FHS lecture, 27.5.19 Friends House, London – Quakers and Jews

As Tony Stoller noted in his introduction to a Special Issue of *Friends Quarterly* in 2015, ‘[t]he relationship between Quakers and Jews has a very long history indeed’.[[1]](#footnote-1) His contribution, which discussed recent fractures in the relationship, positioned the divisions in contrast to a ‘heritage of involvement’[[2]](#footnote-2) shared by the groups. This article, and the Presidential address on which it is based, seeks to add to such analyses by offering an overview of trends in shared Jewish and Quaker history, focussing on their position as religious minorities, at times severely persecuted, and certainly stereotyped in ways which led at times to claims by those in power that Jews and Friends were almost interchangeable. Three broad questions addressed to some degree within it, are as follows:

First of all, why were Jews, including Jewish history, useful or important to early Friends? Although it may be difficult to conceive of early Friends as utilising another, much maligned, religious minority in instrumentalised ways, it is useful to consider how and to what extent Quakers wrote about Jews in the 1650s, the initial period of the development of Friends as a religious movement, and also the decade in which Jews were readmitted, in 1656 (although there is some scholarly debate over the extent to which their readmission was formally recognised).

Secondly, why were Jews and Quakers useful to non-Quakers and non-Jews? While this in many ways seems obvious – how would respectable, in the main, hardworking and honest citizens not be useful to wider society? – it is also possible to offer a rather more pessimistic account, not as an alternative to accounts of Friends, for example, as being noted and respected by many of their neighbours for their good behaviour, by as an addendum to it. It is certainly the case that, as Rosemary Moore notes, that ‘[n]eighbours or relatives might pay fines for Quakers’,[[3]](#footnote-3) suggesting Friends’ key role in wider society. However, this section of the article will give an overview of the other ways that Friends and the Jewish community of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were useful – in short, because they could be usefully stereotyped, and compared to each other, as part of a project by the Anglican authorities to restrict their influence and perpetuate stock characterisations of groups whose existence continued to threaten, or at least disquiet, those in charge.

Thirdly, why should the Jewish and Quaker past be useful and important to Quakers and Jews now? This concluding section draws on analysis of recent uses of the shared Quaker and Jewish past, on the work of Tony Stoller amongst others, offering further thoughts about how, and why, in the aftermath of the British Yearly Meeting decision to undertake specific boycotting of goods from illegally occupied territories, some British Jewish and Israeli media outlets have responded using reference to our shared history, and have used this to frame conflicting interpretations of how their readers ought to view Friends’ decision. It also considers what we as Quakers might learn from this including, perhaps, how our shared history might be a good stepping stone in a particularly divisive period of British history, to seek some understanding if not consensus.

Returning to the first question, of how and why Jews were useful to early Friends, it is important to remember that not all commentators supported Jewish appeals and some criticised Quakers and Jews in the same publications. Although there does not seem much, if any, evidence of Quakers arguing against Jewish readmission, there were several strident Anglican voices arguing that to allow Jews back into England would be catastrophic. In particular, William Prynne also referred to Quakers who at the point at which his *A short demurrer to the Jewes long discontinued barred remitter into England* of 1656 were a new religious group considered almost as problematic. As part of his lengthy and extremely antisemitic account, Prynne notes how events that allegedly occurred in the thirteenth century would be repeated:

Jews were no sooner transported and settled in Rhoan [Rohan?] and London, but they presently began to grow very insolent against the Christians… will not this be their very practise now, if readmitted, to the hazard of our Christian Religion, and seduction of many simple, unstable souls, in this unsetled [sic], apostatizing age? When not only the ignorant people, but many great Professors, turn Atheists, Hereticks, Seekers, Apostates, Blasphemers, Ranters, Quakers, Antiscripturists, and what not…[[4]](#footnote-4)

Prynne then repeats well-worn medieval antisemitic tropes of the Jew as the kidnapper and murderer of Christian children, their bodies used in devilish magical practices, much as Quakers were accused of bewitching followers.[[5]](#footnote-5) Such accusations find a precursor in the previous century, in which, Bernard Glassman asserts, Catholics, Jews and witches were linked ‘as part of the general “Menace” of that age’.[[6]](#footnote-6) Prynne also warns that the Jews would become violent, threatening the order of the state, if Christians rejected the opportunity to convert to Judaism. For authors like Prynne, a frustrated Presbyterian and, in the mid-1650s, a frustrated lawyer and former MP, Quakers were part of the current catastrophe, symptomatic of the unsettled age, which would only worsen if the readmission, debated in Parliament, was allowed.

In a work of the same year his commentary on Jews and Quakers developed further. With *A new discovery of some Romish emissaries, Quakers* (1656) Prynne perpetuated the assertion that Friends were crypto-Catholics and therefore fundamentally untrustworthy, in a way similar to that made about Jews in the sixteenth century, as Glassman, amongst others, has noted. Prynne was able to develop his claims yet further, though, by also referring to Quakers as ‘extraordinary disguised Missionary[s] of the Pope’ who had procured ‘Letters of recommendation… that the Antichristian Infidel Jews themselves should be specially invited to come and reside amongst us…’[[7]](#footnote-7) By also referring to ‘Ramsy the Scotish Jesuite (under the mask of a Converted Jew)’[[8]](#footnote-8) Prynne was referring to the well-known case of Thomas Ramsay, a London-born Jesuit who, in Ariel Hessayon’s words, ‘was circumcised at Rome and masqueraded as Joseph ben Israel, a Jew… from Mantua’[[9]](#footnote-9) and who attempted to infiltrate a Baptist congregation in Hexham before being exposed as a ‘false Jew’ in 1653. Prynne’s inclusion of Ramsay completed a perceived cycle of Catholic – Quaker – Jew – Catholic which was a development of the previous century’s homogenizing of Jews and Catholics, which had been particularly common in the later sixteenth century after Queen Elizabeth’s Jewish physician, Roderigo Lopez, a Portuguese double agent, was found guilty of involvement in plots against her life.[[10]](#footnote-10)

Quakers, though, were in general rather more positive, both about the possibility of readmission, and Jews as a group more broadly. Their published discussion of Jews falls into three broad categories, and at this point the work of scholars such as Richard Allen and Sally Bruyneel must be acknowledged, who have recently written about correspondence between missionary Quakers and Margaret Fell regarding their efforts to convert the Jewish community in the Netherlands and Germany, rather than the community who had moved to England, and about the theological contribution of Fell, respectively.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The first category considers published works dealing directly with readmission, such as Margaret Fell’s *A Loving Salutation to the Seed of Abraham among the Jewes* of 1656, offered a parallel in some ways to James Nayler’s *A Salutation to the Seed of God* of the previous year. Whilst Nayler’s work positioned his intended readers, who were not yet Quakers, as Old Testament Jews, oppressed by Babylon and Egypt,[[12]](#footnote-12) Fell’s work was, though, aimed directly at Jews, and implicitly, by using traditional Christian metaphors for Jesus’ redeeming death, suggested readmission might lead to conversion. The publication’s title sheet noted that ‘The way of truth opened to them, which is the way of holinesse… for the ransomed and redeemed to return to Zion’.[[13]](#footnote-13) That Fell was keen for this to be read widely is suggested by the inclusion of a parallel text in Hebrew, in its second edition, which the Jewish philosopher Baruch Spinoza may have translated for her.[[14]](#footnote-14) In another of the same year (1656), intended specifically *For Manasseth* [sic] *ben Israel*, the Rabbi of the Dutch Jewish congregation being addressed, Fell more explicitly refers to ‘this is hee which brings Salvation, unto Jewes and Gentiles’ and states that she hopes Rabbi ben Israel is ‘the Jew inwardly, whose praise is not of men but of God.’[[15]](#footnote-15) Two years later, George Fox too, as part of his address *To the protector and parliament of England* in 1658 asserted his belief that neither Anglican nor Catholic churches were weighty enough to facilitate the conversion of the Jews.[[16]](#footnote-16) Fascinatingly, Fox puts himself in the position of a Jewish potential convert, unconvinced by Anglicanism:

What, we must forsake one Temple which God hath commanded to be made, and come to your Temple with a Crosse at the end of it, set up of your own invention which God never commanded?[[17]](#footnote-17)

Implicitly, the true biblical manner of worship must be, it seems, Friends’ meetings. Richard Hubberthorne’s *An answer to a declaration* (1659), his criticism of Anabaptists makes a similar implicit call for Quaker labour towards Jewish conversion as, he alleges, Anabaptists refused to tolerate Jews and therefore lost an opportunity to convert them.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Although it has been thought that some Friends’ motivations were based on a millenarian desire to see Jews converted in order to instigate the Second Coming, with Fell, for example, using universal analogies about the inward and outward Jew but also ‘literally applicable description[s]’, as Judith Kegan Gardiner notes,[[19]](#footnote-19) it is to Friends’ credit that they viewed Jews as a group of people capable of conversion to Christianity: from at least the sixteenth to at least the eighteenth centuries, Jews were believed to have a distinctive smell which was initially ascribed to a curse from God although later to diet but due to the former interpretation, rendered them merely ‘Christian Jews’.[[20]](#footnote-20) For Quakers, it seems, conversion was key to making Quakers, albeit with the spiritual bonus points of succeeding where other denominations were likely to fail. Certainly, scholars such as Bruyneel have noted that even if the Second Coming for Friends related to the Inner Light, a spiritual rather than bodily return,[[21]](#footnote-21) this was also possible for Jews. In her initially controversial work *The Daughter of Sion awakened* (1677), which had fallen foul of the Second Day Morning Meeting initially and was deemed to require corrections,[[22]](#footnote-22) Fell emphasized that Jews and Gentiles were equally likely to be redeemed if they ‘come unto God by Him’[[23]](#footnote-23) suggesting that this view of Jews was Quaker orthodoxy by the later 1670s. Indeed, Isaac Penington’s‘booke to the Jews Nationall and Spirituall’ [sic], which had been immediately agreed to be printed by the Morning Meeting in late 1676[[24]](#footnote-24), similarly although rather less sympathetically noted that in ‘a day of mercy and love’, if Jews ‘sought after the Lord their God’ He might be revealed within them.[[25]](#footnote-25) Perhaps Fell’s greater sympathy for the Jewish people had become problematic by the 1670s and required greater elaboration in a decade in which persecution of Friends remained high and anti-Quaker works continued to liken them to Jews, as is discussed shortly. Certainly, analysis of the Second Day Morning Meeting minutes, which notionally contain references to all Quaker publications from the meeting’s inception in 1673, refer to only a handful of works dealing with Quaker-Jewish relations, historical, literal or theological, which seems to suggest a lessening desire to contemplate Friends’ links to a group, the members of which remained the victims of centuries-old prejudice.

The second way in which early Friends referred to Jews is as the Biblical people of God, honourable precursors to Friends, and in this respect Bruyneel sees Quakers as differing from surrounding culture.[[26]](#footnote-26) Certainly, alongside Fell’s work, the use of the metaphor of the inward Jew can be found in several other works of the 1650s aimed primarily at non-Jewish readers. Richard Popkin asserts that Friends self-identification as ‘internal Jews’ led to their especial interest in visiting or communicating with Jewish communities across the world;[[27]](#footnote-27) for example Richard Hubberthorne, writing in *The rebukes of a reviler fallen upon his own head* (1657), noted the need for Friends to aspire to be ‘a Jew inward’ receiving God’s praise rather than the world’s.[[28]](#footnote-28) The following year George Fox too in *The pearle found in England* (1658) observed that ‘he is a true Christian that hath Christ in him, as he was a true Jewe, who was one inward’.[[29]](#footnote-29) The inward and outward Jew dichotomy was sometimes expressed more viscerally with references to the circumcised and uncircumcised, or physical and spiritual circumcision, as Fox outlines in *Newes coming out of the North* in 1655, during discussion of the possibility of readmission.[[30]](#footnote-30) In later years Fox wrote further of Jews, often using his interpretation of the Old Testament as an example of those who had failed to recognise Jesus, such as in *A testimony of the true light of the world* (1657),[[31]](#footnote-31) which perhaps reflects frustration at the limited success of Quakers engaging with those members of the Dutch Jewish community who remained[[32]](#footnote-32) but Fox was sometimes more positive.

Certainly, a third way in which the first generation of Quakers referred to Jews can be seen through examples of greater positivity, especially in Fox’s works, which include references to Jewish traditions. As David S. Katz noted 30 years ago, and other scholars have since explored, English philosemitism developed from the sixteenth century and stemmed in part from a desire to better understand the Old Testament. Katz’ study of philosemitism has included research specifically focussing on Quaker interest in Jews[[33]](#footnote-33) and Fox’s work offers examples of this, such as his comments in the 1658 *Reply to the pretended vindication of the answer to the Quakers 23 Quaeryes* that Anglicans’ use of tithes fell short of

the Law that was among the Jews, which was to have a Store-house, and all the widows and strangers fil’d; not a Beggar among them… But you are like unto the Heathen, that take tythes, whose Beggars and Strangers are scattered up and down for bread.[[34]](#footnote-34)

However, the same work also refers to ‘the hard-hearted Jews’,[[35]](#footnote-35) or in *The Great Mistery* of the following year Fox likens all non-Quakers to Jews for ignoring Friends’ immediate revelation; in the same work he refers to ‘Jewes, Witches and Reprobates’,[[36]](#footnote-36) equally worthy of condemnation for ignoring preaching, so it seems unwise to offer a blanket conclusion that Fox can be consistently considered philosemitic, and perhaps more a man of his time, frustrated by the limited success of Quakers preaching to Dutch Jewish congregations, who yet did show empathy for Jews in many of his works. In a similar fashion, Nayler’s 1655 *A Salutation to the seed of God* criticised contemporary non-Quaker Christians for being too like Jews for their striving ‘about outward washings’,[[37]](#footnote-37) possibly a reference to water baptism and certainly intended as a rejection of Jewish tradition.

A more unusual way in which Robert Rich, self-declared disciple of Nayler, represented himself two years later (1657) appears in *A true narrative of the examination, tryall and sufferings of James Nayler*: Rich asserted that he was ‘sirnamed [sic], Mordecai’, a biblical figure whose activities saved the Jews from destruction, as celebrated in the Feast of Purim; he added that he was part of ‘the Seed of the Jews, which wait for the consolation of Israel’.[[38]](#footnote-38) Rich’s direct self-representation as a biblical figure seems to have been unusual, and Rich was a controversial figure due to his ongoing support for Nayler even after Nayler’s controversial entry into Bristol on horseback in November 1656, in supposed imitation of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. Nayler’s actions *may* have been intended to encourage viewers to see him in this context, whereas Rich made explicit links on his and Nayler’s behalf. Rich may, though, have been largely intending to do as other Friends had done, and suggest links between Friends and devout Jews.

An example of Quakers’ unpublished, positive depictions of Jews, alongside people of other religions, can be found in the writings of travelling ministers such as Daniel Baker, a Friend of Ratcliff Meeting who had in his own words, ‘been amongst Turks, Jews, Barbarians, Heathens & Infidels…of most Nations of Men’, before concluding that his treatment at their hands was less severe than that which he had received ‘in this Town’, Shrewsbury. This grieved him, he wrote, because ‘they that professed not at all Christianity did me no harm as to my outward Man and Liberty’, unlike ‘the Men of my own nation & Native Country.’[[39]](#footnote-39) Although likely to have been intended to emphasize the appalling treatment experienced by Quakers at English non-Quaker hands , it yet suggests a relatively gentle treatment by members of the various religious groups listed (although this was prior to his captivity in Algiers in 1677 and the threatened execution of one of the Friends with whom he was travelling.)[[40]](#footnote-40)

It also seems appropriate to consider Jewish responses to Quaker works and Quaker activities. Possibly a form of reply to Margaret Fell and other Quakers’ correspondence with Dutch Jews, and Fell’s published works, Manasseh ben Israel’s 1656 work *Vindiciae Judaeorum*, intended as a rebuttal to antisemitic works such as Prynne’s, refers intriguingly to ‘all the friends of truth, and all faithfull Christians’[[41]](#footnote-41) whom he hopes will grant credit to his account. Although it is not a definitive reference to Quakers, it is not unthinkable that Rabbi ben Israel might signal his awareness of them in a work such as this.

In addition to Quaker works which sometimes acknowledged parallels between devout Quakers and devout Jews, those outside of either community also made links between the groups, although these were rarely positive and instead are revealing of the ‘usefulness’ of such groups to the majority. Prynne’s work is one example which we have already seen, and further cases can be found for the following two centuries: Matt Goldish has noted, for example, the links made in the 1660s between the alleged Quaker Messiah James Nayler, and messianic Jewish groups in Poland; Goldish suggests that the link may have been real to the extent that Quaker missionaries in Izmir and Jerusalem may have influenced what he terms the ‘Sabbatean outbreak’ as information and publications, some in Hebrew, may have entered ports with Quaker merchants or missionaries and have been carried west to Poland over the course of the next few years.[[42]](#footnote-42) However, that Dutch pastors working in the Middle East propagated claims about the links which were intended to represent both Quakers and Sabbatean Jews as misguided in the extreme is revealing perhaps of religious authorities’ anxieties about the growth and potential toleration of rival religious groups in the area and in Europe, where the accounts were published. Rosemary Moore notes a similar tendency, with Anglican ministers such as Jonathan Clapham, who in his *Guide to the true Religion* of 1667 rejected certain groups, including Jews but Friends too, from a proposed national church.[[43]](#footnote-43) Later in the same century, the Dutch pastor Gerardus Croese suggested that Jews and some Quakers agreed about the doctrine of reincarnation.[[44]](#footnote-44) Croese was also keen to note Fox’s apparent hypocrisy in sending books published only in English – as opposed presumably to Hebrew – to Jewish communities in Amsterdam in the 1670s, which again acknowledges Friends’ known activities but uses them to depict the growing denomination as suspiciously similar to an existing and often maligned religious minority.

In the same decade although in England, an anonymous author sought to offer a rather different, although in many ways a typically scurrilous account of alleged Quaker activities. In *The Quaker turn’d Jew* of 1675, it was alleged that an unmarried male Friend in the Isle of Ely, burning with desire for the wife of another Quaker, arranged to meet with her in a pigsty, the only private place they could find. Having been caught in the act, he ‘circumcised himself out of zeal for a certain case of conscience’[[45]](#footnote-45) and informed ‘the heads of his Sect’ that he had

cut off the unruly Member… but this the She Friends, at the next Assembly, violently opposed… no Person unfit for the Work of Generation, ought to be admitted to their Communion.

In response the man ‘resolved never more to eat Swines Fleshe because of the unhappy Adventure of the Hogg-stye.’[[46]](#footnote-46)

Such accounts of religious minorities – whether Quaker, Jewish or Catholic, amongst others – engaging in illicit sexual activity, were common in the second half of the seventeenth century and many ballads of the period cover much the same ground, as the Bodleian Broadside Ballads collection reveals. This account, though, differs from many in that we again see a melding of Jews and Quakers, albeit in the body of one man, and we also have Friends’ response to the allegations. The account both refers to the limitations of Quakerism, describing it as a ‘Mock-Religion’[[47]](#footnote-47) before representing Judaism in similar terms, focussing on circumcision, which is also linked to castration, and to diet as the only, limited requirements. Ellis Hookes’ response of the same year, *The Quakers acquitted*, asserts that the original account is ‘a cursed Lye’ but to make sure that Friends could prove this to be untrue,

we sent to the Isle of Ely to have an account from the Inhabitants, who write as followeth: …we have enquired from several of our Meetings… and do Certifie… we have never known nor heard of any such Person[.][[48]](#footnote-48)

His response originated with the Second Day Morning Meeting who in early 1675 considered this and similar works, aiming ultimately, and fruitlessly, to ‘put a Stopp to such gross scandalous Pamphlets’.[[49]](#footnote-49) However, Hookes’ efforts likely did little to minimise the harm intended by the original publication, which sought to continue the work of likening problematic groups in an effort to make them seem at best ridiculous and at worst a threat that should be obliterated, to the majority.

Such parallels continued to be made into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; following is a brief overview. Perhaps the most pertinent stems from the comments of the early eighteenth-century Anglican priest and author Thomas Lewis, whose periodical *The Scourge in vindication of the Church of England* was published from 1717 to the early 1720s. The work often referred to the dangers faced by a beleaguered Anglican church and the insolence of Protestant dissenters, and this no doubt informed Lewis’ decision to assert in June 1717, by way of introduction to the issue, that

It is impossible to be in the Streets without observing what a Multitude of Quakers appear among us all of a sudden; and they affect to stalk along by Couples, in so slow and sullen a Manner, that they force the gay and active Part of the World into the Kennels, and perfectly make a Stoppage in the publick Passages of the City….

Lewis went on, noting that Yearly Meeting also, allegedly, meant that

the Fraternity of Porters are drawing up a Petition to the Magistrate… either to turn them into the Coach-way, or to retrench the Circumference of their Hats and Cloaks, which are a great Offence to his Majesty’s Leige People, whose Livelihood depends upon Speed….

Not only were Friends slowing down London’s very economy with their presence, they were also hypocritical, for some ‘dapper and mercurial Youths, who cock up their Hats close, cannot spare you an inch out of a whole Coat, and skip by you with all the Ease and Agility imaginable.’ However, more pertinent for this paper is Lewis’ next assertion, that:

The Religion of a Quaker has a great deal of Judaism intermixt with it, and they always observe an Annual Rendezvous in this City to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, the Divinity of the Holy Ghost being an Article of Faith they absolutely deny: Hither every Congregation of them in the Kingdom send up their Emissaries, to give account of the Proceedings of the Conventicle.

The account continues, outlining Quakers’ apparent obsession with dress before describing George Fox as an ‘Apocryphal Religion-Broker… more like a Mahomitan [sic] than a Christian’[[50]](#footnote-50) in an effort, it seems, to liken Friends to non-Christian groups, and especially in the case of Jews, to a particularly maligned minority, in order to position both or all of these groups as similarly lacking, a point to which I will return, although it is also significant that in February of the same year, Lewis described Friends as appearing ‘perfectly foreign’ in terms of their dress, demeanour and use of language[[51]](#footnote-51), pointing to a desire to make a group originating in the British Isles seem utterly other.

An example from the following century gives us another flavour of non-Quakers likening Friends and Jews in order to vilify both groups for failing to be Christian, in the case of Jews, and for failing to be the right sort of Christian, in the case of Friends. When the essayist Charles Lamb asserted in 1821 that ‘a moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker’[[52]](#footnote-52) his comparison implied, as Aaron Kaiserman notes of Lamb’s representation of Jews, the ‘essentially separative’[[53]](#footnote-53) nature of both groups. This alleged separatism will shortly be considered in more detail, with reference to the idea of ‘othering’. For now, it is enough to note that Lamb, a respected author albeit a dissenter, asserted that both Jews and Quakers were keen to withdraw from wider society, perhaps in order to blame them for any oppression experienced and to encourage their depiction as outsiders. Consideration of Jews alongsideQuakers offers, then, an opportunity to better understand aspects of Friends’ history, and to raise broader questions regarding minorities, with resentment informing both groups’ depiction even by a non-Anglican. Perhaps this resulted from Lamb’s personal dislike of both groups, or of groups perceived to be absenting themselves from wider society; certainly, it suggests that assertions of the groups’ similarities remained in the minds of some commentators into the nineteenth century.

It is useful at this point to think about what this tells us about representatives of other religious groups, as much as about Jews or Quakers. Perhaps the groups were likened in the Interregnum by writers such as Prynne to evidence their dangerous and potentially treasonous behaviour, as foreign – in the case of Jews – or otherwise socially and politically disruptive forces. Jews were obviously not Christian, and as has been discussed, at key points Quakers’ Christianity was refuted in order to better reject their claims – theologically and socio-politically – to offer an alternative to existing denominations. Even in the eighteenth century, after the 1689 Toleration Act allowed Protestant minorities such as Friends to worship freely, Quakers continued to be prosecuted for non-payment of tithes, and the Anglican church as a whole, Donald Spaeth asserts, was perceived by members and especially clergy to be living in an age of danger; as an example, the 1736 Quaker Tithe Bill was viewed by bishops as an ‘assault on their jurisdiction’.[[54]](#footnote-54) In this context of Anglican anxiety an overspill into representations of minority groups perceived to be behind such assaults, or in earlier decades, planned assaults, is not surprising.

This may also point to deeper roots of anti-Quakerism and antisemitism in English society by the eighteenth century: in order to unpick this it is useful to consider two related theories, one literary and one philosophical in origin, which can be applied in order to gain an idea of how and why Jews and Quakers proved a useful tool for Anglican – in the main – post-Interregnum identity building.

The first theory is literary and originates with Seymour Chatman’s work on flat characterisation in novels, plays and other types of fictional work. Chatman suggested that such works might include characters which were far from three dimensional and which, instead, drew upon stereotypes of kinds of people – whether based on occupation, social status, gender or other factors such as religion. Audience expectations of what an elderly Quaker man, for example, would behave like, would give the character a third dimension and were almost certainly based on decades-long circulation of such stereotypes, which would flavour their interpretation of a character onstage or in a novel. The ‘evidence announced’[[55]](#footnote-55) about the character would be interpreted in ways that matched existing prejudices, in the case of non-Quaker and non-Jewish interpretations of those groups. This can certainly be seen in some of the later and less detailed accounts of Friends; non-Quaker readers of *The Quaker turn’d Jew* (1675), for example, were expected to be able to fill in the blanks and ‘know’ how and why such events would have occurred, informed both by stereotypes of Quakers – not a real religion – and Jews – only recognisable by circumcision and a refusal to eat pork.

The second theory originates in philosophy and drew initially on the work of Hegel, whose Master-Slave dialectic discussed in his 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit[[56]](#footnote-56)* has been utilised to assist later scholars’ efforts to understand othering, which is to say, how and why some groups are or were depicted as different from and, more significantly for their experience, lesser to, others. Neither of the two parties can die as to do so would be to lose the opportunity to recognise the other and achieve self-consciousness; instead, one is enslaved to the other, with the slave fearing the master’s death and hence the loss of self-consciousness. However, the slave can then go on to develop further because of this experience of fear. Simone de Beauvoir’s analysis of women’s position in *The Second Sex* (1949)[[57]](#footnote-57) is an example of later uses of Hegel; she and more recent scholars note how otherness is less about real than perceived difference which helps the dominant maintain superiority and oppress others.[[58]](#footnote-58)

However, the other side of the same coin is that the dominated might be liberated from the expectation that they will be able to be part of the status quo. If, as de Beauvoir suggested in the 1940s, men were the norm of personhood, therefore this liberation might apply to women under certain circumstances. Arguably, then, in the 1660s Anglican men were the norm of personhood, at least according to English authorities, and those who did not meet this standard were othered. But by being othered, they might also share with other othered groups a sense of common history, as de Beauvoir suggests, and this space – of otherness but with also the potential for sustaining and developing alternative ways of living – may have worked well for Friends, who by the later 1650s were developing what was to be known as the Peace Testimony, as well as continued support for spiritual gender equality and, within a few decades, the first seedlings of abolitionism in a manner unknown to the majority.

Although it may be a bridge too far to suggest something parallel for the Jewish community, certainly de Beauvoir’s idea of a shared common history between and within oppressed groups[[59]](#footnote-59) may help us to contextualise examples of Jewish-Quaker shared self-development: Geoffrey Cantor’s work on Quakers, Jews and Science offers a wonderful account of interest in science, with comparisons between Quakers and Jews and discussion of Quaker and Jewish members of the Royal Society.[[60]](#footnote-60) There is also some evidence of genuine, rather than alleged, conversions between the two faiths; Robert Michael Smith has written of later eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Anglo-Jewish conversion to Quakerism[[61]](#footnote-61) and Popkin notes how in the Netherlands in the late 1650s the English Quaker Samuel Fisher attended synagogue and lived, in Popkin’s view, as ‘almost a Jewish Quaker’.[[62]](#footnote-62) The authorities’ use of the two groups to signify the ultimate other, then, may have backfired in that it encouraged some members to consider the best spiritual path to sustain themselves through periods of oppression.

At this point it is useful to consider a series of publications written neither by Quakers nor Jews, not aimed specifically at either group, but which often depicted them in stereotypical terms which in many ways drew implicit parallels between them for the benefit of primarily Anglican, urban readers. This again aims to interrogate the usefulness of both communities to those outside it, and particularly to those in power, considering in which ways they were implicitly likened, and how they were seen to differ. Edwina Newman has published in *Quaker Studies* on the usefulness of the Old Bailey records as part of Quaker history, both as a source to gain information on occasions when Friends appeared in the court, the central criminal court in London, but also to garner a sense of how and why Quakers were depicted in certain limited ways in the published *Proceedings* which appeared shortly after trials.[[63]](#footnote-63) For example, it is apparent that especially before 1778, selection of trials for publication led to overemphasis on types of crime and victims or perpetrators likely to entertain readers. This continued until the City of London took control, because revolt in the American colonies and fear of subsequent social upheaval at home led to a desire to represent the court, and by extension legal system, as protecting citizens' rights.[[64]](#footnote-64)

A key example from the Proceedings, which were based on the accounts taken by shorthand note takers present at the trials that nicely embodies the flat characterization of Friends mentioned earlier, is used by Newman too and simply alleges that during the trial of Sarah Willaw for theft in 1727, a Quaker witness to a crime ‘through inadvertency pull’d off his hat, of which being told, took pet, and ran out of court.’ Newman then goes on to discuss the appearance of Quakers elsewhere in the same publication, in an advertisement for a salacious publication depicting Friends as lustful hypocrites[[65]](#footnote-65) and this wider context is very important; both the context within each publication, but also the wider historical context informing how such unnamed figures might be interpreted by a readership seeking amusement and probably not minded to be sympathetic.

It is also possible to offer some areas of comparison in terms of the representation of Quakers and Jews in the same publication. For example, in the few murder trials which included a Quaker victim, the description of the deceased suggests ongoing resentment of Friends and, likely, other minority groups. The first such example, an account from 1696 of the execution of Thomas Randal, refers to his victim Roger Levens as “the Quaker” on all but one occasion, emphasizing the murdered man's, and by implication Quakerism’s, inferior status, even after, or possibly because of, the Toleration Act which some Anglicans did not support and may also point, alongside the representations of Friends outlined earlier, to the ongoing suspicion of Quakers as not entirely Christian or, at least, not entirely Protestant.[[66]](#footnote-66) The account of the trial of Porter Ridout in October 1784 suggests a continued view held by the majority of readers of Jews as similarly lacking; despite the tragic death of a young boy, Moses Lazarus, who was undoubtedly killed by the bullet that Porter Ridout fired into a crowd celebrating Simchat Torah, the description of the crowd as rowdy mirrors Todd Endelman’s remarks on the later Georgian stereotype of criminal Jews and possibly due to this Ridout was found not guilty.[[67]](#footnote-67) Nevertheless, Lazarus is referred to by name or as “the deceased”; he was not depersonalized, in contrast to Rogers Levens. As the account of Lazarus’ death was written decades after Levens’, the differences may, though, reflect stylistic changes or those originating with the City’s desire for fairness, as much as a difference between the representation of Quakers and Jews.

Both groups faced, then, a perception by wider society that they were still criminal, or at least undesirable. The frequent use of Old Testament references in the *Ordinary’s Accounts*, a publication also related to the Old Bailey which were authored by Anglican priests who ministered to the prisoners,serves to emphasize this point; in a manner similar to the inclusion of advertisements for salacious anti-Quaker literature alongside trial accounts, condemned criminals were sometimes described as sharing ‘the Jews[’] Willfulness and Stubbornness’.[[68]](#footnote-68) References were made to Biblical Jews’ failure to convert to Christianity in a third – 9 out of 30 - of Ordinary’s Accounts published in the 1730s to 1740s, the publication’s most intense period of antisemitism. This may relate to the increased numbers of poor Ashkenazim migrants in England c.1720-50, which likely met with growing anxiety on the part of authorities who drew upon antisemitism to encourage fears of Jewish criminality.[[69]](#footnote-69) Conflation of Jews and Quakers in seventeenth- to nineteenth-century culture, as has been outlined already, may then have perpetuated the positioning of both as criminal: Jews were marginalized for their rejection of Christianity and Quakers were likened to Jews; anti-Quaker accounts also criticized Friends’ rejection of the established church and tithes, such as Charles Leslie’s 1696 *The snake in the grass*[[70]](#footnote-70) which, with their historical criminality as dissenters, was enough to mark them as similarly ‘othered’.

Theft cases also provide a second comparable example of the treatment of both groups. In two examples from the same decade there are similarities but also revealing differences that may suggest increased public awareness of aspects of Quaker testimony such as plainness. The published account of William Hurt and William Kenton’s trial for highway robbery of a Quaker family in January 1785 is particularly interesting.[[71]](#footnote-71) The trial relied upon the evidence of their coachman John Acksin, the only non-Quaker present, who could swear and who confirmed the items stolen, which were listed in detail, including Mrs Walker's purse, ‘a kind of sky blue... [with] trinkets of gold about it, or it was gilded a little’; Master Walker's was green. The Walkers’ apparent hypocrisy was deliberately highlighted with the description of items contrasting with Friends' aesthetics. It is useful, then, to compare this case to accounts of wealthy Jews in the same decade: David Levy was assaulted and robbed by Henry Jacobs, a distant cousin, in 1782 and had valuable belongings stolen, in this instance a gold medal, silver cups, gold rings and a quantity of money. However, while ‘othering’ was attempted in both accounts, the latter likely confirmed non-Jewish expectations of Jewish wealth, rather than the charge of hypocrisy implicitly levied at Friends who were likely expected to be wealthy but not ostentatiously so.

However, Quakers also failed as citizens in their refusal to swear, meaning that trials for crimes such as murder could not include Quaker testimony as Friends were not allowed to affirm in such cases and in this respect, unlike Jews, were depicted as problematic: it is important to remember that not all trials were published before 1778, and so each was included deliberately, including that involving Mary Bland, a Quaker midwife whose actions led to the servant Hannah Perfect’s acquittal after a trial for infanticide in January 1747.[[72]](#footnote-72) Bland was the only reliable witness but refused to swear and so could not testify. Her refusal was likely viewed as a failure to act as an expert witness, supporting the alleged perpetrator, and failing in her duty to uphold social norms.[[73]](#footnote-73) She, and by implication Quakers, were othered again, to the frustration, yet possibly comfort, of the Anglican authorities and readership.

The final section of this article relates not to events in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries but to more recent years, and to the use of the past by Jews and Quakers to understand our relationship and its potential in future years. It focusses on the use of the past in the British and Israeli, Quaker and Jewish, press and particularly in relation to reporting on Friends’ position on Israel and Palestine. Tony Stoller has offered significant insights in this area, noting a shift in the twenty-first century to an antagonistic rather than positive relationship.[[74]](#footnote-74) Like Stoller, both *The Friend* and the *Jewish Chronicle* are used in this article as exemplars of Quaker and Jewish press respectively, but reference will also be made to the Israeli newspaper and news website *Haaretz*, and the British *Guardian* newspaper, in an effort to gain a sense of messages being disseminated by Jews, Quakers, and others about a shared past.

Quite understandably, Stoller seeks to begin the Jewish-Quaker story with the *Kindertransport* organised by British Quakers and Jews, amongst others, to preserve the lives of endangered Jewish and other children in what is today the Czech Republic just before the beginning of the Second World War, and Quaker relief work in liberated camps and elsewhere in Europe towards the end of, and after, the conflict. Jews, he suggests, felt they had experienced extraordinary – a super-equivalence – of compassion at Quaker hands and this ‘mythologizing’ and simplifying of a complex situation then flavoured later responses to Friends’ decisions regarding Israel.[[75]](#footnote-75) When boycotting of goods produced in the occupied territories was being discussed by 2011, the *Jewish Chronicle*, as Stoller notes, covered the discussions in very hostile terms, with Geoffrey Alderman offering an account of ‘How Quakers turned spiteful’.[[76]](#footnote-76) Ultimately, Stoller suggests that the close relationship enjoyed by the two religions in Britain in the later twentieth century is unlikely to be restored soon, not least because it is no longer believed to be based on super-equivalence; close friends who can gently criticise each other. Instead, the uniqueness of Quakers is no longer referred to by Jewish representatives, Stoller suggests, and he goes so far as to suggest residual British antisemitism, dating from the pre-war period and indeed, arguably rather earlier, may indeed be apparent in some individual Quakers, which makes for difficult reading but is certainly not impossible. Whether it is the case that Quakers and Jews will never rekindle their relationship, as Stoller concludes seems less certain in the light of other reporting.[[77]](#footnote-77)

Certainly, the *Jewish Chronicle*’s is a discourse of disappointment at Friends’ behaviour pre- and post-2010, although Alderman does acknowledge historical ties, and interestingly begins with a reference to the late seventeenth-century Quaker architect Joseph Avis declining a fee for the construction of the Bevis Marks synagogue, although Alderman dismisses the account as ‘bubbe meise’, probably fictional but with a kernel of truth; other accounts, including that offered by the website of the Bevis Marks synagogue[[78]](#footnote-78), suggest Avis returned any monies given to him which had not been used in the construction. Alderman’s cynicism ostensibly appears to have been renewed by recent events; yet, when outlining reasons for a sense of betrayal, Alderman refers to early Jewish-Quaker positive interaction and acknowledges of a shared experience of being, in his words, ‘second-class citizens of the state in which they live.’[[79]](#footnote-79) Returning briefly to the idea of othering, then, Alderman’s comment does suggest a perceived shared history, the acknowledgement of which had benefitted both parties.

However, in contrast to the *JC*, it is also interesting to include the *Haaretz* coverage of Israel’s early 2018 blacklisting of several groups, including American Friends Service Committee, which similarly made reference to early Quaker history, but also advised caution; indeed Chemi Shalev, the newspaper’s US correspondent, asserts that ‘Israel’s blacklisting of Quakers is a crime against Jewish history’, noting the activities of Friends especially during the 1930s and 1940s, and questioning why no US Jewish groups have ‘stood up for the Quakers and reprimanded Israel for ignoring the history of the Jewish people.’[[80]](#footnote-80) He goes on to refer to the Israeli government’s ‘lack of historical gratitude’ and offers overall more of a sense that Jewish people – Israeli and American in the first instance - need to question the Israeli government’s activities, rather than rejecting a significant part of their shared history. That is not to suggest that Stoller is incorrect in his analysis of the UK Quaker and Jewish press; however, the global picture seems less uniform.

In a similar manner, while Stoller is correct to suggest that *The Friend* has published some discussions which seem to border on antisemitism, or could be interpreted as such, it has also offered insights including those from Friends with Jewish connections like Harvey Gillman, whose personal experience of the impact of the *Jewish Chronicle* article analysed by Stoller was to be informed by a reader of the *JC* that Quakers are antisemitic[[81]](#footnote-81) which does seem to very much bolster Stoller’s point about growing anxieties about Quakers, irrespective of a shared history, at least in the UK. The shared history itself does not seem to have been given much of a space for discussion in *The Friend*, which did though refer to a ‘long Quaker history of pursuing ethical investments’ in an article published after Stoller’s, outlining its pledge not to invest in companies benefitting from ‘the occupation of Palestine’.[[82]](#footnote-82) The absence of reference to Quaker involvement in the nascent Israeli state, or direct acknowledgement of the effects this might have on British Jewish people fearing recrimination, as Stoller outlines, was perhaps a missed opportunity to highlight other related aspects of Quaker history.

In conclusion, it seems that if *The Guardian*, neither a Jewish nor Quaker news outlet, makes reference to American Friends’ Service Committee’s role in ‘helping Holocaust refugees and that now supports self-determination for Israelis and Palestinians’,[[83]](#footnote-83) the use of careful contextualisation and framing of the past alongside the present cannot be beyond the capacity of British and other Quakers addressing a wide audience, including Jewish people both inside and outside the meeting house, in order to avoid greater othering – both perceived and actual – of members of the Jewish community by Quakers. A sobering historical example: despite noting the great success of Stephen Grellet’s address to the local Jewish community at a London meeting house, the anonymous author of a letter held at Friends House also, without apparent irony, noted ‘the general abhorrence which these people [Jews] entertain for Christians’[[84]](#footnote-84) before describing how Grellet’s next activity had been to visit all prisons, suggesting parallels for the nineteenth-century Quaker author, and their readers, between Jews and criminals, which was in a manner not dissimilar to the Old Bailey Proceedings. Bruyneel is right to remind us that Friends reflected and rejected different aspects of wider society in their earlier years, and awareness of the longer history of both groups, on the part of both, can only strengthen existing ties and might rebuild some: part of this must include recognition by Friends of antisemitism in Quaker history, alongside more laudable aspects.

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