British Discourses on 'the Jew' and 'the Nation' 1899-1919.

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Abstract

In Britain, modern antisemitism, that is, the perception of Jews as a 'race' as well as the employment of pictures of the Jew in social and political debates, developed around the same time as did its French and German counterparts, in the second half of the 19th century. Concentrating on the years between the South African War and the conclusion of the Great War, this essay explores the functional character of antisemitism and the discursive context of negative images of the Jew. In Britain, too, Jews were identified as a negative ferment within the nation, and they figured largely as an agent of representative government. In addition, Jews were continuously used as a negative foil for the definition of what was 'English' or 'British'. However, unlike their continental counterparts, British anti-Semites did not question Jewish emancipation and even distanced themselves from 'antisemitism' at a time when elsewhere in Europe, being an 'anti-Semite' was a positive social and political stance. Both elements reflected the political culture, within which British anti-Semitic narratives evolved: while allowing for various forms of manifest and latent antisemitism, late 19th century Liberalism secured the status of the Jews as a religious minority, and contained specific forms of antisemitism that emerged on the Continent during the same period.

This essay looks into the functions of antisemitism from the Second Boer war until the early 1920s. British antisemitic utterances will be examined with the following set of questions: What did the Jew stand for in British journalistic and literary texts, and which pictures were attached to the picture of the Jew? Was there a common strand, a binding theme, in the contextualization of attacks on Jews over a longer period of time?

I. Opposition to the Boer War or the Come-back of Antisemitism

The South African War (1899-1902) was the first major military conflict of the 20th century. Fought for the *raison d'être* of the British Empire, it turned into a humiliating adventure for Britain, costly in terms of human lives and sense of security at the British home front. The war provoked strong reactions amongst ordinary men and women in many European states. While men and women on the Continent, notably in France, Germany, and the Netherlands demonstrated outrage at the British course, those in Britannia's streets celebrated their nation.[1] However, at the British home front the festive mood was not shared

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[1] Ulrich Kröll, "Die internationale Buren Agitation 1899-1902. Haltung der Öffentlichkeiten und Agitation zugunsten der Buren in Deutschland, Frankreich und den Niederlanden während des Burenkrieges*," Schriftenreihe für Publizistik und Kommunikationswissenschaft, Vol. 7* (Münster: Verlag Regensberg, 1973). Harald Rosenbach, "Das Deutsche Reich und der Transvaal (1896-1902). Anfänge deutsch-britischer Entfremdung," *Schriftenreihe der historischen*

by all. Opposition to the War was voiced by pro-Boers from the Liberal and Labour camps.[2] It is here, in ranks of the opposition to the War and to the Unionist coalition government's policy, where the antisemitic choir gave its noisy come-back to the public stage, after modern antisemitism's dawn in Britain, in the late 1870s during the premiership of Benjamin Disraeli and the Bulgarian crisis.[3]

The War in South Africa and with it the antisemitic agitation which set "Jewish capitalist interests" against those of the British nation and the Empire in what was dubbed a "Jews' war", evolved place at a time, when the British public was concerned with questions of immigration control and restriction in response to the immigration of some 144.000 Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe. British Gentiles experienced and witnessed both, the immigration debate and the South African War, in parallel, as would have the Jewish minority. The response to the immigration was two-fold: first, it led to the passage of the "Aliens Act" of 1905, the first modern law designed to monitor and control immigration. [4] Second, British voices began to question current laws of

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Kommission bei der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vol. 52 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

[2] John W. Auld, "The Liberal Pro-Boers," *Journal of British Studies* 14 (1975), 78-101. M. D. Blanch, "British Society and the War," *The South-African War. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902,* ed. Peter Warwick(London: Longman, 1980), 210-237. David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews. Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994)*,* 264-267. J. S. Galbraith, "The Pamphlet Campaign on the Boer War," *Journal of Modern History,* 24 (1952), 111-126. Preben Kaarsholm, "Pro-Boers," *Patriotism. The Making and Unmaking of British National History,* vol. I., ed. Raphael Samuel, *History and Politics,* (London: Taylor & Francis , 1989), 110-126. *The Anatomy of an Antiwar Movement. The Pro-Boers,* ed. Stephen Koss (London, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), xiii-xxxviii. Henry Pelling, *Popular Politics and Society in late Victorian Britain,* (Toronto, New York, 1986), 82-100. Bernard Porter, "The Pro-Boers in Britain," *The South-African War,* ed. Peter Warwick (London: Longman, 1980), 246 ff. Paul Ward, *Red Flag and Union Jack. Englishness, Patriotism and the British Left 1881-1924* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 1998), 59-75. Stewart Weaver, "The Pro-Boers: War, Empire, and the Uses of Nostalgia in Turn-of-the-Century England," *Singular Continuities. Tradition, Nostalgia, and Identity in Modern British Culture,* eds. George K. Behlmer, Fred M. Leventhal (Stanford: Stanford University Press , 2000), 43-57.

[3] For antisemitism in the 1870s see, Feldman, "Englishmen and Jews," 94-120.

[4] For the 'aliens'-debate and the Aliens Act of 1905 see, Feldman, "Englishmen and Jews," 268-290. David Feldman, "The Importance of being English. Jewish immigration and the decay of liberal England," *Metropolis – London. Histories and representations since 1800,* eds. David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (London, New York: Routledge 1989), 56-84. See also, Andreas Fahrmeir, "Immigration and Immigration Policy in Britain from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Centuries, *European immigrants in Britain, 1933-1950,* eds. Johannes-Dieter Steinert, Inge Weber-Newth (Munich: K.G. Saur,2003), 43-54. Previous research has treated the Boer War agitation and the 'aliens debate' discretely; Arndt Bauerkämper, *Die 'radikale' Rechte in Großbritannien. Nationalistische, antisemitische und faschistische Bewegungen vom späten 19. Jahrhundert bis 1945,* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1991)*;* Feldman, "Englishmen and Jews." Claire Hirshfield, "The British Left and the 'Jewish Conspiracy': A Case of Modern Antisemitism," *Jewish Social Studies,* 43 (1981), 95-112. Claire Hirshfield, "The Anglo-Boer War and the Issue of Jewish Culpability," *Journal of Contemporary History,* 15 (1980), 619-631. Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876- 1939 (*London: E. Arnold, 1979*).* William Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English-speaking World: Great Britain* (London, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996*).*

citizenship and demanded a tightening or even fundamental change from the *Jus Soli* to the *Jus Sanguinis*.[5] The public debates about terms of citizenship, which reached a climax during the Great War, were accompanied by gradual changes in nationality law and practice by the state since the late Victorian Era, and found reflection in antisemitism.[6]

The time coincidence of an outright antisemitic argument with an intense preoccupation with the question of whether or not external borders needed to be closed, or at least monitored, turned out to have been crucial for future discourses on Jews and potential negative consequences of immigration for the nation's external and internal security. But it also triggered the incorporation of the picture of the Jew as *eternal alien* into British antisemitism, who was relegated to the status of a hermit in the nation's no-man's-land, not only as member of the Jewish minority but as an Englishman with an immigration background, subsequent to the *aliens debate*: henceforth, the terms "alien" and "Jew" were frequently used interchangeably in one and the same context.[7] The discursive declaration of alienage and denationalisation should target Jewish Englishmen and British subjects, the acculturated Anglo-Jewish minority within the Jewish population. Furthermore, in the immediate historical context, many of pro-Boer utterances included explicit references to the aliens and immigration issues, and their authors imported themes from the aliens-debate into their antisemitic narratives on Jewish capitalist profiteering. All texts shared a juxtaposition of Englishmen and Jews and thus reasoned from the premise that the latter did not qualify to be counted amongst the former or to

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[5] For a proposal to introduce the *Jus Sanguinis* in the aftermath of the Great War see, Bagot Gray, "Our Alien Laws. Some suggested Reforms. The Coming Bill," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 Mar 1919, 5. "The Aliens Bill. Need for Drastic Legislation," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 Mar 1919, 6. For Jewish comments, see, "Anti-Alienism running mad," *Jewish Chronicle*, 14 Mar 1919, 8; "Around the World…," *The Jewish World*, 19 Mar 1919, 6.

[6] For the history of the British nationality law, see Andreas Fahrmeir, "Citizens and Aliens: Foreigners and the Law in Britain and the German States, 1789-1870." *Monographs in German History, Vol. 5.* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000). J. Mervyn Jones, *The British Nationality Law and Practice. With a Foreword by W. E. Beckett* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947). For the changes after the Second World War, when the concept of 'allegiance' was written out of the law, see J. Mervyn Jones, *The British Nationality Law* Rev. Ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956). David Feldman has traced the mounting problems of Jews to assert their interests from the positions of foreigners and citizens in the first two decades of the twentieth century, David Feldman, "Jews and the State in Britain," *Two Nations. British and German Jews in comparative perspective*, eds. Michael Brenner, Rainer Liedtke, David Rechter (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 141-161. See also, David Cesarani, "The Changing Character of Citizenship and Nationality in Britain," *Citizenship, Nationality, and Migration in Europe*, eds. David Cesarani, Mary Fulbrook (London, New York: Routledge, 1996), 57-73. Cesarani attributes changes in the practice of British nationality law in the interwar- period to war-time nationalism. So does Sven Oliver Müller, "Recht und Rasse. Die Ethnisierung von Staatsangehörigkeit und Nationsvorstellungen in Großbritannien im Ersten Weltkrieg," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 30 (2004): 379-403.

[7] The term 'alien' was used alongside and interchangeably with the terms of 'Jew' or 'Jewish' in one and the same text by all authors discussed in this essay (Arnold White, J. A. Hobson, Leopold Maxse, F.E. Eddis, J.H. Clarke) as well as in the British Press.

ever become members of the positive group, since in these discourses Jews embodied the opposite values of what was deemed, ideally, to be *English*.

This second major wave of modern antisemitism in Britain is reflected in newspaper articles and pamphlets as well as in the best known interpretation of the Boer War as fought in the interests of Jewish capitalism, John Atkinson Hobson's work on *"The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects."* The South African War was followed by an intense debate over "national efficiency"; one proponent of this discourse was the author Arnold White whose book *"Efficiency and Empire"* will be discussed.

The editor and journalist James Leopold Maxse was one of the most outspoken antisemites of his time. In his conservative monthly *The National Review*, he untiringly and with increasing frequency after the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 enlightened readers on the pro-German machinations of the "international Jew" and the "German Jew" in Britain. Maxse was no original thinker, he took his themes from the mainstream conservative press, in particular *The Times*.[8] This also pertains to his interpretation of the dangers arising for the British nation from the Jews' presence in the public sphere. As a consequence, Maxse was a seismograph for the quality as well as the development of British antisemitism. The discussion of Maxse's elaborations will be flanked by that of comments from the metropolitan and provincial press in order to underscore the extent to which Maxse's writings reflected what was published elsewhere.

In line with the majority of British antisemitic voices during the time under consideration, James Leopold Maxse questioned terms of British citizenship and national belonging in force. The most glaring evidence of shifting attitudes towards current terms of British citizenship is the identification of so many "German Jews" in Britain, who began to populate the new stands around the turn of the century: in fact, by 1914 only few Jews in Britain were German citizens, and the historical figures these British Gentiles were referring to were Englishmen and British subjects like Lord Rothschild, Lionel Phillips or Sir Ernest Cassel – and with them thousands of ordinary, non-prominent English and British Jews.[9] These English and British citizens, whose families resided between one and four generations on the British Isles could only be identified as German and by their German background if British Gentile contemporaries implicitly questioned terms of national belonging in force.

In his writings, James Leopold Maxse identified specifically the Jews' being near to leading politicians and the government as *the* national Jewish peril. Via antisemitism British authors inquired into the nature and process of national decision-making, and between 1899 and 1919, antisemitism served as an

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[8] John Hutcheson, *Leopold Maxse and the National Review, 1893-1914. Right-wing politics in the Edwardian Era* (New York, London: Garland Pub., 1989), 464 passim.

[9] The vast majority of English and British Jews could trace back their families' history to an immigration from German lands since around 1800. A survey of Anglo-Jewish history in the 19th and early 20th centuries can be found in, Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), ch. 3-5.

instrument for the critical control of the national leadership whose decisions were discredited by the allegation of Jewish influencing. The development of modern British antisemitism cannot be separated from the process of democratisation and the extension of the franchise in Britain in the last third of the 19ᵗʰ century: alongside explicit worries about the state of representative democracy, its themes gravitated around demands for more responsibility, accountability, morality and transparency, and thus reflected changing expectations of those who represented and lead the nation in the wake of slow but progressing democratisation.[10] However, the defence of representative democracy did not come along with demands for further democratisation and the extension of the franchise. Many of antisemitism's British proponents who claimed to speak "for the man in the street" shared at times an apprehension for the masses. This observation pertains to groups and individuals as diverse as the pro-Boers, Arnold White, and Leopold Maxse.[11] Their diffident approach towards the masses was rather typical for advocates of representative democracy in Britain and very close to that of the vast majority of the British political class towards the idea of universal suffrage and a mass-democracy when instigating the progression of representative democracy in the Victorian Era.[12]

Among the highly heterogeneous groups and authors subsumed under the label of promoters of "national efficiency" there had been some voices who also questioned the value of parliamentary democracy and advocated the

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[10] In his work, David Feldman has already pointed to the increasing demands of politics and politicians to be guided by moral standards by groups connected with the Liberal Party in the wake of the Reform Act of 1867 – and to the way in which these appeals at times intertwined with attacks on Jews. Feldman, "Englishmen and Jews," 119 passim. For the changes in the British political system in the second half of the 19ᵗʰ century, the process of democratisation, see for instance, Ian Machin, *The Rise of Democracy in Britain, 1830-1918* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2001). John Hostettler, Brian P. Block, *Voting in Britain. A History of Parliamentary Franchise* (Chichester: Barry Rose, 2001). See also, Pat Thane, "Government and Society in England and Wales, 1750-1914," *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950.* vol. III: *Social agencies and institutions,* ed. F. M. L. Thompson (3 vols., Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1-61.

[11] Both Arnold White and Leo Maxse fashioned themselves as mouthpieces for the ordinary citizens. There is no information on Maxse's thoughts of the masses, however, he cannot be considered a populist. Hutcheson, "Maxse," 37-38. John M. McEwen, "The National Press during the First World War: Ownership and Circulation," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17 (1982): 476. Even though White's apprehension had lost its depth by the time of the Boer War, in his earlier writings Arnold White had clearly distanced himself from the masses. G. R. Searle, introduction to in Arnold White, *Efficiency and Empire*, by Arnold White (London: Harvester Press, 1973), vii-xxxi. For the Pro-Boers see footnoten. 9 and also, Feldman, "Modernity," 182-183.

[12] Machin, *Rise.* See also, Norman Gash, "The Social and Political Background to the Three British Nineteenth Century Reform Acts," *Deutscher und Britischer Parlamentarismus. British and German Parliamentarism.,* eds. Adolf M. Birke, Kurt Kluxen Prince Albert Studies, Vol. 3 (Munich, New York, London, Paris: K. G. Saur, 1985), 57-67.

introduction of an authoritarian form of government.[13] Unsurprisingly, some of those authors who combined the endorsement of "national efficiency" with antisemitic elaborations on Jewish intriguing also questioned the value of democracy and advocated its abolition. Such proposals, however, were very few and seem to have been somewhat isolated in modern British antisemitism. The prejudice rather figured as an agent and in protection of representative democracy.[14]

II. Englishmen and Jews or Jews as Germans

> "This war is, in fact, a fight not merely between Boer and Britisher, but between the *pastoral race* and the *mining engineer* – Cain and Abel over again. It is, in a nutshell, the whole great fight between materialist and spiritualist, between believer in gold and believer in God, between taxed and taxer, between Herod and the Jews, between the oppressed and the oppressor, and still more keenly possibly between moneylending sharebroker and sturdy, upright Christian."[15]

The author of the play *Paul and Joseph; or God and Mammon in the Transvaal* neatly brought together the most current ideas reproduced in the British press on Jews, the British cause and the Government during the Boer War in 1899.

One of the first voices commenting on the part played by Jews in the simmering conflict in Southern Africa was the social democratic weekly *Justice* and its editor H. M. Hyndman. In June 1899 Hyndman identified financial Jews and their money interests as the driving force behind the "campaign against Kruger and the Transvaal Boers." Hyndman informed his readers on what he identified as the wish of the "overwhelming preponderance of Englishmen", namely, the avoidance of a war fought in the interest of a handful of financiers; but he equally laid open his disregard of terms of British nationality, when he referred to those he had identified as culpable of provoking a conflict sarcastically as "such true-born Britons as Beit, Eckstein, Rothschild, Joel, Adler, Goldberg, Israel, Isaac and Co."[16] The better known individuals out of this group (Beit, Eckstein, Rothschild) were either naturalised British subjects or Englishmen. Hence, the exclusion of Jews was driven by two forces, first, a conflict between self-seeking pursuits by individuals at the expense of the majority, a pattern of behaviour that was

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[13] G. R. Searle, *The Quest of National Efficiency. A Study in British Politics and Thought, 1899-1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 54-106; 158 passim.

[14] The combination of concerns about potential threats to representative government with attacks on Jews can be found in writings by J.A. Hobson, Feldman, "Englishmen and Jews," 267.

[15] Howard Swan, *Paul and Joseph; or God and Mammon in the Transvaal. An unfinished Drama* (London: S. Baxter, 1899), 7.

[16] H. M. Hyndman, "The Soudan and the Transvaal," *Justice*, 17 June, 1899,4.

identified as "Jewish", which was set against a selfless caring for the nation as well as the furthering of the common good; second, by a redefinition of *Britishness* and national belonging. Contrasting "Englishmen" with "true born Britons", Hyndman suggested a concept of Britishness based on culture which excluded Jews as immigrants and citizens with an immigrant background.

On the eve of the War, *Justice* returned to the theme even more pronounced, when Hyndman included another facet of British antisemitic discourses, namely, Jewish influence on government decisions and on government ministers. In strong words, the article expressed "detestation for those aliens" who, "under the guise of patriotism" were bullying the British government "to a criminal war of aggression."[17] According to *Justice*, it was the Jewish element which made government policy dangerous to the nation while the legitimacy of government decisions was questioned, since they served the interests of very few instead of using the well-being and interests of the majority as a guideline. By using the term "Jews" synonymously for "alien" and "un-English", these two contributions brought together the constituents of the antisemitic arguments which sought to define what was "national", "patriotic" and "English." The argument was carried one step further only a couple of days later, when Jews were not only identified as exercising major influence on government decision making, but, commenting on a meeting between Lord Rothschild and Arthur Balfour, *Justice* was now convinced that "questions of war and peace" depended largely on decisions of the Jews, now epitomized in the person of Lord Rothschild and New Court, the premise of the Rothschild Bank.[18] What transpires in these remarks as elsewhere in the critical comments on the War, were concerns about a lack of respect for the constitution and the interests of Englishmen and the nation, for whom the Pro-Boers claimed to speak out, on the part of leading politicians. Instead, British ministers had become "willing agents" of the "Jew financier."[19] A cultural definition of Britishness continued to figure prominently in the arguments when time of residence became the dividing line between the Jews, who were over and again ironically referred to as "true born Britons" in want of any true patriotic feelings, and common Englishmen who were identified by their families' centuries old residence on the British Isles.[20] Once again, the Jews' exclusion was driven by a notion of national identity and belonging which was no longer based on common values, English liberties and the *Jus Soli,* but on culture and an ill-defined, vague concept of race. Up to this point, the question of what triggered doubts about the viability of the current terms of nationality had been answered indirectly by the introduction of relatively recent immigration as a yard-stick for in or out of the nation, as well as the employment of the term of *alien* synonymously for *Jew*. However, another often quoted contemporary commentator on the War in South Africa was more precise and direct.

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[17] "'Our Affair', Jew Financiers and Real Anti-Semites," *Justice*, September 30, 1899, 1.
[18] H. M. Hyndman, "'The Jews' War on the Transvaal," *Justice*, October 7, 1899, 4-5.
[19] H. Quelch, "Jews and Jingoism," *Justice*, 4 Nov 1899, 4.
[20] H. M. Hyndman, "'The Jews' War on the Transvaal," *Justice*, October 7, 1899, 5.

The best-known and most influential interpretation of the Boer War as serving "Jewish capitalist interests" is the book-length piece *"The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects"* by the journalist and theorist of imperialism, John Atkinson Hobson published in February 1900. The book, was based on a series of articles Hobson had produced for the *Manchester Guardian* in autumn 1899.[21] In fact, his book and in particular a chapter entitled *"For whom are we fighting?"* offered as much a detailed exposition of Hobson's interpretation of the forces behind the War as it was a comment on the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe to England, and his own scepticism towards the current terms under which British citizenship could be acquired. In order to convey to his readers on the British motherland a clearer picture of the scenery in Johannesburg and the prominence of Jews in everyday life, J. A. Hobson went into some detail about the size and composition of the Jewish population there, in doing so, he evoked pictures most familiar to British readers who witnessed and experienced the wave of immigration from Eastern Europe. The author first echoed the juxtaposition of Englishmen and Jews when he contrasted the "financial pioneers in South Africa", "Messrs. Rhodes and Rudd", both of whom were Gentiles, with those who had taken control of the gold-mining industry in the mean time, namely "a small group of financiers, chiefly German in origin and Jewish in race."[22] Once again, it is their German background and not their actual citizenship by which the Jewish financiers were identified. In a second step, Hobson then turned to the poor immigrants, the numerical majority of Jews, whom he had met on the voyage when he had found with himself on the ship "many scores of Jewish women and children." Upon landing in Johannesburg he then discovered, as he put it, that he had landed in "the New Jerusalem."[23] When the author went on to explain to his readers his problems to give exact figures as to the actual number of Jewish inhabitants of Johannesburg, Hobson launched a thinly veiled attack on the British Nationality law and practice in the face of the immigration from Eastern Europe:

> "Public statistics are most deceptive in this matter; many of these persons rank as British subjects by virtue of a brief temporary sojourn in some English-speaking land" [24]

In fact, nobody ever acquired British citizenship by mere and brief residence, but through a mutual legal act between the immigrant and the State, which

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[21] John Atkinson Hobson, *The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects* (New York: H. Fertig, 1969 edn. First published, London: J. Nisbet, 1900). "Hobson, John Atkinson," *DNB (1931-1940)*, London, 435-436. A detailed discussion of Hobson's factual errors and tendentious description of the financiers' *rôles* can be found in, Harvey Mitchell, "Hobson revisited," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXVI (1965), 397-416.

[22] Hobson, "War," 189.

[23] Hobson, "War*," 190.

[24] Hobson, "War," 190.

Hobson cast aside dismissively. Further, it may not have been known to all of Hobson's British readers but certainly to the author himself, that, at the time he wrote this passage, there was only one English-speaking country, where foreigners could become (naturalised) British subjects, and this was the United Kingdom.[25] Hence, the procedure under attack and in dispute in the writings of J.A. Hobson was not that in any other part of the Empire but in Britain.

The opponents of the War in South Africa were united in the ideal of national and international politics to be guided by moral standards, and the antisemitic commentaries on the background of the war neatly fitted into this moral argument.

Individual character traits ascribed to the Jews constituted a prominent element in the comments on capitalist influences on British politics from the onset, and served as a negative foil for eulogies of what was identified as "English" patterns of behaviour. Jews stood for "lust for gold", "money-grabbing", reckless self-seeking pursuit of individual interests, greed as well as lack of ideals and true religious feelings. The only god the Jews knew, accordingly, was Mammon.

The Labour M.P. John Burns and the Radical Edward Carpenter, on the other hand, contrasted the Jews with the Boers. Their utterances were informed by a nostalgia for an idealized English past and pre-industrialization life on the countryside which was subscribed to by many in the anti-war camp.[26] In a speech in Battersea Park, in May 1900, Burns described the Boers as courageous, energetic, patient and full of love for independence. The Labour leader saw the Boers in a heroic battle, defending their country not so much against an army, but against militant capitalism, personified by the Jews, who allowed English soldiers to fight for their financial interests.[27] Since the 1880s, the socialist writer Edward Carpenter had harshly criticised in his writings what he had made out as values of the Victorian middle-class, in particular a want for true religious feeling and excessive materialism.[28] He had found his ideals in a life on the countryside and a celebration of the "masculine bond which he associated with manual labour."[29] It was the Jews who embodied for Carpenter everything he despised whereas he'd detected British past and brighter future in the Boers. In a tract entitled *"Boer and Briton"* Carpenter praised the Boers for leading simple lives with their cattle and for their love of the land they

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[25] In other parts of the Empire and in the Colonies, foreigners could acquire colonial naturalisation papers which were only valid in the relevant part of the Empire, but not in the U.K. J. Mervyn Jones, *British Nationality Law and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), 286.

[26] For an excellent discussion of this nostalgic discourse, see, Stewart Weaver, 'The Pro-Boers', *Singular Continuities: tradition, nostalgia, and identity in modern British culture*, ed. George K. Behlmer, Fred M. Leventhal (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

[27] John Burns, LCC, MP, *War against two republics. A Speech delivered in Battersea Park on May 20th 1900* (Publisher: Stop-the-War-Committee).

[28] Tony Brown, introduction to *Edward Carpenter and late Victorian Radicalism,* ed. Tony Brown (London: Frank Cass, 1990),1.

[29] Matt Cook, "'A New City of Friends': London and Homosexuality in the 1890s," *History Workshop Journal,* 56 (2003): 44.

worked. This paradise was being destroyed, when the gold fever had turned Johannesburg

> "in a hell of Jews, financiers, greedy speculators, adventurers, prostitutes, bars, banks, gaming saloons, and every invention of the devil."

The real problem did not, however, lie with the Jews but with the leading classes in Britain, the military and the politicians, who would allow the Jews to lead them "by the nose" and who knew only one ideal, commercialism. As a consequence, Carpenter expressed the vague hope that the only class in England he identified as still uncorrupted by the Jewish ideals, the working class, would lead their nation into a better future.[30]

The combination of antisemitism with attacks on the government and concerns about the functioning of the political process along constitutional lines had been central to the utterances during the Boer War. British antisemitism gravitated around the thus perceived sectional interests of the Jews who would realize these against the interests and at the expense of the nation; this theme was accompanied by scathing criticism of the national leadership and leading politicians who were held responsible for Jewish activities since it was government ministers who would allow the Jews to exercise their influence. In so doing, members of the cabinet and the government failed in their roles as leaders and temporary representatives of the nation.

The South African War was a sobering enterprise for the British people. It had taken the imperial power months to gain military control in the veld and even after that, the War dragged on for years. This experience set off a political and social movement in search of ways to enhance and achieve "national efficiency."[31] The journalist Arnold White was but one out of many writers who published their prescriptions for the English, English society and politics in the wake of the Boer War.

Arnold White's treatise *"Efficiency and Empire"* was published in 1901. In the chapter *"Our Moral Inefficiency"* he exposed his interpretation of the reasons for the malaise both Britain and the Empire were experiencing. As the section's title already indicates, for White, too, the real problem did not lie with the machinations of the "German Jews", or, alternatively of "foreign Jews", but with the failings of the society and the political class. However, he reiterated much of what had been voiced by pro-Boers about the Jewish character. Jews represented excessive materialism, "unearned" wealth, and White, too, identified "material success" as "truly the god" of the Jews, which had never,

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[30] Edward Carpenter, "Boer and Briton," *Labour Press Leaflet* (Manchester, 1900).

[31] For the political strand and ideas, see, Searle, *Quest*. The societal responses are surveyed by David Feldman, "Nationality and Ethnicity," *Twentieth Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change*, ed. Paul A. Johnson (London: Longman, 1994), 127-148.

as White stressed, "become a British ideal."[32] Arnold White thus cast doubt on the ability of Jews to harbour what he defined as real religious feelings and excluded the Jews by ascribing to them characteristics which were devised as *counter-British*. The nation had become "infected" by "bad smart society", which was dominated by the Jews and their principles. According to White, the way out of this peril was the emergence of a new elite, young men who would take up responsibility and seats in Parliament and in Government. This new, "true aristocracy" would be characterised by patriotism, independence and the hostility to "financial schemers", in other words, opposed to those patterns of behaviour deemed "Jewish." On a practical level, White proposed a close examination of the qualification of candidates for Parliament.[33]

"Jewish press-control" became part and parcel of antisemitic narratives in Britain in the closing years of the nineteenth century. This motif which accompanied pictures of the Jew until well into the twentieth century was employed by practically all authors who had spoken out in antisemitic terms during the Boer War and can also be found in the writings by Arnold White.[34] The motif developed in line with changes in the character, production and distribution of the press in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Traditionally, the press had been considered by Liberals as an instrument for acceptable political education of the masses and which should accompany the changes in the political system, the process of democratisation. These ideals were run over by a swift professionalisation of journalism in the wake of the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1861 and technological advances since the 1880s, the coming of "New Journalism" and the penny press. Newspapers were necessarily increasingly run by businessmen on business principles.[35] Jewish press-barons and journalists came to personify these changes, which were not only regretted and attacked by Liberals but also, as will be seen in the discussion of Leo Maxse's work, by Conservatives who strove to uphold traditional standards. During the South African War, the pro-Boers worried about their own constitutional rights and abhorred the way in which the government and the press whipped up nationalist feelings amongst the enfranchised but uneducated masses.[36] What evolved was a concoction of attacks on Jews with criticism of a certain form of journalism symbolizing the neglect of what was perceived to be the essence of the role of the political press: the education of the people, control and defence of representative democracy. In this context, Jews came to embody conscious misinformation with sectional, self-seeking interests in mind. Consequently, it was this

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[32] White, *Efficiency*, 80.

[33] White, *Efficiency*, 74-76.

[34] For pro-Boers on Jewish press control see, for instance, the contributions in *Justice*, but also, 'Hireling War Press', *Reynold's Newspaper*, September 24, 1899, 4. Hobson, *War*, 193; 211 passim.

[35] Alan L. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), esp. 181 passim. See also, *Papers for Millions. The New Journalism in Britain, 1850s to 1914,* ed. Joel Wiener (New York, Westport, London: Greenwood Press, 1988).

[36] Feldman, "Englishmen and Jews," 264-267.

"remorseless control" exercised by the Jews "over the expression of public opinion hostile to them" which explained to Arnold White, why the negative influence of "bad foreign Jews" and the dangers arising thereof to the Empire, had been ignored by the Press. [37] In his analysis of the ills of the nation, Arnold White directed his criticism against the old elites who had seemingly failed in their roles. With reference to Jews and German Jews in England, he warned that this "island of aliens in the sea of English life" was still small, but growing. He castigated English society and old aristocracy for admitting "moneyed aliens who unite rapacity with display" into their midst. However, when summing up those character traits that had brought England into the state she was in, he used the examples of other European nations, Austria and France, as a warning to his own. White concluded that it had been "weakness, self-indulgence, want of foresight, self-respect and culture" on the part of the majority which had enabled the "industrious" and "unscrupulous" Jews to reach and assume their positions.[38]

From December 1911 onwards James Leopold Maxse enlightened the interested public about the pro-German intrigues of the "international Jew", or, alternatively, the "German Jew" in England. Although Leo Maxse stressed that he was writing "for the man in the street", the readership of the *NR* was to be found in the upper middle-class villas of the suburbs, and the journal, which counted among the quality journalism, was subscribed to by Conservative politicians and journalists.[39] Upon his death in 1932, an obituary published in *The Times* described Leo Maxse as "confirmed democrat" [40]; and, in fact, concerns about representative democracy were central to Leo Maxse's antisemitic outpourings on Jewish influence on the government, the parliament and "Jewish wire-pulling of the press" as well as Jewish presence in London Society. In addition, themes that had emerged and evolved in previous decades and in particular since the Boer War, continued to loom large in his perception of the Jews, the State and the nation: terms of citizenship, immigration and the negative consequences of immigration arising out of an over-generous immigration policy to the nation's security in times of a national crisis such as the Great War. In short, Maxse identified Jews as acting in favour of the political and military enemy, Germany, by promoting her interests wherever and in every way they could - to the detriment of England. All this was, according to Maxse, the outcome of England's "excessive hospitality."[41] Once again, it was "German Jews", albeit only for the first nine months of the Great War after which they turned into "international Jews", who were made out as

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[37] White, "Efficiency," 80.
[38] White, "Efficiency," 80-81.
[39] Hutcheson, "Maxse," 30 passim.
[40] 'Maxse, Leopold James', *DNB (1931-1940)*, 607 (The obituary was originally published in *The Times*, January 23, 1932).
[41] "The Cabal", *The National Review* (NR), 58/1 (1912): 679-680. See also, for instance, James Leopold Maxse, "The Fight against Pan-Germanism. I. Is the Potsdam Party killed of scotched?", *NR*, 64/9 (1914): 41-50.

schemers, as a result of another author's disrespect for long term residence, naturalisation and Englishness on the part of the historical figures he attacked. His logic became evident in an article from September 1914: he deviated from his otherwise indiscriminate, generalising accusations and gave the first names of those, who were allegedly intriguing for German interests. This list helps to understand, whom he actually subsumed under the term "German Jews": Sir Edgar (Speyer), Sir Ernest (Cassel), Sir Alfred (Rothschild), and Alfred (Mond). Without going into biographical details it is worth mentioning that all of these men were either British subjects or Englishmen. Two of them (Speyer and Cassel) had immigrated to England from Germany decades before and both were naturalised British subjects. The other two were born in Britain and had a German-Jewish background. Nonetheless, Maxse classified all of them, and with them all English Jews with a German background, as "German." Their naturalisation and long-standing residence, not to say that of their families in the cases of Mond and Rothschild, were obviously irrelevant for Maxse's concept.[42] With the combination of anti-Jewish utterances and concerns about the effects of immigration, Maxse was not alone. In March 1915, the *Walsall Pioneer* informed its readers, about "German Jews" who had come to England in order to influence politics in the interests of Germany.[43] While in the *Manchester Sunday Chronicle* an author with the telling epithet of "John Briton", held that Jews as well as German Jews had –

"forced themselves into public positions and Government jobs, and have then behaved in a way that no loyal and honest Englishman would behave."[44]

Once again, "Jews" and "Jewish" form of public conduct served as a negative foil for the definition of what made an Englishman: loyalty, honesty and, apparently, modesty.

Leo Maxse's writings on the Jews belonged into the context of what his biographer had named his "fight for a clean government."[45] In principle, as he wrote as early as in January 1912, Maxse saw any British government under influence and direction of "cosmopolitan Jews", testifying to the irresponsibility of leading politicians on both sides of the House; however, until mid-war, it was the Liberal government and Party which came primarily under severe criticism.[46] Opponents to the South African War had used the picture of Jewish influence when describing Government policy as immoral, wrong, and against the interest of the nation, eleven years on, the right-wing

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[42] Maxse, "Fight."
[43] "Taking sides in English Politics", *The Walsall Pioneer*, March 26, 1915, 4.
[44] John Briton, "The Great Betrayal. How England helps Germany to fight England", *Sunday Chronicle*, October 10, 1915.
[45] Hutcheson, "Maxse," 412 passim.
[46] "The Cabal", *NR*, 58/1 (1912): 679-680. For press-control in behalf of Germany and Jewish influence on the government prior to 1914, see, for instance, "Peculiar Propaganda", *NR*, 58/1 (1912): 688. "Disloyal Jews", *NR*, 61/3 (1913): 6-7.

journalist James Leopold Maxse untiringly employed the same motif in his condemnation of the Liberal Government's policies: in April 1913 Maxse came up with an echo to the utterances of the pro-Boers. His theme was the reputation of the country abroad and the quality of policy-making under the "Asquith clique" who would do anything to maintain the power. Leo Maxse castigated the "deterioration of standards of public life", and the only hope was that of relief – "in spite of the Hebrew clutch upon the Radical Party, the spread of Hebrew power in Parliament, in the Press, finance, and society." As had been the case in 1899/1900, Jews signified the epitome of lack of ideals and empty materialism, the "old struggle between men and money" in Maxse's words.[47]

By August 1914 Leo Maxse had developed the core of his accusations; however, after the outbreak of the War his contributions became more frequent. Over and again, it was the alleged "semitic control" over the British government and leading politicians around which his elaborations circled; and with this motif the questions of how government decisions came about, who decided, who was listened to and whose interests materialized with the help of members of the government. Leo Maxse, too, harshly attacked government ministers for their Jewish contacts and for leaking information which would then reach Berlin.[48] In the course of the war, Leo Maxse's antisemitism and his criticism of the political elite became harsher: what had been explained rather by naiveté before, was increasingly interpreted as the consequence of ill-will and a lack of responsibility towards Britain in the second half of the war.[49] Further, from early in 1916 a potential separate peace agreement with Germany began to enter into Leo Maxse's writings. He warned against Jewish financial interests behind peace feelers, and untiringly pointed to the way in which these Jewish intrigues, designed at ending the peace under conditions favourable only to Germany, undermined international agreements between the allied governments, namely the Pact of London of September 1914.[50] It was this "amateur diplomacy of hyphenated finance", "backstairs business", the machinations of the "international Jew", which constituted the real threat to democracy, in Maxse's view.[51] Maxse's crusade for the salvation of representative democracy and the defence of the nation against the workings

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[47] "Men v. Money", *NR*, 61/4 (1913): 189-190.

[48] For the allegation of a Jewish grip on the British government after August 1914, see, for instance, 'Our military Weakness', *NR*, 64 (Sept 1914): 2-3. James Leopold Maxse, "Fight." "Rich and Poor", *NR*, 64/12 (1914): 515-516. James Leopold Maxse, "Rothschilds in Downing Street", *NR*, 66/9 (1915): 94-100. 'The International Jew', *NR*, 66/1 (1916): 652-653. "The I.J.", *NR*, 66/2 (1916): 813-814. 'Musical Chairs', *NR*, 67/7 (1916): 665-666. 'Financial Roll of Honour', *NR*, 41/3 (1917): 41.

[49] "A Spy", *NR*, 69/4 (1917): 137-138.

[50] The Pact of London (5 Sept 1914) was an agreement between France, Russia and Britain against a separate peace. Italy later joined the agreement.

[51] "High Finance", *NR*, 66 (Jan 1916), 651-652. Further references to the Pact of London can be found in, "The International Jew", *NR*, 66 (Jan 1916), 652-653. 'Competitive 'Canards", *NR*, 68 (Dec 1916), 437-438. "A Greater Danger", *NR*, 69 (Apr 1917), 138-139.

of Jews in highest places lasted into the immediate inter-war period, when he commented on the peace negotiations in Paris. Leo Maxse was not the only British voice who severely criticised secret diplomacy and thus the perceived British leniency on Germany, which did not go together from a British point of view with the promises Lloyd George had made in the run up to the elections in December 1918.[52] Leo Maxse, however, translated this into his very own language and pictures.

Once the peace treaty had been signed, Leo Maxse identified the Jewish control over British government policy and the Premier David Lloyd George as the reasons for the, at the end in his view, far too lenient terms for Germany.[53] This line of interpretation just as with the reading of the Jews against the nation, was shared, for example, by the *Morning Post*. In late November 1918, after the signing of the armistice and in the run-up to the general election, a leader expressed concern about the state of the national parliament, parties and electioneering by the people after four years of war. What would be necessary was a "clean sweep of German-Jewish and other corrupting influences in our public life", as much as an "independent" House of Commons working in the interest of the nation. The *Morning Post* hoped for a return to "national politics" and in view of the upcoming peace negotiations in Paris, demanded that Britain should be represented only by men of "British blood and feeling" with an understanding of 'national sentiments as to the peace terms'.[54] A couple of weeks later, *The Times* reproduced in one of its leaders the assumption that "some international financiers" were said to play too great a role in the surroundings of the Peace Conference, a formula very close to the comments on the Jewish sway over the British delegation published in the NR.[55]

From the pro-Boer utterances to the Paris Peace Conference, British commentators resorted to the theme of Jewish influence in order to portray government policy as harmful and destructive to the nation and the State. This is only possible, if the subjects of such outpourings perceive Jews as a negative ferment to the nation the Jews reside in, irrespective of what individual Jews did or did not do. It is that particular conviction, which forms the very essence of modern antisemitism. In this view, expressed explicitly for instance by Arnold White and James Leopold Maxse, Jews had too much influence on the State and this influence "imperilled the State", as Maxse wrote in 1920, looking back at what he considered as the for England unhealthy "ascendancy Jews were allowed to assume" prior to the outbreak of the Great War.[56]

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[52] On the British debate of German reparations, see, Barbee-Sue, Rodman, "Britain debates Justice: an Analysis of the Reparations Issue," *Journal of British Studies*, 8 (1968): 140-154.

[53] "The I.J.", *NR*, 73/5 (1919): 300-301.

[54] "The Dead Language", *The Morning Post*, November 21, 1918.

[55] "The Conference hesitates", *The Times*, April 3, 1919.

[56] White, "Efficiency," 82. For Maxse, see, "'Anti-Semitism'," *NR*, 74 (Jan 1920), 588-589.

One core element of modern antisemitism that can be found in the German context as in Britain, was a dual picture of the Jew. This view juxtaposed bad Jews with good Jews with the latter standing for everything interpreted as positive by the speaker with reference to his own collectivity.[57] For Arnold White, it was time of residence, two centuries, that allowed the Jew to be categorized "gallant Jew" who would throw in his lot with the nation while the bad "foreign" Jew undermined nation and State.[58] During the First World War, many commentators contrasted the bad and dangerous German Jews with all other Jews, or simply, good with bad Jews. As the *Investors' Review* instructed its readers in June 1916, the good Jews were all patriots and loyal.[59] In Leo Maxse's world, too, there existed two types of Jews: the "international Jew" and the "national Jew", and Maxse himself demonstrated by his shifting uses of the pictures, that the notion of a good, national Jew does not testify to the weakness of an author's prejudice, but forms part of the prejudiced concept.[60] For Maxse, Jews had the potential to be good patriots and loyal citizens. Still, who was and what made a "national Jew" depended entirely on criteria set by the commentator, in this case by Maxse. Moreover, just as the "international Jew" had the potential to become a "national Jew", the metamorphosis could also go the other way round, and a "good Jew" could be turned into a "bad Jew." This was the fate suffered by the conservative politician Lord Rothschild at the hands of Leo Maxse: two years before the war, Rothschild had been praised in the NR as a prime example of a "good national Jew."[61] Seven years later, after the war and after Leo Maxse's antisemitism had become even more radical, he dubbed Lord Rothschild – referring to the same time in his active life in politics for which he was praised earlier – the international Jew, who had been manipulating British policy in the interest of Germany at the time of the Conservative Government.[62]

Moreover, the "national" Jews were by no means spared attacks. Since it was them who were held responsible for the misdeeds of the "bad" or "international Jews", and the whole of the Jewish minority was repeatedly threatened with negative consequences to the status of Jews in the country, if they didn't stop the machinations of those identified as acting against

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[57] For German narratives on good and bad Jews see, George Mosse, "The image of the Jew in German Popular Literature: Felix Dahn and Gustav Freytag," *Germans & Jews. The Right, the Left, and the search for a "Third Force" in pre-Nazi Germany,* ed. George Mosse, (New York: Grusset & Dunlap, 1971), 61-76.

[58] White, "Efficiency," 78-79.

[59] "The German Spy Mania-The Forestal Land Co. and Lady Rothschild", *The Investors' Review,* June 24, 1916, 794-795. See, for instance, John Briton, "The Great Betrayal," *Sunday Chronicle,* October 10, 1915. "In Passing", *The Ilkeston Pioneer,* March 24, 1916, 4.

[60] William Rubinstein holds that the notion of a 'national Jew' testifies to the weakness of Maxse's prejudice. Rubinstein, *History*, 119.

[61] "Advertising Ambassadors", *NR*, 59/7 (1912): 751.

[62] James Leopold Maxse, "The Second Treaty of Versailles. I. Introduction, with a Digression", *NR*, 73/8 (1919): 818.

England's very interests.[63] Further, those categorized by Leo Maxse as "national Jews" were not considered Englishmen and part of the nation. At best, "national Jews" were seen as "politically indistinguishable" from Englishmen.[64]

III. The denial of being British

Antisemitic texts constitute their very own form of violence.[65] They wield oppressive as well as intimidating power and bestow justification upon discriminatory language and behaviour in everyday life. The above discussion sheds a glaring light on the quality of textual violence levelled against the Jewish minority in Britain in the 1900s. Embedded in a host of negative ascriptions, vilifications and frequent open threats to the Jews' status in England, the most prominent element was the Jews' wholesale and categorical exclusion from the nation, their denial of being English and British.[66] From the late Victorian Era until the immediate aftermath of the Great War, British antisemitic utterances on both sides of the political divide, went hand in hand with criticism of the Government and an appeal for transparency as well as the common good as guide line for policy making. In Britain, too, Jews were defined as a race apart and beyond Judaism. However, the variant of racism reflected in this racial construction of the Jew falls into the category of genealogical racism as distinct from anthropological racism, which emerged in Europe in the second half of the 19th century and, in particular, entered with the *völkish* strands of antisemitism on the Continent, in Imperial Germany.[67] British authors commonly used the notion of a "Jewish race"; still, this "Jewish race" was not allocated in a coherent system and hierarchy of human races which would then had been ascribed fixed racial character traits founded on biology. Leo Maxse, just like any of the other authors discussed in this essay, used the notion of a "Jewish race" but did not introduce Jews as one amongst other "races." A racial construction of the Jews notwithstanding, the ultimate term of reference for the definition of the Gentile speakers' relation to the

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[63] See, for example, "The I.J.", *NR*, 73/5 (1919): 300-301. John Briton, "Lord Reading in America", *Sunday Chronicle*, September 26, 1915, 1. "The Choice before Labour", *The Morning Post*, January 24, 1918, 6.

[64] "Dangerous?", *NR*, 64/10 (1914): 161-162.

[65] Ulrich Sieg, "'Auf dem Weg zur „dichten Beschreibung,' Neuere Literatur zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus im Kaiserreich," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung,* 12 (2003): 342.

[66] For a contemporary Anglo-Jewish comment not only on the extent antisemitism has increased to in Britain by early 1914, but also on the emotional and psychological impact on Jews, see, "How Jews suffer", *The Jewish World*, January 28, 1914, 8. For the Jewish responses to antisemitism during the First World War, see, Susanne Terwey, *Moderner Antisemitismus in Großbritannien, 1899-1919. Über die Funktion von Vorurteilen sowie Einwanderung und nationale Identität* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), chapter 5.

[67] Werner Bergmann, "Völkischer Antisemitismus im Kaiserreich", *Handbuch zur 'Völkischen Bewegung', 1871-1918,* eds. Uwe Puschner, Walter Schmitz, Justus H. Ulbricht (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1996), 302-315. For the distinction between genealogical racism and anthropological racism, see, Heil, "Antijudaismus", 103 passim.

Jews was and remained the nation against which the Jews were read. This becomes even more evident in the prevalence of the dual picture of the Jew in the British discourse well into the twentieth century. This, albeit most discriminating, concept, was preconditioned by discursive permeability and fluency, for which a racial hierarchy would not have allowed. Finally, that it was the 'nation' which remained the focal point of the antisemitic discourse was manifested in the picture of the 'inter-national' versus the 'national' Jew which figured prominently not only in the writings of James Leopold Maxse.

In May 1904 the British Premier Arthur Balfour had been pointed to a newspaper article discussing growing antisemitism in Britain, which led the Prime Minister to dismiss the idea publicly as "quite untrue" in *The Times*. This provoked a sharp retort in shape of a letter to the editor by the author Israel Zangwill who pointed to an increasing number of incidents of anti-Jewish violence and manifestations of racial prejudice.[68] British political culture as it developed in the course of the 19th century secured the status of the Jews as religious minority and thus also contained specific forms of antisemitism, namely, attacks on Jews in their status as a religious and cultural minority and, consequently, a widespread questioning of Jewish legal emancipation, which had largely gone along with modern antisemitism in Germany. However, the British liberal self-image, modelled on the British political scenery as much as by positive comparative glance on the Continent, brought about a Gentile narrative according to which whatever was said about and done to Jews in Britain was not "antisemitic", and thus stood in a way of an open and self-critical approach to British antisemitism.

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[68] "Mr. Balfour and the Aliens Bill", *The Times*, May 11, 1904, 7. Contrary to what the title of this short article may suggest, Balfour not only referred to the Aliens Act as not directed against Jews, but commented on antisemitism in general. For Zangwill's response, see, *The Times,* May 13, 1904, 15.