica is, the more sympathy Shylock should win from an audience.'⁴²¹ However, continuing the tradition of the benevolent Jew, Walker does not employ this method. Exorcising Jessica's transgressions against her father, and thus also Jessica's rejection of her Jewish heritage, Eve's love for her father contributes to and encourages a sympathetic reading of both father and daughter. Walker also subverts the relationship between the Jewish daughter and Christian suitor: where marriage signals filial disobedience in *Merchant*, in *Theodore Cyphon* the potential marriage that does not occur but is *almost* realised represents filial love, and the potential for benevolent inter-community relations through a

⁴¹⁷ Shechem Bensadi's non-violence also contrasts with another Shechem depicted in Genesis 34:1-31, a biblical narrative known as the Rape of Dinah. In this story Shechem is not Jewish, but the son of Hamor the Hivite who willingly converts to Judaism in order to marry Jacob's daughter, Dinah, after he 'took her, and lay with her, and defiled her' (Gen 34: 2). The fathers of Shechem and Dinah negotiate their marriage, agreeing that Shechem and the Hivites will convert to Judaism and that the men will undergo circumcision in order to become one people with the Jewish tribe. However, Dinah's brothers reject this agreement, and instead they seize Dinah, and then murder Shechem and all the Hivite men in the city. What had the potential to be a unifying inter-community marriage is transformed into one of violence and bloodshed, and Dinah is never mentioned again. Though we do not know whether or not Walker was aware of this story when naming his benevolent Jew, there are parallels between this biblical story and that within *Theodore Cyphon*: both centre on a Jewish father, his daughter, and a non-Jewish suitor, with the potential marriage between the daughter and non-Jewish suitor reflecting the possibility of inter-community relations, but also the tension and anxieties surrounding such possibilities.

⁴¹⁸ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, pp. 142, 110,

⁴¹⁹ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 54.

⁴²⁰ Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 2, Scene 3, line 21.

⁴²¹ Middleton, 294.

progression towards a more tolerant society. Eve evidently falls in love with Cyphon, and had not Cyphon already been married it is suggested that he would reciprocate. In contrast to Jessica, however, Eve is depicted carefully observing her father's directives to consider him not as a romantic suitor but as a brother as she 'endeavoured to reconcile herself to the idea of being no more than a nominal relation.'⁴²² Reimagining the Jewish family portrayed in *Merchant* from one of conflict to one of love, these familial bonds are extended to Cyphon who is transformed from a Christian stranger into 'my son,'⁴²³ and Bensadi explicitly states his wish to establish with Cyphon 'an union of friendship.'⁴²⁴ Without requiring assimilation through marriage or conversion, essential sameness is, to some extent, achieved through bonds of friendship and nominal familial ties. While Bensadi extends to Cyphon fatherly love, Cyphon in turn entrusts Bensadi with his written confession, and then bequeaths his body to Bensadi who carries out Cyphon's wish to be united with his wife by interring his body 'in the same tomb with Eliza.'⁴²⁵ In exorcising the bad characteristics of Shylock and Jessica, Walker contributes to a new stereotype, the benevolent Jew, that emphasises not Jewish monstrosity but Jewish exceptionalism.

The disobedience of Jessica and her marriage with Lorenzo creates a dissonance within reinterpretations of *Merchant* in relation to sympathetic portrayals of Shylock and Jessica, but in *Theodore Cyphon*, the lack of marriage reveals a hesitation on the part of the Christian author, and thus marks the limits of tolerance and an absence of community consent. It is important to note that the potential romantic relationship between Eve and Cyphon is not obstructed on religious or racial grounds, or because acts of violence interrupt their union and demonstrate an explicit lack of community consent. For Eve and Cyphon, it is another, unrelated obstacle that prevents their legal marriage. Echoing Lessing's plays *Nathan the Wise* in which Recha and Conrade's marriage is prevented as a result of the revelation that they are biological siblings, in Walker's novel the obstacle to Eve and Cyphon's potential union is the revelation that Cyphon is already married. The introduction of Hanson as a replacement for Cyphon provides an alternate suitor, and the interactions between Hanson and Eve in the final volume are framed in terms of romance and their possible marital union. Considering first Cyphon, and then Hanson as his daughter's suitors, Bensadi is depicted as religiously tolerant and progressive in consenting to the potential marriage between his daughter and a Christian, providing that such a union is legal and possesses his daughter's consent. Bensadi observes that his daughter 'transferred to Hanson those affections which once were Theodore's,'⁴²⁶ but the depiction of inter-community marriage is again denied. Instead, such an event is relegated to a possible, undetermined moment in the future and beyond the pages of Walker's narrative: 'Eve had not yet consented to be the wife of Hanson, as she had pleaded for a year to mourn the fate of Theodore.'⁴²⁷ The

⁴²² Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 89.

⁴²³ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 87.

⁴²⁴ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 87.

⁴²⁵ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 3, p. 219.

⁴²⁶ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 3, p. 175.

⁴²⁷ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 3, p. 223.

'yet' here marks conditional tolerance: such a union between Jews and Christians is in theory to be tolerated, and even celebrated, but it will not be depicted in this novel. As the novel concludes, Bensadi returns to the Minories to continue his practice of benevolent moneylending; Eve is left to her grief; and Hanson remains disappointed that his hoped-for union with Bensadi's Jewish daughter, though not denied, remains in a state of suspension as a future possibility but not a certainty. This is, however, not a return to normality. Perhaps, like Hanson, the reader is also disappointed that for Eve and her Christian suitor there is no happy ending through marriage; or perhaps, on the other hand, they may breathe more freely and in unison with Scott's later breath of relief in response to *Harrington*. This state of suspension reflects the limits of Walker's tolerance, but nonetheless, *Theodore Cyphon* challenges the dominance of Shylock and Jessica through his alternate portrayal of a benevolent Jew and his loving daughter, albeit a portrayal tied to the moral philosemitism of the 'good' Jew that underscores Christian benevolence. Walker's novel is framed as a moral guide outlining for his readers how they ought to act, and while the success of this instruction will continue to be discussed, one contemporary reviewer, at least, praised *Theodore Cyphon* as 'a very effectual and interesting vehicle for truths and speculations of the very utmost importance, in moral and political philosophy.'⁴²⁸

"And why not a good Jew?": Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*

The character of the benevolent Jew continued to be portrayed throughout the 1790s and into the nineteenth century, but this was in parallel to successful performances of Shylock by Macklin and then Kean, and alongside other antisemitic depictions of monstrous Jews in fiction. Notable examples of this latter fictional trope can be found throughout the works of Maria Edgeworth, a prolific Anglo-Irish author who published both adult's and children's fiction and frequently included in these works stereotypical and antisemitic Jewish characters. Considered to be one of the earliest socio-historical novels and also the first Irish novel,⁴²⁹ Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* (1800) features an Irish heir who marries a Jewess for her money, only to taunt her with 'sausages, or bacon, or pig-meat in some shape or other' when she refuses to part with her wealth.⁴³⁰ Edgeworth's later novels *Belinda* (1801) and *The Absentee* (1812) both feature Jewish moneylenders fashioned in the monstrous tradition of Shylock, and similarly, Edgeworth's 1805 collection of children's fiction, titled *Moral Tales for Young People*, contains several stories such as 'The Prussian Vase', 'The Good Aunt', and 'Murad the Unlucky' that feature antisemitic characters. Many of her novels and children's stories explicitly proclaim moral lessons and Edgeworth often collaborated with her father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, on works addressing education. As one reviewer writing in *The Edinburgh*

⁴²⁸ 'Theodore Cyphon; or the Benevolent Jew', *Monthly Review*, 20 (1796) 476-477 (476).

⁴²⁹ See for example: Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick, 'Introduction to *Castle Rackrent*', in *Castle Rackrent*, ed. George Watson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. vii-xxxvi (p. vii).

⁴³⁰ Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 29. Though this example is a reflection of the Irish heir's own monstrousness, the taunt draws on the antisemitic tradition criticising or mocking dietary restrictions observed by Jews.

Review notes, 'the duties of a *Moral Teacher* are always uppermost in her thoughts.'⁴³¹ It was therefore a surprise to Edgeworth when in 1815 she received a letter reproaching her on the charge that her work was propagating antisemitism:

Relying on the good sense and candour of Miss Edgeworth I would ask, how can it be that she, who on all other subjects shows such justice and liberality, should on one alone appear biased by prejudice: should even instill that prejudice into the minds of youth! Can my allusion be mistaken? It is to the species of character which wherever a *Jew* is introduced is invariably attached to him. Can it be believed that this race of men are by nature mean, avaricious, and unprincipled? Forbid it, mercy. Yet this is more than insinuated by the stigma usually affixed to the *name*.⁴³²

This letter was written to Edgeworth by Rachel Mordecai (later Rachel Mordecai Lazarus), an American Jewish woman who offered the example of her family, and in particular herself and her father, to demonstrate the errors of Edgeworth's depictions. Rachel Mordecai also notes with irony that she shares her family name with that of Edgeworth's latest Jewish villain, a usurious Jewish trader depicted in *The Absentee*, thus creating the allusion with her letter that this character had stepped out of the pages of Edgeworth's novel to protest its own antisemitic depiction. Highlighting this blurring between fiction and reality, Richard Lovell Edgeworth writes in his own reply that 'Whether I am addressing a real or an assumed character is more than I am able to determine.'⁴³³ This letter reached the very real Rachel Mordecai, and sparked a lasting correspondence between Rachel Mordecai and Maria Edgeworth that was continued by their families after their deaths.⁴³⁴ Mordecai's letter also inspired Edgeworth to write *Harrington*. Contributing to the tradition of sympathetic representations of Jewish characters, *Harrington* promotes, like *Theodore Cyphon* and other texts in this tradition, a moral philosemitism, while the novel is specifically described as an 'act of reparation for Edgeworth's previous antisemitic depictions.'⁴³⁵

Central to *Harrington* is Christian expiation. Through the construction of a fictional autobiography, Edgeworth's Christian protagonist acknowledges, confronts, and portrays the actions he takes to eradicate his own antisemitism. Like *Theodore Cyphon*, this novel bears the name of its Christian protagonist in its title, while the narrative details first Harrington's early encounters with Jews as a child, which engendered his antisemitism and fear of Jews, and then his endeavours to overcome his learnt prejudice and Judeophobia. In order for Harrington to tell his story and his journey from prejudice to tolerance, Edgeworth turns to the staples of imagination within the sympathetic revolution of this period: the benevolent Jew and his loving daughter. The introduction of a Jewish father and daughter, Mr Montenero

⁴³¹ 'Harrington, a Tale, and Ormond, a Tale', *The Edinburgh Review*, 28.56 (1817) 390-418 (391).

⁴³² Rachel Mordecai Lazarus, 'August 7th, 1815', in *The Education of the Heart* ed. by Edgar E. MacDonald (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977), pp. 3-7 (p. 6).

⁴³³ Richard Lovell Edgeworth, 'Edgeworthstown, Ireland, August 4th, 1816', in *The Education of the Heart*, pp. 7-8 (p. 7).

⁴³⁴ Beginning with Rachel Mordecai's letter, the Mordecai and Edgeworth families continued to exchange letters for 127 years.

⁴³⁵ Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion*, p. 62.

and Berenice, soon establishes a romance plot that imitates the paradigmatic relationships established within *Merchant*. Yet, while Shakespeare's play requires the disobedience of Jessica along with her rejection of both her father and her Jewish heritage to fulfil its marriage plot, this is not the case in *Harrington*. Harrington's friendship with Mr. Montenero reflects his progression towards tolerance, while the success of his courtship of Berenice marks the culmination of this journey and testifies to his triumph of tolerance. Carol Margaret Davison discusses *Harrington* as a novel that manipulates Gothic conventions to explore the 'psychopathology of anti-Semitism', further stating that it offers an indictment of antisemitism within society, but also uses its marriage plot to construct a 'symbolic union with that Other' in order to promote tolerance, a liberal message, and the notion of common humanity.⁴³⁶ Examining the Gothic return of the repressed monstrous Jew type, Davison presents a psychoanalytical reading of the novel that reveals Edgeworth's privileging of the Christian self, Christian perspective, and the importance of ultimately upholding Christian hegemony. *Harrington* not only attempts, in Davison's account, to exorcise the monstrous Jew, and further attempts to replace this construction with another — that of the benevolent Jew — but the novel also attempts to reduce Jewishness to essential sameness through Berenice, and thus reveals the limits of tolerance. Though the daughter of a Jew, through the revelation that she is in fact a Christian, Berenice is rendered self-same with her new Christian husband and the British Christian community she is welcomed into through her marriage prior to this union. Harrington's journey towards tolerance is rewarded with friendship and marriage, while Mr Montenero and Berenice are granted conditional tolerance through the construction of their Jewishness as exceptional, or, as is the case with Berenice, through the eradication of her difference altogether.

Mr Montenero and Berenice are continually placed in opposition to previous antisemitic constructions of Jews throughout the novel, whether that be representations in historical narratives, family fictions, political propaganda, folklore, literature, or performances onstage and as exemplified through Shakespeare's Shylock and Jessica. Mr Montenero and Berenice replace the monstrous merchant and disobedient daughter stereotypes epitomised in *Merchant* with depictions of a benevolent Jew and his loving daughter, and Ragussis notes that Mr Montenero, and therefore also the novel itself, 'rewrites the genealogy of the Jew as a *textual* genealogy.'⁴³⁷ This textual genealogy spans literature, art, and cultural representations that are continually revived through political discussions and oral traditions within society. Significantly, within *Harrington* this textual genealogy is connected to financial and cultural capital. Emulating Walker's Bensadi, along with other benevolent Jews onstage, Mr Montenero's charity and compassion to others, both within his own Jewish community and also to those in need within the wider Christian community in Britain, starkly contrasts with Shylock's moneylending. Mr Montenero provides employment to Jacob, a former school acquaintance of Harrington who also belongs to London's community of Sephardic Jews (primarily Jews of Spanish and Portuguese descent), while later, Mr Montenero assists another family, the Manessas, who had themselves previously facilitated his escape from Spain and the Inquisition, as well as helping to preserve his art and property during his escape. Mr

⁴³⁶ Carol Margaret Davison, *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) pp. 34, 52.

⁴³⁷ Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion*, p. 84.

Montenero's economic prosperity further enables his support of Christian society as he offers monetary assistance to prevent Mr Baldwin's bank, and by extension its cliental which includes Harrington's father, from bankruptcy. Where Shylock's moneylending is tied to his monstrous nature, Mr Montenero's mercantile practices highlight his benevolence. Moreover, Mr. Montenero's liberal financial practices emphasise his identity as a Jewish Gentleman, and specifically, as Harrington's father states, his identity as 'a Spanish Jew – that makes all the difference.'⁴³⁸ Distinct from London's Ashkenazi Jewish community, in the eighteenth century it was from the Sephardi community that the majority of Britain's Jewish elites emerged.⁴³⁹ Not simply presenting a dichotomy of monstrous Jew versus benevolent Jew, the perceived differences between Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities contributed to the construction of class distinctions in relation to Britain's Jewish communities: Walker's Bensadi is connected to the poorer Ashkenazi community, and with it the 'very dregs of Judah's tribes,'⁴⁴⁰ whereas Mr Montenero is associated with Sephardic elites and therefore also with gentlemanly tastes and a refined appreciation of art, literature, and culture. Portrayed as a connoisseur of art and literature, and especially British art and literature, as a wealthy gentleman Mr Montenero possesses both financial and cultural capital. It is through selling his highly valued collection of Spanish art that he is able to financially rescue Mr Baldwin's bank, again continuing the trope within this tradition in which Jewish money supports British, Christian society. His wealth also enables him to purchase and then destroy a painting titled 'Dentition of the Jew.'⁴⁴¹ Assessing this painting as both bad art and a record of antisemitic 'cruelty and intolerance,' Mr Montenero professes that its destruction would help to destroy 'all that can keep alive feelings of hatred and vengeance between Jews and Christians!'⁴⁴² Taking ownership of artistic representations of Jews, Mr Montenero asserts control over this textual genealogy in order to benefit both Jews and Christians, and to promote tolerance not prejudice. While the painting is destroyed, the example of Montenero remains.

Of course, at the heart of *Harrington's* textual genealogy of Jewish representation is Shakespeare's *Merchant*, and Mr Montenero functions in particular to refute, expunge, and rewrite the monstrous character of Shylock. Before Mr Montenero enters the narrative, Edgeworth inserts a cameo appearance of Shakespearean actor Charles Macklin, who is introduced by Harrington's friend Lord Mowbray as the 'most

⁴³⁸ Maria Edgeworth, *Harrington* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999), p. 305.

⁴³⁹ W. D. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English Speaking World: Great Britain* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), p. 61. This is not to suggest that there were no wealthy Ashkenazi Jews in Britain, or conversely that all Sephardi Jews who immigrated to England or who were part of England's Sephardi community were wealthy, and indeed the poverty of the Sephardi community is represented through Simon and his father Jacob.

⁴⁴⁰ Walker, *Theodore Cyphon*, vol. 1, p. 90.

⁴⁴¹ Sold at auction, this painting alludes to the story of the 'Jew of Bristol' recorded by Roger of Wendover in which King John arrested Britain's wealthy Jews and demanded a monetary ransom for their release, but one Jew refused this ransom and so King John ordered his men to pull out one of the Jew's teeth for every day that he refused to pay. Edgeworth does not describe the painting in any detail, but we can imagine its graphic nature based on Harrington's reaction: 'I saw it for the first time, and the sight struck me with such associated feelings of horror, that I started back, exclaimed, with vehement gestures, "I cannot bear it! I cannot bear that picture!"' (*Harrington*, p. 249).

⁴⁴² Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 252.

celebrated Jew that ever appeared in England' and the 'real, original Jew of Venice.'⁴⁴³ This meeting is followed by a portrayal of one of Macklin's famed performances of *Merchant*, and watching with enthusiasm Harrington narrates, 'I rejoiced that I should see Macklin in Shylock'⁴⁴⁴:

Shylock appeared – I forgot every thing but him – such a countenance! – such an expression of latent malice and revenge, of every thing detestable in human nature! Whether speaking, or silent, the Jew fixed and kept possession of my attention. It was an incomparable piece of acting – much as my expectations had been raised, it far surpassed any thing I had conceived – I forgot it was Macklin, I thought only of Shylock.⁴⁴⁵

In tying Shylock and his monstrous nature to this fictional, performed identity, and especially one so closely associated with Macklin as to blur the boundary between character and actor, Edgeworth creates a distance between Shylock, and also Macklin's performance of Shylock, and her own Jewish character Mr Montenero. Emphasising the performed and therefore inauthentic construction of Jewishness as represented through Shylock and theatrical portrayals such as Macklin's, Mr Montenero is placed in opposition to these characters as a 'real' and 'authentic' representation of Jewishness. However, Macklin's version of Shylock would not be the definitive version for Edgeworth or her contemporary readers. Harrington does not take place in Edgeworth's contemporary nineteenth century society, but rather is narrated retrospectively: set in 1780 amidst the peak of Macklin's almost fifty-year theatrical run playing Shylock, Edgeworth's novel is published three years after Kean's acclaimed and transformative portrayal of a more sympathetic Shylock. Like Macklin, Kean's performance was incredibly popular, as is illustrated in the letter of another nineteenth century novelist, Jane Austen, who writes in 1814 in a letter to her sister that, 'Places are secured at Drury Lane for Saturday, but so great is the rage for seeing Kean that only a third and fourth row could be got [...] We hear that Mr. Kean is more admired than ever.'⁴⁴⁶ Macklin's Shylock, though radical and renowned in its own way, is outdated at the time of the novel's publication, and associated with Britain's past. Part of this past is Britain's history of antisemitism, but the sympathetic revolution of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries challenges and redresses such prejudice. Kean revises Macklin's dominant interpretation of Shylock through his transformative and sympathetic performance, but Mr Montenero represents a different branch in this textual genealogy that exposes Shylock as antisemitic: that of the benevolent Jew.

As a Sephardi Jewish gentleman, Mr Montenero's wealth gives him the means to possess and rewrite previous antisemitic representations, while his cultural capital gives him the expertise to do so in way that is sanctioned by British, Christian hegemony. Within the novel, it is his relationship to culture, encapsulated by his appreciation of Shakespeare, that 'makes all the difference' to Christian characters,

⁴⁴³ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 198.

⁴⁴⁴ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, pp. 213-214.

⁴⁴⁵ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 214.

⁴⁴⁶ Jane Austen, 'LIII', in *The Letters of Jane Austen*, ed. Sarah Chauncey Woolsey (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1908), pp. 246-249 (p. 248).

while this relationship further signals his affinity with the cultural hegemony of the ruling classes. Renouncing Shylock as ‘that detestable Jew,’⁴⁴⁷ Mr Montenero reconstitutes the story of Shylock as he reveals that Shakespeare’s play may in fact have been based on a previous version in which the usurious merchant was a Christian, not a Jew. Positing the possibility that in his play Shakespeare subverts the roles of Jew and Christian, moneylender and victim, Mr Montenero exposes the importance of fictional representations in the dissemination of racist stereotypes. As Edward Said argues, the ‘idea of representation is a theatrical one’ where the prodigious cultural repertoire of figures, types, and characters appear onstage in order to ‘represent the larger whole from which they emanate.’⁴⁴⁸ The Jewish stage, like that of the Oriental stage that is Said’s primary focus in *Orientalism*, is a theatrical stage existing within European fiction and its cultural imaginary from which a collection of established figures, types, and Jewish Others are selected, and where stories about Jews are told in order to represent the larger whole of the Jewish people. Mr Montenero’s revelation about the story of Shylock in *Harrington* highlights the influence wielded by those who create this stage, and who control the telling of stories that exploit its theatrical and cultural repertoire.

While Shakespeare created a distinctly Jewish villain to symbolise the wider Jewish community, Edgeworth attempts to exorcise Shylock and replace him with her benevolent Jew. However, both Shakespeare and Edgeworth — along with authors such as Walker and playwrights such as Cumberland — are enacting the same role as non-Jewish, and specifically Christian, arbiters of Jewishness. Within *Harrington*, Mr Montenero is depicted as having some control over the textual genealogy of Jewishness through his financial and cultural capital, but ultimately he is simply just another construction of the Jewish Other placed on the imagined Jewish stage of *Harrington*. The sympathetic tradition of the benevolent Jew does not fully eradicate Shylock, but rather the benevolent Jew type exists in parallel as another fictional performance acted out on a stage adjacent to *Merchant*. While Macklin emphasises Shylock’s monstrous and vengeful nature, Edgeworth underscores Mr Montenero’s Jewish exceptionalism and thus contributes to a philosemitic stereotype that is as much about celebrating Christian virtue and tolerance as it is about depicting a benevolent Jew. Representing the Sephardi Jewish genteel class, Mr Montenero is well educated, possesses refined cultural tastes, and is exceptionally benevolent, and it is because of these qualities that he is worthy of tolerance. Yet, constructed as part of Christian expiation, Mr Montenero also contributes to *Harrington*’s Christian journey from antisemitism to tolerance: his story endorses tolerance but with conditions and limits, while also celebrating his own Christian benevolence. Indeed, identifying the inherent moralising of the novel, one reviewer criticises *Harrington*, writing that though Edgeworth ‘intended to do good [...] It is this which has given to her composition something of too didactic a manner, — and brought the moral of her stories too obtrusively forward.’⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁷ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 219.

⁴⁴⁸ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin Books: London, 2003), p. 63.

⁴⁴⁹ ‘Harrington, a Tale, and Ormond, a Tale’, *The Edinburgh Review*, 28.56 (1817) 390-418 (391).

Constructing a didactic moral tale of philosemitism, and continuing the sympathetic tradition of the benevolent Jew, Edgeworth also conjures Mr Montenero's loving daughter, Berenice, onto *Harrington's* Jewish stage. It is through the representation of Berenice that the limits of the novel's conditional tolerance are revealed. Like her father, Berenice is continually placed in opposition to Shakespeare's characters, and Berenice's comparison with Jessica in particular reveals the Christian gaze through which *Harrington* is constructed. Ragussis writes that 'Jewish identity itself disappears, or is mysteriously relocated, as if it exists only behind a mask, only in performance, only through a Christian mediation that confounds and absorbs it,'⁴⁵⁰ and this is best illustrated through the introduction of Berenice. Taking place during Harrington's much awaited trip to see Macklin's performance in *Merchant*, Berenice's entrance into the narrative is a moment of rupture. Though initially absorbed in Macklin's Shylock, Harrington's enthusiastic reverie is interrupted when he catches a glimpse of Berenice, and as he subsequently shields Berenice from the performance onstage by standing in front of her line of sight (at her request), Harrington recounts that:

now, my pleasure in the play was over, I could no longer enjoy Macklin's incomparable acting; I was so apprehensive of the pain which it must give to the young Jewess. At every stroke, characteristic of the skilful actor, or of the master poet, I felt a strange mixture of admiration and regret. I almost wished that Shakespear [sic] had not written, or Macklin had not acted, the part so powerfully: my imagination formed such a strong conception of the pain the Jewess was feeling, and my inverted sympathy, if I may so call it, so overpowered my direct and natural feelings, that at every fresh development of the Jew's villainy I shrunk, as though I had myself been a Jew.⁴⁵¹

Here, and seemingly for the first time, Harrington considers *Merchant* not from his own Christian perspective, but from a Jewish perspective instead, or rather from what he imagines this Jewish perspective to be. Taking the opportunity of physically 'changing my position', Harrington states that 'I now saw and heard the play solely with reference to her feelings.'⁴⁵² This rupture mirrors Edgeworth's own experience following the intervention of Rachel Mordecai's letter where Edgeworth is motivated to reconsider her previous fictional portrayals of Jewish characters. Interrupting the narrative and Harrington's focus on Shylock, Berenice prompts a newfound consideration of representations of Jews and an awareness of a common humanity between Jews and Christians where, like Christians, Jews are seen to experience pain and distress too. The importance of imagination in facilitating sympathy with others is emphasised through both moments of rupture that centre of the perspectives of Jewish women and the consequences of these interruptions. For Edgeworth, she creates *Harrington*, while within the narrative of this novel her eponymous protagonist imagines himself a Jew in order to conceive of the pain felt by his new acquaintance. Through Harrington's narration, Berenice's voice and perspective are even, at times, blurred with Harrington's, and her reported speech uses pronouns as if these words were in fact spoken by Harrington himself: "I should oblige her," she added, in a lower tone, "if I would continue to stand as I had

⁴⁵⁰ Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion*, pp. 59-60.

⁴⁵¹ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 215

⁴⁵² Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 216.

done.”⁴⁵³ Following Harrington’s gaze, the moral lesson of this novel is made clear as the reader is invited into this journey from antisemitism to tolerance.

Yet, largely absent from this scene is Berenice herself, and even her reported speech contains Harrington’s ‘I’. As the reader joins Harrington in considering Jessica through a Jewish perspective, or turning from Jessica to gaze upon Berenice instead, the Jewish stage of *Merchant* is therefore simply replaced with another fictional Jewish stage that is, like the stage of *Merchant*, populated with cultural types and figures constructed by non-Jewish arbiters, while the construction of a common humanity and essential sameness overlooks Berenice’s individuality. Like other works in this trend such as Walker’s *Theodore Cyphon*, within *Harrington* Edgeworth attempts to exorcise Shakespeare’s monstrous merchant (together with Macklin’s version of Shylock) and his disobedient daughter, however in the novel these figures are simply replaced with the equally fictional representations of a benevolent Jew and his loving daughter. Moreover, shielded from *Merchant* and Shakespeare’s characters, Berenice’s imagined Jewish perspective is displaced, relocated, and filtered through the Christian mediation of Harrington’s gaze and narrative, and it is this gaze that shapes the representation of Jewish characters and the construction of tolerance in the novel. Jewish Others are humanised and tolerated, but in a way that upholds the values and authority of Christian cultural hegemony, and the limits of this tolerance manifest in the almost marriage between Harrington and Berenice the Jewess.

Jessica and Berenice are constructed as sexual objects to be gazed on by their Christian suitors, and the interruption engendered by Berenice’s entrance into the narrative not only introduces sympathy, but transforms *Harrington* into a romance story where two suitors compete for her affections and her hand in marriage. However, in contrast to Walker’s Eve and Scott’s Rebecca (whom I will discuss later in this chapter), Berenice is typically characterised through her absence. In her absence, and in the spaces where she is not, or where her perspectives and interiority are unknown, these details are conjured and imagined by Christian mediators. Discussing Harrington’s fascination with Berenice, his friend Mowbray speaks of his own interest in the actress who plays Jessica, observing: ‘you to your Jewess, and I to my little Jessica.’⁴⁵⁴ Shakespeare’s Jessica and Berenice the Jewess are placed in binary opposition to one another, but both depictions function as sexual objects of the male, Christian gaze to be admired, pursued romantically, and potentially reconstituted through sexual or marital unions, or through religious conversion. Notably, however, the women signified in this statement, ‘your Jewess’ and ‘my little Jessica,’ are in fact both Christian, and only associated with Jewish identities through Christian narratives, statements, or performances. The actress playing Jessica and who Mowbray initially pursues a relationship with is no more a Jew than Macklin, and as is revealed in the final pages of the novel, though Berenice is the daughter of a Jew she identifies as a Christian. The ‘Jewess’ signified in Mowbray’s statement is therefore not Berenice, but a version of Berenice imagined by her Christian suitors and one who ultimately does not really exist.

⁴⁵³ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 215.

⁴⁵⁴ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 217.

Epitomising this absence is Harrington's account of his visit to a synagogue where, hoping to encounter Berenice and her father, Harrington details, instead, his disappointment that 'Berenice did not appear.'⁴⁵⁵ This absence is a clue to the later revelation of Berenice's Christian identity, but it also represents the inherent artificiality of Christian constructions of Jewishness. False clues appearing to signify Berenice's Jewish identity are presented, and contribute to the tension and anxiety surrounding the almost marriage of a Jewish daughter and Christian suitor within the novel, an apprehension that only abates with the sigh of relief that follows the revelation that this presumed Jewess is in fact Christian. These false clues include her Spanish fashion and wearing of long veils which were 'not then in fashion,'⁴⁵⁶ a style that she is ridiculed for and that also signals to her alterity and exoticism. Glimpsing her face from beneath her veil reveals another seemingly false clue, and Lady Anne Mowbray speculates that Berenice is 'An East-Indian I should guess, by her dark complexion,' a physical characteristic that Berenice shares with her Jewish father.⁴⁵⁷ When unmasked like Shylock and Jessica, similar fictional constructions such as Berenice the Jewess are also revealed to be empty and lacking, and though they may be compelling characters on a fictional Jewish stage, neither Jessica nor Berenice will actually be found in a synagogue. The emptiness of the imagined version of Berenice in particular is primarily interpolated with or consumed by the characteristics and identity of her father. Mr Montenero is Jewish, and therefore his daughter's identity is, wrongly, assumed to be Jewish too. Much of Harrington's romantic pursuit of Berenice occurs through his developing friendship with Mr Montenero, and while in *Theodore Cyphon* the friendship between Bensadi and Cyphon frequently includes Eve, in *Harrington* although Berenice is often present during such interactions, she is either silent, her contributions chronicled with little detail, or her perspective is assimilated as part of her father's. Harrington notes, for example, that, when 'her father spoke, it seemed to be almost the same as if she spoke herself, her sympathy with him appeared so strongly,⁴⁵⁸ and Mr Montenero, too, remarks that 'Berenice, I am sure, will think and feel as I do.'⁴⁵⁹ Berenice is thus constructed as a cipher. At the theatre, she is placed in opposition to a performance of Shakespeare's Jessica with her perspective imagined by Harrington, while beyond this theatrical space she is simply perceived as an extension of her father. Visiting his new Jewish friends with the professed motive of viewing Mr Montenero's art collection, Harrington's true intention is to gaze upon Berenice, but the result is the same: like the collection of art, Berenice is viewed, gazed upon, and objectified as her father's possession. Yet, as a sexual object, and as a Jewess who is constructed as a potential site for radical assimilation, she is also viewed with the hope to transform her through marriage or conversion from the daughter of a Jew into the loving wife of a Christian.

⁴⁵⁵ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 271.

⁴⁵⁶ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 266.

⁴⁵⁷ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 213. Berenice's dark complexion suggests that she can be considered in terms of ethnic-religious Jewishness that, as I discuss in chapter 1, is perceived to be immutable, although Edgeworth does not discuss this idea with regards to her revelation that Berenice is Christian.

⁴⁵⁸ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 231.

⁴⁵⁹ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 291.

Berenice and her father are both depicted as Jewish Others: they are welcomed into Christian society and celebrated in terms of their exceptionality, but Edgeworth hesitates in fulfilling the marriage of Harrington the Christian and Berenice the Jewess. Paralleling *The Spanish Campaign*, this hesitation is rooted in racial anxieties surrounding Berenice's ethnic-religious identity and the idea that her bloodline may be polluted by her Jewish father. In Meeke's novel, Victoria and Charles marry, but this marriage is swiftly followed by Victoria's death and with it the termination of her Jewish grandfather's bloodline. In *Harrington*, however, Edgeworth attempts to retroactively expunge Berenice's Jewishness. Exploring the idea that 'The Jewish connexion was always a stumbling block' with regards to intermarriage between Jews and Christians,⁴⁶⁰ Harrington's journey from childhood prejudice and Judeophobia to tolerance culminates with his marriage proposal to a woman he believes to be Jewish, and the final obstacle he faces is his father's prejudice. As a politician, and through his opposition to the 1753 Jewish Naturalisation Act and then his zealous support for its repeal in the following year, Harrington's father is directly tied to the structures of Britain's political antisemitism. His prejudice continues throughout the novel as the narrative details events taking place from Harrington's youth — where Harrington witnesses his father's political antisemitism — to events that take place almost two decades after the political fate of the Jew Bill. For the majority of the novel, Harrington's father denounces his son's interest in Jews, and his uncompromising prejudice is encapsulated through his threat to disinherit Harrington if he marries a Jewess. Finally meeting Mr Montenero and Berenice towards the novel's conclusion, Harrington's father experiences a kind of epiphany and, like his son, progresses towards tolerance. However, there remains one barrier marking the limits his own conditional tolerance: he will accept Mr Montenero and Berenice as friends, but nothing more. The final hesitation of Harrington's father is represented through his oft-repeated phrase, 'Jupiter Ammon.' This phrase is meaningless in itself, the words referencing an amalgamation of Egyptian and Roman deities, but it is nonetheless important as it signifies the demarcation of acts as sanctioned or condemned. Swearing by 'Jupiter Ammon' that his son will never marry a Jewess, this phrase signifies the limits of his tolerance along with the importance of observing traditional and cultural conventions, while further establishing the Christian father as absolute authority. The limits of tolerance are determined through the body of the Jewess, and marriage between Berenice the Jewess and her Christian suitor is denied by a British, Christian patriarch *because* she is perceived to be different and Other.

This barrier of difference is, however, overcome in the novel's denouement through the dramatic revelation of Berenice's Christian parentage. Retroactively transforming Berenice from Jewess to Christian in the final pages of the narrative, Mr Montenero discloses that 'her mother was a Christian, and according to the promise to Mrs Montenero, Berenice has been bred in her faith, a Christian, a Protestant.'⁴⁶¹ Within *Merchant*, the barrier of Jessica's status as Jewish Other is conquered through marriage and conversion, a transformation that is inherently antisemitic as it attempts to eradicate all traces of Jessica's Jewishness and transfer her familial ties from Shylock, her Jewish father, to her new Christian husband. Oft left unspoken from considerations of Jessica's identity is her mother, Leah, and exploring the Jewish identity of Leah, M

⁴⁶⁰ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 276.

⁴⁶¹ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 327.

Lindsay Kaplan observes that the significance of this maternal heritage in determining Jessica's racial identity is typically overlooked within criticism.⁴⁶² In Shakespeare's play, Leah is alluded to in relation to Jessica's enduring and potentially immutable Jewishness even after her marriage and conversion, but only in terms of Leah's hypothetical infidelity.⁴⁶³ The possibility that Shylock may not be Jessica's father is presented as the only option that could fully expunge Jessica's status as Jewish Other, while the Jewishness of Leah is overlooked entirely. In contrast, within *Harrington* the spectre of Berenice's dead mother is raised from the dead to transform her daughter from Jewess to Christian, and specifically an English Protestant. Thus, her body, her identity, and most importantly her marriage with Harrington become acceptable to a British, Christian audience. There are limits to the acceptance of Berenice the Jewess within British, Christian society; but for Berenice the Christian, her marriage to Harrington is sanctioned and celebrated because she is no longer deemed to be Other. Revealing the instability of reproductive biological racism, while Victoria in *The Spanish Campaign* must die in order to put an end to her polluted bloodline, Berenice is allowed to live and marry within the text because she is declared to be a Christian, and her transformation from Jewish Other into essential sameness with her Christian suitor is represented as complete. Like Scott, Edgeworth's readers may also breathe a sigh of relief that Berenice is not Jewish, and this sigh and the hesitation that precedes it marks the limits of conditional tolerance emblematic in this period, and signalled through the fulfilment in fiction of Jewish and Christian intermarriage, or rather, through the prevention of such unions. On the surface, this revelation exposes, perhaps unintentionally, the fallibility of the Christian gaze. This gaze controls and mediates fictional constructions of Jewishness, but ultimately representations like Berenice are revealed to be empty, artificial, and not really Jewish at all. Yet the limits marked out through the hesitation and then final acceptance of Berenice the Christian as Harrington's future wife remain blurred, ambiguous, and leaves several questions unanswered.

The genesis of *Harrington* lies in Rachel Mordecai's initial letter to Edgeworth, and returning to the correspondence between these two women we find that Rachel Mordecai does not share Scott's sigh of relief at the novel's conclusion, but rather expresses her frank confession that 'in one event I was disappointed: Berenice was not a Jewess.'⁴⁶⁴ Echoing Berenice's question in novel's final line, 'and why not a

⁴⁶² M. Lindsay Kaplan, 'Jessica's Mother: Constructions of Jewish Race and Gender in *The Merchant of Venice*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 58.1 (2007) 1-30 (1).

⁴⁶³ 'Launcelot. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jessica. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Launcelot. Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jessica. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed: so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.' (*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 5, lines 1-13).

⁴⁶⁴ Rachel Mordecai Lazarus, 'Warrenton, October 28th, 1817', in *The Education of the Heart*, pp. 13-18 (p. 16).

good Jew?’⁴⁶⁵ — a question that directly ties Mr Montenero’s benevolence to his Jewish identity — Rachel Mordecai’s disappointment similarly questions why Berenice’s retroactive transformation was necessary. While Mr Montenero’s benevolence is read by Harrington’s father as a sign of his inherent Christian qualities, and Berenice’s new Christian identity is considered with relief by those belonging to Britain’s dominant cultural classes, the interjection of Jewish women, or characters associated with Jewishness, again disrupts this perspective and consequently questions such limits of tolerance. In response to Rachel Mordecai, Edgeworth acknowledges that she lacks a good reason for making her Jewess a Christian, but discloses instead her own hope for the legacy of *Harrington*:

I really should be gratified if I could have any testimony even were it ever so slight from any of your persuasion that they were pleased with my attempt to do them justice. But except from you, my dear Madam, and one or two other individuals in England, I have never heard that any of the Jewish persuasion received Harrington as it was intended. A book or merely a print of any celebrated Jew or Jewess or a *note* expressing their satisfaction with my endeavours or with my intentions would have pleased - I will not say my vanity - but my heart.⁴⁶⁶

Here, Edgeworth seeks, like Cumberland before her, a ‘greater gratification’ for her Jewish representations. Attempting to exorcise previous antisemitic constructions and creating a fictional artefact of Jewish tolerance and personal atonement through *Harrington*, Edgeworth’s response manifests Cheyette’s notion of the inherent moralising of philosemitism.⁴⁶⁷ Often demanding and feeding on hoped-for gratitude and recognition from the group afforded redress or offered conditional tolerance, this tradition of philosemitism thus privileges the individual whose professed philosemitic actions are performed, in part, with the expectation that they themselves will be praised for their virtue and tolerance. The depiction of inter-community marriage is again denied, and the sigh of relief or expression of disappointment in the prohibition of this union within fiction reveals differing perspectives regarding the limits of tolerance, but also the limits of representing the Other. The moral of *Harrington* is one of tolerance and a greater sympathy between Jewish and Christian communities, but this lesson is ultimately constructed through a Christian perspective that upholds the norms, values, and culture of Christian hegemony and celebrates the virtue of its Christian suitor and the moral philosemitism of its author. Turning from *Harrington* to other works of fiction, Edgeworth continues to seek her friend’s opinion, and following the publication of *Ivanhoe* Rachel Mordecai writes in a letter: ‘You ask how I like Rebecca? Hers appears to me the most finished female character that Scott has drawn.’⁴⁶⁸ Though disappointed with Berenice, Rachel Mordecai is enamoured with Scott’s Jewess, and in this response she is not alone.

⁴⁶⁵ Edgeworth, *Harrington*, p. 331.

⁴⁶⁶ Maria Edgeworth, ‘Edgeworthstown, June 21, 1821’, in *The Education of the Heart*, pp. 21-24 (p. 23).

⁴⁶⁷ Cheyette, p. 8.

⁴⁶⁸ Rachel Mordecai Lazarus, ‘Wilmington, July 17th, 1824’, in *The Education of the Heart*, pp. 59-68 (p. 64).

“Daughter of Israel”: Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*

Scott’s contribution to this sympathetic tradition is *Ivanhoe*, an historical romance exploring the creation of English national identity and featuring, alongside its array of Norman and Saxon characters, a benevolent Jew and his loving daughter. However, as illustrated through Rachel Mordecai’s letter, the public’s admiration of, and fascination with, Scott’s Jewess Rebecca far surpasses interest in his version of the benevolent Jew, Isaac, or at times even the novel’s eponymous heroic knight. Rebecca is praised by contemporary reviewers for being ‘by far the most interesting female character in the work,’⁴⁶⁹ while several dramatic adaptations emerged in quick succession after *Ivanhoe*’s publication in order to capitalise on the novel’s success, many of which diverge from Scott’s original novel by explicitly referencing the character of the Jewess in their titles. These include, for example, Thomas Dibdin’s *Ivanhoe; or The Jew’s Daughter* and William Thomas Moncrieff’s *Ivanhoe! or, The Jewess*, two plays which both appeared in 1820. As one contemporary review observes, Dibdin and Moncrieff were not alone in the rush to adapt *Ivanhoe* which was ‘very eagerly seized by several dramatic writers, and, we believe, pieces grafted on it played at five theatres in London at the same time.’⁴⁷⁰ Further revealing the competitive commodification of *Ivanhoe*, Moncrieff laments in the advertisement of his play that ‘I wrote my drama as soon as the Romance of “Ivanhoe” was published, in the hope of being the first in the market with so saleable a commodity, but was much surprised to find *other* WRITERS were *three* weeks before me.’⁴⁷¹ Part of the commercial value of adaptations of *Ivanhoe* undoubtedly comes from the mystery and celebrity of its author, Scott, who published anonymously as ‘the Author of Waverley’ following the success of his debut novel *Waverley* in 1814.

However, the popularity and therefore the marketability of Scott’s novel is also tied to its Jewish characters, and specifically to Rebecca. Responding to the outpouring of critical acclaim bestowed upon *Ivanhoe*, Jane Porter reveals her frustration that works by herself and her sister Anna Maria were not credited among Scott’s influences or attaining the same success, observing in particular similarities between Anna Maria’s 1817 chivalric romance *The Knight of St John* and *Ivanhoe*.⁴⁷² Yet, as Fiona Price writes, though the two novels share ‘a focus on Judaism, an urgent drive to adapt the chivalric, a motif of national healing and a stadial approach to historical narrative,’ accusations of plagiarism or appropriation are exposed as baseless to any one who reads both works.⁴⁷³ This is evident when comparing the novels’ Jewish characters, who appear only in the third volume of *The Knight of St John*, while the novel’s Jewish daughter Tamar is

⁴⁶⁹ ‘Ivanhoe; A Romance’, *The New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register* (1820) 73-82 (79).

⁴⁷⁰ ‘Ivanhoe; or, The Jewess. A Chivalric Play in Three Acts based on the Popular Romance of “Ivanhoe”’, *Literary Chronicle and Weekly Review*, 2.53 (1820) p. 326.

⁴⁷¹ Thomas William Moncrieff, ‘Advertisement’ in *Ivanhoe! or, The Jewess*, (London: 1820).

⁴⁷² See: Fiona Price, *Reinventing Liberty: Nation, Commerce and the British Historical Novel from Walpole to Scott* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p. 170.

⁴⁷³ Fiona Price, *Reinventing Liberty: Nation, Commerce and the British Historical Novel from Walpole to Scott* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p. 170.

inconsequential to the narrative and, as a minor character, unremarkable. In contrast, Scott's depiction of Rebecca is singularly significant. Nadia Valman identifies twenty-nine dramatic and operatic versions produced in the sixty years following *Ivanhoe's* publication, and notes that of these adaptations fourteen transferred the focus away from Ivanhoe himself and onto Scott's 'tragic Jewess Rebecca.'⁴⁷⁴ Revising and translating Gioacchino Rossini's successful 1826 French pastiche opera *Ivanhoé*, in 1830 Michael Rophino Lacy published his own version that establishes Rebecca as his opera's indisputable star: titled *The Maid of Judah; or, The Knights' Templar*, this publication also prominently features on its title page an engraving of Rebecca herself.⁴⁷⁵ Depicting a dramatic moment adapted from the novel in which Rebecca threatens to kill herself rather than be subjected to sexual violence, this engraving is accompanied by a subtitle taken from the opera's dialogue: 'Remain where thou art, proud Templar! One foot nearer, and I plunge myself down the precipice.'⁴⁷⁶ A decade after *Ivanhoe* is published, the eponymous hero of Scott's historical romance is thus displaced from his own narrative in favour of Rebecca, and the enduring fascination with Scott's Jewess is one of *Ivanhoe's* central legacies. Rebecca is revered for her own heroism, willing martyrdom, and unwavering adherence to her Jewish faith along with her identity as a loving Jewish daughter. Yet, within this sympathetic tradition, Rebecca also displaces another figure as she assumes and transforms the role of the benevolent Jew. While Isaac can still be considered as a benevolent Jew figure, Rebecca can be viewed as both a loving daughter and a benevolent Jewess.

Marking a departure from his usual subject of choice, Scotland, *Ivanhoe* is Scott's first literary foray into the history of England. The novel details the creation of an English national identity through the marriage of the Normanized Ivanhoe and the Saxon Rowena,⁴⁷⁷ and in his preface to the 1830 edition Scott declares *Ivanhoe* to be 'an experiment on a subject purely English.'⁴⁷⁸ However, Scott's novel also aligns this formative moment in English history with a period marked by violent persecution against Jews and thus, as Ragussis notes, Scott's experiment not only revises English history but 'rewrites' it as 'Anglo-Jewish history.'⁴⁷⁹ This rewriting focuses on Isaac of York and his daughter Rebecca, the novel's two main Jewish characters. Taking place in the twelfth century and before England's expulsion of its Jewish community in 1290, this period, and subsequently Scott's novel, is tied to a history of Blood and Ritual Murder Libel, as well as many violent massacres of Jewish people including, for instance, the York massacre in 1190. These stories of Blood Libel and violence continued to haunt England even following the legal readmission of Jews in 1655. Discussing Scott's Waverley novels, Susan Manning writes that they 'collectively transformed what

⁴⁷⁴ Nadia Valman, *The Jewess in Nineteenth-Century British Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 20-21.

⁴⁷⁵ The engraving is by Mr Bonner and taken from a drawing by Mr M Cruikshank during a performance of the opera.

⁴⁷⁶ M. Rophino Lacy, *The Maid of Judah: a serious opera, in three acts* (London: John Cumberland, 1830), p. 36.

⁴⁷⁷ Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion*, p. 104.

⁴⁷⁸ Walter Scott, 'Introduction to *Ivanhoe*', in *Ivanhoe*, ed. Ian Duncan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 3-12 (p. 5).

⁴⁷⁹ Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion*, pp. 113. Lady Rowena is a descendant of Saxon Kings of England, and while Ivanhoe is also a Saxon he is disinherited by his father Cedric and instead associated with the Norman King of England, Richard.

history meant,⁴⁸⁰ and Scott's similarly transformative rewriting in *Ivanhoe* draws on his reader's awareness of England's antisemitic past while focusing on a societal shift from violent antisemitism to tolerance and moral philosemitism. This tolerance is exemplified through the novel's English hero, Ivanhoe. Rescuing both Isaac and Rebecca, Ivanhoe functions, like Theodore Cyphon, as a Christian saviour, and as Rebecca's champion he is further constructed as a divinely sanctioned protector.

The conditions and limits of this tolerance, however, are demonstrated through Ivanhoe's relationship with Scott's Jewess. While highlighting the benevolence of both Jewish and Christian characters, this novel concludes with a celebration of Christian virtue and the marital union of Ivanhoe and Rowena that upholds Christian societal dominance and cultural hegemony. This marriage is explicitly supported by Rebecca, although many readers, preferring Rebecca to Rowena, felt disappointed that the romantic union between Ivanhoe and Scott's Jewess was not realised. Though Scott never intended for Ivanhoe and Rebecca to be united through marriage, we can view the implied potentiality of their romance as an almost marriage in that it presents Rebecca as a suitable romantic partner, while Ivanhoe's prior romantic engagement with Rowena functions as a barrier to their marriage unconnected to Rebecca's Jewishness. Yet, while the legacy of Ivanhoe and Rowena's marriage within the novel is the creation of an English national identity, the legacy of the novel itself and the culmination of the Romantic period's tradition of the sympathetic benevolent Jew is Rebecca. We can, as Ragussis proposes, read Ivanhoe as a mythical story chronicling the origin of English national identity, but we can also view Rebecca's story as a mythicised retelling of Anglo-Jewish history. Looking back to the historical roots of England that encompasses violent antisemitic and gendered persecution but also incorporates moments of tolerance between Jews and Christians, Rebecca's story as a loving Jewish daughter and benevolent Jewess also looks forward to the present moment where the foundational roots of English tolerance towards Jews have prospered.

Connected to England's medieval Jewish community in York, Isaac acts as a moneylender to Prince John while the persecution directed towards him throughout the narrative is typically constructed around his wealth and financial vulnerability. Though overshadowed by his daughter in the novel, Isaac nonetheless embodies key characteristics of the benevolent Jew including his friendship with the Christian suitor established upon mutual tolerance and support, and his love for his daughter, Rebecca, who is cherished by him above all else. Moreover, and similar to other works in this period that construct Jewishness or depict sympathetic Jewish fathers and daughters, *Ivanhoe* is haunted by Shakespeare's *Merchant*. Introducing Isaac in chapter five, Scott's benevolent Jew figure is admitted into a Saxon banquet hall and thus also admitted onto Scott's historical Jewish stage, and this introduction is framed by the chapter epigraph taken from Shylock's 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' speech.⁴⁸¹ Reestablished by Kean's transformative performance that

⁴⁸⁰ Susan Manning, 'Walter Scott (1771-1832): The Historical Novel', in *The Cambridge Companion to European Novelists*, ed. Michael Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) pp. 140-158 (p. 145).

⁴⁸¹ The full epigraph quoted by Scott is: 'Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, / dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the / same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and / cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?' (*The Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 1, lines 55-60).

reframes Shylock from a monster to a sympathetic figure, this speech signals not simply Shylock's revenge, but tolerance as it highlights the shared human experiences universal to Jews and Christians. Framing Isaac's entrance with these lines therefore encourages the reader to consider Isaac through this lens of tolerance and universal humanity, or essential sameness. While Isaac is shunned by both Saxons and Normans, and his host Cedric affirms conditions that mark the limits of tolerance regarding his presence in this Saxon space ('we may endure the presence of one Jew for a few hours. But I constrain no man to converse or to feed with him'⁴⁸²), *Ivanhoe*, disguised as a pilgrim, stands in contrast to this discriminatory behaviour. Embodying an ideal of English and Christian tolerance, *Ivanhoe* first offers his chair to Isaac and engages him in conversation, and then later, when he learns of a plot to kill Isaac, he helps him to escape. Although there are still conditions to the tolerance performed towards Isaac by Christians in this novel,⁴⁸³ there is a shift away from violent persecution and a tolerance based on excessive physical separation, towards more inclusive and sympathetic inter-community relationships, and through Isaac Christian virtue and moral philosemitism is celebrated. Commending and upholding Christian moral virtue through *Ivanhoe*'s example, this novel thus provides its readers with a model of how to act with tolerance and kindness to those deemed Other within a culturally diverse society.

Though both Isaac and Rebecca experience violent antisemitism, Rebecca experiences persecution of a different nature because she is a woman: subjected to gendered and sexual violence, Rebecca is objectified as a Jewish woman and then later put on trial as a witch. This is demonstrated through descriptions of Rebecca's physical appearance and her encounters with other male characters. Throughout the novel, for example, Rebecca is frequently perceived by Christian characters such as Reginald Front-de-Boeuf, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and Prince John as a sexual object,⁴⁸⁴ while her physical descriptions emphasise her Jewish dress, racial otherness, and exotic sexuality:⁴⁸⁵

Her form was exquisitely symmetrical, and was shown to advantage by a sort of Eastern dress, which she wore according to the fashion of the females of her nation. Her turban of yellow silk suited well with the darkness of her complexion. The brilliancy of her eyes, the superb arch of her eyebrows, her well-formed aquiline nose, her teeth as white as pearl, and the profusion of her sable tresses.⁴⁸⁶

Regarded through the male gaze and perspective of Prince John, this depiction dissects her body parts and dress in part of a blazon. As Valman notes, Rebecca's construction as a Jewess draws on fantasies that gave rise to nineteenth-century Orientalism and that often conflated the figure of the Jewess with the Oriental

⁴⁸² Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 63.

⁴⁸³ See for example the treatment of Isaac by King Richard, Locksley, and others following his rescue from the Templar Knights at Castle Torquilstone.

⁴⁸⁴ See, for example, chapter 7 where Prince John appraises Rebecca at the jousting tournament; chapter 11 where Bois-Gilbert describes the 'lovely Jewess' as his prize (p. 223); and chapter 12 where Front-de-Boeuf characterises Rebecca as a handmaiden that he has given to Bois-Guilbert.

⁴⁸⁵ Valman, p. 28.

⁴⁸⁶ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, pp. 93-94.

woman.⁴⁸⁷ Repeatedly characterised and admired as ‘beautiful daughter of Zion,’⁴⁸⁸ ‘daughter of Israel,’⁴⁸⁹ and ‘fair rose of Sharon,’⁴⁹⁰ such constructions of Rebecca highlight her Jewishness in relation to her status as a daughter, and thereby her claim to paternal protection, and as a woman objectified and desired by other men, thus also underscoring her potential vulnerability. In one moment, the narrator even gently reprimands Ivanhoe as he similarly looks upon Rebecca: ‘I know not whether the fair Rowena would have been altogether satisfied with the species of emotion with which her devoted knight had hitherto gazed on the beautiful features, and fair form, and lustrous eyes, of the lovely Rebecca.’⁴⁹¹ However, although Ivanhoe gazes on the beautiful features of Rebecca in a way that suggests his possible desire for her or admiration for her beauty — a possibility that contributes to the disappointment felt by some readers that their relationship was not realised romantically — he does not, unlike other characters such as Bois-Guilbert, act on these desires. This is partly due to Ivanhoe’s discovery that Rebecca is Jewish. Rebecca wistfully notes that when she revealed her ethnic-religious identity he exchanged his ‘glance of respectful admiration, not altogether unmixed with tenderness’ with a glance that contained ‘no deeper feeling than that which expressed a grateful sense of courtesy received from an unexpected quarter, and from one of an inferior race.’⁴⁹² There is no suggestion that Ivanhoe would act improperly regardless of Rebecca’s racial or religious identity, but nonetheless, because Rebecca is a Jewish woman and Ivanhoe an English Christian, the limits of his tolerance, sympathy, and potential relationship with her can thus only be platonic. Providing a model of self-control and respect for the Other, and also a model of conditional tolerance that does not sanction romantic unions between Christians and those deemed to be racially inferior, Ivanhoe’s virtue thus contrasts with other Christian men in the novel who do act on their desires for, or their fears of, the female Jewish Other.

When Isaac and Rebecca are taken prisoner by a group of Templar Knights along with Ivanhoe, Isaac is tortured for his money until they are rescued, but Rebecca is kept on as the sole prisoner of Templar Knight Bois-Guilbert, having been given to him by Front-de-Bœuf. Indeed, Rebecca’s continued captivity is the result of Front-de-Bœuf’s assumption that she is Isaac’s concubine rather than his daughter, a misidentification that presumes she lacks paternal safeguarding or protection afforded legally through

⁴⁸⁷ Valman, p. 4.

⁴⁸⁸ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 93. See also ‘pearl of Zion’ pp. 130-131 and ‘sweet daughter of Zion’ p. 252. As well as being called daughter of Zion, Rebecca’s suffering and persecution are also aligned with the ‘oppressed of Zion’ (p. 423) and she can be read as a metaphorical Zion figure representing the oppression and exile of diasporic Jews.

⁴⁸⁹ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 252.

⁴⁹⁰ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 252. This is an allusion to the King James translation of Song of Songs 2:1 in which the speaker (the beloved) declares ‘I am the rose of Sharon, a rose of the valley’. Song of Songs or Canticles is unique in the Hebrew Bible in that it celebrates sexual love.

⁴⁹¹ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 237.

⁴⁹² Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 299.

marriage and therefore can be freely given away as sexual property.⁴⁹³ Of course, and as the engraving on the title page of *The Maid of Judah* later illustrates, Bois-Guilbert is the primary sexual threat to Rebecca: first using rhetorical persuasion and coercion to pressure Rebecca into having sexual relations with him, Bois-Guilbert falls in love with her — partly as a result of her defiance and self-determination — and then tries to force her to elope with him in order to save her life. Keeping Rebecca as his prisoner leaves her additionally vulnerable to the institution of the Templar Knights, who subsequently conclude that she has bewitched Bois-Guilbert and must therefore be put on trial for witchcraft.

Rebecca is continually objectified by others, but Isaac sees Rebecca only as his cherished daughter. Tortured by Front-de-Boeuf, Isaac at first refuses to relinquish any money, but when he learns that his daughter has been given to Bois-Guilbert as a handmaiden he offers everything:

Take all that you have asked,' said he, 'Sir Knight — take ten times more — reduce me to ruin and beggary, if thou wilt, — nay, pierce me with thy poniard, broil me on that furnace, but spare my daughter, deliver her in safety and honour! As though art born of a woman, spare the honour of a helpless maiden. She is the image of my deceased Rachael, she is the last of six pledges of her love — Will you deprive a widowed husband of his sole remaining comfort? — Will you reduce a father to wish that his only living child were beside her dead mother, in the tomb of our fathers?'⁴⁹⁴

This chapter is again framed by an epigraph taken from *Merchant* that presents a moment of separation between father and daughter, and highlights the relationship between these characters from Shylock's perspective: 'My daughter — O my ducats — O my daughter! / O my Christian ducats! / Justice — the Law — my ducats, and my daughter!'⁴⁹⁵ While the epigraph for chapter five constructs a frame of tolerance, here the epigraph encourages a comparison between Shakespeare's Shylock and Jessica and Scott's Isaac and Rebecca. The father-daughter relationship established in *Merchant* is one of daughterly disobedience and fatherly revenge, and it is also a relationship that hinges on the importance of money, or ducats, to Shylock as signifying these acts. Yet, while Shylock appears equally distressed by the loss of his money as he is by the loss of his daughter, *Ivanhoe* subverts this characterisation and presents Rebecca as Isaac's most treasured possession; valuable to him above all of his money, and even his own life. Exorcising Shylock and Jessica, remnants of these characters are still present in Scott's novel, but these established stereotypes are exploited to emphasise the ways that Scott's characters subvert these antisemitic types. In the place of Shakespeare's monstrous merchant is a benevolent and loving Jewish father deserving of sympathy and tolerance; and in the place of a disobedient Jewish daughter is Rebecca: cherished by her father, desired by Christian men, but, unlike Jessica, remaining loyal to her father and to her faith.

⁴⁹³ A similar misidentification of Rebecca occurs earlier in the text where Prince John asks 'What is she, Isaac? Thy wife or thy daughter' (p. 94) which also contributing to a confusion between Rebecca's identity as daughter or wife/lover. This confusion and slippage is further implied through Rebecca's resemblance to her dead mother, as well as the association with the biblical Isaac, Rebekah, and Rachel engendered through Scott's choice of names. See Gen. 26:1-11.

⁴⁹⁴ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 237

⁴⁹⁵ The epigraph for chapter twelve is taken from *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 2, Scene 8, lines 15-17.

Isaac's supplications to Front-de-Boeuf are unsuccessful, but having gained his freedom, Isaac petitions Ivanhoe on behalf of his imprisoned daughter: the novel's eponymous hero is again able to assume his role as Christian saviour, while his continued interactions with Isaac and Rebecca throughout the narrative demonstrate enduring and reciprocal relationships established upon tolerance and kindness. Reciprocating Ivanhoe's initial act of benevolence, Isaac presents his liberator with a suit of armour and a war horse so that Ivanhoe can compete in the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouch as a knight, having astutely deduced Ivanhoe's chivalric identity hidden beneath his pilgrim's guise. Competing as Desdichado — the Disinherited knight — Ivanhoe prevails as champion of the tournament under this new disguise, but sustains some severe injuries during the melee on the second day, and here Isaac again steps in to offer his benevolence as he arranges for Ivanhoe to be conveyed back to Isaac's home in York where he can better arrange for medical assistance. We can consider these exchanges between Ivanhoe and Isaac through Ragussis's idea of the transformation of monetary debt into moral debt. Though Isaac is, like Shylock, a moneylender, his initial reparation to Ivanhoe is not born out of financial obligations, but the priceless debt of Ivanhoe saving his life and offering kindness when no one else would. Later at the tournament, Isaac steps in where Ivanhoe's father, Cedric, hesitates. While Cedric had previously disinherited his son, Isaac and his daughter take charge of the wounded Ivanhoe and provide not monetary assistance but compassion and medical care. Yet these moments, while examples of Isaac's reciprocal benevolence towards Ivanhoe, are also connected with Rebecca's benevolence too. After his victory on the first day of the tournament, Ivanhoe sends his servant to visit Isaac in order to repay the financial value of the borrowed armour, but Rebecca privately, and without the knowledge of her father, returns the money:

'My father did but jest with thee, good fellow,' said Rebecca; 'he owes thy master deeper kindness than these arms and steed could pay, were their value tenfold. What sum didst thou pay my father even now?'

'Eighty zecchins,' said Gurth, surprised at the question.

'In this purse,' said Rebecca, 'thou wilt find a hundred. Restore to thy master that which is his due, and enrich thyself with the remainder.'⁴⁹⁶

Like Isaac, Rebecca feels indebted to Ivanhoe for saving her father's life, and this clandestine act highlights Rebecca's love for her father and also her own financial means to repay acts of kindness. In this way, Rebecca echoes other loving daughters in this tradition, such as Eve who offers her jewels to help those in need, but the secret nature of Rebecca's acts further separates and distinguishes her from her father, presenting her as independent and autonomous. Whereas Isaac was happy to accept Ivanhoe's repayment, Rebecca disagrees and acts according to her own judgement. However, she does not seek credit or public recognition for her secret act of restitution, suggesting instead that her generosity is delivered on behalf of her father.

⁴⁹⁶ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 130.

Similarly, Rebecca's compassionate influence can be seen in Isaac's decision to offer assistance to the wounded Ivanhoe. Continuing to extend their benevolence to an individual outside of their Jewish community, it is Rebecca who persuades her father that they should offer help to their 'sick friend' despite the danger it might cause for them from his enemies.⁴⁹⁷ Emphasising the love, respect, and esteem with which Isaac views his daughter, the narrator adds the supplemental detail that Isaac was, 'as we have just seen, frequently guided by her opinion, even in preference to his own.'⁴⁹⁸ In part a reaction to the violent antisemitic persecution in this period of England's history, there are limits to Isaac's benevolence, but Rebecca's altruism does not share these limits. Thus in *Ivanhoe*, Rebecca, and not her father, embodies the role of the benevolent Jew more completely. Yet, though assuming the role of benevolent Jew, or rather the benevolent Jewess, Rebecca is not merely a female version of her male counterparts.

From Sheva, Abednego, and Nathan the Wise portrayed onstage, to Bensadi, Mr Montenero, and Isaac depicted in novels, benevolent Jews constructed in the Romantic period typically share the same occupations as Shylock: moneylending and mercantile enterprise. As I have discussed, these professional occupations allow the benevolent Jew to carry out charitable moneylending within their Jewish communities as well as to the wider, Christian community of Britain, and such financial philanthropy is a manifestation of their exceptional, Jewish benevolence. However, though Rebecca does possess her own wealth that she generously distributes as part of her own moral transactions, Rebecca's exceptional benevolence also manifests in her role as a Jewish healer. Asserting control over the health and wellbeing of Ivanhoe, Rebecca confidently states that 'He will not die father', to which Isaac responds, 'I well know, that the lessons of Miriam, daughter of Rabbi Manasses of Byzantium, whose soul is in Paradise, have made thee skilful in the art of healing, and that thou knowest the craft of herbs.'⁴⁹⁹ Traditional benevolent Jew figures are represented within the long-established practice of Jewish moneylending and mercantile trade, but Rebecca reflects the medieval practice of medical healers conventionally associated with women. As William Minkowski notes, following the introduction of formal medical training in the Middle Ages, women were excluded from academic institutions, but nonetheless continued to serve as midwives, herbalists, and healers in their communities.⁵⁰⁰ This is a tradition of female healing practices where women are trained by other women in their communities, and curative secrets handed down from one generation to the next. Trained in the art of medicine and herbs by her mentor, Miriam, and whose curative secrets she keeps well guarded, Rebecca puts her medical skills to benevolent use as she heals her Jewish community and her Christian neighbours. This includes Ivanhoe, who is cured with the 'healing balsam of Miriam.'⁵⁰¹ Thus, whereas the benevolent Jew can offer financial support and friendship to the Christian suitor, the

⁴⁹⁷ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 206.

⁴⁹⁸ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 296.

⁴⁹⁹ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 294. The name Rabbi Manasses of Byzantium is perhaps a reference to Manasseh King of Judah in 2 Chronicles, who is described as an individual who 'practiced divination and witchcraft, sought omens, and consulted mediums and spiritists' (2 Chron. 33:6).

⁵⁰⁰ William Minkowski, 'Women Healers of the Middle Ages: Selected Aspects of Their History', *American Journal of Public Health*, 82.2 (1992) 288–295 (288).

⁵⁰¹ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 296.

benevolent Jewess can also heal his medical ailments and injuries, and restore his body back to physical health.

Rebecca therefore occupies dual roles: assuming the mantle of the benevolent Jew alongside her father, she also remains a loving Jewish daughter within the text who is cherished by her father and admired by her Christian suitor. Unlike other benevolent Jew narratives, however, Rebecca's story — her imprisonment first as sexual property and then as a witch, her near martyrdom as a consequence of her witch trial, and her eventual rescue — emphasises gendered aspects of antisemitic persecution together with her nurturing role as a benevolent Jewess. Noting the 'curative connection' between money and medicine within *Ivanhoe* that is facilitated through Isaac and Rebecca's father-daughter relationship, Price observes that Rebecca's medical skills are viewed as both healing but also destructive.⁵⁰² It is this later interpretation that leads the Templar Knights to consider Rebecca to be a threat, and while Rebecca's skill as a healer contributes to her benevolence, her medical skills are thus also used as evidence against her during her witch trial. Erroneously believed to have cast a spell on her abductor, Bois-Guilbert, her healing is further misread as diabolic magic that threatens to pollute the body politic of Christianity because she is not only a witch, but a 'second witch of Endor,'⁵⁰³ a 'Jewish sorceress,'⁵⁰⁴ and 'the pupil of the foul witch Miriam.'⁵⁰⁵ Scott returns to the subject of witchcraft in his 1830 publication *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, where he traces the history of witchcraft from stories of Moses and the Witch of Endor in the Hebrew Bible to the last sentence of death for witchcraft passed in Scotland in 1772,⁵⁰⁶ and criticises witch-hunts in particular: 'when the alarm of witchcraft arises, Superstition dips her hand in the blood of the persons accused.'⁵⁰⁷ Detailing the superstitious perception in the Middle Ages of the 'contract of witchcraft' where demons and witches were believed to combine their powers to inflict harm upon persons or property,⁵⁰⁸ Scott distinguishes these early modern fears from the stories of Jewish sorcery in the Hebrew Bible, but notes several biblical sources for witchcraft and sorcery that fed into Christian fears of witches and Jewish sorcery.⁵⁰⁹ Foreshadowing European witch-hunts in the early modern period where women healers were accused of witchcraft and sentenced to capital punishment if they were found guilty of being a

⁵⁰² Price, *Reinventing Liberty*, p. 190.

⁵⁰³ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 390. See also p. 391.

⁵⁰⁴ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 390. See also p. 394, p. 397, and p. 403.

⁵⁰⁵ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 394.

⁵⁰⁶ 'In the year 1722, a Sheriff-depute of Sutherland, Captain David Ross of Littledean, took it upon him, in flagrant violation of the then established rules of jurisdiction, to pronounce the last sentence of death for witchcraft which was ever passed in Scotland. The victim was an insane old woman belonging to the parish of Loth, who had so little idea of her situation as to rejoice at the sight of the fire which was destined to consume her.' (Walter Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* (London: George Routledge and Sons. 1884), p. 272).

⁵⁰⁷ Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 183.

⁵⁰⁸ Walter Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft* (London: George Routledge and Sons. 1884), pp. 66-67.

⁵⁰⁹ For example, Scott cites the examples of Moses and Aaron as magician in Exodus 7; the Witch of Endor in Samuel 1 Samuel 28:3-25; and laws against witchcraft and sorcery in Deuteronomy 18:10-11 and Leviticus 19:31; 20:6.

witch,⁵¹⁰ the potential threat of Rebecca's witch trial is heightened as her tutor, Miriam, was previously burned at the stake on this charge in accordance to the directive of Exodus 22:18: 'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.' Rebecca's decision to continue to share her medical skills despite knowing the fate of her mentor, and the possibility that she may be subjected to the same fate, thus underscores the bravery of her enduring benevolence.

Such historical anti-witch and antisemitic persecution is denounced within the text as 'fanaticism of the times,'⁵¹¹ yet Ivanhoe emerges in distinct opposition to such outdated prejudices, and as he saves Rebecca from persecution and death he is presented as an exemplar of Christian tolerance and heroism. Rescuing first Isaac and then Rebecca, Ivanhoe echoes Walker's Theodore Cyphon as he is presented as a divinely sanctioned protector of Jews. Though constructing a benevolent Jewess, *Ivanhoe* is similar to previous stories of the benevolent Jew discussed in this chapter in that Rebecca functions as a 'good' Jew who deserved to be saved by the Christian hero in an act of liberation that ultimately demonstrates Christian virtue and moral philosemitism. In particular, Rebecca declares that Ivanhoe is 'the champion whom Heaven hath sent me,'⁵¹² while Ivanhoe's conquest over Bois-Guilbert in the lists, a victory that saves Rebecca from being condemned and burnt as a witch, is presented as the will of God. Indeed, Bois-Guilbert dies 'Unscathed by the lance of his enemy,'⁵¹³ and instead the death and defeat of the Templar Knight is achieved through what appears to be an act of divine intervention. Ivanhoe comes to Rebecca's defence when others will not and despite his own injuries, but ultimately he does not land a killing blow on his opponent, and rather Bois-Guilbert's death occurs through natural means that are interpreted as divine retribution. The characterisation of Ivanhoe's actions and Rebecca's salvation as being sanctioned by Heaven is further emphasised through the repetition of the phrase 'the judgement of God.' Prior to his combat against Bois-Guilbert, Ivanhoe uses this phrase to describe his determination to assume the role of Rebecca's champion, and presenting himself as an instrument of God he adds 'to his [God's] keeping I commend myself.'⁵¹⁴ Similarly, the Grand Master also uses this phrase following the defeat of Bois-Guilbert: "'This is indeed the judgement of God" said the Grand Master, looking upwards — '*Fiat voluntas tua!*'"⁵¹⁵ The physical act of looking to the Heavens underscores that this is a judgement from the divine, while the latin phrase, which translates as 'thy will be done', frames the Christian defence of Rebecca, who can be interpreted as representing the wider Jewish community, as fulfilling the will of the Christian God. Delivering Rebecca from her witch trial represents a continuance of the exchange of mutual benevolence,

⁵¹⁰ The peak period of witch-hunts in Europe occurred in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and Henry Kamen notes that across Europe women made up more than three quarters of those accused (*The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 291).

⁵¹¹ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 295. The narrator also describes the persecution facing Jews in this period as the 'fanaticism and tyranny of those under whom they lived.' (p. 82).

⁵¹² Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 489.

⁵¹³ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 490.

⁵¹⁴ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 489.

⁵¹⁵ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 490.

tolerance, and friendship between Jews and Christians, but in portraying Ivanhoe as a manifestation of Rebecca's prayers and a champion sent by God to protect her, it also highlights the importance of Christian tolerance towards Jews and Christian opposition to outdated antisemitic persecution.

Following her emancipation, Rebecca is able to return to her nurturing, benevolent role. Rebecca's identity as a benevolent Jewess is firmly established throughout *Ivanhoe*, and in the novel's conclusion she affirms that though she is leaving England she will devote the rest of her life to 'tending to the sick, feeding the hungry, and relieving the distressed.'⁵¹⁶ Isaac is almost absent in the last few pages of the novel as his role as benevolent Jew is supplanted by his daughter, and we further learn that his decisions continue to be guided by Rebecca as father and daughter plan to leave England together in order to seek out more tolerant communities in Europe, and also to enable Rebecca to continue her benevolent work. Moving the focus of the narrative away from Isaac, the novel concludes instead with a meeting between Rebecca and Rowena where Scott's Jewess bestows a casket filled with jewels upon the recently married Rowena and Ivanhoe. A key function of the benevolent Jew is financially supporting the Christian suitor and others, thus helping to uphold and preserve Christian society, and here this benevolent role is performed by Rebecca. Mirroring an earlier moment in the novel where Rebecca repays Ivanhoe with money from her own wealth, Rebecca is depicted as financially supporting Ivanhoe, his marriage to Rowena, and consequently the creation of England through their union. Such acts of financial support and friendship would not have been possible had Ivanhoe not assumed the role of Rebecca's champion, and similarly Ivanhoe's defence of Rebecca would not have been possible had she not earlier nurtured him back to health. Benevolent inter-community relationships, acts of tolerance and kindness, and the mutual repayment of moral debt are thus presented as key foundations of English society. Symbolically, this also places moral philosemitism as a key foundation to the formation of England. Represented through Ivanhoe's heavily sanctioned example, England itself is constructed as a nation that will protect and welcome Jews. Although in the historical period in which this novel is set antisemitic persecution of Jews would leave to violence, Blood Libel, and the eventual expulsion of Jews in 1290 (and the departure of Rebecca and Isaac foreshadows this expulsion), the narrative also looks forward to the contemporary period of its publication that follows the readmission of Jews to England as well as the cultivation of political and cultural movements of tolerance, sympathy, and philosemitism within society.

However, although Rebecca leaves England, her legacy remains, and with it the tension surrounding the implicit but never fully realised romantic relationship between Rebecca and Ivanhoe. In the final pages of the novel, the narrator highlights that Ivanhoe recollected Rebecca's 'beauty and magnanimity'⁵¹⁷ more than his wife might approve, recalling the moment earlier in the novel in which the narrator chastises Ivanhoe, and again suggesting the potentiality of romance, though it remains unrealised. This enduring fixation with Rebecca is shared by Scott's readers. Though Scott disables the romantic union of Rebecca and Ivanhoe within his novel, several of the many adaptations of *Ivanhoe* emphasise the romance, or potential

⁵¹⁶ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 501.

⁵¹⁷ Scott, *Ivanhoe*, p. 502.

romance, between Rebecca and Ivanhoe, while many of Scott's readers felt so strongly that Ivanhoe married the wrong woman that Scott was compelled to address this issue in his introduction to the 1830 edition:

The character of the fair Jewess found so much favour in the eyes of some fair readers, that the writer was censored, because, when arranging the fates of the characters of the drama, he had not assigned the hand of Wilfred to Rebecca, rather than the less interesting Rowena. But, not to mention that the prejudices of the age rendered such an union almost impossible, the author may, in passing, observe, that he thinks characters of a highly virtuous and lofty stamp, is degraded rather than exalted by an attempt to reward virtue with temporal prosperity. Such is not the recompense which Providence has deemed worthy of suffering merit, and it is dangerous and fatal doctrine to teach young persons, the most common readers of romance, that rectitude of conduct and of principle are either naturally allied with, or adequately rewarded by, the gratification of our passions, or attainment of our wishes.⁵¹⁸

While Rowena and Ivanhoe are rewarded romantically and materially, Scott argues that to reward Rebecca through a romantic and marital union with Ivanhoe would be both ahistorical and a fatal lesson to teach his readers that virtue and suffering are always rewarded. Denied temporal remuneration, Rebecca is thus an example that virtue, benevolence, and sacrifice are invaluable and worthwhile in and of themselves. Yet this conclusion to Scott's narrative is not simply a lesson in virtue and reward, but one of tolerance that outlines, in particular, the limits of Christian tolerance while promoting Christian cultural hegemony. The almost marriage between Rebecca and Ivanhoe thus marks the limits of conditional tolerance constructed as part of a cultural hegemony: promoting the perspectives, values, and interest England as a Christian nation, the monstrous and disobedient characteristics of Shylock and Jessica are exorcised to construct exceptionally benevolent and loving Jewish characters, but they remain Other nonetheless. Though not erasing England's historical legacy of antisemitic, *Ivanhoe* rewrites this history to emphasise Christian tolerance and proclaim Christian virtue. Using the examples of Isaac, Rebecca, and Ivanhoe, this novel offers a model of Anglo-Jewish relations built on tolerance and mutual benevolence that ultimately upholds Christian cultural hegemony and the dominance of the Christian ruling class within English society. When considered alongside Scott's sigh of relief upon learning that Edgeworth's Jewess was not really Jewish after all, it is clear that for Scott at least the marital union between Rebecca and Ivanhoe was never a possibility, and that such inter-community marriages are not sanctioned or promoted within his novel. Regardless of Scott's intentions, however, there was and continues to be an audience for such a marital union, and although not portrayed within his novel, the marriage between Rebecca and Ivanhoe does exist as an imaginative possibility within the minds of his readers who may not share Scott's hesitation.

Conclusion

⁵¹⁸ Walter Scott, 'Introduction to *Ivanhoe*', in *Ivanhoe*, pp. 3-12 (p. 12).

The novels explored in this chapter attempt to exorcise the antisemitic stereotypes of Shylock and Jessica through presenting sympathetic portrayals of Jewish fathers and daughters. In conversation with the “cultural revolution” of sympathy and sentiment’ that was also taking place onstage with Kean’s transformative performance of Shylock and plays such as Cumberland’s *The Jew* and Dibdin’s *The Jew and the Doctor*, stereotypes of monstrous Jewish usurers and disobedient Jewish daughters are supplanted by new archetypes: the benevolent Jew and his loving daughter, or, as is the case in *Ivanhoe*, the benevolent Jewess. However, though promoting mutual tolerance within society, these narratives typically cultivate moralising philosemitism. Constructed and imagined from a distinctly Christian perspective, Jewish characters within these texts are frequently venerated for their exceptionalism, and such texts often engender aspects of philosemitism that privilege the moral gratification of the Christian author. The Jewish daughter is presented as an appropriate love object and, in theory, the potential union between the Jewish daughter and Christian suitor is sanctioned, but ultimately this is never fully realised in these novels and thus the almost marriages illustrated in these stories represent the limits of tolerance that is constructed as conditional. While these novels attempt to exorcise the ghosts of Shylock and Jessica, they reveal the pervasiveness of such imagined Jewish ghosts that continue to haunt British society, and in the final chapter I will examine another ghost that is continually conjured within British literature: the Wandering Jew.

Chapter 4

The Wandering Jew: A Palimpsestic Spectre

When, therefore, Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall he do? Jesus saith to him, If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me. Then this saying went forth among the brethren, that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus had not said to him that he would not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?
(John 21:20-23)

'Tis sixteen hundred years ago,
Since I came from Israel's land;
Sixteen hundred years of woe! –
With deep and furrowing hand,
God's mark is painted on my head;
Must there remain until the dead
Hear the last trump, and leave the tomb,
And earth spouts fire from her riven womb.
(Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Wandering Jew*, l. 571-6)

Continually appearing and reappearing across Europe, the Wandering Jew emerged from Israel after the death and resurrection of Jesus and has been wandering the globe ever since. Or, so the story goes. An apocryphal addition to the Passion narrative, the Wandering Jew is cursed to eternally wander and is unable to die, at least until the prophesied second coming of the Christian Messiah. Though perhaps not as well known today as the vampire and the devil, the Wandering Jew nonetheless remains a notable archetype of explicit Jewish identity tied to the supernatural. More precisely, the Wandering Jew is a prominent archetype existing in fiction and folklore through which Jewish identity is typically constructed by non-Jewish writers ventriloquizing a Jewish voice. Created in part to serve as witness to Christianity's central narratives (the Passion and Resurrection narratives), and also functioning as an embodiment of conversion from Judaism to Christianity, the Wandering Jew is essentially a Derridean spectre: conjured, fleshed out, and retroactively inserted into the very narratives it claims to substantiate. Owing to the nature of oral traditions, the origins of the story may never be uncovered, while to return to the Gospels, the New Testament, and historical accounts contemporaneous to these biblical narratives is to reveal nothing of the Wandering Jew. This figure therefore exists as a spectral presence within the Passion story, a kind of absent presence that is repeatedly conjured or produced through stories, folklore, and legends of the Wandering Jew. In *Spectre of Marx* Derrida asserts that:

The production of the ghost [...] is effected, with the corresponding expropriation or alienation, and only then, the ghostly moment *comes upon* it, adds to it a supplementary dimension, one more simulacrum, alienation, or expropriation. Namely, a body! In the flesh (*Leib*)! For there is no ghost, there is never any becoming-specter of the spirit without at least an appearance of

flesh, in a space of invisible visibility, like the dis-appearing of an apparition. For there to be a ghost, there must be a return to the body, but to a body that is more abstract than ever.⁵¹⁹

Derrida further writes that the spectre is ‘what one imagines, what one thinks one sees, and which one projects,’⁵²⁰ and through retellings of the Wandering Jew’s story this figure thus represents a conjuration of a supernatural imagined Jew that is repeated again and again. The imagined Jew and representations of the Jewish Other in fiction embody, to some extent, this kind of Derridean spectralization, but the Wandering Jew is an epitome of this ghostly production. As a spectre, the Wandering Jew is a simulacrum produced and spectralized through the manifestation of his presence and the *appearance* of flesh within an abject, alienated Jewish body. Despite a lack of known origins and an ‘authentic voice’, as well as an absence within the foundational texts of Christianity, the Wandering Jew *does* exist, albeit spectrally. Preserved and conjured throughout history by folklore, oral traditions, and fiction, these conjurations also reflect an attempt to create a distance between the Christian “I” (the author) and the Jewish Other, that is repeated with each retelling.

The spectral existence of the Wandering Jew is fragmentary, and history is littered with countless versions of the Wandering Jew and his story, particularly following Matthew Paris’s inclusion of this figure within his influential *Chronica Majora* (1259). With each new iteration, new ideas, characteristics, traits and so on are superimposed onto existing versions, reconstructing previous renditions while simultaneously drawing on and interpolating other contexts. For instance, as Lisa Lampert-Weissig notes, Paris’s seminal version includes Roger of Wendover’s earlier 1228 entry ‘almost verbatim,’⁵²¹ but also includes one of the first extant images of the Wandering Jew. Each new version still resembles and bears visible traces of earlier versions (sometimes explicitly), and thus the Wandering Jew’s spectral existence is also palimpsestic. At the heart of the Wandering Jew’s story is the story of Christianity, the Christian messianic promise, and the experience of waiting for the prophesied return of the Christian Messiah; and, underneath the constructed layers of Jewishness and Otherness that construct and conjure the Wandering Jew, is the Christian self. Christian theology, although varying within different denominations, posits that the Christian Messiah will return, and this hope for the Second Coming incorporates belief in the Last Judgement and the promise of eternal life or eternal damnation. This idea of waiting for the Messiah and the fulfilment of messianic promises is not a Jewish experience, but a Christian one. Similarly, anxieties surrounding this experience of waiting reflect distinctly Christian anxieties that include, for example: that the Christian Messiah may not return; that the messianic promise will not be fulfilled; that the Christian self will not be forgiven and redeemed through salvation; and that there will be no ‘end’ but simply an undetermined period of waiting. These anxieties are entwined with the early Christian belief that the Second Coming would occur within the lifetime of Jesus’ disciples (‘Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled’, Matt. 24:34; see also Mark 13:30 and Luke 21:32), and the non-occurrence of this prophesied

⁵¹⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London : Routledge Classics, 2006), p. 157.

⁵²⁰ Derrida, p. 125.

⁵²¹ Lisa Lampert-Weissig, ‘The Transnational Wandering Jew and the Medieval English Nation’, *Literature Compass*, 13.12 (2016), 771-783 (774).

event subsequently created space for the fear of a broken messianic promise, while also engendering a reinterpretation of Christian eschatology. Cursed to wander the earth until the Second Coming of the Christian Messiah, the Wandering Jew likewise waits for this return and with it *his* forgiveness, salvation, and an end to his wandering achieved through his death. First alienated from the Christian body and self, Christian anxieties regarding messianic promises and this period of waiting are returned through spectralization to an abstract, flesh, and Jewish body. Often depicted as a Jewish convert to Christianity, the Wandering Jew further reflects anxieties of conversion, but also of Christian supersessionism. Disrupting a Jewish narrative that begins with God's covenant with the Jewish nation, Christianity lays claim to God's covenant through the Christian Messiah, rewriting the Jewish prophesied return to Israel with the prophesied End Times. The palimpsestic spectral Wandering Jew therefore represents not simply the construction of an imagined Jewish spectre, but a Christian spectre too.

As the distance between the period in which early Christianity first developed and the present continues to grow, subsequent generations expecting the Second Coming have necessarily contended with the notion that this return hasn't happened, at least not *yet*. In parallel with, or perhaps as a consequence of, the continual non-occurrence of the prophesied return, generations repeatedly create new versions of the Wandering Jew, updating the story of this figure in relation to the author's contemporary context and imposing additional, palimpsestic layers onto this story. The Romantic period is a particularly productive moment in the Wandering Jew's history where the figure as we know him today was fully realised. Notable prose conjurations of the Wandering Jew in this period include Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), William Godwin's *St. Leon* (1799), Charles Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), and George Croly's *Salathiel* (1828). Appropriating and retelling the story of the Wandering Jew, each novel constructs distinct versions: Lewis creates a Gothic version who possesses a variation of the mark of Cain; Godwin creates an ostensibly secular version connected to the forbidden secrets of alchemy; Maturin doubles the Wandering Jew myth into his story of an English/Irish Faustian wanderer that also features a supernaturally old Jew entombed within an underground vault; and Croly focuses on the Wandering Jew as Jewish eyewitness to the crucifixion, the early years of Christianity, and the Fall of the Second Temple. These depictions are distinct, but they also contain traces of earlier versions of the Wandering Jew, embodying the palimpsestic and spectralized nature of this figure. Moreover, the narrative trajectory of each conjuration is tied to a period of waiting (for the prophesied end; for death; and for either salvation or damnation) along with the anxieties that surround such a period, thus unveiling Christian anxieties and the Christian spectre that lie beneath the Wandering Jew. However, before turning to Godwin, Maturin, and Croly, it will be useful to first trace the history of the Wandering Jew, outline the central characteristics of his tale, and establish the proliferation of Wandering Jew and Wandering Jew-type figures in the Romantic period.

From the Wandering Jew's Origins to his Romantic and Gothic Wanderings

Though it is difficult to locate the exact genesis of the Wandering Jew myth, in part due to its manifestation in various oral and print traditions, the version conjured in Matthew Paris's *Chronica Majora* is one of the first extant descriptions and images of the Wandering Jew and is often considered to be the 'most influential medieval written source of the legend.'⁵²² In an entry titled 'Of the Jew Joseph who is still alive awaiting the last coming of Christ,' Paris's *Chronica Majora* records the story of Cartaphilus (Joseph) as recounted by an Armenian archbishop on pilgrimage to England. Notably, before ending up in Paris's chronicle this version was diffused through several oral, interpretative, and written layers: Paris's entry is a copy of the earlier historical account by Roger of Wendover, while the story itself purports to have been orally conveyed by an Armenian archbishop, and is further filtered through his French interpreter. Through these multiple layers, we are told that Cartaphilus was a porter in the service of Pilate who physically struck and mocked Jesus:

[he] said in mockery, "Go quicker, Jesus, go quicker, why do you loiter?" And Jesus looking back on him with a severe countenance said to him, "I am going, and you will wait till I return." And according as our Lord said, this Cartaphilus is still awaiting his return; at the time of our Lord's suffering he was thirty years old, and when he attains the age of a hundred years, he always returns to the same age as he was when our Lord suffered. After Christ's death, when the catholic faith gained ground, this Cartaphilus was baptized by Ananias (who also baptized the apostle Paul,) and was called Joseph.⁵²³

This extract contains several key features of the Wandering Jew myth, many of which are used within subsequent versions: a transgression or crime, here the insult directed towards Jesus; a curse, here enacted as Jesus proclaims the individual will wait till he returns; End Times and prophecy, here signalled through Jesus's awaited return; a supernatural bodily transformation and youthful regeneration; and also conversion. Although privileging his converted identity, the story nonetheless represents the Wandering Jew's dual identities and reveals an apparently indissoluble link to his former Jewish identity. However, while later versions continue and build upon this foundation, and add new palimpsestic layers (while others trace a different lineage altogether), the Roger/Paris version is itself constructed through already existing parts. Noting that the transmission of the legend is both multilingual and transnational, Lampert-Weissing identifies a thirteenth century oral tradition that claims the Wandering Jew was seen in Armenia, and this incident appears in a 1223 Latin chronicle from Italy.⁵²⁴ Lampert Weissing also highlights that the myth dates back to the sixth century,⁵²⁵ while in an 1853 volume of his *Miscellany*, George Reynolds posits that the legend may have originated from the words of Jesus documented in the Gospel of John.⁵²⁶ In response to an inquiry about the Beloved Disciple, Jesus replies 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee' (John 21:22), and Reynolds states that 'In consequence of this expression we are told, "the saying

⁵²² Lampert-Weissig, 774.

⁵²³ Matthew Paris, *Flowers of History*, vol. II, trans. by J. A. Giles (Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1996), p. 513.

⁵²⁴ Lampert-Weissig, 774.

⁵²⁵ Lampert-Weissig, 772.

⁵²⁶ George W. M. Reynolds, 'The Wandering Jew', *Reynolds's Miscellany*, 11.281 (1853) 280 (280).

went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should *not die*.”⁵²⁷ Thus spreading throughout Europe, and merging with early Christian traditions, the concept of a person unable to die and waiting for the return of Jesus transformed, in part, into the legend of the Wandering Jew. Exploiting this biblical connection, one of the titles used for George Croly’s 1828 novel is *Tarry thou till I come; or, Salathiel, the Wandering Jew*, and the Christian perspectives within Croly’s narrative will be explored later in this chapter.

Within the British tradition of the Wandering Jew myth the Paris text is perhaps the most influential text in introducing and popularising the figure, but *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle*, first published in 1634, epitomises his construction both within the British tradition and also within the construction of the myth throughout history. *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle* is a popular English broadside ballad that recounts the history of English monarchs, starting with William the Conqueror, and was continually reprinted until its final publication in 1830.⁵²⁸ Demonstrating its popularity, other printed ballads often included a line stating that they should be sung ‘To the Tune of The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle,’ while, to ensure the ballad’s continued relevance and commercial value, subsequent editions ‘variously reprint, continue, interpolate, and amend the core text, resulting in new versions that typically bring the narrative up to date with the present at the time of publication.’⁵²⁹ Existing in print and oral traditions concurrently, with parts on the one hand taken and added to other works, and on the other, parts added and amended to the core print text (for example, as well as entries of monarchs, various illustrations are also appended to different versions), there is therefore no one definitive version of *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle*. Like the figure of the Wandering Jew itself, this ballad can be viewed as a palimpsest, with new versions written over old versions, though parts of older versions can still be glimpsed (or even heard). Though narrating the ballad itself, the Wandering Jew is not an active character in the events of the poem, and instead the figure functions as a proverbial witness to England’s monarchs while validating a Royalist and Protestant perspective of English history. The ballad, therefore, conjures the Wandering Jew, giving the figure a voice and the appearance of flesh in order to chronicle not a Jewish experience, but an English, Christian one. In this way, the publication history of *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle* and the text itself can be viewed as analogous to the myth of the Wandering Jew.

We can use the analogy of the production of *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle* to trace the many versions of the Wandering Jew myth that exist in print and oral traditions through history. Often tied to Christian theology or Christian national identities, we can trace the foundations of the Wandering Jew myth back even further: beyond the retroactive spectral presence of this figure within the origins of Christianity, this figure is also constructed using parts taken from the Hebrew Bible and Jewish mythology. Among the many names conferred upon the Wandering Jew are Ahaseurus and Ahasver, which appear throughout the

⁵²⁷ Reynolds, 280.

⁵²⁸ The first known record of *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle* is an entry in the Stationers’ Register to Thomas Lambert in 1634. For a detailed overview of all of the editions of the ballad please see the Bodleian Library’s archive (wjc.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/index.html)

⁵²⁹ Giles Bergel, Christopher J. Howe, and Heather F. Windram, ‘Lines of succession in an English ballad tradition: The publishing history and textual descent of *The Wandering Jew’s Chronicle*’, *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 31.3 (2016) 540-562 (551, 542).

Hebrew Bible in the Books of Esther, Ezra, and Daniel. Derrida writes that ‘Inheritance from the “spirits of the past” consists, as always, in borrowing [...] the borrowing *speaks* borrowed language, borrowed names,’ and this aspect of appropriation or borrowing is evident in the spectralized construction of the Wandering Jew.⁵³⁰ Ahasuerus is the King of Persia, who was not Jewish, and Galit Hasan-Rokem’s article ‘The Enigma of a Name’ discusses how this name was an odd, and perhaps unsuitable choice for the Wandering Jew as ‘its first bearer in the Hebrew Bible was a pagan and his role in postbiblical legend made his name unfit for any Jewish child.’⁵³¹ The name Ahasuerus or Ahasver, when given to the Wandering Jew, speaks. It declares an identity that appears on the surface to be Jewish, or at the very least Other, but whispers beneath its surface that this identity is artificial and borrowed, and that those who assign this name to the Wandering Jew to signify Jewish identity lack a full understanding of the original biblical figure. Perhaps, then, it is an apt name for a spectralized imagined Wandering Jew.

Ahasuerus is the name chosen by Percy Bysshe Shelley and his cousin Thomas Medwin for some of their Wandering Jew figures, the former exploiting the name Ahasuerus in his poem *Queen Mab* (1813) and his verse drama *Hellas* (1822), while the latter uses the name in his 1823 play *Ahasuerus, The Wanderer: A Dramatic Legend*. Revealing Shelley’s enduring fascination with this myth, Wandering Jew figures frequently appear within Shelley’s oeuvre, though not always bearing the name Ahasuerus, and his earlier poems, for example, instead confer the names ‘Ghastha’ and ‘Paulo’ on this figure.⁵³² Shelley’s varied use of names exemplifies not only his fascination, but the way that his constructions of this figure developed and evolved throughout his literary career. Though sharing some similarities, each iteration is distinct and this is true even of his versions that bear the name Ahasuerus. Though both depictions recall the tradition of the Wandering Jew named Ahasuerus, he is in *Queen Mab* a phantom conjured by the Fairy Queen, while in *Hellas* he is a hermit healer. *Hellas* is the last of Shelley’s poems published during his lifetime, and Medwin’s play, published a year after Shelley’s death, recalls this poem through the title of his play and the shared character name Ahasuerus that is used in both works. The play itself, however, and Medwin’s version of the Wandering Jew bear little resemblance to *Hellas* and its hermit healer, but rather share similarities with Shelley’s *The Wandering Jew*, a poem written in 1810 but which remained unpublished until 1877. Affixing a preface to his play in which he suggests that he was the genesis for Shelley’s interest in this figure, Medwin claims he shared with Shelley a fragment containing a translation of a German poem about the Wandering Jew (‘I perfectly remembered the circumstance of having given the note in question to Mr. Shelley, some fifteen years ago’⁵³³). The version of the Wandering Jew in this fragment not only sparked Shelley’s lasting interest in the figure but also bore the name Ahasverus. I will return to this German fragment shortly, but

⁵³⁰ Derrida, p. 136.

⁵³¹ Galit Hasan-Rokem, ‘The Enigma of a Name’, *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 100.4 (2010) 544-550 (545).

⁵³² Ghastha is the eponymous wanderer in Shelley’s juvenile poem ‘Ghastha; or, The Avenging Demon!!!’ appearing in an 1810 volume of poetry, *Original Poetry: by Victor and Cazire*, that was co-authored with his cousin Elizabeth Shelley, while Paulo is the name given to Shelley’s Wandering Jew in his poem *The Wandering Jew* written in 1810. For more details about Shelley’s engagement with the Wandering Jew myth throughout his work see Kim Wheatley’s ‘“Strange Forms”: Percy Bysshe Shelley’s Wandering Jew and St. Irvyne’ and Michael Scrivener’s ‘Reading Shelley’s Ahasuerus and Jewish Orations: Jewish Representation in the Regency’.

⁵³³ Thomas Medwin, ‘Preface’, in *Ahasuerus, The Wanderer: A Dramatic Legend* (London: G. and W. B. Whittaker, 1823), pp. vii-xiii (p. viii).

here I want to note the way that Medwin inserts himself into the lineage between this fragment and Shelley's poem, privileging his role in the production of *The Wandering Jew*. Later, writing a biography of his cousin, Medwin expands his role in this production even further, asserting that in their youth the two enjoyed a collaborative relationship that led to the creation of the poem:

We that winter wrote, in alternate chapters, the commencement of a wild and extravagant romance [...] Shelley having abandoned prose for poetry, now formed a *grand* design, a metrical romance on the subject of the Wandering Jew, of which the first three cantos were, with a few additions and alterations, almost entirely mine. It was a sort of thing such as boys usually write, a cento from different favourite authors.⁵³⁴

Emphasising both the 'juvenile production'⁵³⁵ of the poem, and the appropriation or 'plagiarism'⁵³⁶ of the works of others – including Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and the German fragment – Medwin claims not simply to have inspired Shelley's poem, but to have co-authored it. This claim led to the exclusion of *The Wandering Jew* from collections of Shelley's work, but it was later challenged in the nineteenth century by Bertram Dobell who refutes Medwin's claim.⁵³⁷ Yet capitalising on the publicity of Shelley's later works, and claiming ownership of parts of his cousin's earlier works through his assertion of collaboration, Medwin's use of Ahasuerus speaks to his laying claim to and borrowing of parts of Shelley's works, and epitomises the palimpsestic nature of the Wandering Jew.

Another name borrowed from the Hebrew Bible and retroactively associated with the Wandering Jew is Cain, the firstborn son of Adam and Eve who appears in the book of Genesis and whose story has since been revised, retold, and amended in several apocryphal stories and myths.⁵³⁸ Detailing the story of Cain and Abel, Genesis chapter four depicts Cain's murder of his brother Abel, after which Cain is cursed by God for his transgression: 'And now art thou cursed from the earth [...] a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth [...] Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him' (Genesis 4:11-15). If Cain cannot be killed, this raises the idea that he cannot die and has therefore been wandering ever since. Identifying the

⁵³⁴ Thomas Medwin, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, vol. 1 (London: Thomas Cautley Newby, 1847), pp. 53, 54-55.

⁵³⁵ Medwin, 'Preface', in *Ahasuerus, The Wanderer: A Dramatic Legend*, p. vii.

⁵³⁶ Medwin, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, vol. 1, p. 55.

⁵³⁷ Bertram Dobell, 'Introduction', in *The Wandering Jew*, ed. Bertram Dobell (London: Reeves and Turner, 1887) pp. xiii-xxxii. In this 1887 edition of *The Wandering Jew*, Dobell disparages Medwin by stating that 'owing to mental defect, he was a most inaccurate and misleading writer' (p. xiv) and discusses several circumstances that correct Medwin's claims and confirm Shelley's sole authorship of the poem. These include, for example, redressing Medwin's claim that the poem was intended to have seven cantos (of which he would write the first three) with reference to a manuscript of the poem written entirely in Shelley's handwriting that further reveals Shelley considered the poem complete with four cantos (pp. xxiv-xxvi).

⁵³⁸ For example, writing about Cain in *The Legends of the Jews*, Louis Ginzberg observes the apocryphal belief that Cain was in fact fathered by Satan (*The Legends of the Jews*, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937), p. 105.). Connecting Cain and the Wandering Jew, Matthew Paris's *Chronica Majora* illustrates the entry on Cartaphilus with an image visually depicting the sinful nature of the Wandering Jew in which the figure stands hunched over a mattock, a symbol traditionally associated with Cain. Other literary examples of Cain include *Beowulf*, Byron's 1821 play *Cain*, and Victor Hugo's 1853 poem 'La Conscience'. More recent examples include Neil Gaiman's comic series *The Sandman*, and the TV series *Supernatural* and *Lucifer*.

similarities between Cain and the Wandering Jew, E. Isaac-Endersheim notes that within the Wandering Jew 'further wanders Cain.'⁵³⁹ The connection between these figures is immortalized in what Carol Margaret Davison describes as the Wandering Jew's 'memorable cameo début in British Gothic literature' as this figure wanders into Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796).⁵⁴⁰ Praised by Samuel Taylor Coleridge as displaying 'a great vigour of fancy,'⁵⁴¹ Lewis fleshes out his Wandering Jew by alluding to the story of Cain and prominently affixing a distinct variant of the mark of Cain to his version in the form of 'a burning Cross impressed upon his brow.'⁵⁴² In explicitly presenting his version as a Cain-like figure Lewis establishes an overt connection with a biblical foundation, and conjuring a figure who bears a version of the mark of Cain also brings with it a borrowed association with the story of Cain. This connection is further suggested through other echoes of the Genesis story within this short depiction, for example the reference to 'the Almighty's vengeance' and Lewis's characterisation of the Wandering Jew as a 'fugitive.'⁵⁴³ As the Wandering Jew is inserted into the Passion narrative and connected with John 21:22 retrospectively, Lewis's allusions to the language and themes of the Genesis story, and his borrowing of the mark of Cain in particular, similarly create additional connections between this figure, Genesis 4, and Cain. However, as with previous Christian foundations, this association fails to locate the Wandering Jew's origins and presence within these texts. Exploiting these proclaimed connections, Lewis instead borrows parts from the Genesis story and retrofits them onto his Wandering Jew. The mark of Cain is not defined in Genesis chapter four, and if it were it probably would not take the shape of a distinctive symbol of Christianity, but in shaping the undefined mark into a burning cross Lewis infuses an identifying physical marker with a symbol of Christianity and conversion. While both marks signify the transgression of the individual bearing them, along with their punishment, singularity and otherness, branding a figure identified as the Wandering Jew with a symbol of Christianity highlights the tension between these two identities and the figure of the convert.

Lewis's Wandering Jew is an exorcist. He enters the narrative to conjure the ghost of the Bleeding Nun, and to give Raymond (who is being haunted by the Bleeding Nun) the tools to successfully exorcize her and lay her spirit to rest. Lewis's depiction of his spectralized Wandering Jew reflects, however, a different kind of conjuration. Derrida writes of conjuration and exorcism that their production of spectres creates a relentless pursuit that repeatedly convokes the spectre they try to conjure away 'in order to chase after him, seduce him, reach him, and thus keep him close at hand': 'One sends him far away, puts distance between them, so as to spend one's life, and for as *long a time* as possible, coming close to him again.'⁵⁴⁴

⁵³⁹ E. Isaac-Endersheim, 'Ahasver: A Mythic Image of the Jew', in *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*, ed. by Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 195-210 (p. 205).

⁵⁴⁰ Carol Margaret Davison, *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 96.

⁵⁴¹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'The blasphemy of *The Monk*' in *The Gothick Novel* ed. by Victor Sage (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 39-43 (p. 40).

⁵⁴² Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 172.

⁵⁴³ Lewis, *The Monk*, pp. 176, 177.

⁵⁴⁴ Derrida, p. 175.

The Wandering Jew is conjured into narratives and then exorcised from them only to be conjured again within another story. Unlike the Bleeding Nun, the Wandering Jew cannot be forgiven or laid to rest because the structure of the Wandering Jew myth demands that this only happen at the *end*, as part of the Second Coming and with the fulfilment of the messianic promises. Until then, Christian authors can only pursue this figure as he wanders in and out of their stories, adding their own layers to his palimpsestic construction. The mark of Cain is one of the key additions Lewis appends to the Wandering Jew, and his unique depiction subsequently inspired several imitations. Shelley's wanderer figure Ghasta, for example, entreats the listener to 'Look upon my head' where 'Of glowing flame a cross was there,'⁵⁴⁵ and similarly Paolo from Shelley's *The Wandering Jew* states that 'a burning cross illumed my brow / I hid it with a fillet grey.'⁵⁴⁶ The repetition of this specific mark – a burning cross placed on the brow of the wanderer, and sometimes hidden by a piece of clothing – invokes again not only the Wandering Jew but specifically Lewis's wanderer, bringing with it the borrowed spectre of Cain *through* Matthew Lewis's celebrated portrayal. Furthermore, Shelley adds his own layers to Paolo's mark of Cain. In particular, Shelley links this mark to specific aspects of Christian eschatology which are, like the mark of Cain, borrowed to flesh out his wanderer's story: 'God's mark is painted on my head; / must there remain until the dead / Hear the last trump, and leave the tomb, / And earth spouts fire from her riven womb.'⁵⁴⁷ Later, Maturin too alludes to such a mark branded on the forehead of his wanderer as he describes Melmoth wiping a hand over his 'livid brow, and, wiping off some cold drops, thought for the moment he was not the Cain of the moral world, and that the brand was effaced, – at least for a moment.'⁵⁴⁸

The publication of *The Monk* immediately caused a public outcry: claims that it was pornographic and blasphemous led to its being debated in Parliament, and Lewis subsequently releasing a bowdlerised version expunging many of the parts deemed scandalous. However, its legacy, and in particular the legacy of Lewis's grim characters, the Bleeding Nun and the Wandering Jew, lived on beyond the novel, satiating not only Shelley, but also the public's growing appetite for these stories. Contributing to the popularisation of the Wandering Jew myth in this period, and directly inspiring works by Shelley and Maturin, *The Monk* also sparked a wave of related publications from Lewis's own *The Castle of Lindenberg* (1798), to a parodic version of the novel, as well as a mass of bluebooks. Due to the fact that they were 'cheaply manufactured, sometimes garishly illustrated, and meant to be thrown away after being 'read to pieces,'⁵⁴⁹ many bluebooks do not survive today, but despite this Angela Koch notes that 'no less than five versions of

⁵⁴⁵ Percy Bysshe Shelley and Elizabeth Shelly, 'Gasta; or, The Avenging Demon! !', in *Original Poetry: by Victor and Cazire*, ed. Richard Garnett (London and New York: John Lane, 1898) pp. 50-62 (pp. 60-61).

⁵⁴⁶ Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Wandering Jew*, Canto III, lines 689-690.

⁵⁴⁷ Shelley, *The Wandering Jew*, Canto III, lines 573-576.

⁵⁴⁸ Charles Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) p. 299.

⁵⁴⁹ Frederick S. Frank, *The First Gothics: A Critical Guide to the English Gothic Novel* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1987), p. 433.

Lewis's *The Monk* have been preserved in the Corvey Collection.⁵⁵⁰ Lewis's *The Castle of Lindenberg* is essentially a republished version of the secondary narrative of Raymond and Agnes in *The Monk*, lifted almost word for word from his first novel and capitalizing on the popularity of the Bleeding Nun and Wandering Jew figures in its title.⁵⁵¹ New to this publication, and therefore incentivising its purchase, are two illustrations, one of which depicts the exorcism of the Bleeding Nun at the very moment that Lewis's Wandering Jew dramatically reveals the mark on his forehead.⁵⁵² Taking a different direction and transforming Lewis's tale into parody, R. S. Esq.'s *The New Monk* (1798) burlesques not only *The Monk* but Lewis's distinctive wanderer and his mark of Cain through the figure of Dr. Katterfelto.⁵⁵³ Though *The Monk* initially received public opprobrium, Lewis's novel and his wanderer enjoyed both familiarity and popularity as they were continually devoured and adapted.

Embedded within the secondary narrative of Raymond and Agnes, Lewis's portrayal of the Wandering Jew takes up only a small number of pages in *The Monk*, but it remains one of the most prominent and established depictions of this figure in this period. It was not, however, Lewis's first attempt at conjuring the Wandering Jew. Before travelling to Germany in 1793, Lewis visited France and, as was his habit, sent some of his literary compositions to his mother back in England. While many of these works were not published during his lifetime, several were published in 1839 in Margaret Baron-Wilson's *The Life and Correspondence of M. G. Lewis*. Among these works is a short, two stanza poem titled 'LINES, Written abroad, in answer to a Note addressed 'au Juif Errant', and as this poem is not well known I will quote it in full here:

I.

⁵⁵⁰ Angela Koch, 'Gothic Bluebooks in the Princely Library of Corvey and Beyond', *Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text*, 9 (Dec 2002), p. 14, [accessed online: 10 January 2020] <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/romtextv2/files/2013/02/cc09_n01.pdf>. These versions include three that specifically recall the secondary narrative of *The Monk* in their titles (such as Sarah Wilkinson's *The Castle of Lindenberg; or, the History of Raymond and Agnes*) and with it conjure the acclaimed episode of the Bleeding Nun's exorcism performed by the Wandering Jew. Another chapbook from this group, *Almagro & Claude; or Monastic Murder; Exemplified in the Dreadful Doom of an Unfortunate Nun*, also draws on parts of *The Monk*, its plot plagiarising Lewis's banditti tale as well as the Bleeding Nun and Wandering Jew narrative.

⁵⁵¹ The full title of the novel is: *The Castle of Lindenberg; or, the History of Raymond and Agnes; with the story of the Bleeding Nun; and the Method by which the Wandering Jew Quieted the Nun's Troubled Spirit*.

⁵⁵² This image, titled 'The Wandering Jew laying the Ghost of the Bleeding Nun', can be found on p. 80 of Lewis's *The Castle of Lindenberg*.

⁵⁵³ In this parody, Lewis's Raymond figure is replaced with a character named Henry who is haunted by the ghost of the Bleeding Doctor, and the exorcism is performed by an individual known as the man with the tail. Initially identified as Dr. Katterfelto and creating a caricature of Gustavus Katterfelto — a famous eighteenth century Prussian conjurer, scientist, and quack who often performed with a black cat — the man with the tail is later humorously identified as either 'the wandering Jew, or one of the wise men of Gotham' (R. S. Esq., *The New Monk* (London: Minerva Press, 1798), vol. 2, p. 68). Performing the exorcism, Dr. Katterfelto lampoons the Prussian conjurer's black cat, but also satirises Lewis's mark of Cain:

"How darest thou disobey? knowest thou this instrument and cat? shiver at the sight, and think on ancient deeds — deeds of death, of horror, and of blood!"

He said this in so commanding a voice; and opening his mouth more wide than ordinary, in spite of curiosity, and what he said of the yawning mark, I looked up out of the corner of my eye and beheld a grey hairy circle on the roof of his mouth. I was seized with insensible horror.' (*The New Monk*, vol. 2, p. 60).

By fate for ever doom'd to mourn,
 Through many a clime his feet have borne
 Your wretched, wandering Jew.
 Yet should I search the world around,
 My heart would own it never found
 A friend it loved like you!

II.

Full oft, with many a bitter sigh,
 Erst I implored the boon to die;
 But now, with feelings new,
 Though large my share of human woes,
 Unwilling would my eyelids close,
 And grieve to shut you out.⁵⁵⁴

There is no date attached to this poem, so we cannot be certain exactly when it was written, but I would argue that it was more than likely composed in France and before Lewis travelled to Germany in 1793. There are several distinct traditions of the Wandering Jew that exist across Europe, and though sharing several common features of the legend, traditions such as those that flourished in France and Germany also cultivate elements and themes that are distinctly characteristic of each nation's Wandering Jew. The Wandering Jew's German name, for example, 'Der Ewige Jude' translates as the eternal Jew, and German representations of the figure often emphasise his inability to die along with vivid descriptions of attempted suicide and his seemingly eternal isolation. These themes are not found in Lewis's poem, however, and neither is the horrific depiction of the mark of Cain that would distinguish his later Gothic version, while his title references the French name of the Wandering Jew, 'Le Juif Errant'. The French title of the Wandering Jew, like the French tradition itself and other European traditions, emphasises not his eternal existence and punishment but rather his wanderings. The title further recalls a note addressed to 'au Juif Errant' and suggests that perhaps Lewis's poem is written in response to something he discovered abroad, possibly in France and possibly in response to the French tradition of this myth. These lines provide the reader with a brief insight into a mournful, wretched, wanderer apparently conversing with a friend. Rather than manifesting a version of the Wandering Jew figure, this poem focuses more upon the feelings that can be derived from the myth, but nonetheless it offers a unique rendition of the tale that contrasts with traditional depictions. Here is a sympathetic figure who is wretched and wandering, as the use of alliteration underscores; a figure who is not separate from but shares in human woe; and even a figure who expresses a past wish to die. Significantly, this portrayal also incorporates hope, and in particular a new wish *not* to die as a result of this friendship. Addressing an unnamed friend, the poem's use of the pronoun 'you' and the possessive determiner 'your' functions as an address to the reader, revealing the value of relationships within society and even encouraging friendship with those regarded as Other like the Wandering Jew.

⁵⁵⁴ Matthew Lewis, 'Lines, Written abroad, in answer to a Note addressed au Juif Errant.', in *The Life and Correspondence of M. G. Lewis*, vol. II, ed. Margaret Baron-Wilson (London: Henry Colburn Publisher, 1839) p. 304.

The Wandering Jew is thus a versatile spectre repeatedly conjured across Europe, and each conjuration interweaves established traditions with new palimpsestic layers. Like the various traditions and literary conjurations of the Wandering Jew, Lewis's two representations of the legend are distinct, and his unpublished poem stands in stark contrast to the Gothic version conjured in *The Monk*. Moreover, as he introduces the Wandering Jew into Britain's public consciousness through his novel, Lewis also leaves clues to his European sources, although here his inspiration is not the tradition of Le Juif Errant rooted in France but the tradition of the wanderer developed in Germany. The Wandering Jew/Bleeding Nun episode occurs in Ratisbon, Germany, and in an advertisement to the novel Lewis credits the tradition of the Bleeding Nun to Germany and the Castle of Lauensteun in North Bavaria. Although Lewis does not specifically reference the German tradition of the Wandering Jew, it seems odd that he would not be familiar with it given the time he spent travelling Germany in the years preceding the publication of *The Monk*. Further tying Lewis's Wandering Jew to the German tradition is an 1809 edition of *La Belle Assemblée*, which invokes German legends and literature with reference to Lewis's novel. Published in the magazine's section 'Original Communication' are two German stories: the first is a popular German legend titled 'Laurenstein Castle; or, The Ghost of the Nun' and a possible source for Lewis's Bleeding Nun; the second is a prose translation of 'The Wandering Jew' ('Der Ewige Jude'), a poem by German poet Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart originally published in 1783. The German legend resembles the Bleeding Nun portion of *The Monk*, although occupying the place of exorcist in this story is, curiously, not the Wandering Jew but an old lieutenant. However, the placement of the prose translation of Schubart's poem directly after this legend allows the reader to invoke Lewis's wanderer as they recall *The Monk*, something the reader is directly invited to do: 'Our readers are acquainted with the uses to which Mr. Lewis, in his Novel of the Monk, has converted the ancient legend of the Wandering Jew. – The original story was the invention of the celebrated Schubart.'⁵⁵⁵ The arrangement of the two German stories thus mimics the structure of *The Monk* that conjures first the Bleeding Nun and then the Wandering Jew into its narrative, and the reader can glimpse past constructions and stories of the Wandering Jew while considering more recent Gothic iterations, and perhaps even looking forward to future conjurations.

Before moving to examining some of these later conjurations in detail, it is worth exploring the German tradition of the Wandering Jew myth along with its other European roots. The prose translation of Schubart's poem printed in the 1809 edition of *La Belle Assemblée* marks the second time a translation of Schubart's poem appeared in Britain, and its first appearance is located in the third volume of *The German Museum* published in 1801. Lewis, who was fluent in German, probably read Schubart's original poem while in Germany, and indeed his novel appears before either the 1801 or 1809 publications. Nonetheless, these publications are significant in revealing the Romantic wanderings of the myth as it is likely that either the 1801 or 1809 prose translations are the German fragment Medwin claims to have shared with Shelley that I discussed earlier, and thus a key inspiration for Shelley and Medwin's Wandering Jew figures. Although the editor of *La Belle Assemblée* erroneously states that this figure is Schubart's invention, Schubart's poem does

⁵⁵⁵ 'The Wandering Jew', *La Belle Assemblée* (February, 1809) 19-20 (19). Original emphasis.

introduce key features to the Wandering Jew myth that are subsequently resurrected by Lewis as well as Shelley and Medwin, most notably his suicidal Wandering Jew:

Rome, the giantess, fell; I placed myself before the falling giantess. She fell; but did not crush me. Nations sprung up, and disappeared before me, but *I remained and did not die!!* From cloud-capp'd cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrow of existence pierced me again. I leaped into Ætna's grissly abyss [...] I lay convolved with tortures of hell in the glowing cinders but continued to exist.⁵⁵⁶

The futile suicide attempts of Schubart's wanderer are emblematic of the figure of the Wandering Jew itself: this figure cannot be killed or exorcised, but only continuously conjured, resurrected, and pursued. Moreover, as noted earlier, it is the German fragment that presented Shelley and Medwin with the name Ahasverus/Ahasuerus, a name noticeably absent from Lewis's figure who remains nameless. Borrowed from the Hebrew Bible, the name Ahasuerus can also be traced within the German tradition to a small, eight-page pamphlet first appearing in 1602: *Kurtz Beschreibung und Erzehlung von einem Juden mit Namen Ahasuerus (Brief Description and Narration of a Jew Named Ahasuerus)*. Observing that in 1602 there appeared at least twenty different editions of the anonymous *Kurtz* pamphlet, R. Endelmann states that this pamphlet is responsible for making the Wandering Jew 'common property for the broad masses all over Europe and a source of further development within European folklore.'⁵⁵⁷ Like other palimpsestic spectral productions of the Wandering Jew that preceded and followed the publication of *Kurtz*, this pamphlet added its own, new layers to an old story of conversion. Discussing the importance of naming the Wanderer Ahasuerus in this pamphlet, Tamara Tinker states that this name, prominently appearing in the title of *Kurtz*, 'arrogates to Christianity a figure celebrated by Jews at Purim and puts a formerly Popish convert in the service of German Protestantism.'⁵⁵⁸ In the many versions of *The Wandering Jew's Chronicle*, the Wandering Jew is exploited to endorse a Royalist and Protestant construction of English history and nationalism; similarly, the story of the Wandering Jew is utilized in *Kurtz* to promote a Protestant vision of German nationalism.

The *Kurtz* pamphlet highlights the role played by the Wandering Jew in German legends as well as popular constructions of German nationality, and revered German writers such as Schubart, Friedrich Schiller, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe later appropriate this figure into Germany's eighteenth and nineteenth century literary canon. It is very probable that Lewis read Schiller's *The Ghost-Seer* in its original German prior to its English translation and was therefore aware of the text's mysterious wanderer figure

⁵⁵⁶ 'The Wandering Jew', *The German Museum*, 3 (1801) 424-426 (424-425). Compare with a similar passage in *The Monk*: 'But Death eludes me, and flies from my embrace. In vain do I throw myself in the way of danger. I plunge into the Ocean; the Waves throw me back with abhorrence upon the shore: I rush into fire; The flames recoil at my approach [...]' (p. 169).

⁵⁵⁷ R. Endelmann, 'Ahasuerus, The Wandering Jew: Origin and Background' in *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*, ed. Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 1-10 (pp. 5, 8).

⁵⁵⁸ Tamara Tinker, *The Impiety of Ahasuerus: Percy Shelley's Wandering Jew*, (BookSurge Publishing: 2012), p. 1.

the Armenian,⁵⁵⁹ but Lewis certainly would have been familiar with Goethe's *Faust* in its original German.⁵⁶⁰ As Byron reveals in his letters: 'His [Goethe's] *Faust* I never read, for I don't know German; but Matthew Monk Lewis, in 1816, at Coligny, translated most of it to me *vivâ voce*, and I was naturally much struck with it.'⁵⁶¹ This anecdote appears in response to Goethe's own praise for Byron's *Manfred*, Goethe having drawn similarities between Byron's Manfred and his own Faust, and while neither Manfred nor Faust are explicitly identified as the Wandering Jew, these characters and their stories operate in conversation with the Wandering Jew legend. Medwin remarks on this similarity in the preface to his own Wandering Jew drama: 'A character that bears a strong family likeness to Faust, Cyprian, St. Leon, and Manfred, must necessarily give rise to some of the same incident, and naturally fall into some of the same reflections.'⁵⁶² Like many in this period throughout Europe, Goethe was fascinated by the figure of the Wandering Jew. He writes in his autobiography that 'I now took up the strange idea of treating epically the history of the Wandering Jew, which popular books had long since impressed upon my mind. My design was to bring out in the course of the narrative such prominent points of the history of religion and the Church,'⁵⁶³ while a letter penned by Goethe in 1786 further reveals his interest in tracing the origins of Christianity through this legend: 'the "Wandering Jew" again occurred to me as having been a witness of all this wonderful development and envelopment, and as having lived to experience so strange a state of things.'⁵⁶⁴ Although Goethe regarded the Wandering Jew a 'worthy ingredient' for a poem,⁵⁶⁵ it is one creative project he evidently started but never finished (or published), and Goethe instead turned his attention to the Wandering Jew's relation, Faust.

The palimpsestic nature of the spectralized Wandering Jew is here exposed as again and again each new production signals back to and conjures previous versions while concurrently interpolating new parts. The spectre of the Wandering Jew is therefore not a singular ghost, but rather a family of ghosts: each spectre individual yet inextricably connected to all of the other Wandering Jew and Wandering Jew-type

⁵⁵⁹ Jennifer Driscoll Colosimo, 'Schiller and the Gothic – Reception and Reality', in *Who Is Schiller Now: Essays on His Reception and Significance*, eds. Jeffrey L. High, Nicholas Martin, and Norbert Oellers (New York: Camden House, 2011) pp. 287-301 (p. 290). Schiller's *The Ghost-Seer* (*Der Geisterseher*) first appeared in Germany between 1787 and 1789 (published in instalments in the journal *Thalia*) while an English translation appeared in 1800 under the title *The Armenian*. Possibly a supernatural being, but also possibly non-supernatural though equally inscrutable member of a secret society, Schiller conjures his wanderer by appearing to resurrect not the traditional Ahasuerus model, but the Matthew Paris version in which the Wandering Jew legend is told by an Armenian archbishop. *The Ghost-Seer* demonstrably influenced seminal British Gothic texts in this period, including Lewis's *The Monk*.

⁵⁶⁰ Goethe's *Faust* first appeared in 1790 as *Faust, a fragment*. What is now known as *Faust: Part One* was later published in 1808, with *Faust: Part Two* published posthumously in 1832 a year after it was completed by Goethe.

⁵⁶¹ Lord George Gordon, Byron, 'Letter 377: To Mr. Murray', in *The Works of Lord Byron: Letters and Journals*, vol. 4, ed. Thomas Moore (London: John Murray, 1832) pp. 320-321 (p. 320).

⁵⁶² Medwin, 'Preface', in *Ahasuerus, The Wanderer: A Dramatic Legend*, pp. viii-ix.

⁵⁶³ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Autobiography of Goethe. Truth and Poetry: From My Own Life*, trans. A. J. W. Morrison (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1949), p. 35.

⁵⁶⁴ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 'Terni, Oct. 27, 1786' in *The Autobiography of Goethe. Truth and Poetry: From My Own Life*, vol. 2, trans. A. J. W. Morrison (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1949) pp. 345-348 (p. 347).

⁵⁶⁵ Goethe, *The Autobiography of Goethe. Truth and Poetry* p. 64.

spectres. The German tradition of the Wandering Jew is distinct and significantly influenced British and Irish portrayals of the figure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but it is not the only tradition that flourished in Europe and wandered into British and Irish literature. Developing in parallel to the German and French traditions, for example, the Finnish tradition also established recognisable features. Like the Matthew Paris version, the Finnish tradition highlights the profession of the Wandering Jew, yet while the Paris account identifies this figure as a doorman employed by the Romans, in the Finnish tradition the Wandering Jew is depicted as a cobbler by trade and known as ‘Jerusalem suutari’, which translates as the ‘Shoemaker of Jerusalem’. Aspects of this rendition travelled to England, and in the late seventeenth century an English broadside ballad appeared titled ‘The Shoemaker of JERUSALEM.’⁵⁶⁶ Moreover, along with the English ballads, Biblical and European traditions, and the works I have already discussed, the Wandering Jew was continually conjured in England throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, appearing in poetry, plays, novels, and other mediums. Thomas Percy’s *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), for instance, includes an entry on the Wandering Jew that outlines sources from Paris, Calmet, and the German tradition. Following the publication of *The Monk* – and the importance of Lewis’s novel in popularising this figure cannot be overstated – 1797 saw perhaps the first performance of the Wandering Jew onstage in Andrew Franklin’s *The Wandering Jew; or, Love’s Masquerade*. One reviewer writes that this farce ‘will not fail to prove an universal and lasting favourite of the Public,’⁵⁶⁷ and although in reality this isn’t a play about the Wandering Jew, the myth of the Wandering Jew is central to its romance and comedy.⁵⁶⁸ Later in the following century the Wandering Jew’s journey into drama continued as Medwin’s *Ahasuerus* was published in 1823, a year after the publication of Shelley’s own Wandering Jew verse drama *Hellas*, while in 1830 a play titled *The Sea Devil; or, The Wandering Jew* was performed at the Coburg theatre, thus returning the Wandering Jew to the stage.⁵⁶⁹ This figure was also frequently conjured by the Romantics. Michael Scrivener argues that in the hands of the Romantics, the Wandering Jew was viewed as ‘a mythological construct by which Romantic writers idealized their estrangement from dominant social norms,’ and alongside Shelley’s many poetic conjurations of the Wandering Jew, this figure is also employed in the poems of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.⁵⁷⁰ The Mariner portrayed in Coleridge’s ‘The Rime of the Ancient Mariner’ (1798) is often viewed as a Wandering Jew figure, and Heidi Thomson uncovers Coleridge’s continual interest in this figure through an early reference to a projected romance

⁵⁶⁶ The full title of this ballad is: ‘The Shoemaker of Jerusalem. Who lived when Our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST was crucified, and by him appointed to Wander till his Coming Again.’ Curiously, Goethe also notes this employment in his autobiography, writing, ‘In Jerusalem, according to the legend, there was a shoemaker of the name Ahasuerus’ (*The Autobiography of Goethe. Truth and Poetry*, p. 35).

⁵⁶⁷ ‘The Theatre’, *Universal magazine of knowledge and pleasure*, 100 (1797) 364-365 (365).

⁵⁶⁸ This play centres on a father’s belief that old men are also the richest, and therefore he will only allow his daughter to marry the oldest man, leading one suitor to pretend to be the famed Wandering Jew to successfully gain her hand in marriage. Notably, it appears that Lewis’s Wandering Jew never appeared onstage in this period, and although James Boaden adapted Lewis’ novel in his stage play *Aurelio and Miranda* (1798) Boaden exorcises all of Lewis’ supernatural elements. For more details on Boaden’s play see David Christophers ‘Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk* And James Boaden’s *Aurelio And Miranda* – From Text To Stage’.

⁵⁶⁹ Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama: 1800-1850*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930) p. 522. The author of this play is unknown.

⁵⁷⁰ Michael Scrivener, ‘Reading Shelley’s *Ahasuerus* and Jewish Orations: Jewish Representation in the Regency’, *Keats-Shelley Journal*, 61 (2012) 133-138 (134).

(‘Wandering Jew, a romance’) and also his planned collaboration with Wordsworth in *The Wanderings of Cain*.⁵⁷¹ In 1800, Wordsworth himself penned ‘Song for the Wandering Jew’, which served as both a tribute to Coleridge, but also a public assertion of his independence from his friend.⁵⁷² Each conjuration of the Wandering is thus unique and distinct, but also inextricably connected to previous versions as different traditions, contexts, features, and characteristics are woven together to create a palimpsestic spectre.

The Wandering Jew of this period emerges in Britain alongside anxieties surrounding the Jewish Question, conversion, nationality, and claims to biblical legacies. As Jewish immigrants, communities, and converts became more visible in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century society, occupying more space in national and political debates – particularly following the 1753 Jewish Naturalization Act – so too did the Wandering Jew. Thus a visible, identifiable Other, the Wandering Jew was a familiar spectre who could be invoked alongside these debates, while the continued prevalence of this abject, alienated Jewish body, reveals not just anxieties surrounding a Jewish Other, but also British and Irish anxieties surrounding identity, nationality, and conversion. Drawing on the vast range of traditions of the Wandering Jew, writers in this period conjure and flesh out this palimpsestic spectralized figure by continuing, amending, and reimagining his story; taking parts from previous invocations to create their own versions, to which new parts and contexts are interpolated. This chapter has so far provided a discussion of the myth itself, exploring the history and development of the Wandering Jew along with the figure’s emergence and continued presence within British literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and influential texts such as *The Monk*. I now want to turn to examine conjurations of this figure in detail within three prose texts that each add new and distinct palimpsestic layers to this established spectre, beginning with a discussion of the Wandering Jew’s connections to alchemy in Godwin’s *St Leon*.

St. Leon, alchemy, and the alchemical wanderer

Published in 1799, and following the success of his first novel, *Things as They Are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794) and his earlier work on anarchism, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793), *St. Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* is William Godwin’s second novel. *Political Justice* was one of the most popular responses to the French Revolution, propelling Godwin into the public eye and ensuring that his subsequent works, including *St. Leon*, were highly anticipated. This four volume novel tells the tale of a French aristocrat and soldier, the eponymous Count Reginald de St. Leon, who drives himself into madness and leads his family into poverty as a result of his gambling addiction. Noting the differences between Godwin’s current and previous works, one reviewer writes that in *St Leon* Godwin ‘has disclaimed some of the most remarkable dogmas of *political justice*, and now seeks refuge in the benevolence and charities of

⁵⁷¹ Heidi Thomson, ‘Wordsworth’s ‘Song for the Wandering Jew’ as a Poem for Coleridge’, *Romanticism*, 21.1 (2015) 37-47 (41-42).

⁵⁷² Thomson, 37.

mankind for support and comfort.⁵⁷³ The first volume chronicles St. Leon's military rise and then his societal fall, tracing how his gambling debts force his wife Marguerite Louise Isabeau de Damville (the accomplished daughter of the Marquis de Damville) to sell their possessions before the family decide to leave France altogether in order to pursue the life of peasants in Switzerland. Here, the family experience the realities of poverty, natural disaster, discriminatory national relief programs (of which the St. Leon's are unable to benefit from as they are not Swiss) and the unfair consequences of private ownership which results in the family losing their home. St. Leon also endures a period of insanity. Eventually, however, St. Leon and his family are able to establish a life for themselves on a farm at Lake Constance. Yet, having rebuilt an idyllic though poor life, this is not where the story ends. In the second volume a stranger enters and disrupts the narrative and the life of St. Leon with an offer of a powerful but secret gift: the gift of possessing the alchemical secrets of the elixir of life and the ability to transmute metals into gold. Tempted by being the sole living possessor of this secret alchemical knowledge (as passing on this gift would also bring about the stranger's death) and imagining the possibilities of indefinite wealth and eternal life, St. Leon accepts this gift, and in doing so is transformed into a Wandering Jew-type figure who has to live with the consequences of his actions.

On the surface, *St. Leon* is not a traditional Wandering Jew story: there is no reference to the crucifixion; no God or Jesus figure who curses the wanderer; and no anticipation for an apocalyptic event that will bring about the end of the world, and with it the death of the cursed wanderer. Yet, hinging on the rupture caused by a transgressive act, one that violates the perceived natural order of life and death through alchemical means, and the aftermath of this act that leads to a supernatural existence and an uncertain period of waiting, in which the transgressor becomes an outcast forsaken by society, the kernel of the Wandering Jew story persists. Godwin was a prominent atheist, and turning away from the myth's Christian roots *St. Leon* manifests an ostensibly secular version of the Wandering Jew tied to alchemical endeavours and not the story of the Christian messiah. Alchemy blends the magical with the (proto-)scientific, the philosophical and speculative with the occult: existing as the medieval precursor to chemistry, alchemical study typical centred around the alchemist's search for the philosopher's stone, immortality, and the ability to transmute matter into gold. Godwin's stranger, and then St. Leon, are thus not biblical sinners like the Wandering Jew, but alchemists. However, this secular conjuration continues to manifest key tropes and characteristic of the myth whilst adding its own palimpsestic layers. Demonstrating how the story of the Wandering Jew and the figure of the wanderer has been transformed from a religious figuration into a symbolic presence, we can therefore view this novel as a version of the Wandering Jew story, and its palimpsestic spectre(s) as Wandering Jew-type figures or as alchemical wanderers. The story of the Wandering Jew is a cautionary tale about transgressing against God, and *St. Leon*, using the tropes and structures of the myth, is similarly a cautionary tale warning against the selfish pursuit of greatness and immortality at the expense of social and familial responsibility.

⁵⁷³ 'St. Leon: a Tale of the Sixteenth Century. By William Godwin. 4 vols. 12mo. Robinsons. 1799', *The New London review*, 12 (1799), 519-526 (519). The following year in 1800, Edward DuBois published *St. Godwin*, spoofing the plot of *St. Leon* and the author himself as it places Godwin in the title role, and therefore also the role of the Wandering Jew figure, as well as satirizing Godwin's earlier work and political philosophy.

St. Leon thus weaves together the traditions of alchemy and the Wandering Jew, and subsequent Wandering Jew texts, including *Melmoth the Wanderer* and *Salathiel* that I will discuss later in this chapter, reference alchemy in relation to their conjurations of the myth. Godwin does not revisit alchemy or the Wandering Jew in his fiction, but his final publication *Lives of the Necromancers* (1834) returns to the subject of alchemy and paranormal legends. Documenting stories of magic and mysticism appearing across history, *Lives of the Necromancers* reveals Godwin's continued interest in alchemy, an interest *St. Leon* originally explored. In the preface to *St. Leon*, Godwin quotes at length from *Hermippus Redivivus: Or, The Sage's Triumph Over Old Age and the Grave* (1744), a text that chronicles historical and anecdotal examples of alchemy and the pursuit of longevity. Purportedly written by John Campbell, *Hermippus Redivivus* is in fact the last and most famous medical satire of German physician Johann Heinrich Cohausen exploring the idea of prolonging life, although it was translated into English by Campbell.⁵⁷⁴ Despite its satirical nature, *Hermippus Redivivus* nonetheless documents examples of mysterious figures distinguished within alchemical traditions, and it is one of these individuals that Godwin revives in his preface. Signor Gualdi arrives in Venice a stranger, and appears knowledgeable in all subjects, pays for everything in ready money, and owns a vast collection of paintings. Sparking intrigue, Gualdi's identity is challenged when the uncanny resemblance between himself and one of his paintings is observed: 'You look [...] like a man of fifty, and yet I know this picture to be one of the hand of Titian, who has been dead one hundred and thirty years, how is this possible?'⁵⁷⁵ Gualdi leaves Venice and thus the reality of his identity is left to speculation, and Godwin supplements his own conclusion that Gualdi was in possession of the Philosopher's stone, 'the art of transmuting metals into gold, and the *elixir vitae*.'⁵⁷⁶ *Hermippus Redivivus* is one of many texts that relate similar stories of mysterious individuals appearing in cities such as Venice, Hamburg and Paris and who are connected to rumours of alchemy, longevity, and the legendary Wandering Jew himself, including a letter published in *The Turkish Spy* in 1743 that details several such individuals.⁵⁷⁷ Godwin, however, views such tales with skepticism, and concludes his preface by acknowledging the impossibility of such tales and individuals. Turning to fiction and the story of the Wandering Jew, he explores the possibility of eternal life and societal responsibility not through overt religious narratives but through the philosophical and proto-scientific tradition of alchemy.

Reframing the traditional story away from explicit religious contexts, Godwin conjures not one but two Wandering Jew-type figures, or alchemical wanderers. First, in the middle of the narrative and at a time when *St. Leon* has finally found contentment, a stranger enters the novel. Presenting himself as an old man, his outward appearance conforms to the convention in which male Jewish characters, and also the Wandering Jew, are typically portrayed as old, and often ostensibly poor: 'He was feeble, emaciated, and

⁵⁷⁴ For more information about *Hermippus Redivivus* see: Anna Marie Roos, 'Johann Heinrich Cohausen (1665–1750), Salt Iatrochemistry, and Theories of Longevity in his Satire, *Hermippus Redivivus* (1742)', *Medical History*, 51 (2007) 181-200.

⁵⁷⁵ William Godwin, 'Preface' in *St. Leon; A Tale of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. William Brewer (Plymouth Broadview Editions, 2006), pp. 50-52 (p. 50). The motif of a painting exposing Wandering Jew-type figures is later employed by Maturin in *Melmoth the Wanderer*, and Maturin is perhaps influenced by the inclusion of this episode in Godwin's novel.

⁵⁷⁶ Godwin, 'Preface' in *St. Leon*, p. 51.

⁵⁷⁷ See: *The Turkish Spy*, vol. 2, book. 3, Letter 1 (1743).

pale, his forehead full of wrinkles, and his hair and beard as white as snow. [...] His garb, which externally consisted of nothing more than a robe of russet brown, with a girdle of the same, was coarse, threadbare, and ragged. He supported his tottering steps with a staff.⁵⁷⁸ Though this mysterious stranger appears poor and wretched, St. Leon immediately perceives ‘traces in his countenance’ that suggests he is ‘no common beggar,’ and it is this perception that encourages St. Leon to offer his assistance. The stranger turns out to be not what he seems: echoing the story of Gualdi laid out in Godwin’s prefatorial frame and making use of its alchemical associations, Godwin’s stranger initially introduces himself to St. Leon as a Venetian called signor Francesco Zampieri, and just like Gualdi, Zampieri’s name, identity, and nationality are eventually revealed to be false. Moreover, while his exterior erroneously signifies old age and poverty, he reveals that he secretly possesses inestimable wealth and the secrets of eternal life, and thus his outward appearance may not be indicative of his true age. Proclaiming that ‘The cloud of oblivion shall shelter me from all human curiosity,’⁵⁷⁹ the true identity of the stranger, his age, and how he acquired these alchemical secrets, is shrouded in mystery, and it is in this mystery that key tropes of the Wandering Jew myth are manifested. Like traditional Wandering Jew figures such as Lewis’s wanderer, the personal history and identity of this alchemical wanderer is kept just out of reach of discovery by St. Leon or the reader, although we later learn that he is being pursued by the Inquisition. Similarly, and again echoing traditional Wandering Jew stories, in conversation with St. Leon the stranger recounts ‘events that had passed, and persons that had died, more than a century before, [and] the stranger often spoke of them in a manner as if he had been an eye-witness.’⁵⁸⁰ This stranger is indeed no common beggar, and though his longevity is achieved through alchemy he is nonetheless a supernatural wanderer resembling the Wandering Jew.

Unlike the traditional Wandering Jew, however, the stranger dies, but not before passing on his secrets and the mantle of alchemical wanderer to St. Leon. While the identity of the stranger signals to alchemy and the story of Gualdi, through the name St. Leon Godwin draws on aspects of alchemy connected to the traditions of Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism, and the appropriation of Jewish knowledge and traditions. Descended from a line of distinguished counts de St. Leon, Godwin’s protagonist is French, and notably the town of Leon in France is central to the story of reputed alchemist Nicholas Flamel as the place of his alchemical discovery.⁵⁸¹ Flamel was a fourteenth century French scribe, but after his death the belief that he was in fact also a Rosicrucian sage in possession of the philosopher’s stone flourished, a belief undoubtedly bolstered by an alchemical work *Livre des figures hiéroglyphiques* (1612) ascribed to Flamel posthumously.⁵⁸² This work, as well as texts such as *Hermippus Redivivus*, not only reference the town of

⁵⁷⁸ William Godwin, *St. Leon; A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (Plymouth: Broadview Editions, 2006), p. 155.

⁵⁷⁹ Godwin, *St. Leon*, pp. 156-157.

⁵⁸⁰ Godwin, *St. Leon*, p. 170.

⁵⁸¹ Another possible source inspiring the name ‘Leon’ is Moses de Leon, a thirteenth century Spanish rabbi and Kabbalist who was for many years believed to have been the sole author of the Zohar, one of the central and most widely read Kabbalistic books (Daniel M. Horowitz, *A Kabbalah and Jewish Mysticism Reader* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2016), p. 103). Marie Mulvey-Roberts also discusses a third potential source, Leonicus, an individual also referenced in *Hermippus Redivivus* as having mastered the art of longevity (*Gothic Immortals: The Fiction of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 39-40).

⁵⁸² An English translation of this work first appeared in London in 1624 under the title, *Exposition of the Hieroglyphical Figures*.

Leon, but recount a story similar to that of *St. Leon*, and Marie Mulvey-Roberts posits that Godwin may have used the story of Flamel as a working model for his novel.⁵⁸³ Although not cited by Godwin in his Preface, the next episode recounted in *Hermippus Redivivus* after the story of Gauldi is that of Flamel, suggesting that Godwin was more than likely aware of this story.

The Wandering Jew myth appropriates an abject, spectralized Jewish body to serve the purpose of a Christian legend, and so too Flamel's story similarly suggest an act of appropriation. Flamel's posthumous identity as an alchemist is an enduring one, and rests upon his supposed possession of a manuscript titled *The Book of Abraham the Jew*, thought to be a Kabbalistic text that was then deciphered for him by a Jewish convert to Christianity.⁵⁸⁴ His story connects Jewish Kabbalistic traditions with alchemical traditions. Believing the book to have been 'stolen or taken from the miserable Jews,' and unable to decipher its strange letters, ancient-like language, and enigmatic pictures (all appearing to feature serpents which emphasise the forbidden, transgressive nature of this work), Flamel turns to the Jewish community for help, eventually meeting with 'a *Physician, a Jew by Nation, and as then a Christian, dwelling in Leon.*'⁵⁸⁵ This Jewish-Christian convert successfully interprets the mysteries of the book for Flamel before falling sick and dying on the seventh day of his illness; but, if we are to believe the story, his successful endeavours consequently enabled him to pass the secrets of the book onto Flamel. Paralleling the Christian appropriation of God's covenant from Jews to non-Jews, the pseudo-scientific secrets of alchemy are thus connected to secret Jewish traditions of mysticism and Kabbalah, as well as acts of Christian appropriation and Christian anxieties surrounding death and the End of the world. This model of appropriation and the passing on of secrets from one individual to another, from one community to another, or from Jews to non-Jews is used by Godwin in *St. Leon* as the stranger passes on his secret knowledge to St. Leon. Though we never know the true identity of the stranger, nor do we learn the specifics of his secrets, Godwin's probable use of Flamel as a model for his novel allows for the possibility that the stranger's secret knowledge may be Kabbalah or Jewish mysticism.

Introducing sequential wanderers through the passing of secrets from one person to another further adds a cyclical aspect to the original Wandering Jew story. No longer a singular tale of transgression told from the period of waiting in which the sole Wandering Jew figure awaits his death and the End of the World, events which are beyond his control, here the alchemical wanderer can pass on this mantle, and the tale of transgression begins again: 'The talent he possessed was one upon which the fate of nations and of the human species might be made to depend. God had given it for the best and highest purposes; and the vessel in which it was deposited must be purified from the alloy of human frailty.'⁵⁸⁶ Framing the possession

⁵⁸³ Marie Mulvey-Roberts, *Gothic Immortals: The Fiction of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (New York: Routledge, 2016) p. 51

⁵⁸⁴ Writing in *Hermippus Redivivus*, Cahausen suggests that Flamel was never in possession of the mysteries of Kabbalah, but instead benefitted from Jewish persecution in France: 'he was a Notary Public, at the Time the *Jews* were expelled *France*, that they deposited with him in Trust, a great part of their Wealth, and that he kept it for his own Use.' (Johann Heinrich Cohausen, *Hermippus Redivivus* (Dublin: Margt. Rhames, 1744), p. 98).

⁵⁸⁵ Nicholas Flammel, *Alchemical Hieroglyphics*, trans. Eirenaeus Orandus (New Jersey: Heptangle Books, 1980), pp. 9. 18.

⁵⁸⁶ Godwin, *St. Leon*, pp. 164-165.

of alchemical knowledge as a gift given by God only to individuals who are worthy seduces St. Leon into accepting the stranger's offer, tempted by the belief that he too may be a vessel for divine secrets. Yet, echoing the traditional Wandering Jew myth, the stranger's current state of destitution, misery, and exile suggests that, rather than a gift, such knowledge is in fact a curse. St. Leon only has the stranger's word that this is a gift from God, and his narrative conversely presents the acceptance of such a gift as a transgression that results in his fall from familial paradise and consequent misfortune. Following the disruption caused by the stranger, St. Leon's story thus replicates the structure of the Wandering Jew myth where transgression is followed by punishment and the wanderer's eventual exile from society. Assuming the mantle of the alchemical wanderer, it is only after the death of the stranger that St. Leon puts his new knowledge of alchemy into practice, but though he hopes to bring about good both for his family and society as a whole, St. Leon's alchemical gifts instead engender only misery. First, his family experience an expulsion from paradise (though voluntarily undertaken) as St. Leon decides they should leave their home at Lake Constance and re-enter French society. Subsequently, his newfound wealth is viewed with suspicion because it is unaccountable; his son chooses estrangement from his father and corrupted wealth, stating that 'I shall not be contaminated with an atom of it'⁵⁸⁷; his servant and dog are both killed; his wife dies in childbirth, having delivered a stillborn child; and the lives of his daughters are tainted, ending in ruin or death. St. Leon also faces his own hardships as his immortal existence begins to mirror that of his predecessor.

Revealing a cycle of disruption, repetition, and continual conjuration, St. Leon's transgression and the consequences that follow are depicted as a re-enactment of what the stranger has already experienced. For example, St. Leon's first use of alchemy to youthfully regenerate his body recalls the initial moment of rupture caused by the stranger's entrance into the novel. Having escaped from imprisonment within the Inquisition, St. Leon examines himself in a mirror but he does not recognise his reflection, and instead describes the person staring back as an eighty-year-old man with hair 'white as snow, and my face ploughed with a thousand furrows.'⁵⁸⁸ Although using the possessive determiner 'my' to identify the reflection as his own, St. Leon employs the same simile to describe his hair that he earlier employed in relation to the stranger, while also highlighting his wrinkled forehead that again recalls his description of the stranger. St. Leon further notes a disjunction between his drastically old appearance and his real age of fifty-four, creating a greater distance between his actual and reflected selves. Rather than looking at himself, this passage suggests that St. Leon is once again encountering the stranger, or that their identities have somehow become intertwined. His subsequent metamorphosis into a youthful version of himself again parallels the earlier encounter with the stranger: both sequences begin with the representation of what appears to be an old man who possesses alchemical secrets, and both sequences conclude with the depiction of someone much younger, now in possession of those same alchemical secrets. We can infer that the stranger also endured such metamorphosis, and the supernatural bodily transformations of the stranger and St. Leon, and specifically their potential to achieve youthful regeneration, conjures the ghost of Paris's

⁵⁸⁷ Godwin, *St. Leon*, p. 213.

⁵⁸⁸ Godwin, *St. Leon*, p. 341.

Wandering Jew who repeatedly returns to the age of thirty when he reaches one hundred years old. Since thirty is the age at which Paris' wanderer supposedly witnesses the crucifixion and resurrection of the Christian Messiah, his regeneration underscores his act of transgression in relation to these events. Though the bodily transformations of the stranger and St. Leon do not appear to occur automatically and instead must be brought about deliberately through alchemy, their regeneration similarly serves as an act of remembrance that emphasises the reason for their transformation: their possession and use of secret alchemical knowledge.

Establishing a connection between the stranger and St. Leon, moments of repetition occur throughout the novel, from the initial moment of rupture and transgression to St. Leon's metamorphosis, and also to events that transpire in the lives of both. This includes being pursued by the Inquisition, familial estrangement, and losing ties to their countries and even their own names. St. Leon emphasises his continual and inevitable return to the life of the stranger, stating that 'I found that I was only acting over again what he had experienced before me.'⁵⁸⁹ Here, the use of the word 'acting' reinforces the idea that St. Leon is reliving the life of the stranger, and though the stranger's own act of transgression is withheld from the the narrative, we can thus imagine that St. Leon's act repeats it. To that end, while St. Leon states the condition of his possession of alchemical secrets is 'that they must never be imparted,' the possibility remains that he, like the stranger before him, may choose to die and bequeath his gifts to another individual, beginning the cycle anew.⁵⁹⁰

Godwin leaves his alchemical Wandering Jew figure friendless, without family, and, at the point at which St. Leon is writing his narrative, having decided not to pass on his Wandering Jew mantle or the secrets he possesses. Like the Wandering Jew, St. Leon is immortal, but the possibility of his death in the future remains, again mirroring the structure of the Wandering Jew's story that looks forward towards the wanderer's death. Also like the Wandering Jew, versions of Godwin's alchemical wanderers live on beyond the pages of his novel, conjured in other texts that continue to add new palimpsestic layers. In 1800, a year after the publication of *St. Leon*, Edward DuBois published *St. Godwin*, a satire spoofing the plot of Godwin's novel (as well as lampooning his earlier works and political philosophy) and placing Godwin himself in the title role of the alchemical wanderer. Taking *St. Leon* to the stage, Godwin's friend Reverend John Hobart penned *St. Leon: A Drama. In Three Acts* (1835), a play inspired by the novel. Adding his own twist to this tale of alchemy, Godwin's future son-in-law Percy Bysshe Shelley published *St. Irvyne; or, The Rosicrucian* (1811) and manifested his own alchemical wanderer, Ginotti, who tempts the eponymous Wolfstein de St. Irvyne in order to pass on his alchemical secrets and his curse. Shelley was, as I have discussed, no stranger to the Wandering Jew myth, but though he frequently conjured the Wandering Jew in his poems, *St. Irvyne* is his only alchemical wanderer. Noting the similarities between Godwin and Shelley's texts, including the titles (which reference their eponymous protagonists), and the names of their protagonists St. Leon and St. Irvyne (both of which are derived from places), Mulvey-Roberts highlights the commercial basis for this

⁵⁸⁹ Godwin, *St. Leon*. p. 335.

⁵⁹⁰ Godwin, *St. Leon*, p. 53.

resemblance, suggesting that Shelley hoped to ‘capitalise upon the success of his predecessor.’⁵⁹¹ Yet in addition to the many similarities, Shelley’s version also adds an explicit Christian narrative: unequivocally presenting the pursuit of forbidden knowledge and possession of alchemical secrets as a transgression against God, his novella concludes with Ginotti’s failed attempt to persuade St. Irvyne to accept his alchemical secrets, and as a result rather than passing on the mantle of alchemical wanderer Ginotti is dragged to hell. This overt Christian narrative of salvation and damnation is perhaps a strange addition to a story of alchemy that primarily eschews an explicit religious narrative, particularly as Shelley shared Godwin’s atheism. However, *St. Irvyne* anticipates Charles Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer*, a novel that continues to frame alchemical knowledge as forbidden knowledge and that also culminates with the presumption that Maturin’s eponymous wanderer has been dragged to hell. Reflecting his own Christian theology, and picking up some of Godwin’s alchemical threads, Maturin conjures his own Wandering Jew story to construct a cautionary tale warning against transgression against God.

Melmoth the Wanderer, transgression and punishment, and the Doubling of the Wandering Jew

In 1820, Irish Protestant clergyman Charles Robert Maturin expropriated the Wandering Jew tradition by conjuring a Faustian version of the Wandering Jew into his Gothic novel, *Melmoth the Wanderer*. *Melmoth* is Maturin’s fifth novel, and discussing its publication in a letter to his publisher, Archibald Constable, he frankly confesses his motivation for pursuing a career in literature: ‘let me be candid with you – I write for bread – for the maintenance of my family.’⁵⁹² While not entirely dismissing Maturin’s financial need, Sharon Ragaz suggests another motivation, that of literary ambition,⁵⁹³ to which I would add a third: Protestant evangelism. The result is a four volume Gothic novel that again manifests the Wandering Jew myth and is composed, as a critic from the *Edinburgh Review* writes, using a ‘Golgotha style of writing.’⁵⁹⁴ Suffering through the many, often confusing narrative layers of Maturin’s novel, this critic further laments having to read a multitude of passages ‘of similar sound and fury, signifying nothing.’⁵⁹⁵ At the heart of the novel’s many narrative layers, however, is the Wandering Jew, and conjuring a familiar spectre that is, like its typically Christian authors, also waiting for the beginning of the End Times, Maturin adds his own palimpsestic layers that are rooted in his Protestant faith. Maturin’s dual roles as clergyman and Gothic

⁵⁹¹ Mulvey-Roberts, p. 67.

⁵⁹² Letter from Charles Maturin to Archibald Constable, undated. Quoted in: Sharon Ragaz, ‘Maturin, Archibald Constable, and the Publication of *Melmoth the Wanderer*’, *The Review of English Studies*, 57.230 (2006) 359-373 (360).

⁵⁹³ Sharon Ragaz, ‘Maturin, Archibald Constable, and the Publication of *Melmoth the Wanderer*’, *The Review of English Studies*, 57.230 (2006) 359-373 (360).

⁵⁹⁴ ‘Art. V. Melmoth, the Wanderer’, *The Edinburgh Review*, 35.70 (1821) 353-362 (359).

⁵⁹⁵ ‘Art. V. Melmoth, the Wanderer’, *The Edinburgh Review*, 35.70 (1821) 353-362 (357).

novelist should not be considered in isolation, and as I discussed in chapter 2 his religious interpretations permeate *Melmoth*. Similarly, as his religious beliefs influenced his fictional works, so too his published sermons reveal his dramatic preaching style as well as his fixation on biblical narratives and themes that would not be out of place in Gothic and horror stories.⁵⁹⁶ Tracing the inspiration for *Melmoth*, Maturin states:

The hint of this Romance (or Tale) was taken from a passage in one of my Sermons, which (as it is to be presumed very few have read) I shall here take the liberty to quote. The passage is this. 'At this moment is there one of us present, however we may have departed from the Lord, disobeyed his will, and disregarded his word – is there one of us who would, at this moment, accept all that man could bestow, or earth afford, to resign the hope of his salvation? – No, there is not one – not such a fool on earth, were the enemy of mankind to traverse it with the offer!'⁵⁹⁷

Melmoth thereby functions, as Dale Kramer observes, as a 'sermon in fiction.'⁵⁹⁸ Terry Eagleton further notes that *Melmoth* 'stands at the source of the powerful current of Irish fiction known as Protestant Gothic,' identifying in Maturin's works not just Irish nationalism, but a distinctly Protestant perspective too.⁵⁹⁹ But, what exactly is it that Maturin is preaching in *Melmoth*?

By 1820, the Wandering Jew was a popular figure continually reappearing in fiction, onstage, and in print media, as well as being an established (though not essential) ingredient of Gothic tales since *The Monk*. Contributing to this tradition facilitated Maturin's commercial needs and literary ambitions through the familiarity of the Wandering Jew figure, emphasised with the prominence of 'Wanderer' in the novel's title, while also complementing his own Protestant theology. The myth of the Wandering Jew reflects narratives of Christian eschatology, and in parallel to fictional manifestations of the Wandering Jew, theological works in this period such as Maturin's published sermons turned to discuss themes that are integral to both the Wandering Jew myth and Christian theology: the present period of waiting for the End Times, damnation as a consequence of transgression against God, and also a hoped for future salvation. Such conjurations, however, also reflect contemporary anxieties. The end of the century, tied to beginnings and ends, typically engenders millenarian and apocalyptic trends relating to the prophesied Second Coming of the Christian Messiah and the End Times, and this was the case in the 1790s as I will discuss later in the chapter. However, though the awaited Christian End times failed to manifest in the year 1800, throughout

⁵⁹⁶ See for example Maturin's sermon 'On the Death of Lord Nelson' where he appeals to the Gothic threat of the anti-Christ in his hell-fire sermon warning against nationalism: 'Every where national guilt has been the forerunner of national misery: a view of Europe, which now presents little more than a mass of the victories of one nation, confirms this truth but too fully. If we look to the South, we behold a people among whom was raised and supported the colossal fabric of Antichrist, a system which placed in earthly domination the kingdom of Him whose kingdom was not of this world' (*Sermons*, (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Co, 1819), pp. 49-50).

⁵⁹⁷ Charles Maturin, 'Preface', in *Melmoth the Wanderer*, ed. Douglas Grant (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 5-6 (p. 5).

⁵⁹⁸ Dale Kramer, quoted in: Marie Mulvey-Roberts, *Gothic Immortals: The Fiction of the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (New York: Routledge, 2016) p. 131.

⁵⁹⁹ Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), p. 187.

the nineteenth century theological discussions and conjurations of the Wandering Jew continue to return to these themes, reconsidering and revising eschatological understandings in light of millenarian disappointment that the anticipated End Times and hoped for salvation had not occurred, at least not yet. Framed by his preface, *Melmoth* thus focuses on transgression, not salvation, and raises the spectre of the 'enemy of mankind' who is wandering the earth to tempt humans to deny their Creator. The story of Maturin's eponymous Wandering Jew figure draws, in part, on the myth of Faust, and Melmoth must find a substitute before the end of a predetermined number of years (150 years to be exact) or he will forfeit his own salvation. The price of his transgression is his own damnation, and as he fails to tempt another he is therefore dragged to hell, or so it appears in the novel's conclusion. Underpinning *Melmoth* are themes that are at the heart of the Wandering Jew myth and contemporary Christian anxieties, but it also reflects a 'Golgotha' style of theology that is infused with dark, gloomy, and Gothic fears. In the wake of the unfulfilled End Times prophecies of the end of the eighteenth century, and lacking the hope of salvation, this is a cautionary tale of transgression, damnation, and a melancholy period of waiting.

'We live in awful times,' Maturin proclaims in a sermon published a year before *Melmoth*: 'May we derive this fruit from the dispensations we have been called on to witness [...] yet it is certainly awful to look around us, and see what *has been*, and feel *what is*, and think what *may be*.'⁶⁰⁰ Asserting his belief that the present period is part of the Christian period of waiting, a period that looks back to a past moment of transgression and forward with hope or fear to an imagined future state, Maturin's declaration mirrors the structure of the Wandering Jew myth and that of his novel, *Melmoth*. Though related through multiple narrative layers from which the reader must piece together Maturin's wanderer figure, Melmoth's story hinges on a moment of his transgression that results in his limited immortality, a period that culminates in his death and presumed damnation. The original story of the Wandering Jew substantiates the claims of Christianity by providing an eyewitness to the death and resurrection of the Christian Messiah, yet in reviving the Wandering Jew myth, Maturin's novel reframes the story to focus on an act of transgression within the framework of Christian theology, and to expose to his readers the dangerous consequences of such acts. Where the Wandering Jew's transgressive act marks him as a Christ killer and echoes the act of original sin against God as chronicled in Genesis, the transgressive act and resulting damnation of Maturin's eponymous wanderer are tied to his un-Christian search for secret, forbidden knowledge that is attained not through Christ, but by infernal means. Melmoth travels across Europe to 'study of that art which is held in just abomination by all "who name the name of Christ,"'⁶⁰¹ and his travelling companions include a clergyman (who is narrating this part of the story) as well as Dr John Dee and Albert Alasco. Later, this clergyman would be the only witness to Melmoth's staged death as he reports how he listened to Melmoth's supposed dying words in which Melmoth describes his search as 'the great angelic sin' and 'the first mortal sin – a boundless aspiration after forbidden knowledge.'⁶⁰² Melmoth's other companions Dr Dee

⁶⁰⁰ Charles Maturin, '[Sermon] Preached on the Fast-Day', in *Sermons* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Co, 1819), p. 288.

⁶⁰¹ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 498.

⁶⁰² Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 499.

and Albert Alasco are notable as they are historical figures associated with alchemy. Conjuring the familiar spectre of the Wandering Jew, Maturin thus incorporates several elements and tropes established by previous palimpsestic manifestations, including the tradition of alchemy that was central to Godwin's earlier version. Melmoth's sinful, Faustian search is associated with alchemy, while the discovery of a portrait of Melmoth by his descendant John further recalls Godwin and the traditions of alchemy through the portrait trope. Echoing parts of the story of Gualdi quoted in the preface of *St Leon*, the portrait of Melmoth bears the date 1646, and therefore, as it was painted 150 years before John meets the living original, it exposes Melmoth's supernatural existence.⁶⁰³ Like all conjurations of the Wandering Jew, however, Maturin refashions these established elements and adds his own palimpsestic layers, and these changes and additions are rooted in Maturin's religious beliefs. Whether Melmoth's supernatural existence is the result of alchemy or simply a deal with the devil (or perhaps both) is not confirmed, but it is certainly where his pursuits began. Moreover, this alchemical pursuit for 'forbidden knowledge' is positioned in opposition to the church and therefore to God, an abomination that Melmoth himself aligns with the transgressions of Satan, the fallen angel who rebelled against God, and the original sin enacted by Adam and Eve.

The horror at the heart of Maturin's novel is Melmoth's transgressive act and his pursuit for forbidden knowledge, and in a novel filled with Gothic doubles the Jewish character Adonijah, a solitary scholar living alone beneath the city of Madrid, functions as Melmoth's Wandering Jew counterpart and reveals the dark secrets of Melmoth's unnatural existence. Mirroring Melmoth's act of transgression, we learn that Adonijah had also embarked on his own journey to seek forbidden knowledge, and this doubling emphasises the cautionary aspects of Maturin's tale. Reports, stories, and whispers of Melmoth's supernatural existence haunted the globe following his supposed death, reaching his former friend the clergyman, but also Adonijah. Yet while Melmoth seeks the secrets of alchemy in Europe, Adonijah pursues Jewish secrets and the forbidden knowledge of Egyptian sorcerers. Recounting his own story to Monçada, a Spanish monk recently escaped from the Inquisition, Adonijah confides that:

In the days of my childhood, a rumour reached mine ears, even mine, of a being sent abroad on the earth to tempt Jew and Nazrene, and even the disciples of Mohammed, whose name is accursed in the mouth of our nation, with offers of deliverance at their utmost need and extremity, so they would do that which my lips dare not utter, even though there be no ear to receive it but thine. [...] Like our fathers in the wilderness, I despised angel's food, and lusted after forbidden meats, even the meats of the Egyptian sorcerers. And my presumption was rebuked as thou seest: childless, wifeless, friendless, at the last period of an existence prolonged beyond the bounds of nature, am I now left, and, save thee alone, without one to record its events.⁶⁰⁴

Adonijah's path is different from Melmoth's, and recalls stories of magic in the Hebrew Bible including those found in the book of Exodus that depict Jewish sorcerers (such as Moses and Aaron) and Egyptian

⁶⁰³ The trope of a portrait revealing the supernatural existence of an individual would later be picked up by Maturin's great nephew, Oscar Wilde in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890).

⁶⁰⁴ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 269.

sorcerers (Ex. 7). In parallel to Melmoth's pursuit of 'forbidden knowledge', Adonijah covets 'forbidden meats', and the repetition of the word 'forbidden' emphasises a shared aspect of their pursuits: both are framed as transgressive acts, and both require unnatural punishment. As Melmoth turns to alchemy and the devil, and Adonijah to Jewish sorcery, the secrets of their pursuits are shrouded in mystery, unuttered and unrecorded within the novel in order to keep them hidden from the reader, thus underscoring the potential dangers of such knowledge. Moreover, the doubling of Melmoth and Adonijah further emphasises the danger of such transgressions against God, and the pursuit of forbidden knowledge through deals with the devil, alchemy, or Jewish sorcery. There are many ways to be tempted and sin against God, and Maturin's novel preaches against all of them.

Leaving the fate of his wanderer surrounded in ambiguity, Maturin concludes *Melmoth* by relating the demise of his wanderer. After a violent storm the preceding night, Melmoth's descendant, also named John Melmoth,⁶⁰⁵ and Monçada search a precipice surrounding Melmoth's ancestral home in Ireland for evidence of his death, discovering 'a kind of tract as if a person had dragged, or been dragged, his way through it [...] something hung as floating to the blast. [John] Melmoth clambered down and caught it. It was the handkerchief which the Wanderer had worn about his neck the preceding night – that was the last trace of the Wanderer!' ⁶⁰⁶ Melmoth vanishes from the novel, but his death is not tied to the prophesied End Times or the return of the Christian Messiah, and therefore the spectre of the palimpsestic Wandering Jew lives on to be conjured again, while Maturin and the reader remain in the awful period of waiting.⁶⁰⁷ This ambiguous ending further engenders the 'silent and unutterable horror'⁶⁰⁸ of what *may be*, implicitly recalling the warning of his earlier sermon. Exploiting the threat, horror, and fear of an imagined eternity in hell, the lesson of both Maturin's novel and his sermon is to seek salvation through Christianity and, in the period of waiting for the fulfilment of messianic promises, to derive hope from the present dispensation and divine order of the world, although the times may be awful. In death, salvation is therefore denied to Melmoth. However for Adonijah, and like the Wandering Jew who cannot die, it is in life and his enduring, unnatural existence that salvation and redemption is denied. While Melmoth's death is depicted, or at least alluded to along with his presumed damnation, the death of Adonijah is never disclosed, or indeed confirmed. Echoing countless Wandering Jew stories, the possibility thus remains that Adonijah is still alive, although rather than wandering the earth he is, perhaps, still entombed beneath Madrid. Living in a subterranean vault beneath the Spanish city, he reveals to Monçada that 'Within this apartment I have passed the term of sixty years,' stating further that he rarely ascends to the top of the house 'save on

⁶⁰⁵ Both Melmoth the Wanderer and his descendant are called John Melmoth. To avoid confusion, I will refer to the eponymous wanderer as Melmoth, and his descendant as John.

⁶⁰⁶ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 542.

⁶⁰⁷ Indeed, the conclusion of Maturin's novel did not signal the end of Melmoth's wanderings. In 1835 French novelist Honoré de Balzac reimagines Maturin's tale in his own novel, *Melmoth Reconciled*, where Melmoth succeeds in passing on his curse to a cashier named Castanier. More recently, Maturin's novel was invoked in Sarah Perry's reimagined version *Melmoth* (2018) where the wanderer figure is transformed into a female character Melmotta the witness.

⁶⁰⁸ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 542.

occasions like this, or peradventure to pray.⁶⁰⁹ While Melmoth wanders in and out of all of the narrative layers in the novel, Adonijah, at the age of 107, enters the narrative at the heart of the novel itself, appearing in the second chapter of the third volume. There are moments that invoke Adonijah in the narratives that follow, but it always recalls the reader back to his static existence as Monçada reads and transcribes the Tale of the Indians, The Tale of Guzman's family, and The Lovers' Tale in 'the vault of Adonijah the Jew.'⁶¹⁰ Thus contrasting with the manifestation of Melmoth, whose identity, story, and voice are fragmented across many narrative layers, Adonijah appears static and whole.

In this way, both Adonijah and Melmoth can be viewed as Wandering Jew type figures. Though not Jewish, Melmoth's identity as 'Wanderer' is repeated throughout the text: as well as the novel's title, he is identified as 'Melmoth the Wanderer' six times throughout the novel, and he further embodies this appellation as he is depicted wandering across the globe and between the narrative layers. Hoping for respite from his Faustian pact, Melmoth spends his supernatural existence searching for someone to trade places with him and waiting for the end of his existence. In contrast, Adonijah is a Jew living in a secret underground vault underneath Madrid and who appears to be, like Melmoth, in possession of a form of immortality as a consequence of his transgression. Literally entombed alive, and embodying the Jewish identity of the Wandering Jew figure, Adonijah does not wander the earth, but nonetheless seems to be waiting for some kind of end. Interred underground and seemingly kept alive by supernatural means, Adonijah 'the Jew'⁶¹¹ appears suspended in a moment of living death, a state that reflects the tension between the Jewish and Christian spectres conjured by the Wandering Jew myth where Christianity and the Christian self cannot exorcise itself entirely from its religious ancestor. Adonijah is an old man, and his archaic vernacular comprising of 'thee' and 'thou' represents an identity that is outdated, but not yet entirely dead and gone. Exemplifying Derrida's notion of the production and relentless pursuit of spectres that are repeatedly conjured away in order to be pursued and kept close at hand, Jewish spectres such as the Wandering Jew denote an alienated, primeval past that will, according to Christian theology, be superseded with the prophesied End Times, the return of the Christian Messiah, and a future heaven on earth.⁶¹² The Christian period of waiting for this future state has not yet come to an end, and thus the spectre of Judaism must remain, like Adonijah, in a state of living death. Though Maturin's eponymous wanderer eschews the Jewishness of the Wandering Jew to reflect anxieties regarding wilful transgression against God perpetrated by a Christian character, these aspects are nonetheless kept alive through Adonijah.

Melmoth and Adonijah are punished for their forbidden transgressive acts, though in ways that reflect different aspects of the Wandering Jew myth through either endless wandering or a seemingly

⁶⁰⁹ Maturin, *Melmoth*, pp. 265, 267.

⁶¹⁰ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 356.

⁶¹¹ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 356.

⁶¹² Derrida, p. 175.

eternal life, and Maturin further exploits other key tropes of the Wandering Jew myth such as storytelling to deliver his sermon in fiction. The Wandering Jew serves as eyewitness to the truth claims of Christianity, but also to historical events and subjects that support developing narratives of Christianity as, for example, the ballad of *The Wandering Jew's Chronicle* demonstrates, where the Wandering Jew figure presents a Royalist and Protestant perspective of English History. The spectre of the Wandering Jew is thus continually conjured in order to be compelled to witness Christian truths, to chronicle history, and to share these truths, sometimes through forcing information onto unwilling listeners. Similarly in *Melmoth*, Maturin engages with the storytelling trope through the doubled figures of the Wandering Jew who together attest to the truth of Maturin's sermon warning against transgression. The novel is itself comprised of a series of interconnected narratives and stories told within stories, and in one such narrative layer Monçada relates to John his own encounter with Melmoth in the prison of the Inquisition: 'He constantly alluded to events and personages beyond his *possible memory* [...] he told every thing with the fidelity of an eye-witness.'⁶¹³ These conversations include anecdotes of the Restoration and other historical revelations that expose Melmoth's unnatural life, but they are told to Monçada as part of Melmoth's endeavours to tempt him. Stories, then, can be manipulated as Melmoth presents an offer of an alluring exciting opportunity to his victims, obfuscating the misery of such a life and the price of damnation at the end.

However, that Melmoth's stories are a distorted version of the truth is revealed by the countless stories told about him, and Adonijah's role in chronicling the history of Melmoth in particular holds up a mirror to Melmoth's hidden self and their corresponding transgressions. Adonijah's secrets — both his own and Melmoth's — are shared with Monçada through their conversations, which are in turn shared with John and the reader of the novel, but Adonijah also imposes information upon his guest through compelling Monçada to translate his manuscripts recording Melmoth's transgressions. Entombed in his subterranean vault, Adonijah is surrounded by four skeletons, and Monçada relates to John that these skeletons are incorporated into Adonijah's record-keeping:

'the skeletons thou tremblest to behold, were once clothed in flesh far fairer than thine. They are those of my wife and child, whose history thou must not now hear – but those of the two others must both hear and relate.' [...] Adonijah, in a transport of ecstasy, snatching a skeleton from its receptacle, placed it before me. 'Tell him thy story thyself, peradventure he will believe thee, and record it.' And supporting the skeleton with one hand, he pointed with the other, as bleached and bony as that of the dead, and to the manuscript that lay before me.⁶¹⁴

Echoing previous Wandering Jew figures, Adonijah is cut off from his family who have long since been dead while he remains alive and unable die. Surrounded in part by the skeletons of his family evokes a moment in Schubart's poem 'Der Ewige Jude' where his wanderer takes up skulls on mount Carmel, identifying them as members of his family. In Schubart's poem, this is a moment of destruction as his wanderer then proceeds to throw the skulls down the mountain, but here Adonijah is also in possession of other skeletons relating

⁶¹³ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 228.

⁶¹⁴ Maturin, *Melmoth*, pp. 269, 271

not to him but to Melmoth, and he does not destroy them but rather keeps them to aid his record-keeping. Possessing relics from both his former life and Melmoth's, two of these skeletons are physical evidence of Melmoth's transgression, and it is the stories of these individuals, recorded by Adonijah, translated by Monçada, and narrated to John and the reader, that testify beyond their deaths to Melmoth's act of transgression and his diabolical temptations. Through Adonijah, and with the help of Monçada, the dead speak. Adonijah's unnaturally long life thus ensures that testimony of Melmoth's sins are recorded, preserved, and passed on, while highlighting that, in contrast to Melmoth's victims and Adonijah's family who are dead and presumably at rest in the afterlife, such liberation through death and salvation is denied to Adonijah and Melmoth as it has so far always been denied to the Wandering Jew.

Though the lives of Melmoth and Adonijah are gloomy and awful, Adonijah states that, 'when my task is completed, then will I be gathered to my fathers, trusting surely in the Hope of Israel, that mine eyes shall "behold the King in his beauty, — they shall see the land that is very far off."⁶¹⁵ Quoting Isaiah 33:17, Adonijah discusses his own Jewish beliefs regarding a future state of bliss, where Jews will be redeemed by God and reunited with their family in an eternal afterlife. Ostensibly, this imagined future state appears similar to that hoped for within Christianity, and the final reward of the righteous is tied to eventual redemption, death, and an eternal state of bliss. It also centres the physical land of Israel as being fundamental to the creation of a heaven on earth. At the novel's conclusion, however, this hoped for salvation is denied, or at least deferred, as Melmoth is damned, while Adonijah's death remains unconfirmed. Manifesting the myth of the Wandering Jew, and adding his own palimpsestic layers, Maturin's two Wandering Jew figures thus reflect different but related anxieties tied to the theological foundations of the legend relating to the uncertainty of damnation or salvation after death, but also to the as yet unrealised End Times and the prophesied second coming of the Christian Messiah. If we read *Melmoth* as a sermon in fiction, Maturin's doubling of the Wandering Jew myth reflects a Christian perspective where the current period of waiting is tied to an acceptance of the Christian Messiah and waiting for an imagined future state, and in order to avoid damnation like his eponymous wanderer, Maturin's reader must simply reject offers of temptation and forbidden meats from the enemy of mankind and refuse to transgress the will of God. The pursuit of such forbidden knowledge, whether through alchemy, faustian deals, or through Jewish sorcery, is also cautioned against, and through Melmoth's Jewish double, Adonijah, the importance of not transgressing is emphasised through his own punishment and unnaturally long life. Whether the lesson of Maturin's sermon in fiction is convincing or not is another question altogether, and evidently the reviewer from the *Edinburgh Review* was not convinced, writing that *Melmoth* presents 'such a burlesque upon tragic horrors, that a sense of the ludicrous irresistibly predominates over the terrific; and, to avoid disgust, our feelings gladly take refuge in contemptuous laughter.'⁶¹⁶ However, Maturin's novel does reveal the theological and evangelical potential of the Wandering Jew story, and this potential is later picked up by Reverend George Croly in his novel *Salathiel*

⁶¹⁵ Maturin, *Melmoth*, p. 268.

⁶¹⁶ 'Art. V. Melmoth, the Wanderer', *The Edinburgh Review*, 35.70 (1821), 353-362 (361).

that returns to the Wandering Jew's imagined biblical origins and emphasises the physical and theological importance of the land of Israel.

Salathiel, Theological Supersession, and a New Israel

The 1790s saw an influx of Christian millenarianism, with many in Britain anticipating the End Times and Second Coming of the Christian Messiah by the end of the century. Considering the Revolutions in America and France as 'unparalleled in the history of nations,' Reverend James Bicheno presents his interpretation of scriptural prophecy in his 1793 publication, *Signs of the Times*: 'Thus it has appeared to me, and the more I have examined and thought upon the subject, the more clearly do I seem to discern that the last days spoken of by God's servants the prophets, are fast approaching.'⁶¹⁷ Described posthumously as an eminent dissenting minister of the Baptist persuasion, Bicheno authored many political-religious publications.⁶¹⁸ Rooting his discussion in *Signs of the Times* within a specifically Christian theological perspective, the title page of this work cites Matthew 24:44 ('Be ye ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the son of man cometh'), but it also references the literary exchange between Joseph Priestly and David Levi. Bicheno's interest in the Jewish community, Mel Scult writes, dates back to this Priestly-Levi controversy, further stating that Bicheno may have known Levi personally.⁶¹⁹ Levi's final response addresses the Jewish Question, and specifically Jewish conversion from Christian and Jewish theological perspectives, and linking his discussion of the imminent End Times with these debates, Bicheno's *Signs of the Times* is emblematic of millennial publications during this decade that place anxieties surrounding Jewish identity, nationhood, and conversion at the centre of scriptural considerations and expectations. However, when the year 1800 came and went Christian theologians and Conversionist groups, together with the wider public, had to reconsider their interpretations, and Bicheno, for example, revisited this subject in 1807 with his *A Supplement to the Signs of the Times*. As Andrew Crome identifies, the discourse of prophecy was constantly 'evolving and responding to contemporary events,'⁶²⁰ and although the turn of the century necessitated revised expectations regarding the prophetic End Times, Jews, Jewish conversion, and Israel remained central to early nineteenth millenarianism. In particular, Supersessionism or Restoration Theology – a Christian doctrine dating back to the third century that asserts that the New Covenant created by Jesus supersedes or replaces the Old Covenant made exclusively with the Jewish Nation – formed a core tenet of the Christian Church. Also fundamental to these theological discussions is the prophesied return of Jews to Israel along with the conversion of Jews to Christianity, although whether this conversion was necessary before or during the End Times was debated among millenarians. It is against this backdrop that Reverend George Croly published his own version of the Wandering Jew myth, *Salathiel*, exploring contemporary

⁶¹⁷ James Bicheno, *Signs of the Times; or the Overthrow of the Papal Tyranny in France* (London: 1793), pp. 4, 5.

⁶¹⁸ 'James Ebenezer Bicheno Esq. R. R. S', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, ed. Sylvanus urban, vol. 36 (London: John Bowyer Nichols and son, 1851), 436 (436). Bicheno's other publications include: *A Friendly Address to the Jews* (1787); *A Word in Season* (1795); and *The Restoration of the Jews: The Crisis of All Nations* (1800).

⁶¹⁹ Mel Scult, *Millennial Expectations And Jewish Liberties* (The Netherlands: Leiden, 1978), p. 80.

⁶²⁰ Andrew Crome, *Christian Zionism and English National Identity, 1600-1850* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 203.

discussions regarding the prophesied End Times, conversion, and the physical land of Israel, as well as theological anxieties at the heart of millenarianism and the Wandering Jew myth itself.

Beginning his career as an Anglican clergyman in Ireland, Croly moved to London in 1810 to pursue his literary ambitions and soon became a leading contributor to the *Literary Gazette*⁶²¹ as well as writing for the *New Times*, *Blackwood's Magazine*, and *The Traditions of the Rabbins*. Continuing his work as a preacher in London, Croly's career mirrors that of fellow Irish clergyman and author Charles Maturin as he turned his pen to novels and romances, as well as writing poems, plays, and hymns, and also historical and theological works. Following his death in 1860, one biographer writes that Croly's 'theological works belong to an important order,' further declaring that 'His picture of the Wandering Jew in "Salathiel" is one of the most striking efforts ever seen in that class of literature.'⁶²² This view is shared by contemporary reviewers, and *Belle Assemblée* particularly praises Croly's depiction of the Wandering Jew and the fall of the Temple 'that marked the fate of rejected Israel,' writing that *Salathiel* is a 'work of infinitely higher order' that 'must be read.'⁶²³ Much of Croly's work is critically overlooked due to its overt religious and evangelical nature, and certainly, like Maturin's theologically infused *Melmoth*, Croly's millenarianism cannot be divorced from his iteration of the Wandering Jew. However, it is this relationship between popular fiction and Christian evangelism that makes *Salathiel* essential to a study of the Wandering Jew myth in this period. First published in 1828, *Salathiel* follows Croly's 1826 poem 'The Restoration of Israel' and his 1827 theological exposition of the book of Revelation, *The Apocalypse of St. John*: central to each text is Israel, Jewish diaspora, and possible future Restoration. *Salathiel* and *The Apocalypse* in particular promote End Times narratives along with Supersessionism. In contrast to his poetry and religious publications, *Salathiel* merges historical and theological genres with fiction, myth, and the supernatural, and this generic hybridity is facilitated through Croly's conjuration of the Wandering Jew.

For Croly, the scriptural End Times is inevitable and imminent. Although framing his interpretation as provisional ('we have no right to determine strictly in matters future'⁶²⁴) his own prophetic contribution states that Christian prophecy would be fulfilled in the nineteenth century: 'it shall be in 1335 prophetic days, or 75 years from, the year 1783; in the year 1863.'⁶²⁵ The oncoming apocalypse was thus, for Croly and many other millenarians, a very real future that was to happen within the next few decades, and Croly ascribes this expectation to the belief that Christians had succeeded Jews to become the new people of God. Consequently, possessing the New Covenant, some Christians maintained they now had spiritual claims to the physical land of Israel, a view Croly illustrates in his *The Apocalypse*:

⁶²¹ Leslie Stephen, *Dictionary Of National Biography*, vol. 13 (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1888), p. 135.

⁶²² 'The Rev. George Croly, LL.D.', *The Gentleman's Magazine and historical review* 220 (Jan 1861), 104-107 (106).

⁶²³ 'The Rev. George Croly, A.M.', *La Belle Assemblée*, vol. 8 (London: Geo. B. Whittaker, 1828), 2-10 (7, 4).

⁶²⁴ George Croly, *The Apocalypse of St. John: Or Prophecy of the Rise, Progress, and Fall of the Church of Rome; the Inquisition; the Revolution of France; the Universal War; and the Final Triumph of Christianity. Being a New Interpretation* (London: C. & J. Rivington, 1827), p. 434.

⁶²⁵ Croly, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, p. 435.

The mention of Israel does not necessarily imply the Jews. The Christians, the successors of those to whom the promises were given, are called the “Israel of God,” even to the exclusion of the Jews. The Christians are possessed in the New Testament of the forfeited appellatives that originally belonged to the Jews alone — “the holy nation;” “the chosen people;” “the temple of the living God.”⁶²⁶

Retroactively transforming the covenant with God, and with it the significance and future role of Israel and the Temple, Croly’s version of the tradition of the Wandering Jew and various iterations of this figure similarly establishes a Christian narrative that hinges on this theological succession whilst requiring a connection to its Jewish past. As Steven Krueger notes, the imagined Jew became a spectral presence within Christianity, and although the moment of crucifixion created a new, Christian dispensation, this moment needed to be read backwards as a fulfilment of Jewish, or ‘Old Testament’ prophecy.⁶²⁷ Using the legend of the Wandering Jew, *Salathiel* explores these theological perspectives by returning his reader to this moment of theological transformation, promoting his theology through popular fiction. *Salathiel* thus functions, like Maturin’s *Melmoth*, as a sermon in fiction: exploiting the popular and well-established figure of the Wandering Jew, Croly preaches his perspective of the theological truth of supersessionism.

Although a work of fiction, Croly roots his narrative in theology and history, affirming in his preface that ‘this narrative has the supreme merit of truth; it is the most true – it is the only true.’⁶²⁸ Emphasising claims to historical and theological accuracy and truth, Croly exploits the trope of Wandering Jew as eyewitness to explore the crucifixion, the origins of Christianity and Christian martyrs, and the importance of the physical space of Israel to the past and future covenant. Croly thus fleshes out a palimpsestic Wandering Jew by adding distinct theological layers: the spectre that is produced appears, on the surface, to be a constructed imagined Jew, but in bearing witness to Christianity, Croly also conjures a Christian spectre. Acknowledging the tradition of the Wandering Jew, Croly distinguishes his manifestation of the wanderer from previous conjurations:

A number of histories have been invented for him; some purely fictitious, others founded on ill-understood records. Germany, the land of mysticism, where men labour to think all facts imaginary, and turn all imaginations into facts, has toiled most in the idle perversion of truth. Yet these narrative have been in general but a few pages, feebly founded on the single, fatal, sentence of his punishment for an indignity offered to the Great Author of the Christian faith.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁶ Croly, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, p. 97.

⁶²⁷ Steven F. Krueger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. xiii.

⁶²⁸ George Croly, ‘Preface’, in *Salathiel. A Story of the Past, the Present, and the Future*, (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), vol. 1, p. viii.

⁶²⁹ ‘Preface’, in *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. vi.

Rewriting over previous versions of the Wandering Jew, Croly emphasises that such iterations are fictional while claiming that, in contrast, his wanderer Salathiel alone is the only true version, further writing of his version that 'that exile lives.'⁶³⁰ Including such truth claims in his preface blurs the distinction between historical fact and fiction, and his preface serves as an extension of the novel's fictional reimagining of the Wandering Jew myth and Christian theology. Yet, despite these truth claims, as with all Wandering Jew figures previous versions can be glimpsed beneath the new layers. Salathiel cannot die, and in a moment that echoes Schubart's suicidal wanderer (along with the versions that repeat this trope) he writes that 'I longed to die [...] I toiled for death; but I remained without a wound.'⁶³¹ A majority of the novel's three volumes focuses on the decades between the crucifixion and the fall of the Temple, but the final pages of the novel are devoted to a summation of Salathiel's life up to the present day and briefly chronicles conventional occupations of the wanderer and his witnessing events of historical significance. Salathiel, for example, recounts his venture into the military, his time spent living with Petrarch in Italy, his visit to Germany to pay homage to Martin Luther, and also, conjuring Godwin, via his exploration into the mysteries of nature as he writes, 'I toiled with the alchemist.'⁶³² Choosing to focus on the Wandering Jew's origins similarly reveals established conventions of the myth, bringing to the fore Christian perspectives and anxieties surrounding the Wanderer's transgression, the ensuing Christian period of waiting, and the awaited End Times that have been integral to the story.

The Wandering Jew is a Christian creation, and in part a Christian spectre, but the production of this character gives flesh to a spectralized imagined Jew who is made to represent the collective Jewish community. In order to maintain a connection between Judaism and Christianity whilst asserting a distinction between these religions, the spectre of the Wandering Jew is conjured only to be conjured away from the Christian self, and the conjured production emphasises a constructed Jewish identity. Like Maturin's Adonijah, Salathiel is never identified as a Christian and continually professes his own Jewish identity even as he relates and appears to accept the truth of Christianity, stating for example, 'Israelite as I was, and am.'⁶³³ Moreover, Croly's Wanderer is not simply Jewish, but a Jewish priest, military leader, and part of Jewish royalty, embodying the lineage of royal power along with his lived experiences of his Jewish faith and protection of his community. These lived experiences are woven into the novel as Salathiel, for example, participates in and commemorates Jewish rituals and customs, observes Passover and the year of Jubilee, and performs priestly duties and sacrificial offerings in the Temple. Adding another palimpsestic layer to the Wandering Jew, Croly names his wanderer Salathiel, Prince of Naphtali. Unlike Ahasuerus or Cartaphilus, names which are distinctly not Jewish, the name of Croly's wanderer invokes characters from the Hebrew Bible who are Jewish. The tribe of Naphtali represents one of the ten lost tribes of Israel from the twelve that constituted the people of Israel in biblical times, and each of the ten tribes bear the name

⁶³⁰ 'Preface', in *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. vi.

⁶³¹ George Croly, *Salathiel. A Story of the Past, the Present, and the Future*, (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), vol. 3, p. 412.

⁶³² Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 3, p. 415.

⁶³³ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 3, p. 416.

of one of Jacob's sons or grandsons. Tracing his lineage back to the Hebrew Bible and to Naphtali, son of Jacob and Bilah (Genesis 30:8), Salathiel represents a direct genealogical line to Jacob, one of the three Abrahamic patriarchs (along with Abraham and Isaac), and thus embodies a connection with the foundations of Judaism itself. Similarly, the name Salathiel, the Greek transliteration of Shealtiel, also appears in biblical texts. Referenced in 1 Chronicles 3:17-18 and also in Matthew 1:2 as the son of Jeconiah, king of Judah, Shealtiel was exiled to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar II, and consequently regarded as the second Exilarch, or king-in-exile. Salathiel's names speak to his royal and biblical ancestry, and this ancestry is tied to the physical space of Israel. Inheriting the principedom of Naphtali, Salathiel professes that the 'antiquity of possession gave a kind of hallowed and monumental interest to the soil,'⁶³⁴ but the novel concludes with Salathiel as a prince in exile from his Jewish homeland. This state of exile, however, implies a future return to Israel. In borrowing distinctly Jewish names, and constructing a Jewish wanderer whose identity is tied to the blood and soil of Israel, Croly signals to the importance of Jewish foundations, Israel, and the return of Jews to a narrative of Christian eschatology.

Croly's wanderer is constructed to bear witness to Christian truth, and Croly substantiates his theological claims with appeals to scripture. The original subtitle of the 1828 edition is 'A story of the Past, the Present, and the Future,' exemplifying the structure of both the Wandering Jew story and Christianity that looks back to the Passion narrative, identifies the present moment as the Christian period of waiting for the return of the Christian Messiah, and anticipates a prophesied future state. Later editions modify the title, and the 1901 edition, for example, bears the title 'Tarry thou till I come; or, Salathiel, the wandering Jew.' Taken from John 21:22, 'Tarry thou till I come' appears as the first line of the novel, and the phrase is repeated throughout the narrative four times. Privileging a phrase expropriated from the Gospels, and also recalling Paris's version where Jesus says to the Wandering Jew 'you will wait till I return,'⁶³⁵ this adapted title accentuates the novel's implied scriptural foundations as it reimagines the exchange between Jesus and Peter depicted in John into a phrase identifying Salathiel's punishment. Croly further incorporates details from the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Following the crucifixion, a moment of rupture instigated by Salathiel's transgression, Salathiel observes that:

The sun, which I had seen like a fiery buckler hanging over the city, was utterly gone. While I looked, the darkness deepened, and the blackness of night, of night without a star, fell far and wide upon the horizon. [...] I heard the hollow roar of an earthquake; the ground rose and heaved under our feet. I heard the crash of buildings, the fall of fragments of the hills, and, louder than both, the groan of the multitude. I caught my wife and child closer to my bosom. In the next moment, I felt the ground give way beneath me; a sulphurous vapour took away my breath, and I was caught up in a whirlwind of dust and ashes!⁶³⁶

⁶³⁴ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 2, p. 8.

⁶³⁵ Paris, *Flowers of History*, vol. II, p. 513.

⁶³⁶ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, pp. 30, 37.

Conjuring his wanderer into the crucifixion narrative, Croly depicts crucifixion darkness, earthquakes, and the tearing of the temple veil, each being apocalyptic portents tied to the crucifixion as described in the synoptic Gospels (see Mark 33:15; Matt. 27:47; Luke 23:43-44). Mark 33:15, for example, states ‘And when the sixth hour was come, there was a darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour,’ while Matthew 27:51 details that ‘the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.’ Notably, these portents are also common motifs in Jewish prophecy and apocalyptic literature, and their prominent inclusion in Gospel accounts and *Salathiel* reveals the construction of a Christian narrative that aims to demonstrate the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy through the story of the Christian Messiah. *Salathiel* imitates these canonical Gospel accounts, but employing a range of sensory experiences, Salathiel writes ‘I looked, ‘I heard,’ and ‘I felt’, giving depth and a personal perspective to his narrative that is absent in Gospel accounts. Repurposing Jewish eschatology to support Christian doctrine and millennial prophecy, Croly manifests a fictional eyewitness who experiences these events and who exists today as evidence in the flesh.

Although invoking similar moments of eschatological portents, *Salathiel* is thus distinct from its scriptural foundation through its use of first person perspective. Narrated by the novel’s eponymous wanderer, Salathiel reveals that he is not only witness to the crucifixion, but complicit in it: ‘Under the penalty of treason to Caesar, I demanded instant execution of the sentence. – “Not a day of life must be given,” I exclaimed; “not an hour: — death, on the instant; death!” My clamour was echoed by the roar of millions.’⁶³⁷ As a moment of rupture, this act of transgression is central to Wandering Jew narratives in reframing original sin, the first transgression against God. While the crucifixion is presented as a sacrifice absolving the sin and punishment engendered by the first transgression, the second transgression functions as a rebuke to God’s sacrifice that similarly merits punishment. *Salathiel* fleshes out this part of the Wandering Jew narrative, but filters it through a Jewish spectral eyewitness and in doing so Salathiel, representing a constructed version of the imagined Jew, embodies the antisemitic Christian concept that Jews are collectively guilty for the crucifixion of the Christian Messiah:

I saw at once the full guilt of my crime – the fierce folly – the mad ingratitude – the desperate profanation. I lived over again in frightful distinctness every act and instant of the night of my unspeakable sacrilege. [...] Accursed be the night in which I fell before the tempter! Blotted out from time and eternity be the hour in which I took part with the torturers! Every fibre of my frame quivers, every drop of blood curdles, as I still hear the echo of the anathema that on the night of woe sprang from my furious lips, the self-pronounced ruin, the words of desolation, “HIS BLOOD BE UPON US, AND UPON OUR CHILDREN!”⁶³⁸

Salathiel’s crime is that he is the exemplar of a Christ killer. Again referencing scripture, *Salathiel* quotes Matthew 27:25, a passage that depicts a Jewish crowd accepting responsibility for the crucifixion of the Messiah as Pilate washes his hand of the crime: “I am innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It is your

⁶³⁷ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. 4.

⁶³⁸ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, pp. 2-3.

responsibility!” All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!” (Matt. 27:24-25). The first-person pronoun in Salathiel’s declaration of guilt links his role as witness to the crucifixion to an acknowledgement of his personal responsibility, further emphasised by the possessive determiner that frames the crucifixion as ‘my’ crime. In condemning the Christian Messiah to death, Salathiel retroactively performs an act of unspeakable sacrilege against the Christian God and Christian Messiah, but responsibility and retribution for this crime is also shared and inherited by the Jewish people. A crowd of millions echo his demand for the death of the Christian Messiah, and as a result, the consequences of this crime similarly fall on ‘us.’ Salathiel’s singular ‘I’ transforms into the plural ‘us’, and collective pronouns signify national guilt that is shared and inherited by ‘our children.’

Witnessing the death of the Christian Messiah, Salathiel is also an eyewitness to the suffering and martyrdom of early Christians, and mirroring his role in the Passion narrative Salathiel reveals his own culpability in these violent deaths. One of the earliest examples of Christian persecution follows the Great Fire of Rome in 64 C.E. where Roman Emperor Nero exploited Rome’s Christian community as scapegoats for the destruction.⁶³⁹ Describing the consequences of this persecution, *Salathiel* depicts a scene of Christian persecution:

In the vineyard, a certain portion were to be crucified; in the orangery, another portion were to be burnt; in the pleasure ground, another were to be torn by lions and tigers; gladiators were to be let loose; and when the dusk came on, the whole of the space was to be lighted by human torches, Christians wrapped in folds of linen covered with pitch and bitumen, and thus burning down from the head to the ground.⁶⁴⁰

The depiction of crucifixions here recalls the earlier crucifixion of the Christian Messiah, but Croly also draws on secular historical accounts such as Tacitus’s *Annals* in referencing Nero’s violent practice of using Christians as human torches. Merging history, theology, and fiction, Croly conjures his wanderer into this moment of Christian persecution, revealing that Salathiel purchased his own freedom by becoming a ‘discover of Christians.’⁶⁴¹ Yet witnessing violent scenes of Christian martyrdom, Salathiel again acknowledges his own culpability: ‘This man I had sacrificed. My heart smote me: I would have fled the place of blood, but more of my victims were to be slain; and I must be the shrinking witness of all.’⁶⁴² Matthew 26:14-16 claims that Judas sold the Christian Messiah for thirty pieces of silver, and while Christians are here portrayed sacrificing their lives for their faith, Salathiel echoes Judas’s betrayal as he buys his freedom with the lives of early Christians. Confronted with the violent consequences of his own actions causes Salathiel to reconsider his role in the persecution of Christians, and the use of continued present tense highlights the importance of his own guilt in his role as witness. Christian suffering is

⁶³⁹ G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, ‘Why Were the Early Christians Persecuted?’, *Past & Present*, 26 (1963) 6-38 (8).

⁶⁴⁰ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. 316.

⁶⁴¹ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. 315.

⁶⁴² Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. 331.

therefore portrayed in terms of martyrdom and linked to the Christian doctrine of salvation after death, but Salathiel's suffering relates to his isolation, exile, and immortality as he experiences the Christian period of waiting. Refashioning the traditional Wandering Jew narrative, Salathiel is punished for his transgressions against God as he waits for the prophesied End Times, his death, and his own possible salvation.

Salathiel begins with the Wandering Jew's transgression against the Christian Messiah, describes his witnessing of and complicity in the suffering of early Christians, and concludes with the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (70 CE). Highlighting Jewish presence and involvement in these events alongside the founding of Christianity, Croly frames his narratives with moments of rupture. In alchemical and Faustian constructions of the Wandering Jew, this act of transgression is associated with a reframing of the first transgression of original sin and instigates a moment of rupture that is repeated through attempts to pass on the mantle of the Wandering Jew. In *Salathiel*, however, these two moments are connected, with the destruction of the Temple signalling the culmination of the transgression that begins with crucifixion. The destruction of the Temple and the exile of Jews from Israel that followed is considered within supersessionist theology to be a punishment by God, revealing 'the last and most wondrous sign, that marked the fate of rejected Israel.'⁶⁴³ Mirroring the events that followed the crucifixion, Salathiel notes the chaos and darkness that followed the destruction of the Temple, but significantly both moments can be viewed as transgressions against the body of God, whether the incarnated human body of the Christian Messiah or the spiritual dwelling place of God within the Temple. In Judaism, the Temple is the dwelling place of God, the place where 'God's "might and glory," could be "seen."⁶⁴⁴ Paralleling its physical destruction, *Salathiel* depicts the spiritual ruin of the Temple:

The vast portal opened, and from it marched a host, such as man had never seen before, such as man shall never see but once again; the guardian angels of the city of David! — they came forth glorious; but with woe in all their steps; the stars upon their helmets dim; their robes stained; tears flowing down their celestial beauty. "Let us go hence," was their song of sorrow. [...] Their chorus was heard, still magnificent and melancholy, when their splendour was diminished to the brightness of a star. Then the thunder roared again; the cloudy temple was scattered on the winds; and darkness, the omen of her grave, settled upon Jerusalem.⁶⁴⁵

Paralleling the Wandering Jew's punishment, the spiritual destruction of the Temple and repudiation of Israel encompasses the Christian period of waiting. Christian eschatology claims that Ancient Israel is superseded by, or continued through, Christianity, and the expected return of the Christian Messiah is therefore tied to the physical land of Israel where the Temple will be rebuilt and become once more the dwelling place of God. Rather than passing on the mantle of the Wandering Jew, this framing portrays a

⁶⁴³ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 3, p. 398.

⁶⁴⁴ Daniel M. Horowitz, *A Kabbalah and Jewish Mysticism Reader* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2016), p. 51.

⁶⁴⁵ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 3, pp. 399-400.

period of theological transition. Exploring this moment of rupture between Judaism and Christianity, Croly presents his readers with 'a new law, a new hope.'⁶⁴⁶

Conclusion

Croly died before he could see the year he prophesied as the beginning of the End Times, but as we know, 1863 came and went without the fulfilment of Christian messianic promises. His wanderer Salathiel therefore joins the growing family of Wandering Jew figures, including those conjured by Lewis, Maturin, and Godwin who are still waiting for their death and *the* end. Croly's novel does not mark the end of the Wandering Jew's appearances in fiction nor the end of Christian millenarianism, and both continue to be adapted and modified in relation to scriptural prophecy and popular interpretations of Christian eschatology. With each new conjuration previous iterations can be glimpsed beneath the surface: the Wandering Jew is, as I have discussed in this chapter, a palimpsestic spectralized imagined Jew, and each version adds distinct new layers whilst building on previous foundations. But whether the interpolated and expropriated parts relate to secular, alchemical, Faustian, or theological contexts, at the heart of Wandering Jew narratives are Christian anxieties tied to the Christian narrative of transgression, rupture, and waiting for the end. In a period that witnessed a rise in fictional depictions of Jewish characters alongside increasing Jewish immigration within Britain as well as theological and political debates surrounding conversion, Israel, and Jewish Questions, one of the most prevalent Jewish characters is a Jewish spectre, but also a Christian spectre too.

⁶⁴⁶ Croly, *Salathiel*, vol. 1, p. 243.

Conclusion:

Haunting Afterlives of the Imagined Jewish Other

My brethren! through me—the laborer of Jerusalem, cursed by the Lord, who in my person cursed the race of laborers—a race always suffering, always disinherited, always slaves, who like me, go on, on, on, without rest or intermission, without recompense, or hope; until at length, women, men, children, and old men, die under their iron yoke of self-murder, that others in their turn then take up, borne from age to age on their willing but aching shoulders. And here again, for the third time, in the course of five centuries, I have arrived at the summit of one of the hills which overlooks the city; and perhaps I bring again with me terror, desolation, and death.

(Eugene Sue, *The Wandering Jew* (New York: A. L. Burt Company, 1895) p. 224).

At the close of the nineteenth century, and long after the Romantics and Early Gothicists had conjured their myriad versions of the Wandering Jew, this myth caught the attention of another writer: Bram Stoker. Like Percy Bysshe Shelley who returned again and again to the Wandering Jew throughout his oeuvre, Stoker's fascination with this myth was an enduring one. Pouring over collections in the British library, Stoker's research for his various projects led him to the legend of the Wandering Jew. Later, he chronicled the history of the figure in his non-fiction publication, *Famous Imposters* (1910), where he recounts not only the 'immediate and lasting success' of George Croly's historical and biblical version, but also that the 'great vogue of *Salathiel* lasted some ten or more years, when the torch of the Wandering Jew was lighted by Eugene Sue.'⁶⁴⁷ Sue was a prominent French author whose Gothic novel *Le Juif Errant* or *The Wandering Jew* (1844-45) updated the old tradition and brought it into his present moment, adding new palimpsestic layers associating Jews with disease and specially with the cholera epidemic.⁶⁴⁸ Finally, as H. L. Malchow notes, Stoker even attempted to persuade his friend and celebrated actor Henry Irving to take up the role of the Wandering Jew on stage.⁶⁴⁹ Ultimately, Stoker's efforts to produce a stage version of the legend were unsuccessful, and although Stoker never gave up his interest in the Wandering Jew, he turned his attention to other projects including his 1897 novel *Dracula*. Here, however, the seemingly disparate traditions of Jewish representation unite. Like Sue's Wandering Jew, *Dracula* is in part constructed as a foreign Other who threatens to bring disease and infection to Britain's shores. Reflecting contemporary societal anxieties surrounding Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe into Britain similar to that at the close of the previous century, and with a particular anxiety over immigration into London's East End, *Dracula* was, like Jewish immigrants, perceived as dirty, poisonous, and 'overwhelming alien.'⁶⁵⁰ Critics such as Jules Zanger, Ken Gelder, and Carol Margaret Davison have also noted the similarities between the physical construction of

⁶⁴⁷ Bram Stoker, *Famous Imposters* (New York: Sturgis & Walton company, 1910), pp. 114; 115.

⁶⁴⁸ Sue's version also took the legend of the Wandering into the format of the serial novel, and like his earlier *Les Mystères de Paris* or *The Mysteries of Paris* (1842-43), *The Wandering Jew* was one of the most popular serialised novels.

⁶⁴⁹ H. L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth Century Britain* (California: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 138.

⁶⁵⁰ Jules Zanger, 'A Sympathetic Vibration: *Dracula* and the Jews', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 34.1 (1991), 33-44 (34).

Dracula and the racial and ethnic construction of the Jewish Other.⁶⁵¹ As with Charlotte Smith's *Mr. Vampyre*, the antisemitic monstrousness of Dracula is all the more dangerous because the Jewishness of Stoker's Count manifests as an unacknowledged shadow lurking beneath the text's surface. These connections to a diseased, supernatural, monstrous, and racial Other that threatens the body politic of Britain are, however, still there, and like *Mr. Vampyre*, Dracula thus casts a Jewish shadow. Moreover, and almost one hundred years after Smith's creation of her vampire-lawyer in her 1796 novel *Marchmont*, Stoker's Dracula is further connected with traditions of financial and Jewish vampirism, but also with Shylock and the potential for a sympathetic interpretation.

Although Irving did not star in Stoker's proposed *Wandering Jew* play, he did expand his Shakespearean repertoire through his production of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Lyceum theatre in which Irving performed the leading role of Shylock. Taking up the mantle of sympathetic metamorphosis established by Keane earlier in the nineteenth century, in this role Irving continued the onstage transformation of Shakespeare's Jewish merchant from a vengeful monster into a tragic figure who is, though still monstrous, nonetheless deserving of sympathy. Like the figure of the *Wandering Jew*, who looks back to the death and resurrection of the Christian Messiah and forward to the prophesied apocalypse, and also like the vampire who looks back to their mortal life and forward to their perhaps inevitable second death that ends their immortal life, the figure of Shylock as he exists in our cultural imagination simultaneously looks back to his antisemitic creation while envisaging a future transformation from monster to tragic hero. This transformation is not fully realised with Irving's stage performance, yet, Irving's transformative performance continues to develop the seeds sown by Keane earlier in the century. In conversation with previous stage transformations of Shylock, the theatrical inception of the benevolent Jew archetype, and novels such as George Walker's *Theodore Cyphon* and Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington*, Irving's Shylock demonstrates the afterlife of what Judith Page describes as the cultural revolution of sympathy and sentiment in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that placed Jewish representation at its centre.⁶⁵² The question remains, however, as to whether such philosemitic constructions can ever be genuine representations of Jewishness, or whether representations like Shylock and the many versions of this character conjured onstage and in fiction will always be tied to their origins as a Christian construction, and significantly a construction that continues to function within and uphold Christian cultural hegemony. As Edward Said discusses, such *representations* are ultimately artificial and reflect an imagined and constructed reality.⁶⁵³ However, in the shadow of Irving's Shylock, and also with the spectre(s) of the *Wandering Jew* and the multitude of interconnected antisemitic and philosemitic traditions conjured beneath the surface of the novel, *Dracula* too contains a potential for sympathy. While Dracula is always monstrous, Mina introduces an alternative way of viewing him: 'That poor soul who has

⁶⁵¹ See: Zanger's essay 'A Sympathetic Vibration: Dracula and the Jews', Ken Gelder's *Reading the Vampire* (1994), and Carol Margaret Davison's *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* (2004).

⁶⁵² Judith W. Page, *Imperfect Sympathies: Jews and Judaism in British Romantic Literature and Culture* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), p. 3.

⁶⁵³ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 21.

wrought all this misery is the saddest case of all. Just think what will be his joy when he too is destroyed in his worse part, that his better part may have spiritual immortality [...] I too may need such a pity.’⁶⁵⁴ Dracula is a monstrous Other who cast a Jewish shadow, and as such he must die in order to extirpate the threat he poses. Yet Mina, although Dracula’s victim, argues not for hatred or revenge, but for sympathy and pity. As Shylock’s ‘Hath not a Jew eyes’ speech is now, due to the transformative work of actors such as Kean and Irving, viewed as a plea for a common, shared humanity between Christians and Jews, so too Mina pleads that Dracula is just as deserving of sympathy as she is. We feel pity for Mina, and she encourages us to feel pity for Dracula *too*. Like Shylock, however, this potential for sympathy occurs as part of a larger Christian narrative where Mina is lauded for her display of sympathy and tolerance towards one deemed Other, and the spiritual immortality glimpsed in Mina’s words suggests a specifically Christian afterlife, thus validating a theologically Christian perspective of death and salvation.⁶⁵⁵ In this way, though Shylock and Dracula are both constructed as bloodthirsty monsters, the germ of their sympathetic transformation, albeit transformations occurring as part of Christian narratives, can be found in the original texts, leaving space for future afterlives that, like the Wandering Jew and the many iterations of Jewish Others, are continually refashioned to speak to their present moment while still preserving pieces of the past.

By examining fictional representations of the imagined Jewish Other in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century literature, this thesis has shown how contemporary anxieties regarding nation, race, and religion, the representation of Self and the Other, historical and cultural legacies of antisemitism, and theological traditions shaped Christian constructions of Jewishness that emerged in the fiction of this period. In Stoker’s *Dracula*, we can find a microcosm of some of the afterlives and legacies of these constructions and anxieties, although many other texts appearing in the decades that followed and continuing to the present day also continue to manifest these ghosts. Never leaving Britain’s cultural bloodstream, and continually conjured and manifested throughout history, in the shadow of the 1753 ‘Jew Bill’ late eighteenth and nineteenth century literature was a key space in which Christian religious and theological traditions, medieval myths, cultural stereotypes, and racial and national anxieties surrounding the imagined Jew converged and coalesced in popular fictional representations. Such representations engage with Britain’s own antisemitic past to perpetuate established tropes, to attempt to redress and exorcise them, or simply in order to capitalise on popular trends. As critics such as Davison have noted, representations of Jewish Others are inextricably linked to traditions of antisemitism and depictions of the monstrous Other manifested in British Gothic literature, but as this thesis explored literary representation of Jewishness — whether that be monstrous Jewishness or representations of Jewish benevolence — is one of generic cross-pollination. Appearing in the Gothic, but also texts that utilise tales of terror and narratives of monsters without being Gothic themselves, as well as historical and romance novels, such representations draw on a wealth of established and new contexts and traditions, and these

⁶⁵⁴ Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), pp. 328-329.

⁶⁵⁵ The use of ‘joy’ here in relation to Dracula’s death and potential salvation recalls a passage in the Bible in which the Christian Messiah declares that ‘likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance’ (Luke 15:7).

representations are further shaped in conversation with trends emerging from poetry, theatre, and theology. The roots of Christian constructions of the Jewish Other spread back to the emergence of Christianity and the use of theological interpretation to define religious, racial, and national difference. These interpretations were also used to justify political and social action taken as consequence of this perceived difference, to justify the creation of political-religious institutions like the Spanish Inquisition, but also to grant or deny groups rights and political disabilities as shown through the debate surrounding the 1753 'Jew Bill'. Underpinned by theological interpretations and subsequent mythical, folkloric, historical, and political traditions that developed in the centuries that followed the establishment of Christian religion, these roots were, as I have discussed, united, enriched, and disseminated within popular literary fiction. The rise of the novel in the eighteenth century changed the landscape of fiction. What this thesis has sought to demonstrate is the ways that this medium, from chapbooks, to novellas and novels, became a key and influential channel through which representations of Jewishness were established, refashioned, and developed, contributing to Bryan Cheyette's notion of 'semitic discourse.'⁶⁵⁶

Developing within this space of semitic discourse, what has become clear over the course of this research is the ways that various literary representations of Jewishness contribute to and uphold the Christian cultural hegemony of British society. Constructed in both antisemitic and philosemitic traditions, and further seeping into wider literary and cultural landscapes through unacknowledged shadows, representations of Jewish Others reflect not simply deep-seated anxieties towards Jews and Judaism in terms of national, religious, and racial or ethnic-religious otherness, but anxieties that are specifically Christian in nature. Framed through narratives that privilege Christian perspectives and the British, Christian Self, and often underpinned by Christian traditions, eschatology, and theological interpretations, the texts explored in this thesis reveal the construction of an imaginative stage onto which Jewish Others are represented and ventriloquized by Christian authors, and where British Christians are defined in opposition to such fictional constructs. This imaginative stage and artificial representations of Jewishness function in a similar way to Said's conception of the imaginative stage of the Orient which encompasses the fictional and theatrical *representation* of Orientalism within British literary traditions.⁶⁵⁷ Represented as victims of the Spanish Inquisition, the portrayal of racial persecution against Jews is exploited in order to contrast Catholic persecution with Protestant tolerance, and often within such narratives Jews are placed in the role of victims who can be rescued by a British, Christian saviour. Considering the importance of Shylock and Jessica within semitic discourse, this research provides new insight into the ways that Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* functions as an ur-text of Jewish representation in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century literature. Attempting to exorcise the antisemitic stereotypes of Shylock and Jessica, novels such as *Theodore Cyphon*, *Harrington*, and *Ivanhoe* represent Jewish Others as benevolent fathers and loving daughters. Presented as posing little threat to the body politic of Britain — beyond that born out of biological, reproductive racism and interfaith tension arising within marriage — the familial and potential

⁶⁵⁶ Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of "The Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial representation 1875-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 8.

⁶⁵⁷ Said, p. 63.

romantic relationships between these characters and the text's British, Christian hero demonstrates the tolerance of this hero, but it also reveals the limits of tolerance within emerging philosemitic trends. As this thesis has explored, this tolerance functions, in part, to bolster the self-gratification of the novel's author, while also constructing benevolent Jews and, as in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, a benevolent Jewess that function, through their mutual tolerance and friendship with the Christian hero, to support and uphold Christian hegemony within British society. In a different vein, this approach considers *Marchmont* and explores the ways that this novel manifests the unacknowledged shadows of Shylock and the monstrous Jewish moneylender. Drawing on antisemitic traditions of Jewish usury and the demonisation of Jews, traditions rooted in Christian theology and medieval myths, this novel perpetuates the association of antisemitic tropes with monstrous and demonic otherness.

Underpinning semitic discourse and literary representations of Jewish alterity are Christian scriptural interpretations that reflect contemporary Christian anxieties. As critics such as Diane Long Hoeveler (*The Gothic Ideology* [2014]) and Alison Milbank (*God and the Gothic* [2018]) have noted, religion and theology are integral parts of eighteenth and nineteenth century literature, and in particular the emerging Gothic genre. What this thesis has explored is the importance of religious traditions, perceptions of religious difference, and theological interpretations to Christian constructions of the Jewish Other in fiction. Such constructions emerge through generic cross-pollination that includes the Gothic, but also other genres such as the historical and romance novel, and in conversation with poetry and drama as well as folkloric, mythical, and religious narratives. Significantly, these texts and their representations of Jewishness are infused with Christian interpretations and *re*-interpretations of scripture. From reimagined versions of circumcision and the Jewish covenant with God, to the palimpsestic conjuration of the Wandering Jew myth that is tied to Christian eschatology, these constructions ultimately reflect Christian anxieties. As the Wandering Jew and Wandering Jew figures conjured by Matthew Lewis, William Godwin, Charles Maturin, and George Croly look back to the Passion narrative, and forward to the prophesied return of the Christian Messiah and the awaited apocalypse, these palimpsestic spectres, appearing to testify to the truth of Christianity and a Christian worldview, leave space for future refashioning, and also space for doubt. Conjuring a spectralised imagined Jew, but also a Christian spectre too, Wandering Jew narratives and other texts that contribute to the interconnected threads of semitic discourse ask: What if the theological claims foundational to Christian society, Christian perceptions of Jewish alterity, and supersessionist interpretations are wrong? What if there is no difference between the Christian, British self, and the foreign, Jewish Other? And what if the Christian Messiah never returns? Integral to the texts explored in this thesis, these questions and anxieties remain unanswered, but nonetheless such narratives look forward to future conjurations in fiction such as Sue's *Le Juif Errant* and Stoker's *Dracula*. While the novel itself emerged within the eighteenth century, literary productions of the eighteenth and nineteenth century conjured ghosts of Jewish Others created in earlier theological, historical, and folkloric traditions. Reviving established antisemitic spectres but also refashioning and updating these ghosts to reflect the contemporary anxieties of British, Christian society while further creating new philosemitic creations, these literary constructions are not exact copies of their historical counterparts, but they can be viewed as echoes

of them, or, as with the Wandering Jew, palimpsestic spectres. Thus, resisting death and the end, and tied to Christian anxieties, the Wandering Jew and an array of imagined Jewish Others live on.

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