

# Belonging and Longing of the Beautiful Jewess and the Jewish Villain in the Nineteenth-Century German, English and French Novel

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During the first decades of the twenty-first century, research on the representation of the Jewish woman in literature, perhaps under the influence of Postcolonial Studies, has concentrated on the Oriental aspect of this character: as explored in, for instance, Nadia Valman's *The Jewess in British Literature and Culture* (2007), Eric Fournier's *La "Belle Juive" d'Ivanhoë à la Shoah* (2012) or Hildegard Frübis' *Die Jüdin als Orientalin oder die orientalische Jüdin* (2014). This article aims to contribute to this scholarly approach by expanding it in three ways: firstly, by including an analysis of the dynamic between the Beautiful Jewess and her father, the Jewish Villain; secondly, by examining nineteenth-century literature less frequently studied regarding this topic; and thirdly, by taking a comparative approach. The goal is to investigate how nineteenth-century German/Austrian, English and French non-Jewish writers perceived the belonging and longing of the Beautiful Jewess and the Jewish Villain: an inseparable antithetic pair introduced into literature by Marlowe in his 1592 play *The Jew of Malta* (Barabbas and Abigail) and by Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice* (1605) (Shylock and Jessica). Notwithstanding, this pairing can be traced back further, as noted by Hyam Maccoby: indeed, they derive «from the "exempla" or moral tales, which featured an old and ugly Jewish miser and sorcerer who is robbed of both his treasure and his daughter by a Christian» (Maccoby 1992: 18). They are therefore

constructions of literature and religion. However, during the nineteenth century, these characters gain vitality and depth through historical events such as the colonisation of the Orient by France and Britain, the German study of the Orient, and of course Jewish emancipation in Europe.

First of all, it is significant that the *loci* the Beautiful Jewess and the Jewish Villain belong to, i.e. the Orient and the ghetto, allow novelists to question their identity, and to imagine their true longings. In nineteenth-century France, Britain and the German states, there was a longing for the Orient, perceived as a far-away time, a far-away place and a refuge for the writer's dreams, a sentiment expressed by Gérard de Nerval in a letter to Théophile Gautier at the end of August 1843 (Nerval 1960: 297-8). For a nineteenth-century mind, the Orient was not a precise region; rather, it consisted of an amalgam of different geographical areas such as Greece, Turkey, Northern Africa and India. It is important to notice that the German perception of the Orient was different from the French and the British ones, as Edward Said writes in *Orientalism*:

There was nothing in Germany to correspond to the Anglo-French presence in India, the Levant, North Africa. Moreover, the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical, Orient: it was made the subject of lyrics, fantasies, and even novels, but it was never actual, the way Egypt and Syria were actual for Chateaubriand, Lane, Lamartine, Burton, Disraeli or Nerval. (Said 1978: 19)

Nevertheless, it can be seen that in all three cultures, the Orient was a constructed one, and as novelists created their Beautiful Jewess, they mostly referred to an imaginary part of it. Indeed, the two components of the Beautiful Jewess: 'Jewish' and 'Beauty' originate in *King Solomon's Song* (the Jewish name) or the *Canticles*. Since the Middle Ages, the Jewish woman had been portrayed as belonging to a glorious Biblical past in which she was described as a heroine saving her countrymen, like Judith or Esther, or as a weeping mother at the

Massacre of the Innocents, or at Jesus' crucifixion in which she took no part and therefore benefited from a positive image in the Christian mind. This explains why nineteenth-century writers often chose to refer to the *Canticles* as a way of celebrating the beauty and virtue of their Beautiful Jewess. A good example is Petrus Borel, who in *Dina ou la belle Juive* compares Dina to «une tourelle d'ivoire»<sup>1</sup>, (Borel 1833: 3) alluding to *Canticles* (8:5): «your neck is an ivory tower». In *Zillah; a Tale of the Holy City*, Horace Smith endows Zillah with «large round eyes, of the darkest hazel, mild as the dove's» (Smith 1828: 78), relating to *Canticles* (1:15): «Your eyes are doves». In Wilhelm Jensen's *Die Juden von Cölln* (1869) Lea, who believes her daughter Tamar dead claims: «Eine Blume zu Saron warst du und eine Rose im Tal»<sup>2</sup>, (Jensen 2008: 139) which corresponds to *Canticles* (2:1): «I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valleys». Finally, in Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1820), at the sight of Rebecca of York, the Prior exclaims: «she is the very bride of the *Canticles*» (Scott 1994: 83).

Many German novelists, such as Karl Gutzkow in *Die Kurstauben* (1864), linked the beauty of their Jewish heroines to the Ancient Greek concept of 'kalokagathia' (the union of 'kalos' beautiful with 'agathos' good), which establishes a connection between physical and moral beauty: «Die Nase war von seltenem Ebenmaß und wie beim Profil einer Griechin mit der kleinen gedankenvollen Stirn in eine Linie verbunden»<sup>3</sup> (Gutzkow 1963: 132). When councillor Scholten meets Frau Salome in Wilhelm Raabe's *Frau Salome* (1875), he exclaims 'Ichor' (Raabe 1962: 21), a word that Greeks believed characterised a divine bloodline. By adding this Greek element to their description of a Beautiful Jewess they intend to add nobility to her beauty and try to make it universal. Besides, German novelists contradict Matthew Arnold's view on the supremacy of Hebraism in their culture over Hellenism as described in *Culture and Anarchy* (1869).

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<sup>1</sup> «An ivory tower». All translations in this article are mine

<sup>2</sup> «You were a flower of Sharon and a rose in the valley».

<sup>3</sup> «The nose was of a rare regularity and, in the profile like that of a Greek woman, attached to the small pensive forehead in a line.»

Bonaparte's Egyptian Campaign (1798-1800), the French conquest of Algeria (1830-47) and Britain's overseas empire with Queen Victoria being made Empress of India in 1877 rendered it possible for artists and writers to experience the Orient, which was present in their imagination not only as the one of the *Canticles*, but also as that of *The Arabian Nights*. The Beautiful Jewess also belongs to this latter imaginary Orient which exudes perfumes of eroticism and exoticism. Indeed, in George Eliot's novel *Daniel Deronda* (1876), Mab compares Mirah Lapidoth to the Queen Budoor, a protagonist in a story from *The Arabian Nights* (Eliot 1995: 184). Then, in Alphonse Daudet's novel *Les Rois en Exil* (1879), when King Christian of Illyria has a glimpse of Sephora Leemans, he imagines her as «quelque esclave d'Orient implorant au dehors par le treillis de sa terrasse»<sup>4</sup> (Daudet 2006: 91). Gustav Lanbek transports his Beautiful Jewess back to Canaan and compares her to a Saracen seductress, when he exclaims at the sight of Lea Oppenheimer:

“Wahrlich”, rief er, “du gleichst der Zauberin Armida, und so denke ich mir die Töchter deines Stammes, als ihr noch Kanaan bewohntet. So war Rebekka und die Tochter Jephthas<sup>5</sup> (Hauff 1981: 5).

In *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870*, Susanne Zantop provides an explanation for this confusion between the *Bible* and *The Arabian Nights* by the lack of German colonialism, which led to the awakening of colonial fantasies in the German mind (Zantop 1997: 7) and allowed the construction of German identity.

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<sup>4</sup> «Some Oriental slave, looking imploringly at the outside through the lattice of her balcony.»

<sup>5</sup> «“In truth”, he exclaimed, “you are like the enchantress Armida, and I can only imagine the daughters of your tribe when you still lived in Canaan. Like this were Rebecca and Jephthah's daughter.”»

Moreover, the Orient traditionally designates the territories of the east where the sun rises, as expressed in the Hebrew word 'Kedem' or the Greek one 'Anatolè'. This fascinating light of the Orient is reflected in the eye of the Beautiful Jewess. In his novel *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes* (1838-1847), Balzac applied a geographical determinism to his Beautiful Jewess, Esther Gobseck:

L'origine d'Esther se trahissait dans cette coupe orientale de ses yeux à paupières turques [...]. Il n'y a que les races venues de déserts qui possèdent dans l'œil le pouvoir de fascination sur tous.<sup>6</sup> (Balzac 1988: 46)

While in *Ivanhoe*, Scott describes Rebecca's eyes «whose brilliancy was shaded, and as it were, mellowed, by the fringe of her long eyelashes» (Scott 1994: 299), Hauff imitates him to a certain extent when he describes Lea in *Jud Süß* (1827):

Man könnte ihr Gesicht die Vollendung orientalischer Züge nennen. Dieses Ebenmaß in den feingeschnittenen Zügen, diese wundervollen dunklen Augen, beschattet von langen seidnen Wimpern.<sup>7</sup> (Hauff 1981: 56)

Occasionally, the inborn light she owed to her Oriental origins, is enhanced by the non-organic light of jewels. In *Die Juden von Cölln* Tamar's jewels are shown on a painting in which she posed as a Biblical Queen:

eine leichte Krone [...] perlenbesetzt leuchtete sie matt über den dunklen Locken wie ein fernes Irrlicht [...] Juwelenbesetzte

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<sup>6</sup> «The Oriental form of Esther's eyes, Turkish-like, betrayed her origins [...]. Only races from the desert possess in their eyes the power to fascinate everybody.»

<sup>7</sup> «Her face could be called the perfection of Oriental traits. This regularity in her fine features, those wonderful dark eyes, shaded by long silky eyelashes.»

Spangen hielten einen weiten Mantel [...]. Das Gewebe war kaum sichtbar, denn es war über und über mit Saphiren Smaragden besetzt.<sup>8</sup> (Jensen 2008: 26)

Scott mentions in Rebecca's diamond necklace and pendants (Scott 1994: 83) and Borel in his portrayal of Dina Petrus emphasises the Oriental abundance of jewels on her simple costume: «Son costume était simple, mais des joyaux étincelants atournaient ses cheveux, son front, ses oreilles, son cou, ses doigts et trahissaient sa fortune.»<sup>9</sup> (Borel 1833: 7)

For non-Jewish nineteenth-century novelists, the Beautiful Jewess or the Bride of the Canticles remains impregnated by the Orient she left long ago as she is about to leave her ghetto to enter European society. They believed she had no choice but to become Christian, because Christianity viewed itself as the heir of Judaism.

However, in the second part of the nineteenth century, a new trend began with the end of Romanticism and the beginning of Realism. Some writers, like Charles Baudelaire in his poem 'Une nuit que j'étais près d'une affreuse Juive' in the 1857 Edition of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, reduced the Beautiful Jewess to a vulgar prostitute who belonged to the brothel. This demystification of the Beautiful Jewess had actually already been broached in the anticlerical perspective of the Enlightenment which had reduced Biblical heroines to dangerous seductresses.

Art also contributed to her downfall. In *Bodies of Art: French Literary Realism and the Artist's Model*, Marie Lathers reveals that painters such as Delacroix and Matisse used prostitutes and Jewish models to represent women in the harem and the baths, and this

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<sup>8</sup> «a light crown [...] scattered with pearls casted a dull light over the dark curls like a faraway will o' the wisp [...]. Clasps covered with gems held an ample coat [...]. The fabric was barely visible because of the sapphires and emeralds which literally engulfed it.»

<sup>9</sup> «Her outfit was simple, but sparkling jewels adorned her hair, her forehead, her ears, her neck, her fingers, and betrayed her richness.»

helped to categorise them as such in the European mind (Lathers 2001: 3).

Famous courtesans like La Païva, a Jewish woman, who became famous for bathing in Champagne in her Parisian mansion, and free-spirited famous Jewish actresses like Mademoiselle Rachel and Sarah Bernhardt re-enforced this new tarnished image of the Beautiful Jewess in the public mind.

By this time, the Beautiful Jewess had lost not only her exotic appeal, but also her positive aura, and confusion and ambiguity arose as to where she belonged. Moreover, the emergence of a Jewish bourgeoisie provoked mixed feelings in nineteenth-century European society. In some portrayals, such as Manette Salomon, in the Goncourt brothers' eponymous novel (1867), her skin is pale and her eyes are blue. She might be occidental in appearance, but her essence does not belong to the Occident. Her brilliant Oriental eye is transformed into a dark eye which absorbs the light of the Occident and threatens to reverse European colonialism. Edouard Drumont's *La France Juive* (1886) marks this turning point, by deliberately avoiding previous philosemitic representations of Jewish women and transforming the Beautiful Jewess into a 'Femme Fatale'.

The Beautiful Jewess was reduced to the 'Jewess', illustrating a radical Anti-Semitic re-evaluation of Jewish women towards the end of the nineteenth-century. Following this shift, she is re-connected with her father the Jewish Villain, the personification of ugliness and villainy, and thrown back to the poor reality of the ghetto, from which she had been extirped by the imagination of artists and novelists. Both characters now form a negative collective of 'the Jews'.

Even though the Beautiful Jewess belongs to her father, if she has one, she longs for freedom. She believes that her Christian lover is her chance to escape. When she meets him, she is forced to acknowledge her needs and stop her self-denial. In this, she joins nineteenth-century heroines like Emma Bovary, Effi Briest and Anna Karenina, who vindicate the right to love, a subject still highly contentious in that period, especially between people from different social classes or ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, she becomes an embodiment of the

emancipation of women, which began at the end of the eighteenth century –with, notably, Mary Wollstonescraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and Olympe de Gouges’ *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* (1791)– and develops during the nineteenth century.

In longing for love, the Beautiful Jewess is doomed to lose her identity: the only way to belong to her Christian lover and Christian society is to convert to Christianity and reject her Jewishness. Both her love for her father and then her Christian lover require her self-sacrifice. Thus, she loses herself in the quest for love. Torn between ‘eros’ and ‘familia’, like the heroine of a Greek tragedy, her destiny can only end in madness, suicide or death. Arguably, writers use her story to cast doubt on successful assimilation of the Jews into European society.

The Beautiful Jewess also longs for the realisation of her personal feminine energy, although she rarely achieves it. Most of the Beautiful Jewesses are not only beautiful, but also extremely clever. This aspect is prevalent among English and German Beautiful Jewesses. It takes its root from the German concept of ‘Gelehrte Jüdin’, based on real German Jewish ‘salonnières’, such as Rahel Varnhagen or Dorothea Mendelssohn, who took part in the diffusion of literature in Europe. These intellectual abilities sometimes lead the Beautiful Jewesses to question and reject their Jewish faith and long for another impossibility, not to be Jewish. A good example of this is found in the *Seligmann Hirsch* (1889) by the Austrian novelist Ferdinand von Saar:

“Sie stammt aus sehr feinem, vornehmem Haus – und gebildet ist sie – gebildet! Alle Sprachen spricht sie – und Bücher liest sie, von denen wir beide keine Ahnung haben, aber sie ist eitel, sehr eitel. Alles, was in Wien irgendwie hervorrägt, soll sich in ihrem Hause versammeln: Staatsmänner, Gelehrte, Künstler und Schriftsteller”.<sup>10</sup> (Saar 1958: 374)

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<sup>10</sup> «“She comes from a very fine, distinguished home – and she is so educated! She speaks all languages – and she reads books both of us have not



Only when her mind and heart unite she can become an 'illuminatrix' of humanity, like Frau Salome who uses her intelligence and generosity to save people from a fire, or Rebecca of York, who decides to dedicate her life to the poor and the sick.

This longing of hers accentuates the contrast with her father, the Jewish Villain, who resembles a medieval Jewish usurer. Besides, this comparison illustrates a trend amongst nineteenth-century writers to draw from the past (Antiquity for the Beautiful Jewess and the Middle-Ages for the Jewish Villain) before constructing their own version of the character. The character of the Jewish Villain is linked to the ghetto, to underline his belonging to Jewishness and to show his resistance to assimilation, whereas his daughter who originally belonged to the Orient becomes open to conquest and assimilation.

Many ghettos were abolished during the first half of the nineteenth century, but the character of the Jewish Villain sometimes chooses to belong to a self-imposed ghetto. Writers often sullied the body of their Jewish Villain with traces of the ghetto to awaken suspicion and repulsion in the other characters: dirt and especially grease, a form of dirt which cannot be removed, is often present on his clothing. In *L'Argent* (1891), Émile Zola signalled this through Busch's dress: «vêtu d'une belle redingote graisseuse et cravaté de blanc»<sup>11</sup> (Zola 1979: 24). In Wilhelm von Polenz's *Der Büttnerbauer* (1895), Sam Harrassowitz's outfit betrays his duplicity: «Im hellen Tageslichte besehen, zeigte es sich, daß sein Hemdkragen nicht vom reinsten und da auf seiner hellen Weste verschiedene Fettflecke seien»<sup>12</sup> (Polenz 1994: 85). And Charles Dickens indicates in *Oliver Twist* (1838) that

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got a clue of, but she is vain, very vain. Everything, which somehow is eminent in Vienna, ought to go and meet in her house: politicians, scholars, artists and writers."»

<sup>11</sup> «dressed in a beautiful greasy frock coat and wearing a white tie».

<sup>12</sup> «Strong daylight rendered apparent that the collar of his shirt was not one of the cleanest and that there were marks of grease on his light waistcoat».

when Oliver meets Fagin for the first time, he notices his «greasy flannel coat» (Dickens 1994: 71).

A second characteristic of ghetto life is the restriction of space, leading to a swarming of people and objects. For the Jewish Villain, this can manifest itself, firstly, in the form of his many debtors and staff and, secondly, by the many objects he accumulates in a 'capharnaüm', a place marked by a disorderly accumulation of objects. Besides, *The Larousse Dictionary of the Nineteenth Century* (1866) underlines the Jewish connotation attached to this term in the following expression: «somptrueux capharnaüm du ghetto de Venise»<sup>13</sup> (Vol. III: 307). The Jewish identity of the Jewish Villain is thereby accentuated by his habitat.

In the nineteenth century, the ghetto was synonymous with decay and darkness; in other words, a kingdom of death to which the Jewish Villain belongs to. This is in contrast to his daughter, who, as we have seen, radiates light and life. Unable to adapt to change, the Jewish Villain keeps his surroundings in the same state as himself: aging, decaying and slowly wasting away. Balzac provides a good example of this in *Gobseck* (1830):

Dans la chambre voisine de celle de Gobseck où Gobseck avait expiré, se trouvaient des pâtés pourris, une foule de coquillages, de poissons qui avaient de la barbe et dont diverses puanteurs faillirent m'asphyxier [...]. Cette pièce était encombrée de meubles, de lampes, de tableaux, de vases, de livres, de belles gravures roulées, sans cadres, et de curiosités.<sup>14</sup> (Balzac 1984: 126-7)

A similar scene is described by Wilhelm Raabe in *Der Hungerpastor* (1864):

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<sup>13</sup> «Sumptuous 'capharnaüm' of the Venetian ghetto».

<sup>14</sup> «In the room next to the one where Gobseck had died, there were rotten pâtés, many shellfish, bearded fishes, of which various stench nearly suffocated me [...] This room was cluttered with furniture, lamps, paintings, vases, books, beautiful engravings rolled without frames and curiosities.»

Knochen, zerbrochenes Glas und Eisen [...]. Gold, Silber, Juwelen und getragene Kleidungsstücken [...] eine Dämmerung, in welcher man anfangs keinen Gegenstand von den anderen unterschied, und [...] eine Atmosphäre, welche ebenfalls aus mancherlei ununterscheidbaren Düften zusammengesetzt war [...].<sup>15</sup> (Raabe undated: 40-1)

Having been socially alienated and deprived, the Jewish Villain is possessed by an insatiable quest for the inanimate, which he treats lovingly. This impulse of the character for regression reaches its full expression when he longs to go back to an original world where the animate and inanimate were connected. It alludes to the idea of an interdependency between the Divine and the human, animal, mineral and vegetal kingdoms as developed by the Romantic naturalist Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert in *Ansichten der Naturwissenschaften* (1808). When the Jewish Villain has no Beautiful Jewess at his side (as is the case with many French Jewish Villains), he compensates for this lack of a feminine presence with the acquisition of gems which, at the time, were considered a form of wealth mostly acquired by women and therefore representing femininity for him. This is illustrated, for instance, in Zola's *L'Argent*: «Déjà, un à un, il prenait les bijoux, les retournait, les élevait en l'air, de ses gros doigts tremblants d'amoureux, avec sa passion des pierreries»<sup>16</sup> (Zola 1979: 466) and in Balzac's *Gobseck*: «Ses yeux, où le scintillement des pierres semblait se répéter, brillaient d'un feu surnaturel »<sup>17</sup> (Balzac 1984: 102).

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<sup>15</sup> «Bones, broken glass and iron [...]. Gold, silver, jewels and clothes which had been worn [...] a twilight in which one first could not distinguish an object from another, and [...] an atmosphere which was also composed of all kinds of indistinguishable smells [...].»

<sup>16</sup> «He had already taken the jewels, one after the other, examined them, raised them up, with his thick fingers, which shook like the ones of a lover, smitten with gems.»

<sup>17</sup> «His eyes where the sparkling of the gems seemed to be repeated, blazed with a supernatural fire.»

The Jewish Villain rejects the outside world and shuts himself in his shop full of inanimate objects from the past. He exemplifies a belief that the Jewish community does not want to assimilate into nineteenth-century society. His clear preference for objects dating from the pre-revolutionary era unveils a longing for this period and the place occupied in society by the collapsing aristocracy. This could also be considered as a form of retribution on the aristocracy who in the Middle-Ages had robbed Jews of any wealth they acquired. In Dorothea Gerard's novella *Recha*, when entering Gedeile Wolf's sanctuary for a third time, Theodor Borkam discovers his last purchase of eighteenth-century furniture, which shows a Parisian elegance damaged by partying by its former aristocratic owners (Gerard 1890: 32). Despite being a negative character the Jewish Villain is used by novelists to denounce the decadence of the aristocracy in the nineteenth century. He seems to fulfill a didactic function that compels the reader to think about the values and institutions of their time.

His alienation is perpetuated when novelists exclude him from humanity and reduce him to an animal. In some instances, he is compared to a bird of prey which has obvious comparisons with the traits of a usurer. Another animal associated with the Jewish Villain is the dog, as Sarah Juliette Sasson explains in *Longing to belong: the Parvenu in Nineteenth-Century French and German Literature*: «The dog constitutes the most basic form of the nonhuman [...]. This is the example Shylock employs when he complains bitterly of inhumane treatment» (Sasson 2012: 145). This comparison also hints at the suggestion that many Jewish Villains seem to be able to sniff out money. Finally, the peacock is also significant in the evolution of the Jewish Villain. Indeed, in the later part of the nineteenth century the medieval Jewish usurer is transformed into the Jewish upstart, a show-off, open to ridicule, but now belonging to the bourgeoisie.

The historical context in France, Germany and Britain provides an explanation for this shift between usurer and parvenu within the character of the Jewish Villain. After the French Revolution, French Jews were emancipated, and some of the members of their community, like for instance the Rothschild family, flourished in banking and

entered the haute bourgeoisie. Following rapid economic growth and after many setbacks, the legal emancipation of German Jews was completed in the second half of the nineteenth century. British Jews also struggled before receiving formal emancipation in 1858, although Benjamin Disraeli, a baptized Jew, became Prime Minister in 1837. With the removal of political restrictions, Jews were able to become politically active. In *Jewish Emancipation and Bourgeois Society* (1969) Reinhard Rürup reveals how Jewish emancipation in Europe was part of the triumph of the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century:

The nineteenth century is the century of the European bourgeois, of his technology and industry, his trade and economy, his art and science. The period between 1780 and 1870 spans that economic and political “dual revolution” which resulted in the political, social and cultural emancipation of the middle classes in Europe. This fundamental transformation unfolds in England, France and Germany under different specific conditions, at different speeds, by different methods; nevertheless, the process is the same in each case: the dissolution of the old European order with its corporate structure and mostly absolutist government and the emergence of a new bourgeois society dominated by the two watchwords of “Constitution” and “Machinery”. (1969: 67)

Like the Beautiful Jewess, the Jewish upstart adorns himself with gold and gems, but not with the same aim. His is to shine in society and impress, and of course hide his internal darkness. For example, in Guy de Charnacé’s *Le Baron Vampire* (1885) Baron de Rakonitz displays this vulgar ostentation of wealth with his passion for emeralds: «sa cravate de satin vert retenue par une émeraude cabochon [...] boutons à manchettes, bouton de chemise, boutons de gilet, autant d’émeraudes cabochon»<sup>18</sup> (Charnacé 1885: 83). In Freytag’s *Soll und Haben* (1855), on a visit to Baron Rothsattel, Ehrenthal feels obliged to wear a diamond

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<sup>18</sup> «his tie of green satin was held by a cabochon emerald [...] cuff links, shirt buttons, cardigan buttons, so many cabochon emeralds.»

on his clothes: «eine diamantene Busennadel auf dem Hemd»<sup>19</sup> (Freitag 2009: 30). Having been elected a member of parliament, Augustus Melmotte, in Trollope's *The Way We Live Now* (1875), is rejected by his peers because of his lack of modesty: «The lapels of his coat were thrown back a little wider, displaying the large jewelled studs, which he wore on his shirt» (Trollope 1982: 313).

The Jewish parvenu is a reflection on social mobility in the nineteenth-century. He breaks the walls of the ghetto, of his 'capharnaüm', and using his newly-acquired wealth, he buys and transforms old buildings: symbols of immutability of the old rural aristocracy. This is a liberation for him: he does not belong to walls, they belong to him, he creates the space to which he wants to belong. Baron Rakonitz transforms beyond recognition Prince Ravioli's old hotel (Charnacé 1885: 139), while Melmotte modifies Grosvenor Square twice: once for Madame Melmotte's ball, and then to receive the Emperor of China: «When he was shown into the hall he was astonished to find that it was not only stripped, but was full of planks, and ladders, and trussels, and mortar» (Trollope 1982: 377). When Sam Harrassowitz appropriates Büttner's farm he sets up various factories on his newly acquired land (Polenz 1994: 256).

Most importantly, the upstart belongs to cosmopolitanism in opposition to the nineteenth-century rise of nationalism. To fulfil his destiny, he breaks all the spatial frontiers. Thus, he belongs to foreignness, a label which alienates him again. His mobility within Europe can only raise suspicion and rejection from others because his identity is not readable and he is a product of modernity. Indeed, in Bourget's *Cosmopolis*, Montfanon denounces Baron Hafner's unreliability:

“C'est l'incarnation du monde moderne dans ce qu'il a de plus haïssable que ces aventuriers cosmopolites, qui jouent aux grands seigneurs avec des millions flibustés dans quelques coups de bourse. Ça n'a pas de patrie, d'abord. Qu'est-ce qu'il est, ce

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<sup>19</sup> «a pin with diamonds on the shirt».

baron Justus Hafner, Allemand, Autrichien, Italien ?”<sup>20</sup> (Bourget 1893 : 18)

In Raabe’s *Der Hungerpastor*, before settling in Germany, Samuel Freudenstein, probably born in Ukraine, does business in Warsaw and St Petersburg, even Constantinople, before going to Italy, Vienna and Prague (Raabe undated: 42). Melmotte comes from Paris, tries to settle in Vienna before ending up in Britain (Trollope 1982: 31).

The Jewish parvenu presents another face of the Jewish Villain, as dangerous, but more active: he longs not only to raise himself to the social level of the aristocracy, but also to displace it. This shows two tendencies of the Jewish community perceived by nineteenth-century novelists: on one side, social preservation, on the other progression. In Trollope’s *The Way We Live Now*, Melmotte is shown socialising with Mr Longestaffe, whose estate he covets. A way of truly belonging to the aristocracy is marriage, as Baron Hafner nearly succeeds in doing in Paul Bourget’s *Cosmopolis* (1893). In Freytag’s *Soll und Haben*, Hirsch Ehrenthal initially takes the role of Hofjude<sup>21</sup>, but, as demonstrated in the passage below, he truly longs to see his son as the heir of Baron von Rothsattel’s estate:

“Was ich getan habe, für wen habe ich’s getan? Nicht für mich und meine alten Tage. Ich habe dabei gedacht jeden Tag an dich, mein Sohn, der du bist ein anderer Mann als dein Vater. Ich werde haben den Kummer, und du sollst gehen aus dem Schloß in den Garten und wieder zurück in das Schloß, und wenn du gehst, soll der Amtmann abziehen seine Mütze und die Knechte im Hofe abziehen ihre Hüte, und sie sollen zu sich sagen: Das ist der junge

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<sup>20</sup> «“Those cosmopolitan adventurers are the embodiment of the modern world in its most detestable manifestation. They flash millions around, which they have stolen thanks to some tricks on the Stock Exchange. First, they have no homeland. What is he, this Baron Justus Hafner, German, Austrian, Italian?”»

<sup>21</sup> Court Jew: in the early modern period a Jew who used to manage the finances of an aristocrat in exchange for social privileges.

Herr Ehrental, welcher ist unser Herr, der da geht.”<sup>22</sup> (Freitag 2009: 471)

In conclusion, the character of the Jew is obviously marked by dichotomy, firstly between the Beautiful Jewess and the Jewish Villain, and secondly between the Jewish Usurer and the Jewish Parvenu. This exemplifies the uncertainty of writers when it comes to designate where the Jews belongs to, and their desire for a catharsis of clarification, as mentioned by Claude Lévi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* (1966: 22). These characters also offer the opportunity to imagine what they long for. Both the Jewish Villain and the Beautiful Jewess long to belong to the society they live in. But they do not long in the same way and this leads to conflict between them, reflecting the torment of nineteenth-century Jews between their belonging to their community and their longing to be accepted in the society of their country.

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<sup>22</sup> «“What I have done, for whom have I done it? Not for myself and my old days. And while doing it, every day, I have thought of you, my son, you who are a man different from your father. I shall have the trouble, and when you walk from the castle to the garden and back, the civil servant and the servants in the courtyard will take their hat off, and they will say to themselves: Here goes the young Sir Ehrental who is our master”»



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