

## THE 'ROMAN CATHOLIC QUESTION' IN THE ANGLO-JEWISH PRESS, 1890-1925

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*Abstract: Anglo-Jewish reactions to late 19th and early 20th century Catholic discourses about Jews have received little attention. This article partially fills this gap through an examination of Anglo-Jewish newspapers from 1890 to 1925, a timeframe which includes the Dreyfus Affair, the Hilsner blood libel and the ratification of the British Mandate in Palestine. Three different newspaper editorships have been examined, the Jewish Chronicle edited by Asher Myers, the Jewish Chronicle and Jewish World under the control of Leopold Greenberg, and the Jewish Guardian as the paper of the League of British Jews. It is this article's contention that a more aggressive reaction to Catholic hostility is notable in the Jewish Chronicle and Jewish World when they were controlled by Leopold Greenberg, a political Zionist, than the Jewish Chronicle under Asher Myers or the Jewish Guardian. The Jewish Guardian was unconcerned about Catholic hostility to Zionism though it was occasionally alarmed by generalised anti-Jewish threads that were woven into it. It was also critical of English Catholic writers who argued that Jews could never be proper Englishmen, but whereas Greenberg relished the opportunity to 'hit back' on his own, the Jewish Guardian preferred if possible to allow Christians to defend Jews.*

Jewish-Catholic relations have not received a great deal of attention within existing examinations of modern Anglo-Jewish history.<sup>1</sup> With some exceptions, such as the *Jewish Chronicle's* occasional fracas with the famous pairing that George Bernard Shaw nicknamed the 'Chesterbelloc',<sup>2</sup> very little has been written about Anglo-Jewish reactions to late 19th and early 20th century Catholic discourses about Jews (whether hostile or amicable).<sup>3</sup> What follows is an attempt to fill this gap, albeit partially, through an examination of Anglo-Jewish newspapers from 1890 to 1925. This timeframe includes important events such as the Dreyfus Affair, the Hilsner blood libel, the Balfour Declaration and the ratification of the British Mandate. It is impossible to provide a comprehensive analysis of the entire spectrum of Jewish newspapers published in England or to present every nuance and detail from over

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<sup>1</sup> A recent study by Ulrike Carmen Ehret, investigating English and German Catholic attitudes towards Jews from 1918 to 1939, goes a long way to rectifying this gap. See Ulrike Carmen Ehret, 'Catholics and Antisemitism in Germany and England, 1918-1939', Ph.D thesis, *University of London* (2006).

<sup>2</sup> George Bernard Shaw, 'Belloc and Chesterton', *The New Age*, 15 February 1908, 309-11.

<sup>3</sup> For example, see Dean Rapp, 'The Jewish Response to G.K. Chesterton's Antisemitism, 1911-33', *Patterns of Prejudice* 24: 2-4 (1990), 75-86.

thirty years worth of issues. This presentation is therefore by necessity an admittedly selective consideration of issues from three of the main English language Jewish weeklies: the *Jewish Chronicle*, the *Jewish World* and the *Jewish Guardian*.

The *Jewish Chronicle* has been a popular and opinion forming weekly newspaper for Anglo-Jewry for a long time. It came into existence in 1841 and soon became the communal newspaper of choice for English Jews with readers from a diversity of Jewish backgrounds. It provided a comprehensive picture of Jewish life in England, reported international events of interest to the community and printed the minutes of important Jewish institutions such as the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association. It not only reported but influenced communal opinion. To quote David Cesarani, the principle expert on The *Jewish Chronicle*, the paper has been 'part of the ritual and rhythm of Anglo-Jewish communal life.'<sup>4</sup> I have thus used this newspaper as one significant though partial indicator of Anglo-Jewish thought and discourse. The *Jewish Chronicle* has been examined here as it appeared under two very different editor-ownership pairings. It was owned by Israel Davis from 1878 until December 1906 and edited by Asher Myers until his death in May 1902. Under Davis and Myers the paper was largely representative of the anti-Zionist Anglo-Jewish 'establishment'. The first section of this article examines the *Jewish Chronicle* under Davis and Myers for the period 1890 to 1902.<sup>5</sup> In December 1906, during the papacy of Pius X, Leopold Greenberg, a staunch 'political' Zionist and admirer and friend of Herzl, took over as the principal share owner and editor.<sup>6</sup> Greenberg closely controlled the paper until his death in 1931. The change of ownership was significant as Greenberg set a notably more combative tone for the *Jewish Chronicle* which can be seen in some of its reporting of Catholic attitudes towards Jews. Greenberg also acquired the *Jewish World* in 1913. This provided him with what some within the Anglo-Jewish community, especially those ill-disposed towards Zionism, considered

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<sup>4</sup> David Cesarani, 'The Importance of Being Editor: The Jewish Chronicle, 1841-1991', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, XXXII (1993), 276.

<sup>5</sup> The newspaper under the temporary working editorship of Morris Duparc, from the death of Myers in May 1902 until the change in ownership in 1906, has not been examined in this article.

<sup>6</sup> Broadly speaking there were two main varieties of English Zionism. 'Political Zionists' adopted a top-down approach, campaigning for political and legal guarantees for a Jewish Nation State from the main superpowers, believing that the value of colonisation efforts without a solid underlying legal charter was minimal. 'Practical Zionists' adopted a bottom-up approach, supporting and advocating a gradual increase of Jewish colonies in Palestine through Aliyah, accepting that the formal national question could be deferred until there were more Jews living in Palestine.

a troublesome hegemony. His willingness, perhaps even eagerness, to criticise communal leaders did little to alleviate such concerns. The second section of this article examines the newspapers under Greenberg, with the primary focus being the *Jewish Chronicle*, but supplemented with some examples from the *Jewish World*.

The *Jewish Guardian* did not have the same success as the *Jewish Chronicle* in establishing itself as part of the fabric of the Anglo-Jewish community. Whilst for a time it was the *Jewish Chronicle's* most important and vehement rival, it had a comparatively short lifespan, springing into existence in 1919 and passing away in August 1931. It was produced by the League of British Jews as its principle forum for articulating a Jewish anti-Zionist message specifically to rival that articulated in the newspapers of Leopold Greenberg.<sup>7</sup> Its editor, Laurie Magnus, was a prominent anti-Zionist and member of the League. It was probably coincidental that the paper was wrapped up during the final few months of Greenberg's life, when according to Cesarani a number of medical complaints 'virtually removed him from the affairs of the paper',<sup>8</sup> but certainly the paper's original *raison d'être* was coming to a natural end. One of the primary financial supporters and contributors to the *Jewish Guardian* was Claude Montefiore, a co-founder of English Liberal Judaism.<sup>9</sup> Unlike the *Jewish World*,<sup>10</sup> the *Jewish Guardian* explicitly avoided making a judgement on the relative authenticity of orthodox, liberal and reform Jewish identities. What concerned the owners of the *Jewish Guardian* were not religious identity distinctions but the idea

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<sup>7</sup> According to the minutes of a League of British Jews meeting, Lucien Wolf persuaded the executive of the League to establish the *Jewish Guardian* as a rival to Leopold Greenberg's pro-Zionist Anglo-Jewish newspapers, the *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jewish World*. Minutes of meeting of the literary subcommittee of the League, 18 March 1918, DEPS, League of British Jews, E3/208(1), cited by Stuart A. Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews: The Communal Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1895-1920* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 308-9.

<sup>8</sup> David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 140.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel R. Langton, *Claude Montefiore: His Life and Thought* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2002), 14, 103.

<sup>10</sup> Greenberg viewed "Liberal" Judaism with antipathy and according to Cecil Roth, invariably placed the "Liberal" between inverted commas as a sarcastic snipe. Cecil Roth, *The Jewish Chronicle 1841-1941* (London: The Jewish Chronicle, 1949), 130. In the *Jewish World* he argued that "Liberal" Judaism was too far removed from religious Orthodoxy and national and racial affinity for adherence to it to provide a legitimate 'religious' basis for determining Jewish identity. He suggested in fact that Liberal Judaism demonstrated an opting out of the rigorous commitment required by Judaism. 'Are "Liberal" Jews, Jews?', *The Jewish World*, 7 January 1920, 3-4; 14 January 1920, 3-4; 21 January 1920, 4.

that Jewish nationalism could serve as the basis for Jewish identity.<sup>11</sup> The third section of this article examines the *Jewish Guardian* from 1919 to 1925.

A correlation between the anti- or pro-Zionism of the Jewish newspapers and their attitudes towards Catholic discourse is revealed by this study. A more aggressive reaction to Catholic hostility is notable in the *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jewish World* when they were controlled by Leopold Greenberg than the *Jewish Chronicle* under Myers or the *Jewish Guardian*, though conversely a more friendly tone was detected when it was thought that Vatican support for Zionism could be elicited. The *Jewish Guardian* was relatively unconcerned about Catholic hostility to Zionism though it was occasionally alarmed by generalised anti-Jewish threads that were woven into it. It was however very critical of those English Catholic writers who argued that Jews could never be proper Englishmen.

### **The Jewish Chronicle under Israel Davis and Asher Myers**

During the 1890s the *Jewish Chronicle* under Davis and Myers reported a number of incidents of Catholics demonstrating a friendly attitude towards Jews. Many of these depictions of Catholic amiability were of a minor nature compared with the occasional incidents of Catholic hostility reported by the paper. One of the main vehicles for these amiable reports was the section entitled the 'Colonial and Foreign News'. This usually consisted of terse news fragments. The Austria-Hungary section of the foreign news was particularly notable for its reporting of minor incidents of Catholic amiability. The following are some examples:

A counterblast to anti-Semitism has appeared in Vienna in the form of a pamphlet written by a learned Roman Catholic. The pamphlet discusses two questions: 'Dare a true Catholic be an anti-Semite?' and 'Is not hatred of the Jews a grievous sin?'<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The *Jewish Guardian* stated that 'we do not distinguish in this sense between orthodox, liberal, or Reform Jews. Zionism without Judaism, we assert, makes no appeal to believing Jews.' 'What is a Jew?', *The Jewish Guardian*, 29 October 1920, 10. It later argued that 'to the Jewish Guardian, all Judaism is Jewish' and suggested that the 'exponents of Liberal tenets', such as Claude Montefiore, should be accepted by their 'Orthodox brethren'. 'Mr. Montefiore in the "Hibbert"', *The Jewish Guardian*, 26 May 1922, 1.

<sup>12</sup> 'Foreign and Colonial News: Austria-Hungary', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 26 December 1890, 11.

A Catholic priest, the Rev. Kornel Fabian, has performed a kindly act at Fülekpüspüki (Hungary). The son of a poor Jew died there, and when the good priest was made acquainted with the poverty of the family, he paid the funeral expenses out of his own pocket. He also visited the house of mourning, where he addressed words of solace to the bereaved father. Another priest at Kunetitz has for several years past supported a destitute aged Jew.<sup>13</sup>

A Catholic priest has given 200 crowns towards the building expenses of a synagogue at Janoschida.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Luigi de Pavissia, Catholic priest at Goritz,<sup>15</sup> has written a memoir, which he has published as a pamphlet, of the late Dr. Angelo Levi, who died there recently, and was highly esteemed for his humanitarianism and philanthropy. The author declares that he, as a Catholic priest, has done no wrong in thus honouring a Jew, who prayed to the same God as he.<sup>16</sup>

These examples of Catholic amiability are representative of a number of reports for the 1890s found in the Austria-Hungary section of the 'Colonial and Foreign News'. The paper also reported Vatican support of the Christian Social Party in Austria, a political movement with hostile anti-Jewish inclinations led by Karl Lueger, a Catholic politician who became mayor of Vienna in 1897.<sup>17</sup> This however did little to diminish its reporting of Catholic amiability in the Austria-Hungary section of the foreign news during the final years of the 19th century. It is possible that the *Jewish Chronicle* was operating under the premise that anti-Jewish hostility, particularly that

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<sup>13</sup> 'Colonial and Foreign News: Austria-Hungary', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 10 April 1896, 15.

<sup>14</sup> 'Colonial and Foreign News: Austria-Hungary', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 November 1898, 26.

<sup>15</sup> I am grateful to one of the anonymous readers for pointing out that 'Goritz' must refer to Gorizia, a town which was part of Austria-Hungary. This is supported by a note in an earlier issue of the *Jewish Chronicle* which stated that Dr. Angelo Levi died two years previously in Gorizia. Israel Abrahams, 'Books and Bookmen', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 5 May 1899, 20.

<sup>16</sup> 'Colonial and Foreign News: Austria-Hungary', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 21 July 1899, 20.

<sup>17</sup> The *Jewish Chronicle* concluded that the Vatican supported Lueger's campaign against what it described as a Jewish-Masonic 'tyranny' in order to undermine Liberal reforms in Hungary and to weaken the Triple Alliance. 'The Vatican and the Anti-Semites', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 3 July 1896, 14. For more on Lueger and the Christian Social Party, see Robert S. Wistrich, 'Karl Lueger and the Ambiguities of Viennese Antisemitism', *Jewish Social Studies* 45:3/4 (1983), 251-262.

of the Christian social party, could be mollified by emphasising a friendly relationship between Jews and Catholics.<sup>18</sup>

A drama unfolded in France in the 1890s which provides another piece of the picture of the *Jewish Chronicle*'s reactions to Catholic hostility. After initially declaring itself suspicious about the guilty verdict against Captain Dreyfus in 1894,<sup>19</sup> the paper fell conspicuously silent until November 1897, when fresh rumours of fabricated evidence started to circulate. Following the publication of Zola's *J'Accuse* on 13 January 1898, the drama heated up significantly. A wave of violent anti-Jewish agitations subsequently swept across France.<sup>20</sup> The *Congregation of the Augustans of the Assumption* and their newspaper *La Croix* played a significant role in stirring hostility towards Jews.<sup>21</sup> The *Jewish Chronicle* did devote considerable space to regularly reporting the affair from this point onwards. It also became more critical about Catholic agitators in France. However, whilst the paper started reporting the events of the Dreyfus Affair in great detail, and argued repeatedly that Dreyfus was innocent, it seemed to engage with the drama with at least some reluctance. As Cesarani observed, the paper reported the demands for a retrial but not 'without misgivings.'<sup>22</sup> It was, the paper concluded, better to avoid a specifically Jewish engagement with the agitation and to leave protests to the 'magnificent stand of Gentiles'.<sup>23</sup>

Whilst the paper frequently criticised the role of Catholics in the Affair, it also often found a way to soften its reporting of Catholic participation, either by demonstrating

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<sup>18</sup> This would seem to dovetail with David Kertzer's conclusion, based on his examination of documents from the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano*, that the Church was worried that Jews were trying to undermine the Christian Social Party by demonstrating that its anti-Jewish hostility went contrary to Church teachings. David I. Kertzer, *The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York: Vintage, 2002), 186-204.

<sup>19</sup> For the paper's initial response to the affair from 28 December 1894 to 18 January 1895, see Gideon Kouts, *The Hebrew and Jewish Press in Europe: Select Problems in its History* (Paris: Les Éditions Suger, 2006), 216-220.

<sup>20</sup> George R. Whyte, *The Dreyfus Affair: A Chronological History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 155-157.

<sup>21</sup> By the time of the Dreyfus Affair, *La Croix* was the most popular French Catholic newspaper. According to George Whyte, it had a daily circulation of roughly 170,000-180,000 copies. Whyte, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 19, 212. For examples of *La Croix*'s polemics against Jews and Freemasons before and during the Dreyfus Affair, see Norman James Clary, 'French Antisemitism During the Years of Drumont and Dreyfus 1886-1906', Ph.D thesis, *Ohio State University* (1970). Some citations from *La Croix* for late January 1898 can be found in James Carroll, *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews* (New York: Mariner Books, 2002), 459-460.

<sup>22</sup> Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 84.

<sup>23</sup> 'The French Jews Vindicated', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 30 September 1898, 15-16; For more on the paper's reluctance to protest as Jews, see Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 84-85.

exceptions or by suggesting that specific sections were chiefly responsible rather than the Church as a whole. For example, in February 1899, the *Jewish Chronicle* welcomed 'the return to sanity of certain members of the dominant faith,' praising the founding in France of a Catholic committee,<sup>24</sup> which did not side against Dreyfus.<sup>25</sup> The *Jewish Chronicle* suggested that Jesuits rather than Catholics *per se* were largely responsible for the agitations.<sup>26</sup> The paper also depicted British Catholics as a consistent exception to Catholic hostility towards Jews. For example, the paper stated that Catholic hostility in France 'finds no parallel in England'<sup>27</sup> and reproduced extracts from letters by the Archbishop of Glasgow and several Bishops of England to demonstrate that British Catholics opposed the persecution of Jews.<sup>28</sup> However, whilst these Church officials agreed that hostility towards Jews was 'foreign to the Catholic Church,' none of the cited extracts actually contained an acknowledgement that hostility towards Jews in France had any Catholic component. There was also a tone of equivocation in some of the extracts which the *Jewish Chronicle* did not highlight. For example, the Archbishop of Glasgow stated that the Jews of England have 'nothing to fear', as long as they remain the 'well-behaved body we know', and the Bishop of Middlesbrough suggested that 'in Italy and France, the Jews have made themselves unpleasantly prominent in the attacks on the Catholic Church and the Sovereign Pontiff.'<sup>29</sup> On 22 September 1899 the paper also expressed gratitude towards Cardinal Vaughan, the head of the Catholic hierarchy in England from 1892 until 1903 and the owner of *The Tablet*, specifically for his supposed repudiation of anti-Jewish hostility by the clerical party in France. However, the extracts cited by the *Jewish Chronicle* only demonstrated that Cardinal Vaughan disagreed with the guilty verdict and not that he acknowledged, let alone repudiated, the existence of any Catholic anti-Jewish sentiment in France.<sup>30</sup> The paper not only over-interpreted

<sup>24</sup> The 'comite catholique pour la defense du droit'.

<sup>25</sup> 'France and the Dreyfus Case: Partial Return of Sanity', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 24 February 1899, 12.

<sup>26</sup> For example, the paper stated that 'the Catholics of France, or rather the Jesuits (my emphasis), turned on to the Jewish quarter the stream of religious prejudice. ... The Jesuits threw all the weight of a strong organisation on the side of injustice and darkness' 'The Position in France', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 21 July 1899, 15. The paper also argued that 'in all the intrigues and machinations that have marked the course of this mystery we find, *flagrante delicto*, the Jesuits.' 'Tactics of the Jesuits', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 6 January 1899, 16. In 1903, the paper suggested that in the details of Church administration, including its 'Jew-baiting propaganda', the pope is in the hands of subordinates such as the Jesuits. 'The Papacy and Jews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 31 July 1903, 18.

<sup>27</sup> 'The Jesuits and the Jews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 3 March 1899, 20.

<sup>28</sup> 'English Catholics on Persecution of the Jews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 18 February 1898, 15.

<sup>29</sup> 'English Catholics on Persecution of the Jews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 18 February 1898, 15

<sup>30</sup> 'A General Amnesty', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 22 September 1899, 17.

Cardinal Vaughan's comments, it seemed to forget the equivocal and indeed often hostile edge of *The Tablet* during the drama.<sup>31</sup> And only a week after Vaughan's comments, *The Tablet* expressed an equivocal response to the resolution of the Dreyfus affair with more sympathy for *La Croix* than for Dreyfus and the 'foreign Jews'.<sup>32</sup>

The *Jewish Chronicle* also shone a positive light on *The Tablet* on several other occasions despite its ambivalent attitude towards Jews. For example, in December 1899, referring to the Hilsner Affair,<sup>33</sup> a ritual murder accusation levelled against Leopold Hilsner in Polná, Bohemia, in April 1899, the paper reported that *The Tablet* repudiated the blood libel. Referring to an article in *The Tablet*, the *Jewish Chronicle* stated that the

well timed utterances of the English Catholic Press encourage the hope that, in these days of enlightenment, the Vatican, true to its ancient traditions and precedents, will certainly not be less just than it was in the Middle Ages, and that history may again record a Papal pronouncement, *urbi et orbi*, acquitting our people of the odious crime imputed to them.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> For example, in February 1898, *The Tablet* reported that 'we shall not, we trust, be accused of palliating or condoning the excesses of anti-Semitism, by pointing out that the Jews, in France, Italy, and Austria, the three principal Catholic nations of the continent, exercise a political influence entirely disproportioned to their numbers, and that this influence is always exercised against the religion of the country. In close alliance with the Freemasons ... they form the backbone of the party of aggressive liberalism, with war to the knife against the Church as the sum and aim of its policy.' 'Captain Dreyfus and His Champions', *The Tablet*, 12 February 1898, 238.

<sup>32</sup> *The Tablet* stated that 'some words of *La Croix* which are less unreasonable than the quotations which have been going the round of the English press may be quoted, not as condoning its faults but in the spirit of giving it its due. Occupying itself with General de Galliffet's Report and the decree of pardon, the *Croix* says: "The motives which have determined the signature of the decree of pardon are at last known to us. They affirm the guilt of Dreyfus. They at the same time show the President's desire to suppress the internal strife which is ravaging France.... The Dreyfus affair was a source of division and suffering. Let it be closed and let silence follow the vicious agitation which has been aroused amongst us by our worst enemies, the Freemasons and foreign Jews."' *The Tablet* suggested that these words of *La Croix* 'may serve as a set-off to the delirious and savage utterance which have appeared in *The Times* and elsewhere.' 'La Croix and the Pardon of Dreyfus', *The Tablet*, 30 September 1899, 535.

<sup>33</sup> For more about this blood libel, see František Červinka, 'The Hilsner Affair', in Alan Dundes, ed., *The Blood Libel Legend* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991).

<sup>34</sup> 'English Catholics and the Blood Libel', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 1 December 1899, 16-17; also see 'The English Catholic Press and the Blood Accusation', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 1 December 1899, 12; a few months later the paper reported that *The Tablet* contained another note demonstrating the rejection of the blood libel by several popes. 'The Popes and the "Blood Accusation"', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 9 March 1900, 17.



Despite certain popes proclaiming Jews innocent of the blood libel, it seems anachronistic to look back to the Middle Ages to locate a timeframe in which, according to the *Jewish Chronicle*, 'the Holy See vindicated its claim to be regarded as the representative of Right and Justice'.<sup>35</sup> However, more notable than this lapse into anachronism was the *Jewish Chronicle*'s willingness to overlook the darker elements found within the article in *The Tablet*. The article in *The Tablet* did lament what it called the 'unchristian hatred' of the blood libels. Nevertheless, whilst ostensibly defending Jews from the accusation, the same article had no problem with what it called 'a political or economic conflict, which in particular countries or districts may be justifiable enough'. It clarified that no one can complain if

in this or that country Jewish attempts to squeeze Christians out of a particular industry are met by organized resistance, or if strenuous opposition is offered to an attempt in whatever country, to obtain exclusive control of the Press or the money market. If in parts of France or Austria or Russia the Jews so conduct themselves as to invite economical or political reprisals they have only themselves to blame.<sup>36</sup>

*The Tablet* thus rejected a particularly unsavoury form of medieval hostility, the blood libel, whilst endorsing social, political and economic conspiracy themes. The article also argued that a refutation of the ritual murder charge in most cases is not inconsistent with 'the admission that in a few individual cases Christian children may have been murdered by Jews, and even murdered in *odium fidei*, i.e., because they were Christians'. The article in *The Tablet* suggested that the occasional murder of Christian children may even have involved 'crucifixion, bleeding to death or what not'.<sup>37</sup> Likewise the refutation of ritual murder claims by Herbert Thurston, made a year earlier in the English Jesuit periodical, *The Month*, was marred by the suggestion that on the whole Jews did not ritually murder Christians but that ritual murders had occasionally occurred as 'isolated and unauthorised outbreaks of fanaticism, reprobated with horror by the higher and better feeling of educated Israelites'.<sup>38</sup> In

<sup>35</sup> 'English Catholics and the Blood Libel', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 1 December 1899, 16-17.

<sup>36</sup> 'The Jews and Ritual Murders', *The Tablet*, 25 November 1899, 841.

<sup>37</sup> 'The Jews and Ritual Murders', *The Tablet*, 25 November 1899, 841.

<sup>38</sup> Herbert Thurston, 'Anti-Semitism and the Charge of Ritual Murder', *The Month*, XCI (1898), 567; Thurston clarified and elaborated this theme in his book, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln*, published shortly after

what seems like another attempt to minimise the equivocation in Catholic refutations of the blood libel charge, the *Jewish Chronicle* responded by praising the author of the article for his 'enlightened efforts to nail the abominable falsehoods that pass current among anti-Jews to the counter'.<sup>39</sup>

Related to the strategy of highlighting positive incidents and mitigating or omitting darker attitudes expressed by Catholics was a willingness to accept on behalf of Jews some responsibility for causing hostility. For example, after the conclusion of the Dreyfus retrial, the *Jewish Chronicle* expressed hope that if this sort of religious strife reoccurs, 'French Jews then, will, we hope, not repeat the error of countenancing, in even a remote way, an anti-clerical agitation in France.'<sup>40</sup> The suggestion that Jews were in some way responsible for stirring up the hostility is disturbingly reminiscent of accusations found in Catholic newspapers such as *The Tablet* and *The Month*.<sup>41</sup>

### **The Jewish Chronicle under Leopold Greenberg**

Under Greenberg the *Jewish Chronicle* responded, often in a confrontational way, to a range of incidents that were interpreted as Catholic hostility. One reoccurring theme was the abduction of Jewish children to Catholic monasteries. Such abductions were, as the paper observed, nothing new. As the paper reminded its readers in 1908, fifty years previously the infamous Mortara Affair had seen a young Jewish boy secretly baptised and forcibly removed from his parents by the Church in Rome.<sup>42</sup> However,

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the article. He stated that 'Judaism as a system can certainly not be held responsible for these outrages. None the less, it is very difficult to waive away the evidence of some Jewish complicity in such murders by declaring them all to be the fabrication of popular prejudice.' Thurston went on to suggest that a belief in sorcery was common in the Middle Ages and 'was practised amongst the Jews' even more than among Christians. He concluded that some Jewish sorcerers may have 'combined this very evil magic with their religious beliefs' leading in some isolated cases to human blood being taken from innocent victims. Herbert Thurston, *The Life of Saint Hugh of Lincoln* (London: Burns and Oates, 1898), 286-7.

<sup>39</sup> 'A Catholic Protest against Anti-Semitism', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 17 June 1898, 17-18.

<sup>40</sup> 'Nemesis', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 20 October 1899, 17-18.

<sup>41</sup> For example, as part of his refutation of Jesuit involvement in antisemitism, the editor of *The Month* argued that the agitations in France during the Dreyfus Affair were targeting Jews for social and financial rather than religious reasons. He suggested that the very phrase, 'falling into the hands of the Jews,' testified to significant Jewish involvement in 'nefarious practices'. He suggested that Englishmen cannot understand the extent to which in France 'the Jewish usurer has sucked out of the small proprietor his slender means.' Sydney F. Smith, 'The Jesuits and the Dreyfus Case', *The Month*, XCIII (1899), 121. *The Tablet* condemned the blood libel whilst blaming Jews for creating the hostility by squeezing Christians out of the money markets and the press. 'The Jews and Ritual Murders', *The Tablet*, 25 November 1899, 841.

<sup>42</sup> 'The Mortara Affair', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 26 June 1908, 13; for more on the Mortara Affair, see David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (London: Picador, 1997).

as the paper reported, similar events still occurred in the early twentieth century. In 1908, a series of reports referred to two cases in which Jewish parents had been unable to recover abducted children from a Roman Catholic Monastery in Warsaw, Poland.<sup>43</sup> The following year the paper reported that 'another Jewish girl, aged fifteen, has been abducted by a Catholic priest at Warsaw' and 'all efforts to recover the victim from his hands have so far proved fruitless'.<sup>44</sup> In 1913, the paper reported that in Grodno, 'two hundred Jewish girls under age have been abducted to a Catholic monastery.'<sup>45</sup> Another reoccurring narrative that Greenberg responded to was the alleged anti-Church conspiracy of Jews and Freemasons. For example, in February 1910 the paper reported that

the weight of the Roman Catholic Church is thrown in the balance against us. Speaking to his devoted flock, that most liberal and enlightened Christian, the Curé of the Parish of St. Louis de France in St. Louis Ward, enjoined all faithful sons of the church to vote against Jews and Freemasons. 'The dangers of this election are Judaism and Freemasonry, all true sons of the church must oppose such pernicious influences,' said the reverend father.<sup>46</sup>

In 1913 the paper reported that the Vatican newspaper, *Osservatore Romano*, described the mayor of Rome as a 'ridiculous parody of a citizen magistrate and an exotic amalgamation of Judaism and Freemasonry'.<sup>47</sup> The *Jewish Chronicle* also observed that this conspiracy narrative could even be found in the English Catholic press, which it claimed, only last year 'attributed all political agitation against constituted authority in Europe, firstly, to the power of the Jews on the Press, and, secondly, the influence of the Freemasons.' It concluded that to 'combine the two, and accuse the Jews in their capacity of Freemasons of complicity in the recent massacres that have attended the new regime in Turkey is, I dare say, regarded as a fine idea and a forward step in anti-Semitic propaganda.'<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> 'Abduction of a Jewish Girl', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 February 1908, 9; 'Russia', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 14 February 1908, 9; 'Russia', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 20 March 1908, 11.

<sup>44</sup> 'Abduction of a Jewish Girl', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 29 January 1909, 12.

<sup>45</sup> 'News from all quarters', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 July 1913, 20.

<sup>46</sup> 'The Colonies: Canada: Montreal', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 18 February 1910, 10.

<sup>47</sup> 'News from many Quarters', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 26 September 1913, 19; Ernesto Nathan, the mayor of Rome, was in fact Jewish and a member of the Freemasons.

<sup>48</sup> 'Jews and the Craft', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 August 1911, 15.

Pius X passed away in August 1914. His successor, Benedict XV, was less hostile towards Jews than his predecessor and David Kertzer has argued that for a few years hostility towards Jews in papal encyclicals and Catholic newspapers decreased.<sup>49</sup> Certainly within the *Jewish Chronicle* this is reflected by correspondingly fewer negative references to Catholics and a number of positive references from the beginning of Benedict XV's papacy through to the Balfour Declaration.<sup>50</sup> The *Jewish Chronicle* had even reported that the Catholic community had expressed support for Zionism.<sup>51</sup> However, Vatican admiration for Zionism had been largely imagined, and the 'support', such as it was, evaporated after the Balfour declaration. Cardinal Gasparri, the secretary of state at the Vatican, stated that:

The bells of the Vatican do not chime over the conquest of Jerusalem. It is difficult to take back a part of our heart that we have given to the Turks, in order to hand it over to the Zionists.<sup>52</sup>

Cardinal Bourne, who was the head of the Catholic Hierarchy in England from 1903 until 1935, outlined the Church's hostility towards Zionism in a letter intended for the British prime minister's attention. He stated that claims that Zionists had obtained the approval of the pope were false and suggested that to sympathise with Jewish interests was to sympathise with German finance.<sup>53</sup> Benedict XV delivered an important speech in March 1919 which referred to Jews as infidels and attacked the colonisation of Palestine by foreigners.<sup>54</sup> These and similar statements found their way into

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<sup>49</sup> Kertzer, *The Popes Against the Jews*, 240-1.

<sup>50</sup> See for example 'The Pope and the Jews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 13 August 1915, 5; 'The Pope and the Jews', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 14 April 1916, 9.

<sup>51</sup> 'The Zionist Plan', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 May 1917, 6; 'The Thanksgiving Meeting', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 December 1917, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Sergio Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism: Conflict in the Holy Land 1895-1925* (trans. Arnold Schwarz; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 117.

<sup>53</sup> Bourne's letter stated that the Zionists claimed 'that they had obtained the approval of the Holy City and thereby gained the support of some Catholic bishops in the United States and in England. There is no foundation for this claim. The whole movement appears to be quite contrary to Christian sentiment and tradition. Let Jews live here by all means if they like and enjoy the same liberties as other people; but that they should ever again dominate and rule the country would be an outrage to Christianity and its Divine Founder. It would mean, moreover, most certainly, the controlling influence of Jewish, which is German, finance'. 'Letter from Cardinal Bourne', 25 January 1919, cited in Doreen Ingrams, *Palestine Papers, 1917-1922: Seeds of Conflict* (London: John Murray, 1972), 59-61.

<sup>54</sup> The text of this consistorial allocution can be found in Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 131.

Catholic newspapers and in response to these incidents the *Jewish Chronicle* began to re-adopt a combative attitude towards Catholicism.

In August 1918 the paper addressed the anti-Jewish agitations of G.K. Chesterton. The paper bitterly criticised Chesterton for his suggestion that the Anglo-Jewish community could not be loyal citizens of England.<sup>55</sup> Whilst Chesterton was still technically an Anglo-Catholic until he entered the Roman communion in July 1922, his sympathies and worldview leaned sufficiently towards Rome for Leopold Greenberg to already consider and address him, with at least some justification,<sup>56</sup> as a Roman Catholic. Responding to Chesterton's criticism that Jews could not be loyal citizens of England, Greenberg concluded that these

attacks upon our people have, almost without exception, emanated from one section of the population – the section that holds allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. The foremost anti-Semites in this country, as in many another land, are those who religiously look to Rome.<sup>57</sup>

In 1920, still two years before his formal conversion, the *Jewish World* argued that Bourne's suggestion that Zionism was 'tainted with Bolshevism' is the 'sort of thing he can leave with advantage to the more disreputable anti-Semites among his communion – men like the Chestertons and the Bellocs.'<sup>58</sup> This was, it may be noted, neither the first nor the last time that Greenberg employed the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish World* to respond to and criticise Chesterton.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Leopold Greenberg, 'In the Communal Armchair: Hit Back! Hit Back! Hit Back!', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 11 October 1918, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Chesterton frequently used Catholics as literary paragons for good Christians. Father Brown was his most popular protagonist appearing in at least fifty short stories from 1910 onwards. One of the two protagonists in *The Ball and the Cross* (1910) was a staunch Catholic and it is clear throughout the novel that he was the narrator's favoured champion. In November 1911, Chesterton gave a talk to 'The Heretics', a student society at Cambridge University, in reply to a lecture by George Bernard Shaw on 'The Future of Religion'. Chesterton stated that 'he was more than ever inclined to think, though he had not yet admit it, that possibly the claims of the Greek and Anglican Churches were less near the truth than the Roman Catholic Church.' *The Cambridge Daily News*, 18 November 1911, 4. When he nearly died in 1915 it was Father John O'Connor, a Roman Catholic priest who he summoned to his deathbed and according to O'Connor, Chesterton had told him during the spring of 1912 that 'he had made up his mind to be received into the Church and was only waiting for Frances to come with him.' John O'Connor, *Father Brown on Chesterton* (London: Frederick Muller, 1937), 85, 94-5.

<sup>57</sup> Greenberg, 'Hit Back! Hit Back! Hit Back!', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 11 October 1918, 7.

<sup>58</sup> 'Around the World: Unworthy', *The Jewish World*, 4 August 1920, 2.

<sup>59</sup> As Dean Rapp observed, Leopold Greenberg frequently used the *Jewish Chronicle* to criticise Chesterton, 'especially between 1915 and 1921 when his disparaging remarks about Jews provoked thirty-five editorials, new reports and letters to the editor.' Rapp, 'The Jewish Response to G.K.

From 1918 onwards until the end of Benedict XV's papacy, the *Jewish Chronicle* reported worrying developments in the Vatican's intentions towards Palestine. It increasingly seemed to the paper that the Vatican saw Palestine as a potential sphere for the redevelopment of its own lost temporal power. In February 1919, the *Jewish Chronicle* observed that Cardinal Bourne was endorsing a plan to populate Palestine with Maltese unemployed. The paper described this plan as looking like a 'definite attempt ... to people the country with a considerable Catholic element'.<sup>60</sup> In August 1919 the *Jewish Chronicle* reported that 'the Vatican is considering a project for the creation of a Biblical School at Jerusalem' as a prelude to Vatican activity in Palestine<sup>61</sup> and in October of the same year it reported that 'Catholic papers in Italy are carrying on propaganda for an Italian Protectorate for Palestine.'<sup>62</sup> The paper continued to report these developments in the years that followed. For example, in 1925 the paper reported that 'All the Italian Catholic newspapers are publishing articles demanding that Italy should be made guardian over the Holy Places, with the Franciscans in charge of them.'<sup>63</sup> The papers under Greenberg reached the conclusion that most of the opposition towards Zionism originates from the Vatican. The *Jewish World* for example reported that:

The anxiety of the Vatican in case Jews are allowed to establish for themselves a National Home in Palestine is significant. It is probably accountable for most of the opposition outside Jewry which Zionism has encountered. The fears of Rome are naturally based upon anti-Jewish prejudice of the religious sort, but the pleas that are made by the Papacy that it is anxious to prevent persecution by Jews has its comical aspect when we come to think of its own accord.<sup>64</sup>

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Chesterton's Antisemitism', 76. The *Jewish World* also frequently criticised G.K. Chesterton. A long running series of articles from 23 June 1920 through to 22 September 1920 criticised Chesterton for suggesting that the Anglo-Jewish newspapers published the honour rolls of German-Jewish soldiers killed in the war, with the added twist being that Chesterton regarded this as by no means unreasonable of Anglo-Jews considering that Jewry constituted a single separate nation.

<sup>60</sup> 'Palestine for the Maltese', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 28 February 1919, 7.

<sup>61</sup> 'Roman Catholics and Jerusalem', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 22 August 1919, 16.

<sup>62</sup> 'Italy and Palestine', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 31 October 1919, 29.

<sup>63</sup> 'Anti-Zionist Agitation in Italy', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 13 February 1925, 16.

<sup>64</sup> 'Sir Herbert and the Pope', *The Jewish World*, 30 June 1920, 3.

In 1920 and 1921, the paper reported that Cardinal Bourne had again attacked Zionism and the idea of the Holy Places being controlled by Jews rather than Christians.<sup>65</sup> Following comments in an Italian newspaper, *Il Secolo*, attributed to an unnamed senior cardinal in the Vatican, the *Jewish Chronicle* angrily concluded that 'the outburst against Zionism by Cardinal Bourne to which we alluded last week, was clearly not any personal opinion but was an exposition of policy dictated from a higher quarter.' It stated that it was now placing

on record this evidence of the attitude of Roman Catholicism towards Judaism, so that Jews may know the extent to which these traditional enemies of our people remain hostile to us. Truly Roman Catholicism is a very Bourbon institution – it forgets nothing and it learns nothing.<sup>66</sup>

The *Jewish World* also noted Bourne's hostility towards Zionism and concluded that the real reason for his hostility towards 'Jewish nationalism' is that 'the Movement means the salvation of Judaism, a securing of its maintenance and a strengthening of its hold upon the Jewish people.'<sup>67</sup>

In February 1922, following the death of Benedict XV, Monsignor Ratti succeeded to the papacy, taking Pius XI as his papal name. The *Jewish Chronicle* initially praised Pius XI as a 'profound scholar' and 'skilful diplomatist' and concluded that his initiatory benediction was a blessing upon the whole world. The paper suggested that it 'was an invocation for Peace' in which Jews 'may recognise the act of a good friend.'<sup>68</sup> For a while the paper interpreted a number of developments positively. Chaim Weizmann met twice with Cardinal Gasparri at the Vatican in April 1922 and reported that the general tone of the meetings was friendly though somewhat ambivalent.<sup>69</sup> Despite being unsuccessful in securing a meeting with the pope, the

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<sup>65</sup> 'Catholics and Palestine: Cardinal Bourne's Outburst', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 6 August 1920, 20-1; 'Cardinal Bourne on the Balfour Declaration: A Bitterly Hostile Speech', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 30 September 1921, 42.

<sup>66</sup> 'Rome and Zionism', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7 October 1921, 8; the house of Bourbon was a line of French and Spanish kings. The Bourbons became a metaphor for arrogance and ignorance, with the expression, 'The Bourbons have learned nothing and forgotten nothing' attributed to Charles de Talleyrand-Périgord, a French Statesman in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>67</sup> 'Around the World: The True Dislike', *The Jewish World*, 4 August 1920, 2.

<sup>68</sup> 'Pius XI', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 10 February 1922, 9.

<sup>69</sup> Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 170.

Rome correspondent for the *Jewish Chronicle* concluded on 28 April that Weizmann's interview demonstrated that 'amicable relations were established between the Vatican and the Zionist leaders.'<sup>70</sup> On 12 May 1922, with the ratification of the British Mandate imminent, the paper reported that 'the sentiments of the Vatican towards Zionism are now much more friendly'.<sup>71</sup> The Mandate however failed to pass through the League of Nations and Leopold Greenberg blamed the Vatican. The tone of the *Jewish Chronicle* now turned bitterly hostile. One editorial stated that

no surer testimony could be give to the fact that the Zionist policy in Palestine upon which the Powers are agreed, is a policy that is likely to be of great value to Jews, to raise their world-status and to shield them, at least to some extent, from the bitterness of religious bigotry and the thralldom of religious prejudice in many parts of the world. Roman Catholicism has always been, if not the oppressor, then the depressor of Judaism; and the attitude of Roman Catholics in regard to Jews in relation to Palestine adopted ever since the Balfour Declaration, goes to show that that body has learnt nothing of religious tolerance and forgotten nothing of religious obscurantism.<sup>72</sup>

The paper's correspondent at Geneva concluded that:

It is to the Vatican and the influence of the Romish Church that we have really to attribute the opposition that has arisen. It is noticeable that France, Spain, Brazil, Belgium, and Italy are the countries blocking the way – all countries where the Roman Catholic influence is strongest. ... And there can be no doubt that the Church of Rome is in this matter pursuing the same old policy born of hatred of the Jews, narrow-minded prejudice against them, and a desire to thwart them in every way as 'anti-Christ.'<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> 'Dr. Weizmann and the Vatican', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 28 April 1922, 27.

<sup>71</sup> 'Italian and Vatican Attitude', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 12 May 1922, 21.

<sup>72</sup> 'The Palestine Mandate', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 19 May 1922, 7.

<sup>73</sup> 'The Mandate Postponed', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 19 May 1922, 25.



Invoking the Augustinian idea of an eternal witness people to explain the Vatican's hostility, the *Jewish Chronicle* suggested a religious explanation, that the Catholic Church must still believe that

Jews must be kept, still the wandering and despised of Humanity, the rejected of men, a people torn into segments and prevented from becoming a national entity, so that the doctrine of the Catholic Church shall be proved in the everlasting curse to be marked in the Jew for his alleged doing to death of Jesus and the actual rejection by Jews of his doctrines.<sup>74</sup>

When the Mandate finally passed in July 1922 with an accompanying White Paper which allowed for only a small Jewish community and restrictive immigration, Greenberg was, to say the least, unimpressed. He considered the White Paper a betrayal by the British Government and blamed the Vatican for its interference and its 'bitter and historic dislike of Jews' and grieved that the day had not yet been reached when the world would cease to sympathise with the Church's 'dark recidivism' and 'its suspicion and its ill will towards our people.'<sup>75</sup>

### **The Jewish Guardian**

The *Jewish Guardian* regularly reported incidents of antisemitism at home and abroad. However, the *Jewish Guardian*'s response to incidents of Catholic hostility towards Jews was notably infrequent and mild compared to the *Jewish Chronicle*. Considering the *Jewish Guardian*'s own hostility towards Zionism, it is not entirely surprising that it did not respond with the same zeal to what the *Jewish Chronicle* perceived as 'Vatican interference' in Palestine. When the *Jewish Guardian* did find reason to criticise Catholics, it was conspicuously focused on individuals such as Hilaire Belloc and G.K. Chesterton who attacked the idea that Jews could be Englishmen.

Chesterton's *The New Jerusalem*, published in 1920, argued that Jews could never be Englishmen. Chesterton suggested that Zionism was a good idea and that Jews who choose to remain in England rather than travel to Palestine should be legally obliged

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<sup>74</sup> 'The Papacy and Zionism', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 16 June 1922, 7.

<sup>75</sup> 'The Mandate Confirmed', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 28 July 1922, 7.

to go about swathed in the robes of an Arab.<sup>76</sup> The *Jewish Guardian* responded by stating that Chesterton had 'contrived for once to write a really stupid book.' The paper suggested that Chesterton would probably 'account it a sign of inherited financial preoccupation if one poor Jewish bookman remarks that 12s. 6d is a high price to exact for 300 empty pages'.<sup>77</sup> Neither the *Jewish World* nor the *Jewish Chronicle* deigned to take *The New Jerusalem* sufficiently seriously to bother examining it, which Rapp interpreted as evidence that Greenberg was unimpressed by his supposed support for Zionism.<sup>78</sup> On 11 November 1921, the *Jewish Guardian* reported a lecture by Chesterton to a Jewish organisation called the 'Ghetto Circle'. The paper reported that Chesterton proposed to discuss 'national traditions in Europe' whilst the Ghetto Circle no doubt 'would discuss whether he was an anti-Semite'; the *Jewish Guardian* concluded that Chesterton's suggestion 'seemed a very fair division of labour.'<sup>79</sup>

The paper was more troubled by Belloc's even more hostile discourse which cast Jews in the role of a foreign irritant which could never be assimilated. Unlike Chesterton, Belloc also argued against Zionism, believing that the 'voluntary' segregation of Jews in the nations in which they currently exist was the only mutually beneficial solution to the 'Jewish problem'. In March 1921, just prior to the publication of his book entitled *The Jews*,<sup>80</sup> the *Jewish Guardian* agreed with Israel Zangwill that whilst there is a Jewish problem, it 'does not concern Mr. Belloc' who should 'mind his own business.'<sup>81</sup> After he published *The Jews*, the paper addressed itself to his book on numerous occasions. Rather than criticise directly, the *Jewish Guardian* preferred to criticise indirectly by reproducing extracts from other periodicals. These quoted responses were for the most part by gentiles.<sup>82</sup> For example, on 12 April 1922, the paper reproduced a lengthy review of Belloc's book taken from a periodical called *The Referee*. This argued that Jews become good Englishmen even

<sup>76</sup> Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1920), 227.

<sup>77</sup> "'G.K.C.'" in Jerusalem', *The Jewish Guardian*, 3 December 1920, 7.

<sup>78</sup> Rapp, 'The Jewish Response to G.K. Chesterton's Antisemitism', 84, 86.

<sup>79</sup> 'Mr. G.K. Chesterton at the Ghetto Circle', *The Jewish Guardian*, 11 November 1921, 4.

<sup>80</sup> Hilaire Belloc, *The Jews* (London: Constable, 1922).

<sup>81</sup> 'Mr. Zangwill and Zionism', *The Jewish Guardian*, 4 March 1921, 1, citing a letter from Zangwill originally published in *The Times*.

<sup>82</sup> There were exceptions. On 19 May 1922 the paper reported the speech of Israel Cohen, an Anglo-Jewish Zionist, to the Anglo-Palestinian club attacking Belloc's book. 'Mr. Belloc on 'The Jews': Spirited Reply by Mr. Israel Cohen.' *The Jewish Guardian*, 19 May 1922, 3.

when born in foreign countries and that they often become better English citizens than Frenchmen like Belloc.<sup>83</sup> In May 1922 the *Jewish Guardian* reproduced two further articles by Christians attacking Belloc. One of these was by Maude Petre, a Roman Catholic nun who fell into disfavour with Church authorities because of her affiliation with the 'Modernist' movement.<sup>84</sup> The other, published in the *Jewish Guardian* on 5 May, was by Anglican polemicist, Dean Inge. This was originally printed in the *Evening Standard* on 27 April and reproduced in the *Jewish Guardian*. The article discussed how it was English tradition to 'forget a man's racial origin when he lives among us as a good Englishman', and concluded that English Jews, unlike Roman Catholics, have demonstrated their loyalty to England and have never plotted to assassinate an English Sovereign.<sup>85</sup> The *Jewish Guardian* and the Board of Deputies concluded that Dean Inge's article would provide the most appropriate basis for a booklet refuting Belloc's book. A file can be found on this endeavour within the archives of the Board of Deputies.<sup>86</sup>

The *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jewish World*, like the *Jewish Guardian*, also quoted liberally from Dean Inge's refutation.<sup>87</sup> However, Greenberg viewed the use of Inge's article as the basis of an organised Jewish response with passionate antipathy. He believed that Jews should learn to defend themselves rather hiding behind the shields of gentiles. The *Jewish Chronicle* asked why 'must Jews always rush to shelter themselves behind any amiable words that happen to be said of them by a non-Jew?' Furthermore, the paper reasoned that 'if the Committee came to the conclusion that it was advisable – even thus belatedly – to counter in the manner they determined Mr. Belloc's book, they could have found some Jew who could have written an effectual pamphlet for the purpose.'<sup>88</sup> The *Jewish Guardian* conversely argued that it was

<sup>83</sup> 'The Referee' on Mr. Belloc', *The Jewish Guardian*, 12 April 1922, 7.

<sup>84</sup> Maude Petre, 'Peace be to Israel: A Review of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's "The Jew"', *The Jewish Guardian*, 26 May 1922, 7-8.

<sup>85</sup> 'Dean Inge & The Jews', *The Jewish Guardian*, 5 May 1922, 6.

<sup>86</sup> 'Reverend Inge Dean: article on the Jews published by the Board and critique of Hilaire Belloc's "The Jews"', *London Metropolitan Archives*, ACC/321/B/04/I/009. The file shows that the Board of Deputies, with Dean Inge's approval, created and distributed the booklet to WH Smith and Sons. It was notably unsuccessful and out of 9000 copies, 6632 were returned unsold.

<sup>87</sup> 'Dean Inge on 'The Jews': Mr Belloc's Book: A Scathing Criticism' *The Jewish Chronicle*, 5 May 1922, 21; 'About the Chief Topics of the Day – Dean Inge's Word', *The Jewish World*, 4 May 1922, 5.

<sup>88</sup> 'The Deputies', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 23 June 1922, 7; this was not the first time that Greenberg lamented the need to hide behind the shields of gentiles. For example, in 1913 he argued that Christians (in this case Roman Catholics from Germany) 'cannot always be expected to guard Jewish interests. The time must inevitably come, as it did long ago in the English House of Commons, when they will

precisely because Dean Inge was not a Jew that his article would be accepted as unbiased. It hinted at the possibility that the 'Jewish-Nationalist newspapers' – i.e. the *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jewish World* – were merely jealous because the pamphlet created by the Board of Deputies was 'made from the standing type of *The Jewish Guardian*'.<sup>89</sup>

If one excludes these responses to Chesterton and Belloc, there were only a handful of articles in the *Jewish Guardian* that directly referred to Catholics, and many of these were not hostile. For example, one article argued that if 'the anti-Jewish party had its way, English Roman Catholics and English Jews would be deprived of civil rights'.<sup>90</sup> On 6 February 1925, Claude Montefiore, one of the main financial backers of the *Jewish Guardian*, wrote a warm eulogy in the paper to his Catholic friend, Baron von Hügel, in which he wondered how far Judaism could rival Catholicism in its combination of social ethics and institutional and personal religion. He concluded that Judaism must also combine these three elements from Catholicism 'if it is to survive as a great religion.'<sup>91</sup>

On the run up to the ratification of the British Mandate, as the Vatican and Catholic newspapers became more aggressive in their opposition to Zionism, the *Jewish Guardian* did adopt a slightly more critical posture. The anti-Zionism was not the cause of its concern so much as the anti-Jewish hostility which was woven into much of it. In April 1922, Monsignor Barlassina, the 'Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem',<sup>92</sup> claimed in a lecture delivered in Rome that the Zionist immigrants had flooded the Holy City with 'five hundred prostitutes.' Even worse, the Latin Patriarch suggested, was the fact that 'several of the new colonies live by the principles of pure communism.' He also accused Herbert Samuel of handing over all 'the interests of

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ask why Jews do not look after their own concerns. And if the question has to be asked too often, we shall not be listened to when we do pluck up courage to speak, for we shall be regarded merely as a body of poltroons, of whom no serious notice need be taken.' 'Dumb Dogs', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 11 July 1913, 11-12.

<sup>89</sup> 'Dean Inge's Reprint', *The Jewish Guardian*, 30 June 1922, 3.

<sup>90</sup> 'Anti-Jewish Conspiracy', *The Jewish Guardian*, 19 March 1920, 3.

<sup>91</sup> Claude Montefiore, 'The Late Baron V. Hügel', *The Jewish Guardian*, 6 February 1925, 9.

<sup>92</sup> The 'Patriarch of Jerusalem for Latins' is the Roman Catholic Bishop of Jerusalem. The position was re-established by Pope Pius IX in 1847. The title 'Patriarch of Jerusalem' is also used by the Greek Orthodox Church.

Palestine exclusively to the Zionist Commission.<sup>93</sup> The *Jewish Guardian*'s response was notably restrained, especially in comparison to the *Jewish Chronicle*. The *Jewish Chronicle* reported that the Roman Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem 'urged that the entire Roman Catholic world should make a stand against the desecration of the country by the Zionists and declare a Holy War against them'<sup>94</sup> and later concluded that he was 'an emissary of the Vatican bent on an endeavour by any means – by reckless misstatement, venomous misrepresentation, and all the miserable arts and wiles of a fanatic priest – to stir up ill-feeling in England against the Jews.'<sup>95</sup> The *Jewish Guardian* conversely declared that it did 'not care to reproduce' the alleged statements by Barlassina whilst expressing hope that a denial 'may be forthcoming, in the real interests of the Church of Rome.'<sup>96</sup> The *Jewish Guardian* encouraged the heads of the Catholic Church to 'formulate clearly their objections, if any, to the Palestine mandate', observing that the 'Arabs are working in the open against the policy of the British Government, and the Church of Rome should do the same.' The article then referred to Maude Petre's critique of Belloc's *The Jews* to illustrate how Jews and Catholics can in fact 'understand and sympathise with each other's point of view.'<sup>97</sup> Ultimately the paper blamed the current hostility of Roman Catholics on agitations created by Zionists. It concluded that 'political Zionists must be aware that they have alienated many old friends, without conciliating new ones. They have against them the Arabs, the Romans Catholics, and a large body of British taxpayers' and suggested that what was now needed to calm the situation was a 'more conciliatory attitude on the part of the extreme section of Jewish "nationalists."<sup>98</sup>

## Conclusion

The predominant narratives involving Catholics in the Anglo-Jewish press did not represent a deep engagement on a cultural or religious level but were rather reactions to Catholic attitudes and actions towards Jews. This paper has examined these reactions by looking at three different newspaper-editorship combinations: the *Jewish Chronicle* under the anti-Zionist management of Davis and Myers, the *Jewish*

<sup>93</sup> Excerpts from this lecture delivered by Barlassina and printed in *Osservatore Romano*, 13 May 1922, can be found in Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 173-4.

<sup>94</sup> 'The Roman Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem: Lecture in Rome: Bitter Attack on Zionists', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 19 May 1922, 28.

<sup>95</sup> 'A Wicked Libel', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 2 June 1922, 8.

<sup>96</sup> 'Rome in Palestine', *The Jewish Guardian*, 19 May 1922, 1.

<sup>97</sup> 'Rome in Palestine', *The Jewish Guardian*, 26 May 1922, 1.

<sup>98</sup> 'Palestine Mandate', *The Jewish Guardian*, 26 May 1922, 1.

*Chronicle* (and *Jewish World*) under the Zionist control of Leopold Greenberg, and the *Jewish Guardian* under the League of British Jews. A correlation between the anti- or pro-Zionism of the editors and the tone of each paper's discourse about Catholics is notable. Under the anti-Zionist management of Davis and Myers, the *Jewish Chronicle* was more concerned about maintaining the image of English Jews as loyal well assimilated Englishmen who do not rock the boat. With some notable exceptions, the paper thus tended to discourage collective Jewish engagement with antisemitism. It often advised Jews to lay low and avoid confrontation, to leave protests to gentiles, and it sometimes blamed Jews for being the cause of anti-Jewish hostility. It did report major incidents of Catholic hostility such as occurred during the Dreyfus Affair but often with some reluctance. While it did report Catholic agitations against Jews, it often attributed them to the intrigues of Jesuits. Perhaps in order to maintain an amicable relationship with English Catholics the paper also tended to over interpret the support of English Catholic newspapers during these agitations.

From December 1906 onwards the paper became much more confrontational. This was not so much a reflection of changing attitudes within Anglo-Jewry but rather the personality and ideological inclinations of the new man at the helm of the paper. Greenberg was neither worried about rocking the boat nor overly motivated by a desire to shape Jews into an Anglican mould. He seemed to relish the idea of a fight and often employed a biting and sarcastic tone against those he was confronting. He introduced a much more confrontational approach towards Catholic hostility than the previous management of the paper. At times the paper could present a friendly attitude towards Catholics and the Vatican, especially when it was believed that the Church might support Zionism. However, the paper's aggression towards the Catholic Church turned acerbic after the failed attempts to ratify an acceptable British Mandate in Palestine. Greenberg considered the terms of the Mandate a betrayal by the British Government and blamed the Vatican for creating much of the anti-Zionist hostility. The *Jewish Guardian* conversely did not share Leopold Greenberg's anxieties about Catholic anti-Zionism. Whilst it was unconcerned about anti-Zionism *per se*, and largely blamed what it labelled 'extreme Zionism' for creating much of the existing anti-Jewish hostility, it could not ignore the antisemitic caricatures that were often woven tightly into some of the Catholic criticisms of Zionism. Furthermore, like the *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jewish World*, the *Jewish Guardian* could be very critical of

English Catholic writers who argued that Jews could not be proper Englishmen. However, whereas Greenberg relished the opportunity to hit back on his own, the *Jewish Guardian* preferred where possible to give coverage to Christians who defended Jews.

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