

THE FOUNDATIONS OF ANTISEMITISM IN SOUTH AFRICA :
IMAGES OF THE JEW c.1870-1930

by

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To take only the subject of the Jews, it would be difficult to find a form of bad reasoning about them which has not been heard in conversation or been admitted to the dignity of print.

- George Eliot

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ABSTRACT

Historians of South African Jewry have depicted antisemitism in the 1930s and early 1940s as essentially an alien phenomenon, a product of Nazi propaganda at a time of great social and economic trauma. This thesis argues that antisemitism was an important element in South African society long before 1930 and that the roots of anti-Jewish outbursts in the 1930s and early 1940s are to be found in a widely-shared negative stereotype of the Jew that had developed out of an ambivalent image dating back to the 1880s. By then two embryonic but nevertheless distinctive images of the Jew had evolved: the gentleman - characterised by sobriety, enterprise and loyalty - and the knave, characterised by dishonesty and cunning. The influx of eastern European 'Peruvians' in the 1890s and the emergence of the cosmopolitan financier at the turn of the century further contributed towards the evolution of an anti-Jewish stereotype. By 1914, favourable perceptions of the Jew, associated mainly with the acculturated Anglo-German pioneer Jews, had eroded substantially and the eastern European Jew by and large defined the essence and nature of 'Jewishness'. Even those who separated the acculturated and urbane Jew from the eastern European newcomer exaggerated Jewish power and influence. Herein lay the convergence between the philosemitic and the antisemitic view.

War-time accusations of avoiding military service, followed by the association of Jews with Bolshevism, consolidated the anti-Jewish stereotype. In the context of the post-war economic depression and burgeoning black radicalism, the eastern European Jew emerged as the archetypical subversive. Thus the Rand Rebellion of 1922 could be construed as a Bolshevik revolt. As eugenicist and nativist arguments penetrated South African discourse, eastern European immigrants were increasingly perceived as a threat to the 'Nordic' character of South African society as well as a challenge to the hegemony of the English mercantile establishment. Nevertheless antisemitism in the crude and programmatic sense was rejected. The 1930 Quota Act ushered in a change and heralded the transformation of 'private' antisemitism into 'public' antisemitism. While this transformation was clearly related to specific contingencies of the 1930s, this thesis argues that there is a connection and a continuity between anti-Jewish sentiment, as manifested in the image of the Jew prior to 1930, and anti-Jewish outbursts and programmes of the 1930s and early 1940s. In short, anti-Jewish rhetoric at this time resonated precisely because a negative Jewish stereotype had been elaborated and diffused for decades.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For a society universally regarded as a metaphor for racism and bigotry, remarkably little scholarly attention has been devoted to antisemitism, probably the oldest form of prejudice. Perhaps it is precisely because South Africa's 'race' problems have assumed such overwhelming proportions that attitudes towards the Jew have received so little academic attention. South Africa, after all, has not been immune to 'Judeophobia' or, in the parlance of late nineteenth century Europe, 'Judenhetze'. In fact, the 1930s and early 1940s witnessed a popular surge of antisemitism, ensuring a prominent position for the 'Jewish Question' on the public agenda. Historians examining this period have hitherto focused essentially on the impact of Nazism interacting with the social traumas being experienced by Afrikaners in the 1930s. While these factors are certainly important, they fail to explain why antisemitic ideas resonated so forcefully at the popular level and why they provided such a useful means of political mobilisation for the Afrikaner 'right wing'. This is the essential issue addressed in this study.

In the search for explanations, I have been assisted by numerous colleagues and friends. In particular, I am indebted to my promoter, Dr Edna Bradlow, for her guidance and supervision. Most importantly, she tempered my more

outrageous intellectual flights of fancy and ensured that my feet were firmly planted on the ground. I also wish to thank Mohammed Adhikari, Richard Mendelsohn, Harry Saker, Gideon Pimstone, Sally Frankental and Millie Pimstone for enduring my intellectual probings and questionings. I was also fortunate to benefit from the insights of scholars at the Hebrew University when I spent a year as a Fellow of the International Centre for the Teaching of Jewish Civilisation in Jerusalem. It was extremely useful for me to be able to present an outline of my thesis to a seminar under the auspices of the Hebrew University's Vidal Sassoon Centre for the Study of Anti-Semitism. I benefitted similarly from two seminars which I presented to the Department of History at the University of Cape Town.

Of course, in the final analysis it was my 'dialogue' with the printed word - housed in a range of libraries in numerous cities - that enabled me to reach the conclusions presented in this study. I therefore wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the staffs of the following institutions: the Archives of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, Johannesburg; the South African Library, Cape Town; the State Library, Pretoria; the Cape Archives, Cape Town; the State Archives, Pretoria; the Unisa newspaper library, Pretoria; the Standard Bank Archives, Johannesburg; the Manuscript Division of the Jagger Library, University of Cape Town; the Gitlin Library, Cape Town and the Wiener

Library, London. I also wish to thank my typists, Marlene Williams and Anne Grant who never balked at the thought of an additional footnote or a reconstructed paragraph.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I

Anti-semitism was not a natural growth in South Africa - in view of our traditions, our traditions of a religious outlook and reverence for the Bible, of hospitality and of the love of freedom, it might have been expected that it would never get a foothold here But during the last twenty years our traditional attitude towards the Jew has been widely breeched It is with the Nazis that anti-Semitism took on a particularly aggressive form, and the anti-Semitism of Nazism was an article meant for export. The seeds of this evil thing were blown over the oceans even to South Africa. The stock libel of Nazi propaganda came to be sedulously disseminated among us, sometimes skilfully adapted to our local circumstances, and anti-Semitism grew apace.

J. Hofmeyr, Hoernle Memorial Lecture, 1945.¹

Hofmeyr's argument that anti-Jewish manifestations in South Africa during the 1930s and early 1940s were an aberration, a departure from traditional patterns of interaction between Jew and Gentile, accords well with the dominant thrust of South African Jewish historiography.² That historiography

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1. J. Hofmeyr, Christian Principles and Race Problems. Hoernlé Memorial Lecture, Johannesburg, South African Institute of Race Relations, 1945, p.18.
 2. General South African historiography has paid little, if any, attention to the Jews. For example, T.R.H. Davenport's standard history mentions Jews only with reference to immigration legislation in the 1930s and the Nazi-type Greyshirt movement. T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History, third edition, Johannesburg, Macmillan, 1987, p.335.

has underplayed, if not entirely ignored, antisemitism³ in South African society. Historians writing prior to the 1960s, in particular, turned a blind eye to anti-Jewish manifestations and instead lauded the pioneering decades as years during which Jews were accorded great respect and hospitality.⁴ Afrikaners especially were singled out for their kindness and courtesy towards the 'people of the Book'. The itinerant Jewish pedlar or smous⁵ was commonly

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3. Because 'semite' denotes peoples originating in south-western Asia and therefore includes Arabs and Jews, some scholars have dropped the hyphen and capital "S" for a more precise term. In this study I have chosen the non-hyphenated term although both are acceptable. For further discussion see David A. Gerber, 'Anti-Semitism and Jewish-Gentile Relations in American Historiography and the American Past', in David A. Gerber (ed.), Anti-Semitism in American History, Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1986, p.38 n.1.
 4. See, for example, Sarah Gertrude Millin, The South Africans, London, Constable & Co. Ltd., 1926, pp.175-181; I. Abrahams, The Birth of a Community. A History of Western Province Jewry from Earliest Times to the end of the South African War. 1902, Cape Town, Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, 1955; L. Herrman, History of the Jews in South Africa, London, Victor Gollancz, 1930; G. Saron and L. Hotz (eds.), The Jews in South Africa. A History, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1955. Similar ideas have been appropriated by non-Jewish historians. See, for example, Newell M. Stultz, Afrikaner Politics in South Africa 1934-1948, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974, pp.44-45.
 5. The origin of the word smous (vb. smouse) is not certain. According to Pettman, the word 'appears to be a corruption of the name Moses brought over for Holland in the Dutch East India Company's days. The corruption arose from the manner in which the Dutch Jews themselves pronounced the name'. C. Pettman, Afrikanderisms, London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1913, p.453. Beeton and Dorner suggest the word derives from 'Mauschel', the equivalent of Jewish trader. D.R. Beeton and H. Dorner, A Dictionary of English Usage in South Africa, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1975,

identified as a welcome addition to society. Jewish pedlars, notes Abrahams, 'supplied almost all the requirements of the farming population, from agricultural implements and patent medicines to low-priced furniture and oleography.'⁶ The smous, writes Saron, 'brought to the isolated farmer living in semi-primitive conditions the material goods and also some of the cultural wares of civilization.'⁷ For these services, it is argued, the farmer was forever grateful. Indeed, writes Abrahams, there are innumerable authenticated stories of the kindly hospitality that the Jewish smous received at the hands of the Boerevolk. To them the Jew, 'irrespective of his occupation or appearance, was a member of the People of the Book and as such deserving of a cordial welcome.'⁸ 'My Joodje', writes Aschman, an historian of Oudtshoorn Jewry, was a term of endearment applied by Boers to those pedlars who had for years brought news of the 'outside world', 'produce markets', and 'gossip from the town and the rest of the countryside'. The Boer farmer, he continues, 'came to

p.180. An article in The Ivri, claims the word is derived from the German schmuss (talk, patter) and from the Hebrew Sh'mu (tales, news), the reference being to the persuasive eloquence of Jewish traders. See The Ivri, 1.8.1930. Certainly smous usually referred to a Jewish trader or merchant. See Jean Branford, A Dictionary of South African English, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.226.

6. I. Abrahams, 'Western Province Jewry, 1870-1902' in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, pp.27-28.
7. G. Saron, 'Boers, Uitlanders, Jews', in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, p.183.
8. Abrahams, 'Western Province Jewry', pp.27-28.

rely on that information and to seek the advice of the snous or makelaar⁹ who was in touch with the world beyond the aching Swartberg range'.¹⁰ Jan Smuts also recalled fondly the snous' visit to his father's farm. 'It never entered our heads that they were any but the Lord's people of whom we read in the Bible.'¹¹

No doubt, by comparison with their co-religionists in eastern Europe, the newcomers did enjoy an enviable civil order and much affection. But relations with the non-Jewish majority were not without conflict. Nor indeed were perceptions of the Jew as favourable as those portrayed by historians who, eager to challenge anti-Jewish rhetoric during the relatively insecure decades after 1930, emphasised the Jewish community's contribution to South Africa and the comfortable environment within which it could exercise its talents.¹² In their standard history, for example, Saron and Hotz concentrate mainly on communal origins and the contribution of Jews to the broader society. Scant attention is devoted to conflict while anti-Jewish

9. Makelaar - broker, jobber, scrivener.

10. G.Aschman, 'Oudtshoorn in the Early Days' in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, p.136.

11. Zionist Record, 4.6.1947. Quoted in G. Shimoni, Jews and Zionism : The South African Experience (1910-1967), Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1980, p.45.

12. A similar process is evident in American Jewish historiography. See Jonathan D. Sarna, 'Anti-Semitism and American History', Commentary, March, 1981.

outbursts in the 1930s and 1940s are characterised as a deviation from 'traditional attitudes of tolerance and fairplay'. In Saron's view, economic, political, ideological and spiritual turmoil made the Afrikaner susceptible to Nazi propaganda emanating from South West Africa.¹³

Thus, in its early phase South African Jewish historiography sought to minimize conflict and maximize accommodation between Jew and Gentile. Since the 1960s, however, a new generation of historians, professionally trained and perhaps more comfortable with their South African (and Jewish) identity, has begun to focus on conflict between Jew and non-Jew. Cohen has examined the wide-ranging nature of antisemitism in the 1930s,¹⁴ Bradlow, the measures to restrict the entry of Jews into the Union¹⁵ and Shimoni - albeit obliquely - the precarious nature of Jewish well-being in South Africa.¹⁶ A previous study by the present

13. G. Saron, 'Epilogue' in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, pp.381-382. In a recent study, A. Hagemann has shown that Nazi propaganda in South Africa was limited. See A. Hagemann, 'Rassenpolitische Affinitat und Machtpolitische Ravalitat. Das "Dritte Reich" und die Sudafrikansche Union 1933-1945', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, Bielefeld University, 1987.

14. M. Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa during the nineteen-thirties', unpubl. BA (Hons) thesis, University of Cape Town, 1968.

15. E. Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union, 1910-1948 : policies and attitudes', 3 vols, unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1978.

16. Shimoni, Jews and Zionism. See especially chapters four, nine, ten and eleven.

writer focused on anti-semitism in the Cape Colony and its impact on Jewish communal organisation.¹⁷

The new historiography has neither denied nor ignored the many instances of hospitality accorded Jews in South Africa¹⁸ and the manifold ways in which Jews have been accommodated within and have benefited from the South African body-politic. It has, however, provided an important and a necessary antidote to what one might term the 'accommodationist' or 'hospitality' school of South African

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17. M. Shain, Jewry and Cape Society. The Origins and Activities of the Jewish Board of Deputies for the Cape Colony, Cape Town, Historical Publication Society, 1983. Charles van Onselen and Riva Krut have also indirectly touched upon conflict between Jew and Gentile. See C. van Onselen, 'Randlords and Rotgut, 1886-1903' in C. van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914, vol. 1, New Babylon, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1982 and R. Krut, 'The Making of a South African Jewish Community in Johannesburg, 1886-1914', in B. Bozzoli (ed.), Class, Community and Conflict : South African Perspectives, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1987.
18. There were, indeed, many instances of goodwill. In Calveria, for example, in 1878 the coinciding of Nachtmaal [Holy Communion] and the Jewish New Year meant that L. Rosenblatt, a Calveria businessman, would lose the traditional Nachtmaal business. After the Reverend Joel Rabinowitz had written to Professor N.J. Hofmeyr of the Stellenbosch Seminary explaining the position, the Kerkraad postponed Nachtmaal to accommodate Rosenblatt's interests. Abrahams, 'Western Province Jewry', p.30. Numerous reports from South Africa in the 1890s appearing in the eastern European press similarly indicate respect towards Jews on the part of the Boers. See G. Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration to South Africa and the Development of the Jewish Community in the South African Republic, between 1890 and 1902', unpubl. BA (Hons) thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1960, p.88.

Jewish historiography.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the 'new' historiography continues to depict antisemitism in the 1930s and early 1940s as essentially an alien phenomenon, a product of Nazi propaganda at a time of great social and economic trauma. Shimoni, for instance, while more nuanced and certainly more ambivalent in his description of Jewish-Gentile relations, still seeks an explanation for anti-Jewish outbursts within the Afrikaner's existential condition and his receptivity to Nazi propaganda. Acute race consciousness, anti-British sentiment, disillusionment with British parliamentarianism, frustrations with industrialisation and a vague sense of racial affinity with the Germans are all forwarded by Shimoni as factors facilitating the Afrikaner's receptivity to Nazi ideology. A fundamentalist Calvinism, moreover, pre-disposed him to Christian-rooted prejudice. This prejudice, however, was operative only in the urban context. In the rural setting, Shimoni argues that Calvinism encouraged a sense of 'fellow feeling' with the descendants of the 'Biblical children of Israel'.²⁰

19. Dr. Edna Bradlow, of the University of Cape Town, in private discussion, has suggested that 'school' is too generous a term for these historians. None were, after all, historians in the professional sense. However, it may be argued that they have provided a particular genre of history, albeit one that, in the opinion of this writer, has mythologized the past with respect to Jewish-Gentile relations.

20. Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, p.64. When touching on Jewish-Afrikaner relations, general historians have similarly identified an affinity between the Afrikaner, steeped in Calvinism, and the 'Chosen People'. See, for

Recent studies, then, have uncovered conflict between Jew and Gentile. The overstretched tarpaulin of hospitality has been breached and it is now acknowledged that South Africa did have a 'Jewish problem' in the 1930s and early 1940s. In accounting for this problem, however, historians have sought explanations only within the confines and contingencies of the 1930s and early 1940s. They fail to explain why racist and antisemitic ideas resonated at the popular level.

This study argues that antisemitism was an important element in South African society long before 1930 and that anti-Jewish manifestations in the 1930s and 1940s were related to a consistent and widely-shared Jewish stereotype, the roots of which were deeply embedded in the South African experience. That is to say, while South Africa may not have experienced organised antisemitism prior to the 1930s,²¹ it was not free of anti-Jewish sentiment and ideas. A study of these ideas as manifest in the Jewish stereotype is pertinent and, as argued in this study, essential for an understanding of the later period.²²

example, S. Patterson, The Last Trek. A Study of the Boer People and the Afrikaner Nation, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1957, p.290.

21. The only organised anti-Jewish movement was the shortlived and unsuccessful League of Gentiles, founded in the mid-1920s. See below, pp.289ff.
22. By its very nature then, this is a study of latent or informal antisemitism rather than a study of organised

The stereotype, therefore, was both a barometer and facilitator of prejudice; it prepared the way for the growth and dissemination of antisemitism in the 1930s. The rhetoric of those years cannot be divorced from deeply entrenched negative images of the Jew which had undergone lengthy processes of maturation. An initially ambivalent image had, by the 1920s, become overwhelmingly negative. The reasons for this transformation will be explained in subsequent chapters as will widespread support - across language and party divides - for legislation in 1930 which curtailed the influx of eastern European immigration. 'The Bill will commend itself to most citizens of the Union and has not been introduced a day too soon', noted an editorial (which perhaps best captured the public mood) in the East London Daily Dispatch.²³ Irrespective of political party, noted Die Burger, the overwhelming majority of South Africans supported the legislation.²⁴ In the opinion of the Sunday Times, the newcomers were 'ignorant people of the peasant class who have neither the ability nor the experience necessary to make a living'.²⁵ The Cape reminded

antisemitism. Significantly Fritz Stern makes a specific call for a study of latent and informal antisemitism in his magisterial study of Bismarck and Bleichröder. See Fritz Stern, Gold and Iron, Bismarck, Bleichröder and the Building of the German Empire, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1977, p.497.

23. East London Daily Dispatch, 3.2.1930.
 24. Die Burger, 30.1.1930.
 25. Sunday Times, 2.2.1930.

its readers that the Dutch and English were the real pioneers and they had 'a right to say whom they would have as fellow citizens'. According to this weekly, there were too many traders and too few producers. Eastern Europeans, moreover, had a considerably different commercial morality.²⁶ In similar fashion The Daily Representative applauded the government for taking 'a firm stand in the matter, for a young and growing country cannot afford to allow itself to be used as a dumping ground for immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.'²⁷ Even those who recognised and appreciated Jewry's role in the development of South Africa supported the legislation.²⁸ Clearly it would be a blatant denial of contemporary evidence to assume that eastern Europeans (and virtually all were Jews) were perceived as a welcome acquisition to society, notwithstanding their often acclaimed contributions.²⁹

By examining perceptions of the Jew in South Africa from the late nineteenth century to 1930, this study attempts to explain the apparent contradiction between the many

26. The Cape, 7.2.1930.

27. The Daily Representative, 10.2.1930.

28. See, for instance, Ons Vaderland, 1.2.1930 and the Cape Argus, 8.2.1930.

29. Although the Immigration Quota Act made no specific mention of Jews and indeed curtailed the influx of all southern and eastern Europeans, Jews were undoubtedly the most prominent foreigners and were certainly the targets of this legislation. See below, pp. 311-13.

instances of support for the Jew (and praise for his contribution) on the one hand, and immigration legislation in 1930 curtailing his entry into the Union on the other. The relationship between popular Jewish stereotyping prior to 1930 and anti-Jewish outbursts in the 1930s and 1940s is also examined.

In looking at the image of the Jew, perceptions of the white population only will be examined. It would be almost impossible to gauge the view of black South Africans during this period since there is a lack of source material. In any event, anti-Jewish outbursts and movements in the 1930s and 1940s belong to the realm of white parliamentary and extra-parliamentary politics. Comment focuses, moreover, on the male stereotype, a reflection of sexist assumptions of the day. Although opinions about, and attitudes towards, the Jew are inferred by and large from the literate middle classes, it is reasonable to assume that the sources used do not seriously distort popular views. We now need to examine what is meant by an image and the manner in which it can be gauged.

II

Images... are neither carefully formulated manifestos nor elaborately constructed pictures. They consist of single words and images which spring associatively to mind whenever the relevant subject is mentioned.³⁰

In this study 'image' refers to a broader and more elaborate construct than that defined above. The 'single words and images which spring associatively to mind' are indeed pertinent, but only partly so. This study attempts to delve deeper and to examine that complex mental construct (or set of images) underpinning those 'pictures in our heads'.³¹ When such a construct is widely shared in society we refer to it as a stereotype.

Identifying and conceptualising an image or stereotype is a task fraught with methodological problems. With the range of sources virtually unlimited and the danger of preconceptions inherently acute, the selection and organisation of material assumes a critical importance. Preconceptions or preconceived paradigms must not determine

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30. I. Schachar, 'Studies in the Emergence and Dissemination of the Modern Jewish Stereotype in Western Europe'. unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1967, p.18.
31. This is Walter Lippmann's phrase. It was Lippmann who, in his book Public Opinion (1922), established the conception of a stereotype in modern social psychology. See G.W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice, Boston, Beacon, 1954, pp.191ff.

the final synthesis. How then does the historian gauge a popular or conventional image?

Images are inferred from a range of published and unpublished comment. This includes ideological pronouncements, opinions, attitudes, cartoons, letters, literature, theatre and so forth. The process of inference is problematic and has been undertaken with the utmost caution. Comments are often less important for the ideas conveyed than for the purposes intended or served. The historian, for instance, should remember that those commenting were involved in contemporary social issues. The encomiums showered upon Jews by Lord Alfred Milner on the occasion of the formation of the Transvaal Jewish Board of Deputies, for example, tell us more about Milner's desire to settle the Transvaal with pro-British immigrants than his perceptions of the Jew, particularly those from eastern Europe. Similarly, those praising Jews for their enterprise and thrift may well have appropriated them as exemplars of bourgeois values, necessary in an age of reconstruction. In short, the historian must enter into what Winthrop Jordan has referred to as a 'reciprocal relationship' with the sources, to approach these 'with mind and eyes open' and to hope that the 'thoughts and feelings of their authors' are fairly reflected.³²

32. Winthrop D. Jordan, White over Black. American attitudes towards the Negro 1550-1812, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1968, p.vii.

Adhering to Jordan's precepts for a period spanning more than six decades is an awesome task. Fortunately, the sensitive antennae of the Jewish press³³ betray clearly the crisis periods (or moments) in Jewish-Gentile relations and, on examining these periods in greater depth, prevailing perceptions of the Jew are thrown into relief. For example, comment in the Jewish press during the Rand Rebellion indicates a concern about the association of Jews with Bolshevism. By examining formal Jewish responses, contemporary newspaper comment, periodicals, cartoons, parliamentary speeches, commissions of inquiry, private papers and so forth, the extent to which Jews were associated in the popular mind with Bolshevism can be ascertained. Legislation, and perhaps more importantly, responses to legislation, serve to confirm or undermine general impressions. As noted above, responses to the 1930 Quota Act affirmed a widely shared anti-Jewish stereotype. In essence, then, one gauges the stereotype by investigating in depth as wide a range of sources as is possible.

33. This includes the Jewish Chronicle (London), founded in 1841; the South African Jewish Chronicle, founded in 1902; the Zionist Record, founded in 1908 and various Yiddish newspapers. The latter have been exhaustively examined by M.P. Grosman. See M.P. Grosman, 'A Study in the Trends and Tendencies of Hebrew and Yiddish Writings in South Africa since the Beginning of the Early Nineties of the last Century to 1930', 3 vols, unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1973.

In exploring the image of the Jew, the legacy of European history and its intellectual traditions cannot be ignored.³⁴ White South Africans, after all, are among the heirs to those traditions. And, of course, the period dealt with in this study was an age of increasing literacy, improved communications and large population migrations, specifically between Britain and South Africa. The penetration of European ideas (including the deeply-rooted anti-Jewish stereotype) was inevitable. Moreover, 'a vaguely racial definition of Jewishness'³⁵ ensured that those traits traditionally associated with Jews would be ascribed to their co-religionists in South Africa.³⁶ One has,

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34. As Shils puts it: 'Even if we accept that each generation modifies the beliefs and changes the patterns of action from those which have been presented to it by its predecessors, there is bound always to be a plurality of previously and still espoused beliefs and previously and still enacted patterns of action existing with and in particular patterns which are of more recent origin'. Edward Shils, Tradition, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1981, p.39.
35. Michael R. Marrus, The Politics of Assimilation: The French Jewish Community at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair, New York, Oxford University Press, 1971, p.3.
36. A Jewish presence has been shown to be unnecessary for perpetuating the stereotype. See B. Glassman, Anti-Semitic Stereotypes Without Jews. Images of the Jew in England 1290-1700, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1975. Werner Cahnman's comments are also pertinent: 'Moreover, if a patterned arrangement of social forces repeats itself generation after generation, an image is formed in the minds of men which in continued cultural transmission becomes itself a factor of structural potency. The image of the Jew in the minds of occidental peoples has served to justify his position in the social structure and his position in turn has served to illuminate the image'. W.J. Cahnman, 'Socio-Economic Causes of Anti-semitism', Social Problems, vol.5, no.1, July 1957, p.21.

therefore, continually to bear in mind the possible impact of external ideologies. Eugenist notions, for example, can be shown to have influenced South African perceptions of the Jew.

Notwithstanding outside influences, however, the image of the Jew in South Africa must be placed within the context of South Africa's own historical reality and intellectual traditions.³⁷ Therefore, throughout this study, I have attempted to characterise essential South African worldviews and to understand their changes through time. Perceptions of the Jew, in other words, have been related to the entire social system, including patterns of South African public life. Those equating Jews with Bolshevism, for instance, were concerned with more than an exercise in labelling. A significant influx of eastern European Jews had occurred in South Africa after the First World War and many had settled on the Witwatersrand. Their alien appearance could readily be associated with an alien ideology. But this was not the only reason for equating Jews with Bolshevism. I have argued that the presence of Jews enabled a threatening

37. Clearly a range of traditions and world views has evolved in South Africa. As Lewsen puts it: 'All South African born whites are descended from immigrants who had to adapt to a strange and complex human environment - a colonial situation with all its difficulties and prejudices. All white immigrants were altered by this experience. Some changed hardly at all, some very rapidly while others developed persistent community traits which have remained unchanged for centuries'. P. Lewsen, 'The Cape liberal tradition - myth or reality', Race, vol. 123, 1971, p.65.

ideology to be personified, captured and deflected. The association of Jews with Bolshevism was a way of dealing with ideological conflict and opposition. At this level, then, focusing upon the Jew was a means of furthering political and/or ideological interests. Of course, it was only possible to use the Jew because he had earlier been perceived as the archetypical subversive or outsider.

Besides locating stereotypes in contemporary ideological struggles, they should also be understood at the psychological level. They serve to interpret the world and fulfil a psychological function. The 'poor white' farmer, for instance, could blame the visibly alien Jewish creditor or supplier for his plight. Here was a readily available symbol of change and upheaval. In this sense stereotypes have, as Banton puts it, 'critical emotional significance for those who hold them and they fit together in a twisted but ordered pattern of social relations'.³⁸

Thus stereotypes are complex constructs relating both to the individual's psychological needs and to the wider polity. Rooted as they are in a social reality, they possess, moreover, what social scientists refer to as 'a kernel of

38. M. Banton, Race Relations, London, Tavistock, 1967, p.300. For a succinct overview of the literature on stereotypes see R.D. Ashmore and F.K. Delboca, 'Conceptual Approaches to Stereotypes and Stereotyping' in D.L. Hamilton (ed.) Cognitive Processes in Stereotyping and Intergroup Behaviour, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1981.

truth'.³⁹ This study, however, makes no attempt to confirm or deny their validity. Nor does it wish to categorize individuals commenting about Jews as either philo or antisemitic.⁴⁰ The complex nature of the human psyche precludes such a simple correlation. As Peter Gay reminds us, the nineteenth century German novelist, Gustav Freytag, depicted the Jews as villainous in his Soll und Haben and yet, only a few years later, repudiated Richard Wagner's antisemitism. Gay correctly points out that it would be absurd to single out the 'anti or philosemitic strand' constituting the real Freytag.⁴¹ This study heeds Gay's warnings and passes no judgement upon individuals. Its aims are more modest. It attempts merely to outline images of the Jew in South Africa from the late nineteenth century to 1930, to contextualise these images and to explain their formation. By illustrating the evolution and maturation of the stereotype, the inextricable relationship between popular Jewish stereotyping and anti-Jewish manifestations and movements in the 1930s and early 1940s is demonstrated. Antisemitism in South Africa rested upon firm and solid foundations embodied in the Jewish stereotype.

39. 'Stereotype', International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 15, pp.259ff.

40. Of course in some cases commentators were blatantly antisemitic.

41. P. Gay, Freud, Jews and other Germans. Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p.16.

CHAPTER TWO

GENTLEMEN AND KNAVES : THE AMBIVALENT IMAGE

I

Although Jews were among the early explorers who circumnavigated the Cape of Storms,¹ they and other non-Protestants were denied the right to settle at the Cape during the rule of the Dutch East India Company (1652 - 1795). This practice was abrogated under the enlightened Batavian administration (1803-1806) and maintained thereafter by their administrative heirs, the British, in 1806.² A handful of Jews - mainly of English and Dutch origin - availed themselves of the new circumstances. The majority settled in Cape Town, although a contingent of seventeen among the so-called 1820 Settlers³ located themselves in the eastern Cape. Within a few years most of this group had gravitated towards Grahamstown, an eastern Cape military and trading centre.

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1. Herrman, History of the Jews in South Africa, chapter one, passim.
 2. For the early history of the Jews in South Africa see Herrman, History of the Jews in South Africa, chapters one to six and Abrahams, The Birth of a Community, chapter one.
 3. A settlement scheme designed by the British Government to provide an inexpensive buffer of white settlers on the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony.

Without formal structures, meagre in number and outwardly assimilated, the Jewish settlers made little impact on the popular consciousness. Indeed, observers such as the American missionary, George Champion,⁴ and the German naturalist, Ferdinand Krauss,⁵ failed to mention Jews when commenting on the variety of groups and sects found in Cape Town in the 1830s. Such oversights were hardly possible following the establishment of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation in 1841.⁶ Indeed, seven years after the congregation's formation, its moving spirit, Benjamin Norden, welcomed - specifically on behalf of the Jewish community - the triumphant Cape Governor, Sir Harry Smith, on his return from the Battle of Boomplaats.⁷ The exchange of pleasantries on that occasion reflected both the Jewish community's good standing and the tolerant and liberal ethos of Cape society. All religious denominations, noted the Governor, were 'equally valid' and Jewish interests were 'as blended with the people at large, for whether a man is a Jew

4. A.R. Booth (ed.), The Journal of an American Missionary in the Cape Colony, 1835. George Champion, Cape Town, Struik, 1967, p.28.

5. F. Krauss, 'A Description of Cape Town and its way of life 1838 - 1840', Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library, vol. 21, 1966 - 1967.

6. For the early history of this institution see L. Herrman, The Cape Town Hebrew Congregation. A Centenary History 1841 - 1941, Cape Town, Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, n.d., chapter one.

7. Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, p.1.

or a Christian, he is equally protected by the law, and I believe equally acceptable in the eyes of God'.⁸ Smith's sentiments succinctly reflect classical nineteenth century British liberalism, rooted as it was in respect and admiration for the Judeo-Christian tradition.⁷

Prejudice, bigotry and anti-Jewish sentiment were, of course, not entirely absent from the settlers' cultural baggage. Before the arrival of Jews, for instance, the English explorer, John Barrow, described a certain exploitative element in the South African hinterland as 'a kind of Jew broker defrauding the simple boors',¹⁰ while

8. Cape Town Mail, 28.10.1848. According to Herrman the right of a Jew to hold a public office was questioned as late as 1840. See Herrman, A History of the Jews in South Africa, p.91

9. Philosemitism, albeit based on a variety of motives, ran deep within the Puritan tradition. See D.S. Katz, Philosemitism and the re-admission of Jews to England 1603-1655, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1982, pp.232-44. British tolerance, as Cohen notes, was 'nurtured by the eighteenth century British Enlightenment and became enshrined in the philosophical tradition of liberal utilitarianism that was England's, and Scotland's, most noteworthy contribution to contemporary political theory and practice'. S.A. Cohen, 'Anglo-Jewish Responses to Antisemitism' in J. Reinharz (ed.), Living with Antisemitism. Modern Jewish Responses, Hanover and London, University Press of New England, 1987, p.88. Such values were evident in the Cape Colony long before Smith's arrival as Governor. In 1830, for instance, the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette expressed pleasure at Hebrew being taught at Cape Town's South African College. In fact the periodical quoted with approbation John Wesley's view that 'Hebrew was of divine origin and therefore perfect'. Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette, 16.6.1830.

10. J. Barrow, An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa in the Years 1797 and 1798, vols I and

Charles Boniface, a Cape Town belles lettrist, referred to his rival - the misshapen apostate Jew, Joseph Suasso de Lima - as a 'Joodse Dwerje' [Jewish Dwarf].¹¹ The power of latent anti-semitism emerging at times of stress was even more evident in the 'Neptune affair' of 1849. In this instance, Benjamin Norden's contravention of a pledge not to service the convict ship, Neptune, resulted in the stigmatization of the entire Jewish community. In fact, accusations were so serious that the President of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, S. Rodolf, found it necessary to state:

that no member of the Jewish persuasion with the exception of those already known have acted against the wishes of the people of this Colony, nor have been implicated in any way whatsoever to thwart any steps taken against the introduction of convicts. Though some malignant persona, out of men [sic] malice, are exciting the public mind to condemn a whole community for the unworthy act of one or two, for conclusion I beg to say on behalf of the Jewish community, that they are grateful to their Christian brethren for the benevolence shown towards them in contributing so liberally in their cause.¹²

Even though the synagogue was placed under police protection during the High Festivals of 1849 and Norden was the victim

II, London, T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1801, p.387. Barrow's anti-Afrikaner sentiments suggest racism was part of his psyche.

11. J. C. Mandelbrote, 'Joseph Suasso de Lima: a bibliography', Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library, vol. III, 1948 - 49, p.3.

12. South African Commercial Advertiser, 13.10.1849.

of riotous behaviour, the tarnishing of relations between Jew and Gentile was shortlived.¹³ Sir Harry Smith condemned the riotous and unruly behaviour and prohibited large meetings.¹⁴ Jews, in fact, continued to be welcome. In the 1850's, for instance, A.J. van der Walt of Middelburg in the Cape Colony, advocated the establishment of a Jewish and German Colony in the Free State.¹⁵ The proposal was not taken up but its sentiments are indicative of a favourable image of the Jew. Certainly there were many instances of goodwill between Jew and Gentile. For example, financial support from the non-Jewish community in the building of synagogues was often forthcoming as was support for distress calls and the plight of Russian Jewry.¹⁶ Jews and Gentiles,

13. Rodolf's gratitude to the Jewish community's 'Christian brethren' suggests a patron-client relationship. This is understandable given the fact that Jews in England (and Europe) were at this time struggling for emancipation. See H.M. Sachar, The Course of Modern Jewish History, New York, Dell Publishing Co. Inc., 1958, chapter five and M.C.N. Salbstein, The Emancipation of the Jews in Britain. The Question of The Admission of the Jews to Parliament, 1828-1860, Rutherford, N.J., Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982. See especially chapters two and ten.

14. Cape of Good Hope, Government Gazette, 11.10.1849.

15. E. Rosenthal, 'Jews in the Boer Republics. Some Colourful Personalities', unpub. paper, South African Jewish Sociological and Historical Society, n.d. Copy in the South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives, Johannesburg.

16. Christians, for example, subscribed to a fund for 500 Jewish victims of a devastating fire in Bawe, Poland. Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 14.8.1861. Non-Jews contributed liberally to the building of the Port Elizabeth synagogue in 1872. See Addleson, 'In the Eastern Province', in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, p.307. Clearly Gentiles were generous when it came to issues of non-political significance. However, in the

then, enjoyed amiable contact which included substantial social intercourse. Governor Frere's presence at the wedding of Reverend Rabinowitz's daughter was symptomatic of a sound relationship.¹⁷

In all likelihood Jews were perceived in much the same way as were their co-religionists in mid-Victorian England. While that image included some negatively charged dimensions, it was on the whole benign.¹⁸ Certainly the 170 Jews in Cape Town in 1855,¹⁹ and the increasing number of Jewish traders in the southern and eastern Cape²⁰ thrived in

case of the Neptune affair which was far more real and immediate, boundless support for the Jew was obviously tempered.

17. Herrman, The Cape Town Hebrew Congregation 1841-1941, p.45.
18. See T.M. Endelman, The Jews of Georgian England 1714 - 1830, tradition and change in a liberal society, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1979.
19. According to M. Johnson's Atlas of Physical Geography. Quoted in Abrahams, The Birth of a Community, p.137.
20. By the 1860s many stores in the remote areas were in Jewish hands. See P. Lewsen, John X. Merriman. Paradoxical South African Statesman, Johannesburg, Ad Donker, 1982, p.18 and H. Giliomee, 'The Beginnings of Afrikaner Nationalism, 1870-1915', South African Historical Journal, 19, 1987, p.118. A Jewish-owned store, Mosenthals, was particularly dominant in the southern Cape. Indeed, Mosenthals was intimately connected with the local economy through an extensive network of credit and finance. See K.W. Smith, From Frontier to Midlands. A History of the Graaff-Reinet District 1786-1910, Grahamstown, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, 1976, p.65. For a history of Mosenthals see D. Fleischer and A. Caccia, Merchant Pioneers, The House of Mosenthal, Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball, 1983.

a society which separated Church and State.²¹ An Act of 1860 empowering the government to appoint Jews as marriage officers,²² and another Act eight years later proscribing any differentiation or penalties on account of religious belief,²³ were further indications of tolerance and goodwill.

This tolerance survived the initial influx of Jewish fortune-seekers following the discovery of diamonds in 1869. Indeed, despite the historian, James Froude, observing among the diggers, 'a hundred or so keen-eyed Jewish merchants ... gathering like eagles over their prey',²⁴ the image of the Jew in the 1870s remained overwhelmingly favourable. This was evident in Governor Barkly's generous and philosemitic speech when he laid the foundation stone of Kimberley's new synagogue in 1875:

None I am well aware more thoroughly and sincerely participate in the feelings of whole hearted loyalty which is characteristic of the British nation than Her Majesty's subjects of Jewish lineage and faith. I have had opportunities of

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21. G.W. Eybers, Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History 1795-1910, New York, Routledge, 1918, pp.45ff; pp.188ff.
 22. Cape of Good Hope Statutes, Act 16, 1860.
 23. Cape of Good Hope Statutes, Act 11, 1868.
 24. James A. Froude, 'Visit to the Diamond Fields', in Short Stories on Great Subjects, London, Longman, Greens, 1907, p.273. Froude was obviously influenced by the well-established European anti-Jewish stereotype.

becoming acquainted with them as a body obedient to the law, ready to take their part on all occasions as good citizens and to co-operate in works of benevolence and mercy. In Griqualand West, especially it has happened, from the first, that some of the most energetic and enterprising members of society have been Jewish.²⁵

By the time of Barkly's speech, Jews comprised a mere fraction of South Africa's white population. The majority resided in the Cape Colony where they made up a paltry .23 percent of the entire white population. Cape Town (169), Port Elizabeth (123), Graaff-Reinet (36), Grahamstown (25) and Victoria West (22) were the only centres in the Colony with significant concentrations of Jews.²⁶ Kimberley (at that time not part of the Colony) had approximately 120 Jews.²⁷ A handful of Jews resided in the South African Republic, Natal and the Orange Free State.²⁸

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25. Cited in E. Rosenthal, 'On the Diamond Fields', in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, p.118. Barkly may well have been influenced by his earlier experience as governor in Jamaica where he established close relations with Jewish sugar merchants. See M. Macmillan, Sir Henry Barkly. Mediator and Moderator 1815 - 1898, Cape Town, A.A. Balkema, 1970, p.63. According to Macmillan, Barkly's 'liberal philosophy was offended by religious, or indeed any form of prejudice.' (p.143).
26. G42 - 76 Results of Census. Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1875.
27. Rosenthal, 'On the Diamond Fields', p.117.
28. According to a Free State Census of 1880, Jews numbered sixty-seven out of 1688 white inhabitants of Bloemfontein. S.M. Aronstam, 'A Historical and Socio-Cultural Survey of the Bloemfontein Jewish Community with special reference to the conception of Jewish welfare work', unpubl. D.S.S. thesis, University of the Orange Free State, 1974, p.67. For the Transvaal see

It is important to note that most South African Jews were of Anglo-German origin. They were acculturated (the British were their ideal type),²⁹ bourgeois and, by and large, well ensconced in Cape and Orange Free State society.³⁰ As Lady Duff Gordon, a visitor to the Cape noted in 1860, they had 'abandoned the peculiarities of their tradition if not the features of their race.'³¹ The Jewish community, in other words, reflected the lifestyle and communal patterns of their 'enlightened' co-religionists in western Europe.³²

Dora L. Sowden, 'In the Transvaal till 1899', in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa; and for Natal see D. Abelson, 'In Natal', in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa; and S.G. Cohen, 'A History of the Jews of Durban 1825 - 1918', unpubl. MA thesis, University of Natal, 1977, chapter two.

29. In 1843 a Cape Town municipal official, Rob Waters, reported that a number of known Jews returned 'Protestant' or 'unknown' under religion in the Cape Town census. See Municipal Records 3 CT 1/1/5/10. Cape Archives Depot. I am indebted to Digby Warren for this information.
30. See Herrman, A History of the Jews in South Africa, chapter five, passim. Jews were among the earliest non-Dutch settlers in the Orange Free State. See M. Pencharz and D.L. Sowden, 'In the Orange Free State', in Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa.
31. Quoted in C. Pama, Bowler's Cape Town. Life at the Cape Colony in Early Victorian Times 1834-1868, Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1977, p.95.
32. A sense of atmosphere emerges in a correspondent's report to the London Jewish Chronicle in which he describes Cape Town's Jewish community as follows: Our noble selves may be described as existing of two classes, those who attend 'Shool" and those who don't. There are three sections - so to speak - amongst us, the highest are the big shopkeepers, the second are the small shopkeepers, and the lowest - well we have no lowest. The conditions of life are eminently comfortable, and existence is not a very difficult

Religion was a private matter and primary allegiance was accorded to the state.³³ The community, moreover, personified the values and norms dearest to nineteenth century English liberals: loyalty, obedience, civic virtue, charitableness and, above all, enterprise. In the words of Bill Williams (writing about Mancunian Jewry of the 1870s), the Jewish vanguard had 'fulfilled their commitments' to the 'emancipation contract'.³⁴

problem with the majority. Without egotism we can acclaim the proud distinction of being a quiet and law-abiding body, all more or less hard working, following our respective pursuits with earnestness if not with equal aptitude and results In communal matters an active interest is taken although I regret to write that we see the anomaly, to term it mildly, of Jews walking quietly to church on Sunday. It is whispered that the Royal road to 'society' is through the Cathedral, hence a few whom we can well spare prefer society to the synagogue.' London Jewish Chronicle, 3.7.1891. Elite culture and the notion of 'Englishness' was enormously powerful in Victorian Cape Town. See M.F. Lamond, '"Ichabod": A consideration of the Cape Town elite at the end of the last century', unpub. BA (Hons) thesis, University of Cape Town, 1985.

33. Although external differences were minimized, Jews did not envisage total assimilation. Indeed, they were energetic in establishing communal organisations and synagogues. See Abrahams, The Birth of a Community, chapters three and four, passim.
34. B. Williams, 'The Anti-Semitism of Tolerance: Middle-class Manchester and the Jews 1870 - 1900' in A.J. Kidd and K.R.V. Roberts (eds.), City, class and culture: social policy and cultural production in Victorian Manchester, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1985, p.74. The 'emancipation contract' referred to a Gentile assumption that in return for emancipation Jews ought to assimilate. As Caron writes, 'tensions between Christians and Jews in the nineteenth century were due in no small measure to conflicting interpretations over precisely what assimilation entailed.' V. Caron, Between France and Germany. The Jews of Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1918, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1988, p.5. The 'emancipation contract' as understood in the European context has

II

Pogroms in Russia which followed the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 sparked a new influx of Jewish immigration. Waves of newcomers sought security and opportunity in South Africa, its attraction further enhanced by the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886. The new arrivals differed from the Anglo-German vanguard in speech, manner, religious customs and even dress. A relatively homogeneous community was transformed into a motley combination of cultures bound by a common religious heritage.³⁵

Many of the newcomers settled in Kimberley where, by the late 1870s, Jews had attained prominence in commercial and financial affairs. By October 1881, the Diamond News was writing of a Sunday atmosphere in Kimberley on the Jewish

been the subject of considerable analysis. See S.W. Baron, Modern Nationalism and Religion, New York, Books for Libraries Press, 1947, pp.219-20 and 'Newer Approaches to Jewish Emancipation', Diogenes, Spring, 1960; Arthur Hertzberg, The French Enlightenment and the Jews. The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism, New York, Schocken Books, 1968, chapters eight to ten and J. Katz, 'Misreadings of Anti-Semitism', Commentary, July, 1983. For the influence of the 'emancipation contract' on Jewish-Gentile relations in South Africa see below, pp. 311-13

35. The overwhelming majority of the new arrivals came from Lithuania. See Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, pp.5-7. For the background to Jewish immigration and the migration saga see R.M. Krut, 'Building a Home and a Community : Jews in Johannesburg, 1886-1914', unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1985, chapter one.

Day of Atonement: 'All the houses of business were closed and the diamond market was deserted, a proof of how strong a hold the Jewish people had succeeded in establishing in Kimberley.'³⁶ Certainly names of Jews such as Lewis, Marks, Beit and Barnato had become synonymous with entrepreneurial skill and success. Of course, most Jews were not as successful and many were casualties of Kimberley's 1881 financial collapse. The early 1880s, marked by straitened economic conditions, were not a propitious time for the influx of more fortune-seekers and refugees. In a competitive and economically depressed climate, it was not long before the new arrivals attracted the type of opprobrium evident in the comments of Lewis Michell, General Manager of the Standard Bank:

The departure of hordes of hook-nosed Polish and Lithuanian Jews whose evil countenances now peer from every little shanty and cigar divan would be a distinct gain to the community. Under cover of keeping a 'winkel' [shop] they at present flock to Kimberley from afar, like as-vogels [vultures] to a dead ox, and their villainous faces enable one easily to understand the depth of hatred borne to them in Russia and elsewhere.³⁷

One specific dimension of the stereotype which evolved in Kimberley and which would persist for decades, was the

36. Diamond News, 4.10.1881.

37. Standard Bank Archives, Diamond Volume, Michell to General Manager, 17.4.1882 (Henry Files). Quoted in R.V. Turrell, 'Capital, Class and Monopoly, the Kimberley Diamond Fields 1871-1889', unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1981, p.315.

association of Jews with illicit diamond dealing. As Turrell notes in his study of early Kimberley: 'If Africans were labelled diamond thieves by mineowners, "Cape Boys" and Jews were most commonly associated with illicit dealing.'³⁸ These generalizations are corroborated in contemporary fiction as well as in memoirs, satire and cartoon sketches.³⁹

Many of the eastern European newcomers avoided Kimberley or other urban centres and instead chose to settle in the mushrooming hamlets of the hinterland. These isolated towns

38. Turrell, 'Capital, Class and Monopoly', p.314.

39. See for example, The Knobkerrie, 22.10.1884; The Lantern, 21.2.1885; Cape Punch, 9.5.1888; K.F. Bellairs, The Witwatersrand Goldfields : A Trip to Johannesburg and Back, London, T.P. Chapman, 1889, p.15 and O. Osborne, In the Land of the Boers, or the Other Man and Myself, London, R.A. Everett and Co., (first edition 1893), p.296. The association of Jews with illicit dealing persisted long after the initial discovery of diamonds. It was popularly associated with the legendary success of Barney Barnato, the Jewish lad who rose from humble beginnings in Whitechapel, London, to dominate the diamond industry by the early 1880s. An American Boer War correspondent, Hillegas, in elucidating the success of South Africa's early financiers was quite unguarded when commenting on the mercurial Jewish industrialist: 'Illicit diamond buying was the easiest path to wealth and was travelled by almost every millionaire whose name has been connected with recent South African affairs. Mr Rhodes is one of the few exceptions, and even his enemies corroborate this statement. 'You don't steal diamonds', said Barney Barnato to Mr Rhodes fifteen years ago, 'but you must prove it when accused. I steal them, but my enemies must prove it. That's the difference between us.' H.C. Hillegas, Oom Paul's People, New York, D. Appleton and Co., 1899, p.161. See below, p.79.

were not unlike the villages of Lithuania and Poland where Jews had for centuries functioned as middlemen between the landed aristocracy and the peasantry.⁴⁰ In the new South African setting, their presence as shopkeepers and itinerant traders was keenly noted, particularly since their arrival coincided with the disruption of traditional agrarian life and the emergence of the 'poor white' problem.

Although the 'poor white' problem is usually associated with the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in the 1860s a severe economic downturn ruined many farmers in the eastern Cape and substantially eroded white living standards in that region. There are indications that merchants were identified as at least partly responsible for impoverishment.⁴¹ Certainly the smous - a traditionally welcome asset to the rural economy - appears to have lost favour. In 1865 the Burghersdorp Chronicle characterised him as only marginally superior to the meester,⁴² described

40. S. Ettinger, 'The Modern Period', in H.H. Ben-Sasson (ed.), A History of the Jewish People, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1976, pp.738-40.

41. According to one correspondent in the Stockenstrom district, the plight of eastern Cape farmers was a result of 'merchants' and 'law agents'. C. Bundy, 'Vagabond Hollanders and Runaway Englishmen', in W. Beinart, P. Delius and S. Trapido, (eds.), Putting a Plough to the Ground. Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa 1850-1930, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1986, p.106

42. Meester - In the early days of the Colony the 'meester' was an itinerant teacher passing from farm to farm, devoting a certain amount of time to the children of each.

by this newspaper as 'the very lowest occupation an unfortunate wretch can apply himself to....'⁴³ Bearing in mind the fact that the smous was not necessarily Jewish at this time,⁴⁴ this quotation cannot be accepted as irrefutable evidence that perceptions of the Jewish trader had taken a turn for the worse. Nevertheless there are indications that the latter were beginning to be disparaged. For instance, the travel writer, Frederick Boyle, reported the Cape to be 'a great hunting ground for the [Hebrew] tribes. They fatten on its heavy, credulous boers, especially the German variety.'⁴⁵ In similar vein The Era of Richmond suggested that 'Israelitish Boereverneukers' [Jewish swindlers of farmers] tried to persuade farmers not to improve their properties but simply to confine themselves to sheep rearing.⁴⁶ A few years later English and Jewish shopkeepers were accused in the Dutch press of influencing elections in favour of English candidates through their hold on country commerce.⁴⁷ Clearly the rural trader represented

43. Burghersdorp Chronicle, 26.6.1865. Cited in Bundy, 'Vagabond Hollanders', pp.101-02.

44. See W.B. Campbell, 'The South African Frontier, 1865-1885. A Study in Expansion', in Archives Year Book for South African History, I, 1959, pp.34-35.

45. F. Boyle, To the Cape for Diamonds, London, Chapman and Hall, 1873, p.82. Boyle may well have been referring to the substantial number of German Jews brought to South Africa by the Mosenthal brothers. See Herrman, A History of the Jews in South Africa, p.216.

46. Quoted in Addleson, 'In the Eastern Province', p.307.

47. Di Afrikaanse Patriot, 31.1.1877 and De Zuid-Afrikaan Verenigd met die Volksvriend, 13.8.1881. Quoted in

- at least for some - the vagaries of commerce and the binding power of credit.

As alien traders became more prominent in the 1880s the voices of protest grew louder. This was a period of severe economic distress following drought on the frontier and a slump in both the wool and diamond trades.⁴⁸ In these conditions observers were quick to note the burgeoning Jewish presence. That this was not always a welcome one is evident in a Uitenhage Times editorial following a complaint by 'Afrikander' to the Tarka Herald, a rural eastern Cape newspaper. 'Afrikander' had deplored the imprisonment of an English clergyman, the Reverend B.B. Kett, for a debt owed to a firm of Kimberley auctioneers, Rothschild Brothers:

We don't know the Rev. Kett, nor have we the least idea who 'Afrikander' may be, but we have met many Shylocks in our time of the tribe of Benjamin, and we can fully sympathise with the English clergyman and his Afrikander defender. These are the kind of Afrikanders we want in the Colony; if we had more like the Tarkastad 'Afrikander' and few [sic] Hebrews of the Rothschild type, the Colony would be better off than it is. It is a fact which few will be found to state publicly - but none the less true for that - that the Jewish race has been one of the greatest curses to South Africa. Of course we know that there are Jews and Jews, and that some of the Yeddin are generous and straightforward, and far more generous than most Christians, but they are the very infinitissmal

M.A.S. Grundlingh, 'The Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope, with special reference to Party Politics, 1872-1910' in Archives Year Book for South African History, II, 1969, p.182.

48. For a graphic account of the impact see Bundy, 'Vagabond Hollanders', p.110.

[sic] minority ... If a few of those slightly bloodthirsty peasants could be imported ... from South Russia, they would have gay times in Kimberley and the neighbouring villages - and the Jews wouldn't. All Houndsditch, Petticoat Lane - Pilomet as the people called it - and Seven Dials rolled into one could not produce such an aggregate of knavery and vice as the Hebrew fraternity of the Fields exhibit. The Afrikaner Bond⁴⁹ should, as the old Kimberley song has it - "Bar the Jews".⁵⁰

Besides reflecting an obvious knowledge of conditions in London and Russia, the diatribe openly reflected a growing antagonism towards Jews in the rural areas where they were believed to be responsible for economic hardship. The comments in the Uitenhage Times also indicate the ease of transmission of ideas, in this case between London, the diamond fields, and the South African hinterland.

One observer who certainly noted the Jewish presence was Martin James Boon, an expatriate Englishman. Together with Germans and Hollanders, Boon ensconced Jews in his pantheon of hate. His invective displays notions of social Darwinism and Anglo-Saxon superiority but little is known of the man himself, apart from his arrival in 1874. Eastern European

49. The Afrikaner Bond was a political movement founded in the Cape Colony in 1880 to further the interests of Afrikaners.

50. Uitenhage Times, 13.9.1883. It mattered little to 'Afrikaner' that Rothschild Brothers had been 'ruined' by the collapse of speculation in Kimberley in 1881. See A.S. Mabin, 'The Making of Colonial Capitalism: Intensification and Expansion in the Economic Geography of the Cape Colony, South Africa', unpub. Ph. D. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1984, pp.170-71.

Jews, whom he accused of having driven the Dutch [Boers] from their land 'by craft' obviously made a marked impression upon this inveterate racist:

In the early days in almost all the villages the only storekeepers were Polish Jews and German or Dutch Hollander men, who prided themselves on their ability to cheat with impunity the real Dutch families of their neighbourhoods, and who, to continue their position, did all in their power to make the name of Englishman hateful in the eyes of the farmer, and while stating what the English would do, took great care to make the farmers their dupes and their victims, driving them by craft from their lands. Thus it happens that so many German-Jew storekeepers have the lands of the Colony, Free State, and the Transvaal in their possession. The Boers, like the English farmers have no faith in towns ...⁵¹

Jewish traders - or as Boon referred to them 'buy a "vaatch" vendors' - allegedly overcharged the Dutch and then begged 'shamelessly'.⁵² He was, however, pleased to note that the

51. M.J. Boon, Jottings by the way or Boon's madness on the Road. Being a Philosophical View of Life, Past, Present and to come, in the Orange Free State, Natal and Cape Colony, London, George Standring, 1884, p.163. A sense of Boon's antisemitic sentiment is reflected in the following passage which compares favourably with classical nineteenth century antisemitic writing. 'We are told that Sir Moses Montefiore is a grand type of the Chosen People, if types are to be looked upon with pride, then give me the great massive head with its broad breadth of forehead, its intellectual look and grandeur of old Greeks, rather than the facial outline of the Jews that one meets in Kimberley, London or any large centre. If it is a handsome ugly class of man that is required then commend me to the modern types of Jews, who with a life-time cunning and forestalling are to be found in every Jewish quarter'. M.J. Boon, The Immortal History of South Africa, vol. I, London, William Reeves, 1885, p.142.

Dutch were beginning to recognise 'that under the sneaking "ferneuking" [swindling] Jew, German and Hollander, they are in the hands of Shylocks, and that in having their pound of flesh, they lose their farms and that the Hebrews were their masters'⁵³

Besides maligning Jews in the hinterland, Boon also identified Jews as the villains of Kimberley. The 'sons of Israel' had made fortunes on the fields⁵⁴ and nothing, he contended, was beyond their shrewd and cunning ways:

During the night I passed the celebrated Lakers Kraal Diamond Fields, the last speculative effort of the Jews. Owned by a Jew, who by concession had Jewed a Boer out of it, in trading on their usual cent per cent style, it was conceived as a master-stroke by another Lev-us-see-her⁵⁵ of the capital who was the head of the Abramic Order of the Hebrews in Bloemfontein, due to the fact that he had been the most successful manipulator of the Boers.⁵⁶

In one passage Boon describes how Jews had fraudulently claimed that 'the largest diamond yet' had been found at

52. Boon, The Immortal History of South Africa, vol. I, p.59.

53. M.J. Boon, The History of the Orange Free State, London, William Reeves, 1885, p.54.

54. Boon, Jottings, p.168.

55. This was a snide reference to Moritz Levisieur, a prominent Jewish resident in Bloemfontein.

56. Boon, The Immortal History of South Africa, Vol. II, p.517.

Jagersfontein in the Free State. This, of course, was just another devious move by the 'illicits of Kimberley'.⁵⁷

Boon's comments - although unusually flagrant - were not unique. Even a Cape Punch satire managed to blacken the Jew when jocularly identifying a range of thoughts held by Dutch farmers at the time:

All Jews to be banished. A Jew or "Boere-verneuker" may always be known to a farmer by the shape of his nose, by the many rings on his fingers, and by the tongue being too large for his mouth. Avoid such. The Bible says they are a stiff-necked and perverse generation.⁵⁸

In more serious vein, De Zuid Afrikaan alluded to Jewish power in the Transvaal⁵⁹ and the Jew's money-grubbing ways.⁶⁰ Clearly the substantial involvement of Jews in speculation and trade on the diamond fields and in the hinterland had aroused resentment on the part of both Afrikaner and Englishman. Antagonism was of course exacerbated by the influx of unmistakably alien Jews from eastern Europe who were also frowned upon by the Anglo-

57. Boon, The Immortal History, p.343.

58. Cape Punch, 4.7.1883.

59. De Zuid-Afrikaan, 6.10.1887. This was probably a reference to the influence of the Jewish industrialist, Sammy Marks, in Kruger's Republic. See below, pp.50-51.

60. Ibid, 18.10.1887.

German Jewish establishment.⁶¹ It would, however, be historically inaccurate and misleading to see the negative Jewish stereotype simply as a product of the eastern European influx.⁶² After all, we have seen how the role of certain Jews in the Neptune affair led to aspersions being cast upon the Anglo-German Jewish community. Similarly Boyle commented unfavourably on 'Hebrew tribes' in the early 1870s and Boon castigated 'German-Jew storekeepers'. Moreover, when The Lantern suggested in 1880 that the increase of burglaries across the country may have been a product of the influx of the 'Children of Judah', it too could not have had only eastern European Jews in mind.⁶³ And, of course, the association of Jews with illicit diamond buying was not limited to Jews from eastern Europe.

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61. These sentiments were reciprocated by the newcomers who considered the Anglo-German Jewish establishment assimilated and 'heathenish'. See Herrman, A History, pp.263-64.
62. For an illuminating discussion on the eastern European Jew as a factor in the emergence of modern antisemitism in Germany see S.E. Aschheim, 'Caftan and Cravat: The Ostjude as a Cultural Symbol in the Development of German Anti-Semitism', in S. Drescher, D. Sabeau, A. Sharlin (eds.), Political Symbolism in Modern Europe, New Brunswick and London, Transaction Books, 1982.
63. The Lantern, 20.3.1880. Significantly the Cape Argus took exception to such generalizations. 'Jews in this Colony', the newspaper noted, 'are the supporters of every philanthropic movement, and are never behind their Christian compatriots in any works of public usefulness or in any of the obligations of private life In charity, in educational work, in the responsibilities of public life the Jews are at the very front' Cape Argus 25.3.1880.

III

Despite the emergence of an unflattering and invidious Jewish stereotype in the early 1880s, favourable attitudes towards the Anglo-German Jewish establishment continued to be manifest.⁶⁴ Gentiles still contributed liberally to Jewish charities⁶⁵ and a number of Jews enjoyed prominence in public life.⁶⁶ Discrimination on religious grounds clearly remained unacceptable. Indeed, at the very time antagonism towards eastern European Jews was mounting, the Cape Times published a powerful editorial condemning pogroms in Russia. These disgraceful acts, it noted, had been

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64. This is not to suggest that the burgeoning Jewish presence went unnoticed. For instance, in identifying types to be found in Cape Town, the Cape Punch included the following ditty: 'Here is a Jew, this chap of old/At making watches he is botch/Salutes you, shows his wares of gold/Sir buy a watch. A watch he always wants to sell/knows whats his loss and whats the gain/Will sell you alberts by the ell/Fine heaby shain'. Quoted in Grosman, 'A Study in the Trends and Tendencies of Hebrew and Yiddish Writings', p.54.
65. In 1887, for instance, Lady Robinson, wife of the British High Commissioner, opened a Jewish bazaar to raise funds for the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation. Abrahams, Birth of a Community, p.49. A similar sense of tolerance is evident in the Oudtshoorn Courant's report on Oudtshoorn Jewry's decision to build a synagogue in 1886: '... for although the mass may differ from the Jews on religious grounds, we live in a tolerant age, and the ostensible object of erecting a synagogue is to worship the Great Creator'. Oudtshoorn Courant, 20.10.1886. The list of contributors towards funds for building the synagogue included the names of Afrikaners. See the Oudtshoorn Courant, 2.12.1886.
66. For instance, Simeon Jacobs, Attorney General of the Cape Colony from 1874 to 1882 and Ludwig Weiner, a prominent parliamentarian in the Cape House of Assembly from 1883 to 1898.

wrought 'on a people guiltless of anything but a difference of race and religion'⁶⁷ While primarily concerned to portray Russia as a bulwark of reaction, the Cape Times's sentiments reflected those liberal British values alluded to earlier. It was that ethos which underpinned spirited praise of the Reverend Joel Rabinowitz on his departure from Cape Town in 1882, after twenty-three years service to the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation. Prominent Capetonians publicly lauded the Reverend for his 'zealous and effective services' to 'the poor, the suffering and the down trodden.'⁶⁸ Rabinowitz's successor, the Reverend A.F. Ornstein, was fully justified in proclaiming, during a New Year sermon in 1883, that Jews in South Africa enjoyed the 'freedom to make an honest livelihood, undisturbed by the persecutions to which their race was being exposed in the other parts of the world.'⁶⁹ Ornstein expressed similar views five years

67. Cape Times, 16.2.1882. Such sentiments were recurrently echoed by Gentiles. In 1891, for instance, Kimberley's Mayor Jones led an interdenominational protest against Jewish persecution in Russia, in which Catholics, Presbyterians and Wesleyans all supported a resolution deploring Russian behaviour and the absence of religious liberty. Christians, the resolution noted, should recognise liberty among the national human rights. The Press, 26.11.1891. An eloquent sermon by Cape Town's Unitarian Reverend D.P. Faure on behalf of the Russian Jewish Relief Fund similarly attests to goodwill between Jew and Gentile. See the Cape Argus, 25.2.1891.

68. South African Jewish Chronicle, 21.6.1928. Hereafter abbreviated to the S A J C. Rabinowitz was jocularly known as Cape Town's 'greatest beggar'. See Herrman, The Cape Town Hebrew Congregation 1841-1941, chapter four, passim.

later when he laid the foundation stone of the Oudtshoorn synagogue: 'The Jew and his Christian neighbour', he told the gathering of between 400 and 500 persons, 'worked together in harmony'.⁶⁹

Thus one notices that by the 1880s two embryonic but nevertheless distinctive images of the Jew in South Africa had emerged: the gentleman - characterised by sobriety, enterprise and loyalty - and the knave, characterised by dishonesty and cunning.⁷¹ These contradictory perceptions

69. Cape Argus, 3.10.1883. The position of the Jews was helped by the multi-ethnic and multi-religious character of Cape society. Jews, in other words, were not the only minority or sole 'non-conformists'.

70. The Oudtshoorn Courant, 1.2.1888.

71. Ambivalence is evident in Olive Schreiner's 'autobiographical' Undine, published in 1929 but completed in the early 1870s. (See Karel Schoeman, Olive Schreiner. 'n lewe in Suid-Afrika 1855 - 1881, Cape Town, Human & Rousseau, 1989, p.300.) In her description of passengers on board a ship to South Africa she writes: 'There were one or two German Jews on deck, smoking cigars and sunning themselves, some going out for the first time and some returning to the Cape: not the little snivelling weasel-like creatures who come out third class and, as soon as they land, supply themselves with a wagon and a couple of mules and become "smouses", hawking false jewellery and damaged clothing among the Dutch farmers, and growing rich on it; but gentlemen Jews, with their polite foreign manners and their fascinating broken English, who will make you swear round is square and sell you to the devil before your face, and you shall never know it, who will squeeze you to pulp to get your last shilling to-day, and to-morrow, when your wife is starving and no Christian will help her, will give her ten.' O. Schreiner, Undine, London, Ernest Benn Limited, 1929, pp. 152-53. Ambivalence is once again evident in Olive Schreiner's portrayal of 'The Jew' and Isaac in her novel, From Man to Man. (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1926. Although published in 1926, it is apparent from Schreiner's diary that 'The Jew' section of the

were easily reconciled in class terms, the lower class fortune-seekers and the newcomers from eastern Europe providing the negative polarity. This view was best captured by the Uitenhage Times following a complaint by a Jewish Town Councillor in Port Elizabeth, J. Marks, about its anti-Jewish diatribe (cited above) in support of 'Afrikander'⁷² The editor made it clear that his newspaper 'had no intention whatever of ruffling the feelings of respectable Jews by a generic condemnation of their race'. It was, he pointed out, a 'certain class' of Jew that concerned him, 'those who are mixed up with illicit diamond traffic on the Fields'. Those who doubted the editor were recommended to look at IDB trial statistics or go to the Cape Town breakwater. The editor was, however, adamant that not all Jews were alike. 'What we did and do mean to convey is this - that the lower class of Jews in Kimberley are not profitable to the country or to their neighbours, and that if they could be exported the moral atmosphere of the camps would be much improved, the honest men would have a much better chance of making a living'. He concluded his

novel was written during 1883.) 'The Jew' is depicted as an ugly precursor of the Jewish parvenu; Isaac as selfless and compassionate. See M. Levesen, 'The Jewish Stereotype in some South African Fiction: A Preliminary Investigation' in R. Musiker and J. Sherman (eds.) Waters out of the Well. Essays in Jewish Studies, Johannesburg, The Library. University of the Witwatersrand, 1988, pp.265-66. Quite obviously Schreiner, who grew up in Cradock and spent some time on the diamond fields, was influenced by the presence of Jewish traders and fortune-seekers.

72. Eastern Province Herald, 21.9.1883.

response to Marks by asking his ostrich farming readers their opinion of smouses who visited their farms periodically. 'We are constantly hearing complaints', he noted, 'that feathers disappear mysteriously from birds and many farmers say the smouses are simply an itinerant market for stolen feathers.'⁷³

Antagonism towards Jews, then, was not articulated in 'racial' or biological terms.⁷⁴ Jews, in other words, were not ascribed inherent or immutable characteristics. On the contrary, in line with nineteenth century Victorian or Whiggish assumptions, it was anticipated that 'lower class' Jews would emulate their acculturated and bourgeois co-religionists. Freedom and opportunity would ensure this. These expectations echoed the optimism and hopes of eighteenth century European 'emancipationists' such as Christian Wilhelm Dohm and Abbe Gregoire, both of whom advocated Jewish emancipation in anticipation of assimilation.⁷⁵ These hopes would be sorely tested as the eastern European influx gained momentum.

73. Uitenhage Times, 27.9.1883. For the impact of the smous and Jewish trader in the feather market, see below, pp.57-61.

74. Boon's writing, of course, was underpinned by 'racist' assumptions. In the late nineteenth century, however, he was the exception rather than the rule.

75. Katz, Out of the Ghetto. The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation 1770-1870, New York, Schocken Books, 1978, pp.57-64; 71-73. They also echoed expectations about Cape Town's impoverished white slum dwellers at this time. See John Vivian Bickford-Smith, 'Commerce, Class and Ethnicity in Cape Town, 1875 to 1902', unpub. Ph. D. thesis, Cambridge University, 1988, p.223.

CHAPTER THREE

"WHERE THE CARCASS IS, THERE SHALL THE EAGLES BE GATHERED TOGETHER": PEDLARS, PERUVIANS AND PLUTOCRATS

I

"Where the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together", and where speculation is rife, and carries in its train the digging up of diamonds, or the production of gold, the Hebrew, with his quick wits and wonderful faculty for using them, comes to the forefront and claims and secures success. They are everywhere in Johannesburg. In the share market, keeping hotels, auctioneering, running cafes, owners of stores, brokers, theatre proprietors, and bar keepers, we meet with the descendants of Moses and Aaron.¹

The centre of Jewish life moved to the Witwatersrand following the discovery of gold in 1886. Indeed, having visited the Witwatersrand in 1895, the noted English parliamentarian and historian, James Bryce, referred to Johannesburg as an 'Anglo-Semitic town'² - an observation no doubt based upon the substantial number of Jews among the financial elite³ and the inclination of Jews (approximately

1. Charles Henry Du-Val, 'All the world around!!! with pencil, pen and camera', in M. Fraser (ed.), Johannesburg Pioneer Journals 1888 - 1909, Cape Town, Van Riebeeck Society, 1985, pp.26-27.
2. J. Bryce, From Impression of South Africa, London, New York, Macmillan, 1897, p.385.
3. One need only consider prominent financiers such as George Albu, Alfred Beit, Lionel Phillips, Solly and Woolf Joel. A sense of Jewish economic power (from the earliest days) is evident in The Critic's comments

six per cent of the total white population in 1896)⁴ to congregate in specific areas of the city. Of the 6 253 Jews in 1896, about half were of Russian origin.⁵ Whereas many of the Jewish settlers who came in the 1880s were able to penetrate the crusty layers of competition and avarice, those who arrived in the 1890s found fewer economic opportunities.

Inevitably Jews attracted comment, both favourable and unfavourable.⁶ Perceptions were, of course, influenced by

wishing its Jewish readers a Happy New Year. 'The Stock Exchange is closed in celebration of the event and it may be safely asserted that less business is transacted in town to-day than on any 1st January. This shows the members of the Jewish religion are the backbone of our industry and commercial pursuits.' The Critic, 15.9.1893. For the association of Jews with financial power, see below, pp.92-107.

4. According to the 1896 census carried out by the Johannesburg Sanitation Committee, there were 6 253 'Israelieten' out of 102 098 whites in the three mile radius from the city's Market Square. Z.A.R. Johannesburg Gezondheids Comite Sanitare Departement, Census 15 July 1896.
5. Ibid.
6. Memoirs and contemporary studies are replete with references to the Jewish presence in Johannesburg during the city's formative years. As early as 1886 De Volksstem noted that 'the sons of Israel are strongly represented, so much so that we have heard Ferreira's Camp called "The new Jerusalem"'. De Volksstem, 28.9.1886. 'The most noticeable feature of the crowds in the streets', wrote Mackenzie and Stead, 'is the great number of Jews that are to be seen. Polish Jews, Russian Jews, German Jews - all sorts and conditions of Jews are there, but always well to the front with the customary display of diamonds. Round the Stock Exchange and the headquarters of the innumerable lottery sweepstake offices they naturally are well represented.' W.D. Mackenzie and A. Stead, South

cultural stereotypes brought to the Witwatersrand, including negative and positive images nurtured on the diamond fields and in the southern and eastern Cape. They were also influenced, however, by conservative and deeply insular views which characterised the majority Boer population of the South African Republic. These views, a legacy of the Cape's slave society and centuries of isolation,⁷ were underpinned by a strong Calvinist tradition which informed the values, norms and institutions of society.⁸ Indeed, the

Africa, Its History, Heroes and Wars, Chicago, George Spiel, 1900, p.366.

7. As du Toit puts it: 'Without regular schools, largely beyond the reach of the organised church, without easy access to newspapers or literature of any description and with only tenuous links to the market and the cash economy based in the Cape, the Trekboers and Trekkers could indeed be said to have been effectively isolated from much of the development of social thought and intellectual currents sweeping the rest of the modern world.' A. du Toit, 'Captive to the Nationalist Paradigm: Prof. F.A. Van Jaarsveld and the historical evidence for the Afrikaner's ideas on his Calling and Mission', South African Historical Journal, No.16, November, 1984.
8. S.R. Ritner, 'Salvation through separation; the role of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa in the formation of Afrikaner race ideology', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, Ann Arbor, 1975, p 23. See also T D Moodie, The Rise of Afrikanerdom. Power, Apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975. Although du Toit has recently raised doubts about the nature of Afrikaner Calvinism in nineteenth century South Africa, it seems reasonable to assume that a Calvinist legacy did inform the Afrikaner's worldview. See A. du Toit, 'No Chosen People: The Myth of the Calvinist Origins of Afrikaner Nationalism and Racial Ideology', The American Historical Review, vol.88, no.4, October, 1983 and 'Puritans in Africa? Afrikaner "Calvinism" and Kuyperian Neo-Calvinism in Late Nineteenth Century South Africa', Journal for Comparative Study of Society and History, vol.27, 1985.

Grondwet [constitution] of the South African Republic bound the Dutch Reformed Church inextricably to the state.⁹ Non-Protestants as such were without the franchise and unable to hold public office. In effect the constitution reflected a determined resolve on the part of the Boers to maintain a hard won independence and to keep control of the country and its morals.¹⁰

Notwithstanding the exclusive nature of the constitution, Jews in practice enjoyed cordial relations with the state and even held positions within its machinery.¹¹ Johannesburg's one time Rabbi, Dr Joseph Hertz, was correct when he recalled, some years after he left the Transvaal, that discriminatory laws had been treated as a 'dead letter.'¹² He was, of course, referring to the myriad of articles in the constitution which discriminated against

9. Eybers, Select Constitutional Documents, pp.362ff. The constitution of the other Boer Republic - the Orange Free State - was something of an anomaly. Based in part on the constitution of the United States of America, Church and State were separated. However, the Volksraad was to promote and support the Dutch Reformed Church. Eybers, pp.285ff. Prior to Ordinance 16 of 1877, Jews were forbidden to serve on a Jury. See Aronstam, 'A Historical and Socio-Cultural Survey', p.68.

10. The South African Republic was established by the Trekkers in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1877 Britain annexed the Republic as part of a confederation scheme, only to return independence to the Boers after the latter had taken up arms in the Transvaal War of Independence (1880-81).

11. See Saron, 'Boers, Uitlanders, Jews' pp.185-86.

12. Transvaal Leader, 6.3.1905.

non-Protestants¹³ and not to the fundamentally discriminatory nature of the constitution in which Jews (and Catholics) were clearly second class citizens. This policy was, however, not motivated by antisemitic intent but was rooted in the Boer's desire for sovereignty.¹⁴ In fact, at the time the constitution was drafted, non-Protestants were hardly a visible presence.¹⁵ The reluctance of Boer leaders to change the constitution, despite substantial pressure, was similarly motivated by mistrust - a product of the 'Uitlander' [foreigner] problem - and not by anti-Jewish sentiment. The government, in fact, went out of its way to extol Jewish virtues. At the opening of the Johannesburg Synagogue in 1892, for instance, President Kruger made it clear that he respected 'the Jewish and other faiths without distinction' and that Jews would 'attain civil rights if they proved their trustworthiness.'¹⁶ On the same occasion,

13. Notwithstanding pressure from Catholics and Jews, articles 20, 36, 37 and 140 of the revised Grondwet of 1896 continued to discriminate against non-Protestants. See G Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration to South Africa and the Development of the Jewish Community, in the South African Republic, between 1890 and 1902 unpub. BA (Hons) thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1960, p.72.

14. See Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration to South Africa', pp.75-76.

15. In 1899 Judge A.F. Kock of the South African Republic told a Jewish audience that the constitution 'which prohibits Jews from becoming legislators had been founded when we were totally ignorant of the Jews' character and when we had to mistrust all foreigners'. Standard and Diggers News, 22.6.1899.

16. De Volksstem, 17.8.1892. On another occasion he assured Catholics and Jews that they would have their disabilities lifted if they taught the Dutch language

a very favourable picture of Jews was portrayed by other prominent Boer leaders. J.C. Smuts, for instance, reminded the gathering (in an obviously underhanded jab at the British) that Jews had never annexed the Transvaal nor robbed the country. They were, moreover, trustworthy, paying the treasury all they owed, dutiful, law abiding and 'faithful subjects of the state.' Dr. W. Leyds, the Transvaal State Secretary, acclaimed the manner in which his mother country, Holland, had treated the Jews and suggested that people should appreciate Jewish virtues rather than concentrate on their vices only. Another speaker, J.F. Cilliers, advocated expunging the distinction between Jew and Gentile.¹⁷

It would seem, then, that the early Jewish settlers in the Transvaal made a favourable impression upon the administration. Kruger gave generously to Jewish charities¹⁸ and even courted publicly two prominent Jewish entrepreneurs, Sammy Marks and Isaac Lewis. It was,

and the New Testament in their schools. Standard and Diggers News, 9.9.1892.

17. Standard and Diggers News, 16.9.1892.

18. M. Nathan, Paul Kruger, his life and times, Durban, Knox, 1941, p.276. For Kruger's relationship with the Jewish community see D. W. Kruger, 'Pres. Kruger en die Jode', Die Huisgenoot, 28 November, 1955; L. Hotz, 'Paul Kruger en die Jode', Die Joodse Gedagte, Desember, 1962; L. J. Twyman, 'Paul Kruger en Johannesburg', unpubl. M A thesis, University of Pretoria, 1965, pp.122ff and L. Heydenrych, 'Paul Kruger en die Joodse Gemeenskap van Johannesburg: Fabels en Feite', Historia, vol.31, October, no.2.

ironically, his flirtation with 'foreigners' (mainly Hollanders) which generated antagonism towards his administration during the early 1890s. That antagonism was spearheaded by Kruger's arch-political rival, Piet Joubert, and Eugene Marais, editor of the Dutch-language weekly, Land en Volk. For these two, Kruger's predilection for Hollanders and Jews was tantamount to treason; that he courted Jewish capitalists to boot was an even greater crime.¹⁹

Consequently an anti-Jewish tone was evident in Land en Volk from as early as 1889. In that year the newspaper expressed dismay that the Kruger administration had helped to finance a Jewish-run Pretoria newspaper, The Press.²⁰ 'We would have thought', noted Land en Volk, 'that the President of the Republic had already had enough experience in the past about the sons of Israel by who [sic] The Press was called into life'. Kruger was warned that 'every rightminded and patriotic burger will not envy his choice if he made The Press an organ to ventilate his grievances and interests.' 'Show me a man's friends', proclaimed Land en Volk, 'and I will tell you who he is.'²¹

19. For the growth of opposition to Kruger see C.T. Gordon, The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger 1890 - 1895, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1970.

20. Leo Weinthal, a South African born Jew of German origin was the editor from mid-1891 to mid-1897.

21. Land en Volk, 20.8.1889.

By using the voteless and essentially irrelevant Jew to mobilise opposition to the Kruger regime, Land en Volk was exploiting a deep-seated Boer xenophobia. Such fears were again aroused during the Presidential campaign of 1891. A prominent Transvaler, 'Afrikanus Junior',²² for instance, denounced the President in an open letter for 'surrounding himself with speculating Jews and Hollanders and granting them concessions'²³ One week later 'Afrikanus Junior' was more specific: 'At your right hand stands Nellmapius, at your left Lippert, behind you Ekstein [sic], Sammy Marks and a whole gallery of Jews. And if I speak to you, Leyds answers me, because he stands for you. Fine company indeed for the President of the South African Republic.... The Hollanders rule us and the Jews rule the Hollanders ... the Jews who stand in a circle around our once respected President...'²⁴ Land en Volk supported these views for patently political reasons, arguing that the President was to be rejected because he preferred Hollanders and Jews 'who encircle him like vultures, to loyal sons of the soil.'²⁵

22. His identity was never revealed, but according to Gordon, he was a Transvaal born Afrikaner who had 'rendered great service to his country in war and in the political field.' See Gordon, The Growth of Boer Opposition, p.196.

23. Land en Volk, 5.5.1891.

24. Land en Volk, 12.5.1891. Quoted in Gordon, The Growth of Boer Opposition, pp.195-96. Eckstein, a German, was not Jewish. For further allegations that foreign capitalists were a part of Kruger's exploitative apparatus, see The Critic, 30.12.1892.

25. Land en Volk, 29.12.1892.

Jews and Hollanders, then, were easily exploitable for political purposes. As Land en Volk put it, they were 'dronkaards en modernes' [drunks and modernists].²⁶ Only the Boer, rooted in the soil, was worthy of praise. In an approving reference to aspirant presidential candidate, P. Joubert, the Dutch weekly thanked God that 'we have some honest and upright Afrikaners who will withstand Kruger and his Jews.'²⁷ In what one historian of the South African Republic, Gordon, refers to as a fairly typical letter to Joubert, J.D. Bosman, of Krugersdorp, similarly thanked God that the General was 'independent of the President, the Hollanders and the Jews'²⁸ It is no surprise, then, that Joubert threatened to 'do all in his power to

26. Land en Volk, 5.5.1891.

27. Land en Volk, 12.5.1891.

28. Joubert Papers. Quoted in Gordon, The Growth of Boer Opposition, p.130. If 'MHH's' observations of life in Johannesburg are to be believed one can appreciate Boer animosity: 'The Jews of Johannesburg, contrary to the practice of their countrymen in other parts of the world, do not go beyond the familiar game of speculation in its various forms. Among them we might as well seek for men distinguished in art, science, or philanthropy (all of which have been plentifully adorned by Israelites) as we might do in the Rathbone Place "Den of Lions". The adjective "thick" (in frequent use among racing men), rather than "clever" best suits the Jew of the Rand. The local Dutchman fears him almost more than he hates him; for at every turn the Afrikander has fallen a victim to the 'Sheenie sharp'. The Hawk, 1.12.1892. Cited in The Critic, 2.12.1892.

counteract the Hebraic influence that is making itself felt in this land.'²⁹

II

This 'Hebraic' influence was also very evident in the southern and eastern Cape by the 1890s. There, the prominence of the Jewish smous and shopkeeper was increasingly commented upon.³⁰ Although some saw the smous as a figure of fun or ridicule,³¹ many saw him as a scheming and cunning threat. 'Always on the make and ready to turn his head to anything (except, of course, hard work) to earn an honest penny - when he could do it any other way, or make it more', was the way one contemporary, Oliver Osborne, described him.³² Like Boon and many others, Osborne contended that the smous's greatest prey was the uneducated Dutch farmer. In one passage he describes how two Jews had manipulated a Dutch farmer into paying them off not to

29. Standard and Diggers News, 7.10.1882.

30. A sense of the ambience within the Jewish 'winkel' [shop] comes across in Pauline Smith's, The Beadle. See Pauline Smith, The Beadle, London, Cape, 1926.

31. For the humorous dimension see Oliver Osborne, In the Land of the Boers or the Other Man and Myself, pp.82ff and J.H. Corbett, "Barney's Salt Pork" in The Owl, 8.2.1901. In this short story Corbett describes how a heavy accented smous had inherited money from his 'uncle Barjonal' on condition that his nephew arrange for his burial next to his wife in Leeds. The smous, in order to save money, sent his dead uncle by ship as a crate of salt pork. Unfortunately the ship was wrecked and the survivors ate his uncle.

32. Osborne, In the Land of the Boers, p.82.

construct a railway line through his farm.³³ Clearly the snous was perceived as having a cunning and a wanton ability to exploit. Unwittingly he helped to fashion the anti-Jewish stereotype.

The contours of this stereotype were clearly manifested in an 1893 Commission of Enquiry into Labour in the Cape Colony.³⁴ Taking into account that this was an enquiry into labour and not immigration, it is noteworthy how regularly the issue of eastern European immigration was addressed and the 'set in' or influx of Polish and Russian Jews mentioned. In essence the newcomers were characterised as paupers (often filthy) who shunned physical work. 'They do not work with their hands, they live by their brains', noted J.C. Faure, one of the Commissioners. The M.L.A. for Cape Town, T.E. Fuller's contention that they did not 'beg for food' was of little consequence. Auguste Albrecht, a Constantia wine farmer, for instance, considered them 'a pest to the country'. In the opinion of D.E. Hutchins, the Conservator of Forests, 'they were simply unsuitable immigrants, the equivalent of Chinamen and Coolies'. J.X. Merriman, one of the Colony's prominent liberals and a future prime minister of the Cape Colony, opposed such generalizations. With typical Victorian rectitude and piety, he claimed that some

33 Ibid, pp.82ff.

34. G 39 - 1893 Cape of Good Hope Labour Commission - 1893. Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly.

Polish Jews were enterprising and at least 'believe in God'. And yet, notwithstanding these virtues, Merriman believed the Colony had accommodated enough of these people.

It is therefore little wonder that a newspaper report referred to the Commission as 'wholly unanimous against the introduction of Russian Jews ... a most undesirable people, as already found out in the Uitenhage District, where these people have pushed out many poor shopkeepers and have obtained property intensively.'³⁵ Similar views were expressed about the Oudtshoorn district where Jews were increasingly prominent in the ostrich feather industry.³⁶ The Oudtshoorn Courant, for instance, published the names of those who had taken licences in the Oudtshoorn division during January of 1893. These names, it noted, were 'interesting and instructive' because they revealed 'what a complete hold the Jews have on the business of the district':

Out of the 86 General Dealers Licences, 51 had a Polish, Russian or Hebrew patronymic, besides these there are 15 Hawkers, which give a total of 66 Jewish traders in general goods in the division. When we come to Ostrich Feather Buyers we find that the Jews have the feather business

35. The Press, 11.3.1893. These comments concur with the sentiments expressed by the Uitenhage Times in response to 'Afrikander'. See above, p.25.

36. For their involvement and influence see Aschman, 'Oudtshoorn in the Early Days', and Mabin, 'The Making of Colonial Capitalism', p.110.

wholly in their hands, no less than 62 feather buyers were registered during January.³⁷

These sentiments were confirmed in contemporary Standard Bank reports, filed by District Inspectors. These reports were confidential and as such provide a particularly useful barometer of opinion. One such report for the Oudtshoorn District in 1892 reveals very clearly that Jews were viewed with great ambivalence, if not outright hostility. The inspector warned that vigilance must be maintained when dealing with ostrich feather businessmen. 'An unpleasant feature of the trade', he wrote, 'is the hold which the Jews are obtaining upon the District - the farmers (mostly Dutch) apparently falling into their hands!' The Inspector expressed uncertainty about the effect the Jewish 'presence may have upon the business of the branch at this point ...' Nevertheless, business was conducted with Jews, many of whom appeared 'to be doing well and to be establishing confidence'.³⁸

One year later misgivings were again expressed about 'the Hebrew fraternity' in the ostrich feather trade. For the most part, noted the Inspector, 'they comprised a very shady and undesirable class of men' against whom 'it behooves the bank to exercise the utmost caution....' The Inspector

37. The Oudtshoorn Courant, 2.2.1893.

38. Inspector's Report, Oudtshoorn 1892, INSP 1/1/120 Standard Bank Archives.

warned that, 'under no circumstances should the manager be permitted to advance to any of them a penny of the Bank's money where their assets were of a moveable and perishable nature'. Managers were warned not to 'run the slightest risk with people of this class, who have neither character or means to lose....' The Inspector suggested that it would 'be better for the bank that their business should go elsewhere'.³⁹ By 1894 the fear of farmers 'getting into the hands of Jews and being quietly but steadily brought down' was being expressed by the Bank's Inspector. In considering advances to Jews, the bank was to be especially vigilant. This indeed appears to have been the case. In commenting, for instance, on an advance to one Lazarus, the Inspector noted: 'for a country Jew shopkeeper, whose statement of position is verbal only, and whose character is admittedly bad, too much accommodation seems to be given to this party.'⁴⁰

A particular source of tension between Jewish feather merchants and farmers was the practice of 'buying ostrich feathers three or four years in advance'. This, argued De Volksbode, strangled the farmer and gave the Jew inordinate power.⁴¹ The practice, moreover, was riddled with legal

39. Inspector's Report, Oudtshoorn 1893, INSP 1/1/121 Standard Bank Archives.

40. Inspector's Report, Oudtshoorn 1894, 1/1/121 Standard Bank Archives.

problems as recalled by the novelist and one-time magistrate for the Oudtshoorn region, W.C. Scully, in his autobiographical Further Reminiscences of a South African Pioneer:

Competition was so keen that the [Jewish] traders used to buy the pluckings in advance, sometimes months before the feathers were to be plucked. If the crop turned out to be a failure, the trader could endeavour to repudiate the bargain, if on the other hand, it turned out to be exceptionally good, the farmer would cry off the deal; so it came to a suit anyway. Consequently I used to sit in court almost everyday and all day long trying such cases. I think there were then twenty-six lawyers practising in the Magistrate's Court, and most of them appeared to be doing fairly well.⁴²

It is not without significance that Scully created Nathan Steinmetz, a one-time smous turned illegal feather merchant, as a central character in his novel, Between Sand and Sun. A Tale of An African Desert, published in 1898. Steinmetz was indeed a quintessential caricature of the Jewish trader and diamond dealer. 'His features were of the lowest Hebrew type - his lips were full and shapeless, his nose large and prominent, his eyes small and colourless, but exceedingly

41. De Volksbode, 23.2.1893. The nefarious nature of the 'dishonest' and 'deviant' Russian was shared by 'Observer', although he blamed wealthy Afrikaner farmers for encouraging wicked practices by dealing with the 'Jewish feather buyer before the feathers are fit for plucking'. See 'Observer's' letter, The Oudtshoorn Courant, 2.3.1893.

42. W.C. Scully, Further Reminiscences of a South African Pioneer, London, Leipsic, T. Fisher Unwin, 1913, p.208.

bright and glittering ... money was the only god worth worshipping⁴³

Commenting on the novel, Leveson has correctly identified Steinmetz as 'a full-blown anti-Jewish stereotype, ugly and avaricious, connected with shopkeeping and diamond trading.'⁴⁴ She also perceptively points out that, while Scully's portrait of Nathan's good brother, Max, appears initially flattering, 'stereotypical suggestions of avarice and decadence are deeply embedded in the text':

Max had a face, which, had Raphael seen it through the bars of the Ghetto gate at Rome, would have made him take pains to secure the young Jew as a model. It was one of those faces which one only - and that but very rarely - sees in the youth of Israel. Its shape was a pure oval. The skin was a clear olive, and the eyes were large, dark, and melting. His jet-black hair clustered over a broad low forehead, and his full, red lips were arched like the bow of the Sun-God. As yet the stress of trade had not awakened the ancestral greed which would one day dominate his blood and modify his physiognomy.⁴⁵

The negative attitude regarding feather merchants seems to have been articulated about eastern European Jewish traders in general by Cape parliamentarians, especially those representing rural constituencies. The stereotype usually

43. W.C. Scully, Between Sand and Sun. A Tale of an African Desert, London, Methuen, 1898, p.120.

44. Leveson, 'The Jewish Stereotype', p.263.

45. Leveson, 'The Jewish Stereotype', pp.263-64.

depicted the newcomers as subversive, dishonest and exploitative. For instance, P.J. du Toit (Richmond) talked of pedlar Jews spoiling 'true trade especially in the Northern and Midland Districts'.⁴⁶ As J.T. Molteno (Namaqualand) put it, 'they were able to exist where others could not'.⁴⁷ For M.M. Venter (Colesburg), the pedlars were 'a danger and a menace to the country'. Polish and Russian 'loafers' were, in his opinion 'refugees for political offences'.⁴⁸ T. P. Theron (Richmond), in turn, referred to them as 'blood suckers of the farmers' avoiding honest labour and not engaging 'in the cultivation of the country'. In his opinion, they interfered with honest and legitimate trade in the Colony. Even C.T. Jones (Port Elizabeth), who condemned those who negatively labelled the newcomers as 'paupers', 'criminals' and 'lazy', admitted that the pedlars were doing a 'great deal of harm in certain districts like Oudtshoorn' Perhaps the most blatant and vicious antagonist of the eastern Europeans was Thomas Uppington (Swellendam). Pulling no punches, the one time prime minister of the Cape Colony objected to Russian, Polish and German Jews who 'walked about with packs on their backs and tried to earn a livelihood.' 'The proper way to deal with

46. Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Assembly Debates, 3.7.1894.

47. Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Assembly Debates, 28.5.1896.

48. Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Assembly Debates, 8.8.1893.

these people', he argued, 'was for farmers to warn them off their land'.⁴⁹

It is certainly arguable then, that by the 1890s, the eastern European trader - in the southern and eastern Cape at least - had appropriated a negative label. Increasingly he was perceived as an exploiter of rural society, a notion vividly encapsulated in an account by a correspondent to the Cape Times after a trip to Bushmanland:

I noticed on my trip to these parts that the Jewish traders exercise a great deal of influence and have these squatters in Bushmanland altogether in their power. Not a day passes but [sic] there is either a Jew with his cart or wagon coming to the squatters tent or hut, and making himself at home there for several days, eating their food without paying for it, or doing or giving anything in return, and as they as a rule give unlimited credit and "tick" to the Dutch and half-caste squatters, they thus have them altogether in their power, and the latter are bound to them, as their stock is nearly if not all mortgaged to the Jewish smous.⁵⁰

The coincidence of Jewish penetration into the rural economy and the disruption of traditional agrarian life explains, to a large extent, the crystallization of an anti-Jewish stereotype in the hinterland. The Jew, in his role as creditor and supplier of the struggling farmer,⁵¹ enabled

49. Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Assembly Debates, 28.5.1896.

50. Cape Times, Xmas Special, 17.12.1900.

the image of an avaricious shopkeeper, living by his wits and bent on exploiting the Boer, to develop. Most farmers did not realise that social changes of a structural nature were undermining their former well being and security. Disturbing feelings of alienation and displacement were instead simply projected onto the Jew, a readily available symbol of change.⁵²

III

The eastern European Jew became an even greater symbol of change and upheaval in the urban centres during the 1890s, arriving as he did at a time of severe economic upheaval and stress. In Johannesburg, in particular, these newcomers formed a conspicuous segment of the mining city's 'lumpenproletariat' and a sector of the much maligned 'Uitlander' community. In the case of eastern European Jews, their foreign appearance was an added component of

51. Cahnman contends that the consumer always has to be on his guard with the merchant. What 'the neighbour as kinsmen, would have to offer free of charge, if only he had it, can indeed be had from the merchant, but he does not offer it free of charge, he sells, and since he sells, he stands under the assumption that he takes his advantage'. Cahnman, 'Socio-Economic Causes of Anti-semitism', p.23.

52. Richard Hofstadter noted a similar process in the United States during the 1890s when populist farmers avoided impersonal explanations for their deteriorating plight and focused instead upon tangible targets. See R. Hofstadter, The Age of Reform. From Bryan to E.D.R., New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1956, p.73.

rejection. This was well expressed in the following extract from The Critic's 'Dairy':

The chief objection to this particular class of humanity is, after all, founded on purely sentimental grounds. If the Israelite, who is claiming Russia as his birthplace, were clean, amiable and well-proportioned he would be hailed in the ranks of labour. Being ill-developed, snuffy, unshaven and averse to ablutionary exercises, and bearing also the appearance of an injured outcast, whose hand is against everyone, and against whom every man's hand is, this specimen of humanity is not popular and never will be. It is not his fault, it is his misfortune that clean and respectable people would like to see him fenced in like the Chinese ought to be, in a location.⁵³

These hapless victims of Tsarist oppression and discrimination, residing mainly within a three-mile radius of the Market Square, were soon 'the unhappy recipients of the most vicious class and race prejudice that society could muster.'⁵⁴ It was not long before they acquired the pejorative label, 'Peruvian', a term of obscure origin.⁵⁵

The Johannesburg Times described the 'Peruvian' as follows:

53. The Critic, 3.3.1893. The Critic's comments were prompted by 'a lot of gossip going around about a tremendous crowd of Russian Jews, who are said to be looming in the distance like a crowd of locusts and are about to swoop down upon poor unprotected Johannesburg and ruin either themselves or the community'. The Critic, 3.3.1893.

54. C. van Onselen, 'Randlords and Rotgut, 1886-1903', in C. van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886 - 1914, vol. I, New Babylon, p.74.

55. Dr. Edna Bradlow has suggested to the writer that the term was an acronym for Polish and Russian Union - a Jewish club established in Kimberley in the early days.

To the ordinary members of the public he presents the apparition of a slovenly, unkempt and generally unwashed edition, in various numbers, of the wandering Jew. As a sort of commercial shield, he carries a basket of eggs on his right arm, while holding his money tightly clenched in his sinister hand. He wears no socks. He is a pariah among his own people and among the gentiles. He is only recognized, en passant, by the educated part of the Jewish population as a necessary evil ... in tatterdemalion garments, until he has made his pile. Then he transforms like the butterfly; he eschews his garments of many fluttering rags; he dons the everyday, but more romantic, if less dirty raiment of the civilized populace; he forgets all about the magnanimous generosity of Baron Hirsch; and he blooms forth on the Stock Exchange as a man and a brother, willing to do unto others as others would do unto him. And presently he may rise a stage higher; he buys unto himself with great advantage If some restraint is not imposed upon the operations of these unwashed peregrinators, it will be necessary to consider some legislative means for the isolation of the species, and for the protection of those who, whether English or Dutch, have to earn their bread by that most

This accords with an explanation given by Max Sonnenberg, one-time member of the Cape Legislative Assembly in his autobiography, The Way I Saw It. (Cape Town, Timmins, 1957, p.52). According to Eric Partridge, Peruvian was a Transvaal colloquialism for Polish and Russian Jews. Eric Partridge, A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English, vol I, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1961, p.620. It has also been suggested that the term refers to those immigrants who had sojourned in Argentina under Baron de Hirsch's settlement scheme before coming to South Africa. If that is the origin of the term, the lack of a geographical distinction between Argentina and Peru needs to be explained. It is interesting to note, however, that in a short story in The Owl by J.E. Corbett, the author refers to the English Jews struggling to compete against 'Hebrews from Peru and Argentina ...' (The Owl, 8.2.1901). Similarly the Johannesburg Times's description of the Peruvian mentions the 'generosity of Baron Hirsch.' Another theory is that the term is derived from 'Peruvian' - a mistaken reference to the ancient Latin term for Poland. See Grosman, 'A Study in the Trends and Tendencies of Hebrew and Yiddish Writings', p.162.

unwholesome of all exertions - the earning of one's bread by the sweat of one's brow.⁵⁶

The 'Peruvian' rapidly became associated with the evils of Johannesburg and more especially with the city's problematic liquor trade - one specific barometer of depravation and degeneration. The extent of the liquor trade was enormous and a cause of great social concern. Already in 1892 the Reverend Gray of Pretoria had appealed on behalf of Johannesburgers and Pretorians for the limitation of liquor licenses. According to Gray, there were sixty-five licensed houses for 2 500 adult whites: 'If the salaries payed [sic] to employees and the general expenses of these establishments were taken into consideration', he pointed out, 'it was very clear that a very large number of them manage to exist by means of illicit trade only, and by encouraging gambling and debauchery generally.'⁵⁷ Similar

56. Johannesburg Times, 1.4.1896.

57. The Press, 16.2.1892. The Reverend Gray was not exaggerating the wicked state of Johannesburg described by one contemporary as 'a Monte Carlo superimposed upon a Sodom and Gomorrah'. See W.F. Butler, Sir William Butler: An Autobiography, London, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911, p.415. Another observer described the city as follows: 'The population was made up of the surplus people of many lands, drawn together from greed for gold. Some were growing enormously, many struggling for livelihood, were crowded together in excessive discomfort, while vice was rampant on every side. Drinking and gambling, cursing and swearing; racing and betting, cheating and chicanery, crime and murder, were alike too common, and blackened the moral atmosphere of the Golden City. H.H. Beck, History of South Africa and the Boer British War, Philadelphia, Globe Bible Publishing Co., 1900, p.265. A modern historian, Charles van Onselen, has provided a similar picture in

appeals were made by more than a thousand women of Johannesburg and by Wesleyan ministers in Pretoria.⁵⁸ The Johannesburg Chamber of Mines, recognising the debilitating effects of liquor on its black labour force, added its voice to the chorus of protest. Johannesburg's population, the Chamber noted, 'was 18 000, of which more than half were women and children. If half the number to be taken as adult whites who frequent licensed houses, and the number of licensed houses be taken, it would be seen that no other city in the world would show such a proportion.'⁵⁹

At first 'foreigners' were singled out as the purveyors of this social evil.⁶⁰ It was not long, however, before such veiled references gave way to specific accusations against eastern European liquor dealers.⁶¹ The latter achieved particular notoriety towards the end of 1894 when the Government Inspector of Mines, J. H. Munnik, publicly castigated them in a conference paper, 'Mine Accidents on

his reconstruction of life on the Witwatersrand at this time. See C. van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, vols. I and II.

58. The Press, 16.2.1892.

59. Ibid. For further concern see The Burlesque, 27.11.1891.

60. As early as 1890, Reverend Martins's Presidential address to the Dutch Reformed Synod had noted that the liquor trade was in the hands of foreigners. These people, he noted, disregarded the sabbath, 'much to the grief of all true Christians.' The Press, 13.5.1890.

61. See, for example, The Critic, 9.12.1892; 31.7.1894.

the Rand, Their Causes and Prevention.' In his presentation, Munnik highlighted the difficulty of 'getting' at the real owners of the dens of iniquity and vice. He claimed that 'the Polish Jews who look after them are the most blackguardly race of men in existence, but until we can trace the evil to its root it is no use trying to depose them. These Polish Jews have not the slightest sense of decency or modesty in them, and a more depraved race never existed'⁶²

Munnik's outbursts were followed approximately one year later by a number of editorials devoted to the Temperance Crusade, licensing laws and the liquor traffic in general.⁶³ In 1896, Land en Volk specifically identified Jewish canteen-keepers as the chief beneficiaries of the African liquor trade.⁶⁴ More significantly, the newspaper referred to the decay of Boer society at the expense of Polish and Russian Jewish 'money suckers'.⁶⁵ Articles regularly

62. Standard and Diggers News, 5.11.1894. The Critic criticized Munnik's indiscrete attack. Its comments, however, would not have comforted the Jewish community: 'I do not say that these recent importations are a desirable class of citizen, nor that they are not guilty of the faults imputed to them, but they are only a part of the crowd who make a business of illicit liquor traffic and ought not to have been singled out for attack'. The Critic, 9.11.1894.

63. See, for example, The Press, 3.12.1895; 11.12.1895.

64. Land en Volk, 9.7.1896.

65. Land en Volk, 16.7.1896. Land en Volk was clearly expressing concern for the emergent Afrikaner proletariat on the Witwatersrand. These unfortunate victims of drought, rinderpest, locusts and rural

associating 'Peruvian Jews' with the liquor evil were also published in the Transvaal Critic.⁶⁶

Under enormous pressure from the anti-liquor lobby, the South African Republic prohibited the sale of liquor to blacks from 1 January 1897. Faced with possible ruin, liquor merchants began trading illegally, exploiting their impoverished and desperate fellow Jews in these operations. Judging from the alleged comments of Johannesburg Landdrost, N.P. van den Berg, (and ensuing correspondence in the Standard and Diggers News), this was well known.⁶⁷ In the ensuing months, the question of Jewish involvement in

transformation were ill equipped for city life. See C. van Onselen, 'The Main Reef Road into the working class' in Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886 - 1914, vol. 2, New Ninevah, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1982 and E.L.P. Stals (ed.), Afrikaners in die Goudstad, Pretoria, H.A.U.M., 1978, chapter seven.

66. See, for example, The Transvaal Critic, 21.5.1897; 30.7.1897; 13.8.1897; 19.11.1897; 26.11.1897; 14.1.1898; 10.6.1898.

67. According to the Standard and Diggers News, the First Criminal Landdrost of Johannesburg, N.P. van den Berg, had declared that he 'preferred to credit the word of a Kaffir to that of a Jew' when dealing with illicit liquor laws. (Standard and Diggers News, 2.6.1898). The issue was taken up in the columns of the Standard and Diggers News. In one letter, C.M. Faigan, recalled that van den Berg had once told him in court not to speak so loudly, because, 'you are not Boerverneuking'. (Standard and Diggers News, 7.6.1898). Although the Standard and Diggers News found van den Berg's behaviour objectionable, there was some support for the Magistrate. F.W. Athersoble, for instance, separated the 'low vile Russian Jew' from the 'respectable English, Frank and German Jew.' He was surprised 'that any respectable Jew or newspaper can be forced to defend such a low and degrading class as the Russian Jew'. (Standard and Diggers News, 6.6.1898).

illicit liquor dealing assumed greater prominence. According to Land and Volk, one source of illegal sales was the so-called 'kaffir eethuis', controlled by Jews. In this newspaper's view, Jews had placed pressure on Kruger to abolish the prohibition on 'kaffir eethuis licences'.⁶⁸

By 1899 mining interests could no longer tolerate the impact of illicit alcohol on the black labour force. In a series of sensationalist exposes, the pro-magnate Transvaal Leader definitively linked the 'Peruvian' Jew with the liquor underworld.⁶⁹ Glaring publicity followed the gang murder of a Mrs Appelbe for allegedly supplying information about the liquor gangs. 'How long,' ran an editorial, 'is the community to be ridden by these monsters, by these NATHANSONS, the KATZENS, the LEDIKERS and SCHLOSSBERGS and the rest of the off-scourings from a degraded European race whom they employ There is blood, the blood of an innocent woman, upon the hands of the KANTOR syndicate of Fordsburg.' 'Low class Jews', the newspaper warned, were spoiling the name of 'clean minded and honourable Jews' The newspaper warned that if poor Jews 'are to be caught in the net of crime so that their name becomes a by-word and a disgrace to white folk, South Africa will become the theatre

68. Land en Volk, 7.12.1898.

69. See C. van Onselen, 'Randlords and Rotgut, 1886 - 1903', in Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886 - 1914, vol. 1, New Babylon, pp.74ff.

of an anti-Semitic drama more terrible and more tragic than even France, Germany or Russia have been.⁷⁰ When a correspondent informed the Transvaal Leader that 'a very small proportion (I should even say insignificant) number of Jews were involved in the liquor trade',⁷¹ he was challenged by another correspondent who provided a list of local liquor wholesalers, the majority of whom, judging by their names, were Jewish.⁷² The negative label was difficult to refute and would survive for many years.

The Transvaal Leader justified its crusade on the grounds of preventing the 'enslavement of the pauper immigrant at the hands of the liquor smugglers.' 'Unfortunately', lamented the newspaper, 'there is no word that exhaustively describes the penniless Russian, Pole or German who is entrapped in miserable servitude by the liquor smugglers. The European national name is too large and it would be manifestly unjust to apply the general name of "Jew" to all liquor smugglers, neither do we like the frequent use of the word "Peruvian"

70. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1899. It was not only the Transvaal Leader that focused on the Appelbe case. As the Transvaal Critic put it, 'because of its origin in the illicit liquor conspiracy the case attracted a great deal of notice.' Transvaal Critic, 12.5.1899. Land en Volk also criticized 'Prins' Nathanson for assuming that money would buy him out of trouble. As the weekly put it: 'Hieruit kan mens zien dat die Drank Joden veel geloof hebben in die macht van geld.' Land en Volk, 6.6.1899.

71. Transvaal Leader, 5.5.1899.

72. Transvaal Leader, 6.5.1899.

that is characteristic of the Standard and Diggers News....⁷³

Predictably the Transvaal Leader's 'fearless and effective exposure of the corruption and inefficiency of the Liquor Law' was welcomed by the Witwatersrand Church Council. The latter assured the editor and staff that 'they have the hearty support of all Christian Churches represented by the Council.'⁷⁴ The degree of contempt for the 'Peruvian' was reaffirmed at a public meeting in Boksburg when the Reverend Fagan warned that the 'Peruvian' was a greater 'curse to the land' than 'Chinese cheap labour'. 'Peruvians', he exclaimed, 'made the name of the white man stink in the nostrils of all men, and were moral pariahs. This was partly the fault of the Russian Government, who for centuries had persecuted the Peruvians.' 'What right', asked Fagan, 'had the Government to thrust them out here. The country was too new for Peruvians, and they could not stand that leaven. A Peruvian was too acute and sharp in his liquor dealings to be a good citizen, the Afrikaner was a child beside him.'⁷⁵ Clearly, by the late 1890s, the anti-liquor crusade had indelibly associated eastern European or 'Peruvian' Jews with the liquor underworld.⁷⁶

73. Transvaal Leader, 10.5.1899.

74. Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1899.

75. Transvaal Leader, 15.5.1899.

76. The Transvaal Critic went so far as to refer to an incipient 'Judenhetze' surrounding the exposure of the

As the labour leader, E.B. Rose, recalled, the 'native liquor trade had always been almost entirely in the hands of a very low class of Russian and Polish Jew - "Peruvian" is the appellation contemptuously bestowed upon them locally.'⁷⁷

Besides illicit liquor dealings, the 'Peruvian' was also associated with insanitary living and the seamier side of Johannesburg's nightlife. It was well known, claimed the Standard and Diggers News, that amongst Johannesburg's 'ladies of the night' was 'a large and thriving colony of Americanized Russian women ... controlled by an association of macquereaus of pronounced Russian pedigree.'⁷⁸ Undoubtedly, Russian Jews - many of them schooled in the New York underworld - made a notable impact on this dimension of the city's life, much to the chagrin of the Church and the 'respectable' middle-class.⁷⁹

'Jew of Eastern Europe'. The Transvaal Critic, 12.5.1898

77. E.B. Rose, The Truth about the Transvaal, London, Morning Leader Publication, 1902, p.48.
78. Standard and Diggers News, 7.12.1898. See also the Transvaal Critic, 11.6.1899; 18.6.1897. It should be noted that the manager of the Standard and Diggers News was a Jew, Emanuel Mendelssohn. This probably enabled at least some observers to see the issue in moral and not simply 'racial' terms.
79. See C. van Onselen, 'Prostitutes and proletarians, 1886-1914' in Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886 - 1914, vol. I, passim. Johannesburg's Jewish leaders were also disturbed at increasing Jewish vice.

The latter's sensitivities were similarly violated by the decrepit condition of 'Peruvian' neighbourhoods. In an unusually detailed article, 'Awful Hovels: Peruvian Uncleanliness', The Star described the nature of these dwellings as well as the associated life-style. Failing some 'drastic' measures to get rid of them, warned The Star, 'the town may be visited with an epidemic which will cost many valuable lives.' It was recommended to readers that they ramble 'through the lower end of Commissioner Street, Ferreira's Township, Brickfields or Burgersdorp', to assess the 'desirability of having these people in our midst.'

The rest of the article encapsulated the animus aroused by the alien and impoverished eastern European Jew:

On Sundays they are to be seen in groups of from twenty to forty. These gatherings take place in what is known as Diagonal Street at the lower end of Market and President Streets. In this locality no less than thirty old clo'dealers have their business place, and carry on a lucrative trade. They don't confine themselves to buying cast-off clothing. They purchase anything and everything. Their method of book-keeping is beyond description. A small pass-book serves to record all dealings.

Hop and ginger beer and fruit venders etc. herd together in hovels which are sinks of abomination. Here the delectable drinks are manufactured in vessels which are filthy. These people are also largely responsible for the sale of the vile decoctions whereby so many natives are driven to the verge of madness, and in which state they commit the hideous crimes daily reported in the columns of the various papers, and many others which are never recorded. Cheap brandy is

purchased by the Peruvian in large quantities, and after going through the process known as "doctoring" (a process in which dirty water, cayenne pepper, tobacco and vitriol are freely used), is sold at 5s to 6s per bottle. It is unquestionable that a greater part of the clothing, etc. which is daily being filched from houses in all parts of the town finds its way into dens of iniquity which own these Peruvians as masters.

The auctioneers business in Marshall Square is hampered in every way by them. They pay no licences, and no security, evade the law and yet they buy and sell stock and produce with impunity in opposition to those who desire to carry on a legitimate business. They are despised by the better class of Jews almost as much as they are by the rest of mankind. Their morning ablutions (when they do indulge) consist of taking a tin pennikin of water outside their hovels, their utilizing their mouths as a means of partially warming the water and then as a means of conveying a continuous stream on their heads. A rub on the face finishes the process.

Their food consists principally of dried fish and bread, and consequently in cases where they are mechanics they are able to work for a far lower rate of wage than any average workman. Their womankind of which there are only some 50 or 60 in evidence, are more despicably unclean than the men. Gross immorality reigns supreme and unchecked. The lowest class of Hottentot and Kaffir woman are to be seen going in and out of these places with an air of ownership. There is not a vestige of doubt that should the Sanitary Board take an early opportunity to eradicate the whole brood and take steps to force them to comply with sanitary regulations, they would earn the heartfelt gratitude of the law-abiding community.⁸⁰

Although unusually provocative, these sentiments were widely shared. Indeed, the filth and illegal business dealings described in the article were confirmed by 'English Jew' in

80. The Star, 10.7.1897.

a letter to The Star.⁸¹ Yet another critic of the 'Dirty Peruvians' equated them with the local 'Coolie', adding that both groups were undeserving of the franchise.⁸²

It was not only in Johannesburg that the 'Peruvian' made his presence felt. As early as 1893, a Cape Town German newspaper, Zud Afrikanische Zeitung, exclaimed that: 'The dirty proletariat from the Polish and Russian borders' should 'avoid our land.'⁸³ By the mid-1890s, Russian Jewesses were identified among the growing number of 'continental' prostitutes.⁸⁴ By then the question of alien Jews had become a regular subject for parliamentary debate

81. The Star, 15.7.1897. Vignettes in a Johannesburg satirical monthly, Mail and Skeptic, similarly depicted the Jew as devoid of scruples. See the Mail and Skeptic, 30.10.1897 and March 1898.

82. Transvaal Leader, 13.5.1899.

83. Zud Afrikanische Zeitung, 4.3.1893. Similar xenophobia and antisemitism was evident in responses to Russian-Jewish immigration in Australia during the 1890s. See S.D. Rutland, Edge of the Diaspora. Two centuries of Jewish settlement in Australia, Sydney, Collins, 1988, pp.94-97. The problem has of course been well documented for Europe. See, for example, R.S. Wistrich, The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989, p.64.

84. E.B. van Heyningen, 'Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1910', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1989, p.381. This pattern persisted through the Anglo-Boer War and in the immediate post-war period. See B.I. Feldman, 'Social Life of Cape Town Jewry, 1904-1914, with special reference to the Eastern European immigrant community', unpubl. B.A. (Hons) thesis, University of Cape town, 1984, pp.31-32 and R. Hallett, 'Policeman, Pimps and Prostitutes - Public Morality and Police Corruption: Cape Town, 1902-1904' in C. Saunders (ed.) Studies in the History of Cape Town, vol. I, 1979, p.7.

in the Cape Colony.⁸⁵ While most spokesmen reflected burgeoning rural antagonism, some commentators and certain newspapers raised the spectre of eastern European Jews undercutting the mercantile establishment and threatening Cape Town's business morality. These fears were vividly illustrated in a Cape Town weekly, The Owl,⁸⁶ which described the following scene on Cape Town's Grand parade.

Saturday by Saturday the 'Grand' - Heaven save the word - parade gets worse. The rotten trash that is put upon the sales there would be a disgrace to Petticoat Lane. Not only this but the trade is now largely carried out by Polish Jews, who import - no doubt from other Polish Jews in London - the commonest off-scourings of Houndsditch goods. Then these frowzy gentry stand around and sum up things until whoever purchases is sure to be heartlessly swindled'

The fact is Cape Town at the present time is full of those Polish Jew hawkers who live in dirtier style than kafirs [sic] and existing on about half a crown a week rob the tradesman of his due. They don't pay rent, rates or taxes, yet they are allowed to sell goods just the same as if they kept a store. Respectable Europeans should order these people from their doors. That is the only way to put them down. Let these people do manual work.⁸⁷

85. See Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, pp.7-8.

86. The Owl, was started by an Englishman, Charles Penstone, in Johannesburg shortly before the Jameson Raid. The Raid, having more or less shattered the prospects of the weekly in Johannesburg, forced Penstone to restart the weekly in Cape Town. Cape Times, 6.8.1896. In 1902 The Owl had a circulation of 16 000. The Owl, 13.6.1902. It rapidly became the chief exponent of Cape Town's anti-Jewish press. See below, pp.111-12 and chapter four, passim.

87. The Owl, 23.1.1897.

Clearly no-one could ignore the eastern European presence, especially since their arrival coincided with an increasing concern with public health as manifested in the Cape Colony's Public Health Amendment Act No. 23 of 1897.⁸⁸ In his Public Health and Sanitation Report, Wynberg's District Surgeon, Dr. H Claude Wright, was particularly condemnatory of appalling living conditions 'owing to the large influx of Russian and other Jews, who overcrowd and cohabit promiscuously. Amongst them filth and vermin abound, and they have great objection to ventilation, the crevices all being wedged up with rags in many of their rooms. Some of these people are worse than the natives in these matters.'⁸⁹

Unlike those eastern Europeans who had arrived in the 1880s and had aspired (with some success) to bourgeois standards, those arriving in the 1890s retained a conspicuous and unmistakably alien identity by virtue of their substantial numbers. These impoverished newcomers clearly aroused base and atavistic fears as they threatened English norms, manners and sensitivities. Indeed, among the thousands of fortune-seekers and social casualties of Europe's economic transformation, the 'Peruvian' stood out as the most prominent intruder. In short, he consolidated the image of

88. See van Heyningen, 'Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1910', p.251.

89. G42-1897 Cape of Good Hope, Reports of District Surgeons upon Public Health and Sanitation. Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly.

the 'knave' which had been evident in the 1880s and, in this sense, reinforced the arguments of those who associated Jews with illicit diamond buying and 'boereverneuking'. Both J.R. Couper's Mixed Humanity⁹⁰ and G. Griffith's, Knives of Diamonds,⁹¹ for instance, dealt with the former theme, depicting the Jew in most unsavoury terms.⁹² Dishonesty was increasingly perceived as the Jewish path to riches.⁹³

By the turn of the century the eastern European or 'Peruvian' Jew was thus a clearly defined outsider, set apart by language and accent.⁹⁴ Merriman succinctly

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90. J.R. Couper, Mixed Humanity. A story of camp life in South Africa, London, W.H. Allen, 1892.
91. G. Griffith, Knives of Diamonds: being tales of mine and veld, London, C. Arthur Pearson, 1899.
92. This comes across clearly in Griffith's grotesque Jewish character: 'Something was evidently exercising the mind of the Jew very considerably, for his prominent eyes kept wandering restlessly about the little room, his fleshy pendant underlip trembled every now and then with the movement of his heavy jaw, and his fat, lavishly jewelled fingers kept alternately drumming on the dirty table and wandering aimlessly through his black and rather greasy locks.' Griffith, Knives of Diamonds, p.2.
93. See, for instance, the short story, 'Sam Saulinski', The Owl, 6.11.1897 and 'Old Diamond-Field Days: The Pioneer Talks', The Owl, 8.6.1900.
94. See, for example, the humorous exchange between Isaac and Cohen in the Mail and Skeptic, 13.12.1897. As Gilman puts it in his discussion of European stereotypes, 'the spoken language of the Jews kept alive the old charges of an inherently "Jewish" way of understanding the world as mirrored in the special language of the Jews'. S.L. Gilman, Difference and Pathology. Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985, p.182.

captured his alien status when commenting on the behaviour of the Reverend Tobias, a Jewish minister in O'Kiep, who had allegedly deprecated patriotic sentiment. This had not surprised Merriman 'because the Jewish race with all its marvellous gifts never had a country.' It was, he noted, 'a cosmopolitan race and would not understand the feeling.'⁹⁵ Having been accused by the Cape Times (in a bid to gain electioneering capital) of antisemitism, Merriman reaffirmed his stand. Accepting the 'excellent qualities of the Jews as citizens', he nevertheless argued that 'the fact remains that for good or evil, they elect to remain a race apart who do not, with few exceptions, merge in the population of the land they dwell in.' The Jew, he repeated, 'has no country, he is a cosmopolitan'.⁹⁶

Merriman's remarks explicitly reflect the impact of eastern European Jews impact on popular perceptions. They are also indicative of the marginal and shifting position of the Jew in South African society. Initially defined purely in terms of religion, eastern European Jews now affirmed a 'racial' Jewish identity. Undoubtedly these perceptions were influenced by the current eugenic ideas in which mental, moral and physical traits were attributed to immutable and inherent racial differences.⁹⁷ Eastern European Jews, after

95. Cape Times, 30.3.1898.

96. Cape Times, 1.4.1898.

97. N. Stepan, The Idea of Race in Science : Great Britain, 1800-1960, London, Macmillan, 1982, p.113. See also B.

all, had not acculturated into bourgeois society as their English and German coreligionists had a generation before. In this sense they had failed to fulfil the 'emancipation contract'. More importantly, in maintaining a distinctive and alien identity they conjured up images of the traditional Jew, derived from the pre-emancipation or medieval Jewish model. As Aschheim puts it when discussing eastern European Jews in the German context at this time, the newcomer was perceived as the 'real' Jew, the 'living model' of Jewishness.⁹⁸

IV

The question of the 'real' Jew, of course, raises the issue of religious belief as a formative influence on perceptions of the Jew. With regard to late nineteenth-century South Africa, it is fair to argue that, despite increasing secularisation, religious differences reinforced the alien or outsider status of the Jew. To what extent this was the case, however, is difficult to assess.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, in

Sennel, Imperialism and Social Reform. English Social-Imperial Thought 1895-1914, Garden City, New York, Anchor Books, 1968, chapter two.

98. See S.E. Aschheim, Brothers and Strangers. The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982. p.252. This does not mean the eastern European Jew was the cause of antisemitism. See above, pp.38-39.
99. Jacob Katz has argued that modern or racist antisemitism was medieval or religious antisemitism transformed into a secular or modern idiom. For an account of the metamorphosis see J. Katz, From

certain quarters at least there is evidence that Jews were perceived through a theological prism. That is to say, sermons and religiously inspired literature and comment - especially, although not only that emanating from the fundamentalist Dutch-speaking sector - related to Jewry's biblical roots and historical experience. Jews were very often portrayed as a people who had deviated from their roots or had lost their way by failing to accept the Truth as revealed in Christianity. The Jew, in other words, was perceived as the archetypical deviant. In this sense theologically-based views confirmed the racist 'Peruvian' stereotype. As 'G' maintained in a letter to De Kerkbode, a Dutch Reformed Church periodical, the Jews had deviated from their ethical foundations and in the process had been transformed. Although secularisation had made them susceptible to atheism and Christianity, they still, argued 'G', harboured a deep seated hatred for the latter. Indeed, the call to crucifixion heard nineteen hundred years ago had been taken over by the modern day 'Jewish Press.' Having abandoned their hope for the Messiah, Jews still wanted to rule the world. In their search for money and power they were, moreover, undermining good morals.¹⁰⁰ 'G's' letter is a classic illustration of how theologically

Prejudice to Destruction. Anti-Semitism, 1700-1933, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1980. See especially the introduction and chapter twenty-six.

100. De Kerkbode, 18.1.1897.

based conspiratorial views could be secularised and transformed to suit a modern age.

The notion of deviance was similarly captured by another correspondent to De Kerkbode who questioned the so-called 'historical mission' of the Jews. He was confounded by the fact that Jews, supposedly a light unto the heathens, always lived among monotheistic peoples. This apparent contradiction was reconciled by the notion of Christianity superseding Judaism, a result of Jews rejecting God at the time he wanted to build his Kingdom in Israel. The dispersion of the Jews was a means of enabling them to see the advantage of the Kingdom of Christ.¹⁰¹ Unlike 'G' who identified Jews as a subversive threat, this correspondent viewed them as a spent force. Both letters illuminate, however, the residual power of religion as a formative influence on perceptions in late nineteenth century South Africa.

That power is further illustrated in responses to a speech by Rabbi Hertz (to a Jewish audience) in which he reportedly diminished Jesus by describing him as an ordinary Jew rather than as a perfect person. The Rabbi contended, moreover, that Jesus was a rebel and had been crucified as such. Because the world was still divided and without peace, Hertz

101. Ibid, 24.3.1898.

maintained Judaism's challenges remained and would indeed be ultimately fulfilled.¹⁰²

Hertz's view that the world had to be made free, united and peaceful through the righteousness of the Jew proved abhorrent to Land en Volk which, as already shown, had for some time adopted an anti-Jewish stance. Jewish ideals, the newspaper reminded its readers, were not always noble. Their idol was money, with ninety-nine per cent of Jews being indifferent as to how they acquired it. Could such a people, asked Land en Volk, produce right and righteousness? In light of the facts about international and local Jewry, argued the newspaper, Hertz's statements were ridiculous. Rather than furthering righteousness, Jews were polluting society and creating evil. This, the newspaper contended, was evident to all informed people in Pretoria and Johannesburg. Indeed, the so-called 'virtuous' Jew played an important part in unsettling things in the Republics.¹⁰³ Once again Land en Volk had introduced Jews into the domestic political arena. 'Een Christen' supported this newspaper's sentiments, claiming that his earlier sympathy for Jews had disappeared following the Rabbi's libellous statement. Those propagating Jewish rights were commended to read De Joodsche wet onthuld. Talmud studien. This, he suggested, would enable them to appreciate Jewish opposition

102. Land en Volk, 7.12.1898.

103. Land en Volk, 7.12.1898.

to Christianity. Having once tortured Jesus on the cross, they now continued to slander him. If, after 1900 years, the Jewish spirit had not changed, Jews were not worthy of citizenship in a Christian country.¹⁰⁴ The Reverend Gray of Pretoria also responded to Hertz's speech. In a lengthy reply he criticized the Rabbi's understanding of the historical record, arguing that since the dispersion, Jews had not 'been the pilot that ... steered the world.' All 'higher things' he contended, had been the church's work.¹⁰⁵

Theologically inspired hostility was not unique to the Dutch Reformed Church. The Anglican Dean of Cape Town warned his flock on Good Friday of 1899 that Jews were gathered in their synagogues at Passover to curse and anathemize the Gentiles. The Jews he said:

were reviling us and praying against us, for they could not countervail the truth that their forefathers crucified Christ on that day. Much as they might admire them as fellow-citizens and public spirited men, they could not forget that. It was Caiaphas and his false friends who accepted bribes and bribed as at election time earning their money the Jewish system of "shent per shent".¹⁰⁶

This was theology crossed with crass racism. Consequently, the Cape Times berated the Dean for speaking 'however

104. Land en Volk, 18.1.1899.

105. The Press, 12.12.1898.

106. Cape Times, 1.4.1899.

unintentionally in the very accents of the Judenhetze that disgraces the Continent of Europe, and the anti-Dreyfus fury that degrades France.' It was ridiculous, argued the newspaper, to 'throw up' the crucifixion at the modern Jew, 'the cultivated ones at any rate', who 'far from reviling profess a high respect for the ethical teachings of Jesus
'107

The Cape Times's response and the rather hasty apology from the Dean at the behest of the Reverend Bender of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, suggests such irrationally inspired condemnation of the Jew was, at least for some, unacceptable.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the Dean's retraction, in which he claimed to have 'heard and read' of such Jewish attacks but was satisfied that this was not the case in Cape Town,¹⁰⁹ did not entirely satisfy the Cape Times.¹¹⁰ And yet, the

107. Cape Times, 3.4.1899. By introducing the caveat 'cultivated', the Cape Times was in essence underlining the emancipation contract and its expectations.

108. One correspondent to the Cape Times thought the Dean's comments were an April Fools joke. Cape Times, 3.4.1899.

109. London Jewish Chronicle, 28.4.1899.

110. 'It reminds us too much of the old East End story of a costermonger fresh from a night school for adults, vigorously and without offence found assaulting a Jew. "What's the matter?" cries the amazed victim. "Matter? Why, you crucified my Lord!" "You fool" said the Jew "that was two thousand years ago." "Maybe", says the coster, "but I've only just heard it!" And he resumed his pummeling. Very likely that particular Jew deserved it - for something else. But his persecutor was quite a type of the rationality of the anti-Semite.' Cape Times, 4.4.1899. Virtually the same story (but in the American context) is related by

newspaper published two letters supporting the Dean - one, from J. Samuels, on racist grounds, and another from J. Asteup, of the Lutheran Parsonage in Cape Town, on theological grounds. Asteup was unable to forget 'that the Jews of today practically join their forefathers in their malice, because they hate and persecute those of their own members who become converts to the Christian faith.'¹¹¹

Theologically based ideas were patently not without influence in fin de siecle South Africa.¹¹² They certainly hardened existing divisions between Jew and Gentile and of course reinforced the outsider status of the Jew.¹¹³ By and

Jonathan Sarna. See Jonathan D. Sarna, 'The "Mythical Jew" and the "Jew Next Door" in Nineteenth Century America', in D.A. Gerber, Anti-Semitism in American History, p.57.

111. Cape Times, 4.4.1899.

112. It has been argued that Paul Kruger defended Jews in the 'naive hope' that they would eventually come to the 'true faith of Christ,' if they are properly defended.' Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration', p.90. See also M. Nathan, Paul Kruger, pp. 36ff. This view was spelt out very clearly in Kruger's detailed manifesto in 1899 as to why Jews should be given citizenship. See The Star, 15.8.1899.

113. A specific barometer of religion as a formative factor is evident in concerted missionary activity directed towards Jews. The impetus in Cape Town was sufficiently powerful to provoke the Yiddish journalist, N.D. Hoffman, into writing an impassioned defence of Judaism and the Jewish people. According to Grosman, the *raison d'être* of the essay was the establishment in Cape Town of a Christian Mission Centre, headed by an apostate Jew. Grosman, 'A Study in the Trends and Tendencies of Hebrew and Yiddish Writings', p.182, Grosman was probably referring to one Rietman, an Anglo-Jew on whose behalf De Kerkbode made numerous requests for financial assistance. (See for example De Kerkbode, 14.10.1897) Indeed, throughout the 1890s the Dutch

large, however, Jews in late nineteenth century South Africa were characterised in essentially secular terms. 'Thrifty', 'cunning', 'enterprising' and other such appellations were attributed to them rather than religiously inspired labels such as 'Christ-killers', 'anti-Christ's' and so forth. This is hardly surprising in an age that was becoming increasingly secularised and the religious idiom less influential.

V

Despite the negative impact made by 'Peruvians' and the divisive consequences of religious differences, the liberal ideals of religious tolerance and full political rights for all whites remained an important goal. These ideals certainly motivated the 'Uitlanders' in their campaign for franchise reforms in the South African Republic during the 1890s. Jews and Catholics were prominent within that campaign and they were not without support.¹¹⁴ Even Land en Volk - as we know notoriously opposed to Jewish influence in

Reformed Church attempted to convert Jews. Regular reports of mission work and even cases of successful conversion appeared in the columns of De Kerkbode. (See for example, De Kerkbode, 21.6.1893; 28.3.1895; 12.12.1896; 28.8.1898.) Indications that English missionaries from abroad sought to convert Jews are also evident. See The Press, 24.2.1894. Of course, in the nineteenth century Christians held strong beliefs that Christianity was the road to salvation and grace.

114. See Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration', pp.78ff.

the Republic - supported this struggle: 'If a Jew becomes a burger of the Transvaal', argued the newspaper, 'there ought to be no bar to prevent him from becoming a member of the Volksraad or filling any other position. Why should men who are in all probability atheists, be allowed to fill positions while the same privilege is denied to the Jew who believes in Jehovah?'¹¹⁵ A Cape Town Dutch newspaper, Het Dagblat, similarly condemned legislation in the South African Republic which oppressed Jews. After all, it noted, 'Jews had proved most able in politics as evidenced by Lord Beaconsfield [while] the present speaker in our Legislative Council [Henry Juta] also has Jewish blood in his veins.'¹¹⁶

In such comments we see how insignificant religion was as the arbiter of citizenship. More important, we see a powerful ambiguity and ambivalence in perceptions of the Jew. Clearly Jews were not all branded with the negative racial attributes of the 'Peruvian'. The one-time prime minister of the Cape Colony, J.G. Sprigg, for instance, championed the rights of destitute Jews,¹¹⁷ while the British parliamentarian, James Bryce, claimed that 'the best society of the place [Johannesburg] consists of men of English or Anglo-Jewish race including ... a few Germans,

115. Quoted in Standard and Diggers News, 19.10.1897.

116. Quoted in Standard and Diggers News, 22.7.1897.

117. Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Assembly Debates, 27.7.1894.

most of Jewish origin.¹¹⁸ German Jews also impressed Stuart Cumberland, another visitor to the Witwatersrand:

The trail of the Teuton especially of the Hebraic Teuton - is distinctly visible - on the Bourse, in trade, in society, in fact everywhere. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that the greatest wealth and enterprise are to be found in the German-Hebrew community. Your Johannesburg German-Hebrew is, as a rule, in almost everything an Englishman and a Londoner, but his Sprache frequently persists in giving him away, although it is little short of marvellous how readily, and in some measures naturally, he changes the skin of the bear for that of the lion.

I don't know how, in point of numbers the Jews compare with the rest of the inhabitants of Johannesburg, but I should imagine it is the one town in the world where they, in the upper grades of social and financial life are a distinct majority. Indeed, is not Johannesburg frequently called Jewhannesburg?¹¹⁹

Chief Justice Kotze of the South African Republic also spoke of Jewish warmth, intelligence and influence which was 'used to promote the material and intellectual advancement of the country'.¹²⁰ An Irishman from the Witwatersrand even attributed the good behaviour of the Uitlanders to the 'great preponderance of Jews'.¹²¹ Clearly positive attitudes towards the Jew still existed, but it was the

118. Bryce, From Impressions of South Africa, p.384.

119. S. Cumberland, What I Think of South Africa : its people and its politics, London, Chapman & Hall, 1896. p.12. (Cumberland was a pseudonym. His real name was Charles Garner).

120. London Jewish Chronicle, 13.8.1897.

121. Quoted in Review of Reviews, October, 1899.

acculturated Jew as distinguished from the 'Peruvian' Jew who found favour. For some class and class aspirations mattered most - hence the repeated references to 'cultivated' and 'better class' Jews. As an editorial in the Johannesburg Times noted, 'higher class Jews' were 'law-abiding citizens and faithful supporters of the flag under which they dwelt.' [They] 'were doing a great deal of excellent educational work and in other respects they show a good example to their gentile brethren.'¹²² Such commentators were confident that with freedom and opportunity, eastern European Jews would emulate their acculturated co-religionists.¹²³ This view was put most effectively by Olive Schreiner, the renowned author, who illustrated her case in the most vivid terms: 'That scorned and oppressed Russian Jew, landing here today, unified by our fresh South African breezes may yet be the progenitor of the Spinoza and Maimonides of the great future South Africa, who shall lead the world in philosophy and thought.'¹²⁴

122. Johannesburg Times, 1.7.1897. For further indications of support see The Transvaal Critic, 2.7.1897.

123. Not all observers envisaged the transformation of Russian Jews. For instance, during a debate on Jewish disabilities in the South African Republic, J.B. Wolmarans, R.K. Loveday and J.W. Erasmus, made it clear that specifically Russian Jews were undesirable and unworthy of the franchise. See Notulen - Eersten Volksraad, 1899, pp.480ff. For comment see Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration', p.82. In the twentieth century Russian Jews increasingly defined all Jews. See below, pp.176-78.

124. O. Schreiner, 'Words in Season : An English South African's View of the Situation', Standard and Diggers News, 29.5.1898.

VI

Emerging at the same time as the 'Peruvian' stereotype, but far more sinister, was the image of the South African Jew as part of a network of international finance. This association had already taken root in Europe¹²⁵ and found fertile ground in South Africa where mining magnates - among whom Jews were disproportionately represented - were such a prominent feature of society. It made little difference that these Jewish financiers had largely assimilated and were Jews in name only.¹²⁶ Their presence ensured that the negative stereotype would be accentuated in the mounting struggle between mining magnates, with their international connections, and 'intransigent' Boer leaders in the 1890s.

The first taste of the power of foreign finance had been evident in Kimberley during the 1880s when powerful mining houses had rapidly engulfed weak and scattered small-

125. The Bleichroders, Rothschilds and Oppenheims indeed exemplified what Eric Hobsbawm has referred to as 'the age of capital'. E. Hobsbawm, The Age of Capital 1848-1875, Great Britain, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975. The high profile of Jews in European banking and finance made them readily available targets for vilification, both from the 'left' and the 'right'. For the antisemite, the sole beneficiaries of the age were the Jews; their tentacles extended throughout the world in a cosmopolitan network of kith and kin.

126. See Saron, 'Boers, Uitlanders, Jews', p.192.

holders.¹²⁷ The process was accelerated on the Witwatersrand where, three years after the first gold discoveries, a mere six mining houses dominated the industry.¹²⁸ Jewish industrialists were prominent in the process. Some had important business and banking connections which would, as Hirschfield puts it, 'be utilised to maximum effect in a world where fortunes were clearly waiting to be made.'¹²⁹

The abortive British attempt to overthrow the Kruger regime in 1895 was attributed to the much feared role of international finance. The so-called Jameson Raid evoked enormous condemnation in Britain where labour leaders and

127. The London born Jew, Barney Barnato, was a vital part of that process. Born Barnett Isaacs, Barnato rose from humble beginnings in the east end of London to dominate the diamond industry by the early 1880s. Thereafter, following a titanic struggle he was eclipsed by Cecil John Rhodes. Both of these financial giants became life governors of De Beers - the first major intrusion into South Africa of, as one writer put it, 'the spirit of Mammon'. F.R. Statham, South Africa as it is, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1897, p.196. For the emergence of De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited see Turrell, 'Capital, Class and Monopoly' and W.H. Worger, 'The making of a Monopoly : Kimberley and the South African Diamond Industry 1870-95', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1982.

128. By 1913 the Witwatersrand 'produced no less than 40 per cent of the world's gold output.' C. van Onselen, Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand 1886-1914, vol.1, p.1. The South African economy had rapidly become intertwined with an international network of finance and capital. D. Innes, Anglo-Anglo-American and the rise of modern South Africa, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1984.

129. C Hirschfield, 'The British Left and the "Jewish Conspiracy" : A Case Study of Modern Anti-Semitism', Jewish Social Studies, Spring, 1981, p.96.

the left-wing press relentlessly attacked allegedly unscrupulous financiers bent only on larger profits. 'Short of revolution', exhorted the British labour parliamentarian, John Burns, 'South African capitalists have done practically what they like and the Jameson Raid illustrated that they did not hesitate even at that.'¹³⁰ For Britain's radical-left, the Raid 'confirmed the existence of a crucial nexus joining Jewish finance with British imperialism.'¹³¹ Although these views were not systematically articulated in South Africa, their penetration can be assumed, if only because of the circulation in South Africa of British labour-oriented newspapers such as The Clarion.¹³²

130. Quoted in H.J. Ogden (ed.) The War Against the Dutch Republic in South Africa, Manchester, National Reform Union, 1901, p.32.

131. Hirschfield, 'The British Left', p.96. M. Hyndman, the founder of Britain's Social Democratic Federation, exemplified this view. In an essay entitled, 'Imperialist Judaism in Africa', he charged Beit, Barnato and their fellow Jews in South Africa with the planning of 'an Anglo-Hebraic Empire stretching from Egypt to the Cape Colony and from Breira [sic] to Sierra Leone'. Justice, 25.4.1896. Quoted in Hirschfield, 'The British Left', p.98.

132. See D. Ticktin, 'The Origins of the South African Labour Party', unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1973, p.10. Although British expatriates were probably the greatest consumers of this literature one should not underestimate the number of Afrikaners (particularly in the Cape) who read English journals and magazines. Educated Afrikaners in fact used English for correspondence. See Moodie, The Rise of Afrikanerdom, p.40 and W.A. de Klerk, The Puritans in Africa. A Story of Afrikanerdom, England, Penguin Books, 1975, pp.96-97. See also I. Hofmeyr, 'Building a Nation from Words: Afrikaans Language, Literature and Ethnic Identity, 1902-1924', in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds.), The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa, New York, Longman, 1987, p.98.

While the involvement of Jews specifically in the Raid was not commented upon in South Africa, the role of international finance certainly came under fire. The Raid was perceived by Englishman and Afrikaner alike as an indication of the depths to which financiers would purportedly sink in order to attain their objectives.¹³³ For one visitor to South Africa, A. Mitchie, the Raid was 'a means to enthrone a select group of capitalists, in whose justice, purity and philanthropy the general community of Johannesburg felt less confidence than in the corrupt circumstances of the Hollander ridden Boer'.¹³⁴ Numerous commentators at the time of the Raid made it clear that financiers posed a threat to order and stability. The labour leader, J.T. Bain, for instance, referred to Eckstein, Beit, Rhodes and Phillips 'ruling affairs',¹³⁵ while one McNab, addressing a gathering in Krugersdorp at the height of the crisis, identified Beit, Lippert and others for seeking imperial expansion and territorial aggrandizement.¹³⁶ Even a local Jewish correspondent for the eastern European weekly, Hameliz, recognised the role of magnates in the struggle between Uitlanders and Hollanders

133. See, for example, De Zuid Afrikaan, 4.2.1896.

134. Blackwoods Magazine. Quoted in Review of Reviews, 1.8.1896.

135. The Press, 1.1.1896.

136. The Star, 31.12.1895.

on the one hand, and the rulers of the country on the other.¹³⁷

Within a few months of the Raid, the caricature of a bloated and opulent financier entered South African iconography.¹³⁸ The involvement of the international financier in political events was firmly established, particularly in labour circles. From the time of the Jameson Raid, an economic interpretation of political events was inescapably added to existing analyses of the South African situation. As 'Two British Working Men' put it in a letter to The Press, 'Johannesburg [was] forced to fight the battle [Jameson Raid] for a few bloated capitalists.'¹³⁹

One acute observer of the power of capital was Frank Reginald Statham, author and one-time editor of the Natal Witness and a Kimberley newspaper, the Independent.¹⁴⁰ His

137. Meir Zivan in Hameliz, 1896. Quoted in Grosman, 'A Study in the Trends and Tendencies of Hebrew and Yiddish Writings', pp.101-02.

138. Cape Register, 1.8.1896. Reprinted in Review of Reviews, 1.9.1896.

139. The Press, 31.3.1896.

140. 'Statham, F.R.' in Dictionary of South African Biography, vol. I, pp.768-769. Statham came to South Africa in 1877 at the age of thirty-three to take up the editorship of the Natal Witness. He had at that time only one year's experience as a journalist having been an evangelical lay preacher and before that a stockbroker. Statham had fallen foul of the law and spent a year in gaol. It was his criticism of British imperial policy that led to his criminal past being exposed in the British House of Commons by the Under

early experiences as a journalist in Kimberley informed his views of big business and provided him with the background for his first novel, Mr Magnus, published in 1896.¹⁴¹ While the plot rested on an attempt to ruin a young man by falsely charging him with illicit diamond buying, the backdrop to the story exposed the enormous power wielded by De Beers. Many well known Kimberley personages were depicted, in the words of the bibliographer, Sydney Mendelssohn, with 'the flimsiest veil of disguise'.¹⁴²

In South Africa as it is, Statham's second book, published in 1897, the writer attacked the imperial power and 'the intrusion of the millionaire, the living incarnation of the spirit of Mammon into South African politics'. There was, Statham argued, 'no kind of machinery which the incarnation

Secretary for Colonies, Evelyn Ashley. This prevented Statham from reinstating himself in Britain.

141. F.R. Statham, Mr Magnus, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1896.

142. S. Mendelssohn, South African Bibliography, vol. 11, second edition, London, Arco Publications, 1957, p.423. Worger's study of early Kimberley confirms De Beer's domination of the city which was a company town. As he puts it: 'By the early to middle 1890s the Directors of De Beers were firmly in control of municipal and parliamentary politics in Kimberley and one of their number, Rhodes, had won the premiership of the Cape Colony; the mineworkers black and white, were under the strict control of their employers, the blacks in fenced and guarded institutions, the whites economically dependent during the period of continuing white labour surplus, and the town itself was reliant for its continued existence on the politics pursued by those who ran the industry. Kimberley was a company town.' W.H. Worger, 'The Making of a Monopoly', p.312.

of Mammon is ashamed to employ in furthering its aims.¹⁴³ In this work Statham referred bluntly to what he termed 'the political tyranny of De Beers'.¹⁴⁴ The consolidation of that company 'with the assistance of the Rothschilds ... meant the millionaire made his influence felt in every corner of the social and political structure'.¹⁴⁵

Statham's observation that Rothschild had a dominant interest in De Beers during the early years of the company¹⁴⁶ had been commented on by numerous observers at the time.¹⁴⁷ The connection no doubt enhanced Statham's conspiratorial view of international capital, a view doubtlessly shared by others.¹⁴⁸ For Statham, the Uitlander's struggle for the franchise was a mere ruse used by the capitalists to gain power. He believed this was well known to the Volksraad which, according to Statham, knew

143. F.R. Statham, South Africa as it is, p.196.

144. Ibid, p.197.

145. Ibid.

146. This is confirmed in D. Innes, Anglo, pp.35-36.

147. See for example, J.C. Ridpath and E.S. Ellis, The Story of South Africa, New York, Chicago, New England Company, 1899, p.231 and K.F. Bellairs, The Witwatersrand Goldfields : A Trip to Johannesburg and Back, London, T.P.Chapman, 1899, pp.23-24.

148. See, for example, O. Schreiner and S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, London, Unwin, 1896. It was that same venom towards 'rapacious' capitalism and more specifically Rhodes' exploits in Rhodesia in the 1890s that inspired Olive Schreiner's, Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland (London, Unwin, 1897).

very well that giving 'political privileges to the foreign residents in Johannesburg' would simply be a means of allowing Johannesburg's 'financial corporations' to do what De Beers had done in Kimberley.¹⁴⁹

Although making no allusions to specifically 'Jewish finance', Statham's conspiratorial view of big business needs to be noted. It reflects the massive impact made upon contemporaries by the Kimberley mining magnates, an impact reinforced by the Jameson Raid and the burgeoning power of Johannesburg's 'Randlords'. By the time Statham's South Africa as it is was published, all were aware of Kruger's struggle against the might of international capital and British imperialism in tandem. The prominent Transvaler, Percy Fitzpatrick, captured the sombre mood when he wrote to mining magnate, Julius Wernher, of 'the bitterness of feeling and the distrust of capitalists which obtain here....'¹⁵⁰

As tensions mounted between the South African Republic and Britain over the franchise question, the role of the financier moved to the centre-stage. Republicans in both the Transvaal and Free State recognised the power of

149. Statham, South Africa as it is, p.279.

150. P. Fitzpatrick to J. Wernher 12.12.1898 in A.H. Duminy and W.R. Guest (eds.), Fitzpatrick. South African Politician selected papers 1888-1906, Johannesburg, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976, p.171.

international finance and its connections with British imperialism. Boer leaders had not forgotten the lessons of the Jameson Raid. Free State's President Steyn, for instance, characterised Cecil John Rhodes 'as the capitalist who, under the guise of imperialism, sucked the life-blood from the veins of the working man.'¹⁵¹ His words were greeted with approbation by Johannesburg's satirical weekly, the Mail and Skeptic. 'Lippert, Lewis and Marks and Netherlanders', it exclaimed, 'are the curse of the country.'¹⁵²

English-speaking labour spokesmen and anti-imperialists voiced similar apprehensions about what they considered to be the malevolent intentions of Johannesburg's 'Randlords'. Speaking to an audience of pro-Boers shortly before the outbreak of war, one Stiglingh reminded them that at the time of the Jameson Raid, 'a certain book of Lionel Phillips [a prominent Jewish 'Randlord'] was found in which it was stated that the franchise was not wanted, but the MINERAL RIGHTS in the shape of a monopoly which would have made the country a second Kimberley.' The 'so-called imperialists', he claimed, 'were getting a better franchise deal than they received in their own country.' This was patently an allusion to Jews being the key conspirators, for he added that before 1870 'no Jew could have the franchise in England

151. Quoted in Review of Reviews, 1.3.1898.

152. Mail and Skeptic, March, 1898.

....¹⁵³ J.T. Bain similarly recognised, as the source of tension, 'a huge capitalist conspiracy organized by financial magnates who were representatives of different countries.'¹⁵⁴

The conspiratorial view of international finance was most clearly enunciated by J.A. Hobson, the Manchester Guardian's correspondent in Johannesburg. Hobson, whose writings influenced the pro-Boers in England and the views of Lenin on imperialism, went beyond a mere condemnation of financiers. In his view, it was specifically Johannesburg's Jews who wielded inordinate power: 'The entire mining industry with the partial exception of Consolidated Gold Fields', he informed his editor, 'is in their hands, the Dynamite Monopoly, the illicit liquor traffic are theirs, they and Rhodes own or control the press, manipulate the share market, and run the chief commercial business in Johannesburg and Pretoria. These men will rig the politics when they have the franchise. Many of them have taken English names and the extent of Jew power is thus partially concealed. I am not exaggerating one bit. I think I can prove it.'¹⁵⁵

153. Transvaal Leader, 16.6.1899. As it happened, Jews had the franchise in England long before 1870.

154. South African News, 21.9.1899.

155. Quoted in B. Porter, Critics of Empire. British Radical attitudes to colonialism in Africa 1895-1914, London, Macmillan, 1968, p.201. Hobson was clearly, as H. H. Mitchell argues, 'caught in the clutches of the anti-Jewish stereotype, a stereotype that depicted the Jew

On the eve of war Hobson was even more strident, attempting at all costs to expose the preponderance and power of Johannesburg's Jews:

If one takes recent figures from the census, there appears to be no less than seven thousand Jews in Johannesburg, but the experience of the street repeatedly exposes the fallacy of figures. The shop fronts and business houses are sufficient to convince one of the large presence of the chosen people. If any doubt remains, a walk outside the Exchange, where in the street "between the chains", the financial side of the gold business is transacted, will dispel it. Most of these Jews figure as British subjects, though many are in fact, German and Russian Jews, who have come to Africa after a brief sojourn in England. The rich, vigorous and energetic financial and commercial families are chiefly German Jews.

I lay stress upon this fact because, while everyone knows the Jews are strong, their real strength is much underestimated. Though figures are so misleading, it is worthwhile to mention that the directory of Johannesburg shows sixty-eight Cohens against twenty-eight Jones and fifty-three Browns. The Jews mostly took little part in the Uitlander agitation, they let other do that sort of work. But since half of the land and nine-tenths of the wealth of the Transvaal claimed for the Uitlanders are chiefly theirs, they will

as 'the homeless wandering Jew, mysterious and shadowy, bound by tradition and secrecy to all Jews, plotting to carve out one more area of the world in his ageless quest for universal domination.' See H.H. Mitchell, 'Hobson Revisited' Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. 26, 1965, p.397. The idea of Jews exploiting South Africa and having little commitment to the country went back to at least 1896. In that year the Jewish communal leader, Samuel Goldreich, was accused in the Transvaal Volksraad of making money and taking it out of the country. The Star, 26.7.1896. According to Rabbi Hertz, Kruger had claimed during the Anglo-Boer War that Jews were neither patriots nor soldiers; they were cowards. Simonowitz, 'The Background to Jewish Immigration', p.79.

be chief gainers by any settlement advantageous to the Uitlanders.¹⁵⁶

Even a supporter of the imperial connection such as J.X. Merriman recognised the congruence between international finance and British motives. 'War to you', Merriman informed the British parliamentarian Lord Bryce, 'would be an incident of what you call 'Empire'; to us it would mean absolute ruin, financially and socially, undertaken at the bidding of a subsidized press in order that those who are bursting with riches may grow richer.'¹⁵⁷ Once war began, Merriman was even more condemnatory, describing the conflict as 'a scandalous plot of money-seekers using the British Government as a catspaw backed by the pure Jingo practical spirit.'¹⁵⁸ Merriman was merely echoing what would become a veritable flood of anti-capitalist propaganda on the part of Britain's radical pro-Boers.¹⁵⁹ Labour weeklies such as Robert Blachford's Clarion, Keir Hardie's Labour Leader and W.M. Thompson's Reynolds Newspaper, condemned the war at

156. J.A. Hobson, The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects, London, Nisbet, 1900, p.11. This antisemitic polemic was based on Hobson's reports to the Manchester Guardian.

157. Quoted in Lewsen, John X. Merriman, p.209.

158. Quoted in correspondence from Campbell Bannerman to James Bryce, 10.11.1899. See J.S. Galbraith, 'The Pamphlet Campaign in the Boer War', The Journal of Modern History, Vol. XXIV, June 1952.

159. See A. Davey, The British Pro-Boers, 1877-1902, Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1978.

every opportunity.¹⁶⁰ Britain's Fabian society too was critical of imperial motives. No less than Hobson or the Clafion, it condemned 'the influence exerted over imperial councils by the passions of the newspaper correspondents, and the cosmopolitan capitalists of the Rand.'¹⁶¹ Cosmopolitan of course, referred to Jewish capitalists. These sentiments were, as we saw, best captured by J.H. Hobson in his book, The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects.¹⁶² Put crisply, the book postulated the notion of a war fought in the interests of a 'small group of

160. See Porter, Critics of Empire, p.101.

161. Ibid, p.114. In London, a play 'Paul and Joseph or God and Mammon in the Transvaal', included neologisms such as "Jewhannesburg" and Lord "Roughchild". Hirschfield, 'The British Left', p.106.

162. J.A. Hobson, The War in South Africa. The blatant anti-Jewish nature of Hobson's writing was also evident in his contributions to H.J. Ogden's propaganda collection, The War against the Dutch Republic in South Africa: 'When the richness of the "deep level" became known in 1892, the rush of outsiders became more impetuous, and large numbers of German, Polish and Russian Jews entered the country, lowering the average character of the population'. J.A. Hobson, 'Before and After the Jameson Raid', in H.J. Ogden (ed.), The War Against the Dutch Republic in South Africa, p.16. In a lecture delivered in Newport, England (25.9.1899), F.R. Statham similarly outlined the history of capitalist conspiracy in South Africa and explained the source of the country's problems in the Kimberley diamond mines. 'Take note of the enormous power and influences at work, look at the interests that become involved, and you will better understand the necessity of grappling at the present moment with the conspiracy that aims at enriching a small band of speculators at the cost of the British Empire. F.R. Statham, South Africa and the Transvaal. The Story of a Conspiracy, Westminster, Transvaal Committee, 1899. Cited in Porter, Critics of Empire, p.63.

international financiers, chiefly German in origin and Jewish in race'.¹⁶³

The South African War, then, popularised the concept of war-mongering international - and often specifically Jewish - financiers. As noted, this critique had been most vociferously articulated by England's pro-Boer lobby and its paradigm was well received in South Africa.¹⁶⁴ In Cape Town, for instance, 'non-combatant Uitlanders' began to expound the theme that imperial officials were unduly influenced by capitalists',¹⁶⁵ and caricatures of corpulent and semitic-looking capitalists, relishing the spoils of war began to adorn the pages of popular journals.¹⁶⁶ However,

163. Hobson, The War in South Africa, p.189.

164. According to Ruth First and Ann Scott, Olive Schreiner had actually helped to inspire Hobson's thesis. See R. First and A. Scott, Olive Schreiner. A Biography, London, The Women's Press, 1989, pp.240-41. In view of Schreiner's position on the Jews, it is unlikely that the antisemitic component of Hobson's work can be attributed to her.

165. D.J.N. Denoon, A Grand Illusion. The failure of Imperial policy in the Transvaal Colony during the period of reconstruction 1900-1905, London, Longmans, 1973, p.15.

166. See for example, The Owl, Xmas November, December, 1901. In an article in the Manchester Guardian, Olive Schreiner's husband, S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner, warned that the results of the war would be 'to hand us whites over to the domination of a largely foreign capitalist gang who will reduce the public life of South Africa to that of Kimberley (a lower level does not exist), to hand the natives over to the same men, who will virtually enslave them, and to alienate a love it should have been the pride of Great Britain to preserve, and the preservation of which is a strength to the Empire'. Manchester Guardian, 28.3.1900. Cited

the most vivid indication that Britain's anti-Jewish rhetoric had penetrated South Africa and been extended in the process, was evident in letters written by Jews to newspapers denying charges of a 'Jewish conspiracy' behind the war. When, for example, one of Hobson's articles was quoted with approbation in the South African News,¹⁶⁷ Manfred Nathan, a journalist and advocate, rose to his co-religionists defence. He could not accept Hobson's suggestion 'that when a scheme for self government of the Transvaal is formulated, the giving of the franchise and general political power to Jews should be restricted in some way or other.'¹⁶⁸ Nathan similarly attacked 'Australian MLA' who informed the Cape Times that he 'would deeply deplore that either the Transvaal or Orange Free State should have responsible government for some years to come as I am strongly of the opinion that the capitalist Jewish gang would have too much power.' In a letter to the Johannesburg Gazette, one Dr. B. Liknaitsky complained that 'in different Natal and Orange Free State newspapers anonymous letters against Jews appeared.' He pointed out that Jewish refugees from the Gold fields were suffering no less than Christian refugees, and that those who remained on the Rand had behaved in a most correct manner. He contended, moreover,

in Ogden, The War Against the Dutch Republic in South Africa, p.158.

167. South African News, 16.12.1899.

168. London Jewish Chronicle, 12.1.1899.

that: 'Some crimes have been committed but the overwhelming majority of Jews were law abiding [and] would be the first to hail with the utmost joy the advent of a regime that would put an end to those multi-malpractices that were rampant in this part of the world.'¹⁶⁹

It required little effort, of course, for Boers to accept the view that Britain's war motives were inspired by economic greed. These motives were relentlessly and compellingly unveiled in the anti-imperialist tract, A Century of Wrong.¹⁷⁰ The book vigorously denounced the 'greed of capitalist speculators'¹⁷¹ and the 'sterile, empty, soulless'¹⁷² chauvinism of British jingoism. While no specific mention was made of Jews, it can reasonably be assumed that their purported influence was inferred by the readership. As Lord Kitchener reported during the war, many Afrikaners were 'absurdly afraid of getting into the hands of certain Jews who no doubt wield great influence in this country.'¹⁷³

169. Johannesburg Gazette, 26.12.1900.

170. F.W. Reitz, A Century of Wrong, London, Review of Reviews Office, 1900. The book translated from Dutch into English was actually written by Jacob Roos and Jan Smuts, but issued in the name of F.W. Reitz, the Transvaal State Secretary. See L.M. Thompson, The Political Mythology of Apartheid, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985, p.33.

171. Reitz, p.37.

172. Ibid, p42.

173. Quoted in D.J.N. Denoon, 'Capitalist Influence and the Transvaal Government During the Crown Colony Period,

VII

The war had resulted in a huge exodus of refugees, including Jews, from the Transvaal to the coastal ports. Within months of the outbreak of hostilities, Cape Town's Jewish population swelled from five or six to ten thousand.¹⁷⁴ The newcomers, many of them impecunious, aroused concern and even resentment and the British High Commissioner, Alfred Milner, was quick to inform the Secretary of State, Joseph Chamberlain, of the situation. 'Many of the refugees', he reported, 'are not only penniless but belong to a very undesirable class. They include the loafers and hangers on of society, and those who made a precarious living by mean and in some cases illegal trades - such as the buying of stolen goods and the sale of liquor to natives. A great number of them are the low class of Jews known as Peruvians'¹⁷⁵

1900-1906', The Historical Journal, XI, 2, 1968, p.301.

174. London Jewish Chronicle, 22.10.1899. According to van Heyningen approximately 20 000 to 25 000 refugees arrived in Cape Town in the latter half of 1899. Van Heyningen, 'Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1910', p.286. This would mean Jewish refugees comprised between 20 and 25 per cent of all refugees.
175. Quoted in D. Cammack, 'The Politics of Discontent : the Grievances of the Uitlander Refugees, 1899-1902', Journal of Southern African Studies, vol. 8, no. 2, April, 1982, p.248.

Milner's wife, then Lady Cecil, was similarly unimpressed with the quality of refugees. The worst of these, she recalled, 'were the Jews who had come to South Africa from the ghettos of Eastern Europe (they were known as Peruvians), and had taken British nationality and proposed to live on this and on their wits. They remained a heavy burden for as long as the war lasted, a curious people, in rags, with their belongings in untidy bundles and yet it was often found that they were quite well off, and the possessors of valuables.'¹⁷⁶ As Van Heyningen points out, Lady Cecil's remarks contained 'all the blend of dislike, resentment, prejudice and ignorance which the Jewish refugees generally aroused.'¹⁷⁷

Van Heyningen might have added 'untruths', for despite selfless benevolence from Jewish individuals and institutions, the refugees remained conspicuously poverty stricken.¹⁷⁸ Their arrival furthermore aggravated an already serious housing shortage¹⁷⁹ and in a city acutely

176. V.G. Milner, My Picture Gallery 1886-1901, by the Viscontess Milner, London, John Murray, 1951, p.138.

177. E Van Heyningen, 'Refugees and Relief in Cape Town', in C.Saunders and H. Phillips (eds.), Studies in the History of Cape Town, vol. 3, Cape Town, University of Cape Town, 1980, p.81.

178. They were also conspicuous in Port Elizabeth where, according to The Star 'boarding houses will not take them in'. The Star, 9.10.1899.

179. Van Heyningen, 'Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1910', p.287.

sensitive to the dangers of overcrowding and poor sanitation,¹⁸⁰ these newcomers posed a potential health hazard. Indeed the appalling living and health standards of the Jews once again featured in the Public Health Report for 1901 of Wynberg's District Surgeon, Dr. H. Claude Wright: 'Their houses are filthy in the extreme' and the children of '80 per cent of that persuasion bathed once a month', he noted. Wright recommended a 'very rigid supervision' over their health standards when dealing with the dairy products they vendored.¹⁸¹ One year later his medical report reiterated the same concerns:

Dwellings of the Jewish community are much overcrowded and ill-ventilated. These people herd together and overcrowd to an alarming extent. They are exceedingly afraid of fresh air and ventilation, and close every aperture in their rooms, notably when they have any illness. Their mode of living is objectionable and dirty in the extreme. They seldom or ever bath and their bodies are covered with vermin. They therefore remain a sickly crowd, entirely oblivious to decency and sanitation. Many of their habitations are unfit to be used as such, and as they are large vendors of food, some serious notice should be taken of their mode of life and preparation and storage of articles of food. Some time ago I came across a manufacturer of casein or cream cheese at a Jewish milk vendors place. It would baffle description to depict the filth of that place in which the trade was carried on. I cannot too strongly denounce the state of affairs, and express my emphatic opinion that strict supervision should be given this very undesirable

180. Van Heyningen, 'Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1914', chapters five and six and the Cape Times (weekly) 1.11.1899.

181. G66-1902 Cape of Good Hope, Report on Public Health for the Year 1901, Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly.

class, look at him from any point of political or sanitary economy you like.¹⁸²

Dr. Wright's revulsion was widely shared. A medical expert, Professor W.J. Simpson, went so far as to identify Jewish living conditions as a contributory factor to a major plague epidemic in 1901.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, despite these vicious antisemitic sentiments, Jews did not receive differential treatment during the plague. In other words, respect for the Jewish establishment, coupled with their 'whiteness', remained a crucial factor as indeed did expectations of 'regenerating' the newcomers.

Besides associating Jews with insanitary living conditions, caricatures linked the Jew to a range of Cape Town's social evils. The Owl was particularly malicious, its journalistic invective comparing favourably with anti-Jewish journalism in Europe at this time.¹⁸⁴ The Owl's German-born cartoonist,

182. G66-1903 Cape of Good Hope, Report on Public Health for the Year 1902, Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly.

183. See Professor W.J. Simpson, 'Lecture on Plague', cited in van Heyningen, 'Public Health and Society in Cape Town 1880-1910', p.302.

184. Its crude stereotyping and journalism shock the modern-day reader, sensitive to the consequences of prejudice and bigotry. At that time, however, this Cape Town weekly took exception to charges of antisemitism. Indeed, it argued that a range of ethnic groups fell within its scope. Any cursory reading, however, demonstrates the 'Peruvian' to have been its favourite target.

Heinrich Egersdorfer,¹⁸⁵ was especially crude in his depictions of the Jew. 'The Evil of the Hour' and 'Curses of Cape Town' were just two of his many cartoons which reflected his violently anti-Jewish sentiments.¹⁸⁶ But The Owl was not alone in its coarse stereotyping. Another periodical, The Telephone, claimed that the Jew was prepared to 'do his own brudder'.¹⁸⁷ Even a respectable daily such as the Cape Times had few qualms about vulgar ethnic stereotyping as evident in the following outburst against Yiddish-speaking fish merchants in Kalk Bay:

A disreputable-looking coterie of the parasites of the social fabric, standing a little apart, conversing in a gibberish of mid-Europe, bare-legged, frowzy headed, shifty eyed, and nervously sharp, ready to pounce upon the rough handed sons of the seas as they come to land... The keen-witted specimen of the lower species of the immigrant Hebrew race in unvarnished guise and unreserved demeanour ... Rapacious foreign Hebrew who never risks his own life or safety ... indignantly asks in pig-English "Call that a fish? Vy, I will haf to give it away" ... The Peruvian soon pockets his profit, and so he prospers from day to day.¹⁸⁸

Hostility towards the 'Peruvian' Jew which had existed in Cape Town before the Anglo-Boer War had obviously been

185. For a brief account of his life see E. Rosenthal, Heinrich Egersdorfer, an old-time sketch book, Cape Town, Nasionale Boekhandel, 1960.

186. See The Owl, 1.1.1901 and 17.10.1902. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, pp.352-53.

187. The Telephone, 13.1.1900.

188. Cape Times, 20.3.1902.

exacerbated by the arrival of so many eastern European refugees. 'A most undesirable crowd', was the way Ashendon, Cape Town's city engineer in charge of relief, described them. They were, he reported, 'incapable on the whole as labourers, not physically but mentally, for they look upon work as they do upon water, as a luxury, not often to be indulged in' One of Ashendon's overseers considered them 'more like wild beasts in a tent than human beings.' These people, concluded the engineer 'are legitimately the pariahs of society and should by right be under police protection, not the public works.'¹⁸⁹

Similar attitudes towards eastern European Jews were evident in the Transvaal where British administrators placed 'eastern European and Russian Jews' well up on their unwanted list when considering the question of returning refugees.¹⁹⁰ Colonial officials, however, were instructed not to mention the word Jew in their policy formulations and focused instead upon class. There is no doubt, however, that 'Peruvian' Jews were their target. As Milner's Political Secretary, G.V. Fiddes, put it, 'the Peruvians

189. Quoted in van Heyningen, 'Refugees and Relief in Cape Town, 1899-1902,' p.92.

190. See D.R. Cammack, 'Class, Politics and War : A Socio-Economic Study of the Uitlanders of the Witwatersrand, 1897-1902', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of California, 1983, p.574.

are a wholly objectionable element, and the more of them that can be sent down the better.'¹⁹¹

The refugee influx had clearly consolidated the negative dimension of the Jewish stereotype. As pedlars, shopkeepers and impecunious drifters, they augmented the knave image, crafted on the diamond fields, the Witwatersrand and the rural areas of the southern and eastern Cape. In addition, the image of the 'cosmopolitan financier' introduced a new dimension to the stereotype - that of Jewish power; this idea would gain momentum in the twentieth century. And yet, notwithstanding the 'Peruvian' and 'cosmopolitan financier' stereotypes, the image of the 'gentleman Jew' was not obliterated. The reader will recall the many instances of support for Jews and distinctions made between the acculturated and 'Peruvian' Jew. Substantial goodwill certainly remained and Jewish contributions to cultural and socio-economic life were respected at least in some quarters. When the South African Jewish Chronicle was established in February of 1902, for instance, numerous Cape newspapers praised the 'influential role' played by South African Jews¹⁹² and their 'abnormally developed faculty for business.'¹⁹³ Like 'the Chosen People everywhere', noted

191. Cammack, 'Class, Politics and War', pp.574-575.

192. Somerset Budget, 12.2.1902. Quoted in S A J C, 7.3.1902.

193. Worcester Standard, 15.2.1902. Quoted in S A J C, 7.3.1902.

the Fort Beaufort Advocate, South Africa's Jews were 'enterprising, energetic and a business-like race ... supreme in finance and great commerce.'¹⁹⁴ They were also, noted the newspaper, prominent in law, medicine, philosophy, history and had indeed 'produced great soldiers.'¹⁹⁵

Notwithstanding such comments, the positive image of the Jew had been substantially eroded. Increasingly the popular view embraced only the seemingly dishonest eastern European Jew and ignored his bourgeois and acculturated counterpart. Dr M. J. Farrely, author of The Settlement After the War, was certainly correct when he expressed concern 'about the danger of confounding the mass of the Jewish community in South Africa with a few criminals!' 'There are', he pointed out, 'criminals in every community and of course there are

194. Unlike eighteenth century European 'emancipationists', the Fort Beaufort Advocate suggested that Jewish predilections for commerce - a product of persecution and discrimination - were unchangeable. Even becoming pastoralists, as envisaged by the incipient Zionist movement, 'would no longer bring contentment or prosperity.'Fort Beaufort Advocate, 12.2.1902. Quoted in S A J C, 7.3.1902.

195. Quoted in S A J C, 7.3.1902. In England, Jews were praised for their war efforts. Milner, for instance, publicly commended the Jewish war contribution (London Jewish Chronicle, 11.7.1901) as did the Colonial Secretary, Chamberlain, in an address to Anglo-Jews in London. Cape Times, 26.9.1901. Baden-Powell shared these sentiment and reminded the audience of the Jewish Lads Brigade in London that he and his Chief of Staff had Jewish orderlies during the South Africa War. According to the hero of Mafeking, both were 'frist rate reliable men who would stick to me through thick and thin.' S A J C, 25.2.1910.

some among the Jews: but that is no reason why the entire Hebrew community should be identified, say with illicit liquor dealers, any more than the tricks which a few wandering Jewish pedlars used to play on the Boers a generation ago, were a legitimate excuse for attacking the whole community then.¹⁹⁶

Farrely's concerns were evidently shared by Rabbi Joseph Hertz. A year after the conclusion of the Anglo-Boer War, in an address inaugurating a new representative Jewish institution - the Jewish Board of Deputies for Transvaal and Natal - the Rabbi lamented that:

no community in recent years has been slandered as the Johannesburg Jew has. A few journalists as clever as they were unscrupulous, broadcast the misinformation that as a class, the Jews of this town were illicit liquor dealers, and that they and they alone were given to this form of law breaking. By dint of constant repetition everyone in and out of South Africa came to believe it¹⁹⁷

196. S A J C, 18.7.1902

197. S A J C, 7.8.1903.

CHAPTER FOUR

FROM PARIAH TO PARVENU : THE MAKING OF A
STEREOTYPE

I

Rabbi Hertz's unease about negative stereotyping and its potential dangers for the Jewish community was well founded. In the post-war period, anti-alien rhetoric and especially the debate and legislation surrounding Yiddish-speaking immigration into the Cape Colony,¹ confirmed a widely shared unfavourable image of the eastern European Jew. The latter's vulnerability was further exposed by the impact of capitalist transformations brought about by imperial interventions. Local merchants now found themselves

1. See Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, chapters two and three, passim. Anti-Jewish rhetoric in the Cape Colony was sufficiently serious to provoke Jewish figures in the Cape Colony to establish a Jewish Board of Deputies. Modelled on the British Jewish of Deputies, the organisation was specifically designed to safeguard the interests of the community. See Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, chapters four and five. In the Transvaal a similar body was established to deal with Jewish immigration and a vigilance society was founded to deal with prostitution and the so-called 'white slave traffic'. See E.J. Bristow, Prostitution and Prejudice. The Jewish Fight against White Slavery 1870-1939, New York, Schocken Books, 1983. In Johannesburg the South African Zionist Federation, founded in 1898, considered anti-Jewish rhetoric in 1907 sufficiently serious to convene a special meeting to discuss the 'wave of anti-Semitism passing through the Country....' S A J C, 8.3.1907.

marginalized,² unprotected and certainly in no mood to compete with 'undercutting' and 'dishonest' eastern European and Asiatic traders. In the countryside sustained drought (1903-08) slowed down rural recovery and exacerbated the poor white problem. In these conditions, the visibly alien Jew - often perceived as successful and upwardly mobile - was an easily identifiable target upon which to vent anger and frustrations. The 'anti-Semitic microbes penetrated here too', lamented N.D. Hoffmann, the Lithuanian-born Yiddish journalist who, having anticipated a free society, was not sanguine about the future:

The local press is already worrying its head off as to whether they [the Jews] are suited to the country! ... Here our hygiene is found wanting - there our economy is not to their liking. They cannot bear it that we buy properties, that we found wholesale business undertakings.... In brief even in the country where we thought we would be able to live peaceably we are disillusioned, as we are still being looked upon with disdain, hatred and mockery.³

Such prejudice was exacerbated as economic recession in the Cape Colony (1902-04) and Transvaal (1906-08) generated an acute xenophobia. 'Peruvians', however, were not the only targets of scurrilous and crude stereotyping.

2. For a glimpse into the thwarted aspirations of the local bourgeoisie see B. Bozzoli, 'The Origins, Development and Ideology of Local Manufacturing in South Africa', Journal of Southern African Studies, vol. 1, no. 2, April, 1975.

3. Grosman, 'A Study in the Trends and Tendencies of Hebrew and Yiddish Writings', p.188.

'Continental', and more especially, Asiatics, were now disparaged. To some extent this deflected attention away from the eastern European Jew, but, for many, the latter remained unwelcome and beyond redemption - albeit the victims of historical circumstance and misfortune. This view was succinctly explained by the South African Review:

... the Russian Jew, small blame to him, has been debased by centuries of tyranny to such an extent that it will take generations to work off the brand of slave. Look at the hang-dog faces, the bowed shoulders, and the shambling walk of specimens of the race who are landing here, and ask whether they are "men". Of course they are not. They are hopelessly demoralised and to make self respecting citizens out of the great bulk of them (there are of course rare exceptions) is impossible.... Now it must be clearly understood that the Jew is not objected to because he is a Jew. As a matter of fact his religion makes him a better product of his circumstances than he otherwise would be. But from no fault of his own he has, in certain countries, been shamefully persecuted, and the iron has ground out of his soul all his manliness and every quality which goes to make a good citizen.⁴

It seems ironic that this effete and emasculated import was perceived as a threat to South African society.

While anti-alienism was strongest in the Cape Colony,⁵ opposition to the newcomers permeated beyond the Colony's borders. Johannesburg's Transvaal Leader, for instance,

4. South African Review, 6.2.1903.

5. See Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, chapter three.

echoed the South African Review when it recommended a 'quarenteen' [sic] for the newcomers:

Broken by centuries of espionage and oppression, with every fibre of manhood beaten out of them, ignorant of how to obtain justice, save by bribes, it is indubitable that they stand in need of a certain quarenteen [sic] ere they become valuable citizens of a free community. An Englishman of the middle ages, with his turbulent and lawless instincts were he suddenly sat down in our midst, could not assimilate.⁶

The unassimilability of the newcomers was confirmed on a daily basis as thousands of eastern Europeans entered the country.⁷ Their dishevelled appearance, exotic language and alien manner rudely threatened bourgeois sensitivities and standards. A 'large proportion of the immigrants', according to Dr. A.J. Gregory, Medical Officer of Health for the Cape Colony, 'were unsatisfactory in important respects.' They were, he noted, 'ill-provided, indifferently educated, unable to speak or understand any language but Yiddish, of inferior physique, often dirty in their habits, persons and clothing and most unreliable in their statements.'⁸ The Cape Colony's Agent-General in

6. Transvaal Leader, 29.5.1903.

7. Between 1880 and 1910 approximately 40 000 Jews entered the country. In the Union's first census published in 1911 Jews numbered 46 926. Census for the Union of South Africa 1911, Pretoria, The Government Printing and Stationery Office, 1913 and Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, p.5.

London, T.E. Fuller, was similarly unimpressed with the quality of the newcomers whom he described as 'offensively dirty' and of 'a very low class.'⁹ Fuller warned that such immigrants would 'scarcely prove an acquisition to the Colony....'¹⁰ These were certainly not the sort of immigrants envisaged by Milner in his efforts to ensure British cultural and political dominance in South Africa.¹¹

At the height of Cape Town's economic recession, it was not uncommon for alien Jews to be described as 'the scum of Europe'.¹² The 'lowest class of Russian, Polish and German Jews, filthy and evil smelling', was the way one H. S. Smith (in a letter to the Cape Times) described the

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8. G63-04 Report on the Working of the Immigration Act 1902 - 1904, Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly, Cape Colony.
 9. London Jewish Chronicle, 24.7.1903.
 10. South African Review, 25.3.1904.
 11. It should be noted that Milner was even unhappy with the British 'tonnie' as an immigrant and wanted instead a massive influx of 'good class' British-speakers. See T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa. A Modern History, p.227 and M. Streak, Lord Milner's Immigration Policy for the Transvaal 1897-1905, Johannesburg, Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, chapter one. Natal's Colonial Secretary, C.J. Smythe, put it even more crisply when discussing the question of Yiddish-speaking immigrants: 'I am sure that hon. members will agree with me that much as we may desire white immigrants in South Africa, that is a class of immigrant that we do not desire....' Natal Legislative Assembly Debates, 25.6.1903.
 12. See for instance the cartoon, 'The Coming of the Scum', The Owl, 6.5.1904. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, p. 354.

newcomers 'passing through the dock gates'.¹³ Such sentiments were corroborated and further inflamed by a vicious brand of journalism which included grotesque caricaturing. Henry Farmer's description of 'Fagin', whom he identified at the Southampton quayside, encapsulates the sort of emotion and venom aroused by the eastern European Jew:

I saw him from the quay. He might have been a somewhat younger edition of Charles Dickens' Fagin His nose was hooked most semitically. His unkempt beard was red. His bowler hat with generations dust upon it was dented in. His frock coat was undesirably greasy. The bottoms of his trousers were frayed. He looked worth no more than the clothes in which he stood. He was bound for South Africa.

Farmer's prejudices were confirmed by a ship steward who informed him that when the immigrants underclothes were 'worn out and black they shove "em out of the porthole".¹⁴ Little wonder, then, that Farmer was appalled by 'Fagin', 'still muttering in Yiddish, but grinning and showing unwashed teeth.'¹⁵

Jewish distinctiveness - both physical and cultural - was reinforced by ghetto-like neighbourhoods, in which Jews,

13. Cape Times, 5.2.1904.

14. A similar story was related by Rothmell, President of the Cape Town and District Trades and Labour Council. See Cape Times, 17.10.1902.

15. H. Farmer, 'What is wrong with South Africa.' Quoted in S A J C, 30.10.1908.

like all immigrants congregated. The alien ambience of one particular neighbourhood of Cape Town - District Six - made an enormous impact:

The impression that will prevail in my mind is rows of shabby and unclean shops whose walls and signboards are sprinkled with Yiddish characters, sloping streets crowded with coloured people, Indians, Russians and Poles; narrow lanes where little black and brown babies tumble amidst the discarded rags and the empty canisters flung out of the houses.... I remember the shuffling gait, the hunted crafty look and the greasy dress of the Jewish refugee. I recall the glimpses of indescribable dirt and squalor that I had through open doors and windows. I recollect the dark and heavy smelling shops of the Indians at the corners of the lanes and streets; the group of men that stand around the counters of the tailors and the jewellers holding debates in Yiddish, the lean and ragged little children that rush from miserable and secret lanes into the crowded streets, or crawl out of the doors of the mean houses to stretch their bare brown limbs in the dry gutters, the hard white faces of the wives and the daughters of the hunted Russians, sitting on shabby balconies or lounging against the shop doors....

The writer went on to describe Caledon Street 'with its innumerable shops, all of them small and shabby.' Yiddish-script characters abounded, while in a:

dying and cleaning shop several gents are chattering in Yiddish whilst waiting for their finery.... And there are loungers - it is Saturday afternoon and also the Jewish sabbath. In a nameless lane, there is Tolstoi leaning against a water shoot, looking up at the balcony in Constitution Street. I am shattered by the very image of Fagin. Heaven knows but that he may be the most gentle of men; that nameless

persecution may have brought that look of the hunted beast in his eye.¹⁶

Helen Blackmore described similar scenes when writing about immigrant-crowded streets in the eastern parts of Cape Town:

...those streets full of squalor, offensive to the senses, where vice of every description seems to lurk behind the greasy doors, the filthy window curtains. The Jewish people of the quarter had closed their miserable shops and were sitting on their doorsteps, the women in their tawdry silks and laces, the children with their tousled curls and large eyes full of knowledge, played beside their mother, or gambolled in company with ragged coloured urchins upon the garbage heap that blocked the entrances to the alleys. The men were not in evidence, but as one passed the low doors, the guttural voices intoning the Talmud, or raised in argument reached the ear.¹⁷

Another writer noted that Jewish shops 'where neat and black pudding are sold are chiefly remarkable for the large number of men who sit about in continuous and I hope edifying conversation and a good deal of gambling goes on in what are apparently eating houses.'¹⁸ For many, then, the alien Jew - different in dress, manner, language and physiognomy -

16. The Cape 3.1.1908. For an account of Jewish life in District Six, Cape Town, see Feldman, 'Social Life of Cape Town Jewry', pp.19-22.

17. The Cape, 6.8.1909.

18. Sunday Times, 10.3.1907. These representations were not unlike those of Goethe in his classic description of Frankfurt's Jewish quarter. For Goethe and many others, the ghetto, as Aschheim puts it, 'seemed to concentrate all the negative aspects of Jewish life within its boundaries. Aschheim, Brothers and Strangers, p 6.

evoked images ranging from obscurantism and even piety, to outright debasement.

The picture was much the same in Johannesburg where by 1904, Jews numbered 10 800 or approximately 12 percent of the entire white population.¹⁹ Most of the newcomers congregated in the poorer sections of the city, keeping alive the pre-war association of 'Peruvians' with filth and vice. Even the S A J C noted that 'besides the "old coolie" location, it would be no loss to the town if the Jewish quarter in Marshall street were removed. The area compares favourably with the ghettos of London and Manchester and other large cities.'²⁰ In a Sunday Times article on the 'squalor and scum' of Johannesburg, 'Peruvian' Jews were prominent: 'In the early morning, even before sunrise you may see the Peruvian milkman starting on his morning rounds. Some of the milkcarts also carry sacks of laden bottles. Probably these contain an inferior sort of milk intended for Kaffir consumption.'²¹

19. TKP 169 Census of the Transvaal Colony and Swaziland - 1904. Transvaal Archives Depot.

20. S A J C, 15.4.1904

21. Sunday Times, 10.3.1907. The reader must appreciate that dirty milk was associated with the spread of enteric fever in Johannesburg. 'It behooves each one of us to know something of the source of his milk supply', noted Dr Porter, the medical officer of health in Johannesburg, in a circular. See the Transvaal Critic, 20.1.1903.

At a purely physical level, then, eastern European Jewish immigrants, pouring into South Africa after the war, reinforced and confirmed the negative characteristics espoused in the 1890s. Outsiders in the classical sense, the impact of these new arrivals on the social landscape could not be ignored. For many, their external appearance reflected a lack of respectability and consequently a moral depravity. This was not surprising given notions popularised at this time by the Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso. In the latter's view, physical characteristics mirrored behavioural predilections²² - a thesis confirmed for many by the alleged record of the 'Peruvian' in South Africa.

Post-war iconography and journalism continued to revile the eastern European Jew.²³ For instance, a poem, 'The Devil',

22. Cesare Lombroso (1836-1909) founded the science of criminal law. See G.L. Mosse, Towards the Final Solution, A history of European Racism, London, Howard Fertig, 1978, pp. 83-87 and Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.187.

23. See for example The Owl and the South African Review. The Jew was always cunning and devious and, of course, obsessed with business. Consider the following macabre advertisement which appeared as a joke in the Cape Times: 'Mr. S Woolf, the Superintendent of Funerals, having after many years of service reluctantly decided upon a trip to Europe has granted his power to act as "Director of Funerals" to L. Jacob, ESQ J C, who will devote the same careful attention to this department during Mr. Woolf's absence as he usually does to all other business. Notification of deaths promptly attended to. Quotations given. Prices according to age, weight and position. Mr. Woolf will be glad, on his return, to perform the same kind offices for any of his friends as he has been accustomed to do in the past.' Quoted in S A J C, 1.5.1903.

published in The Owl, viciously attacked the probity of 'a lean little Kimberley Jew', who, quite predictably, was welcomed by the mining conglomerate, De Beers.²⁴ In similar vein, an Egersdorfer cartoon, 'PAUPER PERUVIANS OR THE WHITENING OF SOUTH AFRICA', focused on the depravity and dishonesty of the eastern European Jew.²⁵ The latter clearly left his mark on the popular consciousness. Indeed, his notoriety spread to Natal where parliamentarians, discussing the question of immigration, noted the corrupting influence eastern European Jews had had upon local affairs on the Witwatersrand. 'We have only to go to places like Johannesburg and other large cities where numbers of these people have come in the past', exhorted Natal's Secretary for Native Affairs, F.R. Moor, 'to realize what undesirable immigrants those have been in connection with our Native population, where they have become the means of carrying on a traffic with the 'Natives' which our laws declare to be wholly illegal.' His sentiments were corroborated by the Colonial Secretary and Minister of Education, C.J. Smythe, who noted that the newcomers were inclined to work 'in ways and under conditions that are not in accordance with our ideas of what is right and proper.' These immigrants, added K.H. Hathorn (Pietermaritzburg), had demoralized Natives on the Witwatersrand.²⁶ Such concerns were particularly acute

24. The Owl, 17.7.1903.

25. The Owl, 13.2.1903. Reproduced in the Appendix I. See below, p. 355.

26. Natal Legislative Assembly Debates, 25.6.1903.

in Natal where racial harmony was finely poised and labour shortages linked to liquor consumption went back to the 1870s. By the early 1900s legislators understandably shunned the prospect of Durban rivalling the Witwatersrand for vice, crime and labour instability.²⁷

The eastern European Jew, then, had become a countrywide symbol for corruption and vice. He would allegedly balk at nothing in the process of self aggrandisement and was shrewd, crafty and dishonest. As one correspondent put it, alien Jews were 'a species of low cunning [picking] up a somewhat precarious living before becoming full blown merchants and treading the torturous path to the Insolvency Court.' This 'class of men', continued the correspondent, 'formed the large gangs of illicit liquor sellers and are at present kept away by the enforcement of the pass laws.'²⁸ This accounts for the large number of applications for naturalization papers. Having won the day they are anxious to show their patriotism to the British nation, as formerly to the Boers!'²⁹ Given such sentiments, it is not

27. See P. la Hausse, 'The Struggle for the City: Alcohol, the Ematsheni and Popular Culture in Durban 1902-1936', unp. MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 1984. La Hausse notes that by 1905 the 'lower class Jew and white man' was prominent in running Durban's eating houses and liquor outlets. (p.52)

28. The writer was referring to stringent re-entry laws applied by the Transvaal authorities following the South African War. See Saron, 'The Long Road to Unity', pp.227-28.

29. Cape Times, 13.2.1904.

surprising that the South African Review considered the 'infiltration' of eastern European Jews, together with that of other 'continentals', 'perhaps the most important question before the country'.³⁰ Even the local Rabbi of Paarl, according to a Standard Bank Inspector, did not hold a 'high opinion' of the alien Jew.³¹ Understandably, the Jewish establishment feared being tarred with the 'Peruvian' brush.³²

The clearest indication of the lowly status of the 'Peruvian' is evident in comparisons with the Indian, an even greater focus of concern in the post-war years.³³ 'Linguist' for example, informed the Natal Mercury that eastern European Jews were 'as undesirable as the lowest class of coolies and far more dangerous'.³⁴ For the author of 'The Real Peril, of the Rand, from a Woman's Point of

30. South African Review, 6.2.1903.

31. Inspector's Report, Paarl 1908, INSP 1/1/254 Standard Bank Archives.

32. Riva Krut has sensitively analysed this problem for Johannesburg Jewry. See R. Krut, 'The Making of A South African Jewish Community'.

33. A range of legislation to curtail Indian trading and a further influx of Indians had been promulgated in the late nineteenth century. In the post-war years provisions were enforced setting in motion massive agitation and resistance. See M. Swan, Gandhi: the South African experience, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1985.

34. Natal Mercury, 1.7.1903.

View', the 'swarthy alien Jew, cast out of European cities' was an even greater menace than the 'coolie':

As jerry builders, workers in stop-shops etc., they oust the white artisan. As purveyors of produce or small storekeepers they cut prices and undersell in every department. Servile to a degree so long as poverty prevails, with the first glimmer of opulence, they assume British names,³⁵ demand British rights, and display despotic ruthlessness savouring of the cent per cent tyrant. Of such are the British colonies being filled, and of such should the white artisan beware. The genus 'Peruvian' is far more of a rival than any indentured fellow-labourer.

The writer went on to assert that 'attempts at murder by kaffirs of persons who had spoken against the drink traffic was done at the instigation of low-class Jews.'³⁶ Even the liberal Merriman associated the two groups (albeit obliquely) when he warned Smuts, in a letter regarding the expulsion of Indians, that 'the place of these people, unsavoury as they are, will be taken by the lower class Jew who is scarcely a more wholesome element in the population.'³⁷

35. The assumption of British names was indicative of intrusion. We saw evidence of this in Hobson's reports of Johannesburg. (See above, pp.102-03). See also the story of a Russian Jewish pedlar, Cecil Gordon. The Transvaal Critic, 17.6.1904.

36. Pall Mall Gazette (London), Cited in S A J C 28.5.1905. Here we see the 'Peruvian' as a threat to jobs.

37. Merriman to Smuts, Merriman Papers 187/25. 13.1.1908.

Herrinan's assessment (and indeed the general comparison of Indians with Jews) was shared by the Transvaal Critic which, in a cartoon, depicted a policeman removing an Indian while three gloating 'Peruvian' Jews (wearing hats with the inscriptions IGB, ILB and IDB) looked on. The legend beneath the cartoon confirmed the association of the 'Peruvian' Jew with the Indian while the acronyms on the hats also told a story.³⁸ As the S A J C put it, 'there can be no doubt that what is meant to imply is that the Jews are the principle offenders in the question of illicit liquor selling, illicit diamond buying and illicit gold purchasing.'³⁹ But the Transvaal Critic was even more blatant. Once the Government had its hands free, suggested the newspaper:

It might with profit turn its attention to the gentry and the situation depicted in the cartoon. We have in our midst a class of degraded Europeans who plot in the dark, encourage crime by providing a refuge for the criminal and depot for his plunder, and debase the native by supplying him with that which destroys body and soul. There are hundreds of vagabonds of this sort, compared with whom even the Indian is a polished gentleman. They are or should be well known to the police. We have a law full of terrors for such evil-doers, yet they wax fat under the very shadow of the Temple of Justice. When the asiatic controversy is done with, let the Attorney-General and his subordinates root out these pestilent knaves who thrive on illicit liquor-selling, illicit gold and

38. Transvaal Critic, 10.1.1908. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, p.360.

39. S A J C, 17.1.1908. A pictorial story, 'The Diamond Disease - Or the Story of a Syndicate' in the Sunday Times, similarly associated the caricatured Jew with exploitation and deviousness. Sunday Times, 9.9.1906. See also A.G. Hales 'From Fogolopolis'. Sunday Times, 29.12.1907.

diamond buying, prostitution and every crime on the calendar. If necessary, all South Africa could co-operate in the effort. Political opinion is good. The removal of this scum would be better for our future.⁴⁰

Quite clearly, the press both reflected and inflamed anti-alien sentiment. Indeed, its use of the epithet 'Jew', when identifying wayward individuals who happened to be of that faith, exacerbated antagonism.⁴¹ Although the latter custom was not the case for all newspapers, its practice by some served to reinforce the anti-Jewish stereotype. That stereotype was further harmed by the trial and conviction of

40. The Transvaal Critic, 10.1.1908. Similar ideas of repatriating 'Peruvian' types were captured in a Sunday Times cartoon, 'SUM PEEPLE HOO MITE BE REPATRYATED'. Sunday Times, 22.5.1906. Following the Transvaal Critic's exposure of one Mr Aaron Jacobs for usury, the newspaper expressed pleasure that the Jewish Star also denounced "Our Shylock" and regretted 'that the majority of offenders undoubtedly belong to the less respectable branches of the Hebrew confraternity'. Transvaal Critic, 14.4.1905. The same newspaper had a leading series of articles on 'Our White Slave Traffic' which associated the menace with continentals, including Russian Jews. See the Transvaal Critic, 9.3.1906; 16.3.1906; 30.3.1906 and 18.5.1906. It is important to note the presence of continentals other than eastern European Jews. Indeed two years later a major article in the Transvaal Critic, 'Illicits and Crime' in Johannesburg referred to continentals without mentioning Jews or 'Peruvians'. Transvaal Critic, 7.2.1908.

41. The matter was in fact taken up by the Jewish Board of Deputies for Transvaal and Natal. See Alexander Papers, B C 160 May 1903 - April 1923, 20.11.1907. See also S A J C 25.10.1907. It should be noted that ethnic labels were not uncommon at that time and Jews were not the sole victims. Nevertheless, this sort of journalism has its consequences. More disturbing, perhaps, was the gradual erosion of distinctions being made between the eastern European Jew and his 'respectable' co-religionist. See below, pp.164-65.

Abraham Cohen - alias 'Jewey Cook' - and Jack Silverstein for rape.⁴² 'Crowds of the lowest type thronging the court during the trial' were noted by the Transvaal Leader,⁴³ while a Sunday Times cartoon depicting the scene made it quite clear which sector of the community was most involved and concerned.⁴⁴ Moreover, according to the cartoon, 'Peruvians' continued to be associated with illicit liquor dealing. The Sunday Times was not alone in its view. Commissionaires investigating the Transvaal liquor problem in 1909 were told that: 'In the main the poor Dutch people from Vrededorp or the low class European and Peruvian' ran the illicit trade.⁴⁵ The association of Jews with illicit

42. Transvaal Leader, 4.3.1907.

43. Ibid.

44. Sunday Times, 10.3.1907.

45. Commissioner: 'We are told in the main the people who run the trade [illicit liquor] are either the poor Dutch people from Vrededorp or the low class European and Peruvian?'

Mr George St Leger Devenish (Compound Manager, Robinson Deep): Yes.

Commissioner: Low class Greeks, Italians, and also the undersirable class of Jew?

Devenish: Yes, occasionally you get a man a cut above that.

Report of the Liquor Commission 1908, Pretoria, The Government Printing and Stationery Office, 1910.

Even the Anglo-Jewish press abroad imbibed the popular view that Jews were involved in illicit trading. As late as 1915, the London Jewish Chronicle noted that 'leading members of the local [South African] community are liquor sellers and illicit gold buyers....' Quoted in S A J C, 16.9.1915.

liquor dealing was further reinforced by the 'Trapping System' in which Jews appear to have been the primary target.⁴⁶

The post-war influx of alien Jews had obviously consolidated the negative Jewish image evident prior to the Anglo-Boer War. Moreover the newcomers, by virtue of their numbers, continued to erode the favourable image of the 'law-abiding' and 'respectable' Jew - a process well understood by the Jewish elite who did all they could to encourage their co-religionists to behave appropriately.⁴⁷

46. Africans in the employ of the police would purchase liquor illegally and then report the transaction to their employers. The system, as the S A J C noted, was open to abuse: 'The trap system is in itself odious even when used for legitimate ends, but when it is abused for motives of personal spite, it becomes a real danger to society. Bitter have been the complaints of a certain class of shopkeepers, chiefly Jews, of the vexations and annoyances caused to them by the system, which places them almost at the mercy of unscrupulous detectives. S A J C, 29.7.1904. Numerous complaints concerning false trapping reached the offices of the Jewish Board of Deputies for Transvaal and Natal. S A J C, 18.9.1908. See also the Annual Report for the Jewish Board of Deputies for Transvaal and Natal.) Mr. Benjamin, for instance, was incensed that he and his wife had been arrested on the charge of selling liquor and that, although found innocent, had to have fingerprints and photographs taken by the CID. His wife had, moreover, been searched in seclusion by a male! For another Jew such behaviour was reminiscent of Russia. S A J C, 22.1.1909. According to the Transvaal Critic a 'huge amount of illicit selling to natives' was carried out 'mostly by Jew shopkeepers'. Transvaal Critic, 16.3.1906. In response to complaints Jews became involved in the Anti-Trapping League. Harold Bernberg was, for instance, the League's Honorary Secretary in 1910.

47. As Krut notes, the Board of Deputies for Transvaal and Natal Jewry, 'set about an active but visible programme

II

Although post-war antipathy towards aliens was most marked in the urban areas, negative sentiments continued to flourish in the country districts. Prejudice of the crudest sort, for instance, was displayed in a lengthy letter to the Cape Times from 'A Farmer Pure and Simple'. His complaints about the unfair methods used by Russian Jews in the rural areas convey the sorts of concerns and perceptions among sectors of the country population:

These men obtain at the start of their careers a small credit from certain merchants, mostly without any references, upon which they stalk the country with a bundle on their back, soliciting custom in a very humble way from the poorer farmer on their beats, and as they never pay for food and shelter, and sell inferior articles at enhanced prices, the very fair profit they make is clear gain which is immediately invested in a donkey, with a consequent increase in carrying power involving additional trading facilities Up to this stage there is not much harm done, but now the man becomes dangerous. He soon sets up a permanent shop at or near some of the farms he has been frequenting in a humble capacity, and now begins the steady plotting and planning for the expropriation of his poorer Dutch neighbours and customers, for he rarely succeeds with the more wealthy farmer of standing, who in general has no dealings with this class. His prey at first consists of the poor Bijwoner [tenant farmer] who owns a few sheep, ostriches or cattle, from which a very precarious income is derived. This man is inveigled into buying and purchasing far above his

that combined patronage with policing, coaxing with rigid control.' The essential intention was to 'Anglicize' the 'aliens'. See R. Krut, 'The Making of a South African Jewish Community', pp.150-51.

legitimate income by the isidious and ingratiating manner the Jew knows so well how to adopt.

In this way, argued the writer, thousands of Jews all over the country emerged from pauperism. The state had to control their entry into the country. Peter the Great, he pointed out, had appreciated the deleterious influence of Jews on the peasantry.⁴⁸

Crass prejudice was also obvious in Middelburg (Cape Colony) where, according to the Middelburg Echo, P.J. Hannon, the Cape Government's Expert on Agricultural Co-operation, had at a meeting of farmers advocated the removal of people from the hands of money-lenders and Jews. An association of farmers (based on the Irish experience) could, Hannon argued, provide its members with money in a more economical way and on more attractive lines than that of the Jew. Hannon also alluded to 'Jew speculators' in the feather industry 'scheming to collar the farmer'. This statement reflected popular perceptions, for it was acclaimed by Hannon's audience.⁴⁹

Hannon's statements were vigorously challenged by the Cape Jewish Board of Deputies, a representative Jewish institution established in 1904 to safeguard Jewish

48. Cape Times, 18.3.1904.

49. The Middelburg Echo, 27.10.1905.

rights.⁵⁰ The Board was particularly upset that the Cape's Secretary for Agriculture, A.J. Fuller, had shared the platform with Hannon. In response to the Board's request for an explanation, Fuller claimed Hannon had used the words 'feather speculators' and not 'Jew speculators'. In any event, he continued, hundreds of farmers had complained about speculative transactions.⁵¹

Alleged Jewish 'speculation' (and success) was especially irksome given the background of burgeoning 'poor-whiteism', exacerbated by the Anglo-Boer conflict, drought and the capitalization of agriculture.⁵² In these conditions observers were quick to project legitimate tensions and insecurities onto the Jew, a visible symbol of change. The MLA for Oudtshoorn, H.J. Mulder, for instance, noted in his evidence before a Select Committee on Indigent Whites, that a 'good many Jews were getting the upper hand' at the expense of the Dutch. The Jews, he claimed, had 'small shops' throughout the district 'and the poor people buy on

50. For the origins of this organisation see Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, chapters one to four.

51. The Middelburg Echo, 1.12.1905.

52. The plight of the tenant farmer was particularly threatened in the Oudtshoorn district where the expansion of ostrich farming 'led to the conversion of grazing fields into lucerne fields, thus reducing many bywoners [tenant farmers] to the status of farm laborer [sic] or forcing them from the land altogether.' D. Berger, 'White Poverty and Government Policy in South Africa : 1892-1934', unpub. Ph.d thesis, Temple University, 1982, pp.17-18.

credit from them and very soon they are over their ears in debt.' Farmers, he contended, were forced to sell their produce to the dealer and eventually their 'land becomes the property of the Jews.' Sometimes the farmer 'even ended up working for the Jews.'⁵³

Very similar views were articulated by the Reverend J.H. van Wyk of the Dutch Reformed Church in Adelaide (Cape Colony), in his evidence to the Transvaal Indigency Commission of 1908. Van Wyk drew attention to the evil credit system which resulted in money lenders 'getting a hold on men.' However, he contended that an even greater problem was a 'certain kind of unscrupulous trader.' To illustrate his argument, Van Wyk related a story told by a 'reliable man' about a farm shop which had failed under three successive owners but which succeeded under Jewish management. Two Jews, explained Van Wyk, 'gave the farmers unlimited credit, and today that property is in their hands and he is a poor man.' 'You will find', he continued, 'numberless examples of that in almost every district,'⁵⁴ A question put by the Commission to J.B. Skirving, the Resident Magistrate for Potchefstroom, suggests that the Commission shared Van Wyk's views: 'We have heard in other parts of South Africa',

53. C3-06 Report on the Select Committee on Labour Settlement for Indigent Whites, Minutes of Evidence, Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly, Cape of Good Hope, p.27.

54. T G 13/1908 Transvaal Indigency Commission Minutes of Evidence, p.187.

noted a Commissioner, 'that the Jew storekeeper gets control of all the land about.' Skirving confirmed the statement and then went on to inform the Commission that natives were also exploited by the Jews who dominated the mealie market.⁵⁵

The Jewish trader, then, was perceived to be exploiting the population through his allegedly powerful and ubiquitous position in the rural economy. As one correspondent from 'Piquetburg' informed Ons Land:

Sir - from whence do all these Israelites come? The ninety who were here before have everyone of them got ten brothers now. They have all the butchers businesses and all the hotels in the village. Besides all the small shops they own in the district, one finds them on almost every farm, either on foot or leading a horse and cart.⁵⁶

Commenting on the foregoing letter (which it reprinted), The Owl reminded readers that: 'Piquetberg isn't the only town where nearly all the stores are in the hands of the Jacobs and Moseses who are running this Christian country'.⁵⁷ The

55. Ibid, p.283.

56. Quoted in The Owl, 27.1.1905.

57. The Owl, 27.1.1905 In keeping with its antisemitic outlook, The Owl lost no opportunity to comment upon Jewry's emergent hegemony - even if that meant noting the numerical preponderance, political influence, commercial and financial power of New York Jews. The Owl, 14.6.1905. A Daily Express (London) article dealing with the 'power of the Jew in the modern world' was similarly appropriated. Comments on the supremacy of the Jews in the world of finance and their influence over 'statesmen and kings, soldiers and diplomats' were seemingly approved and reproduced in full. Although the article, in part, complimented the Jews,

Standard Bank Inspector for Middelburg would probably have agreed. Numerous smaller shops in the town, he reported, 'are kept by low-class Jews'.⁵⁸

The notion of Jewish domination and exploitation in the rural areas is again evident in the qualified support given by Cape parliamentarians (representing rural districts) to a motion in the Cape Legislative Council 'deploring massacres perpetrated upon the Jews in Russia.' Discussion revealed an empathy for the Russian administrators and a feeling that Jews themselves were responsible for their own misfortune.⁵⁹ These sentiments were clearly indicative of a total rejection of the 'stranger within the gates.' In post-war South Africa, the Afrikaner's own misery was pre-eminent.

III

Besides widespread antagonism towards the competitive and omnipresent alien Jewish trader, the post-war years witnessed further reinforcement of that other stereotypical Jew - the cosmopolitan financier. The consolidation of this

the overwhelming message was one of Jewish power and influence. That power, noted the Daily Express 'can hardly be exaggerated'. The Owl, 27.10.1905.

58. Inspector's Report, Middelburg 1905, INSP 1/1/246 Standard Bank Archives.
59. See, for instance, the comments of J.N.P. de Villiers (North Western Province); M.J. Pretorius (North Eastern Province) and P.W. Michau (North Eastern Province). Cape Legislative Council, 19.7.1906.

image must be seen against the background of post-war reconstruction. These were years in which the Milner administration in the Transvaal, ably abetted by mining capital, vigorously displayed its power and influence.⁶⁰ In short, the pre-war and war-time fears about the power of mining magnates rapidly materialised. This became apparent shortly after hostilities ceased in 1902 when mineowners began to advocate that Chinese labourers be imported to replace dwindling reserves of African labour.⁶¹ This was an issue of great concern and disturbed important sectors of the white population.

In the struggle against the proposal the cosmopolitan financier figured prominently. As G.H. Maasdorp (Midlands) put it in the Cape Legislative Council, the 'Yellow Peril' was the result of a few people wanting to make money and wanting to get rich 'faster than they did at present'. Mining interests, he argued, 'conflicted with the interests of South Africa and they were to be resisted.'⁶² Some months earlier, Merriman, who was clearly a man of

60. S. Marks and S. Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the South African State', History Workshop Journal, 8, Autumn, 1978.

61. In the immediate post-war period the demand for black labour on the mines outstripped the supply - a result of new railway construction projects and the rebuilding of farms attracting black labour. See P. Richardson, Chinese Mine Labour in the Transvaal, London, Macmillan, 1982, chapter one, passim.

62. Cape Legislative Council, 21.7.1903.

xenophobic tendencies, had warned that if action were not taken, 'they might wake up some fine morning and find that it was too late as the first shipment had arrived and the Rand was being worked by Chinamen.' Then, he warned, 'they might as well say goodbye to this as a European country.'⁶³

Opponents of the Chinese-labour scheme saw the plan as complicating the country's already fragile racial and labour problems. Smuts, for one, warned that the importation would exacerbate the 'racial tangle'.⁶⁴ According to his official biographer, W.K. Hancock, Smuts was furious with the imputation that the 'Boers were consenting partners, or at any rate passively acquiescent', to Milner's 'Chinese cure'.⁶⁵ In a major address, he claimed the Boers were indignant 'against the sacrilege of Chinese importation - this spoliation of the heritage for which the generations of the people have sacrificed their all.' As eighty per cent of the gold mines were 'fit only to be closed down', there was, in Smuts's opinion, 'enough labour for the genuine needs of the country'. He was particularly upset with the mineowners and foreign administrators who looked upon South Africa as a black man's country, 'good enough to make money or a name in but not good enough to be born or die in.'⁶⁶

63. Cape Legislative Assembly, 30.9.1902.

64. W.K. Hancock, Smuts. The Sanguine Years 1870-1918, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1962, p.133.

65. Ibid, p.183.

66. Ibid.

International financiers were once again in the dock. By bemoaning their sinister influence, however, the Boers placed themselves, as Denoon puts it, 'in a flattering light as the only realistic salvation for a magnate-dominated society.'⁶⁷

Boer interests were supported by the Transvaal Critic which argued that importing Chinese labour would 'lead to a state of conflict between the Mining Industry and the bulk of the population wielding the political power which might have the most deplorable consequences for all South Africa.'⁶⁸ The same newspaper argued that the 'capitalist press' minimized or ignored public opinion in this 'money-ridden country.'⁶⁹ The 'great houses', it noted, are 'offering Johannesburg the alternative between accepting Chinese labour or ruin!'⁷⁰ Once again the Randlord or 'Goldbug' had captured the centre-stage of South African politics.

Talented cartoonists and vitriolic satirists relentlessly 'exposed' the allegedly malicious and malevolent designs of the mining magnates. The Owl was again particularly

67. D.J.N. Denoon, 'Capitalist Influence and the Transvaal Government During the Crown Colony Period, 1900-1906' The Historical Journal, XI, 2, 1968, p.301.

68. Transvaal Critic, 3.4.1903.

69. Ibid, 26.6.1903.

70. Ibid, 24.7.1903.

prominent in its critique of mining power. Significantly, this weekly continued to conflate capitalist and Jew, with its cartoonist, Egersdorfer, 'excelling' in his vicious depictions of financiers, devoid of scruples and bent only a self aggrandizement. His message was simple: only the magnates would benefit from the importation of Chinese labour. African and Afrikaner labour, as one cartoon illustrated, was now dispensable.⁷¹ Egersdorfer's cartoons were replete with sarcasm and crude insinuation. Most significantly, however, his 'Goldbugs' were semitic in appearance,⁷² leaving no doubt as to which sector of the population was responsible for the state of affairs. Indeed a typically contemptuous comment beneath one of his 'Goldbug' cartoons made the implication abundantly clear:

A thumbnail sketch of a well-known Rand Magnate who believes in Chinese labour, in forcing the black man to work on the mines, in no taxation of mineral products, in the IDB Act and in fact in all things but truth, justice, charity and God.⁷³

The reference to truth, justice and charity - the cornerstone of an ethical life according to the Hebrew prophet Micah - was a blatant jibe at Jews and their association with the interests of capital. For the Jewish

71. See the cartoon 'Joey at Jewburg', The Owl, 14.11.1902. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, p. 356.

72. See cartoon The Owl, 3.7.1903.

73. The Owl, 3.4.1903.

reader, the abuse of the prophet's teachings must have been particularly offensive.⁷⁴

Clearly the 'Goldbugs' were under assault and Egersdorfer depicted them having to escape a Johannesburg crowd that had protested against the importation of Chinese labour.⁷⁵ Another Egersdorfer cartoon portrayed a Jewish taskmaster, 'Moses', in conversation with Milner, capturing all the nuances of the cosmopolitan financier: the exploitative capitalist allied to the state (Milner) and advocating the importation of Chinese labour. In the cartoon, Moses is asked by the High Commissioner whether all magnates consider Chinese labour necessary. The Jew replies: 'Vy yeth, of courth they do.' The passive observers witnessing Milner's interaction with Moses respond: 'We have had Milner and Moses; the other fellow will be no worse.'⁷⁶ Significantly the accents are those originally associated with Jewish traders and 'Peruvians'. Besides this being a crude way of ensuring that the financier was recognised as a Jew, it was also an indication that the 'Peruvian' and cosmopolitan financier were conflated, an indication of future perceptions.

74. It should be noted that the S A J C also castigated Jews of the 'goldbug' type for being interested only in 'heaping wealth upon wealth.' S A J C, 5.6.1903.

75. The Owl, 4.4.1903.

76. See the cartoon 'Milner, Moses & Mongols' in The Owl, 18.3.1904. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, P. 357.

The Jewish financier, then, was portrayed by The Owl as the villain behind the importation of Chinese labour. While one commentator suggested that the Chinaman might outwit the Jew,⁷⁷ it was seen as more likely that Jew and Chinaman would form an alliance.⁷⁸ In that case explained a futuristic account, 'Roughing it up in Joburg', only whites of 'the Jewish persuasion' would be allowed to walk the pavements of the 'golden city'.⁷⁹

While The Owl was most vociferous in associating specifically Jewish financiers with the Chinese-labour issue, its opinions were shared by others. Labour politicians in Cape Town, for instance, very often identified Jews as the villains behind the scheme. As labour spokesman, J. Carver claimed, the idea of importing Chinese labour 'was not originated by Britons but by men bearing such names as Beit, Solomon, Moses etc. etc.' In his opinion, aliens 'were parasites and from parasites they

77. See 'The Jew's Lament', The Owl, 4.4.1903.

78. 'Then Commissioner Street will be decorated in this wise. Yiddish and Cinese characters all over the place, even on the trancars. The names on each side of the street thusly 'Solomon, Yang, Hi, Foo Chow, and Moses, Dealers in all kinds of Finance.' The Owl, 29.5.1903. Another ditty in the The Owl, 'Ye Goldberg Dirge' reflected the 'China-Jew' invasion. The Owl, 18.9.1903. Even a cartoon in the Burgersdorp Stem (reported in The Owl) depicted the Chinaman, Jew and Clergyman bypassing the interests of the British Empre. The Owl, 4.10.1904.

79. The Owl. 11.6.1903.

became usurers and then capitalists.'⁸⁰ In similar vein, George Woolends, a popular Cape Town outdoor agitator, harangued Jewish capitalists during sessions at the Van Riebeeck fountain.⁸¹ Another labourite, Corley, ridiculed 'talk about British supremacy' in the light of power wielded by intriguing foreign financiers.⁸²

Mining power, then, was popularly perceived as malevolent and subversive. As H.C. van Zyl (North Western Province) told the Cape Legislative Council, the Transvaal was 'in the power of money magnates to the detriment of the people of the country.' Van Zyl went on to paint a picture of mineowners exploiting the country to the detriment of all and then behaving like vultures 'who having devoured the carrion, left'.⁸³ His views were shared by J.A.C. Graaff (North Western Province)⁸⁴ and expanded by a left-wing

80. Cape Times, 5.1.1904. Carver's address also included a poem, published in the London Speaker and reproduced in De Zuid Afrikaner, 7.1.1904.

Peyser, Abrahamson en Beit
Hadden voor vachten wijselike geen tijd
Eerste toen 't uit was met die pret
En gebroken leden weer gezet
Na dien Imperialien Strijd
Zijn Joseph, Jacobson en Jozes
Britsch door afkomste toch van Mozes
Thans de bazen wijd en zijd.

81. South African News, 21.5.1904.

82. South African News, 4.2.1904.

83. Cape Legislative Council, 22.4.1904.

84. Ibid, 26.4.1904.

orator, J.W. Kelly, at an anti-alien rally in Cape Town: 'Where were these people to be found in case of emergency?', asked Kelly. 'Whenever England was engaged with the enemy in battle, were the [sic] people found on the side of England? No, they were always on the side of the enemy and they came in and reaped the harvest for which Britain's sons had shed their blood.'⁸⁵

The 'Yellow Peril' had obviously rekindled conspiracy theories and issues of Jewish 'loyalty' which went back to the Jameson Raid and South African War. As 'Jewchina' complained to the Natal Mercury, New Zealand troops had fought 'for the benefit of the grasping Jewish capitalist whilst those men who did the fighting are denied employment.' The writer wondered why white labour on the mines had been economical in other parts of the world but could not be in Africa. It was, he pointed out, the Jew who 'is not satisfied with 10, 20 or even 100 per cent on his money, but must have it increased, at the expense of the Britishers, many of whom would be glad of the proverbial half loaf today....'⁸⁶

This sort of attack provoked a Jewish response. An indignant correspondent, 'Israel', stated in a letter to the South

85. Cape Times, 5.1.1904. See also the cartoon 'A South African Corporation', The Owl, 20.12.1901. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, p. 358.

86. Natal Mercury, 14.1.1904.

African News that it was 'time the current nonsense indulged in by thoughtless, ill-informed people about Jews being responsible for the coming of Chinese had its quietness [sic].'⁸⁷ Some weeks earlier, a Jewish communal leader, David Goldblatt, had similarly taken exception to Carver's accusation that specifically Jewish mining magnates were behind the Chinese-labour proposals. Goldblatt correctly perceived Carver's charges as examples of blatant antisemitism hidden under the convenient 'Yellow blanket.'⁸⁸

Both 'Israel's' and Goldblatt's retorts had little impact. By the time they responded, 'Jew' and 'capitalist' were securely and comfortably conflated in the popular mind - a bond exemplified in the emergence of a popular cartoon character, Hoggenheimer, the quintessential Jewish parvenu. Although D.C. Boonzaier was responsible for this cartoon representation, Hoggenheimer was not his creation. This distinction belongs to the English playwright, Owen Hall, who created the avuncular millionaire, Max Hoggenheimer, in his West End musical comedy 'The Girl from Kays'.⁸⁹ This

87. South African News, 26.4.1904.

88. Cape Times, 6.1.1904.

89. L. Herrman, 'Hoggenheimer,' in Standard Encyclopaedia of South Africa, vol. 5, pp.559-60. Born James Davis in 1869, Hall had abandoned a career in law for journalism, literature, playwriting and politics. Hall wrote eight plays and co-authored a further two with James T. Tanner. He died in 1907. 'Owen Hall', in Who was Who 1897-1915, London, Adam and Charles Black, 1920.

story of a show dancer who made good through her winning ways with a South African millionaire⁹⁰ opened at London's Apollo Theatre in 1902, playing for 432 performances before being brought to South Africa by the London Gaiety Club under the auspices of Messrs. Wheeler and Edwardes.⁹¹

The loud-mouthed Hoggenheimer became an instant favourite with South African theatre-goers⁹² and, by all accounts, the English comedian, W.W. Walton, delighted audiences with his portrayal of the wealthy Jewish financier of Park Lane.

"Mr W W Walton's strolled [sic] drollery in the character of the wealthy Max Hoggenheimer is irresistible"

South African News⁹³

"The heaviest part fell on W W Walton, who, as Max Hoggenheimer, the rich and vulgar Jew, scored in no uncertain manner."

The Transvaal Leader⁹⁴

"The chief honours fell to Mr W W Walton as Hoggenheimer he was the life and soul of the

90. A Hocking, Oppenheimer and Son, Johannesburg, McGraw-Hill, 1973, p.99.

91. South African News, 15.9.1903.

92. It is quite evident that Jews took no exception to the production. As the Transvaal Critic put it: 'The Jews who dominate every department of society in this community are too strong and sensible to be sensitive to broad burlesque and low-class caricature and they can afford to laugh at it.' Transvaal Critic, 13.11.1903. On the question of Jewish domination, see below, pp.154-56.

93. South African News, 23.9.1903.

94. The Transvaal Leader, 10.11.1903.

production and established himself as the great public favourite."

The Star⁹⁵

"The caricature of the Jewish millionaire ... is cleverly sketched."

The Natal Mercury⁹⁶

It was ten days after 'The Girl from Kays' opened at the Good Hope Theatre in Cape Town that Boonzaier (an avid theatre-goer) published his first Hoggenheimer cartoon, acknowledging Owen Hall's creation by appending the caption 'with apologies to "The Girl from Kays".'⁹⁷ Thereafter Hoggenheimer became a regular feature in the South African News,⁹⁸ following the cartoonist for close on four decades

95. The Star, 10.11.1903.

96. The Natal Mercury, 23.2.1903.

97. South African News, 24.9.1903. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, p.359. Prior to the production of 'The Girl from Kays' Boonzaier had depicted a mining magnate in cartoon form. (See, for instance, South African News, 15.8.1903.) The character, however, was neither gross nor necessarily semitic. Of course those associating international capital with the cosmopolitan Jew would have identified the magnate as being of semitic extraction. Indeed, in August, 1903, Boonzaier's mining magnate assumed a heavy eastern European accent - an idea given to the cartoonist by J.X. Merriman. (Boonzaier Papers, MSC 4, II Correspondence letters from J.X. Merriman 1905 - 1917 Merriman to Boonzaier, South African Library, Cape Town.) The association ensured the parvenu quality of the character, an image recognizable from the moment W.W. Walton strode the stage of the Good Hope Theatre. Commented one critic: Hoggenheimer is, alas a type only too well known in this country.' South African News, 15.9.1903.

98. Boonzaier's cartoons were so popular that the South African News published them collectively in book form. The newspaper warned prospective buyers that 'to prevent disappointment orders should be forwarded at once.' South African News, 9.12.1903.

as he worked for The Cape, The Observer, the Cape Argus, De Voorloper, New Nation and Die Burger.⁹⁹

Quite clearly Hoggenheimer struck a responsive chord in the popular consciousness. Only in this way can we explain the delight expressed by audiences at Walton's portrayal of the Park Lane millionaire and the enduring popularity of Boonzaier's Hoggenheimer cartoons. The ostensible power of the 'Randlords', the imperialist nature of the Anglo-Boer conflict, the infiltration of pro-Boer ideology from Britain's radical-left, and the controversial issue of Chinese labour, ensured Hoggenheimer's transition from stage character to popular culture. It is no wonder that, within two years, he became in the words of J.X. Merriman, 'a classical character.'¹⁰⁰ More important, however, was the fact that Hoggenheimer was a specifically Jewish symbol, following in the tradition of cartoons which appeared in Europe towards the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁰¹ In the South African context Hoggenheimer was closely associated

99. See Murray and Elzabe Schoonraad, Companion to South African Cartoonists, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1989, pp.64-72.

100. Boonzaier Papers, MSC 4,II: Letters from J X Merriman to Boonzaier, 22.8.1905.

101. In the initial phase Hoggenheimer was not specifically semitic in appearance. Within a short space of time, however, he became a gross caricature. For examples of the European model see 'Caricatures', Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 5, pp.171-78.

with Milner,¹⁰² the man accused of siding with the mineowners to enable, as the South African News put it, 'an alien plutocracy to crush a much larger section of the British people.'¹⁰³

It is not without significance that Boonzaier contested the 'Hebraic' nature of his cartoon creation in a 'pictorial evolution' of the caricature which argued that the Hoggenheimer character was an amalgam of European types.¹⁰⁴ It is difficult to gauge how convincing Boonzaier's explanation was. Suffice it to say that the S A J C reprinted his explanatory 'evolution' without comment. The uncanny similarity between the cartoon character and the one-time Cape Town mayor, Hyman Liberman, suggests that the latter - a rather squat and fleshy-looking gentleman - may well have served as Boonzaier's inspiration. Certainly Liberman was well known to the artist. This, however, remains conjecture.¹⁰⁵

102. 1905 - 17 Merriman and Boonzaier, 22.8.1905. The Owl, 27.11.1905.

103. South African News, 26.4.1904. Popular suspicion of mining magnate power over Milner goes back to at least 1900. In that year Milner informed Chamberlain of 'the absurd but most damaging charge of [his] being under the influence of capitalists.' Chamberlain Papers J.C. 13/1 Milner to Chamberlain, 23.10.1900, C S 2.3.55/01. Notes by Milner, November 1900. Quoted in Denoon. A Grand Illusion, p.40.

104. Reprinted in S A J C, 20.7.1906.

105. See M. Shain, 'Hoggenheimer - the making of a Myth', Jewish Affairs, September, 1981.

Far clearer was the popular post-war perception that Jews or 'foreigners' threatened to dominate South African society.¹⁰⁶ The Rev. A.I. Steytler, for instance, reminded a Dutch Reform Synod that, during his youth, the only known photograph of a Jew had been in his possession. Today, he warned, 'there were over 12 000 Jews in Cape Town', and 'if they did not convert the Jews the Jews would convert them.'¹⁰⁷ While Steytler was clearly motivated by religious imperatives,¹⁰⁸ others viewed Jewish ubiquity in a more fundamental way. 'We are beginning to realize', noted the Natal Witness in 1906, 'that there is no value in the prosperity of enormous industries, protected by elaborate laws, owned and managed by a dozen men, principally foreigners, and from whom the racial owners of the land are excluded.'¹⁰⁹ It was this sort of sentiment that had provoked the S A J C to deny charges that Jews monopolised commerce in Johannesburg and that the city was 'entirely dependent' on them.¹¹⁰ Clearly the purported power of

106 This would become a leitmotiv of South African antisemitism throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

107. Cape Times, 1.11.1903.

108. The Synod devoted substantial time to the question of missionary activity. See Cape Times, 1.11.1903.

109. Natal Witness, 21.3.1906.

110. S A J C, 9.10.1903. By 1910 the Sunday Times hinted at aliens swamping South Africa by quoting (at length) an anti-alien article in the British press. Although referring to England, the implications for the local scene were abundantly clear: 'Even in Great Britian an

'Hoggenheimer' and the unabated influx of alien Jews together provided a sense of Jewish domination as well as a threat to English control of trade and commerce.

The notion of Jewish domination, coupled with the conflation of all dimensions of the negative stereotype discussed hitherto, was concisely illustrated in a lengthy letter to The Owl from 'Rondebosch Britisher'. Having visited Johannesburg, the writer was struck 'with considerable force at the presence of representatives of the chosen people'. 'Jewburg', he noted, was certainly an appropriate appellation for the city. The Jews had, after all, 'spread in all directions, they permeate every phase of life; they are ubiquitous.' Their 'connections', he maintained, 'extend to the remotest point of the country', and their influence was felt 'everywhere'. For 'Rondebosch Britisher', that influence was unquestionably pernicious. A mining magnate had in fact told him that the Jews were unhappy with British rule, a view confirmed for him by 'a rather well known Johannesburg Jew'. The latter had quite blatantly informed him that he had 'no time' for 'de Pritish Government!' According to 'Rondebosch Britisher', such disloyalty was 'common knowledge' and hardly surprising since Jewish

alien has to reside in this island for five years, and produce references from the local bank manager and the local priest... The disorderly majority are low-class aliens, and, in the case of men, many of them have been convicted of all sorts of crimes in Europe.' Sunday Times, 13.11.1910.

'loyalty resting as it always did, on a materialistic and cash basis, could not well be expected to stand the strain that had made itself felt in their pockets since the war came to an end.' The Jews, he argued, 'did not bargain for adversity and disappointment and, possibly work.' As his friend had put it, 'they would probably have another war tomorrow to change the state of things and I'm not sure whether some of them are not using their influence in this direction.'¹¹¹

IV

Given the pervasiveness of such anti-Jewish sentiments as manifested in the negative stereotype, it strikes the historian as something of an anomaly that so many Jews attained prominent positions in South African public and civic life during the early twentieth century.¹¹² Without a reservoir of goodwill and respect towards the Jew this would surely have been impossible. Jewish prominence indeed suggests that the Jews' alleged thrift, enterprise, energy and intellectual prowess continued to be respected. In other words, despite a vicious and fast growing anti-Jewish stereotype, ambivalences and ambiguities evident in the

111. The Owl, 27.11.1903.

112. Consider, for example, the following Jewish mayors in office around the turn of the century: Mr D. Wasserberg (Barberton); Mr F. Ginsberg (Kingwilliams-town); Mr Landau (Standerton); Mr H. Liberman (Cape Town); Mr W. Sagar (Kimberley).

1880s and 1890s survived the onslaught of itinerant pedlars and 'Peruvians'.

The positive dimension of the stereotype was captured most eloquently in Olive Schreiner's 'A letter on the Jew', read publicly at a Cape Town gathering protesting Russian pogroms in 1906. Besides requesting international assistance for Russia's Jews, she reminded the audience of the enormous contribution made by Jews to 'the European peoples since they emerged from barbarism' 'Wherever the Jew 'has been given even a limited measure of protection and liberty', she argued, he 'has blossomed out into the noblest forms, as poet, thinker, musician, ethical teacher, and social reformer' Schreiner was astonished by those who wanted to keep the Jew out 'because he has nothing today to offer the world but unholy financial methods, and that he is incapable of any other aim than making wealth for himself.' The Jew, she argued:

has been driven to finance and dealing in money as the one path open to him, and he was bound to bend all his energies to the acquiring of wealth; not only because no other paths for expanding his intellectual powers were open to him, but because, only by the possession of wealth could he hope to buy breathing space for himself or for his people. Today the Jew excels in finance, as with his perseverance, concentration and intellectual force, he is bound to do in almost every line of life to which he devotes himself. But when it is asserted that the Jew should be excluded because he corrupts our excellent financial and commercial methods, I am astonished at the temerity of the assertion.'

Schreiner condemned those who castigated the hapless Russian Jew, separating him from the respectable Jewish establishment. She had lived among poor Jews in the East End of London and had witnessed their standards and values:

Therefore I say that I would welcome the exiled Russian Jew to South Africa, not merely with pity, but with a feeling of pride that any member of that great much suffering people, to whom the world owes so great a debt, should find a refuge and a home among us; and with the certainty, that however broken, crushed and dwarfed he might appear to be by the long ages of suffering and wrong which have passed over him, he would recuperate and rise¹¹³

Schreiner's liberal sentiments reflected the weltanschauung of the late nineteenth century. Her comments were certainly a far cry from her initial reactions to Jewish fortune-seekers in the early 1870s.¹¹⁴ In the ensuing decades she had obviously developed an overwhelming sympathy for the downtrodden and persecuted Russian Jew. Of course, her sentiments were underpinned by a general sympathy for the underdog and an enormous respect for the individual, coupled with religious tolerance and a broad based humanism. Liberty and equality would clearly, in her view, 'regenerate' the Jew, a victim of historical injustice. They reveal too, the

113. Cape Times, 16.7.1906. The full text of the speech is reprinted in Jewish Affairs. See O. Schreiner, 'A letter on the Jew', Jewish Affairs, August, 1976.

114. See above, p.42 n.71.

pervasiveness of the anti-Jewish stereotype and the inclination of some commentators still to separate 'knave' from 'gentleman' Jews.

Nevertheless nineteenth century Whiggish assumptions of progress and improvement had evidently survived and were by no means limited to Schreiner. Merriman, for instance, despite his disdain for the 'Peruvian', looked forward to second generation Jews becoming good citizens. He commended the Jews' emphasis on education, noting how these immigrants sent their 'children to school to learn the way of the country, in order that they might prove good citizens in the future.'¹¹⁵ Russian-Jewish immigrants were also praised by Johannesburg's Mayor, Quinn, who claimed that Jews were 'always foremost in all that went into the making of good citizens.'¹¹⁶ On another occasion he spoke of the magnificent way in which the 'Jewish people... bound together by kith and kin... ran to help each other.' This, he contended, was a lesson 'for the whole world.'¹¹⁷

Substantial sympathy for Jews obviously existed, frequently fuelled by the excesses of anti-Jewish journalism. Hence the Peninsula Herald expressed disquiet at the treatment of

115. Cape Times, 7.12.1905.

118. Transvaal Leader, 5.7.1906.

117. Transvaal Leader, 8.12.1906.

Jews in the local press¹¹⁸ and reminded its readers that these people had stood 'side by side with Britain's sons' in the South African War.¹¹⁹ Jews, in other words, were not simply exploiting the country without giving anything in return. This popular myth was similarly challenged by Paarl's Mayor, Septimus de Villiers, who maintained that Jews did not 'come to a country to make as much money as they could and then return to their homes.' In his estimation, the fact that Jews were building a new synagogue in Paarl was indicative of their confidence in the country. This pleased him because Jews were, as he put it, a race 'who by their keen business instincts and general traits so peculiar to themselves, had always [sic] their eyes open to eventualities.'¹²⁰

It is significant that in both philosemitic and antisemitic discourse, Jews were perceived as a race.¹²¹ This was the

118. It excluded the Cape Argus.

119. Peninsula Herald, 7.2.1903. Quoted in S A J C, 21.2.1903.

120. S A J C, 8.4..1904.

121. This was crudely captured by 'Quivus' in his supposed investigation into the 'Semitic' civilization of 'Jewburg' or Johannesburg. The Jews, he claimed, were the ones who wanted 'docile' Chinese labour: 'Every instinct of the white man was outraged by the proposal. It is the natural thought of the Jews, and in Jewburg only could the idea have been suggested. Never forget - the Jew is not a white man. He is the Semite, the Asiatic. He is brown of skin, black of hair, dark of eye. Herbert* when he painted his greatest picture of Moses receiving the tablets of the law at Mount Sinai depicted the Jew as brown as the sunburned Sinaitic rocks. His skull is different. A physiologist could

point Merriman had made in 1898 when he criticized the Reverend Tobias of O'Kiep,¹²² and was of course consonant with Jewish self-definition at this time.¹²³ In the early twentieth century race and culture were conflated with cultural predilections being ascribed to inherent and ineradicable 'racial' traits.¹²⁴ Thus Judge Kotze could praise Jews for their thrift and sound business qualities¹²⁵ and the Boer General, Louis Botha, allude to the keen 'business insight' of Jews.¹²⁶ It was similarly this conflation of race and culture that enabled the educationist, M.C. Bruce, to generalize about Jewish 'racial' identity when describing Jewish life in Johannesburg. The community, she claimed, indulged in

no more confound the skull with a Celtic or Teutonic than he could the Darmstadt skull with Cuviers.... The importation of Chinese is Jewish thought not Aryan. It is in keeping with Jewburg.' The Owl, 12.2.1904.

*Herbert was the British artist who was commissioned to paint the frescoes of the new British Houses of Parliament in 1840. One of the most notable of these frescoes was 'Descent of Moses from Sinai'. Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers, vol. III, London, George Bell and Sons, 1904, p.34.

122. See above, p.80.

123. See M. Biddis, 'Racial Ideas and the Politics of Prejudice 1850-1914', The Historical Journal, XV, 1972, pp.570-82. Krut notes that a 'racial vocabulary' was built into the foundations of the South African Jewish community. Krut, 'The Making of a South African Jewish Community', p.150.

124. See Sennel, Imperialism and Social Reform, chapter two and Stepan, The Idea of Race in Science, chapter five.

125. S A J C, 27.10.1905.

126. S A J C, 15.5.1908.

concerts, dances 'and gaieties of various descriptions', while the children were, on the whole, 'intelligent, very musical and able to make the best of their advantage.' Despite very austere conditions for many of the immigrants, claimed Bruce, 'there are no paupers and there are no beggars.' Jews, moreover, were not 'bigoted'. 'Hospitable and kind, hardworking and thrifty' was her summation of Johannesburg's Jewish community. 'If they succeed where other people fail', she argued, 'it is because they deserve success.'¹²⁷ That view was in line with Johannesburg's Mayor, G.H. Goch, who argued that it was to the credit of Jews that they dominated financial and commercial pursuits.¹²⁸

In many ways, then, the Jew was appropriated as the exemplar of bourgeois values which were considered necessary for a society undergoing economic and political reconstruction. More significant, however, was the previously noted 'racial' definition of Jewish identity, a product, at least in part, of the hugely conspicuous eastern European presence. By the early twentieth century, the latter vastly outnumbered Jews of Anglo-German origin,¹²⁹ consolidating a distinctively 'racial' image of

127. M.C. Bruce, The New Transvaal, London, Alston Rivers Limited, 1908, pp.71-72.

128. S A J C, 12.5.1905.

129. Even the Cape Colony with its well established Anglo-German Jewish population had 11 667 Russian born residents (presumably all Jewish) out of a population

the Jew. As a result, in the post-war years commentators were less inclined to distinguish between acculturated and alien Jews.¹³⁰ For instance, in a series of articles on 'Ways to Wealth,' the Sunday Times maligned Jews (without qualification) and Portuguese for illicit gold buying. 'The Kaffir', noted the article, 'sells to the Jew or Portuguese illicit in exchange for liquor at a price which represents nothing like the gold contents of the sline.'¹³¹ A Standard Bank inspector in the Johannesburg suburb of Fordsburg (considered to be South Africa's Whitechapel¹³²) similarly reported that 'opportunities for doing any sound business seem limited, the trade of the place being largely in the hands of branches of Johannesburg houses or of Jewish traders whose commercial

of 19 509 Jews in 1904. G 19-1905 Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1904.

130. This had already been noted in 1903 by a young Cape barrister, Morris Alexander, who wrote a series of articles in The Owl, designed specifically to debunk the anti-Jewish stereotype. In these articles, Alexander exploded popular myths such as all Jews being rich, not fighting for the country of their adoption, and being rapacious middlemen. See The Owl, 13.2.1903; 20.2.1903; 27.2.1903; 6.3.1903; 13.3.1903; 23.3.1903. Alexander went on to become a prominent liberal voice in the Cape and then South African parliament. See E. Alexander, Morris Alexander A Biography, Cape Town and Johannesburg, Juta and Co., 1953; and M. Shain, If I'm for myself alone, what am I? : Morris Alexander and South African Society. South African Jewish Board Deputies (Cape Council), 1984.
131. Sunday Times, 28.3.1907.
132. See Inspector's Report, Fordsburg 1907, INSP 1/1/214 Standard Bank Archives.

morality is often of a low order.'¹³³ The absence of class or regional distinction is important - a portent of the future. When Mofi, a black man, complained to the police about a transaction with one J. Rostovsky, the policeman responded that 'had he gone to some decent firm ... not to the Jewish dealers, he would have experienced no trouble.'¹³⁴ The wording of an advertisement placed by one Mr Walton in a Krugersdorp newspaper went even further by introducing the notion of exclusion - an idea that would gain greater adherence in the 1920s and 1930s: 'All work done by British workmen - no Jews employed here'.¹³⁵ A new discourse in which perceptions of eastern European Jews defined all Jews was clearly in the making. It was now even necessary for a Standard Bank inspector to include the word 'respectable' when referring to particular Jewish businessmen whose accounts were considered satisfactory.¹³⁶

Another factor consolidating a Jewish 'racial' identity inhered in the incipient Zionist movement. In other words, Zionism, predicated as it was on Jewish peoplehood, reinforced the idea that Jews were a people or a nation

133. Inspector's Report, Fordsburg 1908, INSP 1/1/214 Standard Bank Archives.

134. S A J C, 13.11 1908.

135. S A J C, 16.10.1907.

136. See, for example, Inspector's Report, Cape Town 1904, INSP 1/1/199 Standard Bank Archives and Inspector's Report, Oudtshoorn 1905, INSP 1/1/253 Standard Bank Archives.

apart and not simply a religious group. This premise was accepted by a range of Christians sympathetic towards the Zionist ideal. W. P. Schreiner, for instance, told a Zionist meeting in Cape Town that Jews:

had throughout the whole years of history provided a greater number of seers, the poets, statesmen and the workers, and the makers of the world.... They possessed in their leading thinkers and men, men whom humanity at large was proud to own.... That people with their great history... was ever seeking an answer to one great question... 'Wither go ye? ... There was the noble ideal which once realized that the highest ideal of the free brotherhood of man but they were still far away from that ideal. In the meantime there was an ideal which was not so lofty, but eminently more practical and that ideal was embodied in the term Zionism.¹³⁷

Another prominent liberal, Sir James Rose Innes, Chief Justice of the Transvaal, was even more trenchant in his supporting claims for 'Territorialism', a Jewish national movement not specifically centered on Palestine.

No one could think unmoved and unconcerned of the history of that wonderful people who had exercised an influence on human kind out of all proportion to their numbers, a people without a territory of their own, sojourners and strangers on the face of the earth, retaining their individuality and their national characteristics, who after 2000 years of difficulty, oppressors and persecution, still stood as a nation and still held their own amongst the people of the world. They had supplied men of letters, statesmen, peers, poets, artists. In all depart-

137. Cape Times, 16.7.1906.

ments of human activity the Jews were not far from the top.¹³⁸

Zionism, then, in the words of C. L. Botha, was for the Jews an 'emblem of nationality, the pride of their race'.¹³⁹ Canon Orford, in turn, noted that despite being scattered throughout the world, Jews had maintained their nationality.¹⁴⁰ Councillor C.A. Lane of Johannesburg went further, referring to the Jews' 'purity' of race which, he argued, was an essential part of Jewish patriotism.... Their 'distinguishing physiognomy', he noted, 'proclaims the care with which they have preserved Isaac's tradition. Exceptions to the rule are condemned.'¹⁴¹ Of course, the antisemite had much the same to say but with malice aforethought.

Preserving their 'nationality' did not necessarily pose problems for the Jew in South African society. In other words, 'racial' loyalty was not perceived as being irreconcilable with a broader loyalty to the country. This notion was best articulated by Lord Milner at the inauguration of the Jewish Board of Deputies for Transvaal and Natal in 1903. The new organisation, he noted, was

138. S A J C, 3.8.1906.

139. S A J C, 3.8.1906.

140. S A J C, 18.8.1908.

141. S A J C, 10.1.1908.

'natural and above board.' 'This great community has its own religion, it has its own race traditions, its own loyalty. There is absolutely nothing incompatible in this with the most thorough-going British patriotism.' In Milner's view it was quite acceptable that there should be 'an organisation intended to protect special Jewish interests and to voice Jewish opinion.'¹⁴²

Milner's comments reveal an erosion of the classic emancipation bargain - the notion of total assimilation. Jews were encouraged to acculturate but this did not mean jettisoning their own identity. His comments also witnessed the demise of 'amalgamationist' politics vis-a-vis the African, underpinned as they were by notions of the 'civilising mission'.¹⁴³ This idea was succinctly summed up by the Mayor of Kingwilliamstown, Byrne, when he pointed out that 'while they might not see eye to eye' with the Jew 'in regard to spiritual truth or interpretation of prophecy', 'they recognized that those who composed the fellowship of that synagogue, though distinct in certain respects...formed a corporate part of the whole community,

142. S A J C, 7.8.1903.

143. See R. Parry, "In a Sense Citizens, But Not altogether Citizens..." Rhodes, Race and the Ideology of Segregation at the Cape in the Late Nineteenth Century', Canadian Journal of African Studies, XVII, 3, 1983, pp.384-88 and S.J.R. Martin, 'Political and Social Theories of Transkeian Administrators in the Late Nineteenth Century', unpubl. M.A. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1978, p.82.

and whose influence would ever be with those who sought the best interests of the whole.'¹⁴⁴ Forming a corporate part of the community, then, was quite legitimate and an understandable product of history. As the Transvaal Leader put it: 'In Lands where Jews are harassed and persecuted, the instinct of self preservation draws them together until they become a class apart. But it is remarkable how, under free institutions, they merge into the political life of the country, without abandoning their own racial loyalty.'¹⁴⁵

Jews therefore had no reason to share the Reverend D. P. Faure's fears that the Draft Union Act of 1908 might discriminate against them because of stipulations that parliamentarians had to be of European descent.¹⁴⁶ By that time, despite their 'racial' image, Jews were accepted as a part and parcel of the white population and, in line with liberal principles, were not to be politically differentiated. Thus, when it was rumoured that Jews would have special representation in the Union Senate, the Transvaal Leader asked why they should have any more claim to representation than Roman Catholics or Christian Scientists? There was, argued the newspaper, no need 'to leaven the Senate with the influence of

144. S A J C, 13.11.1908.

145. S A J C, 7.8.1903.

146. S A J C, 3.9.1908.

religion and culture.' Special senatorial appointments would, in its opinion, be seen by the Jews 'as a reflection of a sub-nationality, as indicating that it is in some way different from the members of the British Empire in South Africa.'¹⁴⁷

In many ways, the comments of the Transvaal Leader reaffirmed nineteenth century assumptions that Jews were merely a religious group and as such were fully accepted into the body-politic which was founded upon notions of common liberty, welfare and rights. Popular perceptions of the eastern European Jew - and many other formal statements - belie these assumptions and demonstrate clearly that Jews were perceived as ineradicably different, unmistakably alien, and set apart by specific cultural predilections, underpinned by a racial essence. This image would ultimately define all Jews with obvious implications for those who anticipated total assimilation.

V

Despite contradictory images of the Jew and the ambiguities of culture and race, observers all shared a common

147. Transvaal Leader, 29.9.1910. Some years earlier the same newspaper praised Jews for their loyalty to the Empire and their contribution to South African life. Transvaal Leader, 8.12.1906.

perception that the newcomers were upwardly mobile. This was explained in different ways but the Jews' apparent rise from rags to riches was always commented on. It was evident in the Johannesburg Times, description of the 'Peruvian,'¹⁴⁸ in the diatribe of 'A Farmer Pure and Simple,'¹⁴⁹ and in many other commentaries. Even Wynberg's District Surgeon, Dr H. Claude Wright (who had so much to say about unhygienic Jewish practices) could not, in his 1904 medical report, ignore the transformation:

They arrived in this colony very poor, and therefore huddled together considerably. They are now all of them well-to-do. They can, therefore, afford all the luxuries of civilization. I use the word civilization with pride, for when many of them arrive they are certainly not more civilized than the Indians, an intermarried and enfeebled race. The freedom and climate have done much to invigorate them. Like Jeshurus of old, they have "waxed fat and kicked", certainly kicked off the trammels of serfdom. I also think they have kicked off the vermin and filth in which they formally lived, and to which I alluded in my previous report. They have waxed fat, rich and are good citizens, law abiding and laying good store for themselves.¹⁵⁰

Dr Wright's comments convey vividly the perceived metamorphosis of the newcomer. For some, success was seen to be a product of thrift, enterprise and even sacrifice. For

148. See above, pp. 65-66.

149. See above, pp. 135-36.

150. G35 - 1904 Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Cape Colony, 1904, Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly.

example, when judging a plaintiff accused by the Deputy Sheriff of being unable to have afforded goods because he had been 'a mere hawker of vegetables', Judge Kotze reminded the court of 'the thrift and perseverance of the Hebrew.' Not infrequently, noted the Judge 'the [Hebrew] commenced business by coming to one's door with a basket hawking his goods, and next he would appear with a wheelbarrow or cart, and later he would possess a shop of his own and eventually he might rise to be Mayor of the place.'¹⁵¹ That the plaintiff possessed certain goods, despite his lowly position, posed no contradiction for this Judge.

It was similarly no contradiction for Merriman who argued that it was the emphasis placed by Jews upon education that had enabled them in every free country to attain 'the very highest positions in the land.' He went even further by suggesting that everyone owed their moral sense to the Jewish race.¹⁵² Like Bruce (the Johannesburg educationist referred to earlier) Merriman was also impressed with Jewish benevolence and charitable endeavours.¹⁵³

151. S A J C, 27.10.1905.

152. S A J C, 4.9.1908.

153. Ibid. In similar vein, Smuts commended Jewish concern with education and with the improvement of their children 'who would be the Spinozas and Maimonides' of the future.' S A J C, 8.10.1909. He had obviously taken this line from Olive Schreiner. See above p.91.

The transformation or upward mobility of the Jew was, of course, not always perceived as the outcome of toil or valuable service. For instance, when considering a Jewish immigrant's application for a hawkers licence in 1907, Councillor Van Zyl of Graaff-Reinet commented that such applicants 'started today with a bundle behind their back' and 'drove around a few months later with a cart and flashy pair of horses such as...he and his fellow farmers could not afford.' Because there were too many of these sorts of men, Van Zyl was opposed to issuing a licence. 'Hardly any produce', he pointed out, 'was being brought to town nowadays, and the class of man as the one whose application was now under consideration was responsible for the deplorable state of affairs. All products etc. were being brought by the people in the country and in many cases in an undesirable manner.' While the Chairman of the Aberdeen Divisional Council admitted to 'a great deal' of truth in what Van Zyl had said, he felt the committee could not withhold a licence when the 'party brought satisfactory witnesses as to his good character.' Moreover, noted the chairman, 'the grievances in small places were not as acute as in the larger centres. In places like Oudtshoorn, and other places the Jewish element was deplorable, and the time was not far on when these people would be their bosses. The committee, he explained, could not, according to the law, withhold their consent for the applicant's licence. Van Zyl remained dissatisfied, retorting indignantly that 'the

people who had signed the certificate as to the applicant's good character are nearly all Jews, and we all know that Jews stick to each other like a leech.' Van Zyl's motion, besides attracting laughter, was not seconded. Clearly his talk was no more than rhetoric. In the case of Indians, the question of licensing was far more problematic for the applicant. Nevertheless, the exchange was not unimportant. Obviously philosemite and antisemite shared perceptions (but obviously not explanations) of Jewish upward mobility.

The notion of metamorphosis was forcefully illustrated in Stephen Black's¹⁵⁴ 'Helena's Hope Ltd' which played for sixty-five consecutive nights in Johannesburg when first produced. The play centres around the dishonest dealings of two Jews, Abraham Goldenstein and Samuel Shearer, who persuade a naive Afrikaans girl, Helena Joubert, to part with her inherited farm. Unknown to her, but known to them, the farm contains deposits of gold. The plot revolves around attempts at retribution and it is ultimately only Shearer who manages to outwit Goldenstein. The interesting feature of the play is Goldenstein's ascent from bearded snous in the opening scene to opulent Parktown financier at the close - the result of sharp and dishonest dealings. Shearer too is an unsavoury character. To add to the already

154. Black has been termed the first self-consciously 'South African' writer. See S. Gray (ed.), Stephen Black. Three Plays, Johannesburg, Ad. Donker, 1984, Introduction.

virulent anti-Jewish characterisations, the play includes Goldenstein's wife, an ostentatious and vulgar woman who had, according to a review in the S A J C, 'peregrinated from Petticoat Lane to Parktown.'¹⁵⁵

Significantly, Goldenstein's accent is thick and guttural, an indication of the impact made by eastern European Jews upon the author. More significant, however, was the fact that the plays billing - 'A Mirror of Rand Life' - was fully believed. Both Jewish and Gentile reviewers agreed that the portrayal of the Jews was not exaggerated¹⁵⁶ and the production certainly struck a responsive chord in the popular consciousness. This might be at least part of the explanation for the overwhelming critical acclaim of 'Helena's Hope Ltd'. The only apparent indication of opposition came from a group of Ferreirastown Jews who threatened to disrupt the opening night.¹⁵⁷ It is possible that they had been forewarned by kinsmen who had seen the production in Cape Town, where it had been performed without incident some three months earlier.

155. S A J C, 3.6.1910.

156. See, for example, Cape Times, 2.3.1910. The Cape, 4.3.1910; and the S A J C, 3.6.1910, which even suggested that the author had omitted other pertinent features of the negative stereotype.

157. Rand Daily Mail, 30.10.1910.

The threatened disruption did not go unchallenged. In a lengthy letter published in the front page of the Rand Daily Mail, Stephen Black denied accusations of antisemitism, arguing that the play contained no villain and no Jew 'of the accepted stage type.' After all, he pointed out, the Polish Jew, Abraham Goldenstein, 'invariably came out on top', in spite of having to compete with people 'of a more cultured class', and this was 'due to his shrewdness and wit.'¹⁵⁸

In many ways, Black's defence affirms the prevalence of a widely-shared anti-Jewish stereotype based on perceptions of the eastern European Jew. By that time, the Northern Post and Border News could, for instance, comfortably state that Jews committed most of the frauds in the country.¹⁵⁹ Certainly it was obvious that the 'Peruvian' was uppermost in Smuts' mind when, as Minister of the Interior in the new Union Government, he introduced a clause in an Immigration Restriction Bill 'to expel from the country certain classes of persons who were not born British subjects, or who have been naturalized in the Union, and who had been sentenced

158. Rand Daily Mail, 30.5.1910. Black also noted that a prominent Jewish member of the South African parliament, Col. David Harris, had thoroughly appreciated the Jewish portrayal. Harris, it should be noted, was a very assimilated Jew and probably not the best person to judge.

159. Quoted in South African News, 25.6.1910. The South African News, it should be noted, did criticize the Northern Post and Border News for its comments.

for certain crimes which included diamond stealing, illicit diamond or gold dealing, and illicit liquor selling.¹⁸⁰ The association with 'Peruvians' was so apparent that a leading Unionist, Percy Fitzpatrick, warned against supposing 'that those people [the target of the Bill] were associated with any religious denomination'.¹⁸¹ The image of the Jewish knave had obviously not disappeared and was demonstrated once again in 'A Girl from Springfontein', produced in 1912. In this play, Solomon Shine, the Mayor of Springfontein, is portrayed as 'a hybrid cross between a Petticoat Lane fruit or fish vendor and a flash Fagin'.¹⁸²

The eastern European Jew was patently still an unwelcome addition to society. Old associations of the Jew with uncleanness and dishonesty were still rampant. As late as 1913, the Medical Officer of Health for Johannesburg, Dr C. Porter, referred to substantial production of milk in the city being in the hands of 'low class eastern Europeans who presumably by reason of their early environment and want of education have absolutely no idea of the word cleanliness'.¹⁸³ In Rustenburg, Alta, the Secretary of the

180. House of Assembly Debates, 13.3.1911.

181. Ibid.

182. S A J C, 29.11.1912. The play was written by Mr Macleod.

183. Report of the Medical Officer of Health, Johannesburg, 1913. Cited in R. Krut, 'The Making of a South African Jewish Community', p.157.

Magaliesberg Tobacco Growers Association, warned 'that if certain contingencies did not take place the Dutch tobacco growers would fall into the hands of Jews....'¹⁶⁴ When challenged on his comments by the S A J C, Alta pointed out that the word 'Jew' was an adjective even 'used by Israelites when they wish to indicate that a certain person cannot be trusted in business matters.'¹⁶⁵ His defence was surely of little consolation to the Jewish editor. It demonstrated just how tarnished the Jewish image had become following the influx of eastern European Jews.¹⁶⁶ These newcomers indeed defined the nature of Jewishness. Moreover, they symbolised change, upheaval and most importantly the power of grasping materialism. To the 'present day', claimed Bloemfontein's Dutch Reform Reverend, Jac van Belkom, the Jew 'still worshipped the golden calf and forsook God. ... he lived only for gold. They forget God and live for this world'. Van Belkom did, however, accept 'Israel' as the chosen race which would still be saved but 'would have to go

164. S A J C, 6.2.1914.

165. S A J C, 6.2.1914. According to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, a Dutch dictionary, issued by a South African publisher in 1914, defined Jews in a derogatory and insulting way. S A J C, 17.4.1914. The writer has been unsuccessful in tracing a copy of the dictionary.

166. Significantly, when a Jewish Land Settlement Association was formed in 1913, the S A J C commented with approval, noting that it had 'long been a reproach levelled against our community that we are today a nation of hucksters and small traders'. S A J C, 30.5.1913.

through the wilderness again.'¹⁶⁷ It is hardly surprising, then, that early in 1914 the S A J C arrived at the following laconic assessment: 'South Africa as a whole - contrary to the expectations of the would be immigrant - does not accord a very hearty welcome and apparently is already regretting that she made it possible for them to come.'¹⁶⁸

VI

The Jewish stereotype which had emerged in South Africa by the outbreak of the Great War was intimately bound up with the local stresses and upheavals engendered by the 'mineral revolution'. Although it confirmed and, in a way, reinforced the widely-shared European Jewish stereotype, the South African image was not simply its reflection. The caricatures of Hoggenheimer and Goldenstein were indeed deeply embedded in a South African reality. The Jew in other words, was not invented in the Sartrean sense.¹⁶⁹ Nor was he a mythical figure.

167. S A J C, 9.1.1914.

168. S A J C, 23.1.1914.

169. J.P. Sartre, Anti-Semite and Jew, translated by G.J. Becker, New York, Schocken Books, 1965, p 13. Sartre argued that the passion of received ideas about the Jew informs and interprets the experience of the antisemite. As he puts it: 'If the Jew did not exist, the antisemite would invent him'.

No one could ignore the approximately 40 000 Jews (the vast majority from eastern Europe) who had entered South Africa in the four decades prior to Union. Many admired Jewish enterprise, initiative and thrift as well as their wide-ranging contributions towards society. Furthermore their communal values were considered exemplary. On the other hand, the distinctive dress, exotic language and strange manner of the eastern European defined the Jew as a classic alien or outsider. These newcomers conjured up images of the ghetto and medieval obscurantism. More importantly, eastern European Jews increasingly defined 'Jewishness' in the South African context. Distinctions between them and the acculturated Anglo-German Jewish establishment were increasingly blurred.¹⁷⁰

The overwhelming presence of eastern European Jews also ensured the definition of Jews as a racial group - a notion, as mentioned before, shared by Jew and Gentile alike. Race and culture were, as we have seen, conflated in the early twentieth century. Moreover, acquired characteristics were believed (in neo-Lamarckian fashion) to be inherited and, in eugenic terms, ineradicable. Even criminality was associated, in the Lombrosian view, with physical appearance.¹⁷¹

170. Much the same process happened in Germany at that time. See G.L. Mosse, The Crisis of German Ideology, Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich, New York, Grosset & Dunlap, 1964, p.137.

171. See Mosse, Towards the Final Solution, pp.83-84.

While many Jews eked out an appalling and poverty ridden existence, others achieved great heights in mining and business.¹⁷² The rise of the latter from their poverty stricken 'Peruvian' status was, for the antisemite at least, ascribable to endemic dishonesty. This had enabled the 'Peruvian' to achieve plutocratic eminence. Hoggenheimer, allegedly the eminence grise of South Africa, merely symbolized on a higher plane the machinations of the Jewish pedlar and the illicit diamond dealer. The upstart in 'Helena's Hope Ltd', Abraham Goldenstein, similarly embodied all the dimensions of the stereotype: in the opening scene of the play he straddles the stage as an unkempt, bearded pedlar, only to become transformed through his cunning intrigues into a wealthy financier. His metamorphosis was that of the classic parvenu. For the philosemite, the metamorphosis was differently attributed - to thrift, enterprise and business acumen. Ultimately, for both philo and antisemite, upward mobility presupposed a potential for Jewish domination.

It was indeed the threat of competition and the fear of domination which fuelled much anti-Jewish sentiment. This was evident in both the rural areas and urban centres. As

172. See M. Kaplan, Jewish Roots in the South African Economy, Cape Town, C. Struik Publishers, 1986, chapters one to seven.

one correspondent to the Cape Times put it during the height of Cape Town's post-war economic depression: 'Can one wonder that there are so many British workmen unemployed in this town when these Jews, who by their mode of living, or rather existence, are able to compete with them at lower wages.'¹⁷³ 'Petty trade', noted the Cape Times at this time, was 'gradually being absorbed by a MOST UNDESIRABLE class of people. The large number of unsavoury looking fruit shops, fifth rate grocery stores and similar places of business, which have been opened in recent months, furnish unpleasant proof that the undesirable alien has established himself pretty firmly in Cape Town.'¹⁷⁴ Similar sentiments were evident in a Standard Bank Inspector's Report for Paarl:

There are about 1 000 competing in storekeeping, hawking, shoemaking, tailoring and other small industries, while the amount of small shops is quite out of proportion to the needs of the community. The competition is detrimental to the needs of the larger and more expensively conducted stores, and any great increase must lead to the depreciation of store and shop property of the better class.

Recent insolvencies have been confined chiefly to this class of traders, and the Manager is to be congratulated in keeping his books free from their names. The local manager of the Bank of Africa has pursued a similar policy and discouraged dealings with the small Jewish trader, with the result that this class of business is mainly restricted to the African Banking Corporation.¹⁷⁵

173. Cape Times, 3.2.1904.

174. Cape Times, 23.1.1903.

175. Inspector's Report, Paarl 1908, INSP 1/1/254, Standard Bank Archives.

At a time of great stress and upheaval, then, the Jew appeared for many to be the main beneficiary of change.¹⁷⁶ For the impoverished farmer, he was a symbol of greed, living by his wits and alien to all that was valued being rootless, scheming, and not given to manual work. These negative characteristics were also evident in the urban context where Jews, allegedly adept on the Stock-Exchange¹⁷⁷ and supposedly comfortable with finance, stood out as 'an urban people par excellence.'¹⁷⁸ While religious

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176. Similar processes were evident in the process of German modernization. See Mosse, The crises of German Ideology, p.2 and S. Wilson, Ideology and Experience. Antisemitism in France at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair, London and Toronto, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982, chapter xvi, passim.
177. According to Olive Schreiner, Jews predominated on the Stock-Exchange. See O. Schreiner, 'Words in Season : an English South African's View of the Situation'.
178. These are the words of Arnold Rose, an American sociologist, who explained antisemitism in terms of hatred of the city. See A. Rose, 'Anti-Semitism's Roots in City Hatred' Commentary, vol VI, 1948. Jews have been historically associated with the city from the late middle ages and western literature has, of course, incorporated an anti-urban bias. As Hadden and Barton put it: 'Cain, the first murderer was also the first city builder and throughout the Old Testament, the stories of Jericho, the Tower of Babel, Sodom and Gomorah and others are reminders of the evils of city life. The New Testament has fewer negative references to the city, but it is significant that Jesus retreats to the countryside to teach and to pray. Saint Augustine makes it clear that a place in the City of God is dependent upon renouncing the cities of men. Even Plato, while accepting that urban philosophers must govern, gave his Republic an agrarian setting and expressed his contempt for the urban masses, contaminated by the vices of urban life. Aristotle referred to artisans and merchants as "ignoble and inimical" to virtue.' J.K. Hadden and J.J. Barton, 'An

differences may have sharpened perceptions,¹⁷⁹ it was the actual encounter between Jew and Gentile that determined the stereotype. For the antisemite the Jew symbolized all that was evil in the modern world, a world nostalgically contrasted with an idealized past age of order and harmony.

Thus, notwithstanding the influence of deep-seated European traditions and late nineteenth century nationalist discourse, anti-Jewish prejudice in South Africa was clearly rooted in specific conditions. In other words, Pinsker's celebrated notion that Judeophobia was a 'form of demonopathy... a psychic aberration' lacks sophistication. Nor is antisemitism, as he contends, 'hereditary' and, 'as a disease transmitted over two thousand years incurable.'¹⁸⁰ In the South Africa situation Schermerhorn's

image that will not die: thoughts on the history of anti-urban ideology' in L.H. Masotti and J.K. Hadden (eds.), 'The urbanization of the suburbs', vol. 7, Urban Affairs Annual Review, Beverley Hills, 1975. I am grateful to Jane Carruthers for drawing my attention to the former article.

179. We have seen indications of religious ideas fuelling perceptions of the Jew but, in an increasingly secular age, these were minimal and not acceptable to mainstream opinion. Early in the twentieth century, for instance, Prof C.F.J. Muller's (misreported) comments at a Dutch Reformed Synod about Jews being a 'curse' to South Africa were answered by the South African News in no uncertain terms. The newspaper detested the 'practice of affixing race and creed labels' and concluded with a plea against 'that blighting curse of the Continent, anti-Semitism.' South African News, 12.11.1903.

180. L. Pinsker, 'Auto-emancipation : An appeal to his people by a Russian Jew (1882)', in A. Hertzberg, The Zionist Idea. A Historical Analysis and Reader, New York, Atheneum 1984, p.185.

assessment is more acceptable; that prejudice is 'a product of situations, historical situations, political situations, it is not a little demon that emerges in people simply because they are depraved.'¹⁸¹

To accept Schermerhorn's view does not mean that one must ignore the western legacy of antisemitism. Nor does it mean that one must apportion blame to the victim as some exponents of interaction analysis, a genre of recent British scholarship on antisemitism, are inclined towards.¹⁸² It is simply to argue that prejudice - as manifest in the Jewish stereotype - must be understood in the broader social, historical and cognitive context.¹⁸³ For many categories of

181. R.A. Schermerhorn, Comparative Ethnic Relations: Framework for Theory and Research, New York, Random House, 1970, p 6.

182. See, for example, C. Holmes, Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1879-1939, New York, Holmes & Meier Publishers Inc., 1979, pp.231-32.

183. The stereotype, of course, had some plausibility - a notion referred to by psychologists as a 'kernel of truth.' See 'Stereotype' in International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, vol 15, pp259ff. Historians similarly note that myths have a core of reality. See G.L. Mosse, Nazism. A Historical and Comparative Analysis of National Socialism, an interview with Michael A. Ledeen, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1978, p.31 and Aschheim, Brothers and Strangers, p.11. In his examination of nineteenth century antisemitism in Germany and Austria, Pulzer makes the point that 'charges against the chosen villain may be embellished by the most lurid fantasy, vast invalid conclusions may be drawn from trivial or isolated facts - but if there were no Jewish international bankers, if the Masons were not a secret society, if there had been no communist sympathisers in the United States Foreign Service, the myths about them would lose their point.' P.G.J. Pulzer, The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in

the social spectrum - the impoverished farmer, the unemployed worker, the competing merchant, and the frustrated businessman or financier - the stereotype served as a psychological cushion. It was a universal scapegoat in an age of turmoil.

CHAPTER FIVE

SHIRKERS AND SUBVERSIVES: EMBELLISHING THE JEWISH STEREOTYPE

I

During the Great War and in the immediate post-war years all dimensions of the Jewish stereotype discussed hitherto were consolidated¹ and indeed embellished. One elaboration,

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1. In 1917, for instance, Stephen Black's 'Helena's Hope Ltd' once again elicited no sympathy for the 'unscrupulous speculator and company promoter, Abraham Goldenstein.' See reviews, Rand Daily Mail, 30.1.1917; Cape Times, 3.1.1917; Cape Argus, 2.1.1917. Jews similarly continued to be associated with IDB (see S A J C, 14.5.1920) and ridiculed for their petty trading practices. The Graaff Reinet Advertiser (7.9.1921), for instance, mocked the eastern European Jew in a letter, 'YEVANTOBIVATS' (you want to buy waatch). The post-war also witnessed the emergence of the Afrikaans smous joke. In these jokes the smous is usually depicted as either shrewd or a figure of fun. See, for example, Die Huisgenoot, January, 1919; August, 1919; September, 1919; November, 1919; December, 1919; January, 1920; February, 1920; March, 1920; May, 1920; July, 1920; November, 1920; May, 1921; January, 1922. See also the Graaff Reinet Advertiser, 10.8.1921; 2.9.1921. (For further discussion of the smous joke, see below, p.312). The shrewd business instinct of the Jew was best captured in a Labour Party newspaper, The Guardian, when discussing the character of J.W. Jagger, Minister of Railways and Harbours. He had, noted the newspaper, 'die slimheid van die Skot en die handelsinsig van die Jood.' Quoted in Die Burger, 6.1.1922. The stereotype was also personified by Schlimowitz, a character in Stephen Black's novel, The Dorp (London, Melrose, 1920). Of course the philosemitic dimension of the stereotype was also evident. The Minister of Mines, F. S. Malan, for example, praised Jews for their industry and enterprise. Commercially and industrially, he argued, Jews 'ruled the roost'. Rand Daily Mail, 14.11.1917. Needless to say such comments were welcomed by antisemites as confirmation of Jewish domination.

introduced during the war, was the notion of Jewish 'shirking' or 'slacking' - a variation on earlier charges of disloyalty and parasitism, relating in addition to conceptions of the Jew as an outsider. Following the overthrow of the Russian Tsar in 1917, the war years also witnessed the emergence of a powerful anti-Bolshevist ideology which incorporated anti-Jewish sentiment due to the alleged part the Jews had played in the destruction of the Romanov dynasty. The ramifications of the Russian Revolution in South Africa were not inconsiderable, particularly in the immediate post-war years of economic recession and labour instability.

The notion of Jewish disloyalty that had been hinted at prior to the war was ignited by the sensitive question of military recruitment. According to the Labour Party politician, Morris Kentridge, Jewish involvement in the war effort was regularly questioned at the hustings during the general election campaign of 1915² and the matter was also raised in parliament.³ By late 1915 the Rand Daily Mail and Sunday Times charged Jewish youth 'with not responding to the call to arms in proportion to [their] ratio in the general population.'⁴ In an apologetic and defensive tone,

2. M. Kentridge, I Recall. Memoirs of Morris Kentridge, Johannesburg, The Free Press Limited, 1959, pp.55ff. See also Alexander, Morris Alexander. A Biography, p.76.

3. S A J C, 24.12.1915.

the S A J C suggested that people incorrectly assumed all Jews in Johannesburg were eligible to take up arms. In fact, argued the Jewish weekly, only four or five thousand of the eighteen to twenty thousand Jews in Johannesburg were British subjects 'and consequently entitled to offer their services to the crown.'⁵ That the S A J C deemed it necessary to respond to charges of disloyalty is indicative of widespread concern and unease. The Jewish weekly's rationalizations, together with those of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies,⁶ suggest that charges of 'shirking' or 'slacking' went beyond the rantings of insignificant individuals or newspapers. Towards the end of 1916, a series of letters appeared in the Natal Advertiser accusing Russian Jews of taking advantage 'of the absence of the boys to grow fat'.⁷

With a major recruitment drive in early 1917, the enlistment issue assumed more serious proportions. 'It is now the duty of every eligible young man to come to a final decision',

4. S A J C, 3.12.1915.

5. S A J C, 15.12.1915.

6. Rand Daily Mail, 8.12.1915. The Vice President and Chairman of the Jewish Board of Deputies, Bernard Alexander, was identified by The Independent as 'that true born Britisher of Posen ... who has himself seven able bodied brothers in his firm not listed.' Quoted in S A J C, 14.4.1916.

7. See, for instance, the letters of 'Proud Khaki' (Natal Advertiser, 22.8.1916); 'Too Old' (Natal Advertiser, 28.8.1916) and 'One who has Fought and Suffered for Country' (Natal Advertiser, 5.9.1916).

noted an editorial in the Rand Daily Mail. Every able bodied man, argued the newspaper, 'should be made to realize what "slacking" means when the last solemn appeal is rejected. The eligible man who refuses to help the Empire in this regard will live to regret very bitterly the selfishness which inclined him to shirk his duty.'⁸ Predictably, attention was focused upon the Jew. As the Standerton Advertiser noted: 'Very few Jews have yet risked loss of life or property by leaving their homes to assist the Empire of their adoption in her hour of agony and need.'⁹ In the heat of the recruitment drive, the question of Jewish enlistment occupied the correspondence pages of major newspapers. 'Twelve Pounder' was particularly harsh in his observations:

Look around Mr Editor, any place of amusement in any town you like in South Africa, everywhere you will see hundreds of strong, healthy, eligible young Jews, who should be in khaki fighting. Look in the stores, there you will find them in soft, easy, comfortable cribs. Go the seaside now, Muizenberg as a start, any evening or Sundays, see how many recruits could be picked up there. I am quite aware that many Jews have enlisted, good luck to them; they knew their duty. Slackers we hear mentioned every day, and taking a look around on Sunday last, it is the Jews that are the biggest slackers of any as far as I could count We have drawn and drained off our best from every quarter, and I really think the time has come when the Jews can make some sort of sacrifice in Britain's cause.¹⁰

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8. Rand Daily Mail, 30.1.1917.
 9. Quoted in S A J C, 9.2.1917.
 10. Cape Times, 1.2.1917. Significantly the ostentatious presence of Jews in Muizenberg was also commented upon

'Twelve Pounder's' sentiments were shared by 'Returned British East African Soldier' who suggested that 'Jews ought to be ashamed of themselves. They are doing the American trick here - filling their pockets and doing nothing in return for the protection they enjoy under the British flag.'¹¹ It mattered little that 'A British Soldier and a Jew' attacked the Cape Town press for allowing 'Slandorous letters and reports of calumnious speeches' against Jews 'continually [to] appear ... without even an editorial note in contradiction.'¹²

In Johannesburg, R.H. Henderson, in a letter to the Rand Daily Mail, claimed that many businesses were falling 'exclusively into the hands of aliens, chiefly Greeks and Russians', [i.e. Jews]. Henderson advocated conscription, including the formation of Greek and Russian battalions. He

by a Jew. The emphasis in this case, however, was upon the parvenu nature of the newcomers: 'There can be no doubt that the large attendance of Jews and Jewesses at Muizenberg is hardly calculated to add to the popularity of our people in this country, more particularly when we take into consideration the ostentation and display which distinguishes their conduct. Of course, there are exceptions, and we have Jewish ladies as well as Jewish gentlemen in South Africa, but it must be admitted - with great regret - that these latter do not preponderate. The vulgarity of our people and their want of consideration for the susceptibilities of others is rapidly becoming more noticeable as they emerge from Fordsburg and Ferreiras to Doornfontein and gradually percolate to Yeoville.' The Cape, 9.3.1917.

11. Cape Times, 3.2.1917.

12. Cape Times, 3.2.1917.

was confident that 'influential citizens of these nationalities are ready to volunteer for the work of organisation'¹³ Henderson's call for conscription was supported by 'A Veteran' who argued that thousands of people of foreign origin 'should either join the forces under the British flag or be compelled to return to their respective countries.'¹⁴

The recruitment drive¹⁵ quite obviously kindled passions and in the process raised old charges of Jewish exploitation and disloyalty.¹⁶ These charges upset 'M R' (a regular but unidentified Jewish correspondent to the Cape Town press), who warned of 'a revival of old hatreds and Jew baiting' in the press. These 'virulent attacks' could, he asserted, 'lead to an explosion of passion such as Cape Town had

13. Rand Daily Mail, 6.3.1917.

14. Rand Daily Mail, 8.3.1917.

15. In the attempt to gain Jewish recruits the Sunday Times even quoted (under the heading 'Moses and War') an extract from the Book of Numbers in which Moses tells the children of Gad and Reuben that refusal to go to war was a sin against the Lord. Sunday Times, 6.5.1917.

16. Even a joke in the Dutch periodical, De Huisgenoot reflected on the Jews lack of allegiance: Following an Irishman and a Scotsman reporting deaths, wounded and missing after battle, Cohen reports:

Generaal: "Hoeveel is dood?"

Cohen: "Not wan"

Generaal: "Hoeveel gewond?"

Cohen: "Not wan"

Generaal "Hoeveel vermis?"

Cohen: "De whole lot"

De Huisgenoot, May 1917.

experienced in the anti-German riots'. In defence of the Jewish community, 'M R' highlighted the Jewish contribution to South African industry. He argued, moreover, that, relative to British forces in active service, Jews were serving in proportion to their numbers.¹⁷ His letter provoked heated responses from 'T B B' and 'R M'. The former accused 'M R' of 'decrying the country that shelters him and his race' and sneering 'at the English as being slackers more than his own people.'¹⁸ 'R M', in turn, quoted a viciously antisemitic letter (from Petrograd's Novoe Vremya) which identified every Russian revolutionary as Jewish. In his opinion this proved that Jews were slackers and internationalists. 'M R's Jewish industrialists were dismissed simply as exploiters of the 'poorer classes', unlike 'the Rhodeses, Hofmeyrs and Merrimans'. While admitting that some Jews were good and dutiful, 'R M' warned that his statements reflected 'the thoughts of very many well wishers of the land, who are not out for profiteering etc.'¹⁹

One of the complications facing the Russian Jew and the question of recruitment was of course his enormous antipathy towards the country of his birth. Joining the allied war effort meant, in effect, supporting the very regime that

17. The Cape, 5.10.1917.

18. The Cape, 12.10.1917.

19. The Cape, 19.10.1917.

oppressed and persecuted him. This existential issue was indeed appreciated in some quarters. 'Ex-Soldier', for instance, noted that the Russians, 'have a reason probably for not wanting to fight.'²⁰ W.H. Harrison, a prominent socialist, went further, arguing that Russian Jews looked favourably upon Germany, a country that had supplied them with forbidden literature. In addition, claimed Harrison, Jews were 'essentially pacifists, and of a philosophical trend of mind rather than adventurers [sic] daring and sport characteristic of warlike communities Their religion also is a theocratic socialism unadorned by any military display so conspicuous in other creeds.'²¹

These arguments naturally lost their forcefulness with the overthrow of the Tsarist regime in February of 1917, a fact noted by the Rand Daily Mail.²² Consequently the question of Jewish recruitment remained alive as the war moved into its final stages. The surest evidence of widespread disquiet emerged in the proceedings of a legal wrangle between the editor of the S A J C, Lionel Goldsmid, and S. Vogelsson, editor of the African Jewish World. The dispute

20. Rand Daily Mail, 12.3.1917.

21. The Cape, 23.11.1917. It should be noted that, as a good socialist, Harrison was opposed to the war and saw the conflict as a product of capitalist machinations. See W.H. Harrison, Memoirs of a socialist in South Africa, Cape Town, Stewart Printing Company, 1949, p.52.

22. Rand Daily Mail, 24.3.1917.

centred on Vogelson's charge that Goldsmid was antisemitic because he had urged Jewish recruitment (and thus encouraged antisemites in their campaign) through the columns of his newspaper.²³ Goldsmid considered the charge libellous. In his evidence he explained how Johannesburg's Mayor and Chairman of the Recruiting Committee, J.W. O'Hare, had urged him to push for Jewish recruitment because complaints 'from all parts of the country' about Russian Jews not enlisting had reached him. O'Hare shared these sentiments, warning Goldsmid that there 'was and is a certain amount of feeling against the Russian Jew which may break out at any moment!' He had asked Goldsmid to exercise whatever 'influence he might possess to endeavour to induce these people to see their duty in the proper light.' O'Hare's views were supported by Henry Filmer, an attorney and member of the Johannesburg Recruiting Committee. Filmer maintained that the Russian Jew as distinct from the British Jew 'was very conspicuous in Johannesburg and on the Reef.' To illustrate his argument, Filmer referred to a store on the Nourse Mines where, out of eight Russian Jewish employees, an anticipated two recruits could not be enlisted. According to Filmer, less than one per cent of Russian Jews had come forward for service.²⁴ That Filmer singled out specifically Russian Jews demonstrates that the old nineteenth century divisions

23. African Jewish World, 11.10.1917.

24. S A J C, 23.11.1917. Negative sentiments towards Russian Jews were, of course, influenced by the belief that most Communists were Jewish. See below, pp.202ff.

between Anglo-German (or acculturated Jews) and Russian Jews had not entirely disappeared.

Jewish leaders appear to have heeded the warnings emerging from the Goldsmid-Vogelson case. In Cape Town, the Reverend Bender, Morris Alexander and Hyman Liberman established a Jewish Statistical Bureau to ascertain the number of Jews serving in the Union, Colonial and Imperial Defence forces.²⁵ Alexander, moreover, told congregants during a synagogue service in Cape Town 'that all young men able and fit to go should join the fighting forces.' His call was fully supported by the S A J C.²⁶

When the Goldsmid-Vogelson case resumed in March 1918 after a lengthy adjournment, the evidence of Bernard Alexander, Chairman of the Jewish Board of Deputies, confirmed once again widely-shared negative perceptions of the Russian Jew, if not all Jews. When asked if Jews were castigated for not registering, Alexander responded in the affirmative. In mitigation he noted, 'it seems quite a common thing to make a football of the Jew, to kick him!' Alexander also drew attention to Major Bass who had criticized Jews during a

25. See Alexander Papers, B C 160, List III, Letter Book 1911-25; Morris Alexander to Percy Cowan, General Secretary, South African Jewish Board of Deputies, 10.9.1917.

26. S A J C, 27.3.1918. It is estimated that Jews comprised approximately six per cent of the Union's Defence forces. See Alexander, Morris Alexander, p.76.

speech at a local theatre and in addition noted that Jews were often slandered at meetings on the Market Square.²⁷ In Durban, a raging debate engulfed the columns of the Natal Advertiser following a letter from 'True Russian' in which he claimed all Jews were Bolsheviks and recommended that Durban be the site of a pogrom.²⁸ While some non-Jews defended the Jewish contribution and the ethical ideals of Judaism, the majority of correspondents shared 'True Russian's' animus and used the occasion to vent their anger on South African Jews in general and Russian Jews in particular. In the main, Jews were accused of shirking, dishonesty, parasitism and exploitation while one correspondent, 'Uncle', accused them of financing the overthrow of the Tsarist regime.²⁹ The anti-Jewish message, however, was best encapsulated in 'Cataracts' letter: 'The Jews are a distinct race of people with a somewhat different mind to anyone else's, it is the mind that causes the trouble, and to alter or remove that - you may as well try to alter the spots on the leopard'.³⁰

27. S A J C 27.3.1918. Despite his evidence, Alexander supported the charge that Goldsmid's article was antisemitic.

28. Natal Advertiser, 11.3. 1918.

29. Natal Advertiser, 23.3.1918. For details see the Natal Advertiser, 7.3.1918; 11.3.1918; 16.3.1918; 19.3.1918; 22.3.1918; 23.3.1918 and 25.3.1918.

30. Natal Advertiser, 22.3.1918.

Debates surrounding the Jewish war effort underline the marginal and vulnerable status of the Jew in the public consciousness. The alien and conspicuous Russian Jew was especially susceptible; he continued to be perceived as an outsider and a disloyal one at that. Animus towards these newcomers was, moreover, clearly related to the well established 'Peruvian' image and all its negative connotations. Of course, notions of war profiteering also reinforced in a most telling way earlier notions of exploitation and dishonesty. The Russian Jew, then, undermined the 'emancipation contract' and raised important questions about the ultimate acculturation and assimilability of Jews in general.

II

Fears of assimilability and questions of loyalty assumed even greater force in the post-war years when thousands of new Jewish immigrants from Russia and its former dependencies allegedly threatened to undermine South African order and stability. Coming from Bolshevik Russia, these newcomers were tarnished with the excesses of the new regime depicted in South African newspapers as anarchistic, lawless and violent.³¹ 'Bolshevist Culture', noted an editorial in

31. See, for example, De Burger, 11.3.1917. See also the cartoons in the Cape Times, 4.2.1919 and 22.2.1919. Of course in the immediate post-revolutionary period Russian affairs were chaotic. The Polish War, Civil War and food shortages ensured social instability.

the Cape Times, would inevitably result in 'political, social and educational chaos and next a swing round to untempered despotism in the hands of an intolerant oligarchy.'³²

The anti-Bolshevist crusade characterising South African newspapers was not unrelated to local tensions and problems. In fact, events in Russia resonated in South Africa precisely because of rising worker consciousness and socialist rhetoric.³³ Militant left-wing socialists had broken away from the essentially racist South African Labour Party during the war to form the International Socialist League in 1915.³⁴ The League's internationalist and colour-blind socialist policies³⁵ confronted a wave of conservatism and xenophobia.

32. Cape Times, 19.2.1919.

33. War-time industrialisation had generated a restive and increasingly radicalised black proletariat on the Witwatersrand. As prices spiralled and black wages remained relatively unchanged, the political atmosphere in South African urban centres became, in the words of Bonner, 'correspondingly charged'. P. Bonner, 'The Transvaal Native Congress 1917-1920: The radicalisation of the black petty bourgeoisie on the Rand', in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds.), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa. African class formation, culture and consciousness 1870-1930, London, Longman, 1982, p.274. But it was above all the fear of white labour radicalisation and its influence on blacks which permeated the Rand.

34. See S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment: The Origins and Early History of the Communist Party of South Africa, 1914-1932', unpubl. Ph.D., Harvard University, 1965, p.70.

35. Ibid, p.82.

Both the National Party³⁶ and the South African Party manipulated the Bolshevist-bogey in an attempt to tarnish labour politicians and trade unionists of all political persuasions. The Cape Town press, in particular, raised the bogey following the formation of the Industrial Socialist League³⁷ in Cape Town after the war.³⁸ For the Cape Times this radical socialist movement was evidence of a rising tide of Bolshevism in the city. The substantial number of eastern European Jews in the movement, moreover, did not go unnoticed.³⁹ Indeed, when Morris Alexander complained about an antisemitic letter in the Cape Times, the editor responded that it was quite pertinent to discuss the large number of Russian Jews who were mischievous Bolshevist agitators.⁴⁰ The Cape also kept a watchful eye over

36. The National Party set itself up as a 'bulwark against Bolshevism.' De Burger, 13.5.1919.

37. The Industrial Socialist League was a left-wing offshoot of Cape Town's Socialist Democratic Federation. For the emergence and development of the Industrial Socialist League, see E.A. Mantzaris, 'The Promise of the Impossible Revolution: The Cape Town Industrial Socialist League, 1915-1921' in C. Saunders, H. Phillips and E. van Heyningen (eds.), Studies in the History of Cape Town, vol. 4, University of Cape Town, 1984.

38. There was also concern expressed in Johannesburg. See The Star, 14.3.1918.

39. See S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment', p.165.

40. Cape Times, 9.1.1919.

developments, referring to the circle of Jewish left-wing agitator, A.Z. Berman, as Berman's Cape Town 'Soviet'.⁴¹

The conspicuous presence, then, of Russian Jews among socialist agitators reinforced conservative fears of international Bolshevism and its challenge to the established order. This was, of course, a worldwide phenomenon in which the alien Jew was a primary target.⁴² Certainly it was no coincidence that the Minister of Railways, Henry Burton, referred to 'substantial elements of Bolshevism in this country' when addressing a Zionist conference early in 1919. He indeed 'looked confidently to the Jewish community to stand firmly by law and order'.⁴³ Commenting editorially on Burton's speech, the Cape Times noted that the government was 'keeping a very careful eye on Bolshevist propagandism.... All over the world experience is proving that Bolshevism possesses highly infective characteristics.... It was found impossible to keep the Influenza Epidemic from invading our territories but we have now to be on our guard against an epidemic more infectious, more destructive and vastly more costly in life and in

41. The Cape, 10.1.1919

42. See, for example, D. Ceserani, 'Anti-Alienism in England After the First World War', Immigrants and Minorities, vol. 6, no. 1, March 1987 and J. Higham, Strangers in the Land. Patterns of American Nativism 1860-1925, second edition, New York, Atheneum, 1981, pp.223-33.

43. Cape Times, 16.1.1919.

treasure than the influenza.'⁴⁴ The Cape Times went on to recommend that the government 'maintain a very close scrutiny of immigrants arriving here from overseas, and also upon Bolshevist literature, which had already found its way into South Africa.'⁴⁵ Both Burton's speech and the recommendations of the Cape Times demonstrated the popular

44. Comparing Bolshevism to the great influenza epidemic which had only recently devastated South Africa, (including Cape Town) was an enormously emotive, if not invidious comparison. For insights into the traumatic impact of the Spanish flu in South Africa see H. Phillips, 'Black October': the Impact of the Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918 on South Africa', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1984, chapter eight. Similarly invidious and indeed apocalyptic views of Bolshevism were captured in a letter to a Cape Town newspaper (quoted in the Sunday Times) entitled 'A Watchman in Zion': 'This thing is to me none other than the "Lamb-like Beast" that is seen rising up in all the earth, as seen in Revelations 13-11, which although it rises like a lamb yet shall, when it gets into power become the greatest system of veiled despotism that our world has known. And what the world has had to pass through during the past five years will be child's play compared to what is in store for us under Socialism Bolshevism, which must rise to power very suddenly in all the world, for it must be universal to fulfil the prophecy. I can prove it to any of your readers that the thing will overtake our world by 1926 A D, that is 1260 years from 666 A D, for it is mentioned no less than seven times in the Holy Scriptures. The thing will be more deadly than any plague or pestilence that this creation has seen, and will change all things under heaven, for kingdoms and nations shall go down before it like grass before a mower.' Sunday Times, 19.1.1919
45. Cape Times, 18.1.1919. Fears were not restricted to the Cape Town press. See, for example, 'The Bolshevist Wave', Sunday Times, 19.1.1919; 'The Bolshevist Menace', Rand Daily Mail, 21.3.1919 and the letter, 'Damnation to you Bolsheviks', The Star, 20.3.1919. The scrutiny of Russian immigrants was not restricted to South Africa. Similar actions took place in England and the USA. See Higham, Strangers in the Land, chapters eight and nine, and Ceserani, 'Anti-Alienism in England'.

association of Russian Jewish immigrants with the alleged Bolshevist threat. Indeed, in depicting the Russian Jew as subversive, the Cape Times had drawn upon those notions of archetypical deviance established prior to the Great War. Of course associating worker agitation with Bolshevism was also a convenient way of discrediting the labour movement, and, in particular, its more radical wing.⁴⁶ Not surprisingly Morris Alexander took umbrage at the association of Jews with all radical activity and in addition condemned the introduction of religious affiliation when Jews committed an offence or indiscretion.⁴⁷ Alexander, always an energetic defendant of Jewish causes, obviously sensed a rising tide of antisemitism emerging from turn of the century anti-alienism.

The arrival in South Africa of two Russian Jews, Lapitsky and Sosnovic, who had come to lecture on the Russian Revolution aroused predictable hysteria in the press.⁴⁸ Sir

46. The Cape Times, even picked up on a letter from J Alexander (The Star, 19.2.1919) of the South African Zionist Federation complaining about The Star (15.2.1919) and Sunday Times (23.2.1919) stating that Jews in Poland were intensely unpopular owing to their support of Germany and Bolshevism. Cape Times, 27.2.1919.

47. See The Cape, 7.2.1919.

48. According to their hosts, Lapitsky was a 'barrister at law at the University of Petrograd, ex-Secretary of the Minister of Labour, Attorney General in the Ukraine', while Sosnovic was a 'journalist, Knight of the Order of St. George, delegate for the Soldiers Council in Petrograd, ex-Assistant Minister of War in the Ukraine,

Thomas Smartt raised the matter in parliament, asking the Minister of Justice, Sir Thomas Watt, how the two visitors had gained entry into the country and how the government intended to deal with them. According to Watt, the movements of the two Russians were to be watched, despite the two visitors being rather innocuous Kerenskyites and not Bolshevists.⁴⁹ Such delicate ideological distinctions mattered little with the public and the local press. Their fears were confirmed by the Russians' opening lecture at the Johannesburg Town Hall where the two visitors told a very large and enthusiastic crowd that the Bolsheviks were 'destined to lead the proletariat of the world.'⁵⁰ Not surprisingly the lecture was described by the Minister of the Interior, Patrick Duncan, as 'from end to end a panegyric of Bolshevism.'⁵¹

Consequently the press articulated a number of questions which the public was patently asking. For instant, the Cape Times remonstrated against 'the scope given to aliens to use, for their sinister ends, a time of grave political and

member of the People Tribunal of Justice'. The Star, 27.3.1919

49. Cape Times, 29.3.1919. (The Cape Times published parliamentary proceeding at this time). The notion that the two Russians had entered South Africa as avowed anti-Bolshevists was reiterated in the Cape Argus. See below, p.232, n.46.
50. The Star, 27.3.1919
51. Duncan to Selborne, BC 294. D5. 13.6: 3.3.1919, Duncan Papers, University of Cape Town.

industrial unrest, when four years of world war have left people excited and prone to act without due consideration and sense of obligation.'⁵² Alien agitation was clearly not acceptable to the Cape Times at a 'time when there was a current of labour unrest on the Rand which was apt to unbalance mens minds and make them lend an ear to the specious plausibilities of Leninism'.⁵³ The Star was similarly concerned, wondering how the two Russian propagandists had come to hire the Town Hall. After all, noted the editor, 'Bolshevism ...is the very antithesis of democracy and liberalism.'⁵⁴ The Rand Daily Mail in turn expressed fears that the Bolshevik emissaries could have a 'bad effect upon the small section of activists on the Rand.'⁵⁵

The outcry against these two Russians must be seen against the upsurge of local socialist activism⁵⁶ and increasing economic hardship. It was therefore hardly surprising that the two 'Bolshevist Emissaries' were given little

52. Cape Times, 29.3.1919.

53. Cape Times, 15.4.1919.

54. The Star, 29.3.1919

55. Rand Daily Mail, 29.3.1919

56. A major municipal strike had begun in Johannesburg. See the Rand Daily Mail, 1.4.1919. In addition there were problems over the Pass Laws for Africans (Rand Daily Mail, 4.4.1919) and 'native unrest' in Pretoria. Rand Daily Mail, 7.4.1919; Sunday Times, 6.4.1919. See also S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment', pp.176-79.

opportunity for further propaganda. After a series of hysterical editorials in the Cape Argus and Cape Times,⁵⁷ the two gentlemen were given a free trip back to Russia by the government.⁵⁸

The visit of Lipitsky and Sosnovic set in motion an anti-Bolshevist crusade⁵⁹ which was particularly evident in Cape Town where the Cape Times warned of a 'very strong' feeling in regard to Bolsheviks.⁶⁰ The Cape was indeed amazed at the 'seditious, poisonous and inflammatory' utterances being printed by the Industrial Socialist League, 'a mere stone's throw' from parliament.⁶¹ In this climate the considerable number of Russian Jews active in this League⁶² did little to

57. See Cape Argus, 13.4.1919 and Cape Times, 15.4.1919; 18.4.1919.

58. See Rand Daily Mail, 10.4.1919

59. See W.H. Harrison, Memoirs of a socialist, 1949, pp.65-72.

60. Cape Times, 31.3.1919. The Cape Town Branch of the Comrades of the Great War passed an anti-Bolshevik resolution, protesting against its introduction into South Africa. Cape Times, 3.4.1919. In the Transvaal a unanimous motion was passed by farmers asking the government not to allow Bolshevism to take root in South Africa. The meeting also appealed to Afrikaners to stand against 'Bolshevism, Kaferism and Mohamedanism, thus making South Africa into a Christian white mans country instead of a rotting place of disorder and violence.' Cape Times, 30.4.1919. In Pretoria, Tielman Roos opened the Nationalist election campaign by claiming the Nationalists were a bulwark against Bolshevism. Cape Times, 12.5.1919.

61. The Cape, 4.4.1919.

62. See E.A. Mantzaris, 'The Promise of the Impossible Revolution', p. 150

enhance the image of the Jew. The association of Jews with Bolshevism was popularly accepted⁶³ and was spelt out by numerous letter writers to the press. 'S.O.E.' best captured the anti-Russian Jewish mood in a letter, 'The Bolsheviks in our midst':

I unfortunately am engaged where the sole topic is Bolshevism, discussed by certain Russian Jews who have sheltered themselves beneath the Union Jack. Now the war is over, and having their skins fairly safe, they openly yelp disgusting epithets which are an insult to our constitution. How many of them want to go back? Not one, all they want is a 70 or 80 hour week. I say a single ticket to their adorable Russia would relieve us of an unwelcome presence, and so give a better chance to soldiers who have a right to obtain work after years of hardship and peril.'⁶⁴

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63. As one Jewish correspondent to the press, Benzion Hersch, put it: 'It is an undisputed fact that when a "Russian" was referred to in this country the Jew of Russian origin was meant, and this was to a certain extent justified by the fact that the vast majority of Russians in this country were Jews. To-day, however, when a Russian is spoken of the inference in the mind of the average citizen is not only that the Jew was intended, but also that it was a Bolshevik.' The Star, 21.4.1919. Hersch had been appointed an immigration officer at the Cape Town docks by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies in 1913. The office was terminated in 1915 due to lack of funds but re-established in 1923. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', pp.194-95 and p.207.
64. The Star, 18.4.1919. 'Observer' similarly pointed out that 'I should like to remind local Russian Bolsheviks that in England large numbers are being deported. This should act as a timely warning'. See also letters from 'Britisher' (Cape Times 22.4.1919), 'TBB' (Cape Times, 26.4.1919) and 'Observer', (The Star, 18.4.1919). The press, moreover, took every opportunity to remind readers of the Russian origins of Kendridge who was Labour's key spokesman. See, for example, The Star, 22.3.1919 and the Pretoria News, 9.5.1919. Kentridge, noted the Pretoria News, had 'for some reason... changed his name from the very old one of Kantorowich.'

III

Although Jews had good reason to worry about anti-Jewish charges such as those described above,⁶⁵ of more practical concern was the introduction of a parliamentary Bill which demanded the registration of aliens and the curtailment of propaganda. The Public Welfare and Moratorium Acts Extension and Further Amendments Bill - known in labour circles as the 'anti-Bolshevik Bill'⁶⁶ - was clearly a response to the combined effects of post-war Russian Jewish immigration, alleged incitement, press hysteria and above all, the anxiety occasioned by the Russian Revolution.⁶⁷

In the newspaper's opinion, Kentridge was 'rapidly becoming the leader of what is a very good imitation of a Bolshevik party in Johannesburg.'

65. For evidence of Jewish concern see letters from Benzion Hersch, Cape Times, 24.4.1919 and 'A British Jew', The Star, 23.4.1919. Hersch made the point that despite notions to the contrary, the majority of Russian Jews were pro-Menshevik and anti-Bolshevik. As a response he advocated forming a special league to counter the anti-Russian Jewish onslaught. 'A British Jew', noting that eighty per cent of the audience listening to Lapitsky and Sosnovic were Jewish, wanted to form a Jewish league of anti-Bolshevists
66. See Creswell's comments, Cape Times, 12.6.1919.
67. The Cape Times, for instance, had accused the Minister of Justice, N.J. De Wet, of burying his head in the sand while Bolshevik clouds were brewing. Cape Times, 26.4.1919. The Sunday Times devoted a lengthy editorial on the question of aliens inciting the native population of South Africa. Sunday Times, 4.5.1919. Die Burger, 13.5.1919.

Despite the Minister of Justice's denial that the registration of aliens was directed against any particular section of the community,⁶⁸ Jewish leaders felt the need to take action. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies involved itself behind the scenes⁶⁹ and the clause requiring the registration of aliens was easily removed with very few parliamentarians objecting. In fact the members of parliament for Vrededorp (L. Geldenhuys) and Bethal (H.S. Grobler), praised Jews for their peace loving qualities.⁷⁰ The fact that the registration clause was so easily removed should not be seen as lack of intent to control Russian Jewish aliens who were clearly perceived in government circles as a threat to public order and were certainly the target of the Bill.⁷¹ This was evident in press responses to the Bill and its passage through parliament. The Star, for instance, focused on Russian Jews when discussing the Bill in its early stages. It had even defended Jews by suggesting that they were inclined to conservatism when free

68. Cape Times, 12.6.1919.

69. The Zionist Record, 14.7.1919. The exact nature of the Board's activities was not explained.

70. Cape Times, 20.6.1919. It is not without significance that both seats included substantial Jewish populations.

71. An interesting series of letters are included among the evidence to the Martial Law Commission of 1922 making it quite clear that South African security chiefs were concerned at this time about Bolshevik agitation and wished to supervise immigration more stringently. See Colonel Sir Walter Hamilton Fowle Kell, 13.6.1919. Martial Law Commission, K4, Transvaal Archives Depot.

of persecution, but those with Bolshevik tendencies were accused of breaching the conditions under which they were permitted to settle in South Africa. Such persons, the newspaper contended, placed themselves beyond the pale.⁷² An editorial in the Sunday Times similarly implicated aliens, 'with no real knowledge of South African history or South African conditions', as responsible for inciting the indigenous population. They were, noted the editorial, 'carrying on a despicable agitation which is a menace to every white man and woman in this country, and it is the duty of the Government to pay very serious attention to it.'⁷³ That Russian Jews were in fact the target of the Bill was also evident in the Cape Times's comments following the controversial clause's removal. Indeed, the newspaper argued that by dropping the clause at the behest of one section of the community, the government was more likely to arouse anti-Jewish prejudice.⁷⁴

In practice the government had little to fear by removing the registration clause as it was able to apply controls through the census and thus did not depend on it. The state, moreover, could monitor Jewish aliens through its own administrative apparatus. Immigration officers were indeed instructed to scrutinize passports and carefully examine all

72. The Star, 3.5.1919.

73. Sunday Times, 4.5.1919.

74. Cited in The Star. 12.6.1919.

foreigners.⁷⁵ The CID in fact requested details of undesirable aliens, 'the majority of whom are low class Russian Jews.'⁷⁶

The Russian Jew thus remained, as far as contemporaries were concerned, a questionable acquisition to South African society. The pre-war 'Peruvian' image was now embellished with the Bolshevik bogey. Like other capitalist societies at the time, South Africa was seemingly obsessed with Bolshevism.⁷⁷ This was a serious handicap for the 'Peruvian' and certainly militated against his incorporation into the body-politic. In reality much of the hatred directed towards the Russian alien was simply a manifestation of antisemitism with Jews in the traditional scapegoat role. When, for instance, a Unitarian minister, the Reverend Balmforth, defended Bolshevism, The Cape leapt to the attack, using as part of its arsenal a vicious and antisemitic diatribe which had appeared in the Rondebosch Boys High School magazine.⁷⁸ The line between anti-alienism and antisemitism was again blurred, as it had been in the

75. Central Archives CIA M 212 Sec. for Interior to Principal Immigration Officer, 12.5.1919. Cited in Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.196.

76. Central Archives CIA 215. Deputy Commissioner DCID to Principal Immigration officer, 7.6.1919. Cited in Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.196.

77. Regular editorials in the Cape Times discussed the civil war in Russia and the excesses of Bolshevism. See, for example, Cape Times, 18.8.1919.

78. The Cape, 29.8.1919.

Cape Colony during the early years of the century⁷⁹ and Jewish communal leaders reacted in much the same way as they had done at that earlier time.

Their anger was expressed at the 1919 Congress of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies in Johannesburg. Bernard Alexander, the Chairman of the Executive Council, was particularly hard hitting:

I wish it to be clearly understood that every Jew is not a Bolshevist and every Bolshevist is not a Jew Because there are some Jews (perhaps a handful in Johannesburg, but I do not think there can be more) who are Bolshevists, is it right for the public of South Africa to say that the Jews are Bolshevists. Is it right because one Jew perhaps amongst the thousands is selling liquor to say that every Jew is a liquor seller? Why should the Jew be singled out? I deny the accusation that the Jews of South Africa are Bolshevists. The Jews are not Bolshevists and I say there are none more loyal than the Jews. It is a scurrilous anti-Semitic attack to describe us a Bolshevist.⁸⁰

79. See above, pp.119-128. A well known Cape Town anti-alien agitator, George Woollends, for instance, criticized Russian Jews (whom he described as 'the curse of the country') for their subversive left-wing propaganda in District 6, Cape Town. Cape Times, 15.7.1919. A blatant brand of social antisemitism was also manifest in Patrick Duncan's comments about the pleasant company on his voyage to South Africa: 'Some people said the company was so nice because there was not the usual proportion of Jews on board but I say nothing about that - the election is too near.' Duncan to Lady Selborne, BC 294. D5. 13.9: 17.9.1919. Duncan papers. Duncan was in fact challenged for his parliamentary seat 'by a labour man [Morris Kentridge] who is by birth a Russian Jew and has Leninist aspirations' Duncan to Lady Selborne, BC 294. D5. 14.5: 4.2.1920. Duncan papers.

80. The Zionist Record, 14.9.1919.

The public's emotional anti-Bolshevism at the time ensured that Alexander's protestations had little impact. Indeed, following the publication of naturalization figures which revealed a preponderance (55 out of 59) of Russians, The Cape published a viciously anti-alien letter, filled with generalizations and well-worn anti-Jewish imagery:

In seems to me an anomaly that, in view of the present chaotic state of affairs in Russia, applications for naturalisation should be considered from her nationals. How many of these applicants, one would like to know, shouldered the rifle for democracy's cause in the great war? I have no hesitation in saying, not a single one! What a legacy for our children! - this fair land, won from barbarism and the wilderness by the blood and sweat of our Dutch, Anglo-Saxon and French forbears, now the happy hunting ground of hordes of "Russians" and Asiatics! ... While we Nationalists, Labourites, Unionists and S A Partyites are oblivious to all else but the particular brand of Government which we severally imagine is vital to our continued existence, the off-scourings of Europe and Asia are steadily acquiring a control, economically, industrially and socially, which will leave us as impotent and futile as a crashed Zeppelin.⁸¹

Strikes and an election campaign kept the Bolshevik-bogey and the issue of undesirable immigration in the news.⁸² The charge of Bolshevism was indeed a useful label, used by

81. The Cape, 12.12.1919.

82. Both issues were discussed at the South African Party conference in Bloemfontein. Cape Times, 13.12.1919. For references to Bolshevism in the campaign see, for example, Morris Alexander's speech, Cape Times, 17.2.1920 and Thomas Smartt's speech, Cape Times, 9.3.1920.

South African Party spokesmen and government supporting newspapers to tarnish the Labour and Nationalist Party. The latter party in fact suffered an unfortunate handicap when their leader, J.B.M. Hertzog, allegedly referred to Bolshevism as 'simply the desire of the people to rule themselves and not be ruled by others.'⁸³

Public persistence in associating Jews with Bolshevism ensured that the image of the Jew in general deteriorated. Morris Kentridge's victory for the Labour Party over Patrick Duncan in the densely Jewish populated constituency, Fordsburg, did not help matters. The Cape was particularly incensed by Duncan's defeat and the Labour Party leader, W. Madeley's praise for the Russian-born victor:

We see that... Mr Madeley... expressed his intense delight that Mr Pat Duncan was defeated in Fordsburg by "one of the finest men who ever stepped into shoe leather." The high-stepper in the leather is none other than Mr Kentridge who was, we believe, formerly known as Mr Kantorowich, and the suggestion that this "international" gentlemen is a better friend of the South African wage earner than Mr Pat Duncan, who has lived all his life in South Africa and who belongs to the country, is enough to draw tears from the eyes of the statue of Cecil Rhodes and from the new one of Onze Jan on Church Square.⁸⁴

83. Cape Times, 22.11.1919.

84. The Cape, 30.4.1920. The Cape was wrong in claiming Duncan had lived all his life in South Africa. In fact he came to the country in 1901 as part of Milner's 'kindergarten'.

Significantly the Jew, Kentridge, was depicted as an outsider despite his arrival in the country in 1901 and his valuable public service. Dredging up Kentridge's original surname, identifying him as "international" and inaccurately comparing him to the 'rooted' Duncan says much about the status of the eastern European Jew in South African society at that time. At any moment of tension he could become marginalised. The Cape's comments say much too about English-speaking South Africans and their strong ties with English culture and society. Balliol educated Duncan was immediately accepted as a true South African patriot.

Social, economic and labour tensions ensured the survival of Bolshevism as a bogey. Certainly left-wing groups had taken a more radical position. The Industrial Socialist League, for example, published The Bolshevik from September 1919 in which it advocated no participation in political institutions of the 'capitalist state' and a socialist revolution through the Unions.⁸⁵ Trade Union membership and the number of strikes had similarly increased through 1919 and 1920.⁸⁶ Together with Afrikaner republican extremism, Bolshevism was thus classified by the government as the greatest threat to the country.⁸⁷ At the opening of the

85. See S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment', p.200.

86. For details see Union of South Africa. Official Year Book, No. 7 - 1924, Pretoria Government Printing and Stationary Office, 1925, pp.260; 262.

South African Party election campaign, Smuts even warned of the moderate Labour Party rapidly 'drifting to an extreme socialist position and preaching a crusade for the nationalisation of all land, mines, factories and industry, and behind this advanced socialism is the menacing growing spectre of international socialism.'⁸⁸ 'The outlook all over the world', noted The Star in obvious agreement with Smuts, 'is full of menace, there is danger even in South Africa of a great financial and industrial breakdown.'⁸⁹

Clearly the fear of Bolshevism was manipulated by the government to deflect attention from serious labour and economic problems. Similar manipulation by opponents of the government depicted these problems as a product of the government's alliance with the mining houses. It was around this alleged alliance that the opposition mobilised, using in the process the well-entrenched image of Hoggenheimer - the incarnation of cosmopolitan finance. Bloemfontein's Volksblad, for instance, railed against the political influence of 'a special race' with 'international interests, large hook noses and a peculiar pronunciation of English.'⁹⁰ The spectre of Hoggenheimer certainly evoked

87. Cape Times, 28.10.1920; Pretoria News, 1.12.1920.

88. Cape Times, 9.12.1920.

89. The Star, 4.12.1920.

90. Cited in The Star, 15.1.1921. Potchefstroom's Nationalist newspaper, Het Westen, even attacked Afrikaner leaders for allowing the 'Jewish English

powerful emotions, particularly among 'poor white' Afrikaners who had flocked in great numbers to the larger centres, especially the Witwatersrand. The Hoggenheimer bogey, however, was also appropriated by government supporting newspapers who blamed economic hardship on avaricious mining magnates of clearly Jewish origin rather than on government mismanagement and the capitalist system itself. These newspapers frequently ridiculed mining magnates, exploiting in the process negative images associated with the cosmopolitan financier.⁹¹

In exploiting visceral fears of Bolshevism and international finance the image of the Jew was severely harmed. Increasingly strident calls to curtail Russian immigration (which in fact meant Jewish immigration) were now

Imperialist', Manfred Nathan, to share a platform with a Nationalist.

91. The Cape was a good example. It relentlessly attacked Solly Joel as a symbol of exploitation. See the poem 'Solly! or a Magnate from the Golden Rand' in The Cape, 21.12.1919. In The Cape's so-called 'political alphabet,' 'Y' stood for Yid, 'with his bags full of cash.' The Cape, 6.2.1920. This journal's comments following the publication of the will of Sammy Marks similarly evoked and well entrenched negative images associated with the cosmopolitan financier: 'The man who makes his pile in Canada or Australia as a rule sees to it that his will provides for some political recognition of the public needs of the country which gave him his wealth: but South Africa's cosmopolitan company of gold, diamond and land magnates are notoriously mean in their doctrines and bequests' The Cape, 16.4.1920. The Sunday Times similarly expressed dissatisfaction. 'Do South African millionaires,' the newspapers asked, 'do so much as they might for the country in which they made their fortunes.' Sunday Times, 16.4.1920.

articulated. In parliament, J.S. Marwick, the South African Party member for Illovo and 'expert' on 'Native labour'⁹² hammered home the subversive threat of 'International Socialists',⁹³ while a range of newspapers warned that South Africa was getting the wrong sort of immigrant. 'The rag-tag and bobtail of Europe or America would do us more harm than good', noted the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser. 'International Socialists, Bolshevists, Revolutionists, Communists and all the elements of the conglomeration of "workers" who do not work and only stir up agitations and turmoil and ill feeling are not wanted'⁹⁴ Some months later the same newspaper warned that whites were sowing 'the seeds of Communism and Bolshevism in the receptive native mind'⁹⁵ The Cape Times in a particularly xenophobic phase under its new editor, B.K. Long, was insistent in calling for curbs on undesirable immigration from countries where democratic ideals were unknown and 'western concepts of morality are quite unappreciated.'⁹⁶ 'The articulation

92. Marwick was born in Richmond, Natal, in 1875. Having originally been involved in 'Native' administration he became a senior partner in the firm of Marwick and Morris, Employers of Native Labourers on Transvaal Gold Mines and Natal Collieries. Marwick was at one time a member of the committee of the Anthropological Section, British Association of Science. South African Who's Who. Social, Business and Farming 1921-22, Bristol, John Wright & Sons Limited, n.d.

93. House of Assembly Debates, 25.6.1921.

94. Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 8.8.1921.

95. Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 14.10.1921.

96. Cape Times, 16.8.1921.

of these sentiments', as Edna Bradlow puts it, 'opened a flood of correspondence which revolved around the "exclusiveness" of the Jews, their increasing numbers in relation to the total population, and the threat their low living standards posed to born South Africans.'⁹⁷

Quite clearly perceptions of the Russian Jew increasingly defined the image of all Jews. That image, moreover, was the South African expression of what constituted a world-wide xenophobia at that time. In this hostile climate, very little was said about the potential 'regeneration' or acculturation of the newcomers. Such optimism belonged to late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the 1920s, 'respectable' Jews of Anglo-German origin were a diminishing minority. It is also noteworthy that in marshalling opposition to Russian immigration, all dimensions of the negative stereotype were employed as is well illustrated in The Cape's call for closer supervision:

over the alien and Bolshevist passengers (mostly of the third class) who by devious means, as yet unknown to Western civilization, contrive to dodge immigration laws and to enter the country through some subtle forms of alien brotherhood by which they jump from pauperism to capitalism. The whole face of South Africa is scrawled over with Russian and Polish and German names - in all the devious ways of commerce and business These aliens are slowly getting a grip on the buildings of the towns, on the farms of the veld. They do no manual work; they simply speculate and barter and

97. Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.199.

accumulate bank balances at the expense of South Africans, English and Dutch, who sit content in the pathetic delusion that the Union's immigration laws assure the exclusion of alien adventurers.⁹⁸

Thus, in the cauldron of post-war depression and xenophobia, the negative dimensions of the stereotype nurtured at the turn of the century - exploitation, parasitism, deviousness and upward mobility - survived. To these perceptions were added the Bolshevik bogey which would be manipulated and entrenched during the heightened struggle between labour and capital in the early months of 1922.

98. The Cape, 2.12.1921.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RAND REBELLION: CONSOLIDATING THE JEWISH STEREOTYPE

I

By the time mineworkers squared up for battle against the mining houses early in 1922, the government was able to arouse a vicious and visceral blend of anti-Bolshevism and anti-alienism which in the process further damaged the image of the Jew. All dimensions of the anti-Jewish stereotype were consolidated as opponents of the government sought convenient symbols with which to characterise and legitimise their struggle, chastise their opponents, and further their agenda. In short, the Jew - appropriated by both the ruling party and its opponents - became a helpless victim of South African ideological struggles.

The struggle between the Chamber of Mines and organised labour was precipitated by an attempt on the part of the Chamber of Mines to reduce production costs in response to a severe downturn in the price of gold. Low-grade mines had to be made more profitable and it was proposed that this be done by removing the conventional colour bar in the mining industry and thus employing more blacks at reduced wages. The exercise involved approximately 2000 'white' jobs and aroused predictably fierce resistance from the mining unions. A conglomeration of these Unions - the South African Industrial Federation - braced itself for a classic

confrontation and general strike. In the struggle, the negative image of the Jew was reinforced as both the Hoggenheimer and Bolshevik bogeys were manipulated for political purposes.

From the outset of the conflict and resultant strike, the Nationalist mouthpiece, Die Burger, accused Smuts of being a lackey of mining capital. Boonzaier's Hoggenheimer cartoons indeed became a feature of this Afrikaans daily. 'Groot kapitaal', noted the newspaper, 'het geen nasionaliteit, geen geloof, geen traditiesie, geen etiese beginsel.'¹ Mobilising opposition against the Chamber of Mines meant appealing to the historical memory, particularly the Afrikaner's traumatic experiences. As Dr T.C. Visser, the Nationalist MP for Vrededorp explained, many of South Africa's problems, including the Jameson Raid, the Boer War and industrial disputes could be blamed on the Chamber of Mines.² These views were shared by the Transvaal leader of the Nationalist Party, Tielman Roos³ while Die Burger defined the Chamber of Mines as foreign capitalists⁴ who had been responsible for the South African War.⁵ A fundraising appeal from the Strike Support Committee, exhorted every

1. Die Burger, 6.2.1922.

2. House of Assembly Debates, 25.2.1922.

3. House of Assembly Debates, 28.2.1922.

4. Die Burger, 21.2.1922.

5. Die Burger, 13.3.1922.

Afrikaner to prevent a takeover by parasitic, overseas capitalists.⁶

It was not, however, only Afrikaner nationalists who mobilised public antagonism against the powerful captains of the mining industry. The post-war economic recession had, as we saw in the previous chapter, radicalised important sectors of the working class, and the South African Labour Party now found itself well placed to further its agenda by appealing also to the Afrikaners' view of South African history. An untenable situation was blamed on foreign mine owners. Consequently the prospects of reconciling frustrated republicans with aggrieved workers had never been better. As Labour leader, Walter Madeley, argued, 'international' finance was involved in a worldwide conspiracy 'to depreciate humanity - to depreciate the flesh and blood of the worker.' It was, he noted, 'a crying shame that its mean, narrow, despicable outlook should be imposed on the world.'⁷ Madeley's sentiments were reiterated by union leaders and spokesmen. As E.S. Hendrikz, Secretary General of the Mine Workers Union, put it: 'Solly Joel and his men overseas' were the villains of the conflict.⁸ 'A Shareholder and Worker' similarly blamed financiers for perpetuating 'an immoral and iniquitous economic system

6. Die Burger, 31.1.1922.

7. Rand Daily Mail, 6.2.1922.

8. Rand Daily Mail, 19.1.1922.

which always places the ultimate burden on the world's workers ... '9 'Who were going to rule South Africa, the selected representatives of the people in Parliament or international financiers?', was the question posed by George Crisp of the Amalgamated Engineering Union.¹⁰

Clearly, negative memories of foreign capitalists resonated in the South African psyche and provided an opportune moment for the mobilisation of workers. As the strike which had officially begun on 28 December 1921 assumed more serious dimensions in 1922, Boonzaiers's Hoggenheimer became increasingly Semitic in appearance.¹¹ Smuts - identified in Die Burger as a representative of 'Hoggenheimer and Co'¹² - was accused by Madeley of allying himself 'with the Chamber of Mines or rather the executive body of the international financiers who pose as the Chamber of Mines, in their determined effort to depreciate the whole of the South African community.'¹³

9. Rand Daily Mail, 6.2.1922.

10. Rand Daily Mail, 18.2.1922.

11. See, for example, Die Burger, 18.2.1922.

12. Die Burger, 23.2.1922. See also cartoons in De Spektator, 24 February 1922 and 3 March 1922. Reproduced in Appendix I. See below, pp.361-62.

13. House of Assembly Debates, 23.3.1922. It should be noted that Madeley was no enemy of the Jews. However, in evoking images of international finance and Hoggenheimer he was, willy-nilly, reinforcing pre-war notions of so-called Jewish finance capitalism.

The conflict between capital and labour obviously helped to dissipate historical differences between the Afrikaner and English worker; as whites, both groups were allegedly threatened by the rapacious power of the mining magnates who were accused of having no respect for white workers. As Duncan put it, the strikers 'appealed to the public on the ground that the "colour bar" was being broken down and the white man's status was being sacrificed by the greed of foreign capitalists'.¹⁴ Herein lay the basis for a Labour/National Party alliance.

In response to Labour and Nationalist rhetoric, the government mounted its own propaganda campaign, drawing upon the 'Bolshevik bogey', as Labour spokesman, Kentridge, put it.¹⁵ Across the country, government supporting newspapers focused upon so-called 'Russian methods', 'Bolshevism' and 'extremism'.¹⁶ Such charges were given welcome ammunition when the Labour Party MP, R.B. Waterston, sponsored a resolution, passed by a mass meeting in the Johannesburg Town Hall, for a South African republic to be formed by a provisional government.¹⁷

14. Duncan to Lady Selborne, BC 294. D5.16.1: 21.2.1922.

15. Rand Daily Mail, 6.2.1922.

16. See for example, The Queenstown Daily, 5.2.1922 and the Natal Mercury, 7.2.1922.

17. N. Herd, 1922 The Revolution on the Rand, Johannesburg, Blue Crane Books, 1966, p.34. Waterston's resolution was rejected by an assembly of seventeen Nationalist and Labour Party MPs at a meeting in Pretoria.

'From a purely industrial dispute which the strike appeared to be in its initial phase', observed the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 'the thing is assuming a revolutionary nature'.¹⁸ An editorial in the Cape Argus was even more trenchant, noting that Waterston and his friends wanted a 'dictatorship of the proletariat - and the consequent destruction of parliamentary government.'¹⁹ The Eastern Province Herald, in turn, was pleased that 'the extremists of the Rand had come out into the open and gnashed their teeth in public', thus ensuring that the real motives of the strikers were becoming clearer. Thereafter the newspaper attributed a specifically Jewish cast to events by noting 'the suggestive patronymics of certain of the plainer spoken of the leaders of the Communist Party - such as, for instance, Morris Kentridge (formerly Kantorowich), Kreschmar and Buirski.'²⁰ The source of this inspiration should require little seeking and if we translate Councils into District Soviets and Provincial Government into its Russian equivalent, the Central Committee, we do not get a by any means overdrawn idea of the real position.'²¹

18. Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 6.2.1922.

19. Cape Argus, 6.2.1922.

20. All three of course were Jewish and involved in left-wing agitation. See Mantzaris, 'The Promise of the Impossible Revolution', pp.147-55.

21. Eastern Province Herald, 8.2.1922.

Action by radicals who had been previously associated with the Council of Action - a grouping within the Mineworkers' Union - generated further tension.²² Organised street gangs now threatened policemen and black workers, thus enhancing the case of those wishing to exaggerate the Bolshevik menace. Even Die Burger, generally sympathetic towards the workers' demands, expressed concern about 'Die Oproerige Seksie' when discussing the 'Raad van Aksie.'

Hierdie Raad van Aksie was dus niks anders nie as boljewistne, sindikelisme of hoe 'n mens dit will neem Daardie sindikalistiese element is 'n gevaar vir die staking. Op die gevaar het ons beriggewer in Johannesburg al in die begin gewys. Die leiers van die staking het hulle reg teenoor daardie boljewistiese gevaar gestel en die beweging afgekeur. Dit sal dus geen verwondering wek dat op die arrestasies in Johannesburg nie die uitbarstings van verontwaardiging gevolg het nie wat 'n mens sou verwag het as hy die berigte van die kapitalistiese kant daarom trent lees. Party van die kapitalistiese blaaie het dit, waarskynlik nie geheel sonder opset nie, laat voorkom as of die gearresterdes in hulle strewe eens is met die stakings-komitee van die S A I F. Dit moes die publieke teen hulle en teen hulle strewe inneem.²³

22. The Council of Action was formed in February 1921 following a clash between the Mineworkers' Union and a group of Communists in the Union. See S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment', p.252.

23. Die Burger, 10.2.1922. Afrikaner nationalists, as we know, shared with the South African Party a fear of Bolshevism. De Kerkbode, the Dutch Reformed Church's mouthpiece, for instance, depicted the Russian state as godless. See De Kerkbode, 21.2.1922.

By late February violence was commonplace on the Rand, with Boksburg in particular, witnessing worker militance and savage police repression. The radicalisation of strike rhetoric and action played into the hands of government and its supporting press. The South African Party was now easily able to attribute all violence associated with the strike to Bolshevism, mobilising deeply entrenched fears discussed in the previous chapter. Boers and mineowners, argued De Prins Albert Vriend, would lose out to the Bolsheviks and the proletariat would rule the land.²⁴ An editorial in The Star noted that the Rand 'has more "Red" to the square mile than any other community in the British Empire'²⁵ In parliament the South African Party's Brigadier - General Byron (Border) expressed the state's resolve to put down 'the growing tendency to Bolshevism in the country.'²⁶ In the Rand Daily Mail's view: 'Hard-working and law-abiding mineworkers had been captured by the extremist or Bolshevik element.'²⁷ It was essential, warned the Diamond Fields Advertiser 'that the extremist elements in a great industrial and cosmopolitan community ... bent on exploiting the situation for frankly revolutionary or purely

24. De Prins Albert Vriend, 1.3.1922. Cited in De Volkstem, 7.3.1922.

25. The Star, 2.3.1922.

22. House of Assembly Debates, 2.3.1922.

27. Rand Daily Mail, 3.3.1922

criminal purposes, shall not be permitted to gain the upper hand.²⁸

By early March, the government and its supporting press was defining the conflict as an attack on civilised values by a Bolshevik revolutionary force.²⁹ A violent escalation of events played into Prime Minister Smuts's hands and, on 11 March, he declared martial law, sending in police and citizen force units to break the strike and to maintain order. The fierce battles across the Reef (costing approximately 200 lives) and the subsequent crushing of the last workers' stronghold in Fordsburg enabled the government to build upon the Bolshevik scare in a most dramatic way.³⁰ The media equated this violence with the 'horrors of Bolshevik Russia'³¹ and law and order now became a primary concern. Even Die Burger, despite its disdain for Smuts and his handling of affairs, expressed disquiet at the radicalisation of worker rhetoric and action³² which, it argued, was due to Bolshevik influence.³³ Nevertheless,

28. Diamond Fields Advertiser, 2.3.1922.

29. See, for example, the Rand Daily Mail, 4.3.1922.

30. For an outline of events see S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment', pp.268-74.

31. See the editorial, 'A Day of Horrors,' Rand Daily Mail, 11.3.1922. See also Cape Argus, 9.3.1922, The Oudtshoorn Courant, 10.3.1922.

32. Die Burger, 11.3.1922.

33. Die Burger, 16.3.1922.

this Nationalist mouthpiece did not lose the opportunity to make political capital out of the Revolt and Smuts's handling of it. The Prime Minister, argued the newspaper, had declared war on virtually all workers and in this way avoided culpability for poor government.³⁴

Responses to the Witwatersrand upheavals demonstrated vividly the countrywide fears of Bolshevism. Labour turmoil, coupled with worker radicalisation, certainly raised a very real threat of social revolution. Within this climate the Rand Daily Mail's notion of 'a Bolshevist plot, aimed at the overthrow of the present Government, and the establishment of a Soviet control',³⁵ was quite plausible. This conspiracy theory was apparently confirmed with the alleged capture of

34. '... Genl Smuts maak van sy aanwesigheid in Johannesburg gebruik om ekskuses te versamel vir die alta groot verantwoordelikheid wat hy op hom geneem het. Ons lees alweer dat hy dokumente ontdek het, waaruit moes blyk dat dit nie 'n burgeroorlog is nie, ook nie 'n uitvloeisel van 'n staking nie, maar 'n rooi-rewolusie, 'n bolsjewistiese ontwenteling. Verder heet dit dat hy bewyse in hande gekry het, dat die sogenaamde rewolusie met geld uit die buiteland aangestook is in Bolsjewistiese rewolusie dis met geld uit Rusland. As gevolg van hierdie ontdekkings het die stakers eensklap van naam verander. Hulle is nou rewolusionêres. Hiermee is genl Smuts sy hele storie weer volmaaks: 'n Bolsjewistiese opstand, uitgevoer deur rewolusionêres, wat betaling ontvang het uit die buiteland miskien wel van Lenien in sy eie persoon. En as jy met sodanige dinge te doen het, dan spreek dit mos vanself dat jy maar kan doodskiet op groot skaal, dat jy met masjiengewere uit vliegtuie op mense kan skiet, dat hy bomme op huise kan goei, dat jy kannone op hulle kan afskiet en hulle met 'n tenk kan platsy. Ons het mos die ekskuses daarvoor agtermekaar'. Die Burger, 15.3.1922.

35. Rand Daily Mail, 13.3.1922.

documents which proved, according to the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 'that money for the Red Revolution comes from abroad.'³⁶ 'The Jacobin element in Johannesburg', noted the Cape Argus, had simply wanted 'to exploit the quarrel as a pretext for civil war and anarchy.'³⁷ The idea of a 'Red' or 'Rooi' revolution was now solidly entrenched.³⁸ The popular mood was best captured in The Star's editorial, 'The Plot Revealed,' which explained just how damaging the radicalisation of the movement had been for the workers' interests.

The tragic events of the last few days have had a sobering effect even on the most irresponsible. The average thinking man, who may have been involved in the industrial trouble, has suddenly realized that the revolution has been skilfully planned under the guise of a labour grievance. The elaborate preparations in equipment and plans prove that the 'Council of Action' have been plotting revolution for some appreciable time and blindfolding the workers throughout. The average striker has been inveigled into the revolt, and now that its awful consequences have been demonstrated under such appalling conditions the scales are beginning to drop from his eyes. The hideous events form no part of a vindication of trade union principles but are an attempt to introduce Russian Bolshevism. It took a tragic awakening for the workers to realize that they are being led into a trap, but the awakening has come.³⁹

36. The Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 13.3.1922.

37. Cape Argus, 13.3.1922.

38. See Die Burger, 13.3.1922.

39. The Star, 13.3.1922.

The Star's view was shared by a range of newspapers⁴⁰ including those in the anti-Smuts camp. For instance, De Kerkbode, articulating the Dutch Reformed Church and hence the Nationalist position, expressed anguish at the turn of events and the manipulation of Afrikaner workers by radical agitators:

... Wij hebben terwyl wij ons sympatie met die werkers in het algemeen bekend hebben, de staking afgekeurd. Wij hebben van stakingen als 'n soort van oorlog gespoken, die alleen als wanhoops maatregel te rechtvaardigen is. De gebeurtenissen op die Rand hebben gewezen hoe nauw oorlog en staking aan elkaar verwant zijn. Temeer is dit het geval, waar er socialistiese elementen met zulke industriële opstand gemeng zijn, zoals, naar wij vernemen, dit voor 'n deel het geval tans op die Rand is. Wij houden ons hand vast voor de toekomst, als onze Afrikaanse mijnwerkers de beginselen inademen en inzuigen van die socialistiese leidlieden, die bij voorkeur de Dag des Heren gebruiken om hunne verderfelike leeringen te verkondigen.⁴¹

Quite clearly the government and its supporting newspapers had generated the notion of a well orchestrated plot; in other words, the radical direction taken by the strikers was blamed on outside agents. As the Natal Mercury contended, violence had not been the creation of ordinary workers: 'Such deeds are the work either of habitual criminals or of mental degenerates whose moral sense has been utterly

40. See, for example, The Queenstown Daily, 16.3.1922; Cape Times, 14.3.1922; Die Zuid Afrikaan verenigd met Ons Land, 16.3.1922; The Cape, 17.3.1922; Rand Daily Mail, 17.3.1922. The Star appealed for intelligence surveillance to be tightened. The Star, 20.3.1922.

41. De Kerkbode, 16.3.1922.

submerged by the backing of alien Bolsheviks or anarchists, whatever they may call themselves'.⁴² Defence headquarters confirmed this view with official statements attributing events to international communism.⁴³ Six weeks after the 'Rebellion', Die Burger, despite ridiculing the notion of an international conspiracy felt quite comfortable in its assumption that a small group of Bolshevists had radicalized Afrikaner workers.⁴⁴ As the Queenstown Daily bemoaned, Afrikaners were 'poisoned by the teaching of Bolshevists and other propaganda agents from overseas....'⁴⁵

The heady days of March had thus generated wide support for the international conspiracy thesis - that those orchestrating events were dedicated to the establishment of a Bolshevist Republic. Certainly popular opinion saw events in terms of a Red Revolution. G.R. Baldwin, son of the English politician, Stanley Baldwin, confirmed this view when he told the Natal Mercury that, in official and other quarters, South Africa was seen to have put down a Russian or Bolshevik inspired overthrow.⁴⁶ Die Burger similarly

42. Natal Mercury, 19.3.1922.

43. Die Burger, 16.3.1922.

44. Die Burger, 24.4.1922.

45. Queenstown Daily, 24.4.1922.

46. Natal Mercury, 31.3.1922. See also Julius Jeppe's speech as chairman of the Johannesburg Hospital Board, Rand Daily Mail, 1.4.1922. The conspiratorial view was succinctly captured in an article 'The Complete Bolshevist - By a long-suffering Johannesburg': 'Just three years ago we of Johannesburg suffered a

acknowledged that a certain section of the voting public believed in the 'Bolshewistische gogga.'⁴⁷

It hardly needs to be emphasized that the driving force, underpinning and generating the conflict, was the prospect of white workers losing their privileged status - a truth not lost on Duncan who succinctly explained this reality in a letter to Lady Selborne:

The papers are making our flesh creep by stories of widespread Bolshevik assassination and revolution but I shall believe that when I see some evidence of it. There was no doubt a small group of men who wanted a communist revolution and a much larger number of men not revolutionist by conviction who became desperate at the thought of losing their work on the mines which they think has happened through the desire of the Chamber of

visitation in the shape of two bulgy browed Russians who came in the then disguise of pretended anti-Bolshevists to teach us the first steps of Bolshevism. But we arose in our hundreds and with some noise and much indignation cast them out of our city, and the Government helped them home. They left, however, a trail and along the trail come more cunning and discreet followers and much literature. The seeds sown in the three years showed some signs of sprouting even before the recent cataclysm burst upon us, and one cannot help wondering how much or how little of it was noticed by the Government. If they did not see the shoals of the riff-raff of Eastern Europe that had invaded our borders they probably had no knowledge at all of the preposterous theories being taught'. Cape Argus. 15.4.1922.

47. Die Burger, 23.3.1922. The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the events certainly corroborated the conspiracy thesis. See Union of South Africa, UG-35 Report of the Marshall Law Inquiry Judicial Commission 1922, p.32. The question of Communist involvement in the strike is dealt with in S.W. Johns, 'Marxism-Leninism in a Multi-Racial Environment', pp.275-82.

Mines to replace white men by natives so as to swell their already monstrous profits⁴⁸

II

In attributing a conspiratorial explanation for events on the Rand, the spotlight predictably focused upon the Russian, and more specifically, the Russian-Jewish immigrant. Sometimes, as previously noted, allusions were made simply to alien or Jewish names⁴⁹ although, in other instances, accusations of specifically Jewish involvement were quite explicit. A Dr Fehrsen of Benoni, for instance, placed 'the Russian Jew invasion' under the spotlight when commenting on a number of prisoners detained during the strike:

... a mentally deficient, repulsive-looking lot of ruffians, amongst them a Russian Jew, just three weeks in South Africa from Kovno. He could not understand a word of English. I addressed him in German and found out that 30 others had landed from the Arundel Castle How long is South Africa to tolerate the Russian Jew invasion?⁵⁰

48. Duncan to Selborne, BC 294.D5.16.4, 15.3.1922. In similar vein, Arthur Barlow, expressed scepticism of the way events had been portrayed in the press. Indeed, in his view, the people knew the press portrayal of events was all 'moonshine'. House of Assembly Debates, 23.3.1922.

49. See above, p.226.

50. The Star, 6.3.1922.

Fehrsen's views were given wide coverage and his sentiments were reiterated in a range of newspapers. In an editorial, 'WHO ARE THE CRIMINALS?', the Eastern Province Herald, discussed the growing 'foreign element who so avidly seek the privilege of British nationhood and oftentimes change their names by letter patent. In how far are these cunning gentlemen, with their suggestive Russian patronymics implicated in what has occurred? Their notable association with the interests of the Labour-Communist-International Socialist movement has more than the savour of pure coincidence at this moment.'⁵¹

The association of Russian Jews with the rebellion was to be increasingly articulated, with the notion 'of a strong Bolshevik element, financed from abroad' and bent on destroying 'all settled government'⁵² unveiling a flood of calls to curtail eastern European immigration. The 'constant influx of immigrants from eastern Europe, many of whom are steeped in Bolshevik doctrines' had to be stopped in the opinion of the East London Daily Dispatch.⁵³ These people, argued the Natal Advertiser, undermined liberty and threatened to overthrow an 'easy going' state that had 'given them too much latitude.' This newspaper recommended

51. Eastern Province Herald, 14.3.1922.

52. East London Daily Dispatch, 13.3.1922. See also the East London Daily Dispatch, 16.3.1922.

53. East London Daily Dispatch, 14.3.1922.

that 'the sternest measures' be meted out to 'the low down alien' and 'the propagandists of Communism.'⁵⁴

Predictably government supporting newspapers welcomed the opportunity to divert blame away from government mismanagement to Bolshevik or Jewish agitators. The Oudtshoorn Courant, for example, reminded readers after the arrest of Morris Kentridge that his real name was Kantorowitz and that he was born in Russia.⁵⁵ With memories of the Bolshevik Revolution and its aftermath still vivid, allusions such as these were most effective in that they tapped a powerful strand of anti-alienism, embodied in antagonism towards the 'Peruvian'. Thus the Cape Times could advocate limiting the influx of the 'human dregs of the continent',⁵⁶ which, of course, meant the Russian Jew who was characterised as being inherently non-productive and subversive.⁵⁷ Correspondence in other newspapers made it quite clear that these newcomers were the architects of disorder.⁵⁸ Editorial after editorial now called upon the government to tighten its immigration laws.⁵⁹ Sharing these

54. Cited in The Star, 16.3.1922.

55. The Oudtshoorn Courant, 15.3.1922.

56. Cape Times, 16.3.1922.

57. Cape Times, 21.3.1922.

58. See, for example, the East London Daily Dispatch, 21.3.1922 and Natal Mercury, 21.3.1922.

59. See for example, The Star, 20.3.1922, Diamond Fields Advertiser, 20.3.1922, East London Daily Dispatch, 21.3.1922.

sentiments, the Chairman of the Worcester Chamber of Commerce, with a fine disregard for accuracy, referred to a certain section of the population first ruining their own country and then wanting to spoil their new country.⁶⁰ In short, alien Jews were identified with Bolshevism and international revolution.

III

In addition to associating Jews with Bolshevism, newspapers began to question the Jewish potential for integration into South African society. 'Unassimilability' became the new catchword, an idea influenced directly by nativist literature from the United States, as well as by a new domestic segregationist discourse in which race and culture were conflated.⁶¹ By introducing notions of 'racial stock'

60. Worcester Standard, 25.3.1922.

61. An indication of the impact of American nativist sentiment is evident in Col. Mackenzie's address to the South African Party Congress in August 1923. In his speech he 'emphasized the importance of a wise selection of immigrants only from the best stock of Europe to combine with the fine type of South African represented in that Congress in building up the future white race of this country. They could not afford, he said, to open the door indiscriminately to the lowest classes of people from the Balkans and other states. The Government, he added, must see that the immigrants admitted to South Africa, with its peculiar race problems, complicated by the presence of natives, half castes and Indians, were men with some social pride, men with a history and traditions behind them, high ideals and lofty standards of conduct - in fact only men of the very best material were fit to breed with the untainted European population of this country.' Cape Times, 16.8.1923. See also Higham, Strangers in

and 'racial quality' newspapers were able to mobilise well established negative images of the Jew. 'There is one important aspect of the Rand Rebellion', noted the Diamond Fields Advertiser:

which in itself presents a damning indictment of the Government, and that is in relation to the laxity of the Union Immigration Laws which permit entry into the Union of a foreign undesirable element which inherently displays no burning desire to add to the production of the country by the sweat of its brow, but shows a readiness to sow the seeds of all the discontent which it has left behind in the country of its origin ... we had 1416 Russian immigrants last year, nearly all of whom will undoubtedly stay. For the most part they will be a reinforcement to the middleman class, of whom the primary producers, judging by the outcry against them have already too many on their backs. Even the co-Nationals of these redundant immigrants began to complain owing to the strain that the latter impose on charities, for they mostly arrive with very little means. The immigration law might well be tightened with general approval, provided this were done without making invidious distinctions of race or religion⁶²

Quite obviously the Diamond Fields Advertiser wished to avoid being charged with antisemitism and thus recommended that 'invidious distinctions of race or religion' be expunged from its proposed immigration policy. Readers,

the Land, chapters nine to eleven, and S. Dubow, 'Race, civilisation and culture: the elaboration of segregationist discourse in the inter-war years' in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds.), The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa, London, 1987, pp.75-78. For further discussion of nativist thought and its impact on the perceptions of the Jew in South Africa, see below, pp.282-88.

62. Diamond Fields Advertiser, 17.3.1922.

however, would have been aware that Russian was synonymous with Jew. Indeed, by use of well-worn stereotypes, the newcomers were blatantly associated with their deviant 'Peruvian' forbearers. Disentangling the Russian Jewish immigrant of the 1920s from associations with those 'undesirables' was hardly possible. The revolutionary cap was made to fit comfortably on the 'Peruvian' head!

The notion of unassimilability was a major volte face from earlier optimistic expectations of eastern European 'regeneration' and acculturation. Now the future of the eastern European Jew was inherently problematic with the radical or Communist dimension of the stereotype being simply a variation on a theme. This conflation of Bolshevism and the earlier stereotype was well captured by the Cape Times, a newspaper at the forefront of immigration restriction during the 1920s. Its editorial comments merit extensive quotation because of the pervasiveness of beliefs articulated.

Not the revelation of alien complicity in the Reef Revolution only but nearly every phase of our national life exhibits the need of a revision of the immigration laws of the Union. The habits and ideas of races who are neither capable of, nor desirous of, merging their distinctive racialism in the South African nationality they profess to acquire are leaving their mark scoured deep in the whole country. In the big towns the general debasement of our moral standards that even the most broad-minded of observers must remark is a large measure traceable to the craze for exotic pleasures which aliens have first created and then ministered to. In the rural areas, the deplorable

decline in commercial morality which is now so frequently to be noted in the relations between dealers and farmers, and particularly between storekeepers and native producers, is probably due to the astonishing change which in recent years alien immigration has wrought in the trading personal. In our social life, too, the contacts made with newcomers from countries where anti-social customs flourish are having an effect which is neither pleasant nor encouraging to contemplate

How much longer are we going to permit Bolshevist agitators to preach treason and revolution in our streets The education test needs to be made more stringent except in the case of those few races who are readily assimilable into our national life.⁶³

Notions of unassimilability, inherent inferiority and cultural determinism - all attributed to something vague called an 'alien' but readily understood as 'Jews' - are again fundamental in the Sunday Times's description of the newcomers:

Some of them are out and out Bolsheviks. Others are sympathisers with Bolshevism and are ready at

63. Cape Times, 18.3.1922. The editor, B.K. Long, was referring to the acceptance of Yiddish as a European language for purposes of the Immigration Act. He was in favour of abolishing this. Both The Cape and Die Burger commented on the Cape Times's association of Jews with Bolshevism. Die Burger, while it praised Jews for their work ethic and their law-abiding behaviour, also noted: 'Niemand sal beweer dat die Russiese Jood die meer ingewenste immigrant is nie. Hy het gewoontes en maniere wat sekere rasse-afkeer wek'. Die Burger, 25.3.1922. The Cape similarly reminded its readers that it had 'repeatedly referred to the growth of alien influences in South Africa - an influence which has now extended to the country districts, where nearly every dorp winkel [town store] or inn has a Russian or German name and where historic farms are falling into the hands of the alien speculator.' The Cape, 24.3.1922.

any moment to help overthrow authority or impede it in suppressing disorder. Such people have no knowledge of South African history or conditions. They are aliens in mind and disposition and habits. Their ideas and methods are those of Eastern Europe - generally of Bolshevist Russia We are not opposed to all immigration We are not trying to stir up feeling against immigrants who are not British or not Hollander But we do say that a land with the complicated racial problems we have here ought to inquire somewhat carefully into the records of those who wish to enter it. South Africans also do not desire to have in their midst a lot of aliens who have no respect for constitutional government and who are invariably on the side of revolution, or anarchy, or any upheaval promising the overthrow of ordered authority It is significant to our mind that at least fifteen hundred Russians entered the Union last year from overseas. We should like to know how many of them were wholeheartedly on the side of the Government during the revolutionary outbreak. What is certain is that some of them were fighting in the ranks of the Reds They joined the upheaval simply because they are Bolshevists at heart and do not care fruppence about the real welfare of the land of their adoption. Those are the kind of immigrants South Africa must keep out.⁶⁴

Paradoxically the newcomers were defined as 'unassimilable' at the very time when they were penetrating sectors of the South African economy previously controlled by the English mercantile establishment,⁶⁵ thereby merging into the dominant structures of South African society and threatening the English mercantile elite. Herein lies a major motivation behind calls to limit immigration with the Rand

64. Sunday Times, 19.3.1922.

65. See Kaplan Jewish Roots in the South African Economy, chapters seven to twelve and A. Arkin, 'Economic Activities' in M. Arkin (ed.), South African Jewry. A Contemporary Survey, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1984, pp.58-59.

Rebellion providing the occasion for the mercantile establishment to articulate fears and prejudices rooted in pre-war experiences and exacerbated in the post-war economic recession. These cathartic exercises, coupled with the manipulation of the Bolshevik and Hoggenheimer bogeys, irreparably reinforced the existing negative pole of the Jewish image. This is confirmed by the assertion of the East London Daily Dispatch that antisemitic feeling in South Africa was stronger than it had been for many years.⁶⁶ Certainly, popular attitudes towards the 'Peruvian' encouraged the belief that the newcomers were the instigators of unrest and disorder and should therefore be limited by government policy. This was certainly the view of those sympathetic to the government. The latter, as Duncan informed Lady Selbourne, 'firmly believe in a Bolshevik plot being at the root of the trouble and are all clamouring loudly for the exclusion of all Russian Jews and the deportation of anyone who is suspected of being in any way unorthodox in his economic creed.'⁶⁷ As noted earlier, Duncan was aware that the wrong fish had been caught but was quite happy as a member of the government to go along with the opposition to eastern European immigration.⁶⁸

66. East London Daily Dispatch, 21.3.1922.

67. Duncan to Lady Selborne, BC 294. D5,16.5: 23.3.1922.

68. Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.204.

IV

Naturally the association of Jews with Bolshevism and the clamour for exclusion left the Jewish community vulnerable and uneasy and its leaders were understandably quick to take steps to deal with the problem. A meeting of the South African Zionist Federation which was held at the height of anti-Jewish accusations moved that the Jewish Board of Deputies be asked to call a special meeting of its Executive Council to consider 'the Jewish position as affected by public opinion on recent events on the Rand.'⁶⁹ A letter to the Rand Daily Mail by one Nathan Levi confirmed feelings of Jewish vulnerability. Levi who was a Pretoria based journalist and long time friend of Smuts had visited Johannesburg where he noted a 'great deal of concern' among the Jewish community. While admitting that a few Jews were 'mixed up with Bolshevist propaganda', Levi warned that 'it is dangerous, it is against the public interest, to make a whole race suspect for a few black sheep, even for several! ...Tens of thousands of loyal and law-abiding Jews', he argued, 'whose self-interest alone (to put it at the lowest level) would make them condemn lawlessness are heart and soul with the Government and with the people of the Union in the crisis'⁷⁰

69. Zionist Record, 31.3.1922. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies did engage itself with the issue. See below, pp.268-69.

70. Rand Daily Mail, 24.3.1922.

Levi's realisation of the potential dangers of the nexus between the current antisemitism and immigration policy appears to have been shared by the Sunday Times. Despite favouring influx curbs, the newspaper made it clear that it had 'no wish to see the movement [to curtail alien immigration] tinged with anti-Semitism.' 'Every sensible South African', it contended 'realises and appreciates the good work done by the Jewish community in the country both in peace and war. If we thought for a moment that the demand for stricter immigration laws was a mere excuse for an anti-Jewish campaign we would wash our hands of the whole thing at once.'⁷¹

The Sunday Times may well have wished to separate Russian from Jew and at an official level this may have been possible. At the popular level, however, the two were obviously associated. No amount of subtlety on the part of this newspaper could erode the public's adherence to the belief in an alien, and more specifically, Jewish role in the recent violence. These perceptions were further consolidated with a popular pictorial account of the 'Red Revolt'⁷² and a documentary film, 'Red Revolution', which

71. Sunday Times, 26.3.1922.

72. A Pictorial View of Recent Events. Through the Red Revolt on the Rand, including photographs from the Star.

played to packed audiences across the country.⁷³ Separating 'Red' from eastern European Jew, and the latter from Jews in general, required a cognitive sophistication which was rarely forthcoming.⁷⁴ Even reports in Die Burger - a newspaper that was sceptical of the conspiracy thesis⁷⁵ - reflected in its journalism a sense of alien or 'Jewish' involvement.⁷⁶ Being a Nationalist and opposed to Smuts

73. Natal Mercury, 28.3.1922; Eastern Province Herald, 11.4.1922.

74. A farmer, Richard Wiggett, for instance, blamed the trouble on 'six dirty Jews and the dirty Jan Smuts.' Rand Daily Mail, 27.3.1922. Senator Reitz, similarly blamed the provinces for allowing Russian Jews to enter the country. Reported in Graaff-Reinet Advertiser, 24.3.1922. The Northern News reported the imprisonment of a Russian Jew and asked how long South Africa was going to tolerate the Russian-Jew invasion. Northern News, 1.4.1922.

75. See, for example, Die Burger, 28.3.1922. Die Burger was not alone. Scepticism about a conspiratorial plot was increasingly articulated. See Die Burger, 29.3.1922. Even the East London Daily Dispatch requested substantive evidence of a plot. East London Daily Dispatch 3.4.1922. In parliament Boydell asked for a Judicial Commission to establish the accuracy of Smuts's reported allegation that 'the recent crisis was due to the influence of Bolshevik propaganda, with a view to establishing a local Soviet Government in South Africa.' House of Assembly Debates 5.4.1922. The Nationalist member for Rustenburg, P. Grobler, similarly expressed scepticism of a 'Bolshevik revolution.' House of Assembly Debates, 18.4.1922.

76. Consider the following report of a strike meeting: '... 'n klein mannetjie, wat 'n hele paar minute sukkel om teen die steen op te klim en half uit asem is toe hy eindelijk op sy voete staan. Maar niks kan die glans van oorwinning verminder nie wat uit sy gesig van hierdie seun van Israel straal. Sy verskyning was iets nuuts - vir my altans. Dit was nie gewoon om die redders van die toonbank in die gevegslinie te sien nie. Die skare staan nog in twyfel, onseker wat wel uit hierdie vreemde verskynsel sou gebore word Maar enkeles begin hom nou te herken en praat van 'Die Goeie Joodjie wat die stakers help!' Die Burger,

seldom meant support for the eastern European Jew. In fact there is even evidence that 'primitive' religious hostility still informed a measure of anger towards the newcomers. A letter in De Kerkbode, for instance, went so far as to identify Lenin as a Jew and described him as the Anti-christ. The writer noted that South Africa had welcomed the Russian Jew not knowing that he would utilize the opportunity for anti-Christian propaganda. Anti-Christian feelings, he argued, increased with the growth of Zionism.⁷⁷

It is therefore not surprising that a government plan to curtail alien immigration (by stringent use of the educational provisions in the Immigrants Regulation Act) was greeted with approbation. The Rand Daily Mail was particularly pleased in view of the fact that the United States had introduced legislation to exclude 'undesirables' who might have chosen South Africa as the next country of opportunity and security. 'No private individual', it noted, 'would allow into his house a person whom he strongly suspected would soon begin to cause him trouble. Why should a Government?'⁷⁸

13.4.1922. A headline in Die Burger 'Die Skuting op Genl Smuts 'n Jood Voor die Hof' could not have helped the Jewish image. Die Burger, 14.4.1922.

77. De Kerkbode. 13.4.1922.

78. Rand Daily Mail, 31.3.1922.

The Rand Rebellion had generated a call for real exclusionist policies in contrast to the lack of action that had accompanied the earlier expressions of dislike and contempt.⁷⁹ Apart from alterations to American policy, factors contributing towards this change included an economic recession caused by the falling gold price and other primary products, post-war urbanisation and labour violence on the Rand. Of course, hostility towards the newcomers was deeply embedded in the South African experience as shown in earlier chapters. As South African society experienced tensions and established forms of domination were threatened, hostility became increasingly marked. Certainly Jewish upward mobility and the penetration of Jews into social and economic preserves previously dominated by the English-speaking establishment aggravated matters.⁸⁰ This process is well captured in a letter from 'Occidens' in the East London Daily Dispatch.

79. Of course, the Immigration Restriction Act of 1902 in the Cape Colony was an attempt to exclude Yiddish-speaking immigrants. However, pressure from Jewish leaders ensured Yiddish being accepted as a 'European language' for purposes of the Act. See Shain, Jewry and Cape Society, pp.27-32.

80. Higham makes the same point with regard to antisemitism in the United States during the late nineteenth century. See J. Higham, 'American Anti-Semitism Historically Reconsidered', in C.H. Stember and Others, Jews in the Mind of America, New York, London, Basic Books, Inc., 1966, pp.244-45. The 'Bolshevik' crisis then, was a deviation from real problems and in this sense bears some comparison with the 'mugging' crisis in Britain during the early 1970s as expounded - by Stuart Hall et al. The 'moral panic' surrounding the 'mugging' crisis was, as Hall puts it, 'about other things than crime, per se. The society comes to perceive crime in general, and 'mugging' in particular,

Johannesburg is today naturally crying out loudly against the indiscriminate admission of aliens into this country. The Rand is the first portion of South Africa which has suffered from the curse acutely and at the same time openly, though the whole country suffers from it silently and almost unknowingly as yet. But the evil has been brewing up for forty years For forty years a certain peaceful demonstration from eastern Europe has been quietly and steadily going on in this country of ours. Let any merchant turn up an old ledger index from last century, and compare it with his current one today and he will be startled to see how many healthy British and Dutch names have given place to a horde of alien surnames. If we handle any Government or commercial gazette today, the same thing is alarming in evidence. Today if a business property inland comes into the market, the chances are ten to one that an alien will acquire it.

... The worst among us are attracted in some form to a code which came in near two thousand years ago - the code which the western world has to thank for all the good that it can boast of. British and Dutch, South African or nationalist, are all events at one in holding to that cult. Not so the materialistic aliens. Their ways are not as our ways, their thoughts are not as our thoughts⁸¹

Invective against Jews during the Rand Rebellion must therefore be seen in the wider context. Quite simply, alien eastern European Jews seemed to threaten traditional values and norms; the 'Red Revolt' provided an ideal opportunity to mobilise support against their entry. The

as an index of the disintegration of the social order, as a sign that the 'British way of life' is coming apart at the seams.' See S. Hall, C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clark, B. Roberts, Policing The Crisis. Mugging, the State, and Law and Order, London, Macmillan, 1978, pp.vii-viii.

81. East London Daily Dispatch, 1.4.1922.

'real' motivation behind immigration restriction is patently apparent in the following letter from Duncan to Lady Selborne. As Minister of the Interior he was obviously in a position to understand the factors informing government policy:

It amused me to get your advice about keeping out the Peruvian as I have just been working a small effort in the direction. Since the US closed the door to a large extent against the immigrant from eastern Europe we are getting him here in growing numbers and I have been putting in force a clause in the Immigration Act which enables the Minister to bar anyone he deems unsuitable on economic grounds or from standards or habits of life. The victims are of course all Jews and the result has been a revelation of the political power which the Jew has here. Many members who have been making most noise about keeping out the Russian Jew come to me privately and say that while they agree on general grounds that the Jew must be kept out an exception must be made in favour of A who has an uncle in their constituency an excellent fellow who gave them great support last election. And so it goes on all down the alphabet. There is a central Jewish Board in Johannesburg and it arranges for telegrams to be dropped on members from various quarters where they have sensitive points and it really is as good as a play to see the game being worked. I am very doubtful if much can really be done to stop the stream in the circumstances but they are really coming in much faster than we can assimilate them and the present Bolshevik scare - which is nothing but a scare - gives a good opportunity for trying a little restriction. But I fear they are too strong for us.⁸²

The threat of a Bolshevik overthrow was therefore a useful diversionary tactic for a piece of legislation designed to curtail the immigration of 'unassimilable' and 'undesirable'

82. Duncan to Selborne, BC 294.D5.16.8: 20.4.1922.

eastern European Jews.⁸³ Of course Duncan's notion of Jewish power and unassimilability (a theme which in keeping with other parts of the world would gain in prominence during the 1920s), had its roots in South Africa's earlier history. In the wake of the Rand Revolt, however, it was easier to express anti-Jewish sentiment under the acceptable rubric of anti-Bolshevism. This was surely the case for the opposition of a wide range of individuals and organisations to further alien or Bolshevik immigration⁸⁴ which of course meant Jewish immigration. This was affirmed by Tielman Roos in a hard hitting vote catching speech in parliament which castigated the government for seeking scapegoats rather than blaming itself. Why, he asked, 'did they not use the term "Russian Jew" when they spoke of Russians and Bolsheviks'.⁸⁵

V

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83. This is not to argue, however, that the bogey was entirely and cynically manipulated. For example, in his evidence to the Martial Law Commission, the Commissioner of Police, Colonel T.G. Truter, referred to a large number of Bolsheviks who had conspired to overthrow the government and proclaim a republic. Rand Daily Mail, 11.5.1922. See Report of Martial Law Inquiry. Judicial Commission. U G-35, 1922.
84. These included: V. Kent, Chairman of the Wanderers Cricket Club (Rand Daily Mail, 12.4.1922); A.E. King, Secretary of the S.A. National Union (Cape Times, 10.4.1922); the Executive of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce (Cape Argus, 1.6.1922) and a number of politicians. See speeches by W. Macintosh (House of Assembly Debates, 11.4.1922) and I.P. van Heerden (House of Assembly Debates, 13.4.1922).
85. House of Assembly Debates, 13.4.1922.

Debate surrounding further eastern European immigration and threats to limit it, coupled with aspersions cast upon their loyalty and behaviour, further eroded Jewish confidence and precipitated predictable responses. In parliament, the two Jewish MPs, Morris Alexander and Manfred Nathan, spoke out strongly against the popular practice of associating Jews with the rebellion.⁸⁶ Even the small rural community of Volksrust, on the Transvaal-Natal border protested 'in the strongest possible terms against malicious accusations hurled at the heads of Jews throughout South Africa implying that they in particular were responsible for the recent regrettable occurrences on the Rand'. The Volksrust community 'strongly urged the authorities to investigate and contradict these basic rumours at once'.⁸⁷

Their concerns were quite understandable and despite Smuts informing parliament that Afrikaners and not Jews⁸⁸ were largely responsible for the rebellion, the association of Russian Jews with the upheavals was well entrenched.⁸⁹ A speech to the Transvaal Women's South African Party Congress

86. House of Assembly Debates, 20.4.1922.

87. Rand Daily Mail, 10.4.1922.

88. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies had placed pressure upon Smuts and the Minister of Defence. According to the Board, 'the anti-Semitic campaign was practically stopped in the press.' Zionist Record, 31.5.1922.

89. House of Assembly Debates, 24.4.1922

by a Mrs Ussher reflects the confused and uninformed thinking at this time. The 'country districts as well as the Rand', she noted, 'were affected by the presence of undesirables. She has seen youths who had come to the Rand fall under the influence of the pernicious doctrines preached by them. Were they going to allow these terrible people, uneducated and unemployable, to come into the country ...? Many had come from Russia, and that is probably only because undesirables are allowed to leave the country, and when they do leave they sow the seeds of revolution and disruption'.⁹⁰

The Rand Rebellion, then, crystallised unspecified and unstructured attitudes towards Jews, precipitating calls for definite exclusion.⁹¹ In these calls, pre-war and war-time images of the Jew were appropriated and embellished. This is well illustrated in a letter to Smuts from Charles H. Frude of Hillbrow, Johannesburg, in which he complained about the granting of trading licences to 'Peruvians', 'who do not care a toss for any suburb or any country, only for what can be made out of it.' Frude deprecated the activities of low class Jewish businessmen whom he referred to as 'the scum of

90. The Natal Mercury, 29.4.1922.

91. See for example the Cape Times's response to 'Fairplay's' defence of Jewish immigration. Its reference to Jewish 'self sacrifice' and 'industry' in this response resonated of course with perceptions of upward mobility as indeed did its reference to 'race loyalty' with notions of the Jew as an outsider. Cape Times, 25.4.1922.

the world', a description he also attributed to 'the fat, prosperous, well-dressed Jew who battens on the community with his dishonest, unscrupulous ways and schemes as well as the dirty half human louts from Russia and mid-Europe whom we allow to come to South Africa.' Frude also raised the issue of Jews' 'shirking' during the war and rhetorically asked Smuts where 'our Jewish friends' are to be found when needed to defend South Africa? In conclusion, he warned that despite the presence of some 'honourable Jews in Johannesburg', there was a growing bitterness 'against the whole crowd and one frequently hears remarks about the coming pogrom etc. etc.'⁹² Frude's letter brought together in one fell swoop most of the historical antagonisms which had marked attitudes towards the Jew - anti-Hoggenheimer, anti-Russian, crude racism, the failure to volunteer during the Great War and unscrupulous business practice. His imagery of the non-productive Jew with its connotations of parasitism and exploitation, also hailed back to the turn of the century. Most importantly, Frude's letter demonstrated that the eastern European Jew was perceived to be inherently beyond the pale and unworthy of entry into South Africa. As The Cape put it, 'South Africa has suffered and is suffering from too large an influx of Russian and eastern Europeans whose peculiar standards of morality and law are rapidly tending to degrade the social and commercial life

92. Charles H. Frude to General J. Smuts, 26.6.1923. Archives of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies.

of the country'.⁹³ Such comments demonstrate a decisive shift away from late nineteenth and early twentieth century ambivalence. At that time observers were optimistic that the newcomers could be regenerated and acculturated. By the time the dust of the Rand Rebellion had settled, however, such optimism was rapidly fading.

The notion of the unassimilable and inherently problematic eastern European Jew was encapsulated in an important shift towards racist assumptions. Such assumptions underpinned a revealing pamphlet by 'Brutus' (Hendrik Francois Viljoen) on the origins of the Rand Rebellion which in addition reiterated a number of well-worn stereotypes.⁹⁴ Brutus's analysis revolved around the deep seated and more immediate causes of the revolt. Among the former he identified was 'the trail and traditions of the international financier in the control of the Rand, and the consequent widespread suspicion of the mining houses.' Here Brutus clearly consolidated the Hoggenheimer bogey, deployed in the early stages of the conflict. With regard to the immediate problems, Brutus identified (amongst others) the 'undue influx of an undesirable type of European immigrant', 'the spread of Socialist and Bolshevist propaganda by extremists,

93. The Cape, 28.4.1922.

94. Brutus [H.F. Viljoen] Never Again. The Psychology and Lessons of the Rand Revolt 1922, CNA, 1922. The writer has been unsuccessful in tracing the identity of Viljoen.

mostly of Scottish or Jewish extraction' and 'a regrettable tradition of the doings of the big financier in the early days that tends to prejudice the case at the outset in the mind of the average man-in-the-street' Brutus, in addition, argued that 'those on the spot were merely mechanically carrying out a dictated policy that was to subserve primarily interests other than those of South Africa'.

Brutus's pamphlet is particularly interesting for its curious conflation of big mining capitalists and radicals plus the combined effect of these two groups on public opinion. The thrust of his argument certainly reinforced a range of ideas evident at the beginning and at the conclusion of the conflict. His focus on the impecunious Jew from Central Europe, and in particular from Russia and Poland, is riddled with racist assumptions. For example, he claimed that the eastern European Jew came to South Africa:

hating the idea of government, but still preserving his attitude of cringing subservience to those in official authority, till he finds that the free constitution renders these habits unnecessary and even provocative of contempt, whereupon he swings over to an opposite attitude of truculence and self-assertiveness and his hatred of all authority becomes vocal and blatant even in the new tongue, which he acquires with dangerous rapidity: this is apparently the part of his environment that he most readily absorbs, the rest largely fails to interest or attract. He remains too often imbued with all his traditional prejudices, and transmits them to his offspring, who continues to be in important respects almost

as little in touch with the older elements of the population.

These new immigrants avail themselves greedily of the unfamiliar gifts of free education, primary and secondary, and of our generous provision of scholarships and endowments for university education, and tend to become clamorous and assertive in regard to their "rights".

All this would not be serious, if their numbers were relatively small and they were distributed all over the country, but they tend to congregate in certain cities, where they become relatively numerous. The facility with which they can be naturalized gives them considerable political weight, and the use they frequently make of this shows the danger of a too wide and easy suffrage.

It is a strange psychological phenomenon, this transformation of the downtrodden helot, transplanted to a free atmosphere and a liberty that he never dreamed of, presuming to point the way in political development to the descendants of races who have won by centuries of struggle and sacrifice the freedom in which the alien is now too generously admitted a sharer. Someone has aptly termed it the "recoil of the Jew".

Imbued with this traditional attitude of hostility and hatred towards constitutional government, and fortified by the success of their compatriots in Russia, this type of alien supplies dangerous material for the agitation in times of unrest and disturbances.

For Brutus, then, the alien Jew was inherently unable to cope with freedom, threatening moreover to dominate society. The pamphlet also referred to 'abundant evidence' that 'the newer Jewish population on the Rand' had, for a number of years, been propagating Bolshevist doctrines. 'The debasing moral effect of the dissemination of the plague of Bolshevism among our men - and still more among our women -

has been disclosed to an extent that could not have been believed possible.'

Besides reinforcing both the Hoggenheimer and Bolshevik bogeys simultaneously, Brutus also criticized the 'more recent immigrants' for their attitudes of 'aloofness or hostility during the Great War - an attitude that was in striking contrast with that of a number of older Jewish families who had fully identified themselves with the two chief elements of our people in this responsibility and service required by their citizenship, and bore their full share willingly during the perilous years.' Brutus in other words, was once again separating the 'loyal and responsible' Jewish establishment from the eastern European newcomers. By doing this he was simply echoing an earlier theme which,⁹⁵ in the 1920s, was largely academic. By then eastern European Jews dominated the community in all ways and it is quite certain that aspersions cast upon alien Jews reflected to a greater or lesser extent upon all Jews. Needless to say, there is also no hint that the 'more recent immigrants' could be 'regenerated'. However, Brutus's separation did avoid charges of antisemitism and prepared the way for acclamation of his pamphlet in the general press.⁹⁶ In short his pamphlet gave a substantial boost to

95. Of course, in using rubrics such as 'Jewish extraction', Brutus in fact contradicted himself.

96. See for example, Cape Argus, 5.6.1922 and East London Daily Dispatch, 22.6.1922.

the anti-alien lobby's clamour for restriction. The East London Daily Dispatch, for instance, quoted at length from the pamphlet in an editorial which expressed hope 'that the Government will turn a deaf ear to those who urge any relaxation of the immigration restrictions.... South Africa has plenty of difficulties of its own, and there is no reason why they should be added to by the unrestrained introduction of unsuitable alien immigrants from parts of Europe where the name of Government has been synonymous with oppression.' 97

Not surprisingly, the anti-alien lobby's arguments disturbed the Zionist Record which blamed the deteriorating Jewish image on 'a violent press agitation ... which sort to cast blame upon Jewish Bolshevists.' The Jewish weekly did, however, note that after 'a time the agitation died down owing partly to the country having recovered from its momentary hysteria, and partly to intervention from the highest quarters' 98

VI

Popular agitation may well have subsided but it was hardly dormant. The government's release of immigration figures a

97. East London Daily Dispatch, 22.6.1922. Even the London Times attributed an important role to Jews in the Rands problems. See Zionist Record, 30.6.1922.

98. Zionist Record, 30.6.1922.

few months after the Raid, for instance, rekindled the issue in the Cape Times. Readers were reminded of the 'Rand upheaval' and the 'large proportion of low class foreigners largely Russians' among the 'loafers and hooligans.'⁹⁹ The Jewish community, therefore, had every reason to feel insecure. Nor could they feel relieved when the findings of the Martial Law Commission failed to indict South African Jewry for the Rand's problems.¹⁰⁰ By then the government had begun to apply Section 4(1)(a) of the 1913 Immigration Act, whereby the Minister of the Interior was empowered to curtail immigrants unsuited to the requirements of the Union

99. Cited in the Queenstown Daily Representative and Free Press, 17.8.1922.

100. S A J C, 3.11.1922. The S A J C's comment that some 'misguided people' would manipulate a particular memorandum given to the Commission says much about Jewish insecurity. The memorandum in question was a document prepared for the Communist Congress in Petrograd and Moscow in 1920 and was presented by a Mr Ivor Jones. It dealt with communist activities in South Africa. In the document the delegate from South Africa states as follows: The Jewish community with its anti-war and pro-Russian sympathies has given generous support to our fund. But as the revolution clarifies this support is confined to the Jewish revolutionaries proper.' The S A J C pointed out that the document 'was not included for the purpose of stirring up any ill feeling against Jewry' but was rather a means of showing 'the activities of communists and the part they played in the events leading up to the unfortunate happenings of March last.' Any consideration of the 'action South African Jewry took in helping to quell the revolt and the sacrifices it made,' argued the Chronicle, disproves the idea that Jews were behind the revolt. The vast majority of Jews, it concluded, 'do not believe in any of these 'isms' whose main objects are to subvert law and order and, it is to be hoped, that those misguided fanatics who are ever on the look out for creating anti-semitism will, upon this occasion, act like sane persons and not carry on in their usual silly and idiotic manner.'

on economic grounds, or on account of their standards or habits of life. The Board's attempt to persuade the Minister, Patrick Duncan, that Section 4(1)(a) was originally intended to be used against Indians and not Jews failed. Duncan, in fact, denied discriminating specifically against Jewish immigrants, maintaining instead that he was motivated by purely economic interests, an argument not without foundation. Unemployment was high at this time and the economy was generally in poor repair.¹⁰¹ Duncan in fact warned the Jewish community that the Nationalist Party would push for even harsher restrictions if eastern European immigration continued unabated.¹⁰² As it happened, the Nationalist opposition, with its eye on the Jewish vote, attacked the government for its poor handling of the immigration issue and one of its spokesmen, P.G.W. Grobler, even went as far as accusing Duncan of being antisemitic.¹⁰³

Despite the Jewish Board of Deputies applying further pressure upon the government to amend its immigration

101. See D. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic Development 1865-1965', in M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds.), The Oxford History of South Africa, vol.II, South Africa 1870-1966, Great Britain, Oxford University Press, 1971, pp.22-29.

102. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p208.

103. House of Assembly Debates, 29.5.1923. It is quite clear that the opposition was attempting to attract Jewish support.

policy, the Cabinet refused to deviate.¹⁰⁴ This was a tense period for the Jewish community which for the first time faced an active restriction policy rather than the usual rhetoric. Its sense of vulnerability is evident in the Board's fear that the Class Areas Bill of 1924 - which set out 'to make provisions for the reservation of residential and trading areas in urban areas for persons other than natives having racial characteristics in common' - would be applied towards Jews.¹⁰⁵ It was of little comfort that Smuts expressed surprise at Jewish concern.¹⁰⁶ Nor indeed could Jews feel entirely comfortable following the removal of the word 'European' from the category of persons included in the Class Areas Bill.¹⁰⁷ They were clearly seen as a people apart.

Shortly before the 1924 general election the Department of Interior announced the suspension of the application of Section 4(1)(a) in the case of Europeans for a trial period of six months.¹⁰⁸ This action - a blatant election ploy¹⁰⁸

104. Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.211.

105. S A Jewish Board of Deputies. Executive Report, S A J C, 24.7.25.

106. Zionist Record, 31.3.1924.

107. S A Jewish Board of Deputies. Executive Report, S A J C, 24.7.1925.

108. Cape Times, 2.5.1924. Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.211.

- was predictably criticized. For instance, a government supporting newspaper, the Queenstown Daily Representative and Free Press, deplored the change in policy 'which will open the door to hundreds of people who will add to the congestion in the slums of our big towns and do nothing to enhance the progress and prosperity of South Africa'.¹¹⁰

Jewish fears were further exacerbated by an election pamphlet in Swellendam which depicted the Jewish parliamentary candidate and Mayor of Swellendam, Eli Buirski, as 'an enemy of Christ.' Christians were called upon not to support him.¹¹¹ The pamphlet was based on a sermon delivered by Buirski's political rival, the Nationalist Reverend G. Du Toit. According to the Cape Argus, Du Toit would have accepted a Jew representing the constituency had Jews been in the majority. This, however, was clearly not the case in Swellendam. Du Toit, in fact could not understand how 'the Christians of such a place could think of choosing a Jew, a person who on account of his belief is an enemy of Christ, to further the holy interests of our people in the Assembly'. For Du Toit a general election was 'nothing else but the choice of the

109. Morris Alexander referred correctly to the decision as an 'electioneering stunt.' House of Assembly Debates, 7.8.1924.

110. Queenstown Daily Representative and Free Press,

111. South African Party [Election Pamphlets] 1924. South African Library.

Government of the land, the Government, whom, according to God's word we must obey and for whom we must pray? Are we not, therefore, called upon to take care that we have a Christian Government? Do we realize the privilege which God has granted this land - that the choice of the Government of the land is in the hands of the Christian Church? ... Does our Christian religion mean that Christ must rule in our hearts, but can or must be shut out from the State?¹¹² De Kerkbode expressed a similar message arguing that it was a Christian's duty to send men of Christian principles to parliament.¹¹³ This was repeated by the Synodal Committee of the Transvaal Church.¹¹⁴

Notwithstanding Buirski's victory in the general election¹¹⁵ and the incoming Pact government's assurances to Jews that Section 4(1)(a) would not be used against Europeans,¹¹⁶ the 'Jewish Question' had not been removed from the national agenda. It was indeed manifest shortly after the election in the Bloemfontein Friend where a lengthy editorial concerned itself with Jewish business morality. The article was particularly interesting for its 'reasonable' tone and

112. Cape Argus, 30.5.1924.

113. De Kerkbode, 16.4.1924.

114. De Kerkbode, 14.5.1924.

115. Presumably this demonstrated to some extent the weakness of mobilising support on religious grounds.

116. Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.215.

for the way in which it acknowledged positive Jewish qualities. It was nevertheless underpinned by racist assumptions and foreshadowed a number of ideas which were to surface more frequently in the next decade.¹¹⁷

...In this country there are numbers of Jews who speak the European South African languages, who follow the country's social customs and who adopt her patronymics if not with the object certainly with the result that they pass for and are regarded as South Africans. For their great qualities in every sphere of life South Africa no doubt reaps the credit as well as the material advantages which accrue from the possession among her citizens of men of great wealth and of business and financial ability. On the other hand South Africans have to bear the discredit and to share the odium of many commercial malpractices which are foreign to the instincts of their races, and which the bankruptcy courts bring too frequently to light. It is no answer to say that British and Dutch names appear commonly among the fraudulent debtors. This naturally followed from the race ratio in the country, but there is the additional fact that many British and Dutch names have been assumed during the last generation or two by men of Jewish descent, and consequently a Brown or a Robinson, or a van der Merwe, or a Joubert may not be racially what the name suggests. Is it then too much to ask of the many worthy and reputable Jews in South Africa that they should do their utmost, by their influence and otherwise, to discourage practices of this nature among their compatriots?...

It would be easy enough to pass legislation to make it compulsory for the names of the actual owners or partners in a business to appear on the business premises and letter papers as well as the trading name, but difficulties would at once arise in the case of limited liability companies, and, above all, there would be difficulties in any state attempt to circumvent the remarkable ingenuity that would undoubtedly be resorted to in order to defeat any such legislation. The Jew, when in business, being a non-producer by race and instinct, devotes his thoughts almost entirely to

117. See below, pp. 341-47.

the problems of the middleman. To this end he brings his marvellous inherited powers of concentration, patience and calculation with the result that among those races that have adopted the South African standard of living the Jewish trader is preeminent for his successful conduct of business. What, therefore, we would earnestly ask of leaders of the Jewish race throughout South Africa is, in the first place, that they would urge their compatriots to devote more of their ability to productive industry, especially to farming, in which some of them have already achieved preeminence, and in which their business capacity would probably make a success of co-operation where both British and Dutch have failed for want of the essential qualities that are necessary, secondly we would urge that the Jewish leaders should use every means in their power to raise the standard of commercial morality amongst their people, and, thirdly, that they should cooperate with the legislature in devising the best methods of putting a stop to all such practices as we have referred to. The strength of the chain of morality in business as well as in society is that of its weakest link, and a South African nation in the making has a right to look around and to consider the quality of the metal which is to be used for the purpose of building up that nation.¹¹⁸

How the Bloemfontein Friend could explain the presence of honest Jews in terms of its racist discourse is difficult to answer.¹¹⁸ What is clear, however, is the notion of upward mobility and Jewish power which was being ascribed to dishonest practices grafted onto inherent business ability. The Bloemfontein Friend's sentiments would certainly have been shared by Sidney Marwick, patently a fervent anti-

118. Bloemfontein Friend, 11.7.1924.

119. Significantly the newspaper did not resort to the eastern European-Anglo-German dichotomy. This of course is another indication that by the early 1920s, Jews in general were defined by the eastern European Jew i.e. as a race and not by different cultural norms.

semite and champion of immigration legislation. He expressed great fear that South Africa would become a haven for undesirables from southern and eastern Europe because the Nationalists allowed open entry for Europeans. This policy, he argued, would bring on 'its own punishment'. In referring to southern and eastern Europeans, Marwick was, of course, referring to Jews. The use of 'southern' was a convenient decoy; everyone knew he had the eastern European Jew in mind. When Madeley argued that there was no reason to curtail the influx of these 'intellectually developed people', Marwick retorted that 'These people [were] here for no good [and] bent on mischief'.¹²⁰

VII

While this chapter has focused on the negative Jewish stereotype as it evolved during the Rand Rebellion and in its aftermath, it should be noted that the philosemitic image discussed in earlier chapters was not entirely obliterated. Significantly this image too was based on racial criteria. Smuts, for instance, generalized about Jewish charitability,¹²¹ while De Kerkbode recommended that 'poor-white' Afrikaners emulate Jews¹²² who were perceived as a model of success. Such messages when seen against the

120. House of Assembly Debates, 21.8.1924.

121. Cape Times, 15.3.1923.

122. De Kerkbode, 4.7.1923.

backdrop of anti-Jewish sentiment indicate the complexity of human responses rather than essential contradictions.

The notion that Jews were a race was captured most effusively by Tielman Roos in an address marking the opening of the Jewish Memorial Hall in Pretoria. 'In the whole history of the world', he pointed out, 'there is no greater spectacle of solidarity and cohesion than that which has been displayed by the Jewish race. Jews are sundered over the whole face of the world and they manage to remain one race.' He attributed this to 'religious considerations', arguing moreover that 'Jewish energy and power, had done a tremendous amount in building up South Africa.'¹²³ Naturally 'racial' pride, solidarity and cohesion were admirable characteristics in the eyes of Afrikaner nationalists whom it may be added had successfully wooed Jewish voters in the 1924 election.

Another important feature of philosemitic discourse evident in Roos's speech and noted in earlier chapters was the allusion to Jewish power. This power, conceived by philosemites as a product of enterprise, shrewdness and business acumen,¹²⁴ could of course for the antisemite be

123. Zionist Record, 26.9.1924.

124. This is well illustrated in the following joke: 'Eendag gaan 'n Engelsman, 'n Duitser, 'n Jood en 'n Koelie in 'n skuitjie in die see vis vang. Na hulle so 'n ent in die see was, ontmoet hulle 'n haai. Hulle gooi toe vir hom 'n lemoen, maar elke keer kom hy maar weer terug, totdat die lemoen naderhand op was. Toe hy weer

seen as the result of Jewish 'pushiness' and dishonest business dealings. What needs to be stressed in this instance, however, is the link between alleged Jewish power and the Bolshevik bogey. Underpinning both views is an emphasis on a dynamism - in one case used subversively, in the other formatively. It should also be noted that the notion of subversion resonated more strongly with the popular psyche in 1922 than the formative notion precisely because an anti-Jewish stereotype had been widely shared in the pre-war years. The South African Party and the media, in other words, were able to manipulate well-established images of the 'Peruvian' and combine these with post-war fears of Bolshevism. In this way they avoided culpability for mismanagement. The Bolshevik or eastern European agitator was an ideal scapegoat!

The process of manipulation and indeed its success was succinctly illustrated in an address by Siegfried Raphaely to the Fifth Congress of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies:

The Jewish Board had made an effort to collect all the newspaper extracts directed against the Jews

terugekom, besluit hulle om die Koelie in te gooi. Die haai sluk hom in, en toe gooi hulle die Jood in. Toe hy weer terugkom, was die Engelsman en die Duitser ten eiende raad. Hulle soek of daar nie nog lemoene was nie, en onder in die skuit ontdek hulle 'n ou harpoen. Hulle vang die haai daarmee en trek hom op die strand. Toe hulle hom oopsny, staan die Jood en die Koelie binne in die haai se mag, en die Jood is besig om die lemoene wat die haai ingesluk het, aan die Koelie te verkoop! Die Huisgenoot, October, 1923.

... one paper in one part of the country would copy from another part of the country, and many members of the general public when reading these anti-Semitic reports might be led to assume that the report in question reflected the unanimous opinion of the people in South Africa. Things came to a very bad press indeed. A doctor in Benoni [Dr Fehrsen] wrote to the press saying he had spoken to an individual who had entered the Union a few days before the industrial crisis on the Witwatersrand. The doctor was quoted as an authority and everybody took it up to such a degree that it was cabled to England, and Mr Winston Churchill even described the revolution as "Lenin's Last Kick," and friendly advice was tendered to the Union Government by an English paper not to admit more aliens into South Africa, and if that were done there would not be a similar occurrence in the future. It was not easy to nail down a lie at any time but in this case they had done so. It was impossible, however, to lie down once it was launched in Reuter's cable wires. It was impossible to undo the harm and injury that these lies had caused not only to the Jews themselves, but to the whole of South Africa. It was a very sad state of affairs, but it was impossible to remedy it. They were not able to deny effectively lies that had been cabled overseas. The Board called to London on the matter, and their cable was published. The Board went even further. The Board went to the Minister of Defence, and from the moment that the Minister was interviewed on the subject this anti-Semitism in the press ceased as if by clockwork or as if by command. The Board further asked the Minister of Defence for permission to interview the individual mentioned, and who it was alleged, had been arrested during the crisis. They wrote several times to the CID, who, however, was not able to trace the mysterious person. They requested the CID to furnish the Board with statistics as to how many Jews were convicted of the most trivial offences, and what percentage such Jews comprised of the total numbers. He thought that the CID was waiting for the newest telescope that was coming to South Africa to be erected in Bloemfontein before they would be able to find even the trace of a Jew who was convicted of any serious offence in connection with the revolution.¹²⁵

125. S A J C, 10.8.1923. Raphaely's explanation - and that taken throughout this chapter - is shared by Yudelman in his reference to 'The Myth of the Red Revolt.' As he puts it, 'Smuts perpetuated the idea that the 1922

The very success of the media's campaign as outlined by Raphaely ignores a fundamental factor - that the animus directed towards Jews during the Rand Rebellion and in its aftermath was possible only because of a well entrenched Jewish stereotype in South Africa, which had the potential to be manipulated at any time.

revolt was a foreign-led aberration rather than the product of genuine indigenous tensions. Russian immigrants to South Africa, the argument goes, were responsible for a Bolshevik-type Rand Revolt. Essentially this meant Russian Jews, since a vast majority of Russian immigrants were Jews.' According to Yudelman, despite Smuts being a firm supporter of Jewish and Zionist aspirations, 'he refused the private entreaties of the Jewish Board of Deputies to scotch allegations that Russian Jews were responsible for the revolt, even though they clearly were not and he knew they were not.' See D. Yudelman, The Emergence of Modern South Africa State, Capital, and the Incorporation of Organized Labour on the South African Gold Fields, 1902-1939, Cape Town, Johannesburg, David Philip, 1987, p.184.

CHAPTER SEVEN

"THE JEWS ARE EVERYWHERE CLIMBING TO THE TOP OF THE TREES
WHERE THE PLUMS ARE TO BE FOUND" : OUTSIDERS AND INTRUDERS

I

The influx of eastern Europeans increased substantially from the mid-1920s as a result of deteriorating conditions in Lithuania and because of changes to United States and Australian immigration policies.¹ In 1925, 1353 Jewish immigrants entered South Africa, the number more than doubling by 1929 to 2738.² The arrival of these newcomers, at a time of severe unemployment and escalating 'poor whiteism', ensured that Jewish immigration would remain a contentious issue in South African public life. In particular, the 'poor whites' - those large numbers of dislocated, recently urbanised and unskilled Afrikaners - perceived the new arrivals as a threat to their well-being. These casualties of modernisation were ill-equipped to compete in the manufacturing and commercial market place,

1. In 1924 the United States introduced the Johnson Act which sought to safeguard the 'Nordic' character of American society. See Higham, Strangers in the Land, pp.316-22. A cursory glance at immigration debates in South Africa reveals quite palpably that the American Act influenced South African legislators. See below, pp.324-33. Australian entry regulations were also tightened. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.216.

2. Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, p.378.

dominated as it was by the English-speaking sector,³ within which Jews were perceived to be powerful and manipulative.

A specifically Afrikaner 'volk' attack against Jews was made by the ex-Boer War general, Manie Maritz, within a few months of the Pact's electoral victory of 1924. Maritz had returned to public life after serving part of a three year sentence for his role in the 1914 Rebellion. His early release was an obvious gesture of reconciliation on the part of the newly elected Pact Government. Perhaps it considered Maritz's eight year post-rebellion sojourn in Portugal and Germany a sufficient punishment for one who was, after all, a 'volk' hero. Whatever their motivation, Nationalists soon regretted the decision. Indeed, they were acutely embarrassed by Maritz's anti-Jewish outburst which took place during an address to farmers in the Northern Cape town of Mcquassie. The occasion - a commemoration of seventeen men killed near the border of German South West Africa at the time of the Rebellion - was used by Maritz to castigate the Jews:

We have recently learned a great deal about the poverty of our people in the Northern Cape and Namaqualand. Who are responsible for this? Our arch-enemy the Jews who come to this country with a bundle on their backs and always manage to amass a large sum of money. The Afrikaners of these

3. D. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic Development, 1865-1965', p.25.

districts were virtually the servants of the Jews. It was similar in all other parts of South Africa, and a people who made their money here out of the suffering of the people usually left the country and spent it somewhere else.

While Maritz's prejudices may well have been sharpened during his years abroad,⁴ his animosity was deeply rooted in the South African experience. His essential message certainly echoes comments made by Thomas Upington (and many others) in the 1890s.⁵ Like his counterparts of that era, Maritz spoke on behalf of Afrikaners who had experienced acute upheaval and dislocation. Industrialisation and urbanisation had indeed taken a severe toll, with many Afrikaners experiencing an acute social crisis by the mid-1920s. Their position contrasted visibly with the success of Jewish immigrants and first generation South African-born Jews. In the popular perception they appeared, quite correctly, to be wholly suited to city life and its commercial ethos - an alien and hostile world for the uprooted Afrikaner. Maritz was thus quite astute in contrasting the behaviour of Germany's commercial class with that of South Africa's. The former, he argued, were 'patriots' and had rescued Germany after 'the havoc wrought

4. He was, after all, close to the currents of European fascism. In 1938 he published My Lewe en Strewe [My Life and Struggle], a viciously antisemitic diatribe which included substantial sections lifted from the notorious Protocols of the Elders of Zion. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union', p.63.

5. See above, p.61.

by war' while South Africa's commercial men 'were nothing but a lot of bloodsuckers'.⁶

Maritz's outburst attracted substantial press coverage and indeed condemnation.⁷ The opposition (South African Party) press regarded his attack on the Jews as unwarranted. His diatribe, moreover, presented an ideal opportunity for that press to taunt the government because Maritz was, after all, a very prominent Afrikaner nationalist. By linking the two, Jewish support for the Nationalists (which had increased following the South African Party's vacillating immigration policy) would hopefully be curbed. His excesses would also be seen as indicative of the dangers of a 'republican' cast of mind and its concomitant extremism.

The Nationalists certainly recognised the potentially negative repercussions of Maritz's utterances. They were obviously sensitive to the fluidity of the English-speaking vote (including the 'Jewish vote') and the tenuous nature of their alliance with the largely English-speaking Labour

6. The Star, 17.12.1924. Maritz was presumably referring to powerful 'Aryan' industrialists such as Krupps.

7. The Rand Daily Mail, for instance, expressed disgust at his 'vicious attack on an important section of the community.' Rand Daily Mail, 18.12.1924. See also The Star, 17.12.1924. Comments in these newspapers suggest a distinctive attempt to distance themselves from crude antisemitism. Memories of the Rand Rebellion were still fresh and this was perhaps an opportunity to show that anti-alien journalism at that time was not inspired by antisemitism.

Party. Certainly they had no desire at that juncture to introduce a 'Jewish Question' into South African public life. It is little wonder, then, that Die Burger simply omitted Maritz's comments about Jews in its report of the speech.⁸ More significantly, a card-carrying member of the Nationalists, F.J.M. van Zyl, distanced the National Party from Maritz in a lengthy letter to The Star. Van Zyl noted how, as a member of the Party, he had taken it upon himself 'to get in touch with the leader of the Party in Pretoria, drawing attention to the speech as some of our Jewish friends may be under the impression that Mr Maritz was speaking as the mouthpiece of the National Party. I have, however, Mr Roos' authority, through his private secretary, when I state that Maritz is not a leader and has not the slightest influence on the counsels of the Party.' In addition to distancing the Nationalist Party from Maritz, Van Zyl noted that Jews had attained prominent appointments under the present government and that 'several of my nationalist friends' had condemned Maritz's speech as 'malicious and beneath contempt.'⁹

Maritz was clearly made aware of the controversy surrounding his Mcquassie speech. In a speech commemorating the death of Boer rebel and martyr, Jopie Fourie, he consequently asserted that he 'did not mind the Jews having businesses

8. Die Burger, 16.12.1924.

9. The Star, 22.12.1924.

but he did not want them to "take in" the land. Most of the people in the land were poverty stricken; and that grieved him intensely. Let the Jews have all the commerce they wanted, but do not let them be merciless in that commerce. The Jews were after all Israelites in a strange land.' Notwithstanding his suggestion that Jews were in South Africa on sufferance, Maritz magnanimously stated that he 'did not wish to persecute the Jews but he earnestly wanted the Afrikaners to organize themselves.' This, he argued, was the only way to 'attain that freedom and independence which all South Africans desired'¹⁰

Maritz's comments provide a fascinating glimpse into the direction right-wing Afrikaner politics were taking as the crisis of modernisation overtook alienated Afrikaner workers and intellectuals. It also illustrates the useful scapegoat Jews would provide in the mobilisation of Afrikaners. Clearly, there was no question at this point of persecuting Jews but there was a definite sense that the alleged Jewish role in commerce could be used as a stalking horse to exploit growing radical Afrikaner sentiments.

Maritz's revised stance did not assuage his critics and his comments drew further criticism from the Pretoria News which compared his 'reckless and vulgar outburst' with Roos's

10. Pretoria News, 22.12.1924.

philosemitic attitude.¹¹ Maritz had obviously embarrassed the party leadership¹² and the Minister of Agriculture, General J.G. Kemp, issued a speedy statement dissociating the National Party from his utterances.¹³ Kemp may well have misjudged the amount of support for, or at least ambivalence towards, Maritz's sentiments. The Sunday Times, for instance, did not even address the issue while De Volksstem, despite chastising Maritz for his anti-Jewish comments,¹⁴ used the occasion to raise the question of Jewish assimilability:

Dit is egter ongetwyfeld waar, dat die Joodse immigrant minder aanspasselik is as die Kristen-immigrant, en dat hy eers na 'n paar geslagte volkome inburger. Miskien is dit een van die redes van die vooroordeel wat nog, - hoe onaangenaam dit ook is om dit te erken - hier is daar bespeurbaar is onder ons teen die nuwe immigrante. Maar daar sal maar min van ons wees wat 'n groter veroordeel teen sulke immigrante deur baie van ons as ongewenste beskou, - koester as wat daar gevoel word teen die beskuldiging van Manie Maritz.¹⁵

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11. Roos had apparently referred to Jews as 'the most law-abiding race in the country.' Pretoria News, 22.12.1924.
 12. According to The Cape, Roos' office was 'bombarded with demands from indignant Jews as to whether he agrees with the sentiments uttered by his distinguished fellow-Nationalist Maritz.' The Cape, 23.1.1925.
 13. The Star, 22.12.1924.
 14. This newspaper indeed argued that the majority of Afrikaners recognised no difference between Jew and Christian. This was, of course, a dubious assertion in view of its position on eastern European Jews.
 15. De Volksstem, 27.12.1924.

The Cape, in similar fashion to De Volksstem, expressed a double edged message. While revelling in the Nationalist predicament, it hastened to point out that 'because of a long cruel persecution through Christian centuries' there 'are proportionately more rogues and tricksters among the Jews.' This it blamed on 'fanatical Christianity' which 'herded the Jews into the slums and the gutters, refused them citizenship, and forced them into devious ways of making a living.'¹⁶ The Jew, nevertheless, remained a questionable acquisition!

The Maritz episode demonstrated quite clearly that while crude and vulgar antisemitism was publicly unacceptable in the mid-1920s, anti-alienism and cultural xenophobia were permissible. This was to be vividly illustrated only a few months later in the responses to yet another anti-Jewish outburst. The perpetrator this time was the Reverend H.G. White of Bloemhof. During an address to the Anglican Synod in Johannesburg, White referred to Jews (and Indians) in a most derogatory fashion when elaborating upon his opposition to the segregation of Africans as a policy. For White, segregation taken to its logical conclusion would mean dealing with 'the two Oriental races among us - the Indians and the Jews.'

16. The Cape, 23.1.1925.

We have the Indian with his lower standard of living, and the Jews, containing a large subversive element with two codes of morals - one for the Gentile and one for the brother Jew. To segregate the Bantu, therefore, is not going in the right direction.

Further, if we do not get some kind of relief from this Oriental invasion, many more of our lads will have to go overseas to look for jobs.

The segregation idea is the outcome of fear and misunderstanding. The ancient prophecy has it that the lion, the lamb and the cockatrice - whatever that is - will all lie down together. There is no segregation in that, and the logical outcome of segregation would be to place the lions in Johannesburg, the cockatrices in, say India, and the wolves in Palestine (laughter).¹⁷

By implication, of course, White was caricaturing popular perceptions of the Jew as an outsider, and a dishonest one at that, to mobilise opposition to Pact policies. Predictably, the Jewish community responded with alacrity. Manfred Nathan criticized the prelate in a lengthy letter to the press¹⁸ and the South African Jewish Board of Deputies took the matter up with the Anglican Church.¹⁹ Numerous non-Jews also expressed disgust at White's comments,²⁰ and the Sunday Times devoted a lengthy editorial to the

17. Rand Daily Mail, 14.5.1925.

18. Ibid, 15.5.1925.

19. Significantly, the latter responded by begging Jews 'to live and conduct themselves in such a way that the finger of scorn would not be pointed at them.' Report of the Sixth Biennial Congress of the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies Congress, Durban. S A J C, 9.8.1925. In other words Jews were regarded as responsible for animosity towards themselves.

20. See correspondence to the Rand Daily Mail, 18.5.1925.

Reverend's intolerance and indiscretion. The newspaper was especially disturbed by the report that White's speech was greeted with laughter.²¹

The White episode once again revealed the unacceptability of blatant antisemitism on a public level in South Africa at this time. Indeed, South Africans, by and large, sought to distance themselves from European 'Judenhetze'. This, as has been frequently shown, did not mean the approbation of eastern European Jewish immigration. On the contrary, White's harsh and insensitive metaphors revealed just how entrenched the anti-Jewish stereotype was in South Africa. The unabated influx of more eastern European Jews thus continued to be a cause of concern and disapproval.

II

Alarm bells were initially sounded by the Director of Census, J.E. Holloway, in his report on immigration for the period 1920-25:

The most striking feature of the immigration figures is the steady and increasing influx of poverty-stricken Lithuanians. The majority of these return their occupation as "commercial" and

21. Sunday Times, 17.5.1925. It would appear from this that the Anglican laymen and the hierarchy (vide n.19) were not ad idem on the Jewish issue. The laymen, if laughter is an indication, did not take the matter too seriously, whereas the Reverend White and his peers, in warning Jews to improve their behaviour, did.

their finances "below 40" or " unspecified". One may perhaps be permitted to doubt the wisdom of admitting this type of "commercial" immigrant into this country under the present circumstances of trade and development.²²

Holloway's sentiments were shared by a range of newspapers straddling the Party divide. Certainly a consensus existed in which middlemen (often perceived to be dishonest) were unwanted, particularly at a time of economic austerity and growing 'poor-whiteism'.²³ 'Prominent members of the commercial community', noted an editorial in the Rand Daily Mail, 'have declared that in the present stage of South African development too many people are already engaged in trade and commerce. Indeed this has been one of the causes of the depressing record of insolvencies, and it is impossible not to feel that, until other portions of the population have grown considerably, those now concluding the trading business of this country are ample for the purpose. Unfortunately unemployment is still rife, and there is

22. Special Report Series of the Census Department. Immigration 1920-25. No.25. Significantly, J.E. Holloway became chairman of the Native Affairs Commission, a body which provided an important arsenal for significant policies in South Africa. See S. Dubow, Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919-36, London, The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1989, pp.36-37.

23. For an indication of the economic climate see evidence to the Economic and Wage Commission. Rand Daily Mail, 10.9.1925 and 'Retrenched Miners', Rand Daily Mail, 26.11.1925.

little room for immigrants with small or unspecified resources.²⁴

The Rand Daily Mail's comments were clearly predicated upon one dimension of the well-worn negative Jewish stereotype namely the newcomers' inherent predisposition towards commerce, their non-productivity and dishonesty in business. There was, however, much more to the anti-alien alarm than the question of economic competition and the alleged economic predilections of the newcomers. By the mid-1920s eugenicist-based fears of 'race mixing' and 'mongrelisation' - primarily associated with South African blacks²⁵ - appeared to have influenced perceptions of the eastern European. In other words, a new 'race' discourse, in which 'Russians' and 'Jews' joined 'Orientals', 'Africans', 'Europeans', 'Anglo-Saxons', 'English', 'Nordics' and 'Mediterraneans' as racial groups, impacted on the question of Jewish immigration. So-called 'moral degeneracy' haunted South African eugenicists while 'miscegenation' or 'cross-breeding' was a fear voiced even by liberal social scientists and philosophers.²⁶

24. Rand Daily Mail, 11.9.1925.

25. See Dubow, Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid, chapters three and four.

26. Ibid., pp.45-51. That was the eugenics' worldview. As Stepan puts it: 'Eugenically "unharmonious" crosses and unfit racial hybrids were a source of worry'. Stepan, The Idea of Race, p.129.

The anti-alien lobby was thus fortified with a sound intellectual rationale, reinforced by nativist assumptions (based similarly upon the eugenics paradigm), emanating from the United States. There the Johnson Act of 1924 had finally, through a rigid quota system based on racial origins of the population in 1890, erected a formidable barrier against the influx of 'alien' or 'non-Nordic' immigration.²⁷ In South Africa, racial nativism focused on eastern European immigrants who were perceived as a special threat.²⁸ The Star, for example, in response to Holloway's report, referred to the fecundity (even in later life) of the eastern Europeans and the impact this would have 'upon the country's intellectual and physical development.' 'It would not', contended The Star, 'need a great deal of such immigration as that in question to effect a profound modification of the present mainly Dutch and British South African European population, and it would obviously be far better to encourage Nordic immigrants, as the United States

27. Higham, Strangers in the Land, p.324.

28. This was certainly a viewpoint held by some English eugenicists. See Stepan, The Idea of Race, p.129. Of course, eugenicist discourse was not necessarily antisemitic. At the turn of the century, for instance, many eugenicists in Britain 'wrote favourably of the Jews' pride in family and race, seeing it as a kind of eugenic model for other groups.' Stepan, The Idea of Race, p.125. Significantly, the writings of a prominent Jewess, Sarah Gertrude Millin, were informed, as Dubow puts it, by 'the language and imagery of biological degeneration'. S. Dubow, 'Race, civilization and culture : the elaboration of segregationist discourse', p.77. See also J.M. Coetzee, 'Blood, Flaw, Taint, Degeneration: The Case of Sarah Gertrude Millin', English Studies in Africa, 23 (1) 1980.

are now doing, than to allow semi-indigents from eastern Europe to flood the country.²⁹ A similar argument was employed by the Cape Times:

We have barely 1,600,000 Europeans in South Africa, a widely scattered population, but still in the main a population of Nordic type. If, however, we continued to lose annually a large number of South Africans of Nordic type - and the statistics show that this is so - and to introduce annually a large number of Southern and Eastern Europeans - Lithuanians, Finns, Poles and what not - we may easily find that the whole character of the South African nation may be changed. We do not say that it will necessarily be changed for the worse, but its main characteristics will undergo a change no less certain because it is subtle and difficult to detect. The question certainly deserves the consideration of South African statesmen.³⁰

The new 'racial' discourse was shared by Die Burger. This Nationalist mouthpiece expressed concern at the loss of Nordic 'stamgenote' [100-ethnics] and their replacement with southern and eastern Europeans and, in particular, Lithuanians. The matter would not have been so serious, it argued, had the newcomers been farmers and not middlemen. Once again the eastern European Jew had been racially or culturally typecast, albeit in a way more or less consonant with reality. This reality, however, was a product of historical circumstances and structural conditions rather than inherent predilections within the Jewish psyche. In

29. The Star, 17.9.1925.

30. Cape Times, 11.9.1925.

the popular view, however, ethnology and culture were conflated and accorded primacy. Thus Die Burger could warn that if steps were not taken to curtail the eastern European influx (especially in view of the United States and Australian immigration policies), South Africa would have another race problem. The newspaper's rationale vividly illustrates the impact of eugenic thought:

Dit geld hier die reg van elke volk om te se wat sy toekomstige samestelling sal wees. As dit ons erns is wanneer ons se dat ons nie teen Asië op 'n rassestandpunt gekant is nie, maar omdat hulle 'n ander besigsheids moraliteit en ander sosiale begrippe het, of omdat hulle nie maklik in die bestaande bevolking oplosbaar is nie, dat moes ons billikerwyse teen baie immigrante van Oos en Suid-Europa om een van die selfde redes beswaar maak.

The issue, concluded Die Burger, was that the government had to encourage 'assimilable' immigrants and stop 'unassimilable' types.³¹ The reverse was in fact taking place and after 1924 there was a large outflow of English immigrants and an inflow of eastern European Jews.

'Unassimilable' had clearly become a label for Jewish or more specifically eastern European Jewish immigrants. The latter were perceived as outsiders, immutably alien, and inherently devious. Most importantly, they intruded into, and threatened to overshadow, the white or European establishment. Besides reflecting the new discourse of race

31. Die Burger, 15.9.1925.

and culture, the term 'unassimilable' conveniently dodged charges of antisemitism. Almost everyone wished to avoid that charge for crude antisemitism remained unacceptable. This was once again demonstrated in responses to the formation of a sinister Ku Klux Klan-type organisation, the League of Gentiles.

III

The League of Gentiles came to the public's notice late in November 1925 through sensational disclosures in the Rand Daily Mail and The Star. According to The Star (which broke the news), the League had approximately 10 000 members, mostly from the middle classes. Its aim was to boycott Jewish traders, an action which, in the League's estimation, would cost Jewish traders approximately £3 000 000 per annum.³² On the day The Star's report appeared a large advertisement was placed in the Rand Daily Mail calling for '20 000 more Gentiles to complete the Scheme of Co-operation for the benefit of all true' Gentiles. Those who recognised 'the ever present danger' of Jewish domination and who wanted to help were given a post-office box number to write to in Johannesburg.³³

32. The Star, 27.11.1925.

33. Rand Daily Mail, 27.11.1925. The box number suggests the League was an organisation rather than the work of individual crackpots. However, further developments suggest that this was not the case. See below, p.291.

The following day, under a huge headline, 'BLINDFOLD INTERVIEW WITH LEAGUE OF GENTILES', a Rand Daily Mail journalist described his secret blindfolded meeting with an executive member of the League of Gentiles in the woods outside Johannesburg. The League's spokesman made it clear that the organisation's objectives were quite constitutional. They were, in essence, to counterpoise powerful Jewish organisations, 'which exert a great deal of influence' with 'an equally powerful Gentile organisation.' He noted that Jews, 'although amounting to 6 per cent of the Union, practically control 94 per cent of the food supply.' His organisation wanted to 'influence the Government' in the same way Jewish organisations did and 'to protect the Gentile and particularly to protect our womenfolk.'³⁴

Factors motivating the League were further elaborated in a preamble to the membership form:

Never in the course of humanity has there existed before today a dissatisfaction so widely spread, so eager a readiness to try and experiment which may establish human existence upon a firmer saner foundation, and the best methods in the interests of the Gentiles is to act now and act quickly. In the name of the truth become a member of the League of Gentiles, which aims at casting out socially, industrially and economically the Jewish element, which is too prominent to-day. The

34. Rand Daily Mail, 28.11.1925. Although the myth of Jewish men threatening Gentile women was well known as a theme in European antisemitism, this dimension of the anti-Jewish stereotype never flourished in South Africa.

League must bring about moral, intellectual and political advantages of the highest value ... The general discontent of late years proves conclusively that there is much room for improvement on our social order Wealth among the Jews is a real danger point to the future prosperity of the Gentiles; and their power of wealth is the greatest danger we have to guard against.³⁵

The melodramatic nature of the secret interview, coupled with the poor language and style evident in the foregoing membership form, suggest that the League was the work of one or two disturbed individuals. Indeed, two days after the membership preamble was published, the Rand Daily Mail published an amended version³⁶ which was hardly indicative of an established organisation as suggested in The Star's initial report. On the other hand, it is possible that someone more educated had tried to repair the earlier poor

35. Natal Mercury, 28.11.1925.

36. 'The society is formed to promote co-operation among Gentiles and all members are pledged to support commercially people of their own race. The society, by the dissemination of educational propaganda among its members, strives to teach them that the Jew always has been, and is, the hereditary enemy. The society pledges itself to leave no stone unturned to obtain Parliamentary recognition; and to bring all possible pressure to bear on the question of the prohibition of the entry into South Africa of all undesirable alien immigrants, particularly when unemployment is prevalent. Jews have strong views on the question of their womenkind associating with menfolk outside their own race. The society has equally strong views, and intends to bring about social segregation of the two races. The society will endeavour to be law-abiding and constitutional in all aspects but reserves to itself the right to take drastic action when such a course is the only remedy left.' Rand Daily Mail, 30.11.1925.

impression. Certainly the League attracted widespread concern both in Jewish and non-Jewish circles - this despite a Jewish Board of Deputies denial of a report in the Rand Daily Mail³⁷ which referred to Jewish communal alarm. The Board indeed claimed, in a letter to the Rand Daily Mail, to have known about the League for some time and had been assured by the CID chief, Major A.E. Trigger, that the matter was of little consequence. The Board therefore regretted the dramatic coverage of the League in the press.³⁸

Interviews with other Jewish communal leaders suggest that the formation of the League of Gentiles was taken seriously. The President of the South African Zionist Federation, A.M. Abrahams, for instance, defended the Jewish record, arguing that their enterprise had created employment for thousands. He pointed out, moreover, that those Jews who had settled in South Africa 'are desirous of becoming true sons of the land.'³⁹ The Chief Rabbi, Dr. J. L. Landau, similarly extolled South African Jewry's contribution to the country

37. Rand Daily Mail, 28.11.1925.

38. Rand Daily Mail, 29.11.1925. The letter was decided upon at a meeting of the Board on 29 November 1925. During the meeting it was clear that certain members did regard the matter seriously but wished 'to allay the fears of the Jewish people'. Executive Council Minutes 1925-1927, South African Jewish Board of Deputies. (Archives, South African Jewish Board of Deputies, Johannesburg).

39. The Star, 3.11.1925.

and noted that hitherto Jews had enjoyed equal opportunities and the absence of antisemitism.⁴⁰

The formation of the League and its objectives were also condemned by a number of non-Jews in letters to the Rand Daily Mail.⁴¹ This newspaper, in turn, ridiculed the League's 'manifesto' and bitterly regretted the potential it generated for social conflict.⁴² That, indeed, seems to have been the general attitude of the press to the establishment of the League, confirming once again its rejection of crude anti-Jewish prejudice. Yet anti-Jewish prejudice of a less crude kind was becoming acceptable when used to advocate restrictions on Jewish entry into South Africa. In this contradiction we see the essential ambiguity of the Jewish image. The very newspapers that criticized the League and its crude proposals were quite happy to associate eastern European Jews with a different business ethic and to blame antisemitism on the inordinate influx of these newcomers. As Die Burger put it:

40. The Star, 30.11.1925. Landau's statement was simplistic for obvious reasons.

41. See 'JPR' and 'An Old Johannesburger' Rand Daily Mail, 30.11.1925 and 2.12.1925 respectively. Madeley added his voice to the protest (Natal Mercury, 2.12.1925). The Minister of Justice, Tielman Roos, however, was not perturbed. He considered the League a 'childish' movement and not worthy of attention. The Star, 30.11.1925.

42. Rand Daily Mail, 1.12.1925.

Dit staan vas op die Rand onder 'n groot deel van die bevolking 'n anti-Joodse gees heers, wat alleen toegeskryf moet word aan die besigheidsgedrag van manne waarvan die meerderheid tot die Wes-Europeses rasse behoort. Dit sou miskien die toestand reg beskryf nie as beweer dat die gevoel sterk teen die Jode as ras is nie. Dit is teen 'n sekere soort winkeliers en besigheidsmense wat die gevoel bestaan, en hierdie gevoel neem to.⁴³

In Die Burger's comments we see the interrelationship between the economy and prejudice which the 1922 Rebellion had also revealed. Of course, we also see a burgeoning racial nativism which depicted the eastern European Jew as a threat to Western values and norms. This was certainly the case for the Cape Times which, while distancing itself from antisemitism,⁴⁴ blamed 'the mischievous spirit which finds embodiment in the "Gentile League", at least in part, on 'immigrants of Hebrew origin' replacing 'British-born Europeans.' It was, argued the newspaper, not because they were Hebrew that they were problematic, but because they hailed from Central Europe and belonged 'to a not very desirable class of immigrant'. In the Cape Times's opinion, South Africans would have to make up their minds whether they 'really want white immigration from Southern or Eastern Europe on anything like the scale that is in progress today,

43. Die Burger, 1.12.1925.

44. This newspaper in fact commended readers to read Macaulay's 'famous essay on the civil disabilities of the Jew in England'. It noted that 'Ku Klux Klans or Fascisti' were not welcome in South Africa and that antisemitism had never benefited 'any nation in any part of the world.'

when 70 per cent of our foreign immigrants hail from Lithuania and neighbouring countries.' The United States, the newspaper noted, had for similar reasons introduced a quota system. Southern and eastern Europeans, it asserted, were unassimilable and had no desire to assimilate.⁴⁵ Projecting from current immigration and emigration figures, the Cape Times warned that they would 'very speedily arrive at a point at which the whole character of our young nation may be changed.' Once again the newspaper stressed that its viewpoint was not informed by antisemitism: 'It is simply a question of South Africanism and we believe that the great majority of the 65 000 Jews who are in South Africa to-day and are helping to build up its wealth and its prosperity would agree that the indiscriminate inpouring of so many hundreds of Southern and Eastern Europeans every year, as long as the other fountains of immigration are so dry, is not desirable and in the interests of South Africa'.⁴⁶ Clearly the Cape Times wished to harness the sympathies of those already in South Africa in its campaign against further eastern European immigration. This was a

45. The Cape Times was effectively acknowledging that the emancipation contract, discussed in chapter one, had been broken by the newcomers. Of course, in an age when the biological quality of human stock was so important, it was virtually impossible for eastern European Jews to fulfil the contract. Thus the whole argument was specious. The fact of the matter was that eastern European was synonymous with Jew. There was nothing in South Africa like the United States' protest against southern Europeans.

46. Cape Times, 1.12.1925.

particularly underhand ploy later taken over by the Nationalists with regard to German Jewish immigration in the late 1930s. However reasonable the Cape Times's comments appear to have been, beneath its rational discourse lay a strong strain of anti-Jewish prejudice.

Anti-Jewish views were similarly expressed by the East London Daily Dispatch which argued in an editorial, 'The Alien Invasion', that Russian immigrants could not, by and large, be compared with those of British stock.⁴⁷ The 'heavy preponderance of Southern and Eastern Europeans in conjunction with the diminishing ratio of people of Nordic strain' also perturbed the Eastern Province Herald:

Students may well ask what will be the ultimate ethnological influence of the heavy influx of this strain into the country. That it will have an effect on our manners and customs, and even on our national characteristics and outlook, few will doubt. The Nordic strain which is, of course, predominant in the country at present in the form of the old Dutch and English population, is highly resistant in some ways, but we have a curious example of the penetrative power of the type of immigrant so heavily in the majority in the figures quoted in the case of the United States of America. In that country the Nordics have preserved all their characteristics and may even be said to represent the governing class; but side by side there is in rapid growth another class of population racially distinctive, the product of the Latin, the Slav and the Semitic immigrant. That they are making an impress on at any rate the surface of the American native is very clear. The question is whether that impression is purely superficial or whether it is gradually penetrating below the surface and into

47. East London Daily Dispatch, 28.11.1925.

the very vitals. Of course we have to remember that the influx into the United States in recent generations has been on a far more wholesale scale than even the present influx in South Africa. Yet we think that even at this early date we can trace the first shadowy markings of the impress of the new population on some parts of the surface of South Africa.⁴⁸

The foregoing responses - reminiscent of anti-alien rhetoric in the old Cape Colony - demonstrate the deeply entrenched nature of the eastern European stereotype and, of course, the deeply entrenched nature of antisemitism in South Africa. The newcomers embodied decades of negative labelling. This was well captured in Ons Vaderland's response to the League. While distancing itself from antisemitism and expressing hope that South Africa would not experience the sort of hatred evident in Germany in the 1870s and France at the time of Dreyfus, the Afrikaans nationalist bi-weekly nevertheless opposed an open immigration policy. It indeed argued that South Africa should admit only the best class of Jew. This, in effect, meant the introduction of an entry quota such as that in operation in the United States.

In defining its stance, Ons Vaderland dealt with a number of anti-Jewish stereotypes popular among Afrikaners. It noted, for instance, that it was unjustifiable to see Jews as industrial exploiters. This, the newspaper contended,

48. Eastern Province Herald, 4.12.1925.

may have been applicable at one time but was no longer the case. Nor was it reasonable to begrudge Jews their partial monopolisation of industry. On the contrary, Jewish initiative had done much for the country. Workers simply had to see that white workers were employed and that wages were not at the 'hongerlone' [starvation] level. Jewish shopkeepers (usually very successful) could also be dealt with by regulations and by the lengthening of the credit period. This, the newspaper claimed, would prevent the repugnant consequences of shopkeepers' behaviour. Ons Vaderland was also confident that Jewish 'pocket-patriotism' would end with the next generation who would come to look on South Africa as a genuine fatherland.⁴⁹ The newspaper also dismissed the view that the uniquely sly nature of the Jew - honed over centuries of oppression - had made him master over those of more righteous Indo-German stock. Only occasionally was the Afrikaner squeezed and reduced to poverty and the Jew was not his master. In its final defence, Ons Vaderland noted that Jews, being unable to return to their country of origin, did not remove their money from the country. In any event, the Jew enjoyed full rights in South Africa where he made money fairly easily. In short, the Jew was not an unmitigated evil.⁵⁰

49. This optimistic assumption echoed assimilationist hopes of the nineteenth century. It certainly contradicted the determinist paradigm informing most of the article. The idea was indeed taken further when Ons Vaderland argued that the Jews' racial pettiness would not continue to the next generation.

Ons Vaderland's refutation of prevailing anti-Jewish images reveals much about the pervasiveness of negative Jewish stereotypes in the mid-1920s. These stereotypes were now consolidated and reinforced by the eugenic paradigm discussed above. Thus the Eastern Province Herald could vilify the newcomers in the following terms: 'They are generally people whose one ideal is to deal in some commodity or another, to be a shopkeeper, a buyer and seller, very frequently a speculator. And as such and taking into consideration their pushful characteristics, they are more calculated to leave their mark ethnologically on South Africa than were they workers in an industry or agriculturalists.'⁵¹

Nativist rhetoric, then, focused on culture and/or economics rather than on religion. In this way the problem was not defined as a Jewish one per se as everyone wished to avoid the pitfalls experienced by Maritz, the Reverend White, and the League of Gentiles. As previously mentioned, the

50. Ons Vaderland, 4.12.1925.

51. Eastern Province Herald, 4.12.1925. The interchange between the United States and South African 'restrictionist' ideology is self-evident. Certainly the United States Quota Act served as a reference and rationalisation for South Africans wishing to curtail the eastern European influx. It was even shared at the popular level. Hence 'A Lover of South Africa' recommended that South Africa take a lesson from America. 'We want producers not traders. South Africa will never be built up from Eastern Europe.' Cape Times, 19.1.1926.

emergence of the latter organisation demonstrated conclusively that the time for public antisemitism had not yet arrived.⁵²

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52. Besides an anti-Jewish pamphlet campaign on the Witwatersrand during the Christmas period, (SAJC 15.1.1926) little was heard of the League. Some months after the pamphlet campaign the Zionist Record reported that the League had been refused permission to use the Johannesburg Town Hall for a meeting. Zionist Record, 30.4.1926. The Jewish Board of Deputies had in fact requested the Mayor of Johannesburg to deny the League use of the Hall. It motivated its case on the grounds 'that the leaflet advertising the concert did not contain the names of the printers or speakers, and was being privately distributed and was construed as a thin disguise for anti-Semitic propaganda.' The Board also noted 'that as the Jewish element referred to by the League embraced thousands of ratepayers who contribute towards the cost of the Municipal Buildings ... the letting of the Town Hall for propaganda against any section of ratepayers was putting it to illegal and improper use.' Minutes of Special Meeting of Executive Committee, 29 March 1926. Executive Council Minutes 1925-1927. South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives, Johannesburg. In addition to requesting the Mayor to forbid use of the Town Hall for purposes of the League, a deputation from the Board of Deputies discussed antisemitic manifestations and the League of Gentiles with the Minister of Justice, Tielman Roos. The Minister 'gave the deputation a very sympathetic hearing and stated that he had given special instructions to Major Trigger to keep him posted as to any developments in the movement and that he would keep the matter before him. The Minister also stated that Major Trigger had the leaders of the League before him and had warned them that they would be held personally responsible for any disturbance, and Mayor Trigger had assured him [the Minister] that none of the leaders were men of any prominence.' Minutes of Meeting of Executive Council, 15 April 1926. Executive Council Minutes 1925-1927. South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives, Johannesburg. In May the Zionist Record reported a case in which a member of the League, Frederick W. Lippiatt, had misappropriated 18 pounds belonging to the association. Zionist Record, 14.5.1926. Certainly the League appears to have made little impact. See below, p.316.

IV

By the mid-1920s, the question of eastern European immigration had been supplanted in the public consciousness by the more pressing issues of South Africa's status within the British Empire and the 'Native Problem'. In addition, towards the end of 1926, the country was convulsed by the 'flag' controversy, an issue which raised the very symbols of the nation's past and future.⁵³ Despite immigration concerns being moved temporarily to the periphery of public debate, certain individuals, supported by the Cape Times in particular, did their utmost to keep the question alive. J.S. Marwick, for instance, resuscitated the old canard that Jews were subverting the social order through their involvement in liquor merchandising. Alien liquor merchants, he told parliament, were ruining 'the natives' and 'the name of the white man in the Transvaal.' The burden of Marwick's complaint was that Jewish liquor dealers were destroying the 'proper' relationship between whites and blacks - merely 'for the sake of a little gain....'⁵⁴ In this sense Marwick added a new dimension to the negative stereotype - the Jew as a subverter of existing 'race relations and of social stability.'⁵⁵ Of course these ideas resonated

53. See H. Saker, The South African Flag Controversy, 1925-1928, Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1980.

54. House of Assembly Debates, 17.2.1926.

55. These ideas would be taken up in the 1960s when allegedly 'liberal' or 'communist' Jews would be

precisely because the 'Peruvian' and 'cosmopolitan financier' were already associated with purportedly subversive intentions and behaviour. Had the Jew not allegedly engineered the Anglo-Boer War? Was he not the inspiration behind the anarchy of the Rand Rebellion? The ultimate force of Marwick's charge, however, rested upon burgeoning fears of African proletarianisation, radicalism and social breakdown.⁵⁶

Significantly, Marwick's comments went unchallenged. Rather the Cape Times used his speech as a springboard for yet another attack on unrestricted immigration. While acknowledging that South Africa's 65 000 Jews had 'played their part and are playing their part in building up the resources of South Africa', the newspaper made it clear that it did not welcome the prospect of more Jews. They might be (as one Jew had put it) 'the salt of the earth' but, as a 'witty young poet' once remarked, "too much salt is worse than none". For this reason, the Cape Times urged the government to consider a quota system. In classic eugenicist style, the newspaper warned that non-Nordics might 'alter the whole character of the future race.' Clearly the eastern European Jew was viewed as a racial outsider; an unwholesome

accused of instigating opposition towards the Apartheid order. See Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, chapter nine.

56. See H. Bradford. A Taste of Freedom. The ICU in Rural South Africa 1924-1930, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1988.

and unwelcome acquisition to South African society. This is even more apparent when one considers a Cape Times assertion that it was a contradiction to restrict Asiatics while 'positively encouraging a class of immigrant who is in very many cases questionably superior to the Asiatic and scarcely qualified in many cases to be classed as of European stock at all.'⁵⁷ What this newspaper was really arguing was that the eastern European Jew had a dubious commercial morality and was racially not European. For these reasons he ought to have been consigned where the Asiatic was by Section 4(1)(a) of Act 22. One correspondent to the Cape Times, sensing the newspaper's anti-Jewish mood, summarised the whole spectrum of misdemeanors with which the immigrant Jew had been, and was now again being, charged:

As traders, the role in which most of them have figured, they have succeeded in gaining for South Africa's commercial morality the reputation of being the lowest in the world.... By giving unlimited credit to farmers and presenting a bill of undreamed of dimensions at a time when the failure of their mealie crops, or an invasion of locusts has made it obviously impossible for them to pay, the alien trader in the country has gained possession of numerous farms....

A study of last year's statistics of crime in the Union reveals the illuminating fact that aliens were responsible for 60 per cent of it, as against 18 per cent, committed by English and Dutch combined, and this despite the fact that aliens form less than 10 per cent of our population.

Illicit liquor selling, illicit diamond buying, fraudulent insolvency, and conflagrations of obscure origin have long been almost a monopoly of the aliens. But so cleverly does he keep in the

57. Cape Times, 4.3.1926.

background, that in the first two cases the responsibility more often than not falls on the comparatively innocent shoulders of his dupes of the poor white and unemployed classes.

To the Eastern and Southern European we owe the majority of the Communist agitators, whose power of formenting trouble was demonstrated in the Rand revolt of 1922, and, more recently the seamen's strike.⁵⁸

The absence of support for eastern European Jews in the press⁵⁹ suggests a widespread aversion to their presence and certainly to the arrival of a further influx. Marwick in fact argued that besides the two Jewish parliamentarians, Morris Alexander and Morris Kentridge, everyone regretted the eastern European influx. He believed 'public feeling is about to demand that legislation shall be introduced to put an end to the admission of undesirable aliens.' Marwick compromised his own argument, however, by calling upon the government to initiate propaganda against the newcomers. He was convinced that, by stirring up negative sentiments, the government could generate antagonism towards the eastern European which would 'transcend in intensity the anti-convict agitation of 1848.' It was 'because South Africa does not apprehend the kind of person who is being landed on these shores that we have not had such an agitation.' When Alexander pointed out that South Africa's Jews had been

58. Cape Times, 13.3.1926.

59. There were occasional responses from Jewish correspondents. See, for example, A. Borson's letter, Cape Times, 4.3.1926.

praised by numerous people including farmers, Marwick became more vitriolic. Once again Jews were characterised as parasitic middlemen of dubious morality as well as subverters of the social order:

We know that the majority of these people are not engaged in primary production. A very large number come to this country and take up such occupations as the middleman, trader, yeast seller, hotel-keeper, bar-keeper, canteen-keeper, eating-house keeper, and occupations of that sort which are already overstaffed.... We want primary producers.

In America anarchists and Bolshevists are not admitted, and there is no doubt that a large proportion of the people who came to this country are of this particular belief. We can well do without them and I know of no Europeans who are less likely to have a beneficial influence on the natives than the particular immigrants I speak of. It is within my experience that these particular people demean themselves with the natives for the sake of a little gain, and they have no idea of the relative position that should be occupied by the white man and the native in this country.... I am convinced and absolutely satisfied that there is a strong feeling in South Africa against this particular type of immigrant coming in.⁶⁰

Although Marwick had undermined his own argument by advocating state initiated agitation, it is clear that he was verbalising an opinion held by many members of parliament and there was a noticeable absence of challenging debate in the proceedings. In fact, Lt. Col. M.J. Pretorius, the South African Party member for Witwatersberg, contended that South Africa wanted people:

60. House of Assembly Debates, 3.5.1926.

who can make a living here, and not people who merely come here to live on the population of our country. It is not a question here of insulting anybody. When I speak of undesirable immigrants, I do not only mean the Jew, but also people who are Christians. It is not that I am against a particular class, but it is time for us to see that we only get the best class of man in the country who will not live as a parasite, but will help to push the country ahead.⁶¹

Notwithstanding his apparent even-handedness, Pretorius's description of the unwanted immigrant clearly confirmed the anti-Jewish stereotype, enough to classify his speech as antisemitic. This was obvious to all and explains the fancy footwork on the part of Pretorius to distance himself - as others had previously done - from antisemitic charges. In truth, however, rhetoric surrounding restriction was based upon 'racist' assumptions in which all Jews were ascribed inherent attributes and immutable characteristics.⁶² These

61. House of Assembly Debates, 3.5.1926.

62. The Zionist ideal and indeed the on-going colonisation of Palestine by Zionists confirmed the notion that Jews were a race. Tielman Roos put it as follows: 'The provision of a national home for Jewry in Palestine is a fitting climax to what is the greatest national romance in history. That a nation scattered amongst the nations of the world, speaking alien tongues, living under divergent conditions, should have maintained its traditions, its homogeneity, its spirit and its own strong sense of oneness, seems to the impartial observer little short of a miracle. No other nation has come within measurable distance of this achievement. Condemned, despised and reviled, compelled in very truth to follow a thorny path, and yet ever revering the spirit beacon light which has brought it through many vicissitudes in the Promised Land.' S A J C 7.5.1926. Being a 'national' group did not necessarily mean Jews could not be loyal South

were usually but not always negative. However, even when Jews were praised, the essential message was one of exaggerated Jewish power and influence. Jews, for example, were often singled out for their intellectual ability,⁶³ their charitability⁶⁴ and their contribution to mankind. J.G. Kemp best captured the philosemitic view when addressing a Jewish audience commemorating Jewish soliders who had fallen in the Great War:

'You, as a race, have throughout the ages and in all parts of the world, produced leaders in religion, law, politics, business and war. You have given the world the Ten Commandments, which

Africans. Indeed, Hertzog hoped Jews would make themselves at home in South Africa 'and become equally good Afrikaners as the other races.' The Star, 14.11.1925. Tielman Roos similarly accepted Jews as 'our South African brothers.' Zionist Record, 8.4.1927. Grobler went further claiming that Zionists were true nationalists 'although not necessarily Nationalists in the Party sense. Nevertheless, they both stood for the same things, namely, preservation of their own language, tradition and religion.' Zionist Record, 8.4.1927. The Cape expressed some concern about dual loyalty. See its comments on Morris Alexander's call for Zionism as a remedy for antisemitism. The Cape, 7.8.1927.

63. One need only consider the encomiums showered upon Jews at a Cape Town meeting celebrating the opening of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Sir Carruthers Beattie, Principal of the University of Cape Town, for instance, paid tribute to the Jews' material and intellectual contribution to South African universities while Hertzog referred to Jews as a nation of 'moralists, of philosophers, of theologians, of lawyers and law givers.' S A J C, 10.4.1925. On another occasion, Creswell referred to Palestine having 'that great Jewish University where would gather all those brilliant intellectuals which lent such lustre to the Universities of the world.' S A J C, 7.5.1926.
64. De Kerkbode cited Jewish charity as an example to be emulated by Afrikaners in solving the poor-white problem. De Kerkbode, 25.2.1925; 3.6.1925.

serve as a foundation for all our laws. Even in modern times you have produced one of the greatest lawyers in the world, namely, Lord Reading, in England. In South Africa today you have a distinguished representative on the South African bench, namely, Judge Greenberg. In politics you have produced such a man as the famous Prime Minister of England, Disraeli; in business such great captains of industry as Rothschild and many others, in war such a man as David.⁶⁵

The important feature of philosemitic discourse, then, was an emphasis on Jewish 'excellence' and concomitant power. At the structural level the philosemitic and antisemitic views were, as noted earlier, not dissimilar.⁶⁶ It is essentially this fear of potential Jewish domination that kept alive the concern surrounding Jewish immigration. Thus could the Party of Roos, Kemp and Hertzog call for stricter control of undesirable immigration at its Cape Congress in 1926,⁶⁷ and for a quota system on Jewish entry at its Natal Congress during the same year.⁶⁸ Afrikaners were clearly sensing a

65. S A J C, 1.1.1926.

66. Cf. Todd Endelman's review of Paul Johnson's A History of the Jews in the Times Literary Supplement, 26.6.1987. Endelman notes that for both philosemites and antisemites 'Jews play a critical role in the history of the West, far out of proportion to their actual numbers, occupying the centre of the historical arena, influential, cohesive, resilient, perhaps somewhat mysterious. Neither views the Jewish people as "normal" - with the same mix of rich and poor, famous and obscure, talented and dull, intelligent and stupid, as other peoples; they stress, rather the "abnormal", that it, those who make their mark in one way or another on the larger society.'

67. Die Burger, 8.10.1926. Cited in Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.222.

loss of influence and power as they confronted the Jewish immigrant in the urban setting.

The subtle shift in National Party policy was obviously detected by Manie Maritz when he delivered yet another anti-Jewish diatribe to 7 000 miners in Lichtenburg. Once again Jews were identified as 'the biggest blood-suckers in the world'. In particular they were accused of dominating the Afrikaner: 'We have fought for a Republic and independence, but today a lot of our people are the agents of the Jews ... In the meanwhile the Jews are coming into the country in thousands. Jerusalem is already here.' Maritz clearly sensed a rising impatience among Afrikaner blue-collar workers who feared a loss in social status and a decline in living standards. Whereas his previous outburst had shown some measure of restraint, he was now blatantly and viciously antagonistic, contending that Jews did 'the meanest and lowest things in the country'.⁶⁸ In sensing the Afrikaner mood in the western Transvaal - an area whose inhabitants were increasingly exasperated by poverty and dislocation - Maritz's sentiments were a harbinger of the 1930s, when, as we shall see later, the Afrikaner 'Right' mobilized power around the notion of Jewish domination. Conditions, in the late 1920s, however, were not felicitous for a popular anti-Jewish movement. The Pact Government had

68. Cape Times, 29.10.1926. Cited in Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.222.

69. Zionist Record, 12.11.1926.

begun to address economic problems and there was certainly some hope that a range of mainly segregationist legislation would improve conditions for the white worker.⁷⁰ Perhaps that was the reason why the League of Gentiles had, according to Tielman Roos, decided to transfer its attention to the countryside. Roos was confident, however, that the League would be unsuccessful there as it had been in the urban centres. The rural community, he argued, valued 'the assistance they received from the Jewish shopkeepers who helped the farmers to tide over the bad times. It was not the banks who helped the farmer but the shopkeepers who bore the heat and burden of the day, and the ~~Jewish~~ farmers felt very grateful to the Jewish shopkeepers who were always willing to assist them.'⁷¹

Some farmers may well have appreciated the Jewish contribution but Roos palpably misunderstood the nature of power inherent in the encounter between debtor and creditor.⁷² That relationship indeed underpinned much animosity towards the Jew. Roos was certainly wrong to assume that farmers in general shared his view that it was 'only right and proper that the Jewish community should be

70. For example, the industrial Conciliation Act, Wage Act and Mine and Workers Act Amendment Act. See D. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic Development 1865-1965', pp.22-31.

71. Zionist Record, 3.12.1926.

72. See above, Cahnman, p.64 n.51.

rewarded for their enterprise, initiative and ability....⁷³ And, of course, his view 'that South Africa would largely come to a standstill if Jewish enterprise were to come to an end',⁷⁴ merely confirmed the alleged hold Jews had on the country's economy - yet another example of the power attributed to Jews by even the philosemite. More importantly, his attitude confirmed that the Pact government saw no need for exclusionist legislation.

A far more realistic insight into rural attitudes towards the Jew is evident in contemporary fiction and short stories. Afrikaans writing in particular confirms the powerful impact made upon the rural community by the smous and Jewish trader. By and large, perceptions of both were negative. If the Jewish trader was not driving a hard bargain,⁷⁵ he was speculating⁷⁶ and, being sharp witted, was easily able to outwit the Boer.⁷⁷ As for the smous, he

73. Zionist Record, 3.12.1926.

74. Zionist Record, 3.12.1926.

75. This even comes through in non-fiction. See C.G.W. Schuurmann, 'Iets oor die Hendl en Handelstudie' in Die Huisgenoot, 26.3.1926. Schuurmann was a Stellenbosch academic who subsequently played a prominent role in 'right-wing' Afrikaner antisemitism and intellectual life.

76. See, for example, E.B. Grosskopf, 'Die Rolprent Spekulاسie' in Die Huisgenoot, 14.8.1925.

77. See, for example, Willem C.W. Kemp, 'Oom Gielie en die Smous', Die Huisgenoot, 8.4.1925. In this short story the Jewish hawker and liquor smuggler, Isaaks, outwits his old friend Gielie. The occasion followed Gielie's appointment as field-cornet. In his new position he

was invariably ridiculed and portrayed as being filthy.⁷⁸ It was in the 1920s too, as Afrikaners urbanised at increasing pace that the plaasroman [farm novel] emerged as a genre of anti-modernist and romantic writing, idealizing the platteland [countryside] and shunning the city. More often than not, as Coetzee writes, the urban symbol of 'monied townsmen' was Jewish.⁷⁹ Jochem van Bruggen stands out as an exemplar of this genre. In his short story, Bywoners, for instance, the Jewish butcher, Kaplan, has all the cunning and sharp business insight associated with the negative Jewish stereotype.⁸⁰ Similarly, D.F. Malherbe depicts the Jewish businessman in Die Meulenaar as scheming and devoid of morals.⁸¹ These themes blossomed in the 1930s as Afrikaners streamed to the cities. In the words of Coetzee, the plaasroman at this time 'comes closest to the

was obliged to arrest Isaaks. The Jew, however, knew Gielie's weakness for liquor and soon set up the field-cornet. The ponderous Boer was certainly no match for the sly Jew.

78. See, for example, B.J. Kloppers, 'Die Smous en Slaapleid', Die Huisgenoot, 1.2.1927. A regularly repeated joke, for example, concerned the smous who saw no problem in his new home being without water because he would be there for only half a year. See, for example, Die Huisgenoot, 8.5.1925.
79. J.M. Coetzee, White Writing. On the Culture of Letters in South Africa, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1988, p.78.
80. J. van Bruggen, 'Bywoners', in J. van Bruggen, Op die Veld en Rante, Pretoria, Van Schaik, 1930.
81. D.F. Malherbe, Die Meulenaar, Bloemfontein, Nasionale pers, 1926.

reactionary Grosstadtfeindschaft, anticapitalism, anti-Semitism, and Blut and Boden ideology of the Bauernroman.⁸²

If one accepts the argument that anxiety produces jokes and that people only joke about what is most serious,⁸³ an important indication of Afrikaner perceptions of the Jew is manifest in the 'Jewish joke'. Certainly the cycle of Afrikaner smous jokes, popular during the 1920s, are significant with the Jew being depicted as alien, obsessed with money and business, sharp-witted, miserly and always wanting to avoid hard work.⁸⁴ Clearly these jokes project onto the Jew the fears and tensions felt by displaced Afrikaners moving to the towns. English-speakers on the other hand did not experience the same social dislocations and therefore did not share these fears to the same extent. It is thus not without significance that popular English-language magazines in the 1920s did not have Jewish jokes amongst their repertoire of regular jokes.⁸⁵

82. Coetzee, White Writing, p.78. For the portrayal of Jews in Afrikaans literature during the 1930s and 1940s see R. Pfeiffer, 'The Jew in Afrikaans Literature', Patterns of Prejudice, vol.II, no.1, January-February, 1977 and E. Tannenbaum, 'Jewish Characters in Afrikaans Fiction', Jewish Affairs, May 1951.

83. A. Dundes, Cracking Jokes. Studies of Sick Humor Cycles and Stereotypes, Berkley, Ten Speed Press, 1987, p.viii.

84. See Appendix II.

85. See, for example, The People : The Family Newspaper, and The Pictorial.

V

As the 1920s drew to a close, it is obvious that Jews were perceived as yet another corporate or 'racial' group within the complex multi-ethnic mix of South African society. Given the deep cultural and linguistic cleavages within this society, and the overwhelming presence of eastern European Jews, this is hardly surprising and yet certain observers took exception to the fact that Jews had not merged fully into the broader white population. For these observers, it was a disappointment and even a source of tension that Jews had not fulfilled the 'emancipation contract'⁸⁶ even though that 'contract' was, as we know, neither formal nor tangible. The one-time Administrator of the Cape, Sir Frederick De Waal, for instance, encouraged Jews to become agriculturalists (and not only intellectuals), and to identify 'with the aims and objects of the people of the land he lives in.'⁸⁷ Although De Waal's comments were expressed in good faith, they nevertheless illustrate the subtle demand for Jewish integration and assimilation.⁸⁸

86. See above, chapter two, p.28 n.34.

87. S A J C Rosh Hashana Number, 1928.

88. Of course, a major strand within Zionist ideology sought the 'normalization' of the Jewish people. See, for example, the writings of A.D. Gordon in Hertzberg (ed.), The Zionist Idea, pp.369-80.

The well-known journalist, Vere Stent, expressed an even more explicit disappointment with the Jews' inability to assimilate into the general community when he praised those Jews who had achieved a 'higher than mere tribal patriotism' and realized 'their duties to the community which has treated them so much better than any other.' Stent demonstrated 'Jewish exclusiveness and the policy of the Close Corporation' by citing the will of Sammy Marks. This he compared with 'the Beit bequests showing undue tolerance and broad patriotism which many a Christian plutocrat might well emulate.'⁸⁸ Stent could not have used better examples to illustrate the notion of an 'emancipation contract'; Marks maintained his Jewish identity while Beit was fully assimilated.

Jewish distinctiveness, then, underpinned antagonism towards Jews at a certain level. As the Superintendent of General Education in the Cape Province, Dr. W.J. Viljoen, warned, not everyone admired the way in which they [the Jews] had preserved their identity. He confirmed that the following argument was most popular: 'Either the Jew is, or is not a stranger and a menace. If he is not then he should become an integral part through intermarriage and racial fusion, of the people among who he lives, and not remain merely a member of a separate religious community.'⁸⁹ Of course this

89. The Cape, 21.5.1926.

was a classic illustration of the 'emancipation contract'. Whereas the future demonstrated that loyalty to one's own religious group did not preclude loyalty to one's country, in the 1920s there were still many who took exception to a distinctively Jewish group identity as manifest in social, residential and occupational clustering.⁹¹ The reality, however, was that Jews perceived themselves as a distinctive group and were by and large perceived as a distinctive group. Such notions were reinforced by determinist assumptions of race, culture and finally the Zionist enterprise.

By not shedding their corporate identity (or not fulfilling the 'emancipation contract'), the existing foundations of anti-Jewish hostility were reinforced. Far more important, however, were the unfavourable characteristics ascribed to the Jew over decades. In other words, the Jew was more than 'unassimilable' - he was subversive and corrupt. He was, moreover, upwardly mobile

90. S A J C, 28.9.1928 and 5.10.1928. Sir Abe Bailey echoed Viljoen's sentiments when reflecting upon Jews outperforming the Dutch and English. 'I have no quarrel with the Jews; on the contrary I admire and respect them as a race. For the most part they make excellent citizens, and they would be a still greater national asset if they could inter-marry with Christians and thus contribute a sparkle to the blood of the nation.' Cited in S A J C, 13.1.1928. See morning contemporary.

91. For evidence of this clustering in the 1930s see H. Sonnabend, 'Statistical Survey of Johannesburg Jewish Population', unpubl. paper South African Jewish Board of Deputies Archives, Johannesburg.

and in this sense threatened to dominate society. The fears of those who felt themselves threatened and aggrieved by the upward mobility of the Jew were well captured in a sarcastic article entitled 'Why I Hate Jews' by Charles Henry Mackintosh:

I do not like the Jews. They are too shrewd for me. They are willing to work harder than I. When they have a goal - and they always seem to have goals - they are not to be turned aside by trifles nor by obstacles which they might term insurmountable. They are not to be moved, as I am moved, by ridicule or by expressions of contempt, because the long centuries have surely taught them the lesson that words cannot alter facts; words may merely be true to the facts or they may be untrue to them, and that which is not true seldom matters much or long.

They have a sense of racial homogeneity such as is unknown to any other breed of beings; because for a thousand years, the hammer of Gentile hatred has beaten them down upon each other.

Jews do not like Gentiles any more than I like Jews, but even there they have an advantage over me, because they have better reasons behind their dislike.

I do not like Jews because they outwork and outlast, outlove and outhate me.

Jews do not like Gentiles because for a thousand years Gentiles have emptied upon the Jews all the foul-smelling slop of cruelty, hatred, envy, ignorance and fear.

Oppression has made his metal more firm than mine. His former helplessness drew out and developed the cruelty of my ancestors, while the cruelty of my ancestors drew out and developed the courage and endurance of his.

... Today in the temple of democracy erected upon the foundation that all men are created free and equal, the Gentile has lost his power to wrong, and the Jew has gained his rights. The law gives neither the advantage now, but the law gives the Jew greater advantage over the Gentile to-day than

ever law gave a Gentile over the Jew in the past. For the law says that whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap.

For the Gentile has sown cruelty, rapacity, greed. The Jew has sown endurance, to bear cruelty; courage to meet rapacity; industry and cunning, to satisfy greed. And now Gentile and Jew are matched against each other without unnatural advantages on either side!

It is to take the pampered lap-dog from his cushion before the fire, to match him against the lean wolf with limbs of living steel gained in grim and long-continued grappling with granite faced necessity. It is to match the domestic chicken against the fierce falcon, the tame rabbit against the eagle of the egries. It is a battle between the alert and practical athlete and his fat and theoretical trainer, and the best man always wins.

No I do not like the Jew. They set too fast a pace.⁹²

Early in 1927, a pamphlet distributed around the Cape Peninsula once again exposed the fears of those who felt their hold over commerce, trade, professional and intellectual life weakening.

CHRISTIANS

A Happy and Prosperous New Year. And may 1927 give you all that you deserve. May your Jewish Controlled Press continue to shape your political thoughts and Political Actions and Edit your Sunday Paper.

May the Jews rely on your assistance to guide the hands of your Government.

May the 75% of Jewish University Students become the Teachers of your Children.

92. S A J C, 9.7.1926. The writer has been unable to establish the identity of Mackintosh.

May they continue to extract your teeth, doctor your ailments, control your food supplies and determine your living conditions.

May you continue to support Tielman Roos's gift from Heaven of inspired Jews whose intellect, perseverance and financial ability has built up South Africa and made it a land for you to live in.⁹³

May you continue to sacrifice your land, your name, your home, your creed, your individuality and the right to your existence and become more and more a dutiful servant to your kind Masters, the Jews - Amen.⁹⁴

The pamphlet's message - not unlike sentiments expressed in Europe in the late nineteenth century - resonated in the South African context precisely because second generation South African Jews had moved rapidly into the professions and industry.⁹⁵ It mattered little that this generation was more acculturated than their forebearers. Very often the

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93. This was a reference to Roos' speech about the League of Gentiles at the Maccabean Fete. In the speech Roos had warned that 'men who were lazy and who were not prepared to labour must not expect to receive the same reward as the man who used his talents to the best of his ability. The voice of envy and the voice of jealousy has been raised against the Jews - the voice of those who were unable to make a success of their own business and who rallied against the success of others.' Zionist Record, 3.12.1926.
94. S A J C, 14.1.1927. The pamphlet was allegedly distributed by The League of Gentiles - the first and last manifestation of its viability since the fanfare of its inception in November 1925. Two months later a pamphlet modelled on the notorious Protocols of the Elders of Zion was distributed. See S A J C, 11.3.1927.
95. See Sonnabend, 'Statistical Survey' and A. Arkin, 'Economic Activities' in M. Arkin (ed.), Contemporary Jewry.

Jew-hater had an even greater fear of the 'duplicitous and conniving' assimilated Jew.⁹⁶

Jewish upward mobility therefore was in itself a phenomenon worthy of comment. Indeed, as was the case in the early twentieth century, it also received positive comment. The Jews, as Sir Abe Bailey put it, 'are everywhere climbing to the top of the trees where the plums are to be found. With their capacity for hard work and their zest for application, it will assuredly not be long before they control the professions, especially law and medicine.'⁹⁷ While Bailey viewed Jewish achievement positively and indeed commended the Dutch and English to 'take off their coats and set to work', others, as we have seen, felt threatened and envious of Jewish success. That success was epitomised in the 'well nigh perfect picture of a Rand Jew attorney'⁹⁸ as depicted by Stephen Black in his 1928 production, 'Backveld Boer'.⁹⁹ Black's attorney personified the Jewish metamorphosis from unkempt smous to powerful city professional. The outsider had become an intruder. Herein lay the emerging consensus behind restriction.

96. Consider for instance the emergence of the 'Jewish Question' in mid-nineteenth century Germany as a response to emancipation and the rapid assimilation of German Jewry. See Aschheim, 'Caftan and Cravat', p.87.

97. S A J C, 13.1.1928.

98. The Cape, 25.1.1929.

99. The play was first performed in Johannesburg late in 1928.

VI

Given the negative Jewish stereotype, the threat of Jewish upward mobility and fears of Jewish domination, it is not surprising that a sense of urgency - exacerbated by the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929 - entered the immigration debate during the late 1920s. The debate, cast essentially in 'racial' terms, focused mainly on the erosion of Western norms and values and the introduction of foreign or alien influences.¹⁰⁰ At the forefront was the Cape Times, imbued with an exaggerated fear that British subjects were being replaced by aliens. The latter, it noted, were 'from racial stocks which experience has shown to be unsuitable to the peculiar conditions of this country.' In the Cape Times's view, a 'reasonable proportion of foreign stock' was acceptable. When that proportion rose 'beyond a certain point', however, 'there was a real risk of endangering the continuity of the development of those broad ideals, upon whose conservation and general acceptance throughout the British Commonwealth

100. Similar fears had been prevalent in late nineteenth century Germany. See, for example, the anti-Jewish diatribe 'A Word About Our Jewry', in P.R. Mendes-Flohr and J. Reinharz (eds.), The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History, New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980, pp.280-84.

the health, the solidarity and the prosperity of the Empire alike depend.¹⁰¹

In parliament Marwick expressed similar concern about the quality of 'stock' entering South Africa and even suggested the proscription of name changing as a means of assessing and monitoring the alien impact. Marwick's anxieties were shared by his South African Party colleague, the member for Albany, R.H. Struben. This one-time Deputy Chairman of the staunchly imperial 1820 Memorial Settlers Association and Vice President of the Cape Agricultural Association, succinctly expressed the prevailing 'racial' paradigm:

The chief ingredients of our European population are of northern stock, and we should introduce people of a stock more likely to assimilate to the existing stock than we are doing to-day. I do not wish to say anything disparaging about any race, but we peoples of northern races are in the majority here among the white population and we should encourage the entry into this country of those people who will assimilate the most rapidly with us rather than encourage people, however good they may be, to come from other parts of Europe. It is time we took into very serious consideration the introduction of a quota system of immigration, as America has been driven to do if we want to preserve in the Europeans of this country the characteristics of our ancestors who settled and developed the country. It is common ground amongst all of us, whether business people or farmers, that South Africa is overstocked with traders. What we want are producers, whether by manual labour or from the fruits of the soil, rather than traders and distributors. We want people who will help to develop the country, who will make their homes in our waste places and who will not merely be ...

101. Cape Times, 29.10.1927.

At this point in Struben's speech, the MP for Griqualand, L.D. Gilson, exclaimed 'Parasites'. Struben opposed the use of that word, preferring instead the phrase 'people who make their living out of the labour of others.' Nevertheless, he terminated his speech with a rousing call for everyone to face the issue squarely and to encourage the immigration of peoples who will help us to build up a sound and homogeneous European population.' 'We want producers', he concluded, 'and not intermediaries.'¹⁰²

In the run up to the 1929 General Election - fought mainly on the question of 'Swart Gevaar' [Black Danger] - restrictionists, probably fearful of alienating potential Jewish electoral support, were somewhat guarded in their approach to immigration. The Cape Times, for instance, simply urged the government to institute a careful enquiry into immigration policy and to collect data for determining a basis on which a quota system could be applied.¹⁰³ This fear of alienating Jewish electoral support probably also explains why the National Party only seriously addressed the issue after the elections. By then the economy had begun to feel the effect of declining prices for primary products and there were fears that further restrictions on eastern Europeans entering the United States¹⁰⁴ would result in a

102. House of Assembly Debates, 9.5.1928.

103. Cape Times, 28.8.1929.

large influx of eastern Europeans to South Africa. Thus the Party's Free State Congress resolved 'that the time has arrived to fix a quota of immigration on the basis operating in the United States.'¹⁰⁵ The Cape Times acclaimed the resolution in an editorial which noted that Sir Lionel Phillips, one of the original Randlords and a Jew himself, had, during an address to the 1820 Settlers' Association, expressed concern that 'most of the foreign immigrants set up on arrival as small traders.' His speech gave the Cape Times an opportunity to launch into the now usual conflation of economic and ethnic factors:

He is a direct cause of the acknowledged over-trading which seems to be a chronic ailment of South Africa's. The excess means that, in all our frequent periods of depression, competition between the hucksters takes on an internecine character, and becomes responsible for the low standard of "business morality" which is so marked a feature of South African commercial life. The present tendency, in a word, is for South Africa to replace its dominant Nordic Stock of Europeans by a stock of entirely distinct characteristics, dubious quality, and undoubted suitability to the economic conditions of the country. Admittedly the process is still very gradual, but it is accelerating; and even at its present pace, it is capable of producing in a generation or so a profound effect upon the whole character of a white population which is initially well under two nations.¹⁰⁶

104. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.223.

105. Cape Times, 21.10.1929.

106. Cape Times, 21.10.1929.

Quite clearly the idea of a quota system, modelled on that of the United States, was gaining ground. According to Gus Saron, the General Secretary of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, this was confirmed by the Minister of Justice, Oswald Pirow.¹⁰⁷ The Nationalists, however, made no mention of impending immigration legislation during the Governor General's opening speech to parliament in 1930. In retrospect it is evident that they had hoped to capture the significant 'Jewish vote' in both the Bethal and Stellenbosch by-elections. Pirow had in fact specifically told Bethal's Jewish community during the by-election campaign that the Nationalists would oppose immigration legislation.¹⁰⁸ However, defeats in both by-elections demonstrated that the Jewish vote was not worth courting. Within a matter of days, on 28 January 1930, the Minister of Interior, Dr D.F. Malan, shocked South African Jewry with the introduction of a Quota Bill.

VII

The Immigration Quota Bill limited to a numerical quota immigrants, of whatever race or creed, born in quota or 'non-scheduled' countries. These included the countries of southern and eastern Europe and therefore directly affected

107. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.224.

108. Ibid.

Jewish immigration. Non-quota or 'scheduled' countries were free of restriction. These included countries of the British Commonwealth, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

A remarkable consensus greeted the introduction of the Bill, with the 'man in the street' being absolutely and unreservedly in favour of it, according to the South African Party member for Cape Town, (Castle), J.A. MacCallum.¹⁰⁹ Thus Malan was quite accurately able to emphasise broad consensus when opening the second reading debate:

The party newspapers have, with very few exceptions, greeted this Bill as one which is long overdue, and not only in principle but also as far as particular provisions are concerned, they have, to a very large extent, given it their support. I have, in the short time this Bill has become known to the country, had proof positive that it meets the desire of a very large majority of the people of this country and that in some quarters, in most, at least, it has been hailed with a sigh of relief.¹¹²

In motivating the need to curtail the influx of eastern Europeans, Malan explained how the Bill subsumed the basic elements of anti-alien opinion and discourse. His explanation of the principles upon which the Bill was based,

109. House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930. For general press comment, see above, pp.9-10.

112. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930.

related essentially to the eugenist or 'racial' paradigm of the late 1920s:

'... The first principle, I would say, is the desire of every nation in the world to maintain its development on the basis of original composition. In the sphere of the individual there is such a thing as the desire on the part of the individual to remain himself. There is a desire to maintain his identity, whatever may be the history through which he passes. Nations also naturally desire to maintain their identity, and because that is so, in our immigration Bills, we could not exclude such countries as Holland, or France or the British Commonwealth, or Germany, all countries from which the original stocks constituting the South African nation have been drawn. The second principle to which I have to refer is that of unassimilability. Here we have our counterpart in the world of the individual and the home. Every home has got its own character, every home has got its own atmosphere, its own aspirations, its own outlook, its own social structure, and it is only natural for the head of every family to decide to preserve that identity, or to preserve that character and outlook. Therefore in every home by preference you would welcome not the stranger with a different outlook, but your own kith and kin. Nations desire to preserve homogeneity, because every nation has got a soul, and every nation naturally desires that its soul shall not be a divided one. Every nation considers from all points of view that it is a weakness, if in the body of that nation, there exists an undigested and unabsorbed and unabsorbable minority, because that always leads to all sorts of difficulties. ... The third fundamental principle is what I would call the desire of every nation to maintain its own particular type of civilization. There is not only one civilization; there are several. It is not to say that one civilization is inferior to the other; one is not necessarily inferior to the other. The only thing is that these civilizations are different. Everybody will admit that the civilization of Asia is different, though more ancient, from that of western Europe. We are called upon in South Africa to maintain western civilization, and the standards of western civilization, and it is difficult enough, as it is, for us to perform our task in that respect,

and I do not think that we should, as a South African nation, further complicate our difficult task by uncontrolled and indiscriminate immigration. ... Let me once again emphasize that the passing of the quota restrictions on some countries of the world does not in any way imply a reflection on the racial composition or on the culture of the peoples living in those countries.

The last statement of Malan's was obviously directed towards the Jewish community whom he proceeded to thank for their contribution to South Africa, making it clear that Jews from England or Holland were welcome to enter the country. The Bill, in other words, was, from Malan's point of view, not antisemitic. He may well have been technically correct but his warning to Jews that the 'indiscriminate' influx of eastern Europeans had engendered 'a nervousness ... among all sections of the population' that 'might actually develop into open hostility', suggests that the Quota Bill was directed at a specifically 'Jewish Question'.¹¹¹ This was recognised by the four Jewish parliamentarians, M. Kentridge, C.P. Robinson, E. Buirski and E. Nathan. Other speakers, however, on both the government and opposition benches, shared Malan's fears and his desire for 'racial homogeneity'. Thus the well-known South African Party 'segregationist', Heaton Nicholls, spoke in much the same spirit as Malan, arguing that 'if anything is done to undermine the characteristics of the white stock, disharmony

111. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930. During the Hitler period Malan acknowledged that this was the case. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', pp.276-77.

will make itself manifest.' In his opinion, it was essential that the Government 'see that the heritage handed to them is carried on unimpaired... in the interests of the future civilization of South Africa.'¹¹²

Nicholls's Party colleague, Leslie Blackwell, similarly argued that a large influx of eastern Europeans would pose a very real threat if not diluted with other more acceptable European immigrant stock:

This is an unhealthy state of affairs, and if it continues then the whole ethnological character of the country would be changed, and we have the right to say that immigration shall be controlled as to conform to the existing ethnological conditions of South Africa. We do not want to keep people out because they are Jews or Lithuanians, but we do want to restrict their numbers so that they shall conform with the present ethnological conditions.¹¹³

Members across the parliamentary divide, then, agreed on the need to maintain 'racial' homogeneity. As the member for Beaconsfield, W.B. Humphreys, put it: 'There is no doubt the whole house agrees that the principle of the Bill is correct.'¹¹⁴ Of course the corollary of 'racial'

112. House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

113. House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

114. House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930. It should be noted that Smuts was abroad at the time of the debate. When he returned in time for the committee stage he disparaged the Bill arguing that it would make South Africa 'look ridiculous in the eyes of the world.'

homogeneity was the belief that the eastern European newcomers were, and would remain, immutable aliens or outsiders.

Where the opposition did take issue with the government was on the question of the method of the Bill's introduction. It ridiculed the government's subterfuge - the denial of its intentions during the Governor-General's opening address and the by-election campaigns in Bethal and Stellenbosch. They indeed reminded the Nationalists that Pirow had told Bethal's Jews there would be no change in Nationalist policy towards the Jews and immigration.¹¹⁵ The opposition in addition argued that the Bill had, in Hofmeyr's words, 'cast an unmerited slur upon valued and important elements in the population of South Africa'.¹¹⁶ While he agreed with the principle of the Bill, he was sure Jews would be able to 'shake off' the 'spirit of the ghetto' and assimilate fully into South African society if they were a part of other strands of immigration.¹¹⁷ His arguments, however, fell on

Smuts, however, had returned too late to influence his colleagues.

115. Madeley went further than the South African Party members in ridiculing the government. He exposed their cynicism by quoting philosemitic statements made by government spokesmen over the years. House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

116. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930. Humphreys, in much the same vein as Hofmeyr described the Bill as 'a slur upon their [the Jews] national character and a blot on their escutcheon.' House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

117. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930.

deaf ears. Government spokesmen in fact denied that the Bill insulted Jews and instead acknowledged the important contribution made by Jews to South Africa,¹¹⁸ a sentiment emphatically and effusively endorsed by Humphreys: 'I maintain that the Jews are an asset to the country. I say, further, and I do not think it is a great exaggeration, that if it were not for that section of the community, this country today would still be cattle farming on the site where Johannesburg stands.'¹¹⁹ Of course, the more said about the Jewish contribution to South Africa, the more the 'power' of Jewry was 'exposed'. In fact, in praising the Jew, the government (and all who shared its principles) were contradicting their policy. Nonetheless, it need not have been self-conscious about the Bill's real intentions as numerous South African Party spokesmen used the debate to vilify Jews by dredging up a range of well-worn anti-Jewish images.¹²⁰

118. The argument that Jews had made an important contribution to South Africa was also put forward by opposition spokesmen. Humphreys was the most effusive. 'I maintain that the Jews are an asset to the country. I say, further, and I do not think it is a great exaggeration to say it, that if it were not for that section of the community this country today would still be cattle farming in the site where Johannesburg stands.' House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

119. House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

120. See, for example, the comments of Christie and MacCallum, House of Assembly Debates, 12.2.1930.

The whole tenor of debate surrounding the Quota Bill reveals quite clearly that the issue of immigration revolved around the 'Jewish problem'. As Kentridge explained, 'the Minister knew that 99 percent of the people coming from non-scheduled countries were Jewish.' In support, he quoted the Bloemfontein Friend¹²¹ which had argued that the real object of the Bill was to 'keep out an unlimited influx of the Jewish people.'¹²² Robinson made a similar observation: 'Do not tell me this is merely a Bill for the exclusion of Lithuanian Jews. It sounds the death knell of any more Jews coming to South Africa. At present it is the poor Lithuanian, to-morrow it may be the Jew from Germany or France that will not be allowed to come in.'¹²³

By 1937 Robinson's fears had proved to be well founded¹²⁴ and he was certainly correct to minimize the divide between eastern European and Jews that was academic at best. Indeed Malan had in effect acknowledged the Bill was against Jewish immigration by arguing that it was in the interests of Jews. Significantly, Hofmeyr also recognised the potential for antisemitism if immigration was allowed to continue unabated:

121. Bloemfontein Friend, 31.1.1930.

122. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930.

123. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930.

124. See below, p.342.

'... there is less anti-semitism in this country than prevails anywhere else. That is something that should give great satisfaction both to Jews and to non-Jews, and on both sides we should do all in our power to maintain that happy state of affairs. But do not let us deceive ourselves. It is true that there is very little active anti-semitism in South Africa to-day. But it is true also that as a result of recent immigration tendencies a state of tension is rapidly developing, and that if the present tendencies are allowed to develop we shall not continue in that happy position to which I have referred. Those of us who have visited many parts of this country have noted in recent years a change of feeling on the part of our non-Jewish population towards our Jewish population. We may deplore that change of feeling - we cannot but deplore it - but you do not remove a sentiment by deploring it, no more than you remove it by arguing against it. There is therefore in South Africa today the possibility of disharmony and strife between Jews and non-Jews, and if the present tendencies of immigration prevail unchecked, then I am very much afraid of that possibility becoming a fact.'¹²⁵

Hofmeyr had correctly gauged a rising tide of antisemitism although it is far from true that anti-Jewish prejudice was a product of 'recent years'. Nor was it necessarily true that there was less antisemitism in South Africa than 'anywhere else'. As this study has shown, antisemitism of a passive kind had a long tradition in South Africa and the migration 'tendencies' referred to by Hofmeyr provided the opportunity and not the cause for a more active antisemitism. An essential problem was the outflow of Englishmen after 1924 and a concomitant inflow of Jews with all the inherent and immutable characteristics ascribed to them over decades. These characteristics were reinforced by

125. House of Assembly Debates, 10.2.1930.

eugenist assumptions which were particularly resonant in a changing South Africa beset with 'racial', 'ethnic' and 'segregationist' phobias. Within these circumstances the eastern European Jew was yet another threatening source of tension and concern and it was now necessary to take action.¹²⁶

126. It must be noted that southern Europeans were also included in the Quota Act for similar reasons as applied to Jews viz religiously unassimilable (Roman Catholics) and 'racially' distinct.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS : REAPPRAISING ANTISEMITISM IN THE NINETEEN
THIRTIES AND EARLY FORTIES

I

Malan's warnings¹, Hofmeyr's forebodings and the general tenor of debate and discussion surrounding the introduction of immigration quotas, demonstrated clearly the intensification of anti-Jewish sentiment in South Africa by 1930. These sentiments, it must be noted, pre-dated Hitler's ascent to power, South Africa's major economic problems following the collapse of the New York stock market, and the political upheavals which saw the coalition and subsequent fusion in 1934 of South Africa's two major white political parties - Jan Smuts' South African Party and J.B.M. Hertzog's National Party.²

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1. During an interview with Die Burger in November 1931, Malan warned those Jews agitating against the Quota Act that, 'it is very easy to rouse a feeling of hate towards the Jews in this country.' Die Burger, 2.11.1931. This classic example of blaming the victim for his own condition was to reach its highpoint at the time of Nazi Germany's Kristalnacht.
 2. The new United South African National Party (the United party) led by Hertzog witnessed defections to the left and right; those to the right formed the 'Purified' Nationalist Party under Dr. D. F. Malan.

Anti-Jewish manifestations during the 1930s and early 1940s, then, should not be seen purely in terms of the contingencies specific to the early 1930s. While the latter were important in transforming the nature and magnitude of antisemitism in South Africa, they do not provide a full explanation for its rise after 1930. It was indeed the widely-shared negative Jewish stereotype which prepared the way for popular outbursts and programmatic antisemitism in the 1930s and 1940s. What emerges during these years is an intensification of accumulated anti-Jewish sentiment.

That sentiment, as we have seen, had its roots in the late nineteenth century when a decidedly ambivalent image of the Jew was constructed on the diamond fields and in the southern and eastern Cape. On the one hand, Anglo-German Jews were praised for their loyalty, initiative and enterprise; on the other hand, Jewish fortune-seekers and traders were depicted as exploitative and dishonest. The influx of 'Peruvians' in the early 1890s and the emergence of the cosmopolitan financier at the turn of the century contributed further towards the evolution of an anti-Jewish stereotype - characterised by a sense of 'otherness' at both the physical and cultural level. As eastern European Jews failed to assimilate into the dominant white population, hopes of regeneration and wholesale acculturation faded. This led to the Jewish image now being cast in an essentially 'racial' mould. Outward appearance and moral

assumptions were inextricably intertwined. By 1914, favourable perceptions of the Anglo-German Jew had eroded substantially and the eastern European Jew by and large had come to define by sheer weight of numbers the essence and nature of Jewishness.³ Even those who separated the acculturated and urbane Jew from the eastern European newcomer exaggerated Jewish power and influence. Herein lay the convergence between the philosemitic and antisemitic view.

War-time accusations of 'shirking', followed by the association of Jews with Bolshevism, consolidated the anti-Jewish stereotype. In the context of the post-war economic depression and the burgeoning of black radicalism, the Jew emerged as the archetypical subversive. Thus the Rand Rebellion of 1922 could be construed as a Bolshevik Revolt. As eugenic and nativist arguments - imported from abroad, especially the United States - increasingly penetrated South African discourse, eastern European immigrants were perceived as a threat to the 'Nordic' character of South

3. At the cognitive level, 'deracinated' Jews who did not conform to the stereotype were simply denied a Jewish identity. It will be remembered, for instance, that the Cape Times quoted with approbation Lionel Phillips on the subject of Jewish immigration. (See above, p.321). In essence Phillips's very presence undermined the 'racial' stereotype. After all, Phillips was an acceptable Jew. Ignoring his Jewish identity, then, was a way of dealing with the contradiction. Psychologists refer to this process as cognitive dissonance. See L. Festinger, A theory of cognitive dissonance, Evanston, Illinois, Row, Peterson, 1957.

African society. Their outward appearance, it was argued, reflected an inherent or biological essence putting paid to nineteenth century expectations of acculturation and assimilation.

Despite widely-shared negative perceptions of the Jew, antisemitism in the crude and programmatic sense was still rejected in the mid-1920s. This was best illustrated by the failure of the League of Gentiles and in responses - spanning both Party and language divides - to its crude proposals. Antisemitism, in short, remained confined essentially to the realm of literary and cultural stereotyping and to rhetoric which did not necessitate serious consideration. The 1930 Quota Act ushered in a change which took a far more invidious form in 1933 with the formation of the South African Christian National Socialist Movement - better known as the 'Greyshirts'⁴ - under the leadership of Louis T. Weichardt.⁵ The 'Greyshirts' were patently inspired by Hitler's success and tactics, particularly 'brownshirt' thuggery and Nazi propaganda.⁶

4. 'Greyshirts' referred to the upper part of the uniform worn by the militant sector or advance guard of the movement which was responsible for maintaining order at political meetings and protecting the leader. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', pp.65-68 and Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, pp.110-11.
5. For further details about Weichardt see D.M. Scher, 'Louis T. Weichardt and the South African Greyshirt Movement', Kleio, XVIII, 1986.
6. This is particularly evident in the 'Greyshirts' fortnightly bilingual newspaper, Die Waarheid - The

Weichardt had in fact joined up to fight for Germany in the First World War and it was he who fashioned the movement's racist, antisemitic and fascist philosophy. Although centred in Cape Town, the 'Greyshirts' had cells throughout the country. At its peak the movement had 2 000 members and its success inspired a number of similar organisations to mushroom across the country.⁷ Clearly South Africa was awash with extremism and racist bigotry.

Although inspired by Nazi forms and racist or 'Volkish' discourse,⁸ the substantive message of South Africa's fascist movements related to the South African experience: Jews had fermented the South African War, inspired Blacks against white civilization, controlled the press, exploited Afrikaners, dominated society and so forth.⁹ These ideas

Truth, published from February 1934 to July 1938 and its monthly, Die Blanke Front (The White Front), published from July 1947 to May 1948. For an outline of its anti-Jewish policy see F.J. van Heerden, 'Nasionaal-Sosialism as Faktor in die Suid-Afrikaanse Politiek, 1933-1948', unpub. D. Phil. thesis, University of the Orange Free State, 1972, pp.76-80.

7. These included the South African National Democratic Party; Die Volksbeweging or Blackshirts; the People's Movement; the National Workers Union or Brownshirts; the South African Fascists and the Gentile Protection League. For details see Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', pp.67-69.
8. The 'Greyshirts', for example, spoke of 'pure Europeans of Aryan descent', an 'organic Volk-state' and a 'national-socialist republic'. See Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, pp.111-114.
9. A 'Greyshirt' handbill, 'South Africa Awake', exhorted Christians to deal only with their co-religionists. It maintained that because the percentage of Jewish doctors, dentists, wholesalers, shopkeepers and

were, as frequently noted in this study, well entrenched in a large part of the national consciousness; in the crises of the early 1930s they were embraced far and wide. Anti-Jewish activities, noted a report of the 11th Congress of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies in May 1935, had reached an unparalleled height.¹⁰

Hostility was further fuelled by the entry of 1044 German-Jewish refugees in the three years following Hitler's ascent to power¹¹ and Patrick Duncan was quite correct when he predicted a major 'immigration problem before long' in a letter to Lady Selborne in August 1936.¹² He had clearly sensed the rising mood of bigotry, its particular character and the political ammunition it was providing for the 'Gesuiwerdes' [Purified Nationalists] who were, after all, losing their radical 'right-wing' to the 'Shirtist' movements.

attorneys was so high, Gentiles would within ten years be unable to advance in the face of Jewish competition. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', p.77. An Afrikaner trade unionist, L.J. Naude, similarly told 600 people celebrating Dingaan's Day at Taaibospruit in 1936 that Jews were bent on controlling South Africa's commerce and industry as well as the spiritual, social and economic assets of the Boer. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', p.87.

10. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', p.77.
11. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', pp.250-52.
12. Cited in Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.252.

The groundswell of anti-Jewish feeling - especially demands for action and threats against the existing Jewish community - now prompted the United Party to introduce stiffer educational and financial requirements for purposes of immigration. These were to take effect on 1 November 1936¹³ and resulted in an interim increase in German-Jewish immigration. The situation, noted Duncan, 'could easily get quite out of hand'.¹⁴ His fears were well founded. By the end of October 1936, well attended meetings, led by a group of Stellenbosch University professors,¹⁵ protested against the impending arrival of the Stuttgart carrying some 570 German-Jewish immigrants.¹⁶ It is not surprising therefore that Weichardt was able to predict that 'our party is about to make a strong and rapid advance'. 'Everywhere', he exhorted, 'our meetings are crowded and our message is eagerly welcomed by the people.' Weichardt was especially

13. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', pp.263-64.

14. Cited in Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.265.

15. Dr. H. F. Verwoerd was one of the most vocal. A Professor of Roman Law at the University of Cape Town, J. Kerr Wylie, rallied to the support of the Afrikaner professors. Jews, he argued, were disloyal and sought only their own ends. They also took no part in productive work, being interested only in speculation, money-lending and propagating communism among blacks. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', p.43.

16. See Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.266.

encouraged by 'the extent to which the intelligensia and the working classes are embracing the ideals of National Socialism. Large numbers of professional men, university professors, lecturers and students, civil servants, school teachers, etc. belong to the Party, if not in open, at any rate as secret members. The workers, too, despite all attempts of the Jews to catch them with the poisoned bait of Communism and Bolshevism, are everywhere getting their eyes opened.'¹⁷ Anti-Jewish feeling, it would seem, had enabled a worker/intellectual alliance to be cemented.

The rhetoric of protest and opposition to Jewish immigration was riddled with racist assumptions and antisemitic generalisations. Jews were aliens, disloyal and bent on exploitation. The professors, however, denied anti-Jewish motivations and explained their behaviour rather in terms of economic competition and their fear that young Afrikaners would be unable to enter the professions for which they were being trained.¹⁸ These were, of course, issues raised long before the 1930s. Clearly the prospect of economic competition had always played a part in anti-Jewish sentiment, especially on the part of urbanising Afrikaners. Hostility, however, was primarily a product of exclusivist

17. Fascist Quarterly, October, 1936. Cited in Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', pp.85-86.

18. See below, p. 343 n.26.

or 'Volkish' ideas, central to Afrikaner nationalism at this time. Nationalist sentiment, in other words, sharpened perceptions of the Jew as a quintessential alien. For the Afrikaner, he symbolised all that was foreign and oppressive. The Jew also helped to consolidate an all-embracing Afrikaner identity, understood in terms of cultural unity, national roots and opposition to the foreigner. In this sense antisemitism helped to cover or paper over class divisions and antagonisms within Afrikaner society. The Afrikaner's inferior status in society and his poverty could be explained in racial or national terms.¹⁹ Moreover, by employing the discourse of 'race' to exclude and denigrate Jews, the Afrikaner was in turn elevated. As Miles notes, 'the act of representational exclusion is simultaneously an act of inclusion, whether or not Self is explicitly identified in the discourse'.²⁰

It is therefore no coincidence that antisemitism continued to suffuse specifically 'right-wing' Afrikaner political discourse and programmes - this despite the upturn in the economy from the mid-1930s. It must not, however, be forgotten that the Jew was a readily available scapegoat precisely because an anti-Jewish stereotype, in which the

19. For comparative views see E. Weber, 'Modern Anti-Semitism' in H. Friedlander and S. Milton (eds), The Holocaust: Ideology, Bureaucracy and Genocide, New York, Kraus International, 1980, p.45.

20. R. Miles, Racism, London and New York, Routledge, 1989, p.39.

Jew symbolised subversion and exploitation, had been elaborated and diffused for decades. Major political parties now had to take cognisance of the groundswell²¹ of anti-Jewish feeling. South Africans for the first time confronted a 'Jewish Question' in its broadest sense.

By November 1936, Malan's Purified Nationalists were calling for the unequal treatment of Jews. Their arguments were predicated upon Jewish 'unassimilability' and fears of Jewish power and domination. As a political programme they wanted to curtail Jewish professional activity, limit their involvement in certain occupations and proscribe name changing.²² Such ideas had of course been aired long before the 1930s but by the mid-1930s these notions had become part of an acceptable political discourse, evident in Malanite ideology and policies.

In an obvious response to flourishing antisemitism, the United Party introduced an Aliens Bill, designed to restrict Jewish immigration - particularly from Germany - without mentioning Jews by name.²³ Immigrants were to be permitted

21. In his study of Afrikaner nationalism Dunbar Moodie argues that anti-Jewish agitation in the late 1930s 'resulted from grassroots pressure rather than from initiative by the leaders.' Moodie, The Rise of Afrikanerdom, p.167.

22. See Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, pp.119ff.

23. The real intentions of the Bill were disclosed by Hertzog during the parliamentary debate, much to the embarrassment of Deputy Prime Minister Smuts. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of

entry by a Selection Board on the grounds of good character and the likelihood of assimilation into the European population. The Bill, however, failed to satisfy the Purified Nationalists; for them any Jewish immigration was unacceptable. This, they argued, was in the interests of the Jewish community and the country.²⁴ Once again debate surrounding the Bill illustrates the entrenched nature of well-worn Jewish stereotypes. Significantly, these were not restricted to Afrikaners and Dr H.F. Verwoerd, one-time professor of psychology at the University of Stellenbosch, was probably correct when he pointed out that the English were 'applauding and encouraging Nationalists in silence.'²⁵ Nevertheless, at the political level, only 'right-wing' Afrikaner nationalists included the 'Jewish Question' as a central plank in their political platform.

Dr Verwoerd, Editor-in-Chief of Die Transvaler since its inception in 1937, was now at the vanguard of anti-Jewish agitation. In a lengthy article, 'The Jewish Question from the Nationalist Point of View', he summarized the whole

South Africa', p.126 and Bradlow, 'Immigration into the Union 1910-1948', p.283.

24. This confirmed Robinson's prescient warnings at the time of the Quota Bill debate in 1930. See above, p.329.
25. Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, p.125. English-speakers, however, were by and large opposed to vulgar, crude and programmatic antisemitism and a number were prominent in efforts designed to combat rampant antisemitism. See Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, chapter five, passim. Patrick Duncan is a good example of one who realised where the new antisemitic discourse would end.

corpus of antisemitic discourse: Jewish domination in business and the professions, the unassimilability of Jews, Jewish alienation from the Afrikaners, questionable Jewish commercial morality and the use of money by Jews to influence government through the English-language press.²⁶ Obviously the 'Jewish Question' was no longer a concern solely of fringe fascist groups; by 1937 it was firmly entrenched within mainstream white politics. With antisemitism assuming a pre-eminent position in Afrikaner public opinion, much of the rhetoric associated with the 'Shirtist' movements was appropriated by the Purified Nationalists, fearful that they were losing political adherents who were being won over by extremist antisemitic propaganda. Where they differed from the 'Shirtist' movements, however, was in strategy. As Purified Nationalist spokesman, J.G. Strydom, put it, the 'Shirtists' 'aim at the same things as we do but go about it in the wrong way.'²⁷ In

26. Die Transvaler, 1.10.1937. For further details see A. Hepple, Verwoerd, Great Britain, Penguin, 1967, pp.220-22. The same edition of Die Transvaler included a full report of a speech delivered by a history lecturer at Potchefstroom University, which attacked liberalism and warned of the danger of there being too many Jews in the country. In a speech at Fauresmith in 1939, Eric H. Louw, former South African Minister Plenipotentiary in the United States, England, France and Portugal, claimed that 65 per cent of the legal firms in Johannesburg and 41 per cent in Cape Town were in Jewish hands; 54 per cent of advocates were Jewish and 22 per cent of doctors. He also noted that 44 per cent of all law examination candidates in 1938 were Jewish and 45 per cent of pharmacy candidates. Die Volksblad, 30.8.1939. Cited in van Heerden, 'Nasionaal-Socialism', p.377.

27. Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, p.122.

short, the Purified Nationalists hoped to use parliament or other legal means to attain their ends.

Malan's Purified Nationalists predictably fought the 1938 general election on an openly antisemitic ticket. Party propaganda was underpinned by an insistence on the prospect of Jewish domination. In Afrikaner nationalist eyes, these fears were confirmed by the election result: a cartoon in Die Burger depicted Hoggenger carrying Smuts and Hertzog to victory.²⁸ The election year also saw the emergence of yet another paramilitary, authoritarian movement - the Ossewabrandwag [Ox-wagon sentinel]. Born out of the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek, the Ossewabrandwag (officially formed in 1939) 'attacked British-Jewish-Masonic' imperialism and capitalism, 'British Jewish' democracy, Jewish money-power and Jewish disloyalty.²⁹ With its 'fuhrer-prinzip', authoritarian philosophy and anti-Jewish stance, the movement was obviously a Nazi clone.³⁰ By 1941 the Ossewabrandwag claimed to have a membership of over 300 000, drawn mainly from the Afrikaner petty bourgeoisie.³¹

28. Die Burger, 23.4.1938.

29. See Shimoni, Jews and Zionism, p.130.

30. See W.H. Vatcher Jr, White Laager. The Rise of Afrikaner Nationalism, London, Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1965, pp. 66-67.

31. D. O'Meara, Volkskapitalisme. Class, Capital and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism 1934-1948, Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1983, p.128.

Thus, by the late 1930s antisemitism had become an integral part of 'volkish' Afrikaner nationalism.³² Many of the key theoreticians within the movement had in fact studied in Germany where they imbibed views of the corporate state, an idealist worldview and a sense of exclusivist nationalism. These ideas propelled a powerful republicanism rooted in notions of divine election, a leitmotiv within the Afrikaners' civil religion.³³ Like their European counterparts on the 'Right', Afrikaner nationalists were opposed to liberalism, Marxism and laissez-faire capital-

32. To counter the appeal of this primitive form of nationalism, the Purified Nationalists were obliged to become more radically right. In 1939, Eric H. Louw gave notice of a private bill which severely curtailed the rights of Jews who arrived in South Africa after 1930. The bill also proposed to prohibit further Jewish immigration. Louw's rationale was based on alleged Jewish control of finance, business, professional activity and the wholesale and retail trade. See Cohen, 'Anti-Jewish Manifestations in the Union of South Africa', pp.151-52. Louw's concerns went back to at least 1921 when, as MP for Beaufort West, he wrote in an article, 'Die Afrikaner in die Handel', that Englishmen and Jews were dominating commerce to the detriment of the Afrikaner. Die Burger, 5.9.1921 and 7.9.1921.

33. As Moodie writes: 'Certainly by 1938, the ordinary Afrikaner had made the main theme of the civil religion part of his own emotional identity. Most Afrikaners believed that they belonged to an elect People, most believed that at some time in the future, and sooner rather than later, God would give them another republic, but this would only come through patience and faith. Indeed, for most of them, their identity as Afrikaners was crucial to their personal integration, overriding their loyalty to the wider South African state.' Moodie, The Rise of Afrikanerdom, p.21.

ism.³⁴ The latter, associated with British imperialism, was of course exemplified in 'Hoggenheimer', who was, as Moodie reminds us, 'English-speaking, imperialist and clearly Jewish.'³⁵

Antisemitism was given further impetus by the South African government's very divided decision to support the Commonwealth war effort to resist Germany in 1939. A powerful anti-war movement was orchestrated by the Ossewabrandwag. The appeal of fascism and with it the rhetoric of antisemitism remained evident during the war. Indeed, a range of major National Party publications issued in the early 1940s demonstrated the formative influence of Mussolini and Hitler on the exclusive nature of an insurgent Afrikaner nationalism in which the Jew had no place.³⁶ The struggle against Hitler, however, gradually eroded the warm reception accorded to Nazi and Fascist ideas. Although the Jewish tragedy was minimized in Nationalist newspapers,³⁷

34. They did however believe in parliamentary government which was patently not the case for the Ossewa Brandwag. For the intellectual underpinnings of Afrikaner nationalism see H. Simson, The Social Origins of Afrikaner Fascism and its Apartheid Policy, Uppsala, Acta Universitatis Upsalienis, 1980, chapter six, passim.

35. Moodie, p.15.

36. Vatcher, White Laager, pp.68-75

37. See S.L. Friedman, 'Jews, Germans and Afrikaners - Nationalist Press Reaction to the Final Solution', unpub. BA (Hons) thesis, University of Cape Town, 1982.

ultimate knowledge of the 'Final Solution' demonstrated unequivocally the logical culmination of racism and bigotry.

II

The 1930s had witnessed the transformation of what Endelman refers to as 'private' antisemitism into 'public' antisemitism.³⁸ That is to say antisemitism moved from the private or ideational sphere into the public or party-political realm. The transformation was clearly related to specific traumas in the 1930s, reaching to and interacting with earlier traumas such as the defeat and disappearance of the Boer Republics and the failure of the 1914 Boer Rebellion.³⁹ Other factors aiding this transformation included the intensification of 'poor-whiteism' following the impact upon South Africa of the world depression, the emergence of Nazism in Europe and the rise of an exclusivist Afrikaner nationalism. All these processes do not, however, explain fully why anti-Jewish rhetoric resonated so

38. Private antisemitism in this view refers 'to expressions of contempt and discrimination outside the realm of public life' while public antisemitism refers to the 'eruption of anti-Semitism in political life - the injection of anti-Semitism into matters of policy and the manipulation of anti-Semitism for partisan political ends.' T.M. Endelman, 'Comparative Perspectives on Modern Anti-Semitism in the West', in D. Berger (ed), History and Hate. The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1986, p.104.

39. This was an attempt by one-time Boer generals to undo the result of the Anglo-Boer War and to re-establish the northern republics.

resoundingly in South Africa. Nor do they explain why antisemitism provided such a useful means of political mobilisation. To suggest, as historians have done hitherto, that antisemitism in South Africa was simply a product of specific upheavals in South African society and of Nazi propaganda is to ignore deeply entrenched anti-Jewish sentiment prior to 1930. In a pertinent model proposed by Marrus and Paxton which 'conceives of anti-Semitism in the modern period as a series of concentric rings', the outermost ring was certainly well established in the South African case by 1930:

In the outermost is a wide band of anti-Jewish feeling, the product of many factors which together produce a vague, often mild, antipathy. This anti-Jewish feeling is but one of many constellations of dislike that circulate within most societies, and that usually express themselves in social choices to associate or not to associate with particular groups or individuals. Closer to the center is a second band of feelings and responses which are more intense and volatile. Defensive and hostile, this area becomes particularly wide and active in times of trouble - most commonly economic trouble but also political trouble such as national collapse brought about by war. Third at the hard core, is the region of the anti-Jewish fanatic, which is also capable of growth and which has an impact upon the other two. This hard core is fuelled by the irrational, unprompted by events, and unaffected by what Jews do or do not do. But it too acts differently according to historical circumstances.⁴⁰

40. M.R. Marrus, 'The Theory and Practice of Anti-Semitism', Commentary, August, 1982. The theory was originally developed in M.R. Marrus and R.P. Paxton, Vichy France and the Jews, Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1981.

Specific historical circumstances, including a profound sense of aggrievement on the part of Afrikaner workers, and a sense of outrage, alienation and powerlessness on the part of Afrikaner intellectuals,⁴¹ certainly activated anti-Jewish manifestations in South Africa during the 1930s and early 1940s. However, historians analysing this period have failed to examine the emergence and consolidation of anti-Jewish sentiments⁴² which had long since penetrated deeply into the national consciousness. Without this preparation Weichardt's vicious oratory and 'Shirtist' propaganda in general would not have been embraced at the popular level. It was in fact because of the popular response that Malan was forced to incorporate specifically anti-Jewish policies into the Purified Nationalist's programme. Of course the illiberal and anti-modernist nature of Afrikaner nationalism

41. See O'Meara, Volkskapitalisme, chapter four.

42. The only analysis which does locate Afrikaner antisemitism (and English acquiescence) in the specifically South African experience was an article 'Die Judenfrage in Sudafrica', published in 1938 in Der Weltkampf, a German periodical. The author, Professor Dr Ernst Schultze, maintained that the Boers had never been sympathetic to the Jews and that there had long been a fear of Jews swamping South Africa and dominating both the economy and the professions. See Professor Dr Ernst Schultze, 'Die Judenfrage in Sudafrica', in Der Weltkampf, October 1938. Hannah Arendt made extensive use of this article in the South African section of her monumental, The Origins of Totalitarianism. See H. Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, New York, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1954, pp.197-207.

during the 1930s is also vital in explaining why 'public' antisemitism was an essentially Afrikaner phenomenon and why it appealed across the whole spectrum of Afrikaner nationalist opinion.⁴³ In this sense South African antisemitism confirms those arguments which seek to explain German antisemitism in terms of antimodernism and illiberalism.⁴⁴

The 'public' antisemitism of the 1930s, then, was not simply a product of political, social and economic traumas coupled with the impact of Nazi propaganda. Nor is it correct to describe antisemitism during the 1930s and 1940s as a deviation from 'traditional attitudes of tolerance and fairplay'.⁴⁵ On the contrary, there is a connection and a

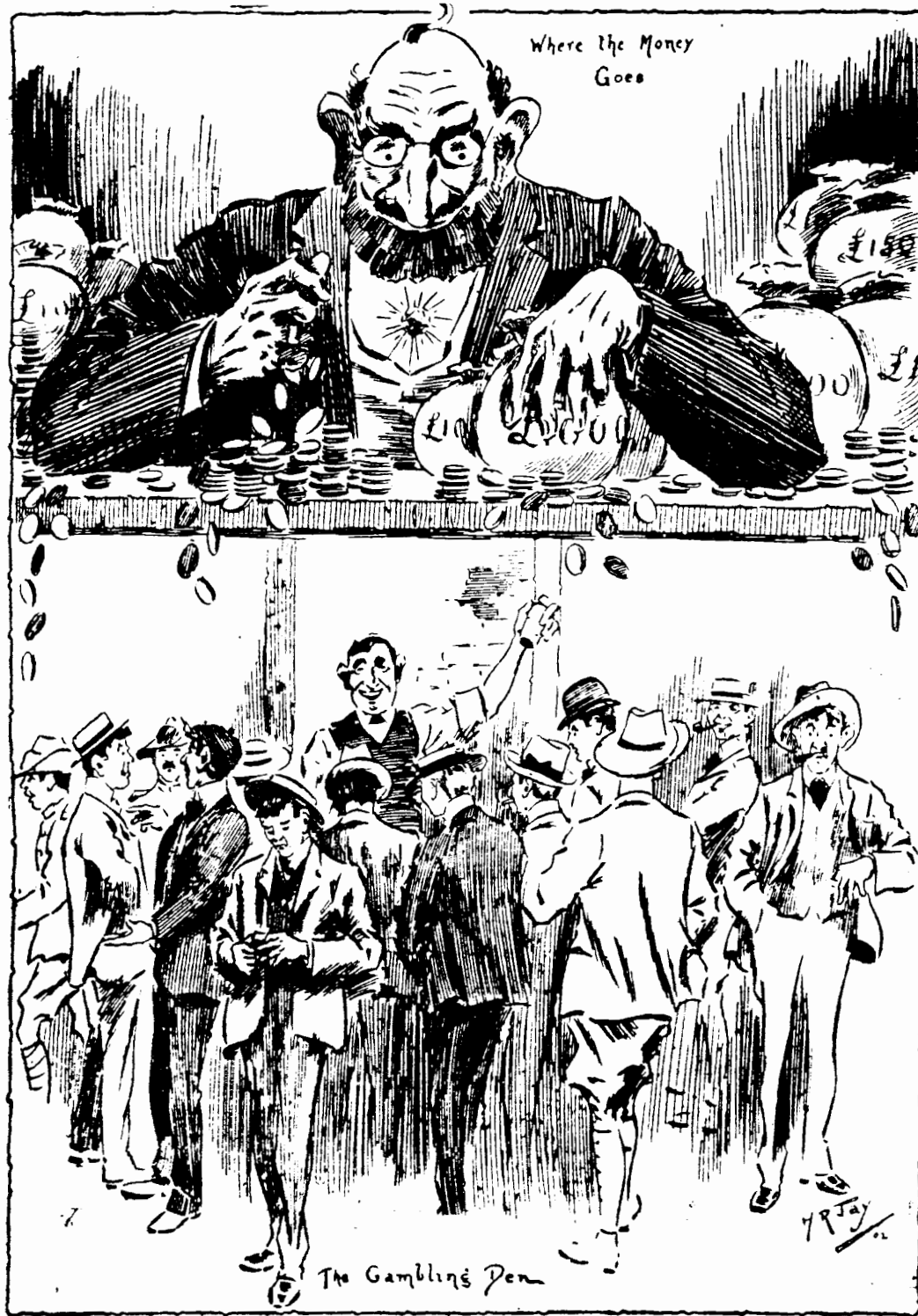
43. Besides this being illustrated in party politics, evidence is also provided in a survey of anti-Jewish opinion conducted in 1944 by Simon Herman, then of the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. For a full copy of his analysis which was based on interviews with 112 persons who held 'strategically' important positions in various sectors of South African public life see Albrecht Hagemann, 'Antisemitism in South Africa During World War II : A Documentation' in Simon Wiesenthal Center Annual, Volume 4, New York, 1987. Also of significance in the report is concern about the Jews' 'dominant role' in the professions and commerce.

44. See S. Volkov, The Rise of Popular Antimodernism in Germany : The Urban Master Artisans, 1873-1896, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978; Gay, Freud, Jews and other Germans, and F. Stern, The Failure of Illiberalism : Essays on the Political Culture of Modern Germany, New York, Allen & Unwin, 1972. Of course illiberalism and anti-modernisation as components of nationalism were not unique to Germany.

45. Saron and Hotz, The Jews in South Africa, p.381.

continuity between anti-Jewish sentiment as manifested in images of the Jew prior to 1930, and the anti-Jewish outbursts and programmes of the 1930s and early 1940s. Of course, without the specific traumas of the 1930s, the earlier sentiments may not have been translated into public or political policy. Nevertheless, as this study had demonstrated, the foundations of South African antisemitism in the 1930s and early 1940s were firmly laid in the prior South African experience.

CURSES OF CAPE TOWN.—No. 1179.





THE EVIL OF THE HOUR.



Dr Gregory "Twenty three per cent of immigrants into the Cape were aliens."
The Owl "At this rate you'd better print me in Yiddish."

PAUPER "PERUVIANS" OR THE WHITENING OF SOUTH AFRICA



The Roumanians & Russians turn out the poor Jews wholesale.



They are shipped by philanthropic societies to London, where passes are given them to South Africa.



On the steamers they are anything but popular.



One enterprising "Sepporner" utilised the sheets supplied him by the C.B.U.S.S. to make himself a suit of clothes.



At Capetown they are dumped on shore with the greatest expedition.



The Harbour Board are considering the advisability of disinfecting them immediately after landing.

H. F. Kersdorfer

'JOEY' AT JEWBERG



MILNER, MOSES & MONGOLS.

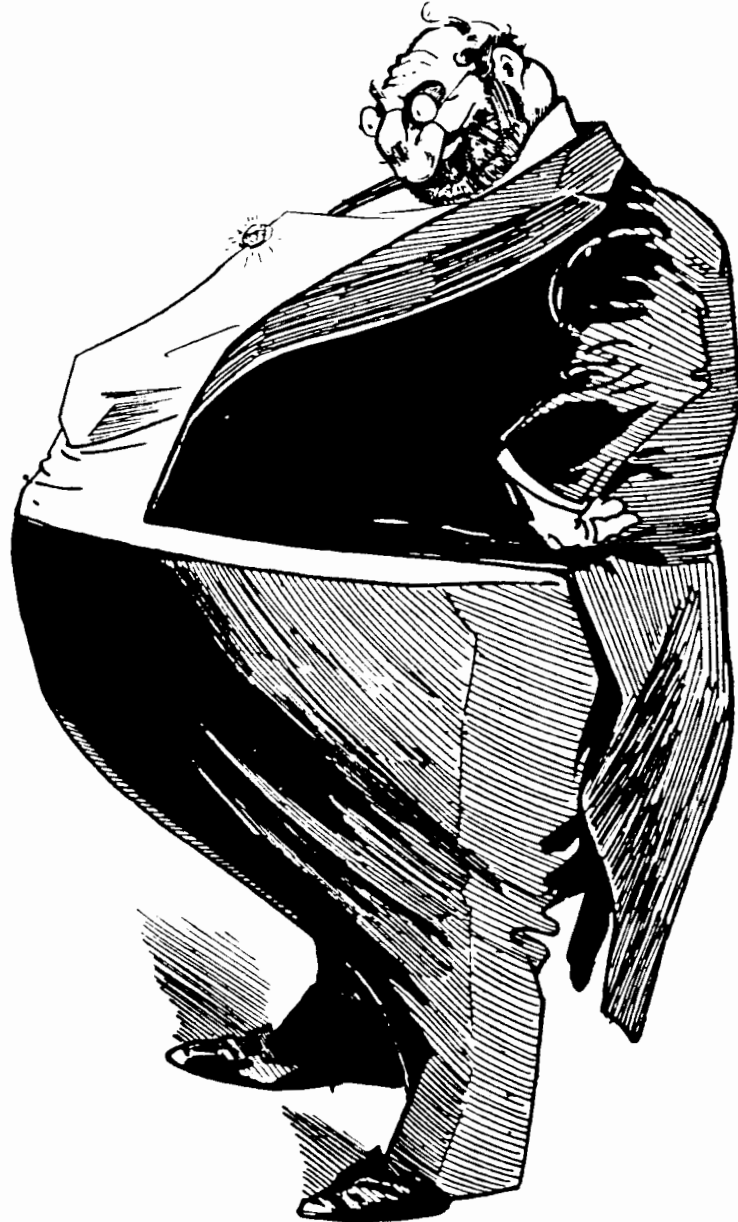
The Owl, 18.3.1904.



MILNER: 'Don't you all think Chinese Impartation necessary?'
MOSES: 'Vy, yeah, of course they do.'
AUDIENCE: 'We have had Milner & Moses, the other fellow will be no worse.'

STARVED INTO SUBMISSION.

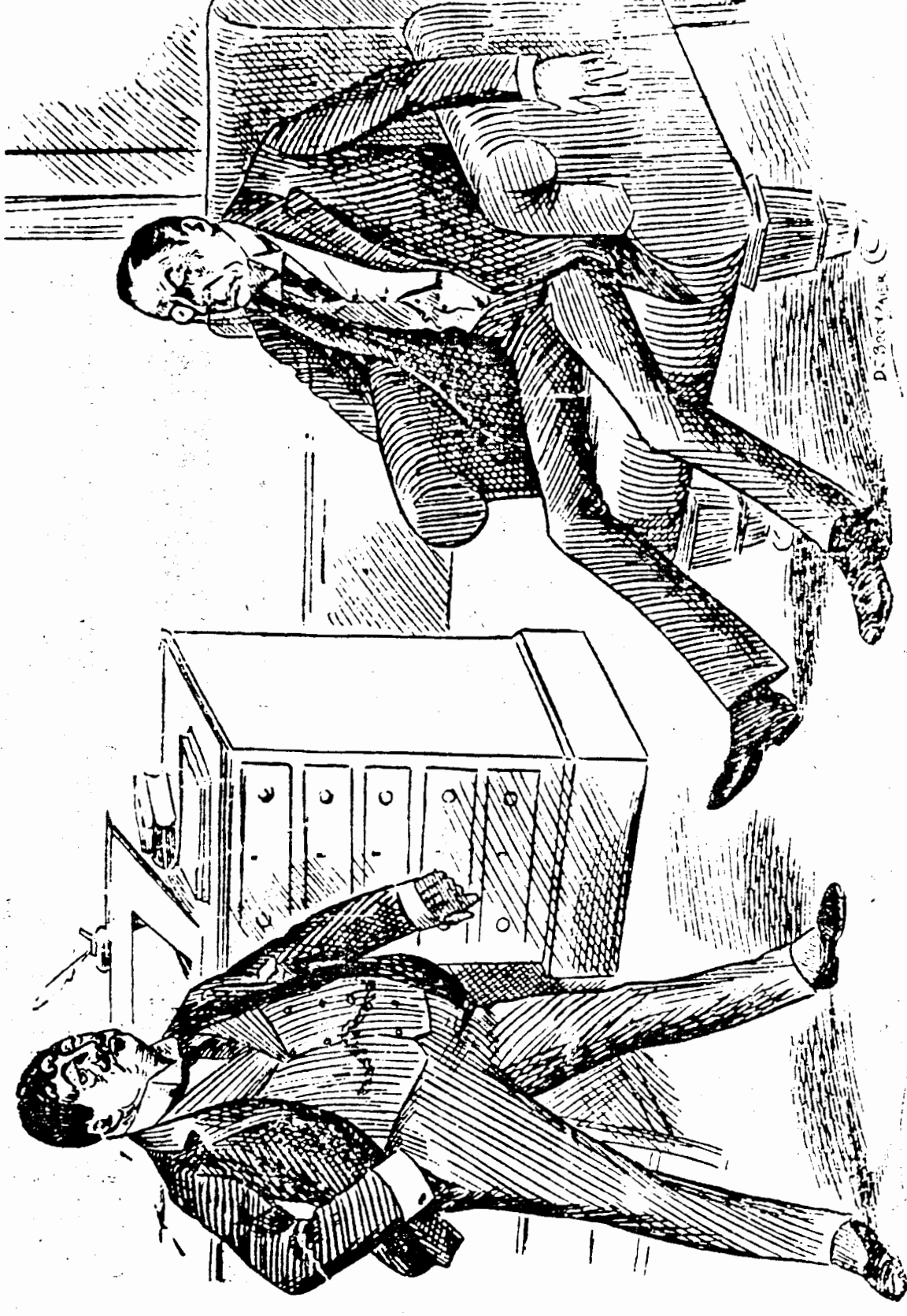
A SOUTH AFRICAN CORPORATION.



ITS LIMIT.

(WITH APOLOGIES TO "HOP.")

"I am of opinion that when the war . . . is over, and South Africa is . . . there will be no limit to the size of these corporations."—John Morley.



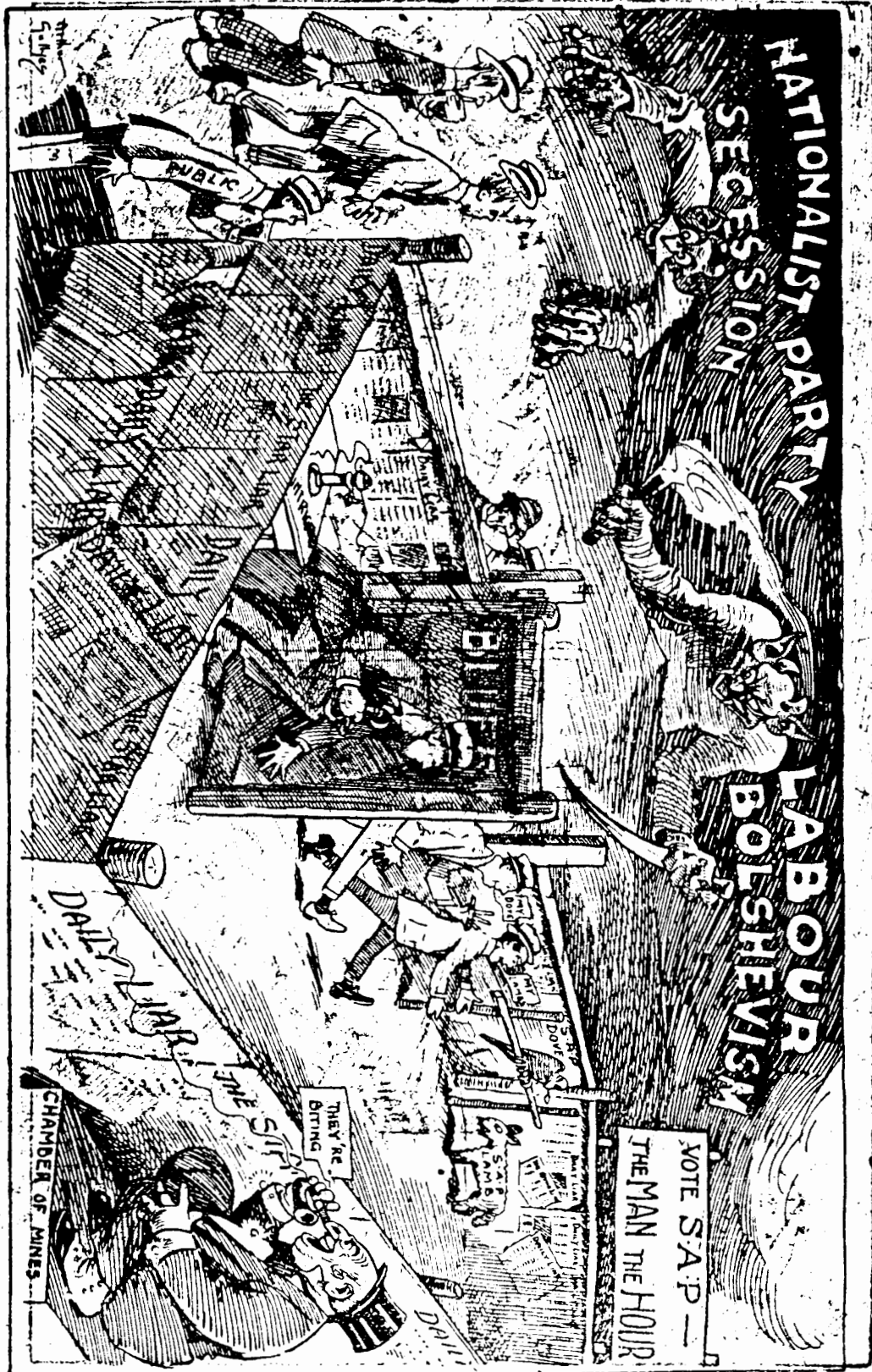
[It is generally believed in the city that Mr. Chamberlain's resignation will seriously endanger the settlement of the Rand labour difficulty.—Vide gram.]

Rand Magnate :—"I am Hoggenheimer—the Hoggenheimer. Your resignation bores me ; your fiscal rot bores everything bores me just now, except Chinese labour." (With apologies to the author of "The Girl from Kay's.")



W. L. D. B. 10.1.08

„DE TOESTAND“



RIJKSREDACTIE VAN DE DAILY LAB & COON
ZOAIS GENL. SMUTS EN DE KAMER VAN MIJNWEZEN HET ONS VOORSTELT.

DE HARLEKIJN VAN DE GOUDMAGNATEN.



Trek maar aan het touwtje en Jannie danst.

APPENDIX II

'n Jood moes vir een of ander misdaad voor die hof kom. Sy prokureur se vir hom dat hy die hele saak moet uitle en alles vertal, dan hy nog 'n kans om vry to kom.

"Goed", se die Jood.

Die volgende dag, voor die vonnis uitgespreek word, vra die magistraat vir die Jood of hy niks te se het nie. Die Jood bly doodstil, hy het net sy skouers opgetrek.

"Het jy niks om jou mee te verdedig nie?" se die magistraat weer; maar die Jood se weer niks nie.

"Ek gee jou nog een kans om jou saak uit te le", se die magistraat, maar die Jood trek maar weer sy skouers op en mompel iets onverstaanbaars. Hy word tronk-toe geneem, en toe sy prokureur hom later vra hoekom hy nie gepraat het nie, se hy: "Ag, man, hoe kom ek dan praat? My hande was mos geboei!"

Die Huisgenoot, 23.1.1925.

Boer aan smous: "Gee asb. die 5 wat jy by my geleen het."

Smous: "O, so? En in watter boek het jy dit gelees?"

Die boer gee hom toe 'n vuisslag op sy kop.

Smous: "Ag, miester, slaan weer, ek het daaimonds gesien!"

Die Huisgenoot, 27.2.1925.

'n Ou smous het op sy sterfbed gele. Sy hele familie het om hom gestaan.

Opeens vra hy: "Is my vrou hier?"

Antwoord: "Ja."

Ou smous: "Is my dogter hier?"

Antwoord: "Ja."

Ou smous: "Is my seun hier?"

Antwoord: "Ja."

Ou smous: "Is julle almal hier?"

Antwoord: "Ja."

Ou smous, bitsig: "Nou, wie die duiwel pas nou die winkel op?"

Die Huisgenoot, 3.4.1925.

'n Smous wat baie graag sy perd wou verkoop se:
 "Hy is 'n eersteklas trippelaar, kan galop dat dit
 dreun, en loop 'n lekker drafstappie, ek het hom
 selfs geleer om ..."
 "So?" val oom Jan hom in die rede "Maar se my kan
 hy stilstaan ook."

Die Huisgenoot, 17.4.1925.

Ou smous aan sy seuntjie: "Aha, Abie, ek sien jy
 het jou nuwe skoene aan."
 Abie: "Ja, Vader."
 Vader: "Nou sorg dat jy lang tree gee, hoor!"

Die Huisgenoot, 1.5.1925.

'n Ou smous het sy vrou en babetjie na die teater
 geneem. Toe die gordyn opgaan, het die babetjie
 'n geweldige keel opgesit.
 Dadelik kom die bediende na hulle toe en se hulle
 moet met die babetjie uitgaan.
 Die ou smous: "Maar wat van my geld?"
 Die bediende: "Dit kan jy by die kaartjieskantoor
 weer kry."
 Die babetjie het tot bedaring gekom, maar na die
 tweede toneel verby was, see die ou smous vir die
 vrou: "Kom laat ons uitgaan - maar knyp eers vir
 Reuben!"

Die Huisgenoot, 22.5.1925.

'n Smous het 'n hoenderhok op 'n vendusie gekoop.
 Hy vra twee vriende om hom te help die hok huis
 toe dra. Omtrent halfpad na sy huis vra hy aan sy
 een vriend wat agter loop: "Jakob, waar is Moses
 dan? Ek het nie gemeen die hok is so swaar nie."
 "Toe maar, ek is hier; ek dra die hout waar die
 hoenders op slaap." kom 'n dromerige stem uit die
 hoek van die hok.

Die Huisgenoot, 15.1.1926.

'n Jood was eendag hard besig om hout te kap, toe hy met 'n ongeluk sy vinger afkap, wat toe onmiddellik in 'n hoop strooi rol. Die Jood het hom boeglam gesoek na die verlore vinger, maar tevergeefs. Eiendelik verskyn daar 'n boer op die toneel en vra aan die Jood: "En wat soek Meneer dan hier?" Jood: "Miesters, iek het mein finger in das strooi verloor, und iek kan hom nicht vind." Die boer haal toe ewe koel 'n halfkroon te voorskyn en gooi dit op die grond; en na 'n paar sekondes, daar kruip die vinger ewe haastig uit die strooi na die halfkroon toe.

Die Huisgenoot, 22.1.1926.

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(vii) Oudtshoorn 1905, INSP 1/1/253
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