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Metropolitan Jewish and Catholic  
hierarchies, the communal press and the  
Diamond Jubilee of 1897*

Article

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**Daniel Renshaw**

**The Queen's Loyal 'Others' –The Metropolitan Jewish and Catholic Hierarchies, the Communal Press and the Diamond Jubilee of 1897**

**Abstract**

This article examines the Jewish and Catholic experience of acceptance, rejection and discrimination in late nineteenth-century Britain through the lens of the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in the summer of 1897. Arguing that the Anglo-Jewish and English Catholic hierarchical discourses created at the time of the Jubilee reveal the continuing profound insecurities felt by the minority leaderships, the article will dissect the various 'stories' created around the events of the Jubilee, particularly in London. It will consider in turn how narratives were created stressing Victoria's personal role of liberator; how a premium was placed by the hierarchies on the different demographic strands of the minority communities behaving in appropriate 'English' class roles; and how this narrative was complicated – first by Irish nationalism and migrant Jewish radicalism, and secondly by the prejudices of the wider British establishment. Ultimately it will contend that the events of the Jubilee revealed a continued exclusion of Jewish and Catholic groups from the British ruling class, and that anti-Catholic sectarianism and antisemitism was not solely a matter of economic discrimination and physical violence against working-class communities but was also a more subtle form of prejudice against more prosperous Jews and Catholics.

**Key Words**

**Catholicism, Jews in Britain, Prejudice, Jubilee, Class**

**The Queen's Loyal 'Others' –The Metropolitan Jewish and Catholic Hierarchies, the Communal Press and the Diamond Jubilee of 1897**

**Introduction**

'Roman Catholics, like Jews, are essentially monarchical and conservative...'<sup>1</sup>

Britain at the conclusion of the reign of Queen Victoria was a nation both buoyed up by a hubristic sense of self-importance and simultaneously haunted by a pervasive fear that this status as the world's foremost economic and colonial power was coming to an end. By 1897 the British Empire was almost at its zenith in terms of territorial control, but already clouds were on the horizon in the form of economic challenges from the United States and an increasing naval threat from Imperial Germany.<sup>2</sup> A deteriorating situation in Southern Africa would soon descend into a traumatic and prolonged military conflict. If affairs were uncertain at the boundaries of the Empire, demographic changes at home were also contributing to a sense of (explicitly racialised) decline. Anti-migrant campaigners such as Arnold White and W.H Wilkins warned of the consequences of the mass migration of Jewish refugees from the Pale of Settlement that had been taking place since 1881 for both British racial stock and British imperial power.<sup>3</sup> 1897 was also the year of the publication of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, a sexualised parable about the dangers of immigration from Eastern Europe.<sup>4</sup>

It was in this atmosphere of mixed confidence, arrogance and angst that the most significant demonstration of British imperial pomp and ceremony in a generation took place – Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. In the summer of 1897 London became the epicentre of an unprecedented display of power and control. Declarations of loyalty to the Queen, now in her late seventies, flooded in from across the colonies; the build-up of events to the day itself were followed with interest both on continental Europe and in North America. Socialism might be gaining ground in proletarian industrial areas of the country but popular support for the institution of monarchy, as evidenced by responses to the Jubilee, appeared to be at its pinnacle, both in the imperial hub and in the wider Empire. As David Cannadine has demonstrated, as the actual political influence of the monarchy decreased, so the associated spectacle of royal events at the end of the nineteenth century became more marked and elaborate, and the Jubilee was the apogee of this trend.<sup>5</sup>

The Diamond Jubilee as imperial phenomenon has frequently been cited briefly in longer articles and monographs examining the Victorian period as a whole or the beginnings of the decline of British power in the 1890s. The most detailed analysis of the event and the responses it evoked have been carried out by Elizabeth Hammerton and David Cannadine. Cannadine authored the classic examination of the functions and processes of royal spectacle in his chapter 'Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual' in Hobsbawm's and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* (1983). Hammerton and Cannadine have also in more detail carried out a study of receptions to the Jubilee in Cambridge. This has drawn out the dynamics behind working-class affirmations or rejections of the implicit affirmation of monarchy and empire tied up with the events of 1897. They have also drawn attention to colonial 'subaltern' groups that had differing perspectives on the festivities of 1897, in India, in Egypt, in French Canada and, most appositely for this current discussion, in Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

The Diamond Jubilee, and the varied responses to the ceremony formed a narrative of exclusion as well as loyalty and patriotism. The Jubilee in important respects reinforced concepts of the 'outsider', and it is this interplay between inclusion and reinforced difference that this article will examine. It will do so by interpreting the responses to the events of 1897 by the leaderships of the two largest religious minorities present in late-Victorian society, the Anglo-Jewish and

Catholic communal hierarchies. By the time of the Jubilee the Jewish population of Britain numbered some 150,000 to 200,000 people, whilst the Irish Catholic population was over half a million (not taking account of people of Irish Catholic heritage).<sup>7</sup> It will consider how these responses were reported by the minority press and in turn the agency of the wider British establishment in solidifying or rejecting narratives of Catholic or Jewish ‘belonging’. It will examine how the contemporary ‘story’ of the Jubilee was incorporated by the Jewish and Catholic leaderships into self-depictions of these two religious groups as ‘model communities’ – anglicised, politically conservative and supportive of the status quo. At the same time, the professions of loyalty that emanated from both Cardinal Herbert Vaughan and Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler offered insights into a deep insecurity felt by both over their place as the representatives of religious outsider groups in that aforementioned British establishment.

By the end of the 1850s Catholics and Jews (or those Catholics and Jews whose property qualifications allowed them to vote) were politically emancipated, and had representatives in Parliament (although, excepting Lord Rothschild, Jews could not take an affirmatory oath until the Parliamentary Oaths Act of 1866).<sup>8</sup> The tributes of 1897 emphasised Victoria’s personal role in this emancipation. Yet in the closing years of the nineteenth century these ethno-religious minorities remained ‘others’, and this ‘othered’ status extended not solely to large proletarian migrant populations, but also to upper-middle class, suburban, English or anglicised communal elites. The Jubilee also brought to the surface loaded questions of whether Jewish and Catholic communities in Britain were inherently ‘conservative’ and ‘moderate’ (the narrative stressed by the leaderships) or ‘subversive’ –the latter based around associations of the Irish Catholic community with militant republicanism and support for Irish Home Rule, and working-class Jewish populations with anarchism and other forms of political radicalism.<sup>9</sup>

This article will examine how the events of the summer of 1897 were covered in the English-language Anglo-Jewish and Catholic press, how this coverage reflected the concerns of the minority communal organisations, and the insights that these reports give into the marginalised religious experience in Britain at the sunset of the Victorian era. It will focus on six newspapers, *The Catholic Herald*, *The Tablet*, *The Universe*, *The Jewish Chronicle*, *The Jewish World* and *Young Israel*. Dissecting the reports of the build-up to and course of the Jubilee celebrations, it will illustrate how these newspapers either participated in or provided an alternative narrative to the prevalent discourse of the metropolitan Catholic and Jewish leaderships being advanced at that time. It is one that emphasised Catholic’s or Jewry’s roles as accepted groups in a national nexus of self-identity that was still predicated on ‘Anglo-Saxon’ ethnicity and the Protestant religion in its Anglican or Nonconformist forms. As part of this claim to ‘model minority’ status a number of points were stressed. Firstly, the political and social progress achieved by Catholics or Jews during the Queen’s reign, and the appropriate gratitude for these gains, was emphasised. A Jewish or Catholic stake in the wider imperial project was asserted. Finally it was claimed that the class stratifications of late-Victorian society as a whole were mirrored in the minority communities and that the Jewish or Catholic aristocracies, bourgeoisies and proletariats responded to the carefully stage-managed pageantry of 1897 in an appropriate manner befitting their socio-economic status.

**Hierarchical narratives: Victoria as liberator, England as refuge**

Both Jewish and Catholic newspapers published lengthy articles over multiple editions in the build-up to the Jubilee celebrations detailing the legislative advances made by the minorities under Victoria's reign. These highlighted the emancipations of 1829, 1858, and 1866, and contrasted current acceptance and inclusion with past discrimination and violence. In the *Jewish World* a lengthy account of Anglo-Jewish history from the re-admission to the present day concluded with a prescient speculation about the future of the community. The nascent Zionist movement was mentioned, as were the demographic trends so evident in metropolitan Jewry:

The writer would suggest that the future of the community lies within the hands of these same immigrants... On the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Queen's reign, it would seem that a broader view of religion, of life and of action, has seized every member of our community, but the real incident within Jewry today, the most striking development of our record is that the children and grandchildren of the ghettos, the Jews of East and West, are meeting together.<sup>10</sup>

For the Anglo-Jewish establishment the build-up to the Queen's Jubilee was an occasion to stress the renewed unity of a Jewish community that had threatened to fracture on class and religious lines since the beginning of the great migration out of Eastern Europe in the 1880s.<sup>11</sup> What these narratives did not mention was the endemic class conflict still apparent in East End Jewry as the nineteenth century came to a close, or the presence of revolutionary anarchist and socialist groups agitating with some degree of support in the neighbourhoods of Whitechapel and Stepney. Just as the Anglo-Jewish narrative of 1897 ignored radical activity within the Jewish community, it also minimised to a great degree a still virulent antisemitism operating in different forms both among the English Protestant elite and the working-class Gentile neighbours of Jewish proletarians.<sup>12</sup>

Children were also involved in this retrospective framing of the Anglo-Jewish century. It was, after all, this generation in which, the leaderships hoped, Anglo and migrant Jewish identities would be melded together in a new and hopeful twentieth century composite affiliation.<sup>13</sup> In *Young Israel*, a short-lived journal catering for Jewish adolescents, this freedom was framed in the language of the *Torah* and of millennia of oppression and diasporic identity. In 'Uncle Jack's' column, the writer reminded his readers of

[The] very little comfort that Jewish children could have had when they were in Egypt, and their mothers and fathers were slaves to King Pharaoh. Happily, in this dear country of ours... there is no slavery. In all the immense empire over which our good Queen rules, no man is enslaved to another man.<sup>14</sup>

The imagery used in *Young Israel* of 'King Pharaoh' would have been familiar to Jewish children through the Passover meal on Seder Night. The reference to the 'immense empire' also drew attention to what was a familiar feature in the turn-of-the-century communal English-language Jewish press, the stake that English Jews had in the wider British imperial project.

The Jewish military spirit of the Maccabaeans was stressed in a contemporary British colonial context. At a service for Jewish soldiers presided over by the Rev. F.L. Cohen of the Walworth

Synagogue in December 1897, after the Jubilee was over, the Jewish minister preached a sermon on a passage from the Book of Samuel, with the rabbi 'pointing with satisfaction to the share Jewish soldiers and Volunteers have had in the frontier fighting of the British Empire, and especially in Asia and Africa.'<sup>15</sup>

Moving to the Anglo-Catholic leadership, Vaughan had stressed the progress that Catholicism had made over the last sixty years when taking on the role of Cardinal on the death of his predecessor Henry Manning in 1892. In a 'Reply by the Archbishop-Elect to the Address of the Clergy and Laity' the new leader of the Catholic Church put the matter thus:

Sixty years ago the Catholic Church in England was composed of but scattered and insignificant remnants of the days of former power and splendour... Marks of persecution were fresh upon her body, the smell of fire was still on her clothing. Her organisation was abnormal and missionary, reduced to its lowest form, as though England had been China or Japan.<sup>16</sup>

In a pastoral letter issued by Cardinal Vaughan immediately before the Jubilee, both of these narratives, already encountered in the Jewish press, of increased civil liberties at home and Catholic involvement in a benevolent imperial project abroad, were emphasised. Vaughan wrote that 'Antiquated restrictions and disabilities have during Her Majesty's reign given place to freedom of speech and action.'<sup>17</sup>

The Cardinal also ruminated on the effects of the expansion of British colonial rule on indigenous peoples. 'Who will deny that, with some exceptions, the combined influence of the Anglo-Saxon and Celtic races which make up the population of these islands, has largely bettered... the peoples that have come under their sway?'<sup>18</sup> The letter concluded: 'Over 10,000,000 of her Majesty's loyal subjects pay spiritual obedience to the Pope; and He, the greatest moral power in the world, delights to pour out prayers and blessings on Queen Victoria and the British Empire.'<sup>19</sup> The language used by Vaughan in the pastoral letter was significant. Firstly, he stressed the role played by the 'Celtic races' in the expansion and maintenance of the British Empire. The Catholic Church in Britain by the last decade of the nineteenth century was partially an Irish Church, and had been since the great movement out of Ireland in the Famine years of the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>20</sup> The Irish attitude towards the Jubilee, on both sides of the Irish Sea, was ambiguous. Here Vaughan, himself an English 'Old Catholic', co-opted the Irish into a patriotic colonial narrative. Vaughan also emphasised the *dual loyalties* of a significant proportion of the Queen's subjects (including the Irish), and that the Queen's influence was temporal only. In certain respects, this was an inversion of the contemporary anti-Catholic narrative (apparent both in the rhetoric of sectarian groups like the Protestant Alliance, and socialist newspapers such as *Justice*).<sup>21</sup> But for Vaughan Catholic faith and obedience to the Pope reinforced an imperial patriotism, through the Papal approval of Victoria as British monarch. However, this expression of 'Catholic patriotism' remained ambiguous. The 'blessing' of Victoria, after all, was in the Pope's hands, and could be taken away. Papal support for the British royal family in this analysis was not unconditional. These tensions between local and transnational spiritual and material Catholic loyalties would become clear as the events organised to commemorate the Jubilee began in earnest.

The Catholic hierarchical narrative apparent in the retrospective summation of the reign of Queen Victoria that so dominated historical overviews of the period as published in the Catholic communal press was bifurcated. Whilst the Anglo-Jewish assessment of the progress made by the community since 1837, straightforwardly focused wholly on the emancipation of a marginalised and previously disenfranchised minority, the equivalent Catholic discussion emphasised not only current toleration and the end of former discrimination but also harked back to a period before the end of Church hegemony in England. Whilst the Jewish authorities celebrated toleration, their Catholic counterparts looked towards a future time when a wider apostate society would return to the religious fold. The discourse employed by the Catholic leadership and the Catholic press stressed that Catholicism was the ‘old religion’ of the country, and that an eventual return to the original faith was necessary for England’s spiritual well-being.<sup>22</sup>

### **Class Roles and the Events of the Jubilee**

The Jubilee was above all a spectacle, a visual feast, a display of power, and the major social event of the 1897 calendar. As *The Tablet* dryly noted in a column headed ‘The Great Day’, ‘... if you want a pageant you must seek inches and glitter, and therefore go to the army and the court...’<sup>23</sup> Inclusion in the various balls and functions held during the celebrations was another indicator of the successful acculturation of the Jewish and Catholic upper classes. The presence of the Anglo-Jewish and ‘Old Catholic’ elites in the recreational activities of the wider aristocracy was stressed in the newspapers, both in columns and in the commercial adverts carried in the communal press, which depicted ‘two Jewish ladies overheard at a reception for the Prince of Wales’ (that particular advert attempting to sell confectionery) and similar hypothetical situations. In the English-language journals large lists were published detailing the guests at the parties held in London and in the provinces. In *The Catholic Herald* the pageantry of the occasion, and its cosmopolitan nature was emphasised. The official Catholic event to mark the Jubilee, held at the Brompton Oratory, was an explicit display of affluence and integration, both domestic and international:

Every Catholic nation represented this week at the Jubilee celebration in London was also represented at the Oratory on Sunday morning. Scarlet and gold, blue and silver, crimson and white – all the colour and sparkle that comes from rich uniforms, glittering epaulettes and stars of many nations, shone from the Catholic princes, envoys and others who filled the front seats.<sup>24</sup>

This report was followed by a long list of the dignitaries who had attended the Mass, involving both the cream of the English Catholic aristocracy and various foreign potentates, nobles and ambassadors, from Austrian archdukes and the Brazilian Minister to the wife of the Premier of South Australia. It concluded with the reflection that: ‘The spectacle was, altogether, possessed of the splendour not often associated even with the great functions to which we are becoming accustomed in Catholic England.’<sup>25</sup> Mass at the occasion was sung by the papal envoy Mgr. Sambucetti.<sup>26</sup> The whole event was marked by pageantry and a certain display of power. Cardinal Vaughan was seated on a throne opposite the papal envoy as mass was sung. *The Tablet* in its report on the celebration quoted at length from the *Daily Telegraph*:



It was difficult to believe I was in England at all. Shut one's eyes, listen to the organs and voices in the choir... and I might be in Italy, not England. It was surely an Easter day in Rome, not a thanksgiving day in England.<sup>27</sup>

The *Telegraph* went on to describe the men acting as coordinators of the occasion, all drawn from the Catholic upper classes. Again, the spectacle and colour of the occasion, and its utter respectability, was made explicit:

The Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshall of England, in his scarlet uniform, most princely and generous of English Catholics, makes an admirable Master of Ceremonies, and on this occasion he was assisted by the well-known Fathers of the Oratory, one of them once a popular officer in the Guards, one of them in years gone by a very distinguished English diplomat.<sup>28</sup>

Although *The Tablet* relayed this report from the non-communal press proudly, there were complexities and difficulties apparent in the *Telegraph's* coverage of events at the Brompton Oratory. The splendour of the costumes, the distinguished nature of the guests, the beauty of the surroundings and the ceremony, were all emphasised. Yet there was still an underlying 'otherness' to the proceedings, that to some extent the ritual and the ceremony was alien or at least exotic to English custom, that this was Italy transported to the heart of the English capital and the English establishment, somehow out of keeping with 'ordinary' religious or social practice. The fact that the events were presided over by the representative of one of the oldest aristocratic families in England, along with a representative of the military and of the diplomatic corps, could also be interpreted in different ways. At one level it was indicative of the progress of Catholicism since 1829, its acceptance by the wider society, and a recognition of the inherent patriotism and conservatism of English Catholics. However, it could also be interpreted as an indicator of 'Romish' influence in the corridors of power, a clandestine Catholic stranglehold over Whitehall, the royal court, and the British Army, the three triangular points of British imperial hegemony. This, after all, was what gave Catholicism such a dangerous potency in the eyes of its opponents, that it encompassed both a growing immigrant proletariat and a small elite stratum. That the involvement of a papal representative in the celebrations might enflame sectarian feeling had been noted in *The Universe* before the festivities began, which commented that: 'The fanatical section of the Protestants of this country have been greatly disturbed by the news that a representative of the Holy Father will take part in the Queen's Jubilee celebrations.'<sup>29</sup>

A similar affirmation of aristocratic identity and belonging took place at the Great Synagogue on the same weekend as the Brompton Oratory Mass. *The Jewish Chronicle* reported the attendance of Lord Rothschild and the representatives of the Anglo-Jewish Association, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and the United Synagogue as well as guests including the Lord Mayor, and that the sermon was preached by the Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler. As with *The Catholic Herald*, there followed a substantial detailing of the attendance of the leading figures in Anglo-Jewry and details on how the celebrations were marked by various synagogues in the capital and across the country.<sup>30</sup>

For the minority hierarchies the Jubilee was not only a chance to make explicit the acceptance of the 'Old Catholic' and Jewish communal elites by the wider British aristocracy, no small matter for leaderships profoundly concerned about Jewish or Catholic 'respectability'. It also allowed them to stress a narrative of patriotism and integration in relation to the middle strata of society and the proletarian migrant communities. The Jewish lower-middle class who had made it out of the Whitechapel ghetto and into the London suburbs were also included in these reports. The *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish World* listed services taking place in suburban synagogues, although not with the enthusiasm that characterised the descriptions of the court functions. The outer environs of the capital lacked the glamour of the royal palaces. The children of the Jewish petit-bourgeoisie were also involved in the general affirmation of the British establishment. *Young Israel* ran a competition for its juvenile readers that involved writing a five hundred-word piece titled 'An essay on Queen Victoria'; the prize, toys worth up to the value of 10s 6d from Hamley's toy store in Holborn, was won by Ethel Violet Solomon of West Brompton.<sup>31</sup>

The East End of London was not wholly forgotten in the whirl of pomp and hubris. In the same edition of *The Jewish Chronicle* that carried such detailed discussion of the Jubilee celebrations of the Anglo-Jewish communal elite was a paragraph entitled 'East End Celebrations'. The opening sentences of the article give a flavour of how immigrant Jewry was still viewed by the English Jewish establishment. 'Down East the Jew was determined not to be outdone by his brother up West, and the result was pleasing, effective and expressive of the gratitude by the denizens of Whitechapel and Spitalfields for the freedom vouchsafed to them in this country...'<sup>32</sup> Whilst the reports on 'West End' Jews focused on pageantry, the narrative of working-class immigrant participation (the 'denizens') in the spectacle stressed both diasporic identity and a suitable proletarian cockney patriotic loyalty. Frederick Wootton Isaacson, Conservative MP for Stepney, petitioned for a military procession to take place in the east of the city, 'so that the inhabitants might have an opportunity of displaying their loyalty and of partaking in the general rejoicings.'<sup>33</sup> As migrant Jews lined the East End streets watching the military procession taking place, *The Chronicle* reported on the favourable comparisons made by observers between English soldiery and their Russian counterparts. The East End was treated to a small slice of the colonial spectacle that characterised the events taking place in the prosperous parts of the metropolis. Soldiers from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa picturesquely marched down the streets of Tower Hamlets.<sup>34</sup> Whilst the Anglo-Jewish aristocracy and upper middle class celebrated in the Great Synagogue, migrant Jewry marked the occasion in the *chevrot* (semi-autonomous grassroots synagogues), listening to both English and Yiddish sermons.<sup>35</sup>

On the day of the Jubilee, there were various stage-managed demonstrations of proletarian loyalty, particularly amongst school children. As the Queen returned to Windsor after the celebrations in the capital, 10,000 London youngsters lined the route, and the communal leaderships issued statements on their behalf stressing the narrative of the hierarchies, of increased civil liberties, positive demographic change and working-class acquiescence in societal control by both the minority leaderships and the wider establishment. Cardinal

Vaughan, taking it upon himself to articulate the patriotic sentiments of the younger members of his flock, wrote that:

We, the children of the Catholic schools of London beg to offer you our heartiest congratulations... the number of children in Catholic schools, which at the beginning of your Majesty's reign amounted to a few thousands may now be reckoned at a quarter of a million. We trust that that the lessons of obedience to the laws of our country and of loyalty to our sovereign which our religion inculcates: and which our teachers have impressed upon us shall never be forgotten...<sup>36</sup>

The Jewish counterpart to this message was issued by Lord Rothschild, again stressing the lifting of civil disabilities for Jews during the Queen's reign.<sup>37</sup> Each of these fulsome addresses received an identical reply from the royal representatives.

### **Minority Radicalism and Conservatism**

Implicit in this affirmation was that Catholic and Jewish communities *en masse* endorsed the conservative politics of the wider establishment. A thanksgiving service for the Queen was held at the Great Assembly Hall in Mile End in the heart of East London. Under the long-term stewardship of F.N Charrington, for many years the Hall had played host to speakers from across the political spectrum and from the different East End communities.<sup>38</sup> This had included, on a number of occasions, socialist and anarchist groups, both Jewish and Gentile. Indeed, in the winter of 1890 the Hall had formed a battleground of sorts between East End Jewish radicalism and the Anglo-Jewish hierarchy, when an attempt by William 'Woolf' Wess to hold a meeting to protest against the Russian persecutions had been frustrated by the intervention of Hermann Adler and Samuel Montagu.<sup>39</sup> In June 1897 however, the language of the gathering that took place at the Hall was that of loyalty and affirmation, once again stressing the fidelity of working-class Jewry, whether English or migrant, with not an anarchist in sight. Sermons were given by the rabbi present in both English and Yiddish. In the rabbi's address the familiar narrative that we have already examined, of the progress of minority civil and religious liberty in Victorian Britain was combined with a factor that was not present in the Catholic case – that Britain had offered a sanctuary for a people who had suffered the most pernicious and brutal oppression abroad: '... though they might be called foreigners, they were as loyal to the country of their adoption as born Englishmen. [They should] show themselves worthy of their freedom and be true to their God and faith.'<sup>40</sup> In other words, patriotism and identification with the mores of the imperial host society was not only desired of East End migrant Jewry by their Anglo-Jewish counterparts, it was an obligation – a recognition that Victoria had provided the Jewish refugee with shelter from the persecution of her relative, the Tsar.

The role of Britain as sanctuary for Jewish immigrants from the Pale of Settlement as articulated in the Jubilee celebrations - as indicated in a sermon given in a Dalston synagogue, 'Albion's white cliffs have been the rock of refuge where the weary exile found rest' - was reversed in the case of the largest of the migrant Catholic groups in Britain.<sup>41</sup> For politicised Irish Catholics settled in British inner-cities, there was little to celebrate in the marking of a reign that had encompassed the starvation and depopulation of the home country. It was also

widely felt that Victoria had no liking for Ireland, or at least no interest in the lives and struggles of its people. The Catholic journal *The Universe* put the matter thus a few days before the official commencement of the celebrations:

We have no word against the Queen, but we thoroughly agree with the Irish papers that say the record reign, as far as Ireland is concerned, has been one of poverty, repression and decay. Ireland has had no share in the blessings of the Queen's reign. Apparently she has no love to lose on the green island.<sup>42</sup>

When the Catholic metropolitan hierarchy announced a *Te Deum*, a hymn of praise, for the Queen, the reaction from *The Universe* was even stronger:

... Irish Catholics look upon her [Queen Victoria's] rule as anything but glorious as far as their country is concerned... They may not wish any evil upon the august lady whom it is the custom of all pious Catholics to pray for, but they certainly cannot break into any unmasked paeans of joy for her kindness to mother Ireland without lapsing into the insincerity of lickspittleism<sup>43</sup>

This reflection of the Irish Catholic view of Victoria and the Jubilee was more explicit in *The Universe* than in *The Tablet* or *The Catholic Herald*, although both of the latter journals also devoted much space to Irish affairs at home and abroad.

John Dillon, the leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party in Westminster put the matter succinctly in a statement released before the Jubilee. The conclusion noted '... Ireland cannot rejoice... while we do not begrudge our fortunate neighbours their triumphal holiday, we must stand apart, waiting and working for the day when wisdom, justice and humanity shall, in God's time, open for our country the gate of freedom and progress...'<sup>44</sup> The more radical Irish nationalists, soon to coalesce under the banner of Sinn Fein, were aware of another anniversary on the horizon, the centenary of the attempted revolution of 1798.<sup>45</sup>

In a *Catholic Herald* editorial published on 25 June the paper attempted to address this disparity between the declarations of loyalty made by the leading figures of 'Old Catholicism' and an attitude by the representatives of Irish Nationalism that veered between indifference and contempt. After asserting that, 'Her Majesty has... no subjects more loyal than those who... are the children of the Catholic Church' the piece turned to the troublesome Irish: 'Does their aloofness negative [sic] all the dicta just laid down? No. They are not Britons. They do not represent Britons.' The Irish are described in this article as a 'subjugated people'. 'Ireland has never accepted English rule in Ireland... She does not ask kindness from England. She wants to be left to mind her own affairs.' The article concludes 'Fortunately, so far as the lot of Catholics in Britain goes, the Sovereign has no subjects who can more loyally, heartily, and unreservedly join the acclamation: Long live the Queen!'<sup>46</sup> Once again, the message was an uneasy and somewhat ambiguous one, symptomatic of a Catholic press that was simultaneously attempting to appeal to an English and an Irish readership, each with a strong and conflicting patriotism. The 'natural' loyalty of English Catholics was asserted (in explicitly religious terms – '... to render unto Caesar the things which are his.') whilst at the same time the legitimacy of the anti-colonial struggle on the other side of the Irish Sea was also accepted. What was not

addressed was the ‘correct’ attitude of the hundreds of thousands of Irish Catholic immigrants and their descendants who had settled in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Manchester and other cities and towns, and who had maintained an active interest in the struggle for Home Rule back in Ireland.

### **Semantics and Sectarianism**

The Catholic hierarchy’s dominant discourse surrounding the Jubilee was one that stressed fidelity to a monarchy that had been instrumental in the granting of civil liberties to a religious minority, and by extension to the wider British establishment, the patriotism of the ‘old Catholic’ elite, and the adhesion of the immigrant proletariat to what MacKenzie has labelled the ‘ideological cluster’ that made up the value system of late-Victorian society.<sup>47</sup> Above all, this was a narrative of *inclusion*, that Catholicism, like Judaism and the smaller Protestant groups, occupied a legitimate and recognised place in the wider socio-political structure, spiritual and material. The subversive anti-Jubilee rhetoric of Irish Nationalists on both sides of the Atlantic was a challenge to this happy presumption. In the summer of 1897 an even more abrupt reminder to Cardinal Vaughan of the continued outsider status of the Catholic Church in British society was forcefully asserted by forces at the heart of the Anglican Victorian establishment. This negation to an extent soured the entire Jubilee celebration for the Catholic communal leadership in London and forced home the point that almost seventy years after political emancipation, Catholicism was still an ‘other’ in a Protestant national narrative. The affair grew out of a seemingly trivial semantic issue which eventually brought into question the position of the Catholic Church in British society.

This controversy began mundanely enough, with a proposed Catholic delegation to the Queen to express in so many words the professions of loyalty already made in the Catholic press and in the sermons of the religious leadership. Although a standard enough request, the delegation’s approaches were refused by the royal authorities. There was not space, apparently, for the representatives of the Catholic hierarchy in Victoria’s busy Jubilee schedule. Vaughan commented in a letter that ‘The answer was no: we were not on the privileged list.’<sup>48</sup> The affair deepened. A letter of congratulation issued by Vaughan and sent to the Queen was returned to sender by the Home Office. The Home Office and the circle surrounding the royal household had apparently objected to the appellation ‘Cardinal’ instead of the term ‘Roman Catholic Archbishop’. The matter was gone into in more detail in a private letter from the Home Office to the Duke of Norfolk, the most prominent member of the ‘old Catholic’ elite in the country. In this confidential communication the Home Office set out their objections. Vaughan had styled the issuers of the letter as ‘the Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Westminster.’ The Home Office reminded the Duke of Norfolk that:

... it is not in accordance with rule or precedent that such an address can be presented – and it has been the universal practice of the HO to take exception to such territorial titles which have no legal validity, though the penalties for assuming them have been repealed.

The ‘proper title’ was, according to the Home Office, ‘Roman Catholic Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops in England and Wales’. It was debated by the Duke of Norfolk and Whitehall whether to send the letter of congratulation back to Vaughan or to correct it themselves. In the end the letter was sent back to the Catholic leader.<sup>49</sup> As a coda to this exchange, a further letter from the Home Office to Vaughan stated that: ‘The Queen would not, I feel sure, have been able to receive your address in person, for there was a difficulty even about those bodies who in one way or another have been placed on the privileged list – and I think she would have asked the Prince of Wales to receive on her behalf.’<sup>50</sup>

What was behind this seemingly trivial disagreement about whether Vaughan was ‘Cardinal Archbishop’ or ‘Roman Catholic Cardinal Archbishop’, and the deliberate snubbing of a figure who embodied adherence to the values of the wider British establishment - social conservatism, deference towards elites, acceptance of class stratification and cautious politics? For Vaughan, the problem was explicitly about the first word in the Home Office’s preferred title. In private correspondence the leader of the Catholic Church got to the heart of the matter:

The term Roman, Romish, Popish, Papist as designating an Englishman’s religion was brought from abroad in the 16<sup>th</sup> century... Roman Catholic is a term taken out of context... to create an unfavourable impression in the public’s mind, as signifying something foreign.<sup>51</sup>

This statement in fact called into doubt all of the statements made in the Catholic communal press on the successful assimilation and legal enfranchisement of Catholics since 1829. The laws may have changed, and the numbers of worshippers greatly increased, but the view of Catholicism or ‘Romanism’ as an exogenous force was still prevalent, not just in working-class sectarian hotspots such as Liverpool or Glasgow but also in the civil service and the royal court. The Anglo-Jewish religious leadership might have adopted the dog collar and referred to themselves as ‘ministers’ rather than *rebs*, and Vaughan may have preferred not use the term ‘Roman’, but that inclusion within the charmed circle that the reports of 1897 revealed such a desire for was still conditional, and could be withdrawn.

### **After the Jubilee**

The vexed issues surrounding the ambiguous relationship between the British establishment, the minority communal hierarchies and concepts of ‘Englishness’, ‘Jewishness’ and Catholic identity continued after the bunting had been taken down, the debris cleared off the streets, and the crowds of flag-waving East End children safely back in their board school classrooms.

Queen Victoria died in 1901. Cardinal Vaughan, whose deputation and congratulatory message had both been rejected in 1897, found himself embroiled in renewed controversy on the death of the monarch. There was some debate in the national press about the nature of the Church’s response and the prayers said for the dead Queen. On Vaughan’s instruction a requiem mass for the Queen was not given in London, although they had been in other countries, including South Africa, and no formal notices were read out in Catholic churches across the country, causing some anger.<sup>52</sup> The fissures of 1897 were still apparent when the Prince of Wales

became King. Once again, the appellation 'Roman Catholic' in an address to the monarch, as demanded by the Home Office, was objected to by Vaughan. He concluded a letter to the Home Office on the argument in the starkest language:

I confess I should regret our inability to present an address to the King just now, all the more because I desire it should be seen that, without condoning in any way the language of blaspheming and offense dictated by the State to the Sovereign, we know how to maintain loyalty in spite of insult and provocation.<sup>53</sup>

Vaughan himself died in 1903. His successor, Francis Bourne, was the first Cardinal of Westminster of Irish descent to assume the position. Although in certain respects by the time of the ascension of Edward to the throne anti-Catholicism had been replaced by anti-Jewish prejudice, both ethnic and religious, the 'otherness' of the Catholic Church and its followers had not faded. In 1909 there was serious discord in Liverpool, the worst anti-Irish violence in Britain in a generation.<sup>54</sup> The question of the fidelity to the British nation state of Irish Catholics settled in the country continued into the early twentieth century. Over the next decade Irish nationalism would become increasingly associated with political violence (in what was in any case a politically violent ten years), as it had been in the 1880s.

By the coronation of Edward VII, the great movement of Jews out of Eastern Europe that had begun in 1881 was reaching its conclusion, although there would be renewed migration after the Kishinev pogroms of 1903 and in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution of 1905. That anglicised working-class Jewish identity that the Jewish hierarchy were so keen to instil, a 'proletariat of the Jewish persuasion' to paraphrase Geoffrey Alderman, was beginning to crystallise in East London and other areas of heavy Jewish settlement. Organisations like the Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigades had been successful in installing, both in youngsters born in the Pale and in Britain, that patriotic identity so stressed by the Jewish communal press during the Jubilee. Yet if anything the Edwardian period witnessed a rise in antisemitic sentiment and a retrenchment of the belief that the Jewish communities, both English and migrant, were, by virtue of ethnicity and religion, inherently outside the national narrative. Concurrent with the ascension of Edward was the emergence of a new organisation that brought together the 'anti-alien' forces that had been coalescing in Britain since the 1880s, the British Brothers' League.<sup>55</sup> The League was the first manifestation of a nascent political current in Britain that would reach its apotheosis in the fascist groups active in the inter-war years, a new phenomenon in Edwardian Britain, the radical right. Although the antisemitism of the radical right in some respects restated the prejudices symptomatic of earlier Victorian English anti-Jewish feeling, it introduced a new ingredient into this poisonous brew – a powerful anti-establishment sentiment. This new anti-Jewish racism placed 'the Jew' not only in the familiar roles of slum landlord, moneylender, 'sweated' worker bringing down wages and (an image borrowed from the social democratic left) capitalist exploiter, but also as a component of and parasite upon a corrupt and decadent ruling class.<sup>56</sup> Thus, the narrative stressed in the summer of 1897, that the Jewish aristocracy and bourgeoisie had become a constituent and integrated part of the wider ruling class, that Jewish politicians, Liberal and Conservative, had been successfully absorbed into the wider political framework, was inverted and made part of a conspiratorial antisemitic rhetoric, that Jews had gained a 'hold', both over the new King and the wider political and

social system. The Marconi and Indian Silver scandals that closed the Edwardian period fed into this new anti-establishment radical right current.<sup>57</sup>

In 1897 the Jewish hierarchy stressed the patriotism of English Jew and Polish refugee alike, that over the course of Victoria's reign not only had English Jews been fully enfranchised but that their Eastern European co-religionists had been offered sanctuary. In 1905, with the passing of the Aliens Act, the first legislative restriction of migration into Britain in peacetime, this sanctuary was partially withdrawn. The position of the Anglo-Jewish hierarchy towards the Act was ambiguous and confused, with some support from Conservative Jewish politicians for the restrictions, although the Act and the political agitation preceding it was implicitly and sometimes explicitly antisemitic.<sup>58</sup>

Both the affirmations and the rejections of the pomp and circumstance of the summer of 1897 reveal a profound disparity between how the Catholic and Jewish hierarchies perceived their role in British society and how these groups were viewed by the wider establishment. For Vaughan and the Anglo-Jewish religious and secular leaders, there was an acute desire to be defined in British society primarily by class status rather than by projected ethnic or religious roles. To this end the communal press emphasised unproblematic, appropriate classed-based responses to celebrations in London. The 'Old Catholic' and Anglo-Jewish aristocracies were present at court functions along with the upper echelon of foreign diplomatic representatives of the faith (in the Catholic case. The bourgeoisie held various receptions and dinners. The lower middle classes attended special services in church and synagogue, and the loyal proletariat lining the streets as spectators. But this narrative was complicated not just by the activities of Irish Nationalists and Jewish radicals but also by the responses of that wider establishment. It was made clear that for the royal court, and for the Home Office, prominent Jews and Catholics were still primarily characterised by their 'outsider' faith or ethnicity, despite wealth or position. They played a necessary role in the proceedings, to demonstrate the societal progressions achieved under a benevolent monarch since 1837, but this role reinforced rather than minimised this difference. Those lucky few Jewish and Catholic men and women attending the gala events held in the capital and elsewhere during the Diamond Jubilee did not face economic discrimination because of their faith, the threat of deportation, police harassment or bricks through shop windows as their working-class co-religionists did, but they were still outside the inner circle of the British elite. They would partially remain excluded for another two generations.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Standard*, 22 June 1903, 'Death of Cardinal Vaughan'.

<sup>2</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987, pp.46-47, David Cannadine *Victorious Century: The United Kingdom, 1800-1906*, London: Penguin Books, 2018, p. 516.



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<sup>3</sup> See Arnold White, *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain*, London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1892, Arnold White, *The Modern Jew*, London: William Heinemann, 1899, W.H Wilkins, *The Alien Invasion*, London: Methuen and Co., 1892.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Frayling (ed.), *Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula*, London: Faber and Faber, 1991, p.83.

<sup>5</sup> David Cannadine 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: the British monarchy and the 'invention of tradition', c. 1820-1977' in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp.120-121.

<sup>6</sup> Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual' in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Elizabeth Hammerton and David Cannadine, 'Conflict and Consensus On a Ceremonial Occasion: The Diamond Jubilee in Cambridge in 1897, *The Historical Journal*, Vol.24, No.1, 1981, p.113. See also William M. Kuhn 'Queen Victoria's Jubilees and the Invention of Tradition', *Victorian Poetry*, Vol.25, No.3/4, Autumn Winter 1987, pp.107-114.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Renshaw, *Socialism and the Diasporic "Other": A Comparative Study of Irish Catholic and Jewish Radical and Communal Politics in East London, 1889-1912*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018, p.13.

<sup>8</sup> Denis Gwynn, *A Hundred Years of Catholic Emancipation*, London: Longmans, 1929, V.D Lipman, *A History of the Jews in Britain since 1858*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990, pp.8-9,

<sup>9</sup> W.J Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals, 1875-1914*, London: Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd., 1975, Donald M. Macrailld, *The Irish Diaspora in Britain, 1750-1939*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp.124-134

<sup>10</sup> *The Jewish World*, 18 June 1897, 'Conclusion'.

<sup>11</sup> All of the key texts on modern Anglo-Jewry examine this divide (although it was denied by the Anglo-Jewish establishment until relatively recently). See Geoffrey Alderman, *Modern British Jewry*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture*, New Haven, Conn., Yale University Press, 1994, Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain: 1656-2000*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000, and Susan L. Tananbaum, *Jewish Immigrants in London, 1880-1939*, London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014 amongst others.

<sup>12</sup> See Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876-1939*, London: Edward Arnold, 1979, and Anthony Julius, *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> For the classic account of this effort amongst Jewish youth see Sharman Kadish, "*A Good Jew and a Good Englishman*": *The Jewish Lads & Girls Brigades, 1895-1995*, London: Valentine Mitchell, 1995.

<sup>14</sup> *Young Israel*, Vol.1, No.2, April 1897, 'Chat with the Chicks'.

<sup>15</sup> *The Morning Post*, 20 December, 1897, 'Jewish Military Church Service'.

<sup>16</sup> Herbert Vaughan, *Reply by the Archbishop-Elect to the Address of the Clergy and the Laity of the Diocese of Westminster*, London: Burns and Oates, 1892, p.5.

<sup>17</sup> Herbert Vaughan, *A Pastoral Letter*, London: Burns and Oates, 1897, p.7.

<sup>18</sup> Vaughan, *A Pastoral Letter*, pp.5-6.

<sup>19</sup> Vaughan, *A Pastoral Letter*, p.8.

<sup>20</sup> Sheridan Gilley, 'Roman Catholicism and the Irish in Britain', in Donald M. MacRaild (ed.), *The Great Famine and Beyond: Irish Migrants in Britain in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Renshaw, *Socialism and the Diasporic "Other"* pp.211-215.

<sup>22</sup> Vaughan, *Reply by the Archbishop-Elect*, pp.13-14.

<sup>23</sup> *The Tablet*, 26 June 1897, 'The Great Day'.

<sup>24</sup> *The Catholic Herald*, 25 June 1897, 'Catholics and the Jubilee'.

<sup>25</sup> *The Catholic Herald*, 25 June 1897, 'Catholics and the Jubilee'.

<sup>26</sup> *The Tablet*, 26 June 1897, 'Chronicle of the Week'.

<sup>27</sup> *The Tablet*, 26 June, 1897, 'Thanksgiving Service at the Brompton Oratory'.

<sup>28</sup> *The Tablet*, 26 June, 1897, 'Thanksgiving Service at the Brompton Oratory'.

<sup>29</sup> *The Universe*, 19 June 1897, 'Notes of the Week'.

<sup>30</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 June 1897, 'Great Synagogue'.

<sup>31</sup> *Young Israel*, Vol. 1, No.4, June 1897.

<sup>32</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 June 1897, 'The East End Jews'.

<sup>33</sup> *The Tablet*, 26 June 1897, 'Chronicle of the Week'.

<sup>34</sup> See Bridget Cherry, 'London's Public Events and Ceremonies', *Architectural History*, Vol. 56, 2013, pp.1-28, p.19, on the imperial context of the 1897 Jubilee, as well as the inclusion of East and South London in the celebrations.

<sup>35</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 June 1897, 'East End Celebrations'.

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- <sup>36</sup> *The Catholic Herald*, 25 June 1897, 'The Queen and Catholic Children'
- <sup>37</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 June 1897, 'The Queen's Review of School Children'.
- <sup>38</sup> Guy Thorne, *The Great Acceptance: The Life Story of F.N Charrington*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1912.
- <sup>39</sup> See Renshaw, *Socialism and the Diasporic "Other"*, pp.106-108.
- <sup>40</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 June 1897, 'Thanksgiving Service at the Great Assembly Hall'.
- <sup>41</sup> *The Jewish Chronicle*, 25 June 1897, 'Dalston'.
- <sup>42</sup> *The Universe*, 05 June 1897, 'Ireland and the Jubilee'.
- <sup>43</sup> *The Universe*, 19 June 1897, 'Notes of the Week'.
- <sup>44</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, 29 May 1897, 'The Irish Party and the Jubilee'.
- <sup>45</sup> Senia Pašeta, Nationalist Responses to Two Royal Visits to Ireland, 1900 and 1903', *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 124, Nov., 1999, pp. 488-504, p.502.
- <sup>46</sup> *The Catholic Herald*, 25 June 1897, 'What we think'.
- <sup>47</sup> John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, pp.242-243.
- <sup>48</sup> Westminster Diocesan Archives, AAW/V.1/1/74, 'Herbert Vaughan private correspondence June 1897'.
- <sup>49</sup> Westminster Diocesan Archives, AAW/V.1/1/18 'Confidential letter from Home Office to the Duke of Norfolk 24 June 1897'.
- <sup>50</sup> Westminster Diocesan Archives, AAW/V.1/1/23 'Letter from Home Office to Cardinal Vaughan, July 1897'.
- <sup>51</sup> Westminster Diocesan Archives, AAW/V.1/1/74 'Herbert Vaughan private correspondence June 1897'.
- <sup>52</sup> *The Daily Chronicle*, 22 June 1903, 'Cardinal Vaughan: Death of the Archbishop of Westminster'.
- <sup>53</sup> Westminster Diocesan Archives, AAW/V.1/9/3a, 'Letter from Cardinal Vaughan to Mr Ritchie, 30 April 1901'.
- <sup>54</sup> Frank Neal, *Sectarian Violence, The Liverpool Experience 1819-1914*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, chapter fourteen.
- <sup>55</sup> Bernard Gainer, *The Alien Invasion: The Origins of the Aliens Act of 1905*, London: Heinemann, 1972, p.70.
- <sup>56</sup> Joseph Banister, *England Under the Jews*, London: Self-Published, 1901, pp.7-8.
- <sup>57</sup> See Bryan Cheyette, 'Hilaire Belloc and the "Marconi Scandal", 1900-1914: A Reassessment of the Interactionist Model of Racial Hatred', *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol.8, No.1-2, 1989, pp.130-142.
- <sup>58</sup> Harry Defries, *The British Conservative Party and Jews, 1900-1950*, London: Frank Cass, 2001, chapter two.