George Eliot's notebooks from the years 1872-77 contain memoranda of her reading while she was preparing for and writing Daniel Deronda, together with the 'Oriental Memoranda' and other notes she recorded in the year following the novel's publication. Above all, the notebooks reveal her acquisition of a wide range of learning about Judaism, and provide insight into the creative process of integrating that learning into Daniel Deronda.

One of these notebooks is published here for the first time; others are offered in new transcriptions. They are presented in a form which demonstrates the intellectual coherence underlying the diversity of the memoranda: translations are provided for the notes in German, French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; explanatory headnotes are offered, and interpretative links are made to the novel; primary sources are traced and the chronology of George Eliot's reading outlined.
It may be doubted, whether a mind which has no susceptibility to the pleasure of changing its point of view, of mastering a remote form of thought, of perceiving identity of nature under variety of manifestation – a perception which resembles an expansion of one’s own being, a pre-existence in the past – can possess the flexibility, the ready sympathy, or the tolerance, which characterizes a truly philosophic culture. Now and then, however, we meet with a nature which combines the faculty for amassing minute erudition with the largeness of view necessary to give it a practical bearing; a high appreciation of the genius of antiquity, with a profound belief in the progressive character of human development … a wonderful intuition of the mental conditions of past ages with an ardent participation in the most advanced ideas and most hopeful efforts of the present …

From the first contribution to the Westminster Review by Marian Evans: her review of Robert William Mackay’s Progress of the Intellect, as Exemplified in the Religious Development of the Greeks and Hebrews

Some of his pages read like extracts from his common-place book, which must be, as Southey said of his own, an urn under the arm of a river-god … Only a devotedness of research such as his own, can give interest and significance to the mass of allusions and particulars …

Ibid.
Introduction

In the summer and autumn of 1872, while George Eliot was finishing the writing of Middlemarch, she was also making notes in the small portable book now known as Pforzheimer MS 711. This is the first of several books which include notes related to the novel she was to begin in 1874 and complete in 1876, Daniel Deronda. She finished the Finale to Middlemarch on October 2; a fortnight earlier, she and Lewes crossed the Channel to take the waters at Homburg, where on 26 September they saw amongst the roulette players 'Miss Leigh (Byron's granddaughter) having lost 500 £, looking feverishly excited. Painful sight' (GHL 1872 Diary). George Eliot also mentioned this scene, in a letter to John Blackwood, as 'the saddest thing to be witnessed'. Despite her comment to Blackwood that 'there is very little dramatic “Stoff” to be picked up by watching or listening' in the Kursaal, the source of the dramatic opening paragraphs of Daniel Deronda was the painful sight of Miss Leigh's play 'in the grasp of this mean, money-raking demon' (GEL V 314). But the written record of this ‘Stoff’ is to be found only in Lewes's Diary and George Eliot's letter to Blackwood. Her notebook recorded no observations from life, but was reserved for notes from her reading. For instance, her notes on gambling superstitions (Pf 711 40, 41) date from April 1874, when she looked up an article on the topic in the June 1872 Cornhill Magazine. By that time, having made 'sketches towards Daniel Deronda, [in] Jan. & Feb. 1874', she must have formed an intention to make gambling a dramatic scene and thematic motif in her novel. Yet there is only one indirect allusion in Daniel Deronda to 'the “axioms of a professional gambler and cheat”, as narrated by Houdin'. If we turn to the Cornhill article, we do not find there the source

1 'Order of Writings' in the GE Journal.
of certain glimpses, in the novel's first chapter, of an impassive Italian with an infallible system, or a worn-out libertine inspired by 'some dream of white crows'. In this instance little is gained by indefatigable searching into written sources. The matter that engages the reader in the opening chapter had its source in the painful impressions made during George Eliot's visit to the Kursaal in September 1872. For memories of that experience she needed no memoranda.1

As an introduction to an edition of George Eliot's memoranda, this exemplum is perhaps unduly sceptical. Caveat lector, if you will. On the other hand, George Eliot's distinction as a novelist lies in her power to locate vivid impressions and dramatized experience within a considered and comprehensive intellectual framework of reference. The intelligence which sustains her fiction is nourished by extensive preparatory reading. Her written records of that reading provide insight into a process of mental argument which may remain latent or scarcely manifest in the novel itself. In this regard, the Daniel Deronda Notebooks – the second part of the Berg Notebook, together with the Pforzheimer notebooks Pf 711, Pf 710 and Pf 707 – have peculiar significance. The predominantly Jewish content of George Eliot's notes must be pertinent to the critical problem of the disparity of reader response to the Jewish content of the novel. The disagreement among readers is summed up in Henry James's well-known 'Conversation': Constantius complains that 'all the Jewish burden of the story tended to weary me'; Theodora's rejoinder is that she thinks 'the Jewish element in Deronda ... a very fine idea; it's a noble subject'. But then, she says, she has 'never disliked the Jews, as some people do'. That is, she had no initial prejudice against Jews which the novel had to overcome. Pulcheria, in contrast, has an imagination which supplies each Jewish character, including Deronda, with 'a horrid big Jewish nose', even though the author makes no mention of it. Pulcheria has known some Jews, 'clever, but not charming'; clever or not, they kept themselves 'so dirty'. Clearly, any number of ablutions performed by fictional Jewish characters would not alter her opinion of real Jews known – or not known – to her.1 James's 'Conversation' dramatizes an implicit truth that must be acknowledged: Daniel Deronda has no power to convert readers to philosemitism, or even to diminish the strength of any aversion to Jews.

In a letter written to Harriet Beecher Stowe in October 1876, George Eliot admitted the impossibility of overcoming the usual English attitude towards Jews and other 'oriental peoples', a narrow-minded 'spirit of arrogance and contemptuous dictatorialness':

There is nothing I should care more to do, if it were possible, than to rouse the imagination of men and women to a vision of human claims in those races of their fellow-men who most differ from them in customs and beliefs. [Emphasis added.]

But in view of 'the intellectual narrowness – in plain English, the stupidity, which is still the average mark of our culture', she had only expected that 'the Jewish element in "Deronda" would [have created] much stronger resistance and even repulsion than it [had] actually met with'. Of her Christian readers, she had expected not to influence the conversion of opinion, but only to provoke 'more aversion' than, in the event, she found.2

Responses from her Jewish readers indicated a greater influence amongst them. In her journal entry for 1 December 1876, she notes: 'Words of gratitude have come from Jews & Jewesses, & there are certain signs that I may have contributed my mite to a good result'. That the result was not better Jewish–Christian fellowship is evident from the preceding statement that she had 'been made aware of much repugnance or else indifference towards the Jewish part of Deronda, & of some hostile as well as adverse reviewing'. A fortnight later she referred to an American Jew's assurance that Deronda had 'already had an elevating effect on the minds of some among his people', and to the editor of the Jewish Chronicle (Abraham Benisch), who had used 'strong words as to the effect the book [was] producing' among his readers. Four months later, she noted that she had had 'some delightful evidence of the great effect wrought by "Deronda", especially among Jews'.3

2 GEL VI 301–2; also reprinted in Carroll, pp. 405–6.
3 GE Journal, 1 and 15 December 1876 and 22 April 1877.
Jewish readers of the novel were amazed by the authenticity of the Jewish part of the novel. Lewes's diary entry for 6 June 1876 notes that he was told of 'an old Rabbi who marvelled how a Christian could so enter into the spirit of Judaism as G. Eliot'. The marvel was not that George Eliot could identify 'the talith or white blue-fringed kind of blanket which is the garment of prayer' (DD ch. 32: 338), or that she had acquainted herself with Jewish ceremonies, customs, and traditions, but that she had acquired so inward a comprehension of 'the spirit of Judaism'. As Sigmund Freud was to remark, George Eliot knew of things 'we [Jews] speak of only among ourselves'.

Her familiarity with Judaism was acquired in various ways, each having its fictional parallel in Daniel Deronda's education. Her visits to the Juden-gasse and Orthodox synagogue in Frankfurt produced a mixture of impressions; in the same settings Deronda experiences similarly powerful and resistant feelings. Like Deronda, she was acquainted with Jewish musicians and knew a young, petite and impoverished 'little Jewess'. George Eliot's friendship with Emanuel Deutsch, who taught her Hebrew, has its fictional complement in Mordecai's friendly instruction of Deronda: 'for somehow, in deference to Mordecai, he had begun to study Hebrew' (DD ch. 35: 384). Personal acquaintance with these and many other Jews certainly contributed to her sympathetic interest, as James surmises when he makes Theodora remark, 'George Eliot must have known some delightful Jews!' But such acquaintance does not account for her knowing what they spoke of only amongst themselves.

2 DD ch. 32. Compare GHL 1873 Diary entries for August 1, 8, 15, and 16, published in part in GEL V 425 and 427.
3 DD ch. 36: 405. On 10 March 1874 GE and GHL attended a private concert after an elegant dinner party, where Agnes Zimmerman performed, and they attended another concert by her on 28 November (GHL Diary). GE became acquainted with 'Hertha' Marks, a young and impoverished 'little Jewess' in September 1874, through Barbara Bodichon, and in 1875 and 1876 contributed to assist her study at Girton College; see GEL VI 83, and many later references. On 26 March 1875 'Barbara & Miss Marks [came] to dinner; after dinner Miss M. sang Hebrew Hymns'. On 4 April, a Sunday, 'Miss Marks sang' again at the Priory (GHL Diary).
4 Carroll, p. 423.

Emanuel Deutsch, as both friend and author, had a key role in the genesis of the novel. He has been identified as 'the probable model' for Mordecai and also as a source for Mirah.1 Readers of the Daniel Deronda Notebooks will come to see that in the novel's conception, his life was less influential than his literary remains. George Eliot's familiarity with his prolonged suffering from cancer and his wish to commit suicide no doubt informed her presentation of Mordecai's endurance and Mirah's suicide attempt.2 But without her inward understanding of Judaism, these characters might have been only vessels of pathos, comparable to Riah in Our Mutual Friend. After the death of Deutsch in Alexandria in May 1873, George Eliot corresponded with and visited Lady Strangford, the editor of the posthumous collection of his writings.3 The notes from Deutsch in Pf 711 are taken from this collection, which was published early in 1874. The Berg Notebook extracts from Deutsch were also made at this time, and not during the period from 1866 to 1869, when he was a regular visitor to the Priory. His essays are brief introductions to large topics – the Talmud, the Midrash – written for non-Jewish readers. George Eliot's notes from Deutsch are also brief; but she takes up his writings as if they were letters of introduction to a new world of literature, and sets out on her own kind of journey to the Orient.

A fortnight after receiving news of his death, George Eliot and Lewes visited Oxford, where on 7 June they met David Mocatta (GHL Diary). A wealthy philanthropist, of the seventh generation of a family which had settled in England in 1670, 'Mocatta did all he could to promote education, especially of the Jewish poor, and he encouraged Jewish literature and research' (DNB). Amongst other works, he funded the publication of books by Leopold Zunz and an English translation (in 1891) of Heinrich Graetz's History of the Jews. Mocatta's valuable collection of books on Judaism may have been that referred to by Oscar Browning: 'George Eliot obtained access to a large library of Jewish literature in London, and the books

1 Baker, in George Eliot and Judaism, p. 131, cites Deutsch as 'the probable model' for Mordecai, George Grove wrote to GE on 27 March 1876: 'You must have thought of our dear Deutsch when you conceived [Mirah's] character' (GEL IX 173).
2 Haight, p. 471, and GEL V 160–1.
3 Literary Remains of the Late Emanuel Deutsch (London: John Murray, 1874), edited anonymously by Emily Anne Beaufort, Viscountess Strangford. See the headnote to the 'Mohammed, the Hebrews in Egypt, and the colonization of Jerusalem' section, Pf711 43–46, 50, 51.
preserved still show traces of her untiring labours'. Alternatively, Browning's reference may be to her own acquired library; the books now preserved in Dr. Williams's Library still show those traces of her 'untiring labours'. Her acquisitions began in earnest that summer: Lewes's 1873 Diary records 'Books on Jewish subjects for Polly's novel' (in Frankfurt, 30 July), and on 27 August, after their return to London, he 'went into town & saw Haas about books for Polly on Judaism'.

George Eliot's 'Books Wanted' note on Pf 711 21 lists eighteen books, the primary reading for an intensive study of Jewish subjects. She immediately began reading and making notes. On 6 September 'Polly read Stanley's Palestine & Sinai aloud' (GHL Diary); her note from Sinai and Palestine on Pf 711 25 records the peculiar 'confluence of associations' in a land where 'side by side are to be seen the hieroglyphics of the great Ramses, the cunieform inscriptions of Sennacherib, the Latin inscriptions of the Emperor Antoninus'. But she soon turned her attention from the land of Palestine to the people whose national and religious history may be said to inscribe an even greater confluence of associations. 'Grätz Geschichte der Juden' was read daily from 14 September to 3 October, and on 4 October she began 'Milman's History of the Jews' (GHL Diary). Notes from her reading on Jewish subjects began to fill the small pages of Pf 711, beginning with two short notes from Milman on Pf 711 8. Her first Jewish note in the Berg Notebook combines material from Milman, Graetz, and Deutsch's essay on 'The Talmud'. Subsequent entries in the Berg Notebook are records of a concentrated programme of reading which preceded the writing of the novel's opening chapters: during the period from September 1873, through 'Sketches towards Daniel Deronda, Jan. & Feb. 1874', to Lewes's Diary entry for 11 June 1874: 'Polly read opening chapters of her new novel'.

1 Life of George Eliot (London: Walter Scott, 1890), p. 123. The Mocatta Collection was bequeathed to University College, London; however, much of the collection was destroyed by enemy action during the Second World War. The present Mocatta Collection in the University College Library is a partial restoration.

2 Nicholas Trübner was another source; see Pf 711 114: 'Books retained from T'. Also, some of Deutsch's books were given or bequeathed to GE and are now in OWL.

3 In 'The Modern Hep! Hep! Hep!' GE refers to 'a small nation – the smallest of the nations' – whose territory lay on the highway between three continents (Impressions, p. 141).

4 This period almost coincides with the calendar for the Jewish year 5634, which began on 22 September 1873 (B 173).
of martyrdom and persecution, from outside and inside its own community, is Jewish skill in the thrust and parry of argument. That such an inner struggle could stimulate the development of survival techniques for the evolution and growth of Judaism was of great interest to George Eliot. For instance, she noted that in the tenth-century controversy over Menahem’s Hebrew Lexicon, hot-blooded contention and virulent satire served to enrich the Hebrew language (B 139v); the witty lampoons hurled by the opposing camps produced its renewed power and resiliency.

Contention is a very common topic of the Berg Notebook extracts. A few instances are the period of civil war between the Sadducees and Pharisees (B 110v, B 153), the battle between the adherents of Hyrcanus and Aristobulus (B 154v), the dispute between the schools of Hillel and Schammai (B 107v), and the Maimonidean controversy (B 193). In the nineteenth-century conflict between Orthodox and Reform views (B 154 to 111 and 124 to 128v), many of these historical struggles were incorporated into contemporary argument. Even apostates such as Salomon Maimon (B 136) and Hyam Isaacs (B 129v to 135v) carry a Jewish habit of argument into their writings as non-believers or Christians.

In the novel, this history of Jewish controversies is almost concealed. When Deronda asks the exact time of service at the synagogue in Frankfurt, he is directed by a youth ‘who entered cordially into his wanting not the fine new building of the Reformed but the old Rabbinical school of the orthodox’ (DD ch. 32: 338); but this preference might seem, to non-Jews, to be based on an interest in architectural history. Non-Jews might also be puzzled by Mordecai’s reference to a tenth-century schism: ‘Our religion united us before it divided us – it made us a people before it made Rabbanites and Karaites’ (DD ch. 63: 698). Its relevance to nineteenth-century divisions may also have thought that making Christians aware of neglected ‘oriental’ orator St. Chrysostom) aptly re-enacts the Rector’s strictly rhetorical question: ‘You don’t suppose I’m going to hold a public debate with a schismatic of that sort?’ There is no hint that public controversy might strengthen a religious tradition. On the contrary, it is Baruch Nolan’s opinion that ‘this debating is an atheistical sort of thing; the Atheists are very fond of it’. Nolan, a Churchman whose extraction is never questioned – despite his Hebrew name and his ‘remarkable hooked nose’ – seems to be unaware that for the rabbis of the Talmud … their chief rite was argument.

For George Eliot, the great schism between Judaism and Christianity must be set in the historical context of their separately schismatic development. No doubt she hoped, despite her later disclaimers to Stowe and others, that her novel would help some readers, ‘western people who have been reared in Christianity’, to acknowledge their ‘peculiar debt’ to ‘the Hebrews’. She may also have thought that making Christians aware of neglected ‘oriental’ aspects of the history of their faith would contribute to the evolutionary development of Western tradition. Henry Hart Milman had proposed that the philosophy of the Talmud [be considered] without the apologetic reserve and prudent suppression of the modern Jewish writers, or without the remorseless literalness of most Christian expositors; without receiving it as altogether a mystery of esoteric wisdom … only really intelligible to

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1 In ‘The Modern Hep! Hep! Hep!’ she comments:

Such internal conflict naturally tightened the bands of conservatism, which needed to be strong if it were to rescue the … vital spirit of a small nation … But all that need be noticed here is the continuity of that national education (by outward and inward circumstance) which created in the Jews a feeling of race, a sense of corporate existence, unique in its intensity. (Impressions, p. 141)
the initiate, but as the growth of the human mind in a very peculiar condition ... and a mysticism of half-European, half-Asiatic cast.

Such a project, as Milman acknowledged, required uncommon gifts:

a perfect mastery of Rabbinical Hebrew ... as well as a calm and subtle, and penetrating, I would almost say, ... a reverential judgement – the gift of few men, of still fewer who are likely to devote their minds to what after all might prove but a barren study ... A religious mind would be above all indispensable; but the combination of religious zeal with respect for the religion of others is the last and tardiest growth in the inexhaustible soil of Christian virtue.

'So alone should we know', he concludes, 'what the Jews have been, what they may be; and fully understand their writings, and their later history.'

As Milman observed, few Christian men had the qualifications for such a project. His estimate of the scarcity of such a combination of gifts reveals, however, a mind a little spotted with commonness; he unconsciously excluded certain candidates. If a woman, a lapsed Christian, whose mastery of Rabbinical Hebrew was far from perfect, nevertheless came to understand the Jews' writings and their later history, it was because she looked for that uncommon mixture of scrupulous scholarship and reverential judgement in the nineteenth-century Wissenschaft des Judentums movement. She was peculiarly well-fitted to know that the German Jews had taken the lead in such historical inquiries. Zunz, Graetz, and Steinschneider were closely studied by her in the original German; she did not need to wait for, or depend upon, translations of these critical studies of Judaism.

When she came to read the English translation of Abraham Geiger's Das Judentum und seine Geschichte, she found in the Appendix these opening words: 'Nearly thirty years ago, Strauss performed the great deed of writing a critical work of the Life of Jesus ...' Nearly thirty years had passed since the publication of her translation of David Friedrich Strauss's Das Leben Jesu. To trace the full history of her lifelong fascination with the varieties of religious experience is beyond the scope of this Introduction. Even to explore the relation between the Religion of Humanity and Judaean-Christian

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3 In his review of Cross's Life in Nineteenth Century xvii (1885): 464–85, Lord Acton paid this tribute to GE: 'her teaching was the highest within the resources to which Atheism is restricted.' Reprinted in Carroll, pp. 463–4.
4 According to the OED entry for heresy, 'The earlier sense-development from "religious sect, party or faction" to "doctrine at variance with the catholic faith", lies outside tradition, a relation which is most pertinent to Daniel Deronda, cannot be undertaken here. It must merely be observed that she did not study religion as a life form that had become, or was about to become, extinct. The forms of religion would continue to adapt to a changing environment, and evolve new patterns of survival. Neither did she have any ecumenical motivation for her comparative study of sectarian variations of Judaism and Christianity. Ecumenicism, insofar as it combines proselytizing with the reduction of different beliefs to common denominators, may improve religious tolerance and may be a short-term strategy for survival; but the smoothing over of differences does not, in the long term, encourage new development and growth. Schisms are not to be resolved by conversion or mended by reunion of the severed parties. A diversity of views is essential for 'separateness with communication' (DD ch. 60: 673), a reforming process which leads to ever more diversity. When Deronda says that Mordecai has 'raised the image of such a task ... to bind our race together in spite of heresy' (DD ch. 63: 698), what does he mean? What could heresy mean to the unorthodox, nay atheist, George Eliot?

For her, heresy was not meant to be hunted out and suppressed by the dominant orthodoxy; it meant 'sect', retaining the original senses of the Greek root σектής: choosing, choice, course taken, course of action or thought, philosophical or religious sect. Deronda must be speaking...
of a racial bond which does not inhibit this freedom of choice. Indeed, Mordecai’s impassioned discussion of the development of the Jewish people culminates in his declaration that ‘the strongest principle of growth lies in human choice’ (DD ch. 42: 499).

If heresy is viewed negatively as a problem, one kind of solution is that recorded in Mocatta’s history, The Jews of Spain and Portugal and the Inquisition (1877): the heretics must be eliminated before the problem multiplies. Another kind of answer involves an effort to reason with those who differ. But in most argument there is really no ‘great gulph’, as William Hazlitt points out, between reason and prejudice. Prejudice can be found even in men whose conscious intentions are to communicate good will towards men of other faiths: men such as Milman and Deutsch.

Milman’s philosemitism was so offensive to his fellow Christians that the first edition of his History of the Jews was withdrawn from public sale. Yet his Jewish sympathies are worded in noticeably prejudicial terms, when he writes of ‘the miserable Jews’ being goaded to the only vengeance in which, besides overreaching in trade, they could indulge, – writings in their own secret unintelligible language, such as the Toldoth Jesu, and the other ‘fiery weapons of Satan’, published later, to the horror and detestation of Christian Europe, by Wagenseil.

Deutsch’s essay on the Talmud, addressed to Christian readers and intended to bridge over one of the ghastliest gulfs in History, had drawn upon his author the torment of ‘buzzing and stinging’ attacks from both sides. But Deutsch himself was capable, in private conversation, of repellant references to the Slavonic peasants of his native region; these references are recalled in Lady Strangford’s prefatory Memoir in the Literary Remains:

1 GE’s copy of Mocatta’s self-published book is in DWL.
3 Milman II, 41. For the reception of the first edition of Milman’s History of the Jews, see the DNB and the headnote to B 106. For notes on the Toldoth Jesu, see PF 710 36 and PF 711 98. Milman’s reference is to Johann Christoph Wagenseil, Tela Ignea Satanae (Altdorf: Schönerstaedt, 1681). GE refers to Wagenseil on B 183 and 193v, PF 711 54, and PF 710 41.
4 See Haight, p. 47, and GEL IV, 409.
and dreamy object' must be 'composed of more moonshine than solid flesh and blood'. 1 F. R. Leavis's argument that 'the Zionist inspiration' of the novel tempts George Eliot into 'modes of self-indulgence' resembles Stephen's argument in tone and even in some details.2

Joan Bennett, writing at the time of formation of the modern state of Israel, was more specifically dissatisfied with the Zionist 'propaganda', as she called it,3 and argued that 'intellect and conscience usurp the place of creative


2 The Great Tradition, 2nd edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), pp. 93–9. See pp. 94 and 96. For an echo of Stephen's argument on p. 189, see Leavis, pp. 98–9. Leavis's proposal that the Gwendolen Harleth part be severed from the Zionist part is poignant when considered in the light of his wife's experience: the severing of all relations with her family on her marriage to a non-Jew. It is said that the Roth family mourned her loss with the ritual Shivah. See M. C. Bradbrook, 'Queenie Leavis: the Dynamics of Rejection', The Cambridge Review (20 November 1981), reprinted in her Collected Papers, Vol II (1982), and also her essay, 'Nor Shall My Sword': the Leavises' mythology', in Denys Thompson, editor, The Leavises: Recollections and Impressions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 31–2.

3 Bennett first states that 'the conception of Daniel's character and story arises out of a conscious – almost a propagandist – intention' (emphasis added), but goes on to refer to GE's 'occasional lapses' from art into propaganda:

The accident that this scheme for a national Jewish home in Palestine has become a desperately difficult political issue serves to emphasize the danger of incorporating propaganda in a fiction. No modern reader can accept Deronda's mission unquestioningly as a valuable service to mankind, but to George Eliot herself it seemed to offer a more promising field than politics for his altruistic energies. (pp. 182, 195, 187–8)

But she has just quoted Deronda's statement that he wants to restore 'a political existence to my people'. In his own mind, and to GE himself, he is taking up the field of politics just as much as if he were at Sir Hugo's elbow (DD ch. 69: 747 and ch. 16: 161). According to Bradbrook, Bennett – who like Q. D. Leavis married a non-Jewish member of the Cambridge English faculty – was 'née Frankau ... from a more liberal Jewish family than Queenie's' (The Leavises, p. 32). It is remarkable that Bennett refers especially to 'Daniel's mother ... who repudiated the restricting claims of race and religion to follow her own taste and talent as an opera-singer' (p. 189). In fact, the Alcharisi tells her son that she was baptized only just before her temporary 'fit' of singing out of tune drove her to marry a second time – that this repudiation of her Jewishness was a preparation for the enforced loss of her career (DD ch. 51: 592, 596).
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novel', readers of Daniel Deronda might well inform themselves about her acquisition of that learning. Her researches into 'Jewish history and Jewish thought' are now accessible to all readers: her notes on 'Hebrew Matters' in the Berg Notebook will reveal 'the place of creative power' in an area of the novel which lies outside the experience of most of us who have not been, or are not, Jews. We might begin with Gwendolen's question, 'Can I understand the ideas, or am I too ignorant?' (DD ch. 69: 747) - bearing in mind that acknowledged ignorance is no barrier to understanding, that it is not equivalent to 'the intellectual narrowness - in plain English, the stupidity, which is still the average mark of our culture'.

George Eliot's Jewish reading did not make her a proselyte; she did not, like Deronda, depart for the East. Rather, her comprehensive intelligence, sustained by her learning, freed her from unconscious prejudice. She was able to bridge 'one of the ghastliest guls in History' because her study of Christian sectarianism and Jewish controversies let her see the great schism between Judaism and Christianity in the historical context proper to them both. Heresy - choosing to differ - is one of the traditions they have in common. The 'modern reader' has no need to look for irony in George Eliot's inability to foresee 'the accident that [the] scheme for a national Jewish home in Palestine [would] become a desperately difficult political issue'. George Eliot was well aware that the history of relations between Jews and non-Jews bears a heavy burden of irony. She had no need of second-sight to foresee that their relations would continue to be disputed ground. Nevertheless, one of the most strikingly ironic images in her novel presents a sign of her hope, if not her confident belief, that historical development may yet bring more intelligent forms of communication with heresy. Mordecai, who waits and yearns for the deliverer of his message to the next generation of his people, is supported by a structure which is a complexly ironic image of how a gulf may be bridged: Blackfriars Bridge commemorates the Dominicans who worked with such missionary zeal to exterminate Judaism.

1 Bennett, p. 188.
2 A journey was thought of, but not deemed practicable; see GEL VI 319.
3 Bennett, p. 187.
4 The words 'second-sight', 'disputed ground', 'hope' and 'confident belief' are taken, out of context, from GE's commentary on the image of Mordecai on Blackfriars Bridge, at sunset (DD ch. 38: 439-40). In Jewish tradition, sunset marks the beginning of the new day (B 125v). The entry for 18 November in GHL's 1875 Diary records that GE and GHL 'walked on Blackfriars Bridge watching sunset'.

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