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MORDECHAI ROZIN

THE RICH AND THE POOR
JEWISH PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL CONTROL
IN NINETEENTH CENTURY LONDON

Thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Social Policy and Administration of the University of Kent,
October 1996

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IN MEMORY OF MY PARENTS

HAVA née KOHN

and JOSEPH ROZIN

THE RICH AND THE POOR
JEWISH PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL CONTROL
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this historical research is to discover new facts by tracing the development of the theory, practice and institutionalisation of the social control and paternalising mechanisms as had been intended in different schemes or implemented by the Jewish élite through its philanthropic institutions in regard to the poor and working class immigrants, mostly from eastern Europe, during the whole of the nineteenth century.

As reflected in Jewish history, helping the poor was and remained one of the most appealing and cherished values based on the assumption that such help had generally functioned satisfactorily.

The humanitarian implications of philanthropy have been discussed and tested in the light of the contrasting class interests of the rapidly acculturated Ashkenazic Anglo-Jewish élite which, in its pursuit of wealth, social status and political power in the host community, severely neglected the poor.

There was a conspicuous disparity between the élite, characterised by extreme, exclusive élitism and antidemocratic aristocracy, and the large number of poor who lived and eked out their precarious living in the overcrowded and unsanitary Jewish East End.

Aloof from the poor and encouraged by its achievements, the Jewish élite had embraced Benthamism, Smilesianism, Social Darwinism and economic theories associated with laissez faire as a basis for the policy of its philanthropic institutions.

The narrowness of these doctrines and the influence of the harsh Poor Law of 1834 and of the COS which emphasised personal responsibility of the individual for his economic situation, are particularly reflected in the activities of the London Jewish Board of Guardians - the key institution of the élite for controlling and regulating the poor.

The encounter between the more conscious Jewish working class and the élite and the survival of the Jewish Board of Guardians through incrementalism and gradualism as well as the avoidance of a more radical communal split, have been analysed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Like many other Jewish communities in Diaspora, the London Jewish Ashkenazic congregations were dominated during the nineteenth century by an autocratic oligarchical élite - one of the wealthiest and most powerful in the world. This cohesive élite, denoted as the Cousinhood, moved gradually from the East End to the West End and country houses leaving the poor behind.

Throughout this period there was no governmental administration that regulated the entry of aliens into Great Britain. The Ashkenazic élite was faced with a part of the westward migration of destitute East European Jews in spite of a variety of 'voluntary' efforts to prevent, stop or divert it. Between fifteen and seventeen thousand Jews lived in London in 1800. This number grew gradually to over sixty thousand by 1880 and abruptly to one hundred and eighty six thousand by 1914, mostly due to immigration following severe persecution in Eastern Europe. The large scale immigration, concentrated in the East End, broadly coincided with the growing of an impoverished Jewish proletariat working in 'sweated' conditions in the consumer goods industry. Strange in their appearance, the newcomers were perceived by the native élite as backward, unenlightened and amoral - as an endless stream of an inferior kind of Jews who imposed themselves on its resources. Feeling that as a minority it would be judged by its lowest representatives, the élite feared that the immigrants would jeopardise their economic and social position in the host community.

The social consequences of philanthropic activities are ascertainable and the purpose of this thesis is to present an analysis of Jewish philanthropy in London during the nineteenth century in its larger socio-economic, political, ideological and religious context and to assess the adequacy of the philanthropic policy and actions of the Jewish élite in handling the extensive social problems

created by immigration.

The conceptual framework of this thesis is related to the broader class interests of the *élite* rather than to merely unified ethnic Jewish collective experience or religious and cultural identities. This is based on the proposition that philanthropic activities concealed motifs rooted in class conflict and class aspirations. This framework is also related to the meanings given by the *élite* to its interests and the ways the interests of the poor were conceived by the *élite*.

In this thesis an attempt is made to identify the different forms and aspects of social control and patronage exercised through the Jewish Board of Guardians and other institutions established by the Jewish *élite* over the poor Jewish class and initiatives of that class to establish alternative social organisations of its own. Such controlling mechanisms were an organic part of the functions of the *élite*'s philanthropic institutions and were designed and continuously directed to enforce the upper class's interests throughout the nineteenth century.

It is argued that the development of those institutions did not evolve in a cause-effect-beneficial sequence but were rather the result of complex interactive class interests, individual influence, events, conflicts, decisions and oscillations with contradictory consequences. But what stands out is the adoption of nineteenth century individualistic and *laissez faire* ideologies by the *élite* in order for it to implement and justify its policy of social control.

The aim of this study is to detect historical evidence of those interacting contradictions in their overt, subtle and intricate forms, to analyse and explain them. Also, to identify the functions of philanthropy - defined as

collective action involving the donations of possessions for the sake of the combined interests of the élite as a group regardless of the individual contributions of its individual members. Those functions included amongst others, the manipulation of moral arguments, consideration of economy, deterrence, instilling discipline and the regulation of the labour market by the temporary provision of absolutely minimal assistance. The undertaking of these regulatory obligations by the élite was necessitated by the limitation of *laissez faire*, as a dogma which could never be fully implemented in practice.

A key study covering these issues, A Century of Social Service: The Jewish Board of Guardians, 1859-1959, written by Vivian Lipman (1959), was published at the centenary anniversary of the Board as an official history on behalf of the Jewish Welfare Board. Much attention was paid by Lipman to technical details in the development of the Board which are significant and, as such, thankfully acknowledged. As that has been done, they will not be repeated in this work.

Adopting a consensual model, Lipman conceived the relationship between the wealthy and powerful élite who led the Board and the Jewish poor immigrants, as largely conflict-free. Although Lipman generally recognised the adoption of Victorian models by the Board, no consideration was given to the content of their social philosophies and the distress caused by them to the Jewish poor. The successes of philanthropy were described as a self-justification, while its failures were denied.

This thesis is intended to redress the balance in favour of the yet neglected and understated bitter social divisions within the Jewish community in London. It is a discussion of the main issues, contents and thrusts intended to tell the 'other side of the story'.

Instances of disputes and grievances are discussed in terms of what the trouble was and what was done, or was planned in order to solve it. Also, the conflicts hidden behind the rhetoric of nobility and apparent harmony attributed to the voluntaristic and philanthropic enterprises and the split between them and the harsh reality of the period. The study is concerned with how class conflict affected philanthropy and how they became embedded in the institutions vital to the welfare of the Jewish poor. Such evidences of class antagonisms are tested and analysed in historical research. Special emphasis will be placed on the continuous effort of the élite to control the immigration of the Jewish poor and to prevent the establishment of alternative social services by the immigrants themselves.

In this context the study will test also the following propositions concerning the élite's mentality and attitudes that there existed:

Preoccupation with accumulation of wealth and political power in the host community.

Fear that the Jewish poor would undermine the conditions under which the economic and social activities of the élite could continue undisturbed.

Physical separation from the concentration of the Jewish poor in the East End.

Political conservatism.

Fear of collectivism, democracy and collaboration with the Jewish poor, immigrant and working class.

Fear of a more radical form of social change.

For the Jewish élite, the non-Jewish environment and the models of non-Jewish philanthropy and social welfare became increasingly important as reflected in different schemes designed to control and reform the Jewish poor. Only by the mid-nineteenth century did the Jewish philanthropy, led by the Jewish élite, emerge from its separate existence by

establishing the Jewish Board of Guardians in 1859.

In this thesis it is argued that optionality and voluntariness of Jewish philanthropy in England during the nineteenth century generally served the élite's best interests. Mandatory taxation of the Jewish wealthy and middle class, intended to overcome the inherent limitations in providing the funds needed for assisting the Jewish poor at the very beginning of the nineteenth century, was proposed by Patrick Colquhoun and Joshua van Oven on behalf of the Ashkenazic élite. The initiative for this scheme followed severe social disorganisation and consequent criticism in the host community. However, the élite did not have sufficient motivation to finalise the implementations of the scheme, nor was such a proposal presented again. In the final analysis the élite was basically interested in financing Jewish philanthropy on a voluntary basis, without accepting legal obligations and the corollary accountability to the State. Rather, the Jewish élite preferred to provide for the Jewish poor and to control them in a quasi official framework. It is suggested that this arrangement permitted the Anglo-Jewish élite to develop elaborate balances and checks in order to control its expenditure and involvement as desired according to its vital interests. It was also intended to deter continuous immigration. Such an arrangement represented the deliberate choice of a middle way between partial-selective philanthropic concern on one hand and laissez faire and indifference on the other.

The deliberate use of the built-in free market mechanism of 'destructive filtration' can be regarded as contradictory to the Jewish traditional **tzedakah**. It is contended in this thesis that the controlling and regulating mechanism used by the London Jewish élite during the nineteenth century was generally a secularised form of philanthropy,

strongly influenced by laissez faire and individualistic doctrines.

In spite of the mighty prosperity of the Jewish élite and the well-to-do bourgeois class, fears were continuously expressed that an influx of needy immigrants would pauperise the community.

During the great immigration and polarisation of the East End versus the West End, a period in which the voices of the poor were heard more often, the philanthropy of Jewish élite was continuously denounced as parsimonious and bureaucratic as reflected in the relief given to the mass of the Jewish poor during periods of unemployment, sickness, etc. An exception were some limited categories of poor considered deserving and who received more adequate assistance.

This thesis deals with the checks and balances used by the élite to reduce its expenses for the Jewish poor and their consequences in terms of the unfulfilled elementary needs of the poor until the State had fulfilled a more pro-active role in the socioeconomic sphere and extended its embrace to contain the well-being of the élite's poor co-religionists.

As the State assumed more collectivist responsibilities, the Jewish élite through the Board attempted to extend the mandatory responsibilities of the Government and municipalities to Jewish poor and immigrants. The Jewish élite embarked on a prolonged dialogue with the statutory authorities to legalise the rights of the Jews to mandatory support and in this way to shift a significant part of its financial burden to the tax and the rates supported arrangements. The thesis evidences the intensive efforts of the Board to adjust one or more of the Unions' Workhouses to Jewish religious requirements in order to

make use of them for those who were defined by the Board as 'incorrigible cases' and as a deterrent for special groups of immigrants. Special emphasis in this test is placed on consequences of these processes on the poor.

Another issue verified in this thesis is the political challenge presented to the Jewish élite by the poor working class, highly enlarged by the great immigration and concentrated in the East End. In this regard a significant influence stemmed from the class conflict doctrines propagated by the socialist and anarchist movements, largely imported from eastern Europe. In spite of the internal divergences amongst them, they unanimously claimed that the Jewish poor were deliberately held in ignorance.

Not having the required resources to establish significant alternatives to the services created by the Board over a quarter of a century, the Jewish working class increasingly required to become involved in the decision making process of the Board.

The endurance of the Board under the auspices of the domination of the élite is explained by the fact that the poor lacked the resources needed to establish an alternative to the Board, and the abilities of the wealthy members of the élite to subsidise some semi-independent organisation of the working class in the East End. Mediation of the upper Jewish middle class and the pragmatic incremental approach of the Jewish élite were instrumental in the avoidance of a more divisive split between the rich and the poor.

The Period Investigated in Thesis

The purpose of this study is to test a development in the field of philanthropy during the whole of the nineteenth century. Hitherto, the first seventy years of this century

has been largely neglected, as reflected in the paucity of published research and compared with the importance attributed to the 'stormy years' of the mass immigration. However, poverty and other severe social problems were common throughout the century among the native, as well as the immigrant, Jewish community in London, which had the largest population in Britain and absorbed most of the immigrants. Moreover, immigration was a continuous, though fluctuating, feature of the first three quarters of the century. It has therefore been considered worthwhile to dwell on this period in particular in the light of the historical material.

Another proposition for this study was the recurrent spiral pattern in the approach of the Jewish élite towards the poor and that the processes which manifested themselves fully after the beginning of mass immigration were an intensification of the substantive problems that were evident in the first half of the nineteenth century and continued on a more deliberate and official basis after the establishment of the Jewish Board of Guardians in 1859.

Following this proposition it is also the purpose of this thesis to verify the restrictionist approach of the Jewish élite in regard to immigration during the period when British society was generally apathetic about this problem. The test imposed by the poor immigrants was considered in the light of their voluntary demographic concentration in the East End and the traditional ways of life created there for generations, as well as their separateness from the wealthy class, continuously reinforced by the traditions brought over by new waves of immigrants.

Plan of the Thesis

The second chapter discusses some treatises of social theorists relevant to some general, Jewish philanthropic

and solidarity ideologies as well as some attempts to test such expositions in the historical context of the practical decisions taken by Jewish individuals and groups in a distinctive Jewish traditional community. This chapter includes also a critical review of the material related to philanthropy by the historians of the Jews in England during the period discussed in the thesis.

This chapter has explicated the ideological synthesis in which some of the questions to be tested have been generated.

The rest of this thesis is an attempt to operationalise the concept of philanthropy in the specific historical circumstances of the nineteenth century Anglo-Jewish community in London. This is done from Chapter four onwards dealing with the different episodes and institutional fields. The sequence of these chapters and their contents is treated generally in a chronological order. Before discussing these particular developments, Chapter 3 considers the basic social relations and dilemmas which constituted a background for all of them.

The third chapter introduces the social structure of the Anglo-Jewish London community at the end of the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century. It illustrates the patterns of poverty, its causes, the importance of social structure and contemporary models of philanthropy and welfare in determining attitudes towards the poor and their problems.

The fourth chapter deals with the Colquhoun-van Oven Scheme for a Jewish communal poor law, presented in 1802 and based on the detailed and critical accounts of Patrick Colquhoun, a metropolitan magistrate, on what was presented as a vast Jewish criminality. His work was published in 1797 as A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis. This ambitious

scheme for social and police control over the poor was intended to be introduced to parliament as a Bill, but never passed beyond an incipient stage.

The scheme reflects the direct involvement of Colquhoun and the influence of his utilitarian philosophy as well as that of Bentham, his close friend and associate, on Joshua van Oven, a surgeon and a leading figure in the Anglo-Jewish Enlightenment, as well as communal worker and representative of the élite in social and educational matters.

The chapter shows that the failure of this scheme was related to the resistance encountered by the other attempts of Bentham and Colquhoun to implement their similar ideas on the British scene - stemming from the opposition and suspicion of the wealthy British class to centralised governmental interventions and the delegation of corporative power during this period.

The educational arrangements for the poor are covered in chapter five. At the very beginning of the nineteenth century those hardly affected the children of the poor immigrants and the least Anglicised poor, who were in the most acute need of education. Later on during the nineteenth century, the establishment of the Jews' Free School (1817) had represented the most concentrated effort of the Jewish élite to help the younger generations of the poor to escape poverty. The rapid increase on the rate of enrolment proves the extent of the previously unsatisfied needs in this sphere.

Chapter six discusses the patterns of poor relief provided by the synagogues and the severe defects in the way in which it was distributed, its inadequacy and the neglect of the poor by the Jewish élite very much preoccupied with its struggle for political emancipation. The chapter also

deals with the characteristics of the newly formed Jewish philanthropic institutions, not necessarily connected with the synagogues and partly secularised.

The chapter also relates to the initiatives of the poor in response to unmet needs reflected the inadequacy of the relief provided to the poor as well as the vital need for institutional care. It was Roth's opinion that 'to some extent the poor Jewish immigrant of the East End suffered and paid the price for the prominence enjoyed by his plutocratic correligionists' (Roth 1961: 291).

Chapter seven describes and analyses the extensive, however abortive, scheme of Henry Faudel. The class basis of his planning and the doctrines that influenced his frame of reference are analysed. The preferences of the élite during the 1840's, as discussed in chapter seven, can explain the postponement of the implementation of some elements of Faudel's scheme until the establishment of the Jewish Board of Guardians in 1859.

Chapter eight explains the causes that influenced the establishment of the Jewish Board of Guardians, its organisational structure and centralised bureaucratic system. The Board did not strike out in a novel direction but it was rather following secularised ideas consolidated in the theory and practice of the voluntary and mandatory arrangements in Great Britain during the first half of the nineteenth century. As shown in the chapter, the Board regarded itself as rooted in the bedrock of Judaism; however, it did not develop a synthesis between the obvious influences of the contemporary trends and the traditional ways of Jewish charity. The individualistic and other contemporary doctrines and models that were adopted by the Board through temporisation, are discussed. The tactics that both served and perpetuated the implementation of its ideological perspective are explored. The Board had been

the symbol of the élite's beneficent patronage, its efficient mechanism of control and supreme domination over the poor. Backed by the continuous economic success of its oligarchic leaders in the host society, its self-righteousness and delighting prestige, the Board was characterised by a strong confidence in its intentions, policies, ways of implementation and achievements.

Chapter nine focuses on the significant issue of immigration which continuously faced the Jewish élite to different extents. The élite considered undesirable any immigrant who could burden its financial resources but it could not legally prohibit immigration. The severe socioeconomic problems of the immigrants were perceived by the élite as dangerous to its reputation and to the conditions under which it could continue untrammelled economic and social activities. When such danger was felt, the élite was more motivated to active interventions, sometimes of a deterring and punitive character.

Chapter ten covers the struggle of the élite to make use of the Unions' workhouses, to institute labour tests for the able-bodied Jewish poor and to receive subventions from parochial authorities for outdoor relief. The intensive efforts in this sphere had preoccupied the élite and the Board for more than twenty years and to a large extent overshadowed all other philanthropic activities. The chapter explores the reluctance of the Jewish poor to enter the workhouses and the bitter resentment of members of the Jewish middle class to such placements for the poor and the establishment of an independent Jewish Workhouse by the latter. Special attention is given in the chapter to the contradiction in the statements of the leaders of the Board directed to different factors in regard to the use of the Unions' workhouses.

Chapter eleven considers the strategies and tactics of the élite in order for it to avoid as much as possible the overburdening of its charitable funds, such as reducing allocations during increased waves of immigration. This continuous policy of the Board merged harmoniously with the contemporary doctrines of aggressive individualism and the legitimacy given to attempts to diminish social expenditure, which was regarded as getting out of control.

Chapter twelve examines the provisions made by the Board for loans and work. The preferential approach of those two departments to 'the better class of the poor' and its consequences is analysed. After its establishment the Board was motivated to institute medical services of its own and to take over the medical relief which continued to be administered by the Three City Synagogues that founded the Board. However, in view of the cost involved in such expansions the leader of the Board re-shifted the burden to the tax supported parochial infirmaries and other voluntary medical institutions. In regard to the extremely severe housing conditions which affected the poor, the Board limited its responsibilities to sanitation. The chapter brings evidence that the élite was not ready to become involved in non-profit housing projects and did not respond to this collective need of the poor and immigrants until the very end of the century, when the élite was more willing to moderate the discontent of the poor in this sphere.

Chapter thirteen focuses on the efforts of the élite around the turn of the century to use the elementary school system, clubs and youth brigade in order to discipline the Jewish poor and to prepare them as a docile, punctual, clean and grateful workforce; also to accept their subordination to the communal leadership of the élite. This chapter relates also to the Jewish press which, by and large, supported the élite's policies in their entirety and

especially in regard to acculturation to the host environment.

Chapter fourteen focuses on the arrangements and organisations initiated by the poor themselves and the middle class, which were characterised by more reciprocal notions of paternalism and traditional and personal ties. The chapter discusses also the extensive attempts of the Board to control and co-ordinate the activities of the different Jewish philanthropic institutions according to its overall policies. Jewish immigrants were undergoing complex processes of proletarianisation and urbanisation. By the end of the century they were divided into rival classes (in addition to some paupers against paupers antagonisms). The mass immigration added a radical new dimension to the political structure. However, even before, from the 1870s socialist leaders sought and found the support of Jewish workers.

Chapter fifteen discusses the persistence of the élite in maintaining the exclusiveness of its institutions, dominated for more than half a century by the same richest families. Such tenacity had set up inequalities and partitions of mutual distrust for more than half a century. In spite of the remarkable increase of the working and the poor Jewish classes and their relative independence, the élite continued to perceive them as dependants, or retainers, excluded from the decision-making processes pertinent to their lives. In this context the assistance offered by the Board continued to emphasise subordination to the wealthy class. In spite of the social changes in Great Britain which were an expression of more collectivistic, equalitarian and democratic ideas, the Board had remained authoritarian and estranged from the poor, perpetuating its power through paternalistic philanthropy. This chapter shows the ways in which the working class and the poor succeeded to exercise influence

by creating their own alternative institutions; how developments and events significant to those classes emerged. This process forced the élite to renounce some of its exclusive prerogatives. The compromises of the élite were made through an intermediary arriviste group of the élite, accompanied by some internal frictions. However, those tensions did not prevent the cohesive pursuit of the élite's primordial interests.

The thesis ends with a concluding chapter which attempts to synthesise the strands of the arguments.

Sources of the Thesis

Some of the primary sources of this thesis were the main schemes advanced for reforming the philanthropies of the Jewish élite at the very beginning of the nineteenth century as well as the reactions to them coming from different quarters. Those have been preserved in the form of pamphlets, some of these now only accessible with difficulty from collections in which they are held. The works of Bentham and Colquhoun, containing their influencing philosophies, have been published in different forms since the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The Laws and Regulations of the main Jewish charities have been obtained from the Mocatta Library, University College, London and the British Library. They represent their policies and organisation, including the voting charity system on which many of them were based. Nineteenth century material dealing with Jewish as well as non-Jewish charities of London in terms of their origin, philosophical basis and functions was reviewed, amongst others, in such contemporary periodicals as the Monthly Magazine, the Quarterly Review and the Philanthropist. Other contemporary sources bearing on the subject were studied including: the extensive reports on Jewish poverty by Mayhew (1851), Stallard (1867) (whose superlative

description of the Jewish Board of Guardians should be approached carefully), Potter and Booth (1902). Further evidence has been generated from the publications of the London missionary societies.

The proposal of Ephraim Alex (1800-82) in a pamphlet entitled A Scheme for a Board of Guardians to be formed for the relief of the necessitous foreign poor (1859) has been preserved, as well as the Board's Laws and Regulations - Orchim (Heb. guests - term that indicated 'foreign' poor); also in their revised and enacted form of AM 5627-1867. The Board published its Half Yearly Reports from its establishment in 1859 and from 1860 its successive Annual Reports. The complete set of those reports are in the archives of the London Jewish Welfare Board. They are considered a significant source of material for the purpose of this thesis and were used as basic points of reference, especially in regard to the otherwise less researched first twelve years of the Board's activities. Each one of those reports starts with a survey of the year's occurrences and developments explaining and interpreting their nature. In addition, each Annual Report contains the specialised reports of the different Departments of the Board, usually in a detailed form. The Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Board, however, do not detail discussions of policy. As such, they are less valuable than the reports written by the reporters of the Jewish Chronicle who gave many detailed descriptions, sometimes almost verbatim, of the Board's official meetings. The old issues of the Jewish Chronicle are at the Collindale branch of the British Library and their review was considered important for this study in spite of limitations in coverage (see Chapter 15). In the Jewish Welfare Board's archives there are also Board Minute Books, Minutes of the Sanitary Committee and Letter Boxes, as well as some other material. Further evidence has been extracted from the memoirs of some 'self-made' middle class immigrants who arrived in London penniless and

other biographies of the members of the élite. Secondary works that reveal responses to the causes of poverty as perceived by the members of the élite, Jewish middle classes and other social observers throughout the nineteenth century have been consulted and were utilised to illustrate and analyse the decision making processes of the élite.

Obviously, the historical sources on which this thesis is based lack the voices of the poor which were rarely recorded, no case records or papers relating to the period researched having survived. The 'begging letters', a system strongly fought against by the Board, have not been preserved in the archives in contrast to the other remnants, they disappeared almost without trace and were not quoted, nor were any verbatim reflecting the grievances or other expressions of the poor recorded in the detailed and ample Annual Reports and other commemorative publications of the Board. Overwhelmed by their poverty and in a cultural shock, the poor were preoccupied in obtaining the minimal supplies for their daily needs, the long working hours in sweated workshops and the continuous search for work. Also, it should be taken into consideration that they often lacked sufficient command of the English language and the orientation and adequate access to the Jewish press.

CHAPTER 2

PERSPECTIVE ON JEWISH PHILANTHROPY

The unifying frame of reference of this chapter is a clarification of the blurred concept of philanthropy and its deidealisation - based on the assumption that in Judaism as in many other denominational conceptualisations, there are different ways to regard dependence and poverty, rather than a monolithic one.

It is suggested in this study that the development of the Anglo-Jewish philanthropy in the nineteenth century and its corresponding ideologies and justifications can be better understood in a perspective of class tensions and conflicts. According to Mahler (1950), one hundred years after the democratic achievements of the French revolution, most of the Jewish communities all over the world were still dominated by hierarchies of powerful wealthy men far off from the political regime that was the vision of the Prophets. He asked what is the advantage of boasting that we are the people of the Prophets and the inheritors of their ideas about social justice. All those explanations on the particular content and entity of our culture were advanced only to conceal the sad realities of the upper class régime (Mahler 1950: 253).

Mahler suggested that the Conservative movement disguises reactionary concepts and contents opposed to the ideas of equity and social justice either by presenting them as progressive, national or religious (255). Mahler regarded the protests of the Prophets and their uncompromising struggle against the oppression of the poor classes as an important Jewish national heritage of the biblical period that strongly influenced the Christian popular sects and the religious social movements. Mahler criticised the automatic, superficial use of the prophetic ideals and the rationalistic movement which pretended a superiority of the wealthy and the educated classes over the poor and lacked the ideas of democratic equality and social justice. His critique also concentrated on the Jewish

Enlightenment that until the first half of the nineteenth century followed the enlightened absolutism of the eighteenth century, according to which 'everything should be done for the people, nothing by the people' (Mahler 1950: 264).

During the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, the poor Jewish class in London which comprised significant groups of poor immigrants who were at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder and whose ethnic and cultural background and circumstances of work and life were sharply differentiated from those of the native Jewish wealthy class constituted a particular ethnic group. Ethnic groups are regarded in accordance with the Schermerhorn (1970) definition as a 'collectivity within a large society, having real or putative ancestry, memories of a shared historical past and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements (Schermerhorn 1970: 12 quoted in Entzinger 1987: 5).

The overlapping of poverty, immigration, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and the relationship of their different aspects to each other and to the domineering Anglo Jewish élite were blurred by the perspective of national solidarity, based on an axiomatic hypothesis, according to which a singular Jewish interest dominates all intra-communal Jewish questions as well as the relationship between Jews and Gentiles. According to this view the monolithic interests led to a unified policy aimed to promote them. N. Kokosalakis (1982) wrote

regarding the solidarity amongst Jews the world over ... which sometimes has been advocated ... even by many Jews ... in its more popular form 'Jews always stick together', that they help each other financially ... that there are scarcely any poor Jews, that there are no class or status divisions worth talking about in Jewish communities (81).

Such an ahistorical perspective was derived partly from an incomplete analysis of Jewish life in the pre-emancipation area and the assumption that because all Jewish classes were subjected to legal discrimination, identical interests might then have developed. The elements of Jewish solidarity did not decrease the practical importance of class interests and this solidarity is not in contradiction with class conflict amongst the Jewish social classes. Jewish solidarity is seen as a function of rival socio-economic and other interests and their impact as reflected in the organisation of philanthropic institutions. Those interests created corresponding conflicting concepts and ideologies in regard to the definition of national solidarity and the limit of its comprehensiveness.

Since most of the Jewish immigrants to England were almost destitute when they entered Britain and needed assistance for a considerable period afterwards, their ethnicity was effectively a class attribute. The immigration from eastern Europe is regarded as an effort made by a whole class which had preserved their national identity in the struggle for existence.

Social history has provided a reappraisal of the way the immigrants were looked upon (Zunz 1985: 62-3). Rather than seeing them as uprooted and passive individuals, those historians regarded them as clever and motivated and, by and large, more active in comparison with those who did not have the energy to leave their depressed environment. It is possible that the way in which immigrants were regarded by historians was partly influenced by the lack of confidence of the élite in the power of the poor immigrants to overcome their predicaments. Jewish immigration to England was a collective not only an individual, enterprising process and, as such, it included chain migration with a strong element of reciprocal help.

As evidenced in the thesis the immigrant poor were able to think about their collective interests vis-à-vis the élite and to furnish some of the resources needed to protect them. Structural factors enmeshed with the immigrants' cultural background to produce the élite's ideology of a differentiated superior class. The élite placed much of the blame on the deficiencies and differences attributed to the poor immigrants as a group. Such perception was embodied in the repressive policy of the Board of Guardians as the main institution of the élite intended to deal with immigration. The policies of the Board were presented by the élite in positive terms and legitimised as being in the interests of the potential immigrants, those already living in Britain and all the strata within the Anglo-Jewish community.

Ethnicity was viewed by Katz (1985) as a temporary element (with long range traces) and as such a secondary one and a less valid analytical category (quoted by Zunz 1985: 89). Katz was, however, criticised by Zunz for treating ethnicity 'as a simple, uniform reflection of nationality and religion, not as a complex attribute worthy of careful definition' (Zunz 1985: 90). Karl Marx advanced the hypothesis that 'the Jew' was a socio-economic category and, at the same time, a religious entity. What Marx implied in his 'On the Jewish Question' was that Jewish culture and solidarity were all epiphenomena of widespread socio-economic conditions and conflicts.

According to the analysis made by Irwin Kohn, writing in the early 1920's, Marx knew nothing about Judaism, especially of the Jewish masses but only of a few wealthy Jews in Western Europe. In Kohn's opinion, Marx's essay reflected a 'salto mortale', a break with his Judaic ancestry. Marx regarded 'Jewish economics' as fiendish (Kohn quoted in Carlebach, 1978: 282). His view partly derived from his unreal conception of Jews as forming a

unitary category of economic action in a larger stagnant and uniform economic context. Lesser mentioned that Marx was indifferent to Judaism but was aggravated by the abilities of some Jews to adjust comfortably to the grande bourgeoisie. Isaiah Berlin summarised Marx's essay and its anti-Semitic tone as a shallow and dull composition - aimed 'to kill the Jewish problem once and for all' (Lesser quoted in Carlebach 1978: 282-3).

Since the 1970s a few historical studies were published on the period of mass immigration which emphasised instances of a 'bitter class struggle transcending any concept of national unity' (Newman 1985: 133-5). William Fishman in his book Jewish Radicals (1975) rejected the notions according to which aspirations and lack of class consciousness characterised most of the immigrants. Buckman in The Jewish Immigrant in Leeds (1983), related the integration of the Jewish immigrants in Leeds during the last quarter of the nineteenth century to their working class status and self-perception. He claimed that the Jewish upper class acted in regard to the poor immigrants out of 'short-term class interests'. Buckman criticised both Lipman's Social history of the Jews in England (1954), and Gartner's The Jewish Immigrant in England (1960, Rev. 1973), for their conclusions as to the predilection of the Jewish poor for the bourgeoisie and the blurring of the identity of the Jewish working class.

The conclusion that the economic struggle had utterly overridden ethnic and religious bonds, and that it presented the key to the very articulation of the various parts of the community, became inescapable. Against this, a strange quietus inhabited the literature of the subject. Cemented into eclectic postures and disabled by an institution centred and establishment-oriented methodology, it seemed unable to conceive of a Jewish proletariat having an existence as

a separate and distinct historical class. Hence a class conflict model finds no place in the standard accounts of Jewish communal life, in which the Jewish bourgeoisie, occupying the entire foreground, exists in an anti-dialectal void with no socio-historic counterpart in the shape of an immigrant proleteriat. Bourgeois communal institutions, especially those concerned with 'philanthropy', are never considered from the standpoint of their function as agencies of social control but are, instead, promulgated as the bases of spurious claims to pre-eminence as 'protectors' of the aliens against the hostility of British society (Buckman 1983: VIII & IX).

While Buckman himself concentrated on the conflicts between the Jewish workers and their Jewish employers following the classic Marxism, he did not see the philanthropy of the élite as an epiphenomenon in the development of socialism but as an important mechanism deliberately used to control the Jewish working class and poor - long neglected as a subject of scrutinising historical research.

Buckman further wrote that 'Professor L. P. Gartner, at once the leading exponent and victim of this static method, considers that the alien worker '"did not regard himself as one endowed with a fixed station in life", and thus accepted long hours and irregular seasons' (Buckman 1983: 6). He related to the profits made by the Jewish élite, arranging for loans to the Tzarist regime under which the Jewish population faced cruel discriminations and massacres officially encouraged. Negating a frame of reference of mutuality, Buckman concluded that the absorption process had involved strong conflicts between the interests of the working class, their employers and the élite.

Another historian in this group, White, the author of the book, Rothschild's Buildings, (1981) argued that the Jewish élite adopted the conception of the host middle classes according to which the poor were to be disciplined into an obedient working class who could be exploited as a measure to prevent complete disorder in the society. In the framework of such discipline, attempts were made to condition the poor ideologically, as evidenced by the eligibility to the philanthropic services. The efforts of Buckman and White exposed the community's social dynamics and related them to a political rationale that had contradicted the assumption of class co-operation.

Other historians rejected an interpretation of narrow class interests motivating power suggested by Buckman and White as 'rooted in their ideological prejudices and derived from their own stand in the political debate over current immigrant policy in Britain' (Gutwein 1992: 19). Newman accepts the known facts about the errors made in the absorption of the immigrants and the 'cold' approach towards them (Gutwein 1992: 19-20). Endleman regarded Buckman's interpretations as a 'Marxist presupposition', but conceded with White that the élite attempted to inculcate the immigrants with middle class values (Gutwein 1992: 20). Still other historians detected class motives in the philanthropic activities of the élite as well as class tensions, but underestimated their total impact and appreciated the efforts of the élite to find a modus operandi to support the process of absorption without resorting generally to the Poor Law and, in this way, prevent further class antagonism.

Although it can be argued that some embourgeoisement had infiltrated into the Jewish poor class, and second and third generations of immigrants were able at a later period to abandon manual labour as a result of economic opportunities and social mobility, this does not mean that

during the nineteenth century large parts of immigrants did not harbour a deep resentment towards the philanthropic institutions established by the élite, or that class tensions did not exist.

The nineteenth century was characterised by hectic changes of economic and social circumstances that forced the immigrants to leave the familiar environment for other countries with all the changes involved in terms of employment, social status and lifestyle. Those changes were accompanied by internal struggle within the Jewish society. The changes had differential effects on the Jewish social structure. The Jewish upper and middle classes were able to make a generally comfortable adjustment to the capitalist régime while the Jewish proletariat lived on low paid intermittent work. Those class discrepancies between the assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie and the Jewish masses had weakened even more the Jewish solidarity.

Ideological expositions and practical decisions taken by individuals or groups in regard to philanthropic actions are often representations of different, divergent or conflicting views of 'doing good'. Active or latent conflicting interests in philanthropic actions may be reflected in negation of values and competition over resources. In theory and practice the exclusion or resolution of such conflicts is hampered by the difficulties in establishing hierarchies of values and ordering priorities. In spite of such pluralism which affected philanthropy especially in modern times, historically philanthropy was based on some unifying assumption emphasising religious and or public, secular philosophy and aspirations for 'doing private or common good'.

As generally represented, the theory and practice of Jewish philanthropy assumes cohesiveness, convergence and coherence between diverse moral aims and virtues that it attempts to accomplish. The underlying socio-economic factors related to **tzedakah** both defined as social justice and charity, were especially obscured by the issue of Jewish ethnicity, obligatory and voluntary religious commandments and national solidarity. Many studies on Jewish philanthropy have concentrated on influential wealthy donors and important events, sometimes of a celebratory nature, presenting the saga of the élite and the institution through which it functioned. Marginalising the poor, scant attention has been paid to the mistakes made by the élite in regard to the poor. Such narratives had overt and covert conservative implications, for instance, that the needs of the poor were simply not as important as those of the wealthy middle class. Ample descriptions of the support extended to the Jewish poor in the field of income maintenance and education, played down class antagonisms and confrontations. Jewish philanthropy was often explained in traditional terms as an imminent phenomenon rather than in the context of the exogenous influences it underwent. Many narratives and studies of Jewish philanthropy have omitted dissonant facets of Jewish belief, in order to avoid controversy liable to undermine the representation of a consolidated Jewish community. Most of those sources relate to generalities and lend themselves to sweeping sentimental statements.

Idealisations, sometimes of a legendary and nostalgic nature, permitted misleading interpretations which concealed the contradictions between the philanthropists and those that mostly needed their services. Also, Jewish inequality was presented as an impermanent phenomenon by historians who had based their explanations on a middle class orientation of the Jewish poor, emphasising their

later upward mobility. Modern Jewish philanthropy, as differentiated from mere charity, was presented in such narrative as rational, enlightened **ipso facto** as useful and progressive. Elusive, liberal and individualistic assumptions, combined with conservative views, created the impression that what was good for the bourgeoisie was good for the proletariat and the poor.

The philanthropic arrangements were presented in an affirmative way whatever they were - emphasising more the generosity of the rich rather than the needs of the poor and did not relate to the extent to which generosity could be extended further to meet adequately the needs of the poor, for example, Jewish charitable relief given to the immigrants was described by Gartner as 'extensive and generous' (Gartner 1973: 162-5).

It was not only Jews who held to this idealised cliché of Jewish solidarity among the Jewish social strata and who oversimplified this image to the point of untruth. Rather than a 'pessimistic' interpretation which stressed the economic and social hardship of the poor, the impression was given that this was readily harmonised by the Jewish philanthropies.

Positive impressions of non-Jewish celebrities were often quoted to emphasise the superiority of Jewish charity, for instance according to the observations of the Roman Emperor Julian (Epistle XXX: 49), Tacitus, the church father Aristedes, no beggars and not a single Jew requiring relief were to be found. Similar admirations for the charitable institutions of the Jews were expressed by Lancelot Eddison in The Present State of the Jews of Barbary, 1675), the Protestant leader Jake Surim and others who, in spite of being sometimes highly critical of Jews in other aspects, admired their charities (quoted in Bergman, 1942, 147). Amalgamations and centralisations of

Jewish philanthropic institutions were regarded as a subject around which forms of cohesion were forged, this is, as a unique bridging catalyst of the Jewish communities, characterised by divisive rivalries between different élite groups and associations, generally tending to remain aloof from one another.

In view of the distinct importance that Judaism always attached to their charitable concepts and activities and the high esteem with which they were regarded - it seems important to review the critical discussions and research of Jewish charity with particular reference to its redistributive aspects. In his study Social Work and Jewish Values, Basic Areas of Consonance and Conflict (1959), Alfred Kutzik, social worker in the Jewish communal service in the United States and lecturer at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, adapted the critique of Thorstein Veblen in regard to the worth of the social worker or philanthropist and the devaluation or negation of the work of the beneficiary deriving from the upper class character of social work agencies and the lower class character of their clientele. Kutzik had contended that antidemocratic values of the nineteenth century charity movement, such as COS, had been transcended to the contemporary social work practice. He concluded that both Jewish and social work values consist of sets of democratic values co-existing with opposed antidemocratic ones. Moreover, the democratic values are not monolithic, having different degrees of democracy. The democratic Jewish values are reflected, among others, in the philosophy of Hillel (ca.110 B.C.-ca.10 A.D.) in regard to the equality of individuals and its corollaries, the love of one's fellow men and the pursuit of peace. While in Judaism the individual was identified with the Jewish community, in theory and practice the superiority of the communal rights was an integral part of the Jewish communalism reflected throughout the Jewish history, for

instance, the primitive communism of the ancient Jewish tribes.

However, any value system or law cannot presuppose universal compliance to its terms, necessarily containing antagonist antidemocratic values, this is, any set of values is not exclusive, implying the rejection or devaluation of other norms. As an example in the approach of the Prophets to the crucial principle of equality, there are marked differences between the equalitarianism of the sheep-farmer Amos, the liberalism of the aristocratic Isaiah, between the chauvinism and fanaticism of Ezekiel and the cosmopolitanism of Jonah. The resistance to their prophecies indicates the persistence of severe exploitation of the poor, the social corruption and perversion of justice. Other Scriptures reveal amongst a preponderance of democratic and humanistic values prejudices against the poor disguised in criticism of their ignorance (Kutzik 1959: 31).

Kutzik was influenced by the critique of the predominance of wealth over learning in the value hierarchy of the shtetl and the emptiness of the erudition and the formalistic culture themselves amply reflected since the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century in the literary works of popular Jewish writers such as Shalom Aleichem (1955). Another important writer, I. L. Peretz (1947), stressed the detrimental effects of the affluence on the Jewish upper class ('the bigger the businessman, the smaller the Jew'). Kutzik also came under the influence of the anthropological study of Zborowsky and Hertzog on the eastern European shtetl mainly before World War I and the general concept of American political democracy directed towards the enhancement of human life.

Kutzik emphasised primarily the religious benefits and

status earned by the individual donors of personal charity - as opposed to communal public charity - in the form of Mitzvot and Yikhus as well as the status loss of the recipients of material help. However, Kutzik omitted its detrimental redistributive aspect (1959: 44). Kutzik did not define democracy. While the term is meant to have a favorable connotation, for instance people decide the way they are governed, it has been used freely even by opposing social and political persuasions.

George and Wilding (1976) pointed out that the socialist emphasis on democracy is a consequence of the belief in equality, and its essence is the enlargement of democratic principles to include previously neglected vital aspects of the socio-economic life (67). Later they wrote 'there are understandable differences of opinion as to what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable inequality. Taking wealth and income as examples there is no agreement on the dividing line between the acceptable and unacceptable face of inequality. Those are matters to be decided not **a priori** but in the democratic process of policy' (George and Wilding 1994: 97).

Kutzik correctly wrote that 'Since the entire ideological superstructure is ultimately based on the socio-economic practices of the groups of people who develop values... practice rather than ideology will be looked to for the ultimate validation of our thesis' (Kutzik 1959: 8). However, the authentic evidences that he brought up to substantiate the antidemocratic Jewish values from the history of the American Jewish charities and its actual practice were few. Their importance is exemplified by the following secondary source quotation showing a primary concern for the worth of the donors. A poor house was argued for, in part, on the grounds

that many of our charitable females... would have

opportunities of visiting and ministering to their [the poor] health and wants. At present they are restrained from visiting the poor by the objectionable locations of their dwelling (Schappes 1950: 222 quoted in Kutzik 1959: 47, 92).

Although Kutzik recognised the class origin of some Jewish conflicting values in regard to poverty, he lacked however, a historically consistent frame of reference. He wrote that 'the general upward movement socio-economically and the increasing rigidity of the social class structure of the American Jewish community has begun to make itself felt' disregarding in this way previous significant class conflicts and tensions which could be consequentially discerned (Kutzik 1959: 35). Using the rather elusive concepts of democratic and anti-democratic as well as communal values, Kutzik reached the unsubstantiated conclusion that '**tzedakah**, charity and social justice rendered as assistance as a right and social equality appear to have been preserved or re-created by American Jews... there is no objective evidence that American Jews characteristically have acted on the basis of communal rather than personal or class concerns in the field of social welfare and politics' (Kutzik 1959: 34-5). According to Kutzik, Jewish charity directed by the value and work of the community fulfilled the major role in maintaining the Jewish communities during many centuries of severe persecutions and socio-economic hardship in Diaspora supporting the national rather than the class structure and character (Kutzik 1959: 47). Again, Kutzik did not substantiate this dichotomy, this is, omitting the role of **tzedakah** in supporting existing stagnant social structures within Jewish communities, emphasising its function in strengthening national solidarity instead.

Despite the apologetic remnants and internal contradictions of his study, Kutzik's work was and

remained an important turning point in the research of the Jewish traditional and current theory and praxis of Jewish charity and social work. The main points in which the study related in a way that to my knowledge has not been done generally before are:

- * Exhortation and code of charity are no proof of beneficiary-centred practice of charity among the Jews, neither are all commands and code of ethics. Rather they may be interpreted as an evidence of implicit criticism directed towards those that could and needed to contribute more funds for charitable purposes (34).
- * Anti-democratic values generated by the Jewish society throughout its history are only partly due, or not necessarily due to outside corrosive influences (35).
- * The democratic as well as anti-democratic values are equally traditional.
- * Anti-democratic values, as a rule, are adopted, if not generated, by groups of higher socio-economic status in the Jewish society.
- * The individual freedom of which Jews 'became so enamoured' contributed to a loss of the sense of collective responsibility.
- * Individualism is essentially an upper class value orientation generated by the need to justify and advertise socio-economic superiority (39-40).
- * The participation of the movement and organisations of the lower classes can provide a basis for fostering the democratic communal values 'to which individualism in all its guises and disguises is opposed' (40).

- * The meaning of the word **tzedakah**, charity and social justice or righteousness, is rather a semantic argument and does not imply that Jewish charity is superior to non-Jewish charity. Such superiority is neither proved by the emphasis of the **Talmud** (see Glossary) on the right of the individual, the corollary obligation of the community to assist him, universal eligibility, adequacy of assistance and confidentiality (42).
- * Reactions to the malpractice of charity are an integral part of the Jewish folklore, literature and hagiography (42).

Advancing the above mentioned ideas, Kutzik (1959) challenged significant deep rooted beliefs in respect to Jewish charity. Regarded as important but provocative at its publication, Kutzik's work is not generally quoted, many writers on the subject generally preferring previous earlier non-critical compilations on the characteristics of Jewish charity (Frish 1914, Bergman 1942).

A turning point in the modern research of Jewish charity is the well documented study of Daniel Nusbaum Social Justice and Social Policy in the Jewish Tradition, The Satisfaction of Basic Human Needs in Poznan in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, (1978). Nusbaum used the instrumental definition of **tzedaka** - social justice as distributive equality - asking 'is social justice a Jewish value?' in order to analyse the extent to which social justice was operative in the social policies of Poznan (west central Poland) as a representative community of the late medieval period, the last period of time in which the Jewish communities in Europe remained committed to their **halachically** generated traditions (see Glossary).

Defining **tzedakah**, social justice, as distributive equality, Nusbaum (1978) concentrated primarily on the

dispensation of life sustaining resources for fulfilling elementary human needs. In consequence, such resources were to be supplied to all the members of the community before less essential, life-enhancing, resources were provided to any member. The nine basic human needs whose satisfaction was examined by Nusbaum in the statutes of the Poznan Jewish community were: (1) food; (2) shelter; (3) clothing; (4) needs of the traveller; (5) health care; (6) dowry for a bride; (7) ransom from captivity; (8) support for old age; and (9) burial (258). Nusbaum attempted to verify if the implementation of **tzedakah** in Poznan translated all the above mentioned basic life sustaining human needs into human rights.

Nusbaum's conclusion was that the communal authorities in Poznan did so. As evidence he considered the community's refusal to subject the satisfaction of life sustaining resources to the arbitrary discretion of voluntary contributions and the militancy of the poor when demanding greater provisions for their food allowance and their claim to receive it at the proper time. However, Nusbaum mentioned that the **gabbaim** of **tzedakah** (see Glossary) who were members of the community council themselves regarded the general provisions as insufficient generally reflecting a more generous attitude towards the poor (Nusbaum 1978: 265). Sometimes the Jewish authorities attributed such insufficiencies to the exploitation by the host community and the collective debts to the latter.

The data examined by Nusbaum revealed periods during which there were difficulties in supplying the intended provisions to the poor and that

the communal officials sanctioned accumulation of life-enhancing resources even when encountering difficulties in supplying food, clothing and shelter, and not only when supplying those needs embraced by

tzedakah which might be considered life-enhancing (Nusbaum 1978: 266).

The data also revealed unequal distribution of wealth and its accumulation in significant amounts by members of the Poznan community even when difficulties were encountered in providing the basic provisions to the poor. While the overall system which by the community generated its revenue was progressive, the official statutes of the community had sanctioned the privileges of the wealthy and preserved class distinctions as illustrated by the differential sumptuary regulations. The general conclusion that can be deduced from Nusbaum's study is that except for ransom from captivity and provision of medical care which were basically equalitarian - the provision provided to the poor never supplied them with more than a subsistence level. Neither was there evidence of conscious attempts to achieve distributive equality (Nusbaum 1978: 254). The traditional trends to provide life sustaining resources according to social status - **lefi kvodo**, this is, to what the recipient was accustomed to before becoming poor and the placing of the burden of the poor on his family - also strengthened differential availability of life sustaining provisions.

The conclusions of Nusbaum (1978) were refuted by Jerome Widroff in his study Medieval Jewish Social Welfare Institutions (1987). In an attempt to demonstrate that Nusbaum's definition of **tzedakah** distributive equality was flawed Widroff proposed a rather conservative alternative definition of **tzedakah** as social justice. In order to do so he examined the context in which the term **tzedakah** was used by Jewish writers representing different aspects of Jewish life cited by Nusbaum. Widroff contended that the writers and authors quoted by Nusbaum as regarding **tzedakah** as a Jewish value of special significance, focused their attention to one or more of the terms: civil

liberty and rights, pro union or working men, in favour of the welfare state etc., but not distributive equality.

According to Widroff's definition social justice can be adequately termed a Jewish value 'if it is central to Jewish self definition and if Jewish institutions have been organised and structured to encourage altruism, generosity towards strangers and between social groups (Widroff 1987: 156).

Some of his criteria for testing the operational application of the value of **tzedakah** were judgements and characterisations of memorialists about Jewish persons in terms of their dedication to charitable purposes. On the basis of his definition Widroff found that the medieval Jewish communities provided **tzedakah** in a way that was compatible with the 'institutional' rather than with the 'residual' conceptions of social welfare as formulated by Wilensky and Lebeaux (1958). Widroff wrote

Jewish survival is one of the great wonders of history. How did this weak, small nation, deprived by its homeland manage to survive and maintain its identity, while so many greater, more numerous and more powerful nations have disappeared? (Widroff 1978: 158).

Widroff attributed the resistance to all forces that acted towards the dissolution of the Jewish people to **tzedakah** and **gemilut chassadim** (personal acts of loving kindness), both considered as one of the three pillars of Judaism together with Torah and worship. Yet Widroff recognised that traditional Jewish society lacked social justice 'if we accept Nusbaum's operational definition of social justice - that it is equivalent to distributive equality' (Widroff 1978: 4).

Defining **tzedakah** in the exclusive meaning of distributive

equality is a radical goal even for advanced socialist régimes of contemporary societies. What is evident in the effort of Widroff to refute Nusbaum's frame of reference, is that the very definition of **tzedakah** as operative redistributive equality is perceived as a threat to one of the most important Jewish values. Instead vague and more compromising interpretations were preferred; although ethical rather difficult to apply to the everyday practice of **tzedakah**.

As Widroff claimed that **tzedakh**, social justice can be adequately termed a Jewish value if Jewish institutions dispensing it 'have been organised and structured to encourage altruism, generosity towards strangers and between social groups' (1987: 156). Widroff based his claims on the Titmuss assertion that 'the ways in which society organises and structures its social institutions, and particularly its health and welfare systems, can encourage or discourage the altruism in man; such systems can foster integration or alienation' (Titmus 1970: 225; Widroff 1987: 10). Believing that people 'were neither altruistic nor egoistic by nature' he attributed to the ideological and ethical basis of social welfare arrangements (such as the National Health Service in Britain) the potential 'to provide institutional opportunities for citizens to show their altruistic support for one another' (George and Wilding 1994: 82). Titmus regarded the commercialisation of blood-giving and receiving a way which 'represses the expression of altruism... and leads to all sorts of undesirable consequences in both health care and society in general' (Titmus 1970: 277). Consequently, George and Wilding (1994) enumerated the encouraging altruism in society as one of the important justifications of social service provision, however relating to the recent social welfare problems in Britain they pointed out that 'several Democratic Socialists have come to accept that social

services do not always act as agents of socialist change but as means of social control, particularly when they are provided under strict eligibility rules' (1994: 82).

George and Wilding (1994) contended that altruism as well as self interest are an integral part of fellowship which implies love for one's neighbour but recognised that in spite of its vital role for the communitarian appeal of socialism - as differentiated from capitalism - altruism 'is a very demanding, and some might say impossible, value in its policy implications' (1994: 99). Emphasising the importance of values for directing practice they regarded them as 'broad, vague and flexible concepts which can be interpreted differently at the margins...' (1994: 99).

The encouragement of altruism can contribute to social cohesiveness and is an important element in the universal approach to social welfare, as was emphasised by Crossland (1963) and Marshall (1965). However, due to its vague - not to say elusive - definition, altruism may involve no more than a limited commitment to distributive equality and as such can be related ideologically to rather conservative movements. Karl Popper in his The Open Society, differentiated between altruism and egoism (1957: 99). However, the distinctions between those two categories may be easily over simplified and fail to take into consideration the ambiguous nature of perceived interests - enlightened as though it may be - such as class obligations (Pinker 1979: 233). According to Pinker, confrontations between adherence of egoism and altruism in their uncompromising forms, are generally connected with academic and political debates. He suggested that 'it is possible to discover more by looking at the various forms of qualified egoism and altruism in the context of the daily welfare practices' (Pinker 1979: 7). Pinker's suggestion is, in fact, very close to what

Nusbaum attempted to do by examining the satisfaction of basic human needs in the late medieval Poznan Jewish community by defining **tzedakah** as distributive social justice (Nusbaum: 1978).

Whether or not Nusbaum examined properly the value of **tzedakah** (in the light of Widroff's critique), he aptly attempted to develop an explanatory concept in evaluating redistribution in the dispensation of **tzedakah**, relating to it in terms of service organisation and not only as a cherished value. Challenging Spencer's view Durkheim, in his The Division in Society (1964), affirmed the existence of altruism in every society where there is solidarity. However, as Pinker pointed out, neither Durkheim nor Kropotkin, who criticised Huxley's distortion of Darwinian theory, supported collectivist intervention of the State as a basis of social policies. Rather, both Durkheim and Kropotkin relied on the spontaneous expression of human inclination for altruism (Pinker 1979: 9). Pinker concluded that the term altruism used in an unqualified way is largely irrelevant to social welfare because of its inapplicability to the most characteristic form of social behaviour. The conditional social welfare model of altruism advanced by Pinker lies beyond the purpose of this study (1979: 10, 47-8, 69).

Altruism in the context of European poverty and in an historical perspective was discussed by de Swaan (1988). He regarded altruistic motivation for charity as an 'object of collective action' rather than 'as an affair between ...the charitable and the beneficiary' as is customarily described (de Swaan 1988: 21). De Swaan contended that charity must also be understood in the context of collective interests, such as the maintenance of a labour reserve (de Swaan 1988: 23). This contention was based on his explanation of poverty.

The problem of the poor is to stay alive; the problem for the rich is of distributing part of the surplus without altering the rules of accumulation and conservation ... to pacify and terrify those who might attempt to change the rule of accumulation, and to prevent the ills of poverty - whether through crowding, contagion or discontent - from affecting the ranks of the well-to-do ... the problem of poverty exists as distributing a minimal amount of social surplus without altering the patterns of dependency and exclusion which define the rich on the one hand, and the poor and all the others between (de Swaan 1988: 14-5).

The collective actions of the rich was explained by de Swaan by their needed confidence in their peers and 'some rules to abide by' which were sometimes difficult to achieve

but in general, when confronted with a sufficient number of visibly suffering poor or with threatening bands of the indigent, the established classes did realise that a co-ordinated effort was required. They found it much harder to persuade everyone in their ranks to participate in it and agree upon a distribution of burdens (de Swaan 1988: 15).

De Swaan defined 'social consciousness' as a cognitive awareness of the interdependence between the poor and the rich together with a readiness and responsibility of the rich to ameliorate the situation of the poor (de Swaan 1988: 253).

The frame of reference suggested by de Swaan emphasising worldly consideration of class interests and collective actions of socio-economic control can explain the morality, feelings of superiority and ideological justifications of the nineteenth century ascending Anglo-

Jewish élite's philanthropy, as it emanated from its class interests.

The following questions related to altruistic motivations are asked: were not the patrons of Jewish philanthropies motivated to help the poor by their short and long-term interests? Were not the forms of some income redistribution in the interests of the élite? These questions do not negate the existence of uncommon altruism represented by completely anonymous contributions by the members of the wealthy classes to known or unknown objects of charity, this is, giving, which was not concerned with the outcome of action under contemporary circumstances. Such kind of giving, free of **quid pro quo**, was considered by Maimonides as the highest degree of charity (see Appendix I, Ch. X, The Eight Degrees of Charity). Marx claimed that social consciousness can never be realised under capitalism and that the market mechanism prevents more cordial relationships between men. However, the distinction between egotism and altruism did not appear in Marx's analysis (Marx 1844 - quoted in Collard 1978: 59, 149). Psychological theories that attempt to interpret philanthropic motivations as mechanisms used to placate personal or collective guilt-feelings, superego demands as well as metaphysical and religious concern with the salvation of the benefactor's soul, either during his life or posthumously, are not discussed in this thesis, but it is not my intention to negate their importance and influences.

Philanthropy is closely related to altruism, generosity, charity and love. The Greek term 'philanthropia' refers to a generalised attitude of kindness and consideration for a human being and it can be displayed without the transfer of material resources. However, later, Greek philanthropia and its cognates tend to suggest some definite favour done by a superior to an inferior.

According to Webster's definition, the English term 'philanthropy' seems to have been a conscious borrowing from the Greek in the general sense of love to mankind, practical benevolence towards men, the disposition or active effort to promote the happiness and well-being of one's fellow men. This was also the Victorian pre-welfare State conception of the general scope of philanthropy. Philanthropy, as somewhat differentiated from the term 'charity', was characterised by more institutionalised and generalised voluntary activities, sometimes including preventive ones. Philanthropy was accompanied by paternalism and social control to an extent that it is difficult to separate them. Although sometimes paternalism was exercised through some kind of relationships, this is not a necessary condition of philanthropic paternalism.

Philanthropy is considered a moral excellence and a virtue fostering conformity to the requirements of morality. While some virtues are very important in moral life others are negligible. The differentiation between significant and insignificant values cannot be sharply delineated. The tendency of Christians and Jews amongst others is to regard philanthropy as one of the most important virtues. Jewish people pride themselves on their descent from Abraham which is characterised by his care for the weak, helpless and unfortunate. Mamonides, relying on Rabbi Assi (Baba Batra 6a) wrote that 'we are duty bound to observe the **mitzva of tzedakah** (the religious obligation of charity, more than all other positive commandments'.

Generally philanthropy is considered an uncontroversially desirable attitude but it is used to show one's nice face on the generosity of the 'haves' to the 'have-nots' as such philanthropy can be exercised only by giving insufficient consideration to the claim of justice, this is because philanthropy presupposes a better-off

benefactor enjoying a surplus beyond his needs and a worse-off beneficiary. The basic question remains as to whether the inequality between a philanthropic person and the beneficiary could not have been eliminated by some other alternatives and whether such alternatives could serve better the interests of the beneficiaries, amongst others, by excluding his dependence on the charitable impulses of the philanthropic person. The importance of this question is also emphasised by the justified hypothesis of psychological studies (which lies beyond the aim of this thesis) that philanthropy is based primarily on an emotive element - the cognitive and motivational ones being secondary only. In his **The Doctrine of Virtues**, Immanuel Kant critically asked

The ability to practice beneficence, which depends on property, follows largely from the injustice of the government, which favours certain men and so introduces an inequality of wealth that makes others need help. This being the case, does the rich man's help to the needy, on which he so readily prides himself as something meritorious, really deserve to be called beneficence at all? (Kant 1964 edn: 122).

While pointing out that only inequality makes room for philanthropy, Kant regarded philanthropy as preferable to no philanthropy if the conditions that made philanthropy necessary could not be removed altogether. This approach is accepted as a basis of this thesis particularly as the period discussed in it is a pre-welfare state one.

Marx claimed that the language of moral rights is senseless and that it is a disguise of vested interests and creates confusion. Whether in the first place the philanthropists had a right to the wealth they distributed for charitable purposes or not, the following question related to the recipients of the philanthropists are

asked: Did the philanthropists have a right to use their wealth at their discretion, without taking in consideration the rights of the recipients? That is to say, does the value of altruism based on property and wealth override other social values that may be related to the problems created by the very accumulation of the philanthropists' wealth? Historically, significant philanthropy of the wealthy élites was based on conditions of great inequalities of wealth and poverty, where accumulation of private property permitted or encouraged pauperism, poverty, dependence, this is, letting the lower classes to remain impoverished and dependent during considerable periods of time. Characteristically, philanthropic activities were optional rather than mandatory in contents and occurrences. As such, in spite of continuous acts of rescuing and assistance, especially following catastrophes or other particularly severe circumstances - generally philanthropy was far from being, even in part, superogatory taking into consideration the large numbers of people afflicted by poverty, homelessness, disease, and the like. Sharp division between a wealthy élite, including philanthropists, and the poor suffering extreme anguish, generally have underlying economic, socio-political and institutional basic causes that are to be attacked and dealt with by drastic, systematic and extensive political measures. Those means require that the provisions for the poor will be based on entirely mandatory welfare arrangements. Ruling wealthy élites, even when philanthropic in character, are generally hostile to the basic needs of the poor classes and underemphasise the political obstacles in effecting required changes.

This chapter has demonstrated the social strategies behind the rhetorical tactics employed by many élites' speakers to reconcile contradictions between the ideas of philanthropy conducive to a more equalitarian society and

the realities of inequality. It shows that myths of philanthropy (including those which constitute deliberately fostered values and attitudes) have deep historical and cultural roots in nations and religions and they continued to be artificially created. It is also argued that myths are especially detrimental and even dangerous to the poor when they direct social policies. Moreover, when such policies are deliberate manipulations intended to impose the myths of philanthropy on large social groups and especially the poor, that they may find it difficult to protect themselves against them.

The questions clarified in this chapter are tested in the historical developments of the Anglo-Jewish philanthropy as described from Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

THE JEWISH ÉLITE AND THE JEWISH POOR: POWER AND INTERESTS

This chapter examines the lack of community organisation in regard to the problems of the poor, especially the immigrants making their living as street and countryside hawkers. This was partly due to the gradual collapse of personal and some of the synagogal assistance to the poor and the general apathetic approach towards them. Significant Jewish poverty, vagrancy and delinquency were not dealt with by the increasingly wealthy small Ashkanazic oligarchy out of the fear of attracting additional immigrants. Instead some futile repressive measures were sporadically undertaken.

In 1656 Jewish Sephardic (Spanish and Portuguese) merchants from Amsterdam were granted legal rights to resettle in England. This step was taken by Cromwell in order to enlarge the overseas trade and facilitate competition with Holland. A corollary of this policy was a liberal individualistic approach which was expressed by a continuous toleration accorded to Jews in England and continued throughout the period discussed in this dissertation. The Sephardic community had developed a comprehensive system of relief and mechanisms for maintaining class control, economically and socially motivated. As early as 1663 the Sephardic élite adopted a severe ordinance prohibiting the communal board from liberating delinquents. 'They shall consent that he be punished by the law according to his crimes as an example to others, and that thereby the stumbling block in our midst be removed and God's people be free' El Libro de los Acuerdos (1931: 12, Article 3). The regulations also prevented the giving of **tzedakah** (meaning both charity and social justice) to poor Ashkenazic immigrants named "**Tudescos**" (Germans) and **Polaccos** (Poles) but allowed its use for permitting them to leave England (1931: 28). However, the Ashkenazim increased considerably and by 1760 there were about 8000. The Sephardim numbered only 2000,

but still they were the most influential. Most of the Jews were concentrated in London. The Ashkenazic community did not develop a system of relief able to cater for their large number of poor and this situation continued well after the Ashkenazic élite gained ascendancy in economic resources and political influence. From 1675 country houses were bought by Jewish Sephardic magnates (Brown 1984: 20). Some of their most conspicuous financiers were Sir Solomon de Medina and Samson Gideon (1699-1762). Gideon was a loan contractor, stockbroker and financial adviser to the Pelham administration. He aided the government to fight the French fleet and then the invasion of the Young Pretender. Gideon and others invested enormous amounts of money in great houses, works of art, racehorses and so on, following and reaching out to the landed aristocracy. Such expenditures and the physical separation from the concentration of the Jewish poor population affected their responsibilities toward the latter. Some of the members of the Sephardic élite did not find sufficient scope for their political and social aspirations within the synagogues and related charities and disengaged entirely by conversions which affected adversely the resources available for the Jewish poor. The Seniors, Ricardos and D'Israelis are the best known examples. Sampson Gideon reared his children in the Christian faith but continued to pay anonymously for his seat in the synagogue Jewish Encyclopaedia (1935 vol 5: 66). In 1740 he provided an annuity for Captain Thomas Coram, founder of the Foundling Hospital. Gideon was worth £350,000, 'more than the whole land of Canaan' as Horace Walpole wrote when informed that the bulk of his estates, including the Belvedere in Kent, was left to the Duke of Devonshire (Aris 1970: 48). Gideon bequeathed £2,000 to the Sons of the Clergy, £1,000 to the London Hospital and £1,000 to the Sephardic congregation.

In 1753 Henry Pelham agreed to the petitions of Jewish

merchants and manufacturers to advance the Jews' Naturalisation Bill, intended mainly to permit wealthy Jews born outside the country the rights of buying land (an entitlement which was legally uncertain). The Bill passed into law in the same year but in 1754 the Bill was repealed following petitions from all the cities of Great Britain and raised considerable public excitement prior to the general election. The agitation increased popular hostility and temporarily endangered the life of itinerant Jewish pedlars, especially old clothes men, no matter how long they had been known as harmless on their beat. The adversaries of the Bill claimed that

such a naturalization would deluge the Kingdom with brokers, usurers and beggars that the rich Jews, would purchase lands and even advowsons, would interfere with the industrious natives, and by dint of the most parsimonious frugality, to which the English are strangers, work at an underprice, so as not only to share, but even in a manner to exclude them from all employment.

(Smollett n.d, II: 336-7).

This quotation reflects the restrictionist economic views which emphasised the obligation of the state in protecting English working class by limiting foreign manpower competition. It also expresses the expectations of English merchants that the state would protect their privileges and monopolies. As pointed out, the Bill was not intended to promote general naturalisation or to encourage Jewish immigration to England, but it was initiated by a group of Sephardic magnates headed by Joseph Salvador (1716-1886) as a limited concession to them to which they felt entitled as a compensation for the services rendered to Pelham's administration. The resentment of the Bill reflects that in English eyes during this period the differentiation that the Jewish

élite tried to introduce was not entirely accepted (the images of the upper class Shylock and the lower class Shylock were interconnected). To counteract this dual image the Jewish wealthy class did not intend to change the pursuit of their economic enterprises (including large scale adventurous speculations) but rather relate to the 'lower' part of the equation, this is, the control of the poor. During the outburst of the anti-Jewish feelings related to the Naturalisation Bill, the Great Synagogue (est. 1722), the main communal centre of the Ashkenazic community, attempted to placate the resistance directed towards all Jewish classes by excluding from relief immigrants, that according to their considerations were not compelled to leave their native countries. Such measures proved, however, generally ineffective (Hyamson 1908: 236).

In 1771 a robbery and murder had been committed in Chelsea by a gang of eight vagrant Jews (Gentlemen's Magazine XLI 1771: 521). The wide publication of the crime, the reward offered for information and detecting innovations used for the first time in this case by Sir John Fielding, magistrate, of the Public Office on Bow Street, aroused strong feelings against the Jews. The damage was caused in the first stages of the investigation when every Jew was implicated in public opinion and, probably more than at any time before, Jewish immigration appeared as a serious social problem. According to Francis Place 'the derision 'go to Chelsea' was a common exclamation when a Jew was seen in the streets and was often a signal of assault. I have seen many Jews hooted, hunted, kicked, pulled by the beard ... without any protection from the passersby or the police' (Add. MSS. 27827 f. 146). The cooperation of the 'principal Jews' and their 'laudable conduct' during the prosecution was complimented and the hope was expressed that the whole nation would not be ignorantly stigmatised. Such situations gave the Jewish

élite a strong justification for social control. Five years previously (1766) during a crime wave in London, the Ashkenazic leaders offered their help to eradicate Jewish receivers of stolen goods and other malefactors; the wardens of the Synagogue expected 'to receive the applause of every Jew who is not totally ignorant of ... his own religion to the true regard for public justice, and the obedience due to the laws of the Kingdom' (quoted by Roth 1938: 155-7). The meaning of the moral support and identification requested by the Jewish élite from the Jewish public can be better understood from the article of J. R. Marcus 'Shed a Tear for a Transport' (1974) based on a Yiddish letter sent from London to a relative in the British American province of Pennsylvania. According to this letter a fifteen year old Jew named Feibel Fibeman had been sentenced to seven years service (equal to exile and slavery) as a 'transport' in British North America for pickpocketing a handkerchief worth ten pennies in December 1771. Marcus concluded that 'although no previous crimes were committed by the teenage lad the Ashkenazic leaders refused to interfere on his behalf and added in their refusal to evince any sympathy for apprehended evil doers, the London Ashkenazim ... were only following in the footsteps of the socially dominant Sephardim' (Marcus 1974: 56). Following the Chelsea murder the Home Office protested to the Great Synagogue with regard to the large number of shiftless poor. In response, the Ashkenazic leaders blamed the English government for lavish distribution of free passages in Royal Packet Boats to impoverished Jews. Moreover, the Great Synagogue petitioned the Home Office to stop completely the immigration of Jewish poor. The restrictions suggested by the wardens were that no Jews should thenceforth come to England unless they paid their full passage money and were furnished with passports by the British ministers abroad (Wolf 1934: 194). As a result of this presentation the Post Master General was instructed accordingly (Roth 1949:

334). At the same time the Lord Mayor of London offered free passages to Jews accepting repatriation. However, probably only the war with revolutionary France induced the more effective Alien Bill of 1792, which stopped temporarily Jewish immigration. In a correspondence with Sir John Fielding and the Earl of Suffolk, the Secretary of State, the Elders of the Great Synagogue expressed their views that Jewish immigration was pulled by the assistance offered to immigrants in England as much as was pushed by the disquiet in Poland following the War of 1768. It was the Elders' opinion that the users of free passages were vagabonds and unable to earn a living. (Letter of Sir J. Fielding to the Earl of Suffolk, S.P., Dom. Geo. III, Parcel 8). The elders also claimed that their relief funds were on the verge of bankruptcy and suggested that immigrants should provide evidence to the Home Office as to the business that necessitated their presence in England or alternatively, evidence as to their ability to find employment prior to their embarkation. According to Wolf (1934: 194) raids were actually made on Jewish pedlars all over the country. While some difficulties in Poland were recognised, the immigrants as a whole were represented to the English authorities as a group of people who came to obtain their subsistence through begging. The economic causes of vagrancy were not recognised. The constant fear that England would become an 'El Dorado' attracting perpetual influxes of oppressed poor Jews was aggravated by the anti-Jewish feelings following the brutal Chelsea murder and the increasing concern of the élite over the rising rate of criminal acts committed by Jews. But according to Wolf the restrictions introduced by the Ashkenazic authorities in the distribution of relief or its total refusal in order to deter potential immigrants 'made matters worse. The destitute strangers, knowing no trades, and possessing no friends, either peddled on the highways or drifted into crime' (Wolf: 193). Wolf severely criticised the



Ashkenazic establishment for a prolonged apathy, refuting the claim that funds were exhausted.

The problem of the poor, which had been growing daily more serious for eighty years does not seem to have excited the slightest intelligent interest among the leading Ashkenazim, while the Sephardim had equipped themselves with a number of fairly well managed schools and other charitable institutions including an orphan school, a hospital and an institution for lending money to respectable poor and for apprenticing poor children, the German Synagogues although numbering a much larger congregation, had done scarcely anything to prevent their poorer members from becoming paupers or to save the children of the poor from growing ignorant and shiftless. They could not plead the excuse of poverty, for although the majority of their members were the reverse of affluent, the well-to-do and even wealthy families were certainly not few (Wolf: 194).

It seems that the Ashkenazic élite tended to enforce 'police actions' using the central and municipal authorities. In his book Desultory Reflections on the Police, Sir W. Blizard (1785) mentions a plan designed by the Earl of Suffolk himself for the regulation of the lower orders of Jewry. His friend a 'worthy respectable Jewish gentleman' assured him 'that the respectable part of the body would do all in their power and be happy to advance such a good design, but that the undertaking would be far more arduous' because of the extent of the involvement of Jews in crime (Blizard 1785: 43-4, quoted in Rumney 1933). The order of the Secretary of State, the Earl of Suffolk to the Post Master General of December 1771 to charge Jewish poor with full passage money (at the request of the Jewish élite), was carefully formulated so as not to imply any change in the liberal policy of

England toward immigration. 'The industrial poor of all other nations could be transported to England gratis'. (Roth 1949: 334). At this point it is interesting to bring in the interpretation of Josiah Tucker, in his pamphlet A Letter to a Friend concerning Naturalisation 1753, related to the problem of repatriation of poor Jews. His support of an open economy so important to the Jewish élite included a free immigration policy

Perhaps you may imagine, that the law empowers proper Officers to send such indigent foreigners to their native countries:- But there neither is, nor ever was, such legal power subsisting by virtue either of the statute, or Commander of the Realm.
(Tucker 1753)

This liberal policy continued after the Napoleonic Wars to the late nineteenth century. This long range policy emanated from the belief in the beneficial contribution of the immigrants to the economic progress of England. This view persisted even through the period of fear prompted by Malthus' theories of over-population (Trevelyan 2nd ed. 1946: 474). In parallel, the recognition of free migration as a legitimate right was the corollary of the perception of the worth of untrammelled trade. Although Adam Smith did not discuss the subject, a positive view of human mobility was implicit in his writings and strengthened by the American Declaration of Independence. As pedlars, Jewish immigrants expanded the products of newly developed consumer goods, recycling used goods and material. But towards the end of the eighteenth century, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was a feeling that the Jewish poor could not be absorbed by the economic growth, especially when due to lack of sufficient support they presented social problems. In spite of the fact that at this period many of the Ashkenazic leaders were themselves ex immigrants or first

generation natives, they adopted this pessimistic view which among other causes, influenced the inadequacy of the system of relief. Taking into consideration the élite's background, it is assumed that it was aware of the ways in which the immigrants, as European city dwellers, were affected by the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution. But, like their contemporaries, the non-Jewish middle class capitalists, the élite was to a considerable extent preoccupied by hectic economic enterprises. The provisions for the poor, as an integral part of others synagogal funds were as nowadays 'sustained exclusively by men engaged in this acquisitive process ... among the more favoured members of society, economic interests have eclipsed all others' (Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan 1972: 30).

In terms of relief the crisis of 1771 did not impel immediate action by the communal leaders. Eight years elapsed until, under circumstances of severe distress the first significant Ashkenazic charity, the Meshibat Naphesh or Bread, Meat and Coal charity was established. One of the founders and the first president was Levi Barnet Cohen, born at Amsterdam 1740, son of a wealthy trader. He arrived in England by 1778 and during the late 1790s was considered one of the leading merchants of London. Levi was the father-in-law of both Nathan Mayer Rothschild and Sir Moses Montefiore. In 1859 his grandson, Lionel Louis Cohen, later M.P. for North Paddington (Conservative) was one of the founders of the London Jewish Board of Guardians and its Vice President. Since 1869 and until the 1940s all the presidents of the Board were the descendants of Levi Barnet. However, this institution was not designed for or capable of dealing with the distress of the poor in any important way.*

* For some other early Ashkenazic charities see S Stein (1964) 'Some Ashkenazic Charities in London at the End of the Eighteenth Century and the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century'. TJHSE XX: 63-81.

According to Shulvas (1971: 113) the Jewish immigrants who were unable to speak German were especially discriminated against. Generally, the incessant incoming groups of homeless immigrants and the fear of attracting even more provided an excuse for inadequate charities. Other general factors that influenced the Jewish élite during the Napoleonic wars in curtailing any assistance beyond the crude necessities, were the resentment towards the large expenditure on poor relief, agricultural depression and social unrest.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were between twelve thousand and fifteen thousand Ashkenzim in London, as estimated by Colquhoun (1796). The large number of poor among them encountered serious difficulties in providing their children with secular and religious education. Such educational facilities were created too late and were too small so that they met only the need of a fraction of the Jewish population. The majority of the poor children were employed in the street trades to supplement the meagre income of their large families. Many of those children were no longer influenced by the traditional restraints of their parents and religious institutions. It was only natural that they moved into street callings which enabled them to start on their own with a small capital. The situation was complicated by the fact that the efforts that those Jews were making to provide a bare living raised some public discontent. Some of the immigrants belonged to a category denoted as **Betteljuden** (small groups of Jews who moved continuously from Jewish community to Jewish community seeking charity) after being uprooted from Poland and other countries by persecutions and economic competition and lived for long periods as transients in Germany and underwent a process of disorganisation prior to their immigration to England. Some of the **Betteljuden** were rejected by their original communities because of different transgressions (Shulvass

1971: 85-101). The members of the Jewish upper class showed a persistent tendency to regard the majority of immigrants as belonging to the **Betteljuden**. In fact, most of the immigrants were impoverished Jews who believed that England would offer better economic opportunities than Germany and Holland or could not gain a settlement in Germany. Still others planned to transmigrate farther to America. Their outlandish look, long Polish style gabardine, beards and sidelocks - at a time when faces were shaved - made them much more visible than the Irish immigrants who also followed street vocations. The lack of industrial and mechanical openings forced the Jewish poor into street selling. The large numbers of Jewish pedlars reduced their benefits. In addition to old clothes, oranges and lemons, the Jewish pedlars sold buttons, sealing wax, pencils, spectacles, cheap jewellery and pictures, etc. Other Jews were employed in pencil making, embroidery, glass engraving, diamond cutting, watch making and repairing, but the total number of Jewish artisans was small. The street trades involved some 'deformationes professionnelles'. Many Jewish crimes were typical of the English urban poor and mainly committed as a direct consequence of hunger and the inability to provide in a socially acceptable manner the most elementary necessities. The legitimate returns in peddling and street trading in secondhand clothes, were small. In terms of entertainment, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Jewish poor acquired rapidly some of the values and morals prevalent in their surroundings, this is, the English class of which they increasingly became a part. Obviously, the customs that the poor internalised were remarkably different from those incorporated by the élite within its respective class. This process was accompanied by a growing indifference of the Jewish poor toward the patronising élite. The physical violence as a widespread medium of self-protection and protest used in the streets became

also a Jewish poor class characteristic. Modes of amusement such as boxing - still very brutal and rowdy - became common amongst the Jews. Renowned Jewish prize fighters such as Samuel Elias alias Dutch Sam, his son and above all the most outstanding and sophisticated 'scientific' pugilist of England at this time, Daniel Mendoza (1763-1836), provided the Jewish poor with ethnic pride and important models of identification. Jewish pugilists and their peers were involved in the Old Price Riots at the reconstructed Theatre Royal at Covent Garden in October 1809. In order to counteract the public protest against a sharp increase in the price of seats, Jewish pugilists and other Jews were hired by the management as 'bruisers' against the 'ring leaders', (described by Samuel Maunders in The Treasury of Knowledge, 1847 - as the heads of the mob or riot). In derision Jews were called 'old clothes', 'bad shillings', 'oranges and lemons' and so on. According to the contemporary 'News'

the high priest of the Jewish synagogue has caused one hundred itinerant Jews to be struck off the charity list for six months for making a noise at the Covent Garden Theatre. He has also warned them of excommunication in case they should be guilty of the like again (quoted in Roth 1950: 208, 211).

Such external developments and rigorous collective repercussions indicate the concern of the élite.

Most aggravating for the Jewish élite was the fact that the Englishman in the street and the general public did not distinguish so much between the wealthy Jews associated with money-lending and speculative transactions and the poor offender, and this in spite of the advanced acculturation of the former. In a way no matter how far they moved from their concentration in Whitechapel, Houndsditch, Spitalfields and how isolated in their

country estates, no matter how much they internalised the stigma-free image of the English gentleman, the real image of the Jewish poor stuck to them. This image was presented to the English public in a distorted form by newspapers and periodicals, caricatures, popular songs and shows. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the image of grasping and unrestrained Jewish economic self-interest was already stereotyped. In different tracts such as The Commercial Habits of the Jews 1809, written anonymously, the Jews were presented as excessive, aggressive, dehumanised capitalists who functioned under the guise of their utility to the successful state of the Empire, leaning on the theories of economic liberalism.

The financial activities of the brothers Goldsmid and later in the century of Natan Mayer Rothschild, became a popularly propagated theme. According to this view Jewish money endangered the state and the Church. The apparent threat of Jewish takeover was argued, **inter alia**, by their connections with Jewish financiers from other countries as well as the lack of national and social ties to England and its masses. These arguments were underlined by anti-capitalist radicalism as well as by the resentment towards the Jews **per se** as expressed by William Cobbett (1835). The anti-capitalist trend of Cobbett was based on physiocratic doctrines which were applied to the total Jewish population in England and not to Jewish financiers only. According to this doctrine Jews did not really contribute to the English economy but rather exploited it by not creating goods by work (Cobbett 1967 edn: 34-36). Such views were shared by many other nostalgic radicals and exacerbated by the acquisition of some country estates by Jewish financiers, which were regarded as usurpers of the traditional-paternal rural ownership. In spite of the economic freedom and prosperity the wealthy Jewish class enjoyed in England it was exposed to anti-Jewish feelings that were reinforced

in England at this time by the nationalist movement and the Napoleonic Wars.

However, anti-Jewish feelings in spite of their ample expression, did not lead to the same political and social limitations that were prevailing in other European countries. The conglomerate of the ideas adopted by the English aristocracy can be largely defined as non-interventionism. However, Jews were generally expected to control the situation of their poor so that it did not present a social problem affecting the general public. Under the impact of capitalism, the English environment at this time provided a rationale for a liberal frame of reference in de-emphasising religious and other differences amongst men. There was a spirit of opposition to Church and central government interference. The emphasis was rather on local government responsibility in regard to the maintenance of charities, health and educational institutions. The Church of England at this time also assumed a worldly character. The stress was rather on the obedience of the Civil Law, social responsibility and voluntarism. In the light of these values the Jewish élite was expected under normal circumstances, although unofficially, to take care of their own poor. The image of avaricious Shylocks with ample international connections in novels, comic magazines, on stage, daily papers, and pseudo-scientific tracts induced some of the wealthy Jews to maintain a low profile altogether. Many others, however, felt that this image of making malevolent money was to be counteracted by the image of the wealthy Jew as a 'big giver' and scientific philanthropist. For the very wealthy, money was the 'carte de visite' for entering the non-Jewish upper class 'bon ton' society but generous philanthropy was needed too, moreover as their acceptance was always an incomplete one and in many ways they remained marginal. Less wealthy Jews too were accepted as governors of

non-Jewish philanthropic institutions and overseers of the poor in the parishes in which they lived. While antipathy, suspicion and hostility continued and possibly were even more traumatic for the Jewish upper class taking into consideration their social ambitions, the Jewish élite learned to live with them. After Waterloo, the Jewish wealthy class improved its economic position and English society was even more open to accept their members to its ranks. During this period the Jews belonging to the upper middle class and the middle class continued to move out from the Jewish East End. In this way they separated and estranged themselves from the Jewish poor, the circumstances of their daily life and the Jewish institutions located in the East End to which the poor applied for help.

During the last part of the eighteenth century the Ashkenazic synagogal charities were at a very low point in terms of resources and administration. In similar ways to the English boroughs they were not stimulated by any pressure from a central authority. A striking account of the consequences of this disorganisation in terms of Jewish delinquency, want of skill and illiteracy was given by Patrik Colquhoun LL.D. (born in Dumbarton, Scotland in 1745) in his book A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis, 1796 which attracted widespread attention through its relatively objective and comprehensive disclosures on delinquency. His detailed and methodical descriptions and remarks in regard to the different categories of offences forced the Ashkenazic community into the fierce light of public criticism. Colquhoun's official position in the city magistracy increased the authoritativeness of his book. In the context of this alarming quantitative account, Colquhoun estimated the number of itinerant 'Jew Boys' dealing in counterfeit money, purchasing articles stolen by servants, and so on, at two thousand (1796 3rd edn.: vii.).

Colquhoun regarded the offences committed by the 'lower order of the Jews' as one of the 'chief sources of that depravity which prevails in the metropolis, and is to be considered as one great cause of the increase of petty crimes'. Colquhoun attributed the delinquency of the Jewish poor to their faulty education, lack of occupational training and resources for honest employment (1796: 41), and therefore considered them redeemable. He was aware that 'their Sabbath prevents them from placing out their children as servants, or apprentices, or binding their sons to mechanical employments, or indeed to any useful art, by which they can assist in increasing the national property - instead of which they diminish it by living upon the industry of others,' (1796: 159). Colquhoun denounced 'the system, which now prevails in the education and habits of this numerous class of people and which is directly hostile to the interests of the State and to the preservation of morals' (1796: 40). In his Treatise, Colquhoun admitted that the police system was unable to control the numerous, partly minor transgressions of the low income urban class, including the Jewish poor. He dealt with all groups of the population and the Jews were not treated worse than other sections. Beyond the accusations directed to specific groups, Colquhoun stigmatised the whole working class presenting it as composed of potential criminals to be controlled by a regime of hard labour. However, unlike other contemporaries magistrates, Colquhoun did not limit himself to police measures but suggested preventive intervention through education, savings banks, provision of employment and a uniform national poor rate. Colquhoun related to the 'lower order' as a separate entity; however, in other passages he placed the Jewish poor and the middle classes on the same continuum of immoral commercial practices,

From the orange boy to the retailer of seals, razors,

glass and other wares in the public streets, to the shopkeeper, dealer in wearing apparel or in silver and gold, the same principles of conduct too generally prevail ... the mischiefs which must result from the increase of this depraved race, arising from the natural course of population ... that a remedy cannot be too soon applied ... Those belonging to the Dutch synagogue, are in a peculiar manner, rendered objects not only of commiseration but of serious attention on the part of the legislature (Colquhoun 1796: 160).

Still in another paragraph Colquhoun made an analogy between Jews and gypsies. The criticism and admonition of special legislation to restrain Jews or to interfere with their internal organisation was directed to the Ashkenazim only, who unlike their Sephardi coreligionists did not establish sufficient institutions to educate and help their poor. Colquhoun's quasi-official remarks in regard to specific legislative measures were without precedent as the autonomy of the Jewish élite in regard to philanthropy as well as education was considered unquestionable. Nor did the English authorities interfere in the Jewish internal communal conflicts. As to the solutions proposed by Colquhoun, he regarded the Jewish élite as unwilling rather than unable to reform its poor in this way contributing to London's crime and insecurity. For this purpose he intended to superimpose the wealthy on the 'lower ranks'. Colquhoun believed that 'they [the wealthy Jews] cannot but view with horror and distress, the deplorable conditions and growing depravity' (Colquhoun 1796: 160). Considering his proposals to establish various institutions for the assistance of the poor, it is possible that the paragraphs related to Jewry's situation were aimed deliberately to create an unprecedented embarrassment and provoke the emotional reactions needed to force the wealthy Jews into concrete action.

What Colquhoun criticised and expected to change in the situation of the Jewish poor can be understood by looking at his general approach to popular education and employment. In his article 'Propositions for Ameliorating the Conditions of the Poor, etc.', Quarterly Review (Dec. 1812), Colquhoun proposed a national education scheme in a paternalistic framework as the fundament on which a superstructure of prosperity and happiness could be erected solidly, followed by a disappearance of want 'in proportion as the lower classes are instructed in their duties' (Colquhoun 1812: 323, 354). Claiming that the improvidence and the vices of the poor were a result of their utterly neglected education, Colquhoun placed, at least indirectly, the responsibility for their situation on the well-to-do who were able to support such education. (1812: 319). Colquhoun himself was criticised for supporting the public education movement (the plan designed by Dr Bell). The criticism came from George Emsor in his On National Education, London, who believed that every man must buy instruction, as any other commodity and 'if he cannot afford it he must go without it' (reviewed in Quarterly Review 1811: 431). Considering the economic causes of poverty Colquhoun was also concerned with the fluctuations in the number of the poor in England and their uncertain sources of income. 'The true essence of government', he asserted, 'was to guide by imperceptible means, the working classes into channels calculated to enable them to render their labour productive' (1818: 22). Such ideas were compatible with those of the **haskalah** - the Jewish enlightenment movement in Europe which propagated the productivisation of the Jewish masses.

Colquhoun was aware that the Anglo-Jewish élite was given an almost free hand in managing matters of philanthropy. It was recognised and legitimised by the relevant English authorities. At the beginning of the century philanthropy

was tied with the synagogues and was financed through membership taxes and foundations. Each synagogal congregation functioned autonomously. Through the synagogues the oligarchic élites continued to dominate the infrastructure of the Jewish community in England.

During the first half of the nineteenth century at least, the great majority of the community accepted the élite submissively. Since political thinking was not developed, nowhere could the masses generally perceive more democratic models in the Jewish world.

The mainsprings of the Jewish élite's power were both spiritual and civil but the élite's rule was lay in character rather than rabbinic. In respect to philanthropy for instance, most of the voluntary contributions usually centred around the synagogue and the wardens of the synagogues were often also charity wardens. Most of the governments did not make provision for the specific needs of the Jewish communities and they continued to cater for them in the framework of their remnant autonomy.

Therefore, the communities were forced to fall back upon the resources of their wealthy members and to accept their authority. Such élites succeeded in maintaining a relatively firm grasp over most of the educational and socioeconomic aspects of Jewish life.

The voluntary loyalty and dependence of the members of the Jewish communities enabled the élites to exercise comprehensive powers over them. During the nineteenth century Russia and other East European countries, from which the Jews arrived in Britain, generally remained medieval in character permitting internal self-government among the different corporate groups. More modern and emancipated states too did not perceive the autonomy of the Jewish community as a usurpation of their power and

continued to expect, and even stipulate that Jews would take care of their own. In such circumstances only the very courageous would occasionally dare to scold the oligarchal leaders or get involved in some aggressive protest against them.

The establishment of the Jewish Board of Guardians in 1859 reflected three parallel processes: 1). the secularisation of the aid system, 2). the rationalisation of its application, 3). the emulation of the concept of an aid system and organisational structure prevalent and preferred by the host society. This was therefore a relinquishment of the traditional collective and individual philanthropy. However a series of actions intended to bring about these changes was evident from the very beginning of the nineteenth century when the doctrines of Colquhoun and Bentham were incorporated by van Owen - the representative of the London Jewish élite.

Since the late eighteenth century there was a gradual disuse of Hebrew and Yiddish (written in Hebrew characters) in the traditional and philanthropic terminology. In lieu, English philanthropic terms were borrowed. Beyond the semantics, English contemporary concepts of philanthropy were adapted especially as they generally fitted the interests of the Jewish bourgeoisie as of its non-Jewish counterpart.

As it will be shown in the next chapter and Chapter 7, because of the important role played by the rapid acculturation of the Jewish élite, concepts of philanthropy were generally constructed on the same basic considerations that prevailed in English philanthropy; they developed and functioned much in tandem. The similarities between the different aspects of English and Anglo-Jewish upper class philanthropy are indeed striking. Both were largely unanimous in regard to their characterisation of the

'lower social orders' and in aiming to replace the values of those strata by English bourgeois ones rather than by a specifically Jewish system of traditional values. Moreover, there were almost no organisational forms of uniquely Jewish features established by the Anglo-Jewish élite during the second half of the nineteenth century. This is demonstrated, amongst others, by the separatist Orthodox community that developed in the East End, namely **Machzikei Hadath** (Heb. Upholders of the Religion) in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which fiercely condemned the Anglicised form of Judaism promoted by the élite including its philanthropic aspect. The preservation of some specific Jewish aspects of Jewish philanthropy was rather related to the observances of strict religious commandments such as the **Shabbat**, Jewish festivals and dietary laws.

Throughout the nineteenth century, some of the members of the élite felt that by manifesting the willingness of the Jews to resemble as much as possible their British counterparts and their culture, they were fulfilling the expectations of the host society. Some others felt that by doing this they were actually implementing the Jewish traditional values that after undergoing a metamorphosis became an integral part of the modern bourgeois thinking. Beyond this there were sporadic attempts to connect directly Anglo-Jewish modern philanthropy with traditional Jewish values based on universal and humanistic common denominators of general philanthropic notions. Thus for instance, rabbis quoted Biblical verses and **Hallachic** texts related to **Tzedakah**. However, in instances of conflict between the concept of Jewish and non-Jewish philanthropies the Jewish élite followed the English model and precedents to which they were permanently alert. The involvement of Jews in non-Jewish philanthropies and the co-operation with them continuously enforced this trend.

In this thesis it is claimed that while the Jewish élite

identified themselves with the general principles of English philanthropy, the selection of these principles for actual implementation and its extent was based on class interests as they appeared to them in the historical circumstances.

This chapter has shown the constant fear of the Jewish wealthy class that public opinion might identify the 'enlightened' and the assimilated Jewish bourgeoisie with the 'undesirable' hawkers and itinerant mendicants. However, additional pressures from the host society were needed in order to motivate the Jewish élite to undertake the planning of financial and social responsibilities in regard to the poor as reflected by the Colquhoun-van Oven scheme.

CHAPTER 4

THE COLQUHOUN - VAN OVEN SCHEME AND ITS OPPONENTS

This chapter focuses on the readiness of the Jewish élite to adapt an innovative English comprehensive organisational model designed by Patrick Colquhoun. The scheme was intended to empower the Jewish élite to support, educate and combat vagrancy and mendicity by using quasi-police measures. It also included the establishment of an exclusive indoor institution for the Jews. The scheme was to be legalised by Parliament. The basis of opposition to the scheme and the reasons for its failure are explored.

The campaign to obtain the funds requested for a large plan to reform the Jewish poor was started in 1795 when the brothers Benjamin (1755-1808) and Abraham (1756 - 1810) Goldsmid, who by this time were involved in large transactions in government loans, were able to collect during two consecutive years the amount of twenty thousand pounds sterling that was invested in Imperial 3 per cent. More than half of this money was raised within an amazingly short period of time from Jews and non-Jewish philanthropists, their banking friends. Unfortunately the outlines of this plan are unknown and so is the dispute that induced the brothers to postpone the use of the capital and the accumulated interest until 1807 when it was ultimately used for the erection of the Jews' Hospital. According to Alderman (1983: 9) the scheme failed because it was considered to contribute even more in attracting large numbers of Jewish poor from abroad.

The brothers Goldsmid were born in Holland, their father Aaron settled in London ca. 1763, starting ca. 1777 as a merely unknown bill broker in a modest office in Leman Street, close to the East End where he lived in Goodmans Field. Abraham and Benjamin extended his business. During the Napoleonic war they overpowered the domineering Stock Exchange banking clique and in association with a

non-Jewish firm were successful bidders for the national huge loans. Both brothers were determined to win a place in non-Jewish aristocratic society. In 1792 Benjamin bought and remodelled a thirty bedroom extravagant mansion at Roehampton decorated with famous works of art which Thackeray dubbed a banking colony (Arkin 1975: 160). Abraham acquired a country house at Morden in 1805 and later the Merton Place, the country house of Nelson's mistress, Lady Hamilton. (Brown 1984: 33-4). The Goldsmids entertained lavishly, giving splendid fêtes. Among their guests were the Prince of Wales, George III and Queen Charlotte and Nelson. Philanthropy to non-Jewish causes was also a way to counteract the image of the Jews as merciless usurers and the feelings of non-Jews that the Jewish wealthy class reserved its generosity for their own philanthropies. During the 1790s the brothers Goldsmid and some of their Jewish partners became governors of the Foundling Hospital. When the Naval Asylum was established in 1798 Benjamin contributed £2,000 and was instrumental in raising an additional £2,600 from other Jewish financiers in 1806. According to his biographer in 'Memoir of the Late Abraham Goldsmid', Gentleman's Magazine, 1810 (LXXX, part 2nd: 382-385) and the Dictionary of National Bibliographies, (VIII: 81), Benjamin was the real founder of the Naval Asylum. Abraham gave £700 for the Society for the Deaf and Dumb and for many other charitable purposes. The participation in non-Jewish philanthropy received commendatory accounts in the general newspapers and to some extent created and maintained good relations between the Jewish and the general community as well as on a more inter-personal level. However, the meteoric amassing of a huge capital and the ostentatious way in which the donations were made raised suspicion from some non-Jewish quarters which denounced them. An anonymous publication, The Commercial habits of the Jews, commented,

One of these gentlemen [A. Goldsmid] (who it must be confessed, if we remove out of the consideration the rapidity and manner in which his immense property has been acquired has been liberal in his charitable donations) has been exhibited in the windows of the print-shops with scrolls of paper dangling out of his pockets ... The indelicacy of this exhibition is sufficiently obvious, but our contempt and disgust are excited when we learn that it was not the result of gratuitous adulation, but a wretched design and plot upon the admiration of the publick (1809).

William Cobbett expressed his deep contempt for Abraham Goldsmid even more bluntly by emphasising the exploitation involved and disguised by his charity 'a man acquiring such immense wealth must see that something was necessary to keep the public from grudging ... (Goldsmid) merely tossed back to the miserable part of us in the shape of alms, the fraction of pence upon the immense sums of money that he got by his traffic in loans and bills and funds' (quoted in Emden: 93). Such accusations could not be easily dismissed. Beyond the deep dislike Cobbett felt for the Jews in general and their description in derogatory and misleading terms, his campaign was an integral part of an attempt made by the radical opposition to stop the system that Pitt initiated for financing the war, which by the wealthy capitalists exploited the State. (Cole 1938: 118-9). Yet large scale philanthropic donations impressed the contemporary social mind as gratuitous efforts to correct and ameliorate social conditions out of a sense of 'noblesse oblige' and many newspapers considered Abraham's benevolence genial and respectable. Such laudatory articles motivated Cobbett to devote an issue of his weekly Political Register to combat Goldsmid's popularity as a philanthropist.

A contemporary Jewish critique was expressed by the London

Jewish printer, Levi Alexander (1802: 22), 'As for their charity ... they like the pomp and stance of a printed subscription, where their names blazoned in the front of a newspaper tells the world so much good has been done' (22). As a traditionalist Alexander's strictures were based on the halakhic principle of giving without making one's identity known. Lucien Wolf, writing in 1934 considered the donations to non-Jewish charitable causes during that period as an act that jeopardised the needs of the Jewish poor, 'Those, however, who know from the pages of Patrick Colquhoun ... how terrible was the condition of the German Jewish poor of London at this period, can only marvel at Benjamin Goldsmid's misdirected altruism.' (Wolf 1934: 196) differentiated between the approach of the brothers, regarding Abraham as 'delighted in succouring the needy' and 'truly attached to his community'. According to Emden the tendency of Benjamin to combine charity with his own personal advancement was severely criticised in the Jewish circles (1943: 90). Both brothers committed suicide, Benjamin in 1808, presumably due to gout and melancholia, and Abraham in 1810 subsequent to an alleged conspiracy of other speculators and stock collapse.

Situated at the higher level of the power structure, the Goldsmids decided or were consulted in respect to the situation of the Jewish poor but out of an unwillingness to face excessive attention and possibly due to lack of expertise and time they acted sometimes prudently through Dr Joshua van Oven, surgeon, the Honorary Medical Officer to the Poor at the Great Synagogue. Joshua van Oven was not a member of the higher economic circles but had a more direct knowledge of the situation of the poor acquired through his contacts with them as their surgeon. He was not a deep independent thinker but possessed the knowledge of the modern philanthropic doctrines and social thought necessary for helping the élite to choose amongst the

alternative ways of action. However, his job security depended upon the leaders of the Ashkenazic community who obviously were to be satisfied and who ultimately took the responsibility for implementation of any project. Joshua van Oven (1766-1838) was the second president of the Bread, Meat and Coal Charity (Wolf 1934: 187). At the beginning of the nineteenth century he was a leading figure in the philanthropic and educational reforms.

His father Abraham, was graduated at Leiden and appointed physician of the Great Synagogue in 1767. He translated into Hebrew the OEconomy of Human Life written by the moraliser Robert Dodsley as well as other works. Joshua's son, Bernard, followed the same professional and commercial career, and was active in the élite's struggle for political emancipation. In 1815 van Oven translated from Hebrew into English, the Shoreshe' Emuna, Elements of Faith by the enlightener **maskil** (Aufklärer) Shalom Cohen. (Contacts between van Oven and Cohen were established in 1813 when the latter attempted to establish a Hebrew school in London, prior to his return to the Continent.) The Elements of Faith is a moderate orthodox Jewish catechism parallel to those used during this period in Christian Charity Schools. It was based mainly on the Bible only, however it received the approbation of the Chief Rabbi Solomon Hirschell, subsequent to the pressure of influential financiers (Roth 1950: 68). Twenty years later van Oven published the Manual of Judaism as well as other Hebrew writings that he translated into English. Van Oven attempted to modernise Judaism in England sharing the tendencies of the **haskalah** Jewish enlightenment movement in Germany (Roth 1967: 345-76). Although the **haskalah** emerged as an integral part of the general enlightenment movement in eighteenth century Europe, it was characterised by the special circumstances of the Jewish people. As an adherent of this movement van Oven was concerned with assimilation in respect to language, manners and the productivisation of the Jewish poor by

introducing changes in their occupational structure and by promoting mechanical crafts and agriculture. Such a change was deemed by some among them, Jewish as well as non-Jewish circles, as a precondition for bettering their character and situation. Generally, the **maskilim** accepted this implied critique and propagated this view in their social and economic doctrines, sometimes overlooking the real conditions of the low income Jewish class and their inability to obtain employment of any sort, even when fairly skilled. At the beginning of the nineteenth century this doctrine was practically implemented in West Europe by societies for apprenticing and promoting industry amongst the Jews especially manual work. In the Eastern and other parts of Europe the **maskilim** were often supported and maintained by wealthy Jewish merchants, consequently in their writings they reflected the ideals of the rising Jewish middle classes presenting them as a model to be imitated by the poor. In their views the Jewish masses were ignorant and arrogant. R. Mahler (1972: 80-81) wrote about their approach to the poor, 'Enrichissez vous! the motto of the rising capitalism was also the motto of the **maskilim** ... wealth is a natural reward for economic initiative .. poverty is the result of indolence, inertia and illiteracy'. . According to Mahler (Mahler 1972: 82, 84-5) 'the productivization of the masses was also directly in the interests of the rising Jewish capitalist class, for the impoverished non-productive elements constituted a handicap to the expansion of the internal market'. As a consequence of their approach to the poor, some **maskilim** regarded Jewish philanthropy as an incentive to idleness. Even when the approach of the **maskilim** to the Jewish wealthy class was more ambivalent or critical, it still reflected the hope that their resources could be used for improving the situation of the Jewish masses. The indifference of the host regimes toward the vast poverty of the Jews and the long-standing tradition of 'Jews take care of their own',

only increased the dependence of the **maskilim** on the wealthy Jewish class. The influence of this movement on van Oven facilitated the incorporation of the contemporary ideas on education for the poor and relief of poverty. However, there is also evidence of internal struggle which sometimes underlined the writings of European **maskilim** and some of them identified themselves with the poor class and criticised the wealthy Jewish domineering class in Eastern Europe. In 1780 during a visit to different European countries, Benjamin Goldsmid established contacts with prominent Maskilim there in order to use their methods in England. In his Memoirs of the Life and Commercial connections of Benjamin Goldsmid of Roehampton, 1808: Alexander commented,

His views [Benjamin Goldsmid] were directed to the remotest points of moral perspective as the greatest means of reducing the whole to a uniform practice of beneficial improvement. The principal object of Mr Goldsmid's inquiry was the situation of the individuals in foreign countries. He felt for their state at home as well as lamented their abject depression abroad, but above all things he wished to observe was their mode of educating children ... in order, if possible, to alleviate their condition at home on his return. Thus he invited philanthropy and philosophy for application to the best of purposes. (1808: 24, 25, 27).

The emphasis of his inquiry abroad was on the education of children, reflecting a more sceptic view in respect to the adult poor. In 1788 two of the brothers Goldsmid, their two brothers-in-law and other financiers, reorganised the small Ashkenazic Talmud Torah School (est. 1732), a traditional Jewish religious school for poor boys, by adding and emphasising practical subjects, but this institution accepted a very limited number of boys whose

parents could not pay for private tutoring. The school accepted only children of 'respectable families' rejecting homeless and destitute children. Illegitimate children were **a priori** to be excluded from the screening process as well as children whose parents were not legally married, all this according to the prevailing social philosophy of the nineteenth century philanthropy.

By 1801, in spite of the severe situation of the Jewish poor and the high rate of offences committed by Jews, no agreement was reached between the Jewish financiers as to the proper use of the twenty thousand pounds which remained in abeyance since its collection in 1797. The additional editions of Colquhoun's book continued to present the Jews of all classes and Jewish philanthropy in derogatory terms. The leaders of the two Ashkenazic synagogues in Fenchurch Street (Hambro') and Leadenhall Street (New Synagogue) refused to share the expenses incurred by the Great Synagogue in maintaining the 'strange poor' who swarmed the streets peddling and begging. Under these pressures van Oven met Colquhoun (who presided as a police magistrate at Queen's Square, Westminster) in March 1801 and in collaboration with him designed a comprehensive scheme which (as described later) was based on the ideas of Colquhoun and Bentham and supported by Abraham Goldsmid and the Ashkenazic élite. The correspondence between van Oven and Colquhoun was summarised in a work named in a work: Letters on the Present State of the Jewish Poor in the Metropolis with Proposition for Ameliorating their Conditions by Improving the Morals of the Youth of Both Sexes and by Rendering their Labour Useful and Productive in a Greater Degree to Themselves and to the Nation, London 1802 (by Joshua van Oven). The publication of the letters to Colquhoun aimed at generating without delay a more favourable opinion towards the whole English Jewry. They included such argumentative apologies as the objective causes of Jewish

poverty and delinquency, the care that Jews generally take of their own poor, the potential of the Jewish poor to extend their occupational field and the ability of the Jewish wealthy class to control the poor and help them in discriminative ways, embodied in a practical scheme. At the same time Colquhoun was instrumental in rendering the scheme into a Bill for presentation before the Parliament (Picciotto 1875: 260).

The involvement of Colquhoun in the Scheme can be better understood in the light of the repetitive failure of Colquhoun to implement Bentham's and his own plan during the same period, the general unwillingness of the government to reform the Poor Law and the reluctance of the destitute poor to enter the workhouses. Colquhoun, possibly with the consent of Bentham himself regarded the whole situation as an exceptional opportunity to realise some of his ideas using the material resources of the Jewish magnates and their non-Jewish partners to reform the Jewish poor. In fact already in 1778 Bentham suggested to erect a Labour house for Jews to be supported by the Jewish community. This in order to solve the problems connected with dietary and other Jewish religious observances that prevented Jewish poor of entering workhouses. In his An Extract of a Pamphlet intituled, 'Draught of a Bill, To Punish by Imprisonment and Hard Labour, Certain Offenders: and to Establish proper Places for their Reception' 1778, republished as A View of The Hard-Labour Bill, Jeremy Bentham wrote

As to Jews, I must confess, I can see no feasible way of making, in each Labour house, the provisions requisite for satisfying all their various scruples. As it happens there seems reason (I do not know whether to say to hope, but at any rate) to believe that of such of them as are likely to become inhabitants of these houses, there are not many on whom these

scruples would set heavy. The only expedient I can think of for the indulgence of those people, is to have one Labour house for all the convicts of this persuasion throughout the kingdom. In such case, it would be but reasonable that the whole community of Jews should be at the expense of this establishment, including the charges of conveyance. They might then have their own rabbis and their own cooks and butcher. (Bentham 1778).

In this pamphlet Bentham suggested inter alia to provide a new establishment of Labour houses all over England. In March 1792 Bentham proposed the government to undertake the charge of a thousand convicts under a new system denoted Panopticon. The plan of the model prison (a 'pauper' branch was planned later on) was adopted in 1794 by an Act of Parliament. In 1795 Bentham prepared the adaptation of the Panopticon prison to workhouses. His plan was extended gradually to comprise two hundred and fifty Houses of Industry to be established throughout England. In regard to this plan Bentham was assisted by Colquhoun who collected information and agreed to sponsor the Panopticon Plan. According to Poynter (200) when Jeremy Bentham had enlisted Colquhoun's aid in 1796 'it was not as a mere assistant but almost as a patron for Colquhoun was already much more widely known as an authority on such subjects than was Bentham himself'. However, Bentham and Colquhoun were to be disillusioned because they could not recruit new supporters amongst the philanthropists and few parishes co-operated in providing information (Poynter: 141, based on Bentham Papers CLI: 102-5). Under the circumstances described, the Jewish Askenazic élite was more collaborative, in view of the financial prospective of the brothers Goldsmid during this time.

According to the scheme it was proposed to establish a

corporative body authorised by the Parliament and empowered with a government-like prerogative for the superintendence of all matters relating to the Jewish poor in London, regulating their economy, promoting industry and productive labour among them. The board was to be entitled to purchase lands not exceeding one hundred acres in extent upon which buildings would be erected from time to time as to be found necessary. For the first phase it was proposed to erect four buildings (Substances, etc. 1802: 1, 3):

1. An asylum for the aged and the infirm persons.
2. An hospital for the sick, maimed and diseased.
3. A school for the education of children and for the instruction of the mechanical and other useful arts.
4. An institution of industry for vagrant poor and such as are able but not willing to work for their living.

In addition a burial ground was to be purchased or rented for burying those who may die in any of the places belonging to the establishment, unless removed by their relatives to be buried elsewhere at their own respective costs.

Colquhoun and van Ovens' scheme was inspired by the arrangements for the poor at Shrewsbury. According to the parochial survey of Sir Frederick Morton Eden (1928) at the end of the eighteenth century, the six parishes of Shrewsbury had been united by an Act of Parliament and among other arrangements a joint House of Industry was built (1797, abridged edn 1928: XXXV) 'designed on sound lines and under ...able management ... this Poor House became almost a municipal workshop' Due to the earnings from the sale of manufactured merchandise the yearly poor rate was reduced (considered by Eden as a result of factors which were not related to the value of work done by the inmates). In comparison with other workhouses, those of Shrewsbury provided a relative high standard of accommodation and reflected the rise of public conscience

in respect of the conditions under which the poor were maintained, however Eden (1928 edn: 127) concluded rather sceptically 'a kind of glare, which obscures the truth, has been thrown upon workhouses ... the advantages are only negative. This is the merit of the much taunted workhouse of Shrewsbury' (127).

Colquhoun had no good opinion of the contemporary workhouses and no doubt he wanted to create something quite different. It was true that beyond its intrinsic defects whether a workhouse reformed by educating and providing work for the able-bodied, punished and deterred or solely maintained the poor more comfortably than elsewhere - depended less on the statutory provisions and regulations than on the individual management, and parish leadership. Therefore, Colquhoun hoped to achieve more ambitious aims by establishing a system of securing efficient properly motivated and resourceful governors. However, he did not relate to the other aspects of the contemporary practices such as the demoralising cruelties and tyrannies of the contractors to whom the poor were to be 'farmed'. As envisaged by Bentham and Colquhoun, workhouses were to become institutions that the nation was to be proud of. They were to combine productivity, usefulness, to rehabilitate the able-bodied poor, provide separate accommodation for the impoverished - previously independent labourer, using a division based on moral traits. The separation of the honest dependent victims of difficult times from those who lived a depraved life, was regarded by Colquhoun as one of the main advantages of his proposal. The Houses of Industry were also to improve the conditions of life of all inmates, for instance, by reducing working hours, providing proper food and so on.

The operation of the whole scheme was to be carried into effect without interfering with 'the general system of Jewish oeconomy' (Letters 1802: 2) and without obstructing

the Jewish religious practices (Letters 1802: 17). The aim of the scheme was to operate powerfully 'not only promoting the cause of humanity but also in rearing up the infant poor in habits of useful industry and in restraining the adults from acts of nature, criminal and nauseous to the society' (2: I). In cases of bastards the directors were to be entitled to act in the same way as church wardens and overseers (6: XVI).

The directors were to be empowered (6-7, XVII) 'to appoint officers, who are to have the authority for apprehending persons of the Jewish persuasion committing acts of vagrancy and carry them before the magistrate to be dealt with as the law directs'. Determined to combat Jewish vagrancy in the densely populated metropolis, van Oven regarded the substitution of the functions discharged inefficiently by the police as rather promising. Moreover, putting into practice some of the theories that Colquhoun had advanced, even on a limited scale, could rise the esteem of Abraham Goldsmid and himself as outstanding philanthropists and reformers far beyond the sphere of the Jewish community.

I am persuaded, that if the scheme was fairly laid down, and its consequences fully made out, it would be embraced with avidity by the best informed and most important part of the nation ... A system like this ... would be an exemplary proof of justices of the plan for consolidating the metropolitan parishes into one Board for the affairs of the poor as proposed in your excellent work of the Police (Letters: 21).

It is worth noting that in the framework of relieving all paupers the plan of Panopticon included measures for apprehending beggars and vagrants. In addition to its power to incarcerate the dependent and punish the criminal, the Board was also to be invested with power 'to

inquire into the circumstances of the poor' in order to differentiate between the 'idle and disorderly persons' and 'the deserving poor'. The latter was to be helped by occasional relief. (Substances: 4, VIII; Letters: 19, 28) The model for this provision was also borrowed from contemporary innovatory practices (Letters: 18) 'a method of assisting the out-poor with occasional relief, somewhat familiar to that adopted at Shrewsbury'. However, out-door relief was considered rather secondary. Bentham contended that a system of out-door relief (which he designated as 'Home provision') could not be universal as the so called impotent and homeless needed institutional care anyhow. He also thought that it could not employ paupers efficiently and finally it could not be combined with education. In his Pauper System Compared Bentham expressed his opinion that outdoor relief could 'do tolerably well for the strictly virtuous' but a system based on institutional care, publicly run in large establishments was controllable and perfectible. (CLIIb: 454-9, 509-15). The activities were to be conducted by a Board of the Presidents of the four main synagogues, twelve Ashkenazic and four Sephardic representatives, two aldermen of the City, two magistrates for Middlesex, Kent, Essex and Surrey, and the four presidents of the City synagogues. The executive body was to be constituted of eight directors (two elected representatives of each respective congregation). Eligible for election were all members of the synagogues who paid an annual fee of three guineas.

To support this scheme the Jews of the metropolis were to become a separate fiscal unit. The activities of the centrally led institutions were to be provided from a Jewish Poor Fund established by an Act of Parliament. The following sources of income were proposed:

- a) Compulsory, synagogal levies and if they were to be

found insufficient an individual tax on the incomes of all Jewish householders in London assessed by three distinct committees to be balloted for from the Board of Directors.

- b) An appropriation of one half of the poor rates paid by Jews to their parishes of residence which were, with very few exceptions, without recourse to their poor coreligionists, due to the long tradition of 'Jews taking care of their own'.
- c) An option to borrow up to £10,000 for the purpose of purchasing land and erecting buildings.
- d) An appropriation of the funds used by the synagogue to assist their attached poor.
- e) Donations, bequests, legacies and any other voluntary contributions were to be accepted.

The proposal to replace voluntary contributions for the maintenance of the poor by compulsory levies to provide adequate relief on a steady operational basis stemmed from the deep dissatisfaction with the exclusive reliance on contributions characterised by their insufficiency and fluctuations on the decisions of the donors. Voluntary contributions, especially at the 'top level' were to a large extent based on personal discretions, clique and business relations, rivalries over hierarchic positions and honours in the philanthropic institutions. The contributions were further hampered by the atrophy of charitable instincts and unwillingness to devote surplus resources to the needy. In contrast, the members of the Sephardic congregation were paying a progressive income tax 'imposta' based on the financial transactions executed and an additional fixed tax 'finta' (Ascamot, Laws, revised 1906: 1-6). This social arrangement of the Sephardim was a continuation of the traditional Jewish **tzedakah**. Inherent in the voluntary financing was the dissatisfaction of the wealthy with the status gratifications that the community could offer. In this regard van Oven wrote to Colquhoun,

I do not think that the support of an institution of such consequence can or ought to rest on such an uncertain footing as occasional eleemosynary subscriptions. The plan is for the effectual relief and maintenance of poor which is an absolute duty not an act of generosity and liberality ... experience has too fatally evinced how unstable a basis eleemosynary contributions proves, being too much subject to the changes of caprice, and too liable to have its resources withheld from opposition, whom avarice and sometimes interest.

(Letters 24.3.1801: 18, 31-32: emphasis in original).

This bitter critique towards the prosperous Jewish élite is evident throughout his letters. On the other hand van Oven in his letters to Colquhoun anticipated the reluctance of the parishes to lose a part of the poor rates paid by the Jews, of which they benefited in their entirety especially 'wherein the majority of the Jews reside, which may oblige us to wait the period when the reform you suggest shall take place and open a door for the admission of such a claim' (Letter of 27.3.1801, Letters 1802: 21). Van Oven also feared that such parishes will have to reassess all their inhabitants, non-Jewish included, in order to make up for their income 'a measure, in the present high state of the rates, extremely unpopular, if not oppressive, besides its producing a revival of prejudices and hatred against the Jew, which is now happily fast diminishing' (Letter of 21.12.1801, Letters 1802: 31). Consequently that proviso was altogether omitted from the additional formulations of the Bill.

Fully supported by Abraham Goldsmid, the scheme was endorsed by the three main Ashkenazic synagogues and presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Henry Addington, for approbation by the Parliament. However, it

was strongly opposed by the Sephardim, who petitioned to Parliament. They regarded themselves more Anglicised and organised and resented being identified with the limitations of the Ashkenazim in terms of philanthropic organisation and to contribute disproportionately to the scheme. The charitable efforts of the Sephardic community were recognised by Alexander (1802: 30), yet the Sephardic community too faced a severe problem of poverty. Rumney (1933: 90) estimated the number of their poor at 1,100. According to Roth (1964: 239), during the last quarter of the eighteenth century many wealthy Sephardim lost as much as 90 per cent of their capital as a result of the crisis in the state of affairs of the Dutch East India Company, and the finances of the Sephardic community were in disorder. Whatever were the facts in regard to the situation of the Sephardic charities, the immigrants were mainly Ashkenazim and due to a lack of solidarity between the two élites, the Sephardic were determined to preserve their financial independence and to remain a separate 'political body'. To justify this trend, differences in religious rituals were over emphasised. The Sephardim blamed the Ashkenazim for the unfavorable change in English public opinion towards Anglo Jewry, and indicated their wish to avoid public action. They regarded the plan as an intention to use their funds for encouraging Ashkenazic immigration from Europe. Mr Pierce, a solicitor, was requested by the élite of the Sephardim, led by Isaac Aguilar, to prepare a clause requesting the exclusion of the Sephardim from the Bill and forward it to Mr Hobhouse, the M.P. in charge of the Bill in the House of Commons.

Still another conflicting pressure with which van Oven was faced came from the Jewish wealthy group itself, concerned about the authority given to the Board to assess and tax them. This is reflected in the second letter of van Oven to Colquhoun, 'how trifling and nugatory does a burthen

of a moderate taxation appear as an objection. I say a moderate tax for it cannot, and must not, be a heavy one, no tax for charitable purposes ought to be so large as to excite sentiments militating against these benign ideas of charity ...' (Letters of 21.12.1801, Letters 1802: 34-5). Although the financing of the plan was to be based on more progressive and obligatory taxes, the inherent unwillingness to burden the wealthy Jewish class and to protect its interest is reflected throughout the approach of van Oven and this was probably the main obstacle to the implementation of the scheme.

Following the opposition of the Sephardim and in spite of intra-élite controversies, a plan was prepared by Colquhoun and van Oven for the 'general oeconomy' of the Ashkenazi poor only. It was entitled Substances for Clauses to Frame a Bill to be brought into Parliament for the Better Providing for The Poor of the German Jews in the Metropolis and the Bills of Mortality, including St. Pancreas and Marylebone. The category of the poor included British born and foreigners. But oppositions from additional quarters further reduced the momentum of the scheme. Finally, only a brief petition of the German Jews, residents of London, was presented to the House of Commons on the 25th February, 1802 in which was stated

although the Jewish Poor have an equal right with other members of the community to Parochial Relief when in Distress, yet the peculiar Circumstances of their religious Rites and Diet completely shut them out of all Places established for the Relief of the Poor, and the same Cause deprives them (when afflicted with Sickness, or maimed by any Accident) of the Benefit to be derived from medical Aid administered in the different Hospitals in this Metropolis, and prevents the Children of Jews from being bound to mechanical and many other Employments, by which they might be enabled

to become useful Members of Society; and that, in the present State of the Class of the Jewish nation, of whom the Petitioners form a Part, there is no Asylum to which the aged and infirm can resort for Succour and Protection when Disability assail them, nor any place for the Education and Maintenance of the Infant Poor; and that the Relief afforded by the Synagogue is, under the present Circumstances, very inadequate and for Want of proper Regulations, is inefficiently applied; and that the Petitioners conceive it will be highly advantageous to the Persons denominated German Jews, residing in the City of London ... if Power was given to regulate and maintain their poor, and to promote Industry and the knowledge of useful and productive labour among them and thereby render them more useful members of Society than they are, or can be, under the present peculiar circumstances and therefore Praying, That Leave may be given to bring in a Bill for the purposes aforesaid ... Ordered, That the said Petition to lie upon the Table.

(Commons Journal 1802: 172).

Tierney did not act to bring in a bill that would incorporate the scheme's proposals. By moving to lay the petition on the table, he indicated that at some future date he had intended to refer it to a committee prior to its presentation for Parliamentary approval in a form of a bill based on the van Owen and Colquhoun scheme. However, no further proceedings took place on the petition and no letter was required for its withdrawal. Also, there are no verbatim accounts of debates at this period, and the standard edition of debates (Parliamentary History) has nothing of the 25th February 1802 when the petition was presented. On 22 April 1802, at Coachmakers Hall, the scheme was totally abandoned following a decision taken by the Ashkenazic leaders who had supported it (Board of Deputies of the British Jews, Minute Book 1, 1760-1828, The Parliamentary Register 1802: 63-4).

One of the main factors accounting for the failure of the scheme was the reluctance of the Ashkenazic élite to authorise its establishment as a distinct fiscal body exposed and subjected to the interference of the state. This élite suspected that an obligatory levy, although proposed as moderate, would not be limited to the relief of the poor but would be eventually enlarged to encompass other fields of communal activities, such as education. This aspect of the scheme was regarded by the Ashkenazi élite as unfeasible and even dangerous to its vital interests (Letter of 21.12.1801, Letters 1802: 34-5).

The obstacles encountered by Colquhoun and the Ashkenazic establishment represented by van Oven to implement the scheme, even in a limited format, exposed the conflicting interests and ideologies within the structure of the Anglo-Jewry as well as the positions of the different Jewish strata vis-à-vis the host environment. Consequently the additional reactions to the scheme that endured the relapsing time will be explored. These reactions were typed in the form of pamphlets. The opposition of Levi Alexander to the scheme reflects the traditionalist approach combined with a sympathy for the poor, rejection of its repressive measures intended to control them and a sarcastic critique toward the wealthy class struggling to legalise its power over the poor.

Levi Alexander was a printer, and a bitter pamphleteer of Whitechapel. His father, the English born Alexander Alexander, was the first Jewish typographer in England. In 1770 he translated the Ashkenazic liturgy into English. Levi prepared and printed the revised edition. In 1808 Levi Alexander published a critical pamphlet against Solomon Hirschell, the chief rabbi of the Great Synagogue, which referred also to his want of charity in a particular case (1808b: 16). In his pamphlet Answer to Mr Joshua van Oven's Letters on the Present State of the Jewish Poor in London ... with a Word to P. Colquhoun, 1802, Alexander

vehemently criticised the elements of coercion and punishment included in the scheme

the rich impose too often the iron hand of power on the weakness of the poor ... but oppressing the poor without legal power and causing for legal assistance to do it to a greater extent, is worse than amassing fortunes by indirect means ... The men, or bodies, who grow rich every day ... deceive themselves when they think because it is so, that they are better than their less fortunate neighbours (Alexander 1802: 41-2).

Alexander described the tyranny already exercised by the synagogal authorities in order for them to obtain considerable burial taxes from the low middle class families of deceased persons; beyond this his fears of authoritarian policies can be understood in the context of the historical experience of the Jewish people. As a representative of the lower middle class and taking into consideration the structure of the Jewish community at this time which consisted of a small upper and middle class versus a large number of poor, Levy was alarmed by the burden of the prospective compulsory taxation (Alexander 1802).

At the same time Alexander suspected that 'If... an asylum ... could be accomplished, the influx of foreigners from all parts would be drawn to this centre and it would require above a treasury loan [underline in text] to supply all their wants. Yet I must confess these exotics are better learned than our own natives' (1802: 22).

Similarly to the wealthy class Alexander regarded the financial burden imposed by immigration as insupportable but as a traditionalist, and in contrast to the Jewish élite, he viewed the integration of the immigrant poor as a two way process necessitating a thorough understanding

and appreciation of their Jewish education versus the Jewish élite which demanded the overall 'regeneration' of the immigrant poor without a specification of what mores were to be the target of change (37). In the open letter to Colquhoun, Alexander (1802) accepted his conclusions in regard to the educational deficiencies of the poor in modern and secular terms but rejected the stigmatisation and he contested the practicability of the proposals included in the scheme, 'why brand and maculate a proportion of the human specie ... with an indelible mark of approbrium, for what is not to be alleged against individuals as a fault, but only to their mode of education, the prejudices of which if they are so lawful, are too formidable for any Police bench to reform' (Alexander 1802: 34-44).

Alexander stated bluntly that Jewish poor do not derive any advantage in terms of employment from their geographical proximity to their rich neighbours, thence he concluded that the proposed vocational training was futile. The viewpoints expressed by Alexander reflect the insulation of the Jewish élite and the extent to which democratic and traditional practices such as providing employment to the poor were lacking in the Jewish community. He regarded the poor with more compassion and even as their representative and instructor of the poor in precluding their oppression,

In this place I think myself intitled, as well as called upon by strong conviction of duty, to admonish, and as far as I can, instruct my poorer brethren upon the nature of the mischievous measure that is about to be circled about them; for should the Synagogue obtain the wished-for power, what will be the consequence only time can shew (Alexander 1802: 42).

Both van Oven and Alexander were among those who at this

period in England were knowledgeable of the Jewish scriptural assertions in regard to poverty and the practical ways the Halakhah suggests in dealing with the poor. But van Oven's position as an employee of the Great Synagogue and his functions as representative of the Ashkenazic establishment can account for the differences in their approaches. Alexander related to the reaction of the poor to their situation in another pamphlet 'Though the mob are blind enough, yet their optic are not so thick ...' (1808b: 16). The depreciation of the masses was characteristic to some of the early nineteenth century Jewish intellectuals and was adopted by the **Haskalah** (Enlightenment) movement. The poor's more direct opinions about the scheme are not evident as they did not possess the means of the wealthy to immortalise themselves. The structure as a whole discouraged the poor's expression in the contemporary media.

An additional reaction to the scheme of van Oven and Colquhoun came from Philo Judaeis, an anonymous non-Jew in his pamphlet A Letter to Abraham Goldsmid, Esq, containing Strictures on Mr Joshua van Oven's Letters Pointing Out the Impracticability of Ameliorating their Condition through the medium of Taxation and Coercion, etc., London 1802'. The basic premise of the writer was that the Jewish poor were already provided for quite adequately and consequently there was no need to impose an additional burden on what he considered as 'the frugal and the industrious part of the community, who already groan under the pressure of Parliamentary and Parochial Taxes' (V). The writer suggested the establishment of a seminar for the education of the new generation to be financed by voluntary donations. Philo Judaeis did not object to the repressive feature of the scheme rather his scepticism was based on the inefficiency of legal confinement of mendicants,

If British juris prudence, with all its advantages has hitherto been found inadequate, to coerce them [mendicants] into habits of industry. - How can it be expected, that your proposed Directory with limited powers will be able, especially after they are reinforced by fresh importation of alien Jewish vagabonds, Surely Mr van Oven will not, assert that the young and profligate Jews will tamely submit to such an incarceration. If Mr Wood [the Director of the Shrewsbury House of Industry] is drawn so pathetically to complain of the insuperable difficulties in establishing proper discipline (Philo Judaeis 1802: 11-2).

On the basis of his knowledge in regard to the feelings of the English poor towards the workhouse, Philo Judaeis asked '... is it your intention to require Parliament to arm you with the invidious power of compelling adult Jews to become inhabitants of what, I am convinced, they will in spite of your benevolent intentions, view as a prison?' (18) Regarding the unemployed able-bodied poor as negative and irreversible, he did not see any strength in van Oven's proposals in respect to outdoor relief, 'If you cannot comprehend all your Poor, in your proposed operations, where is the utility of restoring to partial remedies? and shutting up one part in the House of Industry, while you leave the remainder to their former habits of vagrancy? Such a step will at once defeat your main object - which is to regulate the oeconomy of the Jewish Poor' (22).

Philo Judaeis regarded such power as was requested by the Ashkenazic establishment in the scheme to be in direct contradiction to the spirit of the English law. He doubted if 'without trenching on existent laws, which ought neither to be modified nor repealed, merely to enable your nation to impose a tax on yourselves' (26) and

if the 'legislature ... will delegate an authority to the opulent Jews, to assume an unconstitutional controul over their poorer brethren' (18). Finally, Philo Judaeis suggested to give up the proposal in order to avoid the dangers inherent in opening 'a new channel of Fiscal resource' (Philo Judaeis, 1802: 24). The ideas included in the pamphlet reflected among others the reluctance of the English middle classes to the power accorded to centralised authorities.

While some interest which the **Maskilim** had aroused in the reform of the spiritual and material life of the Jewish people was still current, the attention of van Oven, as the delegate of the Ashkenazic élite in charitable affairs was attracted to the philosophy of Colquhoun, himself inspired by Bentham. As van Oven and the Ashkenazic élite accepted his ideas and were ready to implement the scheme on their basis, the social ideology of Colquhoun will be considered in some detail. Colquhoun can be considered an incipiently moderate collectivist; his confidence in economic individualism was tempered by the recognition of the utter exploitation of the working classes, especially children, and his sense of justice. Yet beyond their moderate collectivism, and rejection of the more cruel exploitation, Bentham and Colquhoun shared the common doctrine of the nineteenth century, that the paupers should never be relieved of their poverty above the level of scanty means of supporting life. Bentham also asserted that, at no time should a person be granted from public funds relief to an extent that rendered him in general more eligible upon the whole, than that of persons maintaining themselves by their own labour (Browning 1833-1846, I: 32). Colquhoun attempted to differentiate between 'indigence' - a state wherein a person is unable to maintain himself by his labour - and 'poverty' as the state where a man's manual labour support him, but no more; 'the other when there is a surplus from his labour'

(Quarterly Review, 4, 1818: 103). Bentham considered poverty as the main incentive to work. Colquhoun wrote in his Treatise on Indigence, 1806

Without a large proportion of poverty there could be no riches, since riches are the offspring of labour, while labour can result only from poverty, poverty therefore is a most necessary and indispensable ingredient in Society without which nations and communities could not exist in a state of civilization (1806: 7).

After four decades these definitions were adopted by the Royal Commissioners of 1832-34. The existence of poverty and inequality as a basic premise was manifestly acknowledged by the Jewish élite. It was considered to be conducive to an harmonious society, supposed to prevent indigence and help the already indigent to become self sufficient poor but no more. Poverty was seen as an insoluble chronic problem, but indigence and crime as acute states that required a more bureaucratic control to substitute the personal and more informal pattern, of relationships between social classes in the Jewish community. Van Oven and the Jewish élite accepted apparently without second thought, Colquhoun's inclination to deal with the relief of indigence and the problems of delinquency in the same frame of reference. The differences were obscured by the overemphasis of control elements in the relief of the poor. To the extent that control was not to serve the interests of the dominant class per se (as in regard to taxes for the maintenance of the poor) it was deliberately minimised. The models chosen for the reformed House of Industry, and other main instruments of moralisation and subordination reflect the tendency to maintain the poor by their own work and in this way to reduce the poor rate and synagogual fees. These models also expressed a growing awareness of urban

disorganisation (the Jewish London poor included) and recognition of the insufficiencies of the old Poor Law arrangements. As Colquhoun did not explain how the passage from poverty to indigence had occurred or how to prevent it, this theoretical lacuna was reflected in the contradiction of van Oven's explanations. On one hand, the negative characteristics attributed to the Jewish poor were described as caused by their unfavorable circumstances of their life in the Diaspora, by the adverse influences to which they were subjected in an oppressing society that amongst other prohibition did not permit Jews to work in agriculture, etc. Van Oven wrote to Colquhoun 'The inability to work for a livelihood is not occasioned by a want of industry in the poor, it is a combined effect of some transient local and some permanent religious causes' (Letter 25.3.1801, Letters 1802: 10). But, on the other hand, van Oven was disposed to assert the necessity of improving 'the habits of the lower classes ... to support those measures which shall convert idleness into industry' (3,4). Behind this contradiction was a confluence between van Oven's **Haskalah** which basically defended the principles of Judaism but overstressed the need for productivisation of the Jewish poor and generally regarded the lower classes as inferior groups, and the individualistic doctrine according to which poverty implied some falling short in moral conduct or judgment, some social defects in terms of willingness to work.

The 1802 Colquhoun-van Oven plan to authorise social control of the Ashkenazi élite over its poor failed. However, many of the elements of social control reflected in van Oven and Colquhoun's scheme were incorporated in subsequent plans dealing with the situation of the Jewish poor. It is worth noting that fifty seven years later, the newly established London Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish Poor in its First Half Yearly Report

regarded its emergence as a direct realisation of the comprehensive proposition made by van Oven to establish 'a Poor Board for the entire management of the poor' (1860: 8).

While some of the powers requested by the plan were invested in the European **Kehillot** (Jewish communities) that obtained autonomy in pre-national decentralised and granting privileges states - the scheme proposed by van Frederick Merton Eden and Colquhoun. As a Maskil and Oven was based on the social philosophy of Bentham, interested in modernising the Jewish life, Joshua van Oven was not interested in a revival of the **Kehillah** but in adopting an ultra modern philosophy of welfare that was assumed to combine maximum control over the Jewish poor. But the obligations of the middle and upper Jewish classes were also to be increased by some compulsory financial measures.

The plan of van Oven and Colquhoun had also a clear tendency toward secularisation of poor relief and its gradual separation from the synagogues. It was in line with the general atmosphere in this field. While in Catholic countries the Church, in the main, continued its educational and charitable functions with minimal control in England private charitable donations were expected to provide important social and economic needs under public rather than religious supervision. As a general result of Protestantism, the secularisation of social welfare, including philanthropy, attained a high degree of congruity in England, and the disunity of the English religious organisations made the secularisation of philanthropies even more obligatory. The scheme reflects an open criticism on the particularistic trend of the different Anglo Jewish sub-groups and its negative impact on the poor relief,

These synagogues are, generally speaking, independent of each other, and of course involve distinct interests. All their reliefs to the poor are dispensed in money, at the discretion of the overseers ... This relief is far short of being even temporarily effectual, both from its inadequateness to the extent required and from the vague manner of its dispensation. (Letters 1802: 9-10)

What van Oven meant to obtain was a consolidation of all the funds of the synagogues, comparable to those of all parishes suggested by Colquhoun in his tract The State of Indigence and the Situation of the Casual Poor, 1799 (29).

The failure of the plan discussed in this chapter reveals the different interests of the Jewish strata and groups. In the final analysis the Jewish élite regarded the obligatory additional tax to be imposed by the scheme as contradictory to its basic class interests. Rather, the élite preferred a continuation of the voluntary arrangements permitting maximum leeway in terms of its obligations. The consequences of the scheme's failure are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. The fear that excessive power of the Jewish élite would lead inevitably to the abuse of the poor expressed by some opponents to the scheme was justified by subsequent developments as shown in Chapter 10.

CHAPTER 5

EDUCATING THE POOR

The aim of this chapter is to examine the efforts made by the élite in educating the poor which also included philanthropic provisions such as apprenticeships, clothing, meals, and so on. The elementary education specifically designed for the poor was considered by the élite as the greatest angliciser for the children of the immigrants and the native poor. The poor were acculturated to the values chosen by the élite as necessary for the 'humbler classes'.

A small scale implementation of the van Oven and Colquhoun plan was the Ashkenazi Jews' Hospital at Mile End established in 1801. The number of inmates was limited to ten aged persons, ten boys and eight girls. The intention of the founders to create a model institution is evidenced by its administrative structure and personnel. The Rules for the Management of the Jews' Hospital in Mile End, London Called Neveh Zedeq 'Abode of Righteousness' (1808). Many arrangements were comparable to the Charity Schools' patterns and indeed the motto of the institution was: '**Homsum, humani nihil a me alienum puto**' (I am a human being and consider nothing human alien to me). The impetus to establish this institution was partly due to the Christian conversionist activities amongst the Jews. The twenty thousand pounds plus interest collected by the brothers Goldsmid from Jews and their non-Jewish business associates in the late 1890's, were finally used by Asher Goldsmid the third brother and his three brothers-in-law with the help of Joshua van Oven and others to establish this institution. For admission to the Jews' hospital it was required that candidates be of good character or from parents of such character 'belonging to one of the three established synagogues in London and born in or have been ten years resident in London'. (Laws, 3,5) Law 6 added 'those are to be preferred who shall prove to have been reduced in life, from a respectable situation, denominated **Evionim** (Heb.) 'stipendiary' poor. Other prerequisites included the ability to read Hebrew prayers and English

(Law 73). The admittance was further limited by the voting system (Law 6) (to be discussed later). Homeless and destitute children were excluded, as well as those considered to have a low potential for industrial training. No preference was given to orphans. The curriculum included a limited general education (arithmetic and English language and a religious education, mainly prayers) and a beginning training in a few trades such as furniture making. By the age of twelve to thirteen, the boys were apprenticed to artisans, the girls at the age of thirteen to fourteen were placed in Jewish homes as servants. A manual prepared for the girls by a 'Daughter of Israel' entitled The Jewish Preceptress: Elementary Sessions Written Chiefly for the Youth of the Female Children Educated at the Jews' Hospital, London, 1818, published by an anonymous wealthy Jewish woman, presents the repertoire of values and attitudes that servant girls were to internalise in the institution. They included, beside the moral implications of Jewish religion, a strong emphasis on thrift, gratitude, subservience and industry which was considered 'as an efficient remedy for abating laziness, immorality, poverty and criminality and restoring prestige of the London Jewish community' (52). She also wrote about industry 'is admirable to observe the gradations of industry by which ... the labour of the mechanic ... are rewarded by the purchase of their industry by the affluent. The affluent ... are occupied by the peculiar duties of their station' ('A Daughter of Israel' [pseud.]: 52-59). The general purpose of the institution was to prevent the involvement of Jewish children in the London streets and at the same time 'to improve the morals and social habits of the children' in such a way as to maintain the social structure and the subordination of the poor to the wealthy class. In order to ensure the admittance of their children the parents were requested to renounce their rights over their children. Children were denoted as

'inmates' and were confined to the premises of the institution. According to the prevailing middle class standards of the period the Jews' Hospital was highly regarded by non-Jewish philanthropists as shown in the book of Highmore, Pietas Londinensis, 1810, vol. 1). Among the instrumental supporters of the institution was Augustus Frederick, the Duke of Sussex (1773-1843), the sixth son of George III and uncle of Queen Victoria, who supported the cancellation of civil disabilities of Catholics, Jews and Dissenters and the abolition of slave trade. He was also a reputable Hebraist and active in Jewish philanthropic schemes. A more flexible approach to the occupational mobility of the girl inmates is evident when Henry Faudel was nominated by the House Committee presided over by Baron A. de Rothschild to investigate the system of this institution. In 1844 Faudel anonymously published his Brief Investigation into the System of The Jews' Hospital with a proposition for Improving the Management and Extending its Benefits, by one of the members, London. He suggested that only one portion of the girls should be fitted for servants while others

could be apprenticed to respectable trades and other class being articled with premiums ... would after a few years produce a number of superior nurses and other governesses and teachers, now very much wanted by the Jewish community and they would find really good and well paid situations ([Faudel] 1844).

Faudel deplored the insufficient contribution of the vocational programme of the Jews' Hospital to the occupational structure of the community 'the Jews would at the present moment hold a different place in the Kingdom, if at this time five hundred mechanics existed among them, drawn from the poorer classes, who must otherwise casually obtain their living ...' (1944: 21). In regard to the policies of the Jews' Hospital, middle range donors were

excluded a priori from the process of decision making. To insure this, Rule 6 in respect to Governors (2) stated 'Subscriptions of Half a Guinea per annum will be received; but such persons cannot have any vote in the concerns of this Charity, nor be elected to any honorary office' (Rules 1808). The rules do not present any pretence of democracy, rather, inequalities in wealth and their implications in terms of power were regarded as natural and ordained by God. The number of children that completed their studies and were apprenticed since its opening in 1807 until 1844 was two hundred and twenty three. Obviously this institution did not meet the needs of the large number of neglected Jewish children. The fear that assistance to fresh immigrants might encourage others to come to England acted against preventive intervention. But even in regard to the children of the so-called 'respectable poor', the tendency was to separate them from their parents and their environment. The limitation of the main educational efforts to the children of 'respectable poor' reveals the conceptual frame of reference of the Jewish élite including the contradictory set of distinctions in regard to the poor. According to this philosophy, poverty was not always the direct effect of vice and the industrious poor could be normative by fulfilling the specific tasks assigned to them in a rather stagnant society. By inference a distinction was introduced between the 'respectable', 'honest' or 'worthy' poor and the 'unworthy' poor. Only the respectable possessed the social characteristics that entitled them to the sympathy of the élite but they too were not to be trusted. The differentiation between the 'respectable' and 'unrespectable' was not the same as the distinction between the rich and the poor, therefore this interpretation of poverty connected together the two categories 'respectable' and 'poor', that is, the poor could not be genuinely 'respectable'. In this evaluative frame of reference the most evident contradiction was

idleness. Respectability meant respect for work, independence and concealing as much as possible the external evidence of poverty. According to this 'double bind' interpretation the scope of the educational and philanthropic institutions was to enforce the work ethic amongst the poor but again, not in order to enable them to escape the poverty but to perpetuate their situation, albeit as 'respectable poor'.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth Century, English charity schools provided simple education the inculcation of religious and moral values they also fulfilled an important task in preparing the children of the poor for making a living, in this framework boys were apprenticed. The charity schools belonged however to the Church of England, Catholics, Non-Conformists and Jews were bound to provide their own services. The expansion of Jewish popular education followed closely the overall English trend. In 1812 Joshua van Oven initiated the establishment of a school for the Jewish poor based on the Lancasterian model. The Jews' Free School was opened in 1817. After a few years it was transferred to a more spacious building in Spitalfields, the name was adopted from the environment. Conversionist institutions founded somewhat earlier were considered an important contributory factor. The Jews' Free School fed the pupils, Baroness de Rothschild provided them with clothing, so in this sense too it can be regarded as a charity institution. As such it was to a considerable extent used as an instrument of social oppression. It is worth noting that Francis Place and others who feared that the Lancasterian schools could hurt the feelings of the poor, deliberately avoided the use of the words 'poor' and 'labouring poor' in the bylaws of the Royal Lancasterian Society (Letter of E Wakefield to F. Place ... quoted in Wallas, 4th edn 1925: 95). The adoption of the Lancasterian system by the Jewish élite is not surprising. In the first quarter of the nineteenth

century this movement was supported by wealthy dissenters such as the Quaker William Allen - the editor of The Philanthropist and one of the first subscribers of The Jews' Hospital (Rules, 1808, XI). The cooperation with non-conformists who stood outside the Established Church included additional fields. The Lancasterian movement was supported also by the Whigs who believed that through popular education the working classes could be brought to be an integral part of the social order, but the Whigs were at the same time interested to preserve the supremacy of the landed aristocracy.

The curriculum of the Jews' Free School included a strong component of Anglicisation and embourgeoisement persistently impressing respect for middle class values. In fact, as late as the 1850's the Jewish wealthy class who patronised Jewish Charity schools (and on a small scale some non-Jewish schools around their country homes) was frightened by the prospects inherent in popular education as exemplified in the Memoirs of Annie and Constance, daughters of Sir Anthony de Rothschild

Both she and her sister had been greatly interested in the education of the poor, having started a village school at their mother's house at Worth before they married, and we see from her remarks on a book she was reading the broad minded manner in which she considered education '... Richter disapproves of education for the poorer classes. I think he is quite right in saying that reading and writing may be dangerous acquisitions to them ... They are either too much, or not half enough. If you teach the poor to read, you must give them ... sufficient moral and religious instruction to make good books welcome to them.

After her sister's death in 1854 she resolved to devote 'more time and thought to her children and the poor at

Aston Clinton and Halton must now claim my care and our own poor Jewish brethren ...' (Lucy Cohen, Lady Rothschild and Her Daughters [Lady Battersea and Mrs Eliot Yorke] London 1935: 69). Such a manifest statement would generally not have been made by Jews permeated with the often repeated halachic injunctions in regard to the education of the poor as reflected in the long accepted tradition of Hilel. As its non-Jewish counterpart the Jewish élite was swept by the social philosophy of the period and its ambivalence towards the education of the poor as illustrated by the request of some Unions to omit writing from the instruction programme in order not to offer the indoor children greater advantages than to other poor children and this as a matter of principle and not because of budgetary considerations.

Henry Mayhew in his London Labour and London Poor, 1851 regarded the Jews' Free School around the middle of the nineteenth century as the largest Jewish educational institution adapted for the reception of one thousand, two hundred boys and girls but with an average attendance of about nine hundred. Mayhew pointed out that the children of the Jewish poor left school in order to help their parents 'strong strictures passed upon them [on the members of the Jewish wealthy class] concerning their indifference towards their brethren in all other aspects. Even if they subscribed to a school, they never cared whether or not it was attended' (Mayhew 1968 edn: 128). Taking into consideration the estimations of the Jewish poor population in London and their geographical concentration and their inability to pay for private education, it is evident that only a small percentage of the children of the poor were able to attend schools. The basic elementary education and skills provided by this school contributed to some change in the occupational structure of the Jewish poor. The establishment of the Jews' Free School and then the Jews' Infant School can be

regarded as a more useful, although limited, attempt of the Jewish élite to subsidise the education of the Jewish poor children. Yet by the end of the second quarter of the nineteenth century the majority of the poor children remained untouched by the programmes that van Oven designed on behalf of the élite.

In 1841 the Jews' Infant School was established as one of the earliest schools of this kind. The attention to the problems of the infant schools was drawn by Owen's New Lanark experiment. One of the founders was Francis Henry Goldsmid who, together with his father, Sir Isaac Lyon and his sister, Anna Maria, were interested in educational questions and were in close association and friendship with Owen (P. Emden, 1943: 111-112). Francis Henry Goldsmid (1808-1878), afterwards Sir F. H. Goldsmid, Bart., M.P., was the son of Isaac Lyon Goldsmid; when he was born the family lived in Spital Square, Spitalfields, later on they moved to a residence at St John's Lodge, Regent's Park. His father possessed also the Wick at Brighton and Somerhill near Tonbridge (Emden 1943: 112). Francis received 'a very careful private education'. He was the first Jewish barrister (1833) and Queen's Counsel (1858). In 1860 he began his parliamentary career as a temperate liberal. Francis pursued his father's deep interest in the University College and its hospital as treasurer and chairman (in 1870), a ward was named after him in recognition of his services. As a minority group struggling for the right to parliamentary careers, the Jewish élite was predisposed to embrace Owen's humanist philosophy (borrowed from Joseph Priestley and others) based on rational education and attempting to uproot superstition and the preconceived ideas. On the other hand, characteristically in contradiction with this declared humanism, in 1858 Francis Henry stressed in his reply to Ephraim Alex, the founder of the London Jewish Board of Guardians, the importance of checking foreign

immigrants by refusing them all relief until they had been in England for three or five years (Lipman 1959: 25-6).

The Goldsmids were exposed to the ideas of David Ricardo with whom Isaac Lyon Goldsmid intensively corresponded (Ricardo of Jewish birth, 1772 remained Jewish until 1793 and opposed religious oppression in Parliament, Heerjte, 1975: 73). Ricardo adopted Malthus's theory of population

If it is part of the plan ... to feed ... and educate the children of three years age and upwards belonging to the poor, I see the most serious objections to the plan and I should be exceedingly inconsistent if I gave my countenance to it. I have invariably objected to the poor laws and to every system which should give encouragement to an access of population.

(Sraffa, edn. The Works of David Ricardo, VII: 359-60).

However, Malthus himself favoured the establishment of a system of parish schools believing that in such schools the children of the poor could acquire the virtues of sexual restraint. (Malthus, 1878 edn IV. ch. 9:436-41). The correspondence between Isaac Lyon Goldsmid and Ricardo is not extant but there is no evidence that such views were refuted by the Jewish élite as contradictory to the Halakhah, rather this élite was the main supporter of bourgeois assimilation (meaning the process by which one transfers one's identity from one ethnic community to another).

In 1844 Isaac Lyon Goldsmid opposed the establishment of an institution designed to provide lecturers for the adult Jewish poor. He expressed the fears of the wealthy class that such an institution might promote separation between the Jewish and non-Jewish poor and unduly encourage their exclusiveness. Goldsmid's proposal to remove the word 'Jews' from the name of the Literary and Scientific

Institution was opposed by a certain John Michael who stated that he represented the Jewish working class and 'that the rich were ashamed of the name of Jew' but he claimed 'the rest of the community was not'. (VJ, 15.3.44) This is an evidence of the fear of the Jewish élite that the establishment and support of the Jewish services might be interpreted as an unpatriotic act. Sharp differences in terms of feeling toward Jewish ethnicity were an integral part of the class tensions and made the application to and the use of the services provided by the Jewish élite uncomfortable and repulsive. The deplorable lack of Yiddishkeit and the constant preaching about the duties and values of the middle class further estranged such benevolence. A severe critique in this regard appeared in a spirited article entitled the 'Baron Rothschild and the Phanthom' by Hertz Ben Pinhas published by the Jewish Chronicle early in 1850. It illuminated the ways in which the poor were accused by the élite and deserves a more extended reproduction.

Panthom:	<p>true thou art charitable, pious and iberall ... because you art an honest, upright and honourable Jew, the first among thy race, they have chosen thee ... Look at yonder pale face wretch as he descends the 'vale of years' as regular as the fingers on thy gold repeater ... on his beaten tract, neither rain nor snow can stop ... And for what? To obtain that miserable pittance which every fellow obtains in the dungeons ... And what has he done to deserve such a fate? Had fate but made him thy father's son and taught him the value of shares, and the rules of compound interest, and the use of vulgar</p>
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fraction, he too might have been a 'gentleman' ... Take the restless tiger from his wide forest, place him in van Hamburg's cage and bid him rest, such is the Sabbath to the itinerant Jew! ... there actually is such a place as a synagogue ... then he looks at his clothes, they are so 'shabby' how can he be seen among so many 'gentlemen'. He reflects, too, that he is a 'sinner' and ... there is no synagogue for 'sinners', the house of God belong to 'saints', sinners must not show their faces therein ... Why do they seek the gambler's den and the drunkard's grave ... Is it because these poor wretches have no souls for intellectual bliss?
O no ...

Baron Rothschild: (Roused with indignation ... replied)
And what would'st thou have me do with the scum of my race? Where I to divide my gold among them, and waste the fruits of a life's labour upon these vagrants ...? Is not my purse ever open to every charitable cause? ... Is not my name inscribed in letters of gold upon the tablets of charity? ...

Phanthom:
Hear me. Thy ire I neither fear nor invoke, thy hand cannot reach me, neither in bounty nor in wrath ... Listen, to feed the hungry is not to find food for the body alone ... When a few moments ago thou didst dilate with honest pride upon thy manifold bounty thou didst utterly forget to

relate thy liberality expended on food
for the hungry mind. I heard ...
nothing of what is termed Jewish Press
... Baron it looked not well for a Jew
to have to go to the Gentile press to
read thy electioneering speeches.
(quoted in M. Margoliouth, 1851,
History of the Jews in Great Britain,
II, 177-83).

To the extent that some effort was made by the élite to relate to the 'hungry mind' of the poor, it involved an inculcation of a respect for property and its preferential status.

The educational arrangements for the upper and middle Jewish classes reflect the rigid stratification of the London Jewry. The wealthy who supported and patronised the charities and the Jews' Free School in the east, provided for their own children a liberal education, a privilege they could afford by paying for private tuition and schools selected for their standards and reputation. For accommodating such pupils a Jewish school named 'Academy' was established by Hyman Hurwitz, a Polish born **Maskil**. Apparently some middle class parents sent their children to non-Jewish schools including those belonging to the National School Society - a branch of the Church of England.

In 1845 the West Metropolitan Jewish School was established under the patronage of the West London Synagogue of British Jews, led by Francis Henry Goldsmid. This school became later on the West Metropolitan Jewish school for Middle Class Pupils and in 1878 The Jewish Middle Class School. Most of the parents supported the school as subscribers. The Chairman "disliked the system of ragged schools" in which education is cast to the poor

as we cast alms to the beggar' (JC, V, 39: 311). At the same period two other Jewish schools at Borough and Stepney were designated for the working class. The contributions to the Jewish Middle Class School burdened the parents and brought some grudging contemplations at the exemptions accorded to the poor,

This class deserves more sympathy than it receives. With the poor, who cannot or will not pay for the education of their children, there is almost unlimited sympathy. To such an extent it is carried that from pure benevolence large classes of the poor have been pauperised (for there is a distinction between poverty and pauperisation) and indeed almost demoralised, for they have been led to imagine that no portion whatever of the duty or cost of educating their children falls on them ... Heaven forbid that we should write a word or think a thought unkind to the poor, but still we cannot help feeling that it is a duty on the part of the so-called better classes to endeavour to educate the parents as well as the children of the poorer classes to foster amongst Jewish Englishmen that spirit of independence and self reliance which is one of the noblest characteristics of our Anglo-Saxon brethren ... (JC, 270: 138)

This is an additional evidence of middle class moralism and friction between this class and the poor. (to be discussed in the part dealing with economic relations)

A serious disability that concerned the Jewish élite was the policy of Oxford and Cambridge to reject Jewish candidates as well as Dissenters and Catholics on religious grounds which continued until the University Test Acts of 1871. However, the University of Edinburgh had graduated Jewish physicians (Henriques, 1974: 208-210). Isaac Lyon Goldsmid took an important part in

the foundation of the University College, London (1825), then called the University of London, giving the necessary impetus to the acquisition of the site on Gower Street (University College Report for 1859). Goldsmid enlisted the support of Aaron Goldsmid, George Magmus, Nathan Mayer Rothschild and the Sephardi financiers, Abraham Lindo and Moses Mocatta, as well as non-Jewish bankers.

Isaac Lyon Goldsmid da Palmeira (later Sir J. L. Goldsmid, Bart. (1778-1859) was the nephew of Benjamin and Abraham. As a partner of Mocatta and Goldsmid, bullion brokers to the Bank of England and to the East India Company, as well as through his investments in London docks and railway construction, Isaac Lyon amassed a large capital. Many of his other financial activities were conducted in Spanish and Portuguese countries and South America together with his son Francis and Bernard van Oven (the son of Joshua). Isaac Lyon invested a great deal of energy in introducing the Jewish Disabilities Bill (1830, 1833) and to induce different politicians to take an interest in this question that concerned the Jewish élite. He was made baronet in 1841, being the first professing Jew to receive an hereditary title in England. In his London and country houses, Isaac Lyon entertained politicians, musicians, artists and educationalists; Louis Napoleon, Metternich as well as Queen Victoria (1853) were amongst his guests. Isaac Lyon represented some degree of theoretical sophistication that the Cousinhood reached during the first half of the nineteenth century. The concepts of contemporary philanthropy were an integral part of this trend,

On the political sciences ... Isaac Goldsmid bestowed particular attention. Political economy was only one of these that he had deeply studied ... his association with Ricardo made him familiarly practised in the theory and discussion of the leading questions of

political science' (Clarke 1859: 377).

In 1834 Isaac Lyon supported the establishment of the University College Hospital and served as Treasurer (1839-1857). The foundation of the University College represented a new system of education fitted to meet the needs of the affluent and ambitious members of the upper middle and wealthy classes. In this framework Benthamite concepts were widely applied. Simon wrote 'Supporting it as members of the original Council, were not only the leading philosophic radicals but also dissenters, Catholics and Jews, at the nominal head of the movement stood the Whig leaders, (1960: 119-120). The First Statement of the Aims of the Council of London University (1827) assured that no religious tests and teaching were to be imposed on the students as Isaac Lyon and his friend, the poet Thomas Campbell who was one of the founders agreed (Emden 1943: 115).

Isaac Lyon rose to a considerable eminence as a philanthropist. He supported Owen's experiments by acting as one of his treasurers. In 1839 he leased one of his properties in Hampshire to establish a community and housing project after the model of New Lanark (Emden 1943: 112, Life of Robert Owen, 1857, I, p.150). However, a more proper perspective of his social thinking is revealed in his position towards the proposals for national prosperity of Napoleon III while the latter requested the financier to assist him in his scheme,

Perhaps what affected Goldsmid more than anything was the sham philanthropy of the prince, his socialist professions, and his plans for the benefit of the working classes. It might have been thought a capitalist was the last man to whom communistic invitations could be addressed, but Goldsmid really and legitimately wished that each man should attain

property ... So far from thinking that the possession of wealth gave him the right to domineer, he rather felt more humble in the fear he might be deemed purseproud or neglectful of his duties

(H Clarke, Memoir of Sir Isaac Goldsmid, Bankers Magazine July 1859: 451).

Isaac Lyon also supported and was active in the campaigns of the leading Quakers such as the manumission of the Negroes and in the reform of the penal code and improvements in prison conditions, in collaboration with Peter Bedford and Elizabeth Fry. We read about his personal ambiguous involvement, 'Nothing was more repulsive to him than the associations of a prison, but he spent many an hour not only in the jail of Newgate but even in the condemned cell. Here he obtained practical evidence which made him more constant in the movement for the restriction of capital punishment, which Mr Secretary Peel influenced' (Clarke 1859: 449) But philanthropic connections were beneficial to business interests, 'The Frys had introduced Mr Goldsmid to Sir William Congreve, and among other undertaking supported by that great projector and his connection was the Imperial Continental Gas Society ... Mr Goldsmid joined in the direction' (Clarke 1859: 450).

Characteristic to the approach of the Jewish élite, Isaac Lyon Goldsmid's motivation to help children was dominated by a scepticism and contempt towards the adult poor, 'he felt strongly that the mass of ignorance and vice was rather to be overcome by the careful training of children than by combating with the fixed habits of the adults' (Clarke April 1860: 382). His attitude towards the poor was described as 'very thoughtful, ready to reprove in providence, warm in assisting the claims of the poor aged, the widow and the orphan but still more happy if he succeeded in obtaining permanent and effective relief. As

a proprietor of a manorial property he increased the salary of the incumbent and in another town estate dedicated a large site for a church.' (Clarke April 1860: 222-3). The geographical distance from the East End and consequently the lack of an undivided contact with the Jewish poor increased the social differentiation.

In regard to his contribution to Jewish charities, Clarke, the writer of the Memoir, did not have too much to say except for some support for the Jews' Infant School and the Jews' Hospital established by his uncles, insufficiently impressive for flattering remarks Clarke himself concluded, as far as Jewish charities were concerned (April 1859: 221), 'he rather held back from the main body of public charities, any new design for improving the condition of the poor or alleviating distress was sure to receive a warm and early welcome' but exactly the Jewish public charities were those which needed the support of the wealthy as their exclusive source for maintaining the poor. Notwithstanding the fact that he was acquainted with philanthropic schemes, he neither came forward with such a scheme nor supported the ones that were advanced during long periods of time whereas he maintained his tremendous wealth.

This chapter shows that in spite of the patronising character of the educational programmes designed for the poor, a variety of useful services were provided, however the facilities provided could accommodate only a limited number of poor. Additional developments during the last part of the nineteenth century will be discussed in Chapter 13.

CHAPTER 6
THE LIMITED RESPONSES TO POVERTY
AND THE PREOCCUPATION OF THE ÉLITE

This chapter attempts to demonstrate that having acquired considerable financial power the Jewish élite embarked on prolonged efforts to obtain the political power denied to it. Concentrating on their political aspirations, the Jewish élite largely neglected the social problems of the community. The chapter relates to the lack of sufficient resources of the existing philanthropy and to the initiatives of the poor themselves in establishing some necessary service.

As pointed out oligarchic and plutocratic ruling of Jewish communities in Diaspora was a long established pattern. The rigidity of the social stratification of the Jewish community in London and its predisposition to adopt 'en masse' laissez faire theories and their actual implementation was dictated by the major changes in the economic activities of the Jewish élite. In precapitalistic Jewish communities the wealthy merchant bankers purchased goods and services (for their own use), extended credit and invested capital by employing merchants and pedlars as purchasing agents and in many other ways. In doing so they supported the less prosperous and the poor themselves. The Jewish community was an integral socio-economically interdependent unit living and fulfilling together economic functions in the host community. In nineteenth century England the Jewish merchant bankers moved increasingly into modern large scale financing including government and ministerial loan contracting, investment in insurance, gas, railways, docks and in foreign countries. This process led to the breaking of old economic ties within the Jewish community; an effect aggravated by the dispersal of the well-to-do. In an attempt to refute van Oven and Colquhouns' accusations, Levy Alexander enumerated Jewish artisans and servants whose services were not used by their rich coreligorists and could not therefore make a decent living

... a long list might be made out of the unfortunate Jews who have attempted in vain to live by professional exertion. I must ask you here what is to become of the female sex when thought to execute women's arts, they must still remain unemployed, and our nation you know prefer English servants in every capacity but that of cooks. (Alexander 1802: 25-27).

Mayhew a half of a century later, thought that 'if they (the wealthy) cared more about employing their own people their liberality would be far more fully felt' (1850: 123b). However, the middle class did employ to some extent Jewish workers increasing direct intra-group exploitation. London economic life permitted a gradual enlargement and prosperity of the Jewish middle class: contractors, import and export merchants, shippers, wholesale and warehousemen, ready made clothing and cigar manufacturers, etc. Two large factories owned by Jews, Moses and Company and Benjamin Hyam, employed thousands of people. The number of Jewish artisans, shopkeepers, grocers, stallholders etc, with a more stable income also increased. At the same time, the poor Jews were much less occupied in street trades (where the Irish replaced them) and other lumpen proletariat occupations. The 1840's witnessed a rapid process of manual labourisation of the Jewish poor which resulted in the emergence of a Jewish working class, increasingly employed by Jews in cigar and hat making, clothing, boot and shoe sweatshops, also as carpenters, upholsterers, carvers and so on.

Influenced by the moralism of the Victorian upper classes, many of the contemporary observers regarded Jewish poor as provident, sober, self-disciplined and highly motivated to escape poverty. As such they were contrasted with the Irish. By implication Jewish workers were regarded as individualistic and latent bourgeois. In an attempt to explain subsequent disintegration of the Jewish working

class, the Smilesian characteristics were repeated by historians using a more modern terminology overstressing ethnicity but omitting common denominators of social structure. In more recent studies Gerry White, Bill Williams and Joe Buckman challenged these views (see review of literature in the Introduction). It seems that the relative small capital needed, rather than the Smilesian virtues, enabled some part of Jewish workers and ambulatory traders to become 'bedroom master' and stallkeepers. This process coincided with the introduction of the sewing machine and the band knife cutting machine (JC: 27.1.1956). On the other hand, the mechanisation of the boot and shoes trade in which the Jews were an important factor caused an abrupt rise in the start up capital needed. The consequence was some decline of Jewish workers in this sector. In the clothing trade most of the work was done at home and the small masters remained dependent on the highly competitive wholesale clothiers and their constant pressure to cut the cost of work of their employees even harder. In this field there was almost no direct competition with non-Jewish tailors. The significant cheapening of the mass production through the subdivision of labour was achieved at a high price of exploitation of the semi-skilled Jewish male, female and children working as tailors, machinists, pressers and messengers. After a twelve hour day of work many of them continued to work at home until midnight in order to support themselves. In his famous pamphlets 'Cheap Clothes and Nasty' Charles Kingsley described the terrible conditions of the London sweaters-tailors, 'What is flogging or hanging to the slavery, starvation, waste of life, which goes on among thousands of free English clothesmen' (reprinted in Alton Locke, 1877: LXVIII). Induced to bring over relatives from the old country, to pay excessive rents and to save themselves or their children from wretched conditions, the Jewish workers accepted exploitation.

In 1858 one of the first known disputes between Jewish cigar makers and their employers took place. According to a letter addressed to the editor of the Jewish Chronicle of 8 January 1858, a cigar-maker complained about the practice of his master to travel especially to Holland and other European countries in order to bring cigar-makers to London, promising them advantageous conditions but after their arrival paying them lower wages than English workers were ready to accept. The editorial comment supported the masters accepting their arguments as to the fluctuations in the trade and its semi-skilled nature. Taking other skills, the Jewish poor were exploited as pedlars outside the sweatshops. The evidence brought by H. Mayhew in his series of letters to the Morning Chronicle, disclosed that some of the Jewish middle men supplying relatively cheap ready-made garments for the West End show shops, employed as many as three hundred hands 'many of those so employed setting their wives, children and others to work'. (Letter 11.12.1849 in Thompson and Yeo, edn, 1971: 227). Mayhew left to the readers to decide 'how much of the pauperism arises from deficient wages and how much from those habits of improvidence which are the necessary consequence of uncertainty of employment' (Letter 12.12.1850: 181).

During the great cholera epidemic of 1830 a Jewish cucumber seller, Abraham Green, drew Jewish public attention to the wretched condition of Jewish orphans. '**Honen le Yetomim**' (Pardon for the Orphan), the institution established in 1818 by the Great Synagogue for relieving and educating the distressed fatherless, was restricted in terms of the number of orphans that it could accommodate. The '**rachmunes**' (compassion) of a stall-keeper in the East End named Green, was aroused by three destitute orphans by the name of Assenheim whose parents died during the epidemic. Green left his stall to collect money for the maintenance of the children in his cucumber basket carrying two of the children and leading

the third. Largely through the support of Isaac Valentine, founder of the Jewish Chronicle and Green's brother-in-law, additional funds were collected for the establishment of the Jews' Orphan Asylum in Godman's Fields, now the Norwood Jewish Orphanage. (Roth, 1950: 221-222). A similar earlier initiative of a certain Nathan Barnett is mentioned by Roth, (1950: 222). In 1884 a Jewish baker provided new immigrants with accommodation in the East End. Although the premises were closed by the Jewish Board of Guardians as allegedly unsanitary, the attempt prompted the foundation of the Jews' Temporary Shelter. The élite was afraid that such an institution in general, and especially under its own auspices, could be a direct encouragement to Jewish immigration. Green's initiative represented many other less known efforts of this kind that remained generally unrecorded due to a lack of keen interest in the life of the masses and grass roots movements. However, such efforts involved greater personal exertions and expressed more genuine compassion. Henry Faudel, in a account more critical towards the Jewish wealthy class, described the initiative of the poor as widespread and predominant

... many sources of relief, it is reported, have been commenced by those who are but little elevated above poverty in the neighbourhood where the distress has been most evident, and maintained subsequently by the personal interference of individuals, and the stringent appeals of private friends, which could not have been refused if wished, which dared not be neglected.

(Suggestions, etc, 1844: 26).

However, such initiators of limited means were not accepted as partners into the administration of the charity they created as soon as such charities were subsidised by the élite. The original arrangements

established in this way were necessarily improvisations, taking into consideration the lack of sufficient resources in terms of money and time of the poor Jewish class. During the first half of the nineteenth century and well afterwards, the *élite* continued to maintain exclusive control over all community issues and to demand strict institutional conformity (see Chapters 14 and 15).

The Missionaries activities amongst the Jews did not counterbalance the general non-interventionist trend of the English environment. However, these activities enforced the philanthropic endeavours of the Jewish *élite* by raising communal concerns and motivation to change the social conditions that were used by the conversionists in their actions among the Jewish poor. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews was established by the London Missionary Society to work among the Jews of London as a consequence of Evangelistic movement. The leading missionary was Joseph Frey (born 1771), a convert from Judaism, who created a Free School for the Jewish poor children in 1807. According to Roth (1950) very few pupils were Jewish 'and those of the lowest section of the population' (227). Salman wrote

As is well known, the moral Jew, however poor, is not easily bought over, recourse was had to the lowest order of society. You (Frey) converted a number of ignorant, friendless children, the paupers of vice, these poor, miserable wretches, for the most part illegitimate ... were glad to be received in any society that did clothe and feed them.
(quoted by S. Levin, 1957: 17).

The Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews however increased its activities, especially in the educational field, by opening two additional schools by

1812. The Twelfth Report of the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews regarded the neglect of the Jewish poor children and youngsters as a moral justification for the missionary activities

Instead of their youth being bound apprentices to handicraft trades, they are sent forth to gain their livelihood by the lowest description of traffic.

One of the best means the Jews could employ to rise their nation from its present degraded state would be to give a moral education to their youth and afterwards bind them apprentices to trades (Twelfth Report: 1812).

In reaction, the Great Synagogue sent a delegation to present its abhorrence before the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews and Rabbi Solomon Hirschell issued a ban on the Missionary Schools in a Sabbath sermon and later in a caution printed in English and Yiddish. Hirschell considered everyone who sent his child to the Missionary Schools

As if they had themselves forsoke their religion and been baptised; and shall lose all title to the name of the Jews and forfeit all claims in the Congregation both in life and death ... everyone ... is reminded of his duty to warn everyone who may be ignorant ... and acquaint him thereof, that he may escape the snare laid to entangle him.

(Exhortation delivered Sat. Jan. 10, 5567 [1807]))

According to Narrative of Joseph Frey, 1813, 'opposition of the Jews, alas! had its desired effect, for two full years after the opening of the Free-school, notwithstanding zealous exertions, no one child was added to the original number' (65-66). Besides the 'Hebrew Schools', the SPCJ established in 1814 the Episcopal Jews'

Chapel, (the first stone of this institution was laid by the Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, who was also a Patron, while William Wilberforce was Vice President). An Operative Jewish Converts' Institution, 'to provide a place of refuge to Jewish believers' was established in 1831. Some of the inmates were trained as printers and bookbinders. An additional institution named 'Asylum for Jewess' functioned in Palestine-Place the headquarter of the SPCJ (Rev. W. Ayerst, 1848: 421-6).

In 1847 the budget of this society was £29,000 (Historical Notices of the London SPCJ: 2-9). John de la Roy (quoted in S. Levin, 1957: 16) estimated the number of Jews converted by missionary activities before the end of the nineteenth century at three thousand, five hundred, apparently most of them poor.

The submission of the official religious functionaries to the élite is evident from a bitter critic of the spiritual leadership by Solomon Bennett (1761-1838). According to Bennett, the Chief Ashkenazic Rabbi, Solomon Hirschell (from 1802 to 1842) lost much of his influence and moral standing as a result of his subordination to the Jewish financiers and that this subservience was not divorced from personal and pecuniary benefits (Netzah Israel: The Constancy of Israel, 1817). Bennett accused Hirschell of condoning the magnates' serious transgressions, such as business transactions on the Sabbath, by ignoring them, also that he obtained his position as Chief Rabbi as a protégé of the Goldsmids through their connections with German Jewish merchants (The Present Reign of the Synagogue of Duke's Place Displayed, London 1818). The neglect of the poor was one of the features of Anglo-Jewish life that Bennett condemned. Due to the subservience of the rabbis to the wealthy class and in the absence of countervailing forces, the **halakha** was interpreted in a way that supported and legitimised

economic enterprise, accumulation of wealth and individual rather than collective responsibility. The following excerpts are from the Subjects For Moral and Religious Discourses published in the Jewish Chronicle, of 21 January 1842.

... Query - Is a desire to be rich compatible to virtue? - answered in the affirmative, Effects of prudence, temperance, and industry contrasted with their opposites, Doctrine of chance refuted. Man's fate in most instances shown to be his own working ... Distress to be relieved. Industry to be encouraged, and the institutions of the country supported. Riches shewn to be an aid to virtue!

The departure from the **halakhah's** concepts is clearly perceptible in regard to the chance elements which are amply recognised. This departure was a part of a gradual and complex process connected with the changes in the socio-economic situation of the wealthy Anglo-Jewry. Doctrines in regard to charity were not discussed in the context of real situations. The demands of the **halakhah** in regard to the responsibilities of wealth towards the poor were stated in broad terms, sometimes ignored. However, resentment over Jewish disorganisation persisted as a counter balancing force. Charity was not rejected publicly. It is worth noting that some important members of the élite (such as Baron Lionel de Rothschild M.P. and Sir David Solomons M.P. and Lord Mayor of London) were radical secularists and the obliteration of Jewishness was in their view, the best way to assimilation.

The London Jewish community was a conglomerate of separate semi-voluntary organisations. Membership in the synagogue was partly enforced by the situation of the Jews as a religious minority. The synagogues and their affiliated charities functioned as discreet institutions serving

their own members. The synagogues did not have any legal authority to implement judicial and administrative control. Functions such as marriage, burial, mutual aid representing the very preservation of Jewish identity were concentrated under the auspices of the synagogue, enabling control over its affiliated members. The expectations of the wealthy class were strongly reflected in the synagogal life and rituals. The Great Synagogue was enlarged in 1790 through a donation of four thousand pounds. It seemed to symbolise the increasing confidence and trust in the future. The wealthy group of 'free members' determined the policy of the synagogue and to a large extent the arrangements for all the Ashkenazi poor in London in terms of relief. From this group the 'parnasin' wardens of the synagogue were elected. The ratepayer seat holders, mostly middle class, were not represented in the decision-making body. Honorific practices acknowledged the status of the wealthy members demonstrating their supposed worth and superiority and insured continuous contributions (partly made during the services before the entire congregation possessing some compulsory elements). Such donations were an important source of funds for the maintenance of the synagogue and its poor.

In the Eastern part of the City there were three main Ashkenazic synagogues, the Great Synagogue (established 1690), Hambro' (1707) and the New Synagogue (1761). For the purpose of relief the synagogues divided the poor into three categories:

1. 'stipendiary' poor receiving fixed monthly allotments, were those who by themselves or through their families belonged to the synagogue and as members were entitled to claim relief from donations and trusts.
2. 'casual poor', not entitled to the benefits of the first category. Such poor had claim on the congregation because they or their parents rented a seat in the

synagogue for at least six months, or were married in the synagogue.

3. the 'strange poor' or **Orhim** (guests or wayfarers, see glossary) who had no claim on a particular synagogue.

The assistance to the 'stipendiary' and even the 'casual' poor included elements of mutual aid which to some extent limited their humiliation under the tutelage of the wealthy members. The stipendiary poor who resented attending synagogal prayers were forced to do so in order to complete the **minyan** (quorum needed to make possible public prayers). The sanctions were deductions from their allocations or complete deprivation of assistance. According to an arrangement concluded between the three synagogues in the later part of the eighteenth century, the Great Synagogue contributed half of the expenses incurred in helping the 'foreign poor', while the other half was shared by the other two synagogues. According to this arrangement the poor were obliged to apply weekly to all the three synagogues in order to obtain sixpence 'a head' from the first and threepence from the second and third. According to an agreement of 1804 the Great Synagogue assumed the responsibility of assisting the 'foreign poor' the other two synagogues contributing each a quarter of the expenditure. The cost of 'paupers' burials' was to be defrayed in the same manner by turn. (Roth 1950: 230-3) This centralising process was intended to prevent indiscriminate relief but its dispensation continued in a vague and insufficient manner.

The financial resources dedicated were far from being commensurate to the needs of the poor. Disputes and bitterness between the three synagogues over the responsibilities towards the poor were a continuous feature accompanied by occasional quarrels such as in 1790 when a coffin was left unburied. It is worth noting that such tensions were sometimes temporarily eliminated by intermarriages between the members of the families of wealthy leaders of disputing synagogues competing for

priority within the community (Roth 1950: 232-233).

The determination of eligibility to synagogal assistance was comparable to the gaining of a 'parochial settlement' under the provision of the old Poor Law. It often involved severe debates (Roth 1950: 232). The honorary officers responsible for the relief of the poor were styled 'Overseers of the Poor'. The relinquishment of the traditional terminology and the adoption of the new one were not only semantic, rather, they facilitated and accompanied the identification with concepts alleging manifestly the pre-eminence of the wealthy over the poor.

The feelings of the poor were disclosed in a letter to the editor of the Jewish Chronicle in which the absence of the poor from the services is explained 'our poverty is thrown in our face at the Synagogue, we are all heaped together in a cluster at the bottom of the Synagogue in a corner, whilst at the top the benches are empty' (4.1.1850). The attire of a bishop of the Church of England that Dr. Hermann Adler, the successive Chief Rabbi, wore, was most probably viewed with suspicion by the poor. Generally the poor did not receive **aliot** - honours given during the reading of the Law (presenting blessing etc).

Within the Ashkenazic élite the prerogative of the Rothschilds was undisputed. Nathan Mayer Rothschild (1777-1836), later Baron, was born in the ghetto of Frankfurt. He emigrated to Manchester bringing with him twenty thousand pounds, of which a fifth was his own to start as a textile merchant. He moved to London and married a daughter of Levi Barnet Cohen, one of the most prestigious Ashkenazic families. Not unlike his poor immigrant correligionists whose lives he was going to control, he was described as 'having a strong German-Yiddish accent' (Aris 1970: 64). Not many years later he was one of the main members of the Stock Exchange and an official bullion broker to the English government.

Some historians suggest that together with the Continental branches of the families the Rothschilds were able to influence to a considerable extent the direction of European history. Nathan died in 1836 leaving a capital of between five and six million pounds. Unlike other wealthy Anglicised Jews, the Rothschilds remained somewhat separated from the more extended Cousinhood, preferring to marry their more close cousins only, possibly with the intention to create an eternal financial empire with a family dynasty. Appeals from Jews of England and all over the world were addressed to the New Court, the headquarters of the 'House' and one of the international money centres close to the Bank of England. In respect to appeals from non-Jewish institutions Emden wrote that Nathan in other instances, not so accessible, was also interested in Owen's scheme and helpful' (1943: 112). Apparently many applications for help were declined. The Jewish informants of Mayhew complained

apart from conventionalities, they (the rich) care nothing whatever, for so long as they are undisturbed in money-getting at home, their brethren may be persecuted all over the world. An honourable exception exists in Sir Moses Montefiore, but the great Jew capitalists, with powerful influence in many a government, do not seek to direct that influence for the bettering of the lot of their poorer brethren. In fact, the Jews have often been the props of the courts who have persecuted them; that is to say two or three Jewish firms occasionally have not hesitated to lend millions to the governments by whom they and their people have been systematically degraded and oppressed (Mayhew 1850: 126b, 127a).

As far as philanthropic activities for the English Jews were concerned Roth (1950) pointed out Nathan Rothschild's lack of enthusiasm. In 1813 he had been elected **Gabbai**

Tzedakah (charity collector, distributor or administrator) of the Great Synagogue, but he declined to serve and had paid the substitute fine according to the regulations. In 1818, while a warden of the Great Synagogue, Nathan proposed a Saving Bank for the Jewish Nation without practical results. A similar proposal to the Committee of the Great Synagogue was renewed in 1822 by Samuel Samuel on Nathan's behalf. Prior to the description of the proposal itself The Hebrew Intelligencer of 1 January 1823, praised Nathan's benevolence in most generous and courting terms. According to the proposal, sums of money were to be advanced to 'the industrious poor of our nation, to furnish them with the means of maintaining their families by their own to be repaid by them in small easy instalments'. For this purpose he offered to subscribe five hundred pounds. The name that Nathan proposed for the fund was **Davar Tov** (Lit. A Good Thing). The details of the proposal were prepared by Benjamin Gompertz, the first actuary of the Alliance Assurance Company, a relative of Nathan. However in regard to the implementation it was reported that

it presents some obstacles and difficulties, which we are not at present prepared to enumerate or combat with. We are aware a society of this kind exists in Hamburgh; and surely, our English Jews must be fully impressed with the utility and even necessity, of a similar one, in a country like this, where our poorer brethren stand so greatly in need of the assistance, they are often compelled to resort to means, which must retard instead of assisting the ends of industry, the plan, which we understand remains in embryo but we hope in our next, to report, that some active measures have been adopted.

(Hebrew Intelligencer, 1.1.1823)

This proposal also did not have any practical outcome.

The lack of genuine interest was somewhat embellished by Roth (1950: 236): 'Rothschild's term of office was not adventurous and the most important innovation with which he was associated in conjunction with his nephew, was the establishment of the services for the poor at the Jews' Free School on the solemn occasions of the Jewish year, (236). The greater prestige of the Jews' Free School afforded Nathan a way to further increase his status. The information received by the Hebrew Intelligencer and published in the same issue provides an estimate of the comparative value of Rothschild's proposed donation to the unrealised 'Good Thing' Saving Bank 'Edward Goldsmid, of Finsbury Square is about leaving the neighbourhood for Park Lane where he has purchased an elegant mansion which, it is supposed, with the furniture will cost £10,000' (Jewish Intelligencer 1.1.1823). The reporter of one of the 'fashionable parties' in which one hundred and thirty persons participated (Jewish Intelligencer 22.12.1822) found that 'The dresses were very elegant and a profusion of diamonds blazed in every part of the room'.

The ability of the Rothschilds to respond more than others to different appeals, maintained their status as philanthropists amongst the English Jews and elsewhere in the Jewish world where their wealth became a myth. According to Roth (1850), the continuous disputes amongst the three synagogues of the Ashkenazim as to the ways in which their responsibilities towards the strange poor were to be discharged provoked Nathan's 'fastidious sense of organisation' (237). Through his interventions, communications were re-established in 1824, 1825 and 1828 but no operational co-operation was obtained until 1830 and this under the pressures created by the disastrous impact of the cholera epidemic and the subsequent appeal of the government. Generally, calamities that affected a significant number of local Jews raised the levels of responsibility for fellow Jews including the poor. After

further crises the agreement reached in 1834 was mainly attributed to the influence of Rothschild. It was published as 'Articles of a New Treaty agreed on by the sub-committees of the Great Hambro' and New Synagogues AM 5594 and 5595' [1834-1835] and after two modifications (1835/6) it was maintained until 1859 when the three synagogues agreed to establish The Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Foreign Poor. This ability to mediate between opposed interests of the wealthy 'big giving' leaders of the synagogues acknowledged his position as the foremost leader of the London Jewish community by adding a dimension of organisational leadership.

Nathan Rothschild's role in non-sectarian philanthropy remained peripheral even when considerable donations were involved. The accessibility of central positions of leadership in the Jewish philanthropy facilitated the socialisation into philanthropic roles of his sons and relatives. This socialisation often occurred in the ordinary process of their business and as a family affair.

Philanthropy was an integral part of the élite's lifestyle in the formal as well as the informal spheres and served to promote social as well as business connections. The leaders were chosen on the basis of visible criteria such as wealth, reputation and decorousness, consequently they tended to represent the interests of a rather narrow group. Their commitments to give were an important factor in controlling not only the poor but the givers as well. The soliciting of gifts, apparently less conspicuous and understood than the presentation of gifts, carried also a great deal of prestige. Persuading to give money meant also placing oneself under the obligation of the solicited, creating in this way a whole sequence of reciprocal claims. This sequence often reflected the hierarchy and the ways of communication used in their economic activities. The internalisation of occupational

qualities and roles facilitated an interpretation of such philanthropic soliciting activities in terms of selling. The less prosperous philanthropic activists fulfilled corresponding philanthropic tasks. In this way the stratification of the London Jewish community was reflected in the philanthropic organisation. The wealthier members of the élite, the 'big givers' were the trustees or officers of prestigious existing charities directly or indirectly monopolised by them; the upper middle strata were contributors to these and leaders of middle range charities. In this framework, such motives as joining titled people in committee work and gaining public notice, etc., were also at work. The middle class was active in mutual aid organisations and as donors and governors of minor charities.

The ideology of the wealthy class as reflected in this framework, accepted the idea that the poor class cannot plan, think or be trusted. It was assigned a different culture for which controlling and rationalised measures were proposed by the members of the élite or their professional helpers in matters of philanthropic requests.

As a result of its social structure the Anglo-Jewish philanthropy was controlled by a relative small and stable group of affluent men. Consequently this group had a tremendous impact on the philanthropic organisation, the raising and distribution of funds, making and executing decisions, moving to or excluding others from important philanthropic activities. In view of the extreme centralisation of the decision making processes and the public acclaim stirred by their esteem, the leaders were tempted to believe in their own individual and institutional ethos. It seems that Jewish philanthropy enhanced its prestige by creating heroes that obtained large public consideration and prestige.

Most of the members of the Jewish élite belonged to the orthodox synagogal congregations. The most powerful sub-group led by Louis Cohen (1799-18) and Moses Montefiore was orthodox. The common denominator was, however, the belief that minimum Jewish religious practices only had to be protected from secular interference. The overall religious observance and knowledge of the élite itself was restricted. Involved in a rapid process of increasing secularisation the member of the élite did not perceive conflictual elements between their orthodoxy and the universalistic assimilation, nor between Jewish humanitarian concepts and the massive adoption of the laissez-faire doctrine. Unlike the contemporary German Jews, the Anglo Jewish élite did not develop its cultural and intellectual heritage maintaining a rather narrow Judaism based on ethnicity and religion (German Jewry - of course much larger in size - developed the **Wissenschaft Haskallah**). Generally, the Anglo Jewish élite gave their Jewishness a rather materialistic and worldly meaning which fitted their main occupations and aspirations. It was satisfied with the influence of the Mendelsohnian Enlightenment - an assimilationist Jewish European ideology that permitted Jews to change their outward appearance and life style making them acceptable to the English society and imbuing the wealthy strata with a sense of social and economic success and prosperity, interpreted as a direct result of the strict adaptation of such values as effort, initiative and so on. The optimistic mood of the élite was generated by the appreciation of their economic endeavours, their industry and aspirations. The contemporary philanthropic thought and premises were incorporated in such an atmosphere with increasing avidity.

While the large scale philanthropic schemes designed by the Ashkenazi élite according to prevalent English models were abortive, there is some evidence of their limited

implementation. In 1844 the Jewish Ladies' Benevolent Loan and Visiting Society was established in Whitechapel Road. The aims of the society were to promote 'the visits of Jewish Ladies amongst their own poor and advocating habits of prudence and economy amongst them' and to provide small loans without interest as well as a small relief fund. (Sampson Low, Jnr., *The Charities of London*, etc., ca. 1850: 145-6). A small scale saving bank was attached to this association (146) 'to enable the recipients of loans to deposit a trifle weekly from their earnings' (VJ, 15.11.1844). It was an integral part of the saving bank movement which assumed that lack of frugality and providence amongst the Jewish poor threatened their stability. Bentham, during the early development of this movement, had a more realistic attitude towards it: 'Some are for doing everything for savings out of earnings, but this will not do very well where there can be no savings, still less where there can be no earnings.' (Bentham, *Tracts on Poor Laws and Pauper Management*, Bowring, 8: 367) It is possible that the savings were the price the recipients of this charity had to pay in order to benefit from the assistance offered by the Society and be able to reapply for help. In 1855 The Jewish Chronicle published abstracts from the eleventh annual report of the Society characterising it as 'truly benevolent'. The concepts outlined in this report were later propagated by the C.O.S. In addition to the 1844s guiding principles and the typical Victorian moralism and suspicion towards the poor the Society emphasised prevention of pauperism and immediate intervention in case of temporary distress '... by timely assistance to enable those who through sickness and other inevitable misfortunes are reduced to the verge of destitution to renew their labour' (JC 13.7.1855). The Society recognised the limits of rehabilitation and the consequent need for permanent relief in cases considered to belong to the 'deserving poor' and in which the

principle of family responsibility could not be applied '... there are however some cases for the relief of which absolute gifts are indispensably necessary, the cases of aged and infirm persons who being childless have none to provide for them'. According to the report, distribution of relief was 'preceded by vigilant inquiry. The committee in rotation visit the neighbourhood in which the poor are located and from personal investigation enabled judiciously to apply the finances entrusted to their care' (JC 13.7.1855). The Jewish Ladies' Benevolent Loan and Visiting Society was preoccupied to prevent what it regarded as the 'abuse of the bounty' of the middle classes,

... this Society opens to them a means of dispensing their gifts, and materially enhancing the value and utility of their benevolence, the committee have much satisfaction in directing attention to the fact, as strikingly illustrative of a growing moral improvement in the principles of the poor, few bad debts have been incurred since the report published last year ...' (JC 13.7.1855).

The Society related to a confined number of poor persons and as such can be regarded as a small scale extension of an operational experiment based on innovative models of English philanthropy. The principles that guided the Society were confirmed four years later by the newly established Jewish Board of Guardians, which from the beginning attempted to implement them in regard to the 'strange' poor (having no claim of membership on the three contracting Ashkenazic synagogues). At the same time the Board made a considerable effort to persuade the leaders of those synagogues to transfer the care of their 'stipendiary' and 'casual' poor to the Board but this interference was rather 'repudiated than sought by the synagogues' (First BGHYR July-Dec., 1859 of the Board,

17). The incipient attempt of the Society to enlarge the control over the poor was declared as a clear and vital policy of the more ambitious Board 'The Board seeks to draw all the poor to its own doors, it will be grateful for the information of any case of real distress to which its notice may be directed, for it wishes to establish an accurate register of all the poor, and to discourage private indiscriminate alms giving ...'. However, as far as new immigrants were concerned, the Board refused to adopt the humane principle of immediate intervention by stipulating the six months non-interference period, that is, six months only after their immigration were the needs of the poor applicants considered by the Board (19).

The increasing distance in terms of habitation and standard of living among the Jewish social classes made the visit of the wealthy women in the East End Jewish quarter quite extraordinary. The innovatory practices based on harsh principles made the task even more difficult. This is evidenced by a report of the Liverpool Mercury in regard to the activities of Jewish Ladies' Benevolent Institution of Liverpool (est. 1849):

the investigation of cases by untrained volunteers provided so difficult and so unsavoury, and the conflict of pity and principle involved in each decision so baffling and painful, that only the most valiant of the members continued their active service, the rest tending to absent themselves upon such reasonable excuse as their disinclination to remain in town during the insanitary summer months. The Minutes of the meetings are a tribute to those who plodded on, bravely endeavouring to reconcile themselves to the discovery that the poor were so frequently not also the deserving and to combine correct charitable practice with natural commonsense.

(Liverpool Mercury 10.11.1858, quoted in M. Simey, 1951: 68).

The existence of parallel situations in London is suggested by the recommendation of Faudel to use relief officers and the appointment of salaried investigation officers by the Board. Visiting the poor provided an outlet for the surplus of time and energy for the wealthy Jewish women, as well as an avenue to express their feelings of superiority, their responsibility for uplifting the poor, get them to behave and look as English as possible,

At a time when it had not yet become fashionable to speak of personal intercourse between the rich and the needy she [Charlotte de Rothschild] always strove to impress the great duty of cleanliness. I am **bekoved** (honoured) too, rejoined the Baroness, yet I always dust some of my things by myself. (Hermann Adler, Chief Rabbi, Central Synagogue. Sermon in Memory of the Baroness, Sabbath, 22.3.1884).

It is worth noting that the personal intercourse with the poor was presented as a precursory to a later fashion rather than as a deep rooted Jewish tradition and its discontinuation by the wealthy class. Moses Montefiore recorded in his diary one visit to some narrow walks around Petticoat Lane in 1830,

We there visited the rooms of about 112 persons. To 108 we gave cards to obtain relief, we witnessed many distressing scenes, parents surrounded by children frequently six or seven, seldom less than two or three with little or no fire or food and scarcely a rug to cover them, without bed or blanket, but merely a sack or two for the night, a bed being almost out of question. Few had more than one room, however large the family. (quoted in C. Bermant, 1969: 14).

While cleanliness was no doubt vital in an era of epidemics, it seems that what was needed in order to provide the elementary wants of the Jewish poor was a continuous serious effort. Considering the tremendous wealth of some of the members of the élite such an effort was within its possibilities.

According to different contemporary tabulations there were in London more than twenty five minor Jewish Ashkenazic and Sephardic charities, not including friendly societies and educational institutions. Still other charities were established and maintained by the main synagogues such as the Spanish and Portuguese Board of Guardians (est. 1832). Two almshouses were founded by A. L. Moses and Joel Emanuel in 1854 (under the auspices of the Great Synagogue). Some charities included elements of insurance based on medieval corporation models according to which, needs of middle class subscribers were considered before those of non-members (S. Stein 1964: 74). Beneficiaries of charity schools, for instance, were obligated to recite the mourner's prayer at the synagogal services for deceased quid pro quo, albeit posthumously. These eleemosynary charities provided:

1. distributions of money (pensions, loans, doweries, festival grants, etc).
2. help in kind (food, coal, clothing, blankets, medicine, etc)
3. utilities in kind (apprenticing, education, medical treatment and hospitalisation, nursing and lying in, and so on).

One of the early charities of the Ashkenazim which was not strictly connected with the synagogue, was The '**Meshivat Nefesh**' (lit. Restoring the Soul, Psalms XIX, 7); whose English name was borrowed from the environment, the Bread, Meat and Coal Society, established in 1797, distributed during twelve winter weeks 5s or 6s tickets. The preference of help in kind is reflected in the Laws and

Regulations of the Society called Meshivat Nefesh for the Relief of the Poor, A.M. 5540 [1780]. Help in kind was considered less demoralising than relief in cash and characteristic to the contemporary suspiciousness towards the moral values and self discipline of the poor. The inability of the Jewish charities during the first half of the nineteenth century to apply the workhouse test often increased such suspiciousness. Though help in kind was accepted by the Jewish tradition alongside with other forms of relief, its distribution was not generally attributed to the inability of the poor to administer their life reasonably. (Laws, 1780, II). The original regulations of the eighteenth century were patterned on the model known from the Continent. They were written in Yiddish with an admixture of Hebrew and were based on Jewish concepts of **tzedakah** and administration of Jewish institutions such as by 'seven upright men of the town'. By the end of the eighteenth century the regulations of benefactors, if the latter had no sons. In this way donors guaranteed that there would be someone to recite regularly the prayer for them after their death, an overt **Meshivat Nefesh** were gradually translated into English. This process involved, whether conscious or not, an increasing desanctification and adoption of laissez-faire concepts from the English environment, including some operational patterns of parish churches. It was the Jewish élite that took the lead in borrowing and adapting such concepts and practices to its own needs. However, the other Jewish strata too were dependent on this conditioning sphere in various degrees. The Jewish charities were unplanned, overlapping, and responded to diversified specific needs of a limited number of poor. As such they did not relate to the most difficult problems of the completely and partially destitute, including those that could not become self-supporting as the very old and chronically ill. These charities were also unable to provide casual relief to the working class during

sickness, unemployment and other hazards. Some of the charities, at least, aimed at helping the 'deserving', 'respectable' and lower middle classes as shown by A. Highmore, Pietas Londinensis, etc., 1814, (93) and Sampson Low, Jn. The Charities of London, 1831, (145-6). The requirement of social standing as the most important criterion for eligibility is illustrated by the regulations of the A. L. Moses Alms' Houses of Aldgate. Such prerequisites were mentioned by E. H. Lindo, A Jewish Calendar ... with a Table of Religious and Charitable Institutions of the Jews in London, 1833, (101-4), for example in regard to the Hand in Hand Asylum for the Aged and Decayed Tradesmen, established in 1840. The new immigrants were often excluded from benefits. Even when provided, the help was usually inadequate and given in a way that prevented further bona fide claims.

Notwithstanding their severe limitations, the standards of Jewish charities were highly regarded by some contemporary non-Jewish writers such as A. Highmore (1814). Mayhew (1850) wrote:

The Jewish charities are highly honourable to the body, for they allow none of their people to live or die in a parish workhouse. It is true that among the Jews in London there are many individuals of immense wealth, but there are also many rich Christians who care not one jot for the need of their brethren. It must be borne in mind also that not only do the Jews voluntarily support their own poor and institutions, but they contribute - compulsorily it is true - their quota to the support of the English poor and church. This is the more honourable and the more remarkable among the Jews, when we recollect their indisputable greed of money ...'
(Mayhew 1850: 127).

Following his survey of Jewish charities including schools, Mayhew estimated their annual cost at 14.000 l., (not including 2000 l. representing the amount of loans lent yearly by three Jewish loan societies). At the same time Mayhew estimated that by 1849-50 there were about eighteen thousand Jews in London and concluded that the charitable donations of the Jews amounted to an approximate average of a little less than 1 l. per person and that 'the ratio of the English Christian's contributions to his needy brethren throughout the country will be very nearly the same as that of the Jews' (129). As far as London's Christians were concerned, Mayhew reached the conclusion 'that their munificence does not fall short of that of the metropolitan Jews' (129). The criticism of the Jewish wealthy class that Mayhew inserted by quoting his Jewish working class 'informants' was not reflected in his concluding remarks, wherein he rather praised the bounty of the Jewish wealthy class as well as the non-Jewish one implicitly accepting the sharp social differentiation involved.

As many of their non-Jewish counterparts, Jewish charities were based on a voting charity system by which a person subscribing e.g., one guinea annually became a governor; twenty guineas usually entitled the donor for a life governorship, sometimes 'with right to name a successor in default of which his next heir according to the Jewish Law of Succession ..' **Meil Tzedakah**, (The Cloack of Charity), est. 1736 listed by E. Lindo 1838: 2). Persons donating less than half a guinea could not be elected as officers of the charity, vote or express official opinions. The number of votes depended on the corresponding subscriptions of one guinea each, giving the donor the privilege of choosing beneficiaries. As benefits were often insufficient for all the applicants, lottery wheels especially made for drawing lots were used.

According to this system the poor who did not have influential acquaintances to sponsor their application were discriminated against. A later evidence of what this system implied for a Jewish widow was described by C. Rosenfeld in Torath Ha'adam (The Law of Man) Teaching of Humanity: A Treatise Throwing some Light on certain Movement of the Day 1890.

I happened to know a poor striving widow, whose child was well deserving support. Since she had no acquaintance with any member of that institution she had to advertise in the papers for votes, this entitling an expense of 16/- . After all, her endeavours proved a failure ... but the expense ... has devoured her only and small capital. I think in such cases it would be quite sufficient that parents should make an application in writing ... (17).

A severe criticism of the Voting Charity System was expressed toward the end of the nineteenth century by a group of philanthropists related to the COS, amongst them Frederick David Mocatta, (1818-1905), the most important representative of Jewish scientific philanthropy in the Cousinhood and the chairman of the Charity Voting Reform Association. Mocatta considered the system irrational and immoral, permitting subscribers to select their beneficiaries and in this way to act sometimes upon their capricious dispositions rather than meritorious criteria. He regarded the practice of allowing any number of applicants to compete for a single vacancy as a cruelty concealed as charity (A. Mocatta, 1971: 9). The Association attempted to replace the system by introducing criteria of merit so as not to enable subscribers 'to pervert the selection process into electioneering campaign'. Mocatta did not include in his will legacies for charities based on this system. However, Mocatta emphasised criteria of merit rather than needs. The ways

in which charity was distributed were embarrassing, coarse and divisive. The voting charity system made it even harsher. The general approach of the *élite* to the Jewish poor as reflected in biographies, newspapers and other extant records give evidence of little sympathy toward them, an unerring realism rather than idealism.

An important stage in the Jewish *élite*'s struggle for emancipation started in 1829 under the leadership of Isaac Lyon Goldsmid. It was extended for over thirty years. In 1830 Joshua van Oven was appointed together with Goldsmid, Rothschild, Montefiore and Mocatta by the Board of Deputies to a committee that negotiated with the government the matter of Jewish emancipation which centred around the cancellation of the Christological Oath. Obviously this was a matter of concern to the Jewish *élite* which aspired to political positions. (C. Emanuel 1920: 15). Henry Mayhew (1850) reached the conclusion that the Jewish population in the East End concerned with obtaining the basic necessities of living remained indifferent to this issue 'I was told by a Hebrew gentleman ... that so little did the Jews themselves care for Jewish Emancipation that he questioned if one man in ten, actuated solely by his own feelings, would trouble himself to walk the length of the street in which he lived to secure Baron (Lionel) Rothschild's admission into the House of Commons' (1850: 206a). In this issue - as contrasted to the relief of the poor - there was an increasing co-operation between the various groups of the Jewish *élite* (Roth 1950: 238). This movement involved among other, the establishment of an administrative machinery and commission of solicitor. The heavy expenses connected with the petitions to Parliament were divided between the synagogues - the Sephardim included (for instance in 1831 for Robert Grant's abortive Bill). In the 1840's some letters to the editors of the Jewish press opposed the movement regarding the solution of the

problems of Jewish poverty much more important. The Board of Deputies that fulfilled a leading role in the movement was criticised for neglecting the widespread Jewish poverty and called to study its extent and causes so as to draw measures for its alleviation. Following Lionel Rothschild's election in 1847, the Jewish Chronicle regarded emancipation incomplete without an internal one (JC, 18.10.1847). However, the criticism that the preoccupation with emancipation consumed vast energy that could be directed to ameliorate Jewish poverty was rejected by the Jewish élite 'From the first, Jewish leaders strove for social improvements with no less ardour than for political enfranchisement; the chronicles who dwell, as they are apt to do, on one aspect only of their endeavours, are doing them far less than justice' as pointed out by Hannah F. Cohen in her book Changing Faces: A Memoir of Louisa Lady Cohen by her daughter, 1937 (18). Lucien Wolf (1934), regarded the struggle of the Jewish élite for political emancipation as a motivating factor 'to put their house in order and so the work of internal progress was promoted side by side with the agitation for external rights' (Essays 1934: 314).

After 1837 another domestic question that concerned the Jewish élite was the rising Reform Movement which threatened its religious unity. It is worth noting that in the Parliamentary debates and publications related to the Jewish political rights, the Jewish élite and its non-Jewish supporters strongly emphasised the liberality and sensitivity of the Jewish wealthy class, H. Faudel, 1848: 7). The main opponents to emancipation were the High Church Tories who regarded the Jewish wealthy class as the prompter of liberal bourgeoisie and a threat to the Established Church. The argumentative defences used by the Jewish élite in order to neutralise the image of foreigners, dishonesty and vulgar materialism attached to the Jews as a whole were summarised by Bernard van Oven in

a letter to the Editor of The Times published on 3 February 1830 and republished as 'Emancipation of the Jews'

I must therefore beg of your candour to allow me ... to rescue my brethren from the charges you have advanced against them, which include a blind and besotted pursuit of one sole and unworthy object - the accumulation of wealth. Sir, this is by no means the case. From the highest to the lowest class they may be quoted as examples to their neighbours in the important duties of husband, wife, parent and child. The annals of Newgate offer but few Jewish names courted of highway robbery, housebreaking and murder. The vice of drunkenness is so rare. His charity is universal, unbounded, the Jews contribute equally to the Church and poor's rates, without in any way benefiting from them, they maintain their own poor and all foreign poor of their religion, they have many and extensive public charities and subscribe largely to all schemes.

(The Times, 3.2.1830, see also B van-Oven 1834).

The same counter-arguments, including exaggerations in regard to the adequacy of Jewish relief were advanced by Francis H. Goldsmid (later baronet), a member of one of the richest Jewish families in his sixth writings in support of the political rights. In this struggle the Jewish élite enjoyed the continuous support and expertise of middle class communal workers such as the van Ovens and a more critical member of his own wealthy class, Henry Faudel (F. H. Goldsmid, Two Letters, 1830: 12). In the struggle for political rights, Isaac Lyon Goldsmid enlisted the support of Elizabeth Fry with whom he collaborated in prison reform (M. Sabbstein, 1982: 67). As far as individual aspirations for political honours were concerned, philanthropy played an important part. This is

illustrated by Lord Shaftesbury's recommendation to bestow the honours of the Peerage to Sir Moses Montefiore (in a letter to Gladstone, 2.12.1862 quoted in Emden, 1943: 164). Montefiore's generous donations were one of the main considerations. Montefiore, was interested in Shaftesbury's Field Ragged Schools and supported them financially (165). Though several times elected, only in 1858 was Lionel de Rothschild fully accepted as a member of the House of Commons. The political rights were finally won by the élite. This political achievement was only partly due to the philanthropic donations through which the Jewish élite aroused a sympathetic interest in their rights. By this time the influence of the Jewish élite was increasingly felt beyond the economic sphere, as Lord Granville wrote to Queen Victoria '(Lionel Rothschild) represents a class which is great by their intelligence, their literary connections. It may be wise to attach them to the aristocracy' (quoted in JC, 7.8.1936).

Lionel de Rothschild (1808-1879) son of Nathan, was instrumental in providing the British government with the means needed to compensate slave owners in the overseas dominions. Lionel presented this transaction in Parliament as an humanitarian and liberal act. The loan for governmental assistance during the Irish famine in 1847 was provided without commission as a philanthropic donation (F. Morton 1962: 141-2). The loans provided during the Crimean War and for purchasing of the shares of the Suez Canal were represented as a patriotic support of national endeavours and the development of the British Empire. Lionel maintained the general reputation of honest dealings. The eighteen loans that he supplied were estimated at £1.600 millions but the public exposure of such transactions led Lionel and the other members of the House to transfer their interests to mining in South Africa and Europe. Lionel was the lord of the manor of

Tring, a splendid seventeenth century mansion planned by Sir Christopher Wren as a present from Charles II to Nell Gwyn, for which he paid a quarter of million pounds, and many other thousands of pounds were paid for remodelling it (S. Aris, 1970: 78). Lionel was considered also an exemplary landlord of the estate of Gunnersbury Park which he inherited from his father and brought to sheer magnificence (F. Morton 1962: 143-4). The prodigious sums that other members of the Jewish élite spent on 'territorial ambitions' are illustrated by the Sassoons who bought Ashley Park in Surrey, once occupied by Cromwell, and later on Trent Park. David Sassoon's aristocratic aspirations can be deduced from his witty saying 'There is only one race better than the Jews and that is the Derby' (143-4). The acquisitions of country palaces and the extravagant way of life reflect the surplus reserves of capital available beyond investment in current business and donations to charity. They provided the Jewish élite with an even more stable and secure economic situation, less fluctuant than some of their financial enterprises, but such acquisitions were detrimental to inter-class Jewish solidarity by contributing to the increased social distance between the rich and the poor.

The approach of Lionel Rothschild towards the Jewish poor and working class is reflected in his political campaign in which he carefully managed to disown and de-emphasise the support of the Jewish working class and even the middle Jewish class in order to avoid being identified by the English public as a leader of a Jewish electoral organised body. Consequently, during this period, the already significant Jewish constituency in the East End of London was disregarded. This attitude was reproached by the Jewish Chronicle, (6 April 1847, 21 May 1858) which also published a reader's letter expressing scepticism in respect to Lionel's commitment to Jewish

interests and his readiness to represent them in case of his admission into the Parliament. However, Lionel was not deterred by the criticism of Jewish radicals nor by the Jewish electoral power in the City of London which was regarded as one of the important constituencies in England. The Jewish radicals during this period were unable to oppose this trend as represented by Lionel Rothschild. In his campaign Lionel addressed himself to matters of general interests seen from a liberal and laissez-faire perspective, emphasising religious freedom, property taxes and opposed church rates. These ideas were shared by the other religious minorities and the rising middle class. Increasingly accumulating power and security, the 'House' did not feel the need to 'bribe' a better position of leadership by outstanding philanthropic endeavours.

In spite of the unwillingness to strengthen his ties with the poor of his own ethnic group, Lionel and other wealthy Jews nominated themselves as the representatives of the Jewish poor and the community as a whole vis à vis the English authorities. The Jewish élite was ready to accept this role as a substitute or in addition to their positions in the host community. The use of the representative power enabled the Jewish élites to control the Jewish poor and prevent their immigration to England through the authority and machinery of the government. This process involved a policy of differentiation between the strata of Jewish immigrants. In 1858 this representative power was reinforced by the parliamentary positions of Lionel de Rothschild and Alderman David Solomons.

Before the struggle of the Jewish élite for election to Parliament there was a strife for its right of being elected to municipal positions. David Solomons, one of the founders of the London and Westminster Bank in 1834

became the first Jewish sheriff of London and Middlesex and in 1855 the first Jewish lord mayor. Through such involvement in the municipal higher power structure the Jewish élite was able to understand better the system of money grants available, for example, for the education of the English poor. The chief powers enjoyed by municipal corporations included the superintendence of elementary education. The government of such corporations was entrusted to the mayor and a number of aldermen. In the late 1840s Benjamin S. Phillips, born in London in 1811, a partner in the financial firm Faudel, Phillips and Lows and later knighted, was instrumental in obtaining a grant of one hundred pounds for the Jews' Free School from the Common Council of the Corporation of London of which he was elected a member in 1846 as representative of the ward of Farringdon (H. Mayhew, 1850: 207b, 208a). This precedent illustrates that the participation of the Jewish élite in the municipal government was accompanied by corresponding demands for municipal contributions to the voluntarily supported Jewish schools. For thirty years Benjamin Phillips was an active member of the Jewish Board of Deputies which in 1849 or 1850 discussed with the Education Commissioners of her Majesty's Privy Council the possibility of obtaining a grant of money for Jewish education. According to Mayhew (1850), the grant was requested 'in the same proportion as it has been granted to other educational establishments. Nothing has as yet been given to the Jewish schools and the matter is still undetermined' (1850: 299b).

The increasing confidence of the Jewish élite in the English environment was evident in its readiness to start a step by step process for acquiring equal municipal subventions for the education of the Jewish poor children with the consequent decrease of the dependence of the poor on its exclusive resources. This confidence was largely based on the association of the Jewish élite with the

important financial circles of the metropolis. The request of equal money grants reflects an additional step in the gradual departure from the practice according to which 'Jews take care of their own'. It was presented as a matter of principle. On the other hand concomitant large scale donations to voluntary non-sectarian charitable efforts stressed that contributions of individual Jews were not confined to their sectarian charities. As an illustration, during his mayoralty, Phillips (elected 1865) raised personally seventy thousand pounds for the Cholera Fund. Phillips was succeeded in the office by his son Alderman Sir George Faudel Phillips (Jewish Encycl. 10: 5). Both of them were presidents of the Jewish Blind Society established in 1819 as the Institution For the Relief of the Indigent Blind of the Jewish Persuasion.

The chapter has argued that the Jewish masses were indifferent to the struggle of the élite for parliamentary and municipal positions, and that this constitutes additional evidence of the widening social distance already existing in the community. The next chapter will discuss a further proposal for organising the community to tackle the challenges so far unmet.

CHAPTER 7

THE FAUDEL SCHEME

This chapter deals with an additional comprehensive unimplemented plan which, as its predecessor the Colquhoun-van Oven Scheme, was intended to enable the Jewish élite to reform and control the Jewish poor through registration, centralisation and rationalisation of services. Special emphasis was placed by Faudel on the children of the poor regarded as more educable. The detailed form of the plan enabled the identification of the Bentamite ideas and early Victorian bourgeois values that influenced the expectations of Faudel. The chapter shows that he was also influenced by the framework of the services of the Society of Friends.

In 1841 extracts from a large scheme of charity and education were published by Henry Faudel in the Voice of Jacob. The series of several articles was entitled Suggestions to the Jews for Improvement in reference to their Charities, Education and Government by a Jew (Henry Faudel). In 1844 the articles were republished in a booklet. Henry Faudel was a member of a wealthy family. In 1833 he entered into partnership with his brother-in-law, Benjamin Phillips, founding the firm Faudel, Phillips and Sons. He was considered by the Jewish élite as initiated in philanthropy and education for the poor and, as such, he investigated the conditions of the Jew's Hospital. He was active in the struggle for emancipation and published a booklet addressed to Sir R. H. Inglis, M.P. (1848) in which he emphasised the humane and charitable qualities of the Jewish law and people. The scheme illustrates the attempt of Faudel and the Voice of Jacob to bring about concerted actions between the different Ashkenazic synagogues and charities, which during the first part of the nineteenth century proliferated in a chaotic fashion. Faudel meant to create a superstructure encompassing and assimilating all Anglo-Jewish arrangements in the realm of charity and education in the metropolis and the provinces. The model

for this ambitious scheme was provided by the Society of Friends:

for they are spread over as large a surface as the Jews - consist, like them of merchants and traders - similar in numbers superior in education (although not in mental capacity) with a well-ordered and responsible government we consequently hear of no distress or disorganisation among them. Yet it is not to be doubted that as many causes for interference occur in that body as in our own, but education, discipline and a well regulated system for their poor enable them to grapple with every question of good or evil (Faudel 1844: 19).

Like his predecessors in attempts to reform the Jewish poor and to stop deleterious competition amongst the different Jewish wealthy subgroups, Faudel was strongly influenced by Benthamite ideas. He regarded the object of government as 'the production of the greatest possible amount of human happiness. I am not far wrong in stating that the only exception in Great Britain of an extensive religious community being without a government is to be found amongst the Jews ... the want was never so much felt as at the present moment' (4). Faudel was not a philosopher and most probably he did not read deeply the work of Bentham. Rather, he quoted passages which were regarded by the Jewish élite as justifying accumulation of wealth and middle class prosperity. Within the framework of the utility principle the identity between self and common interests fitted the new capitalist class. According to Bentham and his followers, the greatest happiness of England was based on the expansion of the competitive enterprise and denial of aristocratic privileges, and indeed, the representative of the capitalist interest in the Parliament used the utilitarian terminology. As was made amply evident in his

booklet, what Faudel meant was not the socialists' interpretation of the greatest happiness of the community (such as Robert Owen's). E. Whittaker (1960) pointed out that

the utility derived from an addition to wealth was less for those with high incomes than for persons with low incomes, a transfer of funds from the wealthy to the poor would rise the aggregate utility of society. But Bentham backed away from accepting the equalisation of income as essential to governmental reform. Such a course he said would conflict with the principle of property if property were equally divided 'everything would be speedily destroyed ...'
(1960: 131).

The idea of selective and limited interference was accepted by Bentham's followers, for instance, Chadwick believed that in some situations only the intervention of the State can ensure the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers (A. Young and E. Ashton 1956: 21). Preoccupied with the good reputation of the Jewish élite regarded as a prerequisite for obtaining its political emancipation, Faudel linked the provision to the poor with the ability of the Jewish wealthy class to maintain its status in England. Consequently, Jewish solidarity was presented as a vital interest of the wealthy Jewish class,

What has been done by you for the elevation of your brethren? But let all that is practicable in this respect be attained, and you will ascend with them, as the majority become refined in their manners. Honour will emanate from the people and be reflected upon the leaders. Every onward movement of the middle and lower orders, must press you, the more advanced into higher eminence and it is therefore necessary on your parts to procure... the means of

making its members of every class useful and excellent citizens. The aristocratic class of the Jews is formed of men of wealth ... of wealth honourably acquired ... but unless the strictest regard be had to the education ... we shall have this class noted only for its money (Faudel 1844: 14).

In regard to the obstacles that prevented co-ordination of Jewish charities some additional criticism and exhortations were directed at the wealthy; they were in his opinion pride and mutual jealousy. 'Every charity is encountered by another for similar purposes ... both contend with all the force and feelings of competitors for public favour ... sink for once the mere desire to be a chairman, committee men, and managers. Act with others and not as if you only were patrons and founders. (Emphasis in original) (6, 12).

Faudel was aware of the Colquhoun and van Oven scheme (1848: 4) and repropoed many of their ideas. Like them, he believed that the 'unity of purpose and management' would be achieved by 'providing a building adapted to the whole' (10). All the non-ecclesiastical matters of the community were to be included in the scheme and superintended by

a General Committee or Council, consisting in the first instance, of those who are disposed to give their personal or pecuniary assistance ... and afterwards, during the operation of the project also of members selected by the public and popular election of the Jews ... They should possess the confidence of the community from their members, education, wealth and footing in the society (Faudel 1844: 18).

The Council was to be empowered to:

1. propose and carry out laws and regulations.

2. enact a registration of all the Jews in England in order to obtain 'a large amount of statistical information, and the concentration of the community facilitated - no claimant for any purpose of education or charity could or would be recognised, unless upon the register' (20).

3. charge a small flat registration fee - 'very trifling to the poorest when considered as giving them defined claims as recognised members of the community' (20). This fee was intended to produce an annual amount to be added to the general funds. 'The Society of Friends has a general register, and every member contributes to the local funds, these again to the general, thus sufficient sums are obtained. A somewhat similar modus operandi I would advocate for our adoption' (29).

4. receive and administer funds, grants, gifts and loans from synagogues and individuals including those that were reserved to cater for the synagogues' pensioners.

5. reorganisation of existing charities which Faudel believed 'would result in great savings and make it possible to provide more adequate relief. Also through an efficient check of all persons relieved and preventing tradesman to offer help to the unknown and frequently unworthy' (12).

6. instruct all Jewish children and 'taking charge of all the offspring of the poor. I take from them all the claim generally resorted to for the charitable interference of the Synagogues as the poor will have very little difficulty in maintaining themselves if we maintain all their children to do which, it would be necessary to remove them to a suitable establishment ... in connection with a school of industry' (21). Faudel believed that 'the removal of the young from the old, at an early age very desirable for the contamination of evil example ... tends to undo the instruction they receive and is the cause of so small a number attending the places already provided.' (22-23). By taking responsibility for the

children of the poor, the economic causes that prevented their parents from sending them to school could be more justifiably ignored. This too was a Benthamite idea according to which in Houses of Industry the infant mortality would be considerably reduced, parents would be relieved from an economic burden, children and society greatly benefit from their training. (J. Bentham, *Pauper System Compared*, CLII b.: 454-9, 509-15). The adult poor generation was regarded by Faudel as socially dysfunctional and uneducable, therefore unable to furnish its children with the instrumental values and skills feasible for the younger generation of the poor. The exclusive separation of the children of the poor from their parents and families during their formative years was of course opposed to the Jewish tradition.

7. establish a superior school for a limited number of the most talented boys in the neighbourhood of London University to be trained for the professions of law, medicine, clergy, etc. Cutting off the most able boys with a potential for natural leadership could be detrimental to the poor from many aspects.

8. amalgamate all the Jewish charities 'not to be understood the depriving of any of their funds, nor do I wish to divert legacies but to secure an efficient centralisation with wholesome and necessary control' (24).

9. establish a well regulated system of relief under check and control to stop mendacity and all indiscriminate charity regarded by Faudel 'as an evil encouraging consumers instead of helping producers, assisting idlers and beggars rather than artisans'. Faudel regarded 'every beggar ... employed in seeking the entire day whom to devour, considering himself entirely at liberty, morally and physically, to devote his entire time to the readiest way of getting money' (25). In order to combat indiscriminate charity Faudel quoted Tacitus's concept of 'false compassion' defined as an injury to industry and community. It is worth noting that no **halakhic**

injunctions in respect to charity were cited in this work, in sharp contrast to his other booklet A Few Words on the Jewish Disabilities Addressed to Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Bart., M.P., 1848 (12-14). In his zeal to prevent the Jewish public from what he termed indiscriminate charity, Faudel deliberately omitted pertinent Jewish injunctions in regard to immediate, non-means test based provisions he was aware of, substituting them with laissez-faire economic slogans. As other non-Jewish representatives of the wealthy class, Faudel ignored Benthamite writings that did not support laissez-faire doctrine. Nor did he relate specifically to problems of unemployment, sickness, etc., basically assuming that personal endeavour can counterbalance all predicamental situations that faced the Jewish poor. In this sense Benthamite theory presented a double bind approach to social reform, promoting and at the same time obstructing it, but always providing justification for sharp social differentiation.

10. build a House for the aged, decayed and temporary destitute. It was proposed to divide the building into wards, 'each separate ward to be under control'. Some arrangements in the wards for the aged were comparable to those of the Greenwich Hospital (28).

11. appoint proper officers for the distribution of charity (27).

12. provision for an Anglo-Jewish press (10). As far as social reform was concerned 'A journal ... placed on independent footing might be made a vehicle for affording a large amount of statistical information on the numbers, callings and education of the Jews - the incomes and expenditures of charitable societies and synagogues' (31).

At the request of the Voice of Jacob of 29 October 1841, some detailed statistical reports and investigations were preliminarily prepared. According to the editorial, the main aim was not their publication but rather 'to convene

a meeting of all managers of the Jewish charities or a special meeting of the Board of Deputies for the consideration of the data so prepared'. The weekly Voice of Jacob and then the Jewish Chronicle reflected the aspirations of the rising middle classes. Through frequent reporting of philanthropic disorganisation in the Jewish press and with its support Faudel hoped 'to shake off that terrible apathy and coldness, which have hitherto left them the sport and passive creatures of circumstances' (31-32) and create an atmosphere conducive the implementation of his comprehensive plan.

The overwhelming measures of control included in the scheme were directed at the poor but Faudel was not sure as to their willingness to accept his accusations and the changes he engineered,

... but how can their condition be improved unless with an earnest disposition on their own part towards it. Is obtaining occasional charity that relieves them only for a short period the sole aims of their lives? Is not the welfare of their children an all powerful feeling with them? Does the destitution of old age never occur to their thoughts until the moment that it commences, when helpless infirmity assails them? Is not the thought of an hereafter sometimes present to their minds? If their answers, their opinions upon these subjects are what they should be, and what must naturally be expected, I am sure they will add, that they are prepared to go with me in the scheme for their improvement and welfare ' (Faudel 1844: 17).

Personal virtues such as parsimony, hard work, ambition to get ahead, were considered to prevent any dependence on public funds. The social philosophy in which Faudel had been nurtured prevented him from relating to the meagre income of the Jewish poor, their inability to save and

provide for old age and in the final analysis their sufferings. Within the limitations of his social and economic theory, Faudel can be regarded as an important exponent of a part of the Anglo-Jewish élite that viewed the disorganisation of the community as a serious threat to its status in the host society. This part of the Jewish élite, characterised by some self criticism was however, marginal and not representative of the whole. The conscience of the Jewish middle class, as its non-Jewish counterpart, was influenced by the literary work of Charles Dickens. It is worth noting that following the protest of a certain 'Jewish lady', Dickens (1864-5), had counterbalanced the avaricious and corrupt character of Fagin by creating Riah in Our Mutual Friend, a submissive Jew who cared for his poor fellows, but Riah remained a rather neutral portrait and the Jewish middle and upper classes appeared to have felt pressured by the stereotyped figure of the Jews. At the end of his stage play 'The Jew' (1794), Richard Cumberland elevated Sheva, his principal character, as the widow's friend, the orphan's father, the poor man's protector and universal philanthropist but the negative description of the Jewish money lender persisted throughout the period. However, during this period the efforts of the élite to rehabilitate its image through philanthropic channels were limited. Some of the mechanisms of social control suggested by Faudel in the 1840's were subsequently adopted and implemented by the London Jewish Board of Guardians established in 1859.

Generally, the Jewish charities failed to co-operate in the setting up of the suggested superstructure and even to reach more modest ways of co-operation in terms of fundraising and distribution of benefits. Parochialism was deeply rooted. The personal needs of the leaders were carried over as ever into the public matters. The most important charities were dominated by the Cousinhood and

were managed in the same paternalistic and autocratic ways, not unsimilar to family banks. However, these charities were limited in terms of the number of the poor and the needs they could relieve. As such, they were not the first resort of many distressed poor. The resentment to the preaching moralism coloured with patronising overtones probably deterred many potential applicants in severe difficult situations. The feelings of the low middle class towards the attitude of the élite in respect to charity was described by Morris Lissack, an immigrant from Posen, in his book: Jewish Perseverance or The Jew at Home and Abroad, A Biography, (1851). Lissak started as a pedlar after being advised by another Jew to pawn his gold watch and some of his clothes and with the money to obtain some goods for sale, 'Oh! if the rich could see the struggle which their less fortunate, but honest, brethren have to endure, they would frequently be much more charitable and would feel much livelier sympathies with their sufferings. But 'sympathy is rarely strong where there is a great inequality of condition'.

In the late 1840's Benjamin Gompertz outlined a plan for 'the suppression of mendicancy and the substitution of casual relief by self help arrangements' in an open letter to the secretary of the Hambro' Synagogue (A. Hyamson 1908). Benjamin Gompertz (1779-1865) was the son of a wealthy merchant. He started his career as a stockbroker. As a distinguished mathematician he became the actuary of the Insurance Company established by his two brothers-in-law, Moses Montefiore and Nathan Rothschild. In 1822, Gompertz drew up the details of the abortive plan of a Saving Bank advanced by Nathan Rothschild. According to M. Adler's Memoir of the late Benjamin Gompertz F.R.S. etc. (19), his plan included the establishment of a Board of Guardians to be empowered to investigate the claims of the Jewish poor, to keep a register of all applicants for relief, to dispense charity and procure employment. This

plan was influenced by the establishment of the Liverpool Hebrew Philanthropic Society and Jewish Ladies' Benevolent Institution in the 1840s, and the continuous echoes of these initiatives in London but Gompertz's plan which included proposals for amalgamating the Jewish charities lacked the backing of the most wealthy financiers within the Ashkenazi élite and failed a short time after its proposal (1908: 284, Margolionth, 1851: 118). More than fourteen years elapsed until the Jewish élite was ready to support the amalgamation of the inadequate arrangements of the three City Synagogues by establishing the Jewish Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish 'Foreign' Poor.

In this chapter it has been shown that the Jewish philanthropists were unable at this time to overcome some of their individualistic and competitive inclinations which resulted in a proliferation of small services, each one caring for a very limited number of poor, with all the consequent suffering. As will be shown in Chapter 8, the establishment of the Board of Guardians implemented many of the ideas included in the Faudel Scheme, possibly in a harsher manner than those intended by Faudel.

CHAPTER 8
THE JEWISH BOARD OF GUARDIANS:
ITS ESTABLISHMENT, IDEOLOGIES AND POLICIES

This chapter relates to the establishment of the Jewish Board as a turning point in the Anglo-Jewish philanthropy. The documents examined indicate that from its foundation the Board reflected a good comprehension of the class interests of the wealthiest members of the élite. The Board gave its relief with great care, deliberation and self consciousness, being aware of the manipulative value of its controlling activities in the economic, social and moral life of the poor.

The establishment of the Board in March 1859 can be explained by a conglomerate of cumulative factors. Possibly, the trigger was the trade depression of 1857-58 and the hard winter of 1858 that caused severe hardship amongst the poor, calamities being long known to create more social awareness. An important contributing factor that steered public opinion was a series of strong and lengthy leaders that appeared in the Jewish Chronicle during 1857-1858 on the subject of Jewish poverty and charities. The articles stressed that the problems, especially those of the 'foreign' poor, could no longer be shelved. The articles were probably written by Abraham Benich, the editor of the Jewish Chronicle who estimated the total yearly expenditure of the Jewish community on organised and private charity at fifteen thousand pounds. Benesh strongly advocated the co-ordination of all the communities' charities through a central Board of Guardians. (JC 25.9.1857) The proposal for amalgamation in the editorial article incorporated previous ideas for the organisation of Jewish philanthropies made by Colquhoun and van Oven in 1802, the first Half Yearly Report of the Board presented its establishment as a belated realisation of their scheme (1888). Other plans that influenced the establishment of the Board were those of Walter Joseph (1841), Henry Faudel and Benjamin Gompertz (1844), as well as that of Abraham Benisch

influenced by the model of the Jewish Comité de Bienfaisance established in Paris by Napoleon I. Expressing dissatisfaction with the system of charity, Benisch suggested 'to copy some features as might easily be transferred' from the French-Jewry model, however, he realised that 'Our Saxon love of independence would render the amalgamation of all charities under one ... impracticable ... and repugnant to our national character' (JC, 25.9.1857). His proposed Board of Guardians was to have an efficient paid secretary who was to make 'strict enquiry precede relief'. In cases of emergency the Board that he proposed 'would appeal to the community as other charities'. (JC, 2.10.57) Another influential model was that of the Society for the Relief of Distressed Persons: 'Let such Society be formed ... let one great charitable engine display its power' (JC, 4.2.1859). The Jewish Chronicle reported a project brought before the community for the foundation of a Jewish workhouse with a labour test for able-bodied paupers to be established without delay. By the middle of the nineteenth century the Jews had accumulated considerable experience in regard to the workhouses, for instance the Jewish Chronicle of 25.9.1857 reported the election of a co-religionist John Symons as Guardian at Hull. Such Guardians have taken their work seriously. According to the 'Hull Packet' quoted by the Jewish Chronicle, he gave a lecture - the first one delivered by a Guardian of that Union to the inmates and children of the workhouse 'his subject was "The Way to Succeed in Life", the rules given were exemplified by sketches of the lives of eminent men who had risen from the ranks'. (JC 18.3.1859) The involvement of Jews in the Poor Law arrangements can explain why the Board was constituted very much after the fashion of a Parochial Relief Board.

The Ephraim Alex' proposal in 1857 to establish the Jewish Board of Guardians, made on behalf of the Great Synagogue

was opposed by the other two synagogues. His plan was modest in comparison with a scheme proposed not long before, by Benisch, the editor of the Jewish Chronicle. Benisch was influenced by the movement of coordinating charities, as reflected somewhat later by the founding of the COS in 1869. However, Benisch fully and continuously supported the scheme of Alex in the Jewish Chronicle, during the years 1858 and 1859.

The Board represented a large scale implementation of elements of social control proposed in the various schemes from the very beginning of the century. It also coincided with the heydays of the capitalist economy which enabled the Three Synagogues to vote an initial, although modest, amount for the function of the Board and to undertake the responsibility for its continuous financial support. The responsibility to finance the Board emanated from the doctrinal (**halachic**) and constitutional obligations of the Synagogues to assist the **Orchim** (Guests and wayfarers). At the same time, the Board appealed to the community at large for financial contributions. Another contributing factor was the immigration which, from the middle of the nineteenth century, had become noticeable. The Board was preceded by the Conjoint Board of Relief, established in 1834 by the major Ashkenazic Synagogues in London and based on established co-operation between them in regard to the **Orchim** 'strange' poor - each individual one being considered too limited as a unit of organisation. The Board raised expectations promising further advantages of amalgamation and co-operation with other charities in order to prevent the 'strange poor' 'over-running all our existing institutions' (Simon Waley, quoted in JC, 1.7.87, Historical Essay on the Board).

The seventeen members who founded the Board were delegates of those synagogues (of German, Polish and Dutch origin) and were financiers, business men and professionals. In

their respective synagogues they were electors with voting and office holding privileges (as differentiated from seat holders and not electors). Ephraim Alex, who was the elected president, was a middle class successful dentist born in Cheltenham in 1800, Overseer of the Poor of the Great Synagogue. He served as President for ten years. These delegates of the Synagogues met on 16 March 1859 in Black Horse Yard, Aldgate and established the Board according to the decisions of the authorities of their respective Synagogues. Empowered to deal with the 'foreign' poor only, the Board started its operation without delay using the amount of £440 voted by the three Synagogues.

Lionel Louis Cohen was a foreign banker and member of the Stock Exchange who, at twenty seven years old, became the Honorary Secretary until 1869 when he succeeded Alex as president. Cohen was a member of one of the most important families of the Cousinhood. The two daughters of Levi Barnet Cohen, Lionel's grandfather were married to Nathan Rothschild and Moses Montefiore. Cohen, possessing high executive abilities, assumed the personal control for the Board's activities, characterised by careful scrutiny of details. Lionel established a dynasty that maintained its hegemony as Presidents of the Board until 1947 (with an interruption from 1920-1930). In this way, the Board evolved into a family enterprise - a Cousinhood within the Cousinhood. The most important members of the Board were related by family ties and brought over other relatives to serve on the Board for more than two generations. Most of the important families of the Cousinhood were well represented in the Board and largely accepted the policies delineated by the Cohens and the even more important contributors, the Rothschilds.

In 1860 the Jewish Chronicle published a plan of Lionel Cohen entitled A Scheme For The Better Management Of All

The Jewish Poor (15.6.1860). In this scheme the defects of the synagogal assistance were detailed as follows,

1. Want of proper and periodical investigation.
2. Continuance of money relief to able-bodied paupers.
3. Inefficient medical attendance.
4. System for granting fixed allowances to so-called casual poor.
5. Capricious mode of relief.
6. The limitation of relief to very minute sums, when perhaps by doubling or trebling the sums given, which the overseer cannot do, the applicant might be made to support himself.
7. The light test imposed on persons attaching themselves to the Synagogue.
8. The impossibility of prompt attention to occasional wants by the Synagogue Secretary.

In his Scheme Cohen concluded that practically there were no distinction between the 'casual poor' who had remained under the care of the Synagogues and the 'foreign' poor who were transferred to the Board and that, if such differentiation was made it was rather arbitrary and unsatisfactory. 'I believe the wants of the poor are so shifting, so multitudinous and withal so pressing, that a body having no other synagogal duties to perform and independent officials can alone adequately deal with them' (Cohen 1860). Cohen continued to struggle for the inclusion of all poor under the responsibility of the Board for more than ten years. (JC, 2.10.1870). Lionel Cohen was also the Founder and the first Vice President of the United Synagogue, established in 1870, which reflected the adoption of the organisational models of the Nonconformist and Anglican churches for creating a formally centralised Rabbinate under the tutelage of the élite. According to this model, the Ashkenazic synagogues were amalgamated and the authority invested in the Chief Rabbinate was similar to that of the Archbishop of

Canterbury.

The Jewish Chronicle regarded Lionel Cohen as the 'High Priest of the secular government of the community' (JC 10.1.1879). Later during this century, the Cohens were associated with the Conservative Party, and Lionel's parliamentary career was prematurely terminated by his death in 1887 at the age of fifty five. Among the founding members of the Board was also Jacob Waley (1819-73), called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, 1842, a Professor of Political Economy at the University College (1853-65) and consequently Prof. Emeritus. Algernon Sydney, who was appointed Honorary Solicitor, originated from a family of lawyers, his appointment emphasising the importance that the Board placed on legal procedures.

The establishment of the Board manifested the recognition of the élite that the problem of the 'strange' poor could no longer continue to be almost entirely evaded. It also showed some sensitivity of the élite to what non-Jews would think of the lower standards of the synagogues' relief and the awareness that severe social problems of the Jewish poor might hamper satisfactory relations with the host society. The Board was to fill the vacuum created by the westward migration of the wealthy classes from the East End, which aggravated the situation of the poor in the East End. The extravagant lifestyle of the middle classes, characterised by large conspicuous expenditure, further disassociated them from the poor. The Board also lamented the loss of control of the rich over the poor caused by this migration,

Formerly, when rich and poor lived in close proximity, the association of locality afforded some kind of intercourse, imperfect though it was. The rich and the poor were not as now estranged and apart. The worthless and the beggar were at least partially known

as such to the donor; and in the instance of the worthy and respectable - when suffering became too keen, the wealthy then knew personally their respectable neighbours, and relieved them as such; but with the westward emigration both these conditions changed, and to the advantage of the beggar (First BGHR 1859: 10, 11).

In the West End, much of what can be termed their direct public responsibility had been discarded. The new congregations established there, linked together middle class members of different places in Europe and elsewhere. While maintaining some aspects of Jewish tradition, their philanthropy was prone to adopt inspirations from corresponding laissez faire concepts as a principle source. Those ideas were not lacking in feelings of contempt for the weak. As the representative of the élite, the Board attempted to convince the Jewish public that the detrimental impact of the geographical distance 'has not altered the donor's heart' and its possible corollary 'that relief will soon be forthcoming' (First BGHYR: 11). Consequently, the Board regarded its responsibility as a channel through which the donations of the middle and upper classes would be distributed to the poor. In this way, the Board was to discharge the upper classes from the direct pressure of the insistent poor, the duty to relieve them personally and to legitimise a direct avoidance of the poor 'let but the sums heretofore given to clamorous mendicants who beset our Synagogue gates and the doors of our private residences, be placed at the disposal of the Board, and ample funds will be the result' (Second BGHYR: 13). The Board was also to discharge the members of the élite engaged in financial and oversea trade in the City of London, from the need to assume responsibility for the poor who were no more than a few minutes' walk or ride from their City offices. In this way they were exempted from seeing the poverty and

degradation which, according to Pollins (1981), increased significantly during the period when the Board was established (3-4). (The first Office of the Board was on Black Horse Yard, Aldgate East and by the beginning of 1860, premises were rented on 13 Devonshire Square.) From its commencement, the Board tried to apply an efficient administration based on models provided by the English society. The élite attributed to itself the inclination and talent for sound administration and the ability to apply it persistently to the institutions of the community, as required in their business activities. As paternalism was often a wealthy amateur privilege, it was important for the élite to make this distinction. The original Scheme of Ephraim Alex included a centrally organised, administrative apparatus purposely designed for rationalised control of the poor. This control was to be as encompassing as possible as 'Clerk to keep a register of all the foreign and other poor applying for relief, their addresses and trades, where natives of, how long they have been in this country ... and he shall also investigate all cases brought under his notice by the Board. (A Scheme, &, 1859, 6, revised and enacted in 1867, Law 48, 21) According to the Scheme, (the Board shall obtain from various institutions the name of their recipients (7). The intention of the élite in establishing the Board was to segregate the treatment of the 'foreign' poor from the other 'stipendiary' poor who were attached to the Three City Synagogues, or had a right to claim relief from them. In this way, the Board was to deal with them in differential ways influenced by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

The possibility of co-operation with the Poor Law authorities made the problems that faced the élite more complex and incompatible to the old fashioned administration of the Synagogues and necessitated the commencing of the Board's machinery. One of the first

rules that Alex introduced in his Scheme was that 'In case of confirmed paupers, the Clerk to apply to their respective parish for out-door relief' (1859: 7).

The Board had been founded with the intention of functioning as a quasi-official statutory agency paralleling union in regard to the Jewish 'confirmed paupers', especially immigrants, within the community and towards the local and central authorities of the Poor Law.

It was more than ten years before George Goshen attempted to find an answer to the question 'How far it is possible to mark out the separate limits of the Poor Law and of charity respectively, and how it is possible to secure joint action between the two' (quoted in de Schweinitz (1961: 151). This minute was, according to de Schweinitz (1961), the first recognition by government in England of philanthropy as an organised force. References throughout the history of the Poor Law had been made to private charity but never as an organized activity with which to negotiate and to arrive at mutual understandings about policy and program (1961: 151). The COS, later on the Board, regarded co-operation with the Poor Law as an important means to eliminate expenditure for the relief of what it considered 'undeserving poor', using against them heavy-handed procedures. The founding of the Board and its location in Aldgate was intended to deal with the poor in a separate place, distanced from the Synagogues and their religious, social and cultural activities.

The Board was to be denoted The Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Necessitous Foreign Poor (The Scheme & ... 1859). However, from the beginning, the leaders of the Board were interested in expanding their control over all the poor of the community and adopted the name of the Jewish Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish Poor. Because of the stigma attributed to the Board by

the poor attached to the Synagogue, in 1871 only, after prolonged efforts, the Board succeeded in taking over from the three City Synagogues the responsibility for their poor. In this way occupying an increasingly central place in the community. The establishment of the Board had been a belated development of the grouping of parishes and the shift of responsibility from the parish vestries to the elected boards of Guardians and the supervisory central body Poor Law Commissioners, and the later Poor Law Board, following the 1834's report.

In respect to the Jewish poor, the Board had attempted to fulfil also a parallel function of such a central body in its connections with the other 'more voluntary' Jewish charities. This similarity to the host authorities facilitated the communications with the Board. In establishing the Board the élite took as its combined model, the British statutory and voluntary philanthropies as well as business patterns. One of the manifestations of this influence was the very name of the Jewish Board of Guardians with its strong controlling connotations, which does not have a counterpart in the Hebrew nomenclature related to the **Tzedakah**. The influence of the contemporary social philosophy and arrangements was already evident in the administration of charities by the three main City Synagogues before the establishment of the Board. They used the term Overseer of the Poor - defined as one who keeps watch over or directs, supervises or superintends others. This term replaced the Hebrew charity term of **Gabai Tzedakah** - meaning collector of charity and implying also the combined functions of assessor of the income of the community's members and distributor of the charity per se. (Maimonides, **Mishneh Torah**, VII, Gifts for the Poor, Chapter 9, 1 [see Appendix I]). Some of the Jewish traditional terms of charity used by the synagogues and by the Board at the very beginning of its activities were gradually abandoned

by the Board with consequent detrimental implications for the poor. The less segregated and more traditional Hebrew term, **Orchim**, meaning guest - not necessarily poor - and denoted wayfarers or passers - through, was still printed in Hebrew at the bottom of the page of the original Laws and Regulations of the Board, 1859. In the First Half Yearly Report the term, **Orchim**, was printed in Hebrew adjacent to 'Foreign' or unattached poor (17). The term, **Orchim**, printed in Hebrew, was still used in the statistical tables of the Annual Reports of the 1860s for residents less than seven years in England (Seventh BGAR 1864: 8, 30-31). Versus the diminution in the status of the poor, as reflected in the use of a more humiliating terminology, was the Board's enhancement of the reputation of its wealthiest members. This was done by publishing their conspicuous munificent contributions in order to attract their loyalties and affections,

From the first day of its existence when the munificent sum of £100 as a first donation was generously presented by Messrs N. M. Rothschild and Sons, the Board has been favoured by a continuous flow of liberality, reaching to an aggregate of upwards of £800, all spontaneously offered, without any other stimulus than the benevolence of the donors and the publication of the Board's monthly reports. (First BGHYR, 1859: 22).

The wealthy members were described by the Board as the few possessed by the indomitable and commending genius, managed to win their way to wealth and fame, despite every obstacle (6).

The methods used by the Board were not new, they had been previously used for considerable periods of time by the Overseer of the Poor of the Synagogues and by the smaller Jewish philanthropies, strongly influenced by the English

models during the first half of the nineteenth century. What characterised the Board from the beginning was the large scale of its operations and its efforts of investigation.

A deep dislike was reflected in the approach of the élite for the long neglected, cumulative and pressing needs of the poor as a group

True it is that the Board did not feel justified in relaxing all investigations and in throwing open its doors to the promiscuous crowd of necessitous persons who might besiege them.

(Third BGHYR, Dec. 1860, 13-14).

It should be taken in consideration that the three ornate City Synagogues forced the poor into a catch-as-one-can, according to which the beadles of those synagogues distributed weekly small amounts in coins, frequently throwing them over a group of poor waiting outside, barred by the gates. This cruel system gave an advantage to the strong and the young over the weak poor, encouraging violence. The Board, however, had blamed the distressed and aggravated poor for adjusting themselves to the strange and haphazard previous arrangements, as well as for the delay in the investigation process of its own system. The total disorder and confusion to which the poor were exposed by the three City Synagogues was caused by internal frictions within the wealthy class, resulting in duplication of inadequate relief. Kokosalakis pointed out that the exclusion of some members from the power structure of the congregations motivated the establishment of new synagogues rather than religious or ideological issues (1982). As he pointed out, the superfluous organisational rift was an obstacle to the dynamic development of the community (69, 74). It is possible that some business rivalries had jeopardised philanthropic actions.

The measures of control over the Jewish poor were in some ways a continuation of those used by the Synagogues in regard to their attached poor. The financial dependency of the communal institutions on voluntary contributions brought about a disinclination to use disciplinary measures against the wealthy members of the synagogues.

In regard to the contributing members, the effectiveness of such measures had been limited to those who recognised the Jewish traditional authority. However, as far as the poor were concerned, their living depended on the ways in which the élite interpreted and implemented the Jewish traditions, this is, in the light of its interests. The Board's controls had been intended as much more comprehensive. In the formative years of the Board, the process of social control in respect to the 'foreign' poor was increasingly differentiated and specialised by application of rules and sanctions and designated functionaries (whether salaried personnel or volunteers). The intention of the Board had been to rely on clear and articulated principles. Control was exercised by minimising as far as possible cash contributions, especially until 1870. Instead, help in kind was given to prevent 'misuse of relief' (except for loans). Significant proportions of the value of the food and coal were lost by the poor who, under distressing circumstances, were forced to exchange food tickets for goods or to sell the tickets on the clandestine market for cash. The applicants for relief and their families -including the rejected ones - were minutely recorded. In order to be relieved, the applicant was subjected to visitation and different scrutinising and controlling intrusions into the family. Controlling and disciplinary measures included the use of bath tickets as a prerequisite for relief. Those measures were intensified in regard to those in more prolonged relief. The philosophy and practice of the Board contradicts statements according to which, it 'functioned on the

assumption that their constituents wished to be moral, to improve themselves and regain independence' (Black 1988: 79). Once the Board was established, it tended to include an increasing number of departments directed by committees. Those departments acted in co-operation forming a deliberate network of social control and sometimes blaming the victims. As an example the Work Committee had 'refused the loan of sewing machines to those applicants whose houses were reported by the visitors to be either dirty or overcrowded' (Ninth BGAR, 1866-67: 47). In the same Annual Report, the Visiting Committee recognised 'that the mass of our poor, especially the foreign portion of it, are constantly, and almost hopelessly, struggling in a chronic state of want and wretchedness', also that 'excessive slackness of work of almost every description coupled with the high price of provisions' increased the hardships of the poor (55).

The élite exclusionist policy was carried out by the Board from its commencement.

The allowance made by the Synagogues was far too small, and one of the reasons given for this parsimony was that an influx of foreigners was to be feared if too much relief were given. The experience of this Board has shown that the number of new cases it receives every month, of parties who have resided here less than a year, is very small, and the regulation stringently enforced that no person be relieved, unless resident here more than six months, will tend greatly to check the arrival of fresh paupers. [emphasis in the text] (First BGHYR, 1859, 18-9).

Those continuous efforts to discourage immigration were, however, largely ineffective, taking into consideration the geo-political factors largely influencing immigration. For instance, the American Civil War decreased

considerably the number of immigrants that continued their way to America, consequently remaining in England (Manchester Guardian, 3.7.1861, quoted from Williams, 1976: 268). The leaders of the Board regarded it, however, as their primary duty to protect the Anglo-Jewish establishment from the problems involved in immigration.

The Cohens especially, were long known for their antipathy towards immigration and their conservative tendencies within some variations, became the official policy of the Board and were accepted within some variations by the most important families of the élite. In designing and implementing its restrictionist policy, the élite was strongly supported by the professional and clerical middle class. In reacting to the proposal of Alex not to relieve any person less than six months in Britain (Scheme and attached Laws 1859, 11: 5), Simon Waley and Sir Francis Goldsmid had suggested that no person be relieved until resident for three to five years. Professor D W Marks, the Minister of the Reform Synagogue, had proposed that immigration of the poor should be checked only by repatriation. (JC 1.7.87, Essay on Board's History by A.I. Mayers).

One of the ways by which the Board attempted to reverse immigration was the limitation of relief.

In 1861, the Board announced that 'invariably refusing any other relief then their return passage has materially checked their arrivals'. (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 10). The policy of transmigration and repatriation was based on safeguards against costs of absorption. Characterised by an orientation of instrumental activism, the Board acted sharply to export the problem of the immigrants and, possibly, the poor who had been in the country longer.

The item of £46. 17s. 3d., for persons proceeding abroad, is regarded as a most economical and prudent

outlay; for by means of this sum upwards of sixty persons, and mostly those of the poorest class, have left the country. (Second BGHYR, 1860: 9).

The selection of the poor for transmigration and repatriation became the general policy of the Board. While the Board asserted its scope to help the poor to become self-supporting and retain their self respect - applicants did not feel this way. Such a claim of the Board was, in practice in conflict with its social philosophy and practical strategy 'to heed them off by demonstrative refusals of any appreciable relief to newly arrived immigrants' (Lipman 1990: 33). In turn, this practice was contradicted by the statistics of the Board, according to which the overall refusal rate was only approximately five per cent of the total number of applications. In addition to the scope of deterring immigrants and conveying its restrictionist policies to potential immigrants abroad, the Board was interested in lowering its expenses as much as possible (33).

During the 1860's and 1870's a still restricted steady flow of immigration continued but it did not reach the proportions of the 1880s, nor was the entrenched restrictionism an important controversial issue. In the 1870s, the Board viewed the problem of severe poverty caused by immigration as more or less finite. In view of such expectations the Board was not prepared for the large flux of immigration.

A declared important principle of the Board was 'that proper and deserving objects only would be relieved' (Lipman, 1959: 26, based on Remembrances of A. I. Mayers, JC, 1.7.87). The application of this principle meant preferential considerations and concern for the 'deserving' poor, as evident from the commencement of the Board's activities in regard to this category which

originally had belonged to the middle classes, or was much closer to them. The Board was prepared to make more significant efforts in ameliorating their problems. The control of the Board was not always overt and was not recognised as such by some of the users of its services or by the Board. This was attributed to the paternalistic nature of some of the Board's controls, such as the advancing of loans and other services predominantly used by the 'deserving' poor. For instance, in regard to the effort of the Board to stop the 'begging letters' written by the poor to different factors in the power structure of the community, the Board recognised that this continuation of the system was detrimental 'to the really deserving poor' (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 12). This dichotomy implied an over simplified and moralistic approach, especially as so many applicants to the Board were new immigrants and, as such, unknown to the community. Later, the Board followed the COS division between 'helpable' and 'unhelpable' (Lipman, 1959: 237) - a largely rhetoric change. Moreover, the former entrenched terminology continued to be used by the Board throughout the nineteenth century and beyond.

The criteria of 'good' character and virtue, as proved by economic success and thrift, which were considered by the Board as a precondition for assistance, were sometimes especially cruel to the immigrants because of their inability to produce the required evidence. The painful investigations to detect the 'undeserving' unnecessary in the primary group communities were resented by the immigrants as repugnant. Rather than kinlike obligation, a reciprocal mistrust was created by the Board. Such an atmosphere was conducive to over-reactions, callousness and penalising for infractions of regulations. The feelings of gratitude of the poor were probably often combined with resentment. The Board continuously strived 'to influence the community in withholding relief until due inquiry be made' (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 12).

From its commencement, the Board was preoccupied with attempts to differentiate between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. Reinvestigations of poor on relief were made every six months (Scheme 1859: 7). The Mendicity Department was one of the first established by the Board six months after the commencement of its activities (First BGHYR, 1859: 15). This department invited the Board's subscribers 'to apply to it for information as to the merit of any applications they might individually receive for relief', however only 'a few gentlemen, pre-eminent for their liberal and judicious charity, systematically refer to the Board for information'. The Board could not but 'greatly regret the limited use which has been made of this department'. (First BGHYR, 1859: 15). According to the Jewish Chronicle 'Since the formation of the Board the poor are forbidden to solicit from individuals, should they do so they are referred to the Board' (25.1.1861). The mistrust was directed to the group of 'imposters and self-selected paupers'. The report did not give information about the social and economical situation of this group. In the first six months of the Board's activities, eleven per cent of the applications were refused as compared to seven and a half per cent in the second part of the first year.

As the register of the Board becomes more and more complete, the per centage of undeserving persons who venture to appear before it, will no doubt continue to decrease.

(Second BGHYR, 1860: 8).

It is clear that a large proportion of the efforts of the Board were dedicated to prevent its abuse.

In compiling statistical summaries, the Board used returns after the models required by the Poor Law Board from every

Union in England and Wales. In 1860, on the basis of such returns, the Board reached the conclusion that in regard to one hundred and fifty persons a 'test of labour should be applied and hope that in some future time means may be devised by which this test may be enforced' (Third BGHYR, 1860: 9). In summarising such data the Board did not relate to the social and economic implications of their situation as 'foreign' poor or to the appropriateness of the use of the 'less eligibility' principle. In its efforts to deter immigration, the Board alternately ignored the fact that the problems that faced most of the users of its services at this time stemmed, to a great extent, from the crises they had undergone as immigrants, aggravated by recurrent trade depressions, low salaries, fluctuations of seasonal demands and some hard winters, for instance, at the beginning of the 1860s (during this period the immigrants had changed from Germans and Dutch to Russians and Polish).

The principles according to which the Board made some use of the Unions' workhouses as disciplinary measures for resistant or recalcitrant persons were not published. In regard to this more sensitive issue, details were selectively omitted in contrast to the widely profused quantification of other interventions. The local Poor Law Unions' returns also are not specific on the number of their Jewish inmates. Black wrote

The Board unquestionably used and could always consider employing the 'workhouse threat' (Black, 1988: 79).

Generally, the Board claimed to be in a financial crisis as each wave of immigrants arrived, such as at the beginning of the 1860s when the Board had a deficit of approximately fifty pounds. Given the importance that the Board accorded to such deficits, the Board tried to reduce the relief allotment, which was the main item of expenditure.

Concomitantly, in spite of being far from generous, the leaders of the Board feared being regarded as such and, in this way, encouraged immigration and general pauperism. In the distribution of relief, the Board was backed also by the influence of contemporary social philosophy; Mill declared that 'No locality has a moral right to make itself by mismanagement a nest of pauperism, necessarily overflowing into other localities, and impairing the moral and physical conditions of the whole labouring community' (Mill, 1859: 117, 1870). The Board reduced the fixed allotments to the aged (later on in the century also to the native ones) to an inadequate level (Lipman, 1990: 34).

Impressive and exacting as the charity work was described by the Board's publications, it was exposed to the critique of the laissez faire middle class doctrinaires.

Conclusive contradiction to the assertions repeatedly made that its [the Board's,] efforts are not sufficiently directed to help the poor to help themselves, and that the poor are pauperised instead of being stimulated by the benefactions which it affords them. (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 14).

The Board continuously underwent such pressures from a part of the Jewish élite and the middle class imbued with the danger of pauperisation. It is worth mentioning that the Board was sometimes urged directly by the COS, then the Society for Organising Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicity, (with C. B. P. Bosanquet as Secretary) to adjust the Board along with 'some at least' of the other charities 'more progressive' along the lines propagated by the Society. In a letter to the Board sent on 27.11.1871, C. J. Ribton Turner, Org. Sec., wrote 'after looking into the schedule of Jewish charities you have left with me'. Turner suggested a 'thorough investigation into the antecedents of every applicant for charity and the application of a

provident test to candidates for pensions admission to asylums, etc' [emphasis in text]. (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 78-80). In order to create 'further concentration and invigorated action', Turner also suggested 'that a Central Body should be formed consisting of representatives of all the Jewish charities' (79). In the comments that followed, the leaders of the Board expressed their readiness to assume similar roles and functions to the COS vis à vis the Jewish charities which have restrictive objects. The Board wrote that a 'considerable part of its expenditure is already incurred in investigations recorded for the use of other charities' (80). However, the actual power of the Board to control and co-ordinate other Jewish charities under the auspices of the middle and working class was limited, and it was increasingly so after the mass immigration of the 1880s. Already in 1871 the Board bitterly complained about the 'multifarious distributors of Jewish charity. Their investigation, as yet incomplete, discloses the existence of many institutions almost unknown, and working with apparently identical objects in similar directions' (77).

The Board followed persistently the goals of controlling the poor designed originally. By the end of the nineteenth century the Board was increasingly regarded as an entrenched institution, characterised by a conservative resistance to change and unable to overcome the inertia which was attached to its structure and functions. The Board had difficulty in renouncing the arrangements developed during the first thirty years of its existence which became obsolete in the evolving collectivist approach. A conventional and high minded moralising paternalism was reflected, amongst others, by the continuation of the arrangement, according to which imploring and humiliated applicants were interviewed by the seated 'rota' - Relief Committee - standing behind a brass rail. Towards the end of the century the aged and ailing women only were allowed to sit. This arrangement was continued in spite of criticism and had been justified by F.

D. Mocatta as, intended to facilitate business rather than motivated by fear of infection in view of repeated epidemics (JC, 14.4.1893). During the 1890s the Board was requested to improve recording visitation, to introduce case conferences at which investigators were to be present. Such professionalisation was regarded, however, as expensive in the light of the growing numbers of immigrants who remained in England for more than six months and were entitled to apply to the Board. During the twentieth century control was exercised also by social workers. From its establishment the paid officer status was socially and functionally inferior to that of the unpaid management and they were entitled Esquire versus Mister. An additional impetus that had caused the Board to intensify some of its activities and to improve the more visible and sanitary conditions in the East End were the unfavorable critiques that had appeared intermittently in the non-Jewish press and sometimes were expressed in different official, high standing forums, including the Parliament.

In 1859, while the establishment of the Board was seriously contemplated, Sir Sebag-Montefiore and Sampson Samuel envisaged its prospective provisions for all poor - irrespective of their Synagogal rights or length of residence in England - as a visible consequence of the Board's founding. The synagogues, however, feared that such a step could greatly harm the feelings of their attached poor, some of them 'decayed' merchants and other previously middle class members. This persistence of the three City Synagogues which established the Board and supported it financially, continued for about eleven years and is **ipso facto** an evidence of the harsh manner by which the Board dealt with the 'foreign' and other poor. The Board, however, assumed a professional air. Paid clerks, relieving and investigating officers were introduced from its commencement. It was confident of its ability to ensure differential approaches to various categories of poor. The

leaders of the Board feared that the resistance of the three City Synagogues to the transfer of their attached poor to the relief of the Board could degrade the Board and reduce its support. 'The restriction of relief to any one section of the poor would materially check the flow of benevolence which the knowledge of the charitable feelings of the community led the Board to believe might otherwise speedily evils of the old system' and the synagogues' initial reluctance to transfer to the Board the supervision of their medical officers (19). In 1861 the Board regarded the increasing tendency of the synagogues to use its services as an evidence of

The groundlessness of the assumption entertained at the establishment of the Board that the poor of the synagogues would regard the Board with disfavour and feel that the delicacy and hesitation in presenting themselves for relief at its doors (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 9).

In 1871, the investigation of the Synagogues' poor requesting Matzot (Passover cakes) was entrusted to the Board (Thirteenth BGAR, 1870: 28), preceding the transfer of the responsibilities for all their needs to the Board during the same year.

According to Alex's Scheme, the visitations of the poor were to be undertaken by the Ministers of the Metropolitan Synagogues in co-operation with the Board. In order to implement this arrangement, London was to be divided into set in' (First BGHYR, 13). The Board criticised 'the districts 'each Minister to have a locality to himself' (1859: 6). It is possible that Alex had been inspired by the districted visitation at Elberfeld and other towns in Germany which had had some influence in England, combined with models of pastoral involvement of the British in charitable institutions. There is no indication as to the causes of the relinquishment of Alex's proposal in this

area. The abandonment of this idea can be explained by the reluctance of British administrators and legislators to adopt the systematic community organisation (de Schweinitz, 1961 edn: 98). An additional factor that could have contributed to the absence of rabbis from the membership of the Board during the whole nineteenth century, was the secularistic tendency of Lionel Cohen and the Jewish tradition of lay rather than religious government.

According to the 1861 Annual Report, visiting the poor at their own homes entailed heavy sacrifices (however no difficulty was found in filling up this committee) (17). In the same year each visitor was given responsibility for a certain number of 'cases' (18). The frequent reorganisation of the work of this committee throughout the history of the Board can be explained, **inter alia**, by the cleavage which already existed in the structure of the community.

The modest report of the Visiting Committee describes the results of the reorganisation of that committee which took place early in the year. Its advantages are clearly stated in the report as being shared between rich and poor, in the intercourse which it induces between them. The ever-increasing distance to which the community expands, east and west, renders it essential that the sympathy which keeps it together should be aroused by frequent personal intercourse between all classes. (Twelve BGAR, 1870: 15).

The influence of the philanthropic thoughts of Octavia Hill and Edward Denison towards the end of the 1860's, can be traced here. In her history of the London COS, Mrs Bosanquet quoted from the views of Sir Charles E. Trevelyan,

Since the beginning of this century the gulf between rich and poor has become fearfully wide. The rich have become richer and the poor poorer. The proposal is to close

this gulf and to bring back the rich into such close relation with the poor as cannot fail to have a civilizing and healing influence, and to knit all classes together in the bonds of mutual help and good will.

(de Schweinitz, 1961 edn.: 187, 258).

However, the influence of the C.O.S. and some other allied movements on the Jewish élite and the Board had its limits. The life example of Edward Denison, the son of a Bishop of the Church of England who went to live in Stepney in the East End, to teach at night in informal working class adult education, had no echo at this time in the élite's milieu. Nor was there a Jewish counterpart to Octavia Hill who, during this period, became convinced of the importance of improved housing for the poor. With the help of John Ruskin she had begun a project of slum dwelling improvement (43-46). While Octavia Hill came under the influence of Christian socialism (as the movement was denoted by Frederick Denison Maurice) the Jewish élite that led the Board was moving in the opposite direction. It was in a process of transition from the association with the Liberal Party to the Conservative/Unionist. It is worth noting that the Jewish wealthy classes and intelligentsia and, of course, the working class in western countries, have been traditionally identified with the Liberals. The unprecedented social conservatism of the Jewish élite was related to its increasingly immense wealth during this period. While the Christian Socialists still regarded the poor as largely responsible for their social situation, the housing project of Octavia Hill and the movement for personal service amongst the poor, represented a turning point towards collectivism. Almost thirty years elapsed until the full impact of those movements reached the Jewish élite and influenced a more direct and concrete social involvement for the amelioration of the condition of the Jewish poor in the East End (See later sections on Housing

and Acculturation).

A system of controls and checks was inbuilt into the structure of the Board from its foundation and was enlarged gradually as the Board expanded its direct activities. The Board also activated its control mechanism through its satellite specialised institutions. The Board regarded its controlling intervention especially necessary when co-operation with the mandatory authorities was needed.

In 1870 the few persons of the Jewish faith in Governmental gaols have been collected into a single prison ... thus the policy of wise administration encourages even prisoners to practise self restraints prompted by a sense of religious obligation; surely mere indigence otherwise blameless should be safe from violation of conscience.

(Twelve BGAR, 1870: 30).

The differentiation between culpable and blameless poverty reflects the feelings of the leaders of the Board that a part of the poor were responsible for their neediness. In regard to Jewish lunatics, the Board had hoped that no legislative impediment could prevent the grouping of such persons in one asylum. The responsibility for achieving such arrangements was assumed by the Jewish Ministry of the United Synagogue who organised the supervision and visitation of the Jewish inmates in asylums, prisons and reformatories. The reports of the United Synagogue in this matter were, however, to be sent regularly to the Board. (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 27-29). Deserving attention and indicative, is the fact that the workhouses were not mentioned among the institutions visited by the rabbis. The administrative machinery of the Board was considered by some contemporary social observers as an exemplary and pioneering institution, highly organised and able to experiment more easily and rapidly. One of them was J. H. Stallard in his book, London Pauperism amongst Jews and

Christians, 1867.

Compared with the Poor Law Guardians, the Board was considered by some modern and more recent historians as largely generous (Young and Ashton, 1956: 83). There were, however, no comparative historical studies done to prove that, in terms of quality and degree the Board had performed at a level higher than that of other contemporary British philanthropists who embraced Victorian philanthropic approaches. Despite the eagerness of the Board to excel in contemporary modern patterns and to be more British than the British, many of the superlatives characterising its activities are rather impressionistic. The preferential assistance that the Board had offered to the deserving, including former middle class members, was not peculiar to the Board.

The London Board continued to exercise a strong influence on the organisation of Jewish philanthropists in the provinces and in London. Amongst others, the Jewish Manchester Board of Guardians was modelled upon that of London 'almost in every respect' (JC 37, 1868, quoted in Williams 1876: 284).

The immigrants generally did not perceive the élite to be motivated by the religious obligations of tzedakah or 'true charity'. The ways in which the Board administered their assistance heightened antagonism. They felt they were looked down on by strict faces lacking a 'Jewish heart'. The Guardians, as the Board was familiarly called in the East End, was not a likeable body and was regarded by the poor with apprehension and fear (Green, 1991: 198-9). To many who sought its help, the judgement of the Board in regard to their fitness for relief seemed harsh.

The Board was conscious of the fact that some of its arrangements and services were considered by the poor as humiliating, however, it had continued them deliberately.

In 1866 the Board reported that

borrowers, who are generally a respectable and industrious class, would also be relieved from the humiliation of attending the relief committees indiscriminately with the crowd of general applicants. (Nineth BGAR, 1866: 20).

Only in 1868 were sixteen persons exempted from attending the Relief Committee every month. (Tenth BGAR, 1868: 14). The report of 1868 added 'that the self respect of the lessees [of sewing machines,] is thus maintained by keeping them aloof from the general recipients of relief and the large class of poor probably now amounting to a thousand persons' (19). The registers, including the names of the applicants to the Board and the users of its services, were 'unreservedly placed at the disposal of the community for inspection and reference as a means of ascertaining the merits of persons applying to them for relief' (Ninth BGAR, 1866-7: 26).

The systematic monitoring of applicants in an open register had been one of the non-confidential and humiliating procedures of the Board (the open register was set in operation in 1859, First BGHYR, 1859: 15). In 1871, the Annual Report announced that 'any persons ... availed themselves daily of the registers of the Board and of the intimate knowledge of the poor by its officers to test the merits of the applications which they received' (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 17). It is possible that the register included the sums of relief received. The monitoring of the applicants probably frightened many poor away, creating additional abhorrence of receiving charity and the humiliating approach to those who were assisted. How many poor in distress avoided becoming beneficiaries of the Board and the other Jewish philanthropies, because they knew that this would place them at the bottom of the social pyramid?

How many others applied for charity only in extreme need and made their utmost endeavours to get along without the interference of the Board? The suspicions and charges of the Board in regard to imposture and the difficulties of the beneficiaries to defend themselves against such claims, created an additional lack of self respect. The severe loss of status of the recipient can be implied from the short duration of dependence of those who became recipients, as mentioned in several annual reports of the Board. Humiliation continued for decades unabated. The official opprobrium towards the poor in its official publications, is evidence that the poor were made to feel the indignity of their position by the practice of the Board. The Jewish poor felt that, at least some of their needs had legitimate institutional roots and that the context of the rules of the Board were unJewish and insufficiently responsive and that as such 'do not belong to them'. The services offered by the assimilated native members of the Board in their modern highly stereotyped forms and content - dissimilar to their religious customs and social conventions - were unfamiliar to the poor and regarded by them with deep distaste. Moreover, they lacked many of the Jewish symbols to which they were used. Whatever the motives by which the élite were actuated, for instance, limiting immigration, the relief was given in a patronising superior way, depressing the dignity of the recipients. Green (1991) wrote:

Many Jews, even at the time, thought the Board's leaders were more conscious of their role in protecting the image of Anglo-Jewry than in satisfying the needs of the poor. The Board's attitude to the problem of mass immigration during the 1880's was hardly enlightened ... Its proposals to deal with the plight of the immigrants seemed to smack of the old Poor Laws than the Bible. (Green 1991: 202).

The Jewish poor remained free men; poverty did not generally break their spirit to an extent that they could accept apathetically the approach of the Board. Binenstock (1951) concluded, on the basis of his study, that different values, beliefs and practices predominant in the **shtetel**, appeared to be conducive to non-authoritarian or anti-authoritarian patterns of behaviour in adult life. In his research, he dealt with different factors, such as education, that sustained moral autonomy of the individual, his critical reaction and independence of authority (1951: 150).

An evidence of the power of the poor, besides their ability to uproot themselves and emigrate, was their motivation to 'play the system', for instance, applying to several charities during the same time to eke out some bare provisions, selling or pawning relief in kind, such as clothes, to get money for food, etc. The doctrine that emphasised the deficiencies of the poor as the cause of their situation was 'as much a political ideology as an explanation of behaviour' (Bailey 1975: XXVIII). The class distinctions coincided with the culturally alleged juxtapositions in which the poor were presented by the élite: decent, worthy and useful versus immoral, useless and degenerate.

Considering poverty as a moral rather than social condition, the élite was horrified by the apparent lack of industry, thrift, cleanliness and all other middle class Victorian virtues. The élite presented an increasing desire to teach the poor, habits of industry and self reliance. Such measures have been often declared by the Board as designed to increase the power and autonomy of the poor, however, the work of the large majority of the Jewish poor in the sweating system was ipso facto, an evidence that the immigrants were more than willing to do any kind of work in order to provide a bare living under terrible exploitation. (In order to compete for contracts, workshop' masters

lowered the piecework rates and wages of their workers to a cruel extent). It is worth mentioning that sometimes the *élite* presented the Jewish poor to the host community as a sober, hardworking, family man - a Smilenian type par excellence. Possibly the motivation to defend the Jewish poor stemmed partly from self-interest rather than altruism, for the Jewish *élite* realised that some of the opponents to the Jewish poor were also against their wealthy patrons.

In this chapter, as well as in the subsequent chapters, the philosophy, policy and activities of the Board as the main controlling mechanism of the *élite* over the poor were analysed. One of the main conclusions of this chapter is that even before the great immigration which started in 1882, and which figures in the next chapter, the Board extended its 'scientific philanthropy' to a rather limited number of those considered to be deserving poor.

CHAPTER 9

CONTROLLING THE IMMIGRATION OF THE POOR

This chapter gives evidence that the policy of the Board in regard to immigration was dictated by its custodians, the Cohen family, known for their opposition to mass immigration and sometimes for restrictive legislation. This was also the policy which characterised the Anglo-Jewish élite as a whole so that the Board represented class rather than personal or group interests.

The rule by which relief was refused to those who had been in the country less than six months was proposed by Ephraim Alex, the first president of the Board (1859-1869) in his A Scheme for a Board of Guardians, to be formed for the relief of the necessitous foreign poor and published as a separate pamphlet. It became an integral part of the Board's original Laws and Regulations (Law 11: 5), published by the committee composed from the various representatives of the City's three synagogues. By this rule the Board excluded from vital relief the new immigrants who were obviously in the greatest distress, in order to press them to agree to transmigration or to be repatriated. However, according to the Resolutions of the Board, no. 3, added to the Laws and Regulations, the Relief Committee (rota) had been 'invested with discretionary power in cases of emergency, to relieve any applicants, even if they have been domiciled in this country for a less period than six months.' (Laws and Regulations, 8 [n.d., ca. 1859]) According to the First Half-Yearly Report of 1859, the application of this rule was a continuation of the policy that existed before the establishment of the Board.

The allowance made by the Synagogues was far too small, and one of the reasons given for this parsimony was that an influx of foreigners was to be feared if too much relief were given. The experience of this Board has shown that this evil may be met by other means. For it gives the Board the greatest satisfaction to state that

the number of new cases it receives every month, of parties who have resided here less than a year, is very small, and the regulation stringently enforced that no person be relieved, unless resident here more than six months, will tend greatly to check the arrival of fresh paupers (18-19).

This is evidence that the situation of the newly arrived immigrants was worsened by the centralised control brought about by the advent of the Board and the haphazard assistance given by the Synagogues was in some aspect more humane and closer to the Jewish tradition of charity.

The prerogative of the Relief Committee to disregard the Six Month Rule in special cases or situations, brought about a direct correlation between the increase in immigration and the severity of the enforcement of the rule. This implies that in its general restrictive practice, the Board showed sometimes a certain flexibility towards the newly arrived immigrants (Eighth BGAR 1865: 8). Lipman also mentioned that in October-November 1865 the rule was applied 'more stringently' when the Board was faced with increasing flows of immigrants (1959: 32-33). In another instance, Lipman wrote that a more flexible application of the Six Month Rule could expose the Board to the nativist critique, e.g. being accused for attracting immigration (101). However, significant restrictionist movement did not develop until the 1880s' mass immigration.

Evidence of the leaders of the Board adhering to their tenets in applying the rule of Six Months appeared in the Jewish Chronicle of 7 December 1866 and 19 June 1868. The persistence of this rule was backed indirectly by the philosophy of Herbert Spencer according to which, it would be preferred socially to abandon the poor to nature's intended fate. The rule represented a bizarre exclusion for an institution manifestly created for the betterment of

the 'foreign poor', however, the immediate introduction of this rule and its application is an evidence of the deliberate intention of the founders to use the Board as an instrument of controlling immigration. The persistent use of this rule by the Board reflected its commitment to deterrence. In applying it intensively, the Board felt sustained and legitimised the contemporary Poor Law approach and later in the period discussed, the Majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law.

This rule must have caused deep bewilderment and anger to newly arrived immigrants considering their traditional background. In several places the **Talmud** suggests that it is the Covenant between God and Israel that makes for 'All Israel responsible for one another' (Talmud B. Sota, 376). The Hebrew term for 'responsible' used in the passage **arevim** (guarantors), has a strong contractual connotation, therefore the injunction is a synthesis between kinship and consent. According to another basic injunction, it is severely prohibited to postpone a request of a poor person for food and its provision is to precede investigation (Maimonides Mishneh Torah Laws concerning Gifts for the Poor, Chapter VII, 6, [see Appendix I]). In fact, the application for relief prior to the six month deadline was regarded by the Board as an unfitness to survive the life struggle. In the Social Darwinian frame of reference, the Six Month Rule was a sort of test that the Board instituted to determine those who could not be regarded as fit for the struggle of survival and repatriation. As most of the immigrants were penniless the application of this rule caused tremendous suffering. The immigrants were, in fact, thrown on the more limited private resources of the middle classes and/or other poor, whether relatives, kin, **landsleit** (a fellow from the same town in eastern Europe) or other working class members who supported the minor Jewish charities in the East End. By refusing help to the immigrants, the Board reduced constantly the already

limited means of the Jewish working class and poor. (Subsequent waves of immigrants pouring into the East End made the burden of assistance a continuous one.) However, as a result of this rule, alternative institutions were established by the Jewish middle and working class in order to help the immigrants upon their arrival. The Board continuously attempted to eradicate such institutions or at least to limit their activity or otherwise bring them under its control. This rule had been widely and continuously advertised in the European Jewish press at the Board's expense.

It is interesting that the French-Jewish establishment discussed the possibility of adopting the Anglo-Jewish six month waiting period before immigrants could request relief but, in practice, this rule was not applied. It is possible that the leeway given by the French élite to immigrants can account for the more independent institutions of the latter. The application of this rule legitimised the neglect of the needs of the newly arrived poor as individuals and families and as a specific group within the community in such vital areas as health, education and housing.

Obviously there are no statistics in regard to the social situation of the newly arrived immigrants during the first six months of their stay while they were not eligible for the help of the Board (except for transmigration). However, the situation of the Jewish poor and working class is reflected in the existing evidence in regard to the mortality of their children.

In 1896, a committee was designated to investigate mortality of Jewish children (following a general study on this subject published in *The Hospital*). It was discovered that amongst the Jewish poor, the death rate for children under ten approached eighty two per cent as compared to

twenty per cent amongst the children of the wealthy Jews. The total number of deaths of the children under ten was more than double in comparison to the national level for this category. By 1893 the death rate increased by almost 6 per cent reaching more than sixty per cent (60.25%) (Black 1988: 230). The Investigation Committee appointed by the Jewish establishment claimed that three fifths of the Jewish population were immigrants less than ten years in England, blaming improvident young Jewish parents for the death of their children (Black 1988: 230). The lack of basic provisions faced by the poor was not presented by the Investigation Committee as problematic. This is evidence that even the needs of the more established immigrants who were in London for up to ten years were addressed on a small scale only, especially if they were not included in the category of the deserving poor. The austereness reflected in the conclusions of this investigation can be explained by the doctrinal frame of reference of the élite combined with class superiority which, to a significant extent, eliminated sentiments of compassion from the 'rational' organisation of philanthropy. The authority of the Board had been more effective and articulated in regard to the users of its services, which ensured their co-operation. During the six months waiting period, before which the Board refused to consider applications, many new immigrants succeeded - albeit with tremendous difficulties that could have been avoided - to remain in London. In their process of adjustment those immigrants were helped by relatives, kinsmen, **landsleit** and alternative, smaller and more flexible institutions, such as the hevras. The more informed new immigrants were about the limitations of the authority of the Board - the weaker was the control that the Board was able to exercise over them. The inconsistency in the policy of the élite stemmed from the discrepancy between its various goals: excluding the immigrants from relief for a period of six months facilitated the process of re-emigration and repatriation

as well as the deterrence of other potential immigrants. In this sense, the Six Month Rule functioned as a control by inaction. On the other hand, this policy increased and developed the alternative services that were established to help the immigrants. Those services were offered more quickly through a more unconditioned eligibility for relief. It was a taxing dilemma for the Board because despite its policy after the 1880s immigration continued on a large scale.

In the 1880s, it became apparent to the élite that it would be faced by a prolonged and irreversible mass immigration from Eastern Europe. Most of the immigrants thought in terms of reaching America. Some remained, however, in England as a temporary stopping point when their cash ran out. For different reasons, some of which did not depend on the immigrants themselves, the temporary settlement in England became permanent. The proportions of immigrants who moved on, versus those who stayed, is unknown as the intervals between arrival in Britain and departure had varied between days and years. The Board was the most significant institution dealing with immigration, despite its opposition to it. Unable to prevent the mass immigration, the sponsors and the leaders of the Board were preoccupied with several alternative courses of action. Some recommended legal restriction of immigration by the State, provided that the distinction between the refugees and immigrants per se could be operated. However, taking into consideration the complicated, diversified and dynamic conditions in such a vast country as Russia and other parts of eastern Europe, it was difficult to differentiate between those whose survival depended upon escape and mere immigrants who made their way to the frontiers because of other causes. Those members of the Board and élite in general, who favoured such a distinction and, from time to time accused the immigrants of coming to Britain in order to become rich, were very much interested in applying to

the immigrants who were not victims of direct persecution, the principle of 'less eligibility' in order to exclude them from relief, whatever were their means.

Other members who implemented **de facto** the restrictionist policies of the Board, were opposed to the willing transfer to the State of the legal prerogatives in limiting immigration; rather, they favoured a continuation of the intensive voluntary restrictions on immigration long exercised by the Board. This part of the élite emphasised the ability of the Board to deal with all the economic and social aspects of immigration including the expulsion of their paupers. Doing this, they relied on their accumulated experience in dealing with transmigration, dispersion and repatriation.

In 1902, Sir Leonard Cohen, President of the Board, (1900-1920), stated that 'it is not for legislation to determine if immigration was needed or not'. (JC, 28.3.1902). The Cohens, the official almoners of the élite responsible for the policy and function of the Board, were long known for their restrictionist conservatism. At times they recommended the enforcement of legal limitations on immigration. In regard to repatriation, the severest issue, the Cohens were supported morally and financially by the wealthy class as a whole.

A somewhat different approach was presented by Alfred Cohen, brother of Leonard, who was not in favour of restrictive legislation. Alfred claimed that it would be dangerous from an economic perspective to limit the flow of cheap labour and, therefore, the immigrants should be allowed to come freely into Britain. Appearing before the Council of the Jewish Colonisation Association, of which Board he was a member, Alfred declared that he regarded the alien Jews as 'dirty, squalid and unpleasant' and the Yiddish jargon as a cancer causing anti-Semitism

(JC 15.10.1901). It is argued that some of the members of the élite and more members of the Jewish middle class, were directly interested in cheap immigrant labour, especially enterprising manufacturers and merchants in consumer trades such as ready made clothing, shoes and boots, furniture, cigars, etc. An example of such important manufacturers was the firm of Moses, Son and Davis, substantial wholesale clothiers. (Finestein, 1992: 104) This subject lies beyond the scope of this dissertation.

After the 1900s, as a consequence of the increased trend towards restrictionism, different attempts were made by the Board to find practical modalities for a selective immigration. By 1893, a screening system denoted 'trriage', was proposed by Nathan S. Joseph who, at this time, had already accumulated more than twenty five years of experience, being responsible for the policy of the Board in different areas. In 1893, Joseph became chairman of the Executive of Russo-Jewish Committee and Conjoint Committee of Russo-Jewish Committee and Board of Guardians, 1893-1909. Joseph advocated restrictions against the 'helpless' immigrants as differentiated from able-bodied,

This class constitutes a grave danger to the community. Its members were always paupers and useless parasites in their own country. Many of them were never persecuted but came with the paupers and parasites and live or starve on the the pittance that the Russo-Jewish Committee and the Board of Guardians successively bestow on them, to the detriment of the more deserving because more improvable cases. The lifeboat is well-nigh full. If we can admit any more passengers, they must be such as can lend a hand to the oars. To admit an unlimited number of helpless souls, who are mere dead weight, would not be mercy, but homicide.

(JC 17.6.1892)

Joseph proposed a tripartite classification of immigrants based on 'industrial fitness':

1. Skilled artisans, victims of persecution to be assisted by loans etc. to become economically independent. Those were supposed to fit from the moral and physical points of view 'vigorous, robust, healthy'.
2. 'Fit' to transmigrate.
3. The poor, the weak, the adventurer and mendicant.
(JC 12.3.1893)

An editorial of the Jewish Chronicle compared such 'nice exemplars' with the 'feeble and stunted tailors of Whitechapel' (JC 15.11.1889). Social Darwinism was combined with the terminology taken from the élite occupational background. In his testimonial before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, Nathan Joseph declared 'We should never dream of sending a bad specimen on to America because we should say "before we spend thirty to forty pounds on this case, will it prove a good investment?" Most Jews ... look upon charity as a piece of business (RCAI Min No 15948). In his testimony, he also proposed to the anti-alien leader 'an Alien Expulsion Act', according to which the Home Secretary could expel: anarchists, criminal aliens, idiots, insane, diseased, prostitutes and procurers; also immigrants less than three years who became a public burden for three to four months, other than recipients of outdoor medical relief. An additional category included long resident aliens who had more than once been fined, prosecuted, and adjudicated as bankrupt. Their families were to be expelled as well.

Joseph further suggested to permit aliens to come on probation. He regarded expulsion as more efficient than restriction by which, it was difficult to determine 'what class the alien belonged to'. Joseph asserted before The

Commission that 'we are doing it every day in large numbers and they go willingly'. (RCAI, 1742, Min No 15811-15900) It is possible that due to the impact of Joseph's testimony, the Aliens' Bill was introduced in February 1904 which barred from landing, immigrants without an evidenced source of support, for a crime in their countries of origin, those of notorious bad character (such powers were granted to the Home Secretary).

The suggestion of Joseph in regard to probation and expulsion, rather than **a priori** restriction, were implicitly based on the Benthamite test of unprecedented severity. It was, in fact, a continuation of such a test that the Board created and applied from its establishment in the framework of the six months' waiting period. During the suggested probation period, the immigrants were to prove their abilities to survive the most harshest conditions without any help from the institutions sponsored by the élite.

The suggestion of Joseph reflected an approach of non-interference in association with laissez faire capitalism influenced by Smith and Mills' philosophy. (Clark 1985: 71). Joseph published his anti-humanitarian ideas in the Jewish Chronicle 'The days had passed when people allowed their hearts to run away with their heads and were led mainly by sentiment in the administration of their charity' (JC 8.5.1901). Emphasising the contradictions between altruistic feelings and what he regarded as a rational approach to the poor, Joseph suggested an abrogation of the charitable element of charity.

The effort of the Board to restrict the 'nursing' by the Visiting Committee of the Russo-Jewish Committee is reflected in the instructions of the Board from 28 December 1892.

We entirely concur in this restriction, no 'first' visiting should be entrusted to visitors; no house-to-house should be permitted; and protracted 'nursing' of cases should be discouraged in every way (BGMB 3: 79).

Sir Julian Goldsmid, the Chairman of the Russo-Jewish Committee, attempted to persuade the Board to adopt a more lenient policy by writing to Benjamin Cohen, the President of the Board:

It is inevitable in consequence that in the good sense of the word there must be more 'nursing' of such cases than of the ordinary cases of paupers with which the Board of Guardians Visiting Committee has to deal. (Letter of 17 January 1893, BGLB).

However, the Board succeeded in imposing its hard line. According to the 'Suggestions of Mr Lionel L. Alexander as to the necessary conditions as to which the work of the Russian Conjoint Committee can usefully be continued' he stipulated:

that Visitors be required to abstain from all unnecessary and undesirable 'nursing' of cases, and to cease their ministrations to cases when requested by the Committee to do so (BGMB 23 April 1893: Book 3: 97d,e).

Allowing for the subordination of Joseph and Alexander to the Rothschilds and Cohens, they were involved in the highest policy making and implementation of the most crucial issue of the Board. Alexander suggested:

That all Russian cases which left home in consequence of conditions in Russia making it difficult for them to maintain themselves and their families there, be considered as indirect victims of persecution.

That helpless and hopeless cases which need not have left Russia, be, whenever possible, sent back to their homes so soon as they can be persuaded to return; and that other relief be refused them with a view of inducing departure (BGMB 23 April 1893, Book 3: 97d).

The Board was, and remained throughout the period, the main instrument of the élite concerned with immigration control. In regard to the Russian refugees, the Board co-operated with the Mansion House Committee and its successor, the Russo Jewish Committee, founded in 1882 and directed until 1894 by Sir Julian Godsmid, a Liberal M.P. and member of the Visiting Committee of the Board. The functions of this organisation paralleled those of the Board. Black also wrote that the Russo Jewish Committee conducted its activities

on a somewhat more enlightened and generous line. Board executives felt not merrily their philosophy but their honour impugned, a contretemps that threatened to divide Anglo-Jewry into warring camps. Sir Julian's political tact not only patched over differences...(Black 1988:13)

However, it is argued here that the differences between Sir Julian Goldsmid and the leaders of the Board were not significant and the discrepancies in their views were settled by compromises based on the common interests of the élite as a whole.

As the systems proposed for classification of the immigrants were largely futile in practice, the Board applied a vague and blurred criteria for screening. Generally, only the youngest and promising were offered help for transmigration. One of the factors that weighed heavily for repatriation, rather than transmigration, was the cheapest cost of the former and, therefore, more

immigrants were repatriated than helped to reach America or South Africa. Repatriation was obviously less expensive than the assistance needed by the immigrants for an incipient absorption in Britain.

In spite of having no statutory power, the Board used the exasperation of the immigrants in order to force them to repatriate by the very refusal of relief. Lipman apologetically argued that it had been the traditional practice of the synagogues' overseers of the poor 'to give applicants enough to get them on to the next town and the next overseer'. (Lipman, 1959: 54) Such practice, however, can be denoted in modern terms, transmigration rather than repatriation. Lipman preferred the term emigration to the Continent, rather than repatriation. According to Lipman the Board continued naturally the policy of repatriation that existed in England before the its establishment. (Lipman 1959: 54). Lipman estimated that the approximate number of repatriated between 1880 and 1914 was fifty thousand individuals (17,500 cases). Most of the emigrants had been in Britain for less than seven years (94-6). He further wrote:

The repatriation to Eastern Europe, leaves one with the tragic thought that some at least of those thus returned must have become victims of persecution once they were back, it would have been far better had it been possible for them to emigrate to the U.S. or to the Colonies (96).

It is evident that repatriation of such a large number of people to the territories from which they had escaped could not have been done without the tremendous pressures created by the Board. The Board placed great importance on the previous and contemporary deterring impact of repatriation and to the other controls and checks that were severely applied, in order to prevent the newly arrived immigrants

from finding shelter beyond that offered for a short period by the Jews' Temporary Shelter and other elementary assistance.

Repatriation caused many tragedies and tremendous distress. In many instances it actually endangered the lives of the repatriatees. After being uprooted from their **shtetls**, selling all their belongings, endangering themselves on the way to Britain, after they failed to make a start in England without the much needed assistance of the Board - the repatriation was a terrible failure and blow.

Most probably they were shaking like a leaf standing behind a copper rail before the 'rota' (the Relief Committee) - just as if they were standing before the much feared Tzarist officials. As bad as the situation of the settled immigrant in England had been, it was considered by most poor immigrants as generally better than the life they had left behind them in Russia or Romania, considering the low standards of living of the majority of the Jewish population in Russia.

Until the 1870's, immigration was regarded by the Jewish élite as wholly determined by economic conditions. The emphasis on the motivation of the immigrants to improve their economic situation continued in different degrees until beyond the turn of the century. Obviously, economic and religious tolerance in Britain and its 'strategic' geographical position on the way to America were some of the important pulling factors. Such additional economic motivations of immigrants were also related to the large poverty of the Jewish population in Russia which, sometimes, compared unfavorably with the worse conditions in the East End. At the same time, the élite attempted as much as was possible to deliberately disregard the severe discriminations in Eastern Europe as a pushing factor. This was sometimes accomplished by excluding such pushing factors from the general context of the general

situation of the Jews there. An announcement that Jews were to be expelled from Moscow and elsewhere outside the Pale of Settlement at Passover 1891, affected the lives of four hundred thousand Jews in Imperial Russia. Such events continually influenced the tempo of the immigration. A considerable time elapsed until the Jewish élite was compelled to acknowledge the plight of the Russian Jewry caused by severe political problems of religious hatred and discrimination. After the pogrom of Kishinev Bassarabia, it was more difficult for the élite to claim that the social problems of the Russian Jewry were caused mainly by a surplus of Jewish population. Holmes (1988) wrote:

The Jewish public all over the world was only too familiar with poverty which occurred through no fault of the poor, with discriminatory acts that instantly reduced many well-to-do Jews to paupers. Certainly, often persecutions coincided with the deterioration of economy conditions (Holmes 1988: 11).

However, Holmes considered the repressive policy of the Tzarist regime with particular severity upon the Jew, as a key influence to the mass emigration from Russia (27). In an effort to justify its restrictionist policy, the Jewish élite continuously advanced the Liberal hope that persecution in Eastern Europe would cease and the economic situation would improve. Representing the social situation of the immigrants to the host community, the Jewish élite showed their conflicting attitudes of shame and contempt for the immigrant. Hannah Arendt (1968) wrote in her book, Anti-semitism,

They were rapidly assimilating themselves to those elements of society in which all political passions are smothered beneath the dead weight of social snobbery, big business, and hitherto unknown opportunities for profit. They hoped to get rid of the antipathy which

this tendency had called forth by diverting it against their poor and as yet unassimilated immigrant brethren (1968 edn).

Interventions on behalf of discriminated Jews in other countries through British diplomatic channels, were undertaken by members of the Jewish élite and especially through Sir Moses Montifore. The Jewish élite was expected to do so as one of the wealthiest and more influential Jewish élites in one of the most powerful empires of the world at that time. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, such intervention was also used to prevent forces pushing towards immigration by reducing persecutions in the country from which the immigrants came.

During the nineteenth century, organised worldwide Jewry was an alliance of Jewish aristocracy belonging to different Western countries who had taken it upon themselves to protect Jewish interests. Such attempts were partially successful. Such international Jewish co-operation also dealt with limiting Jewish immigration in general towards western countries and transferring the responsibilities of supporting them to different countries. Obviously the Anglo-Jewish élite was instrumental in diverting the stream of immigrants away from England (especially from Romania). An additional effort was made by the Jewish élite to reduce immigration by excluding the poor immigrants from the immigration movement, this is, to confine the immigration to the middle class considered much more helpable and, in the long term, less burdening on the budget of the Board. The Jewish élite promulgated the theory that it could do nothing for the **Luftmenschen** (lit. living on air). It asked the European Jewish organisations to co-operate in this matter, preventing many poor from realising their immigration. However, under the heavy pressure of the emigrants from eastern Europe, those organisations were either unable or unwilling to live up to

the understanding that they had with the Anglo-Jewish élite. After the 1880's refugees poured out of Russia and other countries in large numbers, in spite of the efforts made to stop them.

In the early 1880s there were mutual recriminations between the English and American leaders in regard to the classification and absorption of immigrants, reflecting the expectations of the American-Jewish leaders for 'better material' (Paintz, 1964: 112, 120). The American Jewish establishment suggested that the English élite was not making as much effort as it could do (Black 1988: 264). At the end of the nineteenth century, more than 20 per cent of all British millionaires were members of the Cousinhood (Rubinstein 1982: 13).

From the 1890s it expected the élite in Britain, as well as in other western European countries, to support the families of the poor immigrants in their countries, in order to allow their breadwinners who reached America to establish themselves (Black 1988: 264). However, the Board regarded such families as deserted and made many intensive efforts to prevent the enlargement of this arrangement. Rather, it attempted to punish and deter such wives and children by making use of the workhouses. The policy of the Board in regard to deserted wives and their children was formulated in a letter presented by Lionel Cohen, the President of the Board, to the other members of the Executive Committee on 4 May 1880:

In accordance with the regulation laid down by the Board, no case in which the children were old enough to require educational supervision was to be sent to the workhouse. Eleven cases came under this category ... in all the four admissable cases the proffered workhouse relief was refused. In vain I explained to the women the arrangements which had been made, and the care which

would be taken of their infant children. Each refused to go to the workhouse, although I was, of course, compelled, in consequence, to abstain from relieving them. To this end I venture to submit-

1st. That the workhouse test must be inflexibly adhered to in all cases in which the children are under 7 to 9 years of age, and that any deviation from the enforcement of this test must be reported to the Board.

2nd. That public notice should be given that after a certain date no relief (unless under exceptional circumstances) will be given to women whose husbands desert them...(BGMB 4 May 1880, Book 2: 269-70).

In America, repatriation to Europe of immigrants requiring welfare assistance was practised mainly by New York City philanthropists, where most of the immigrants disembarked. There too, there was a deep antipathy of the established middle classes, whose parents or grandparents came from Germany, against the **ostjuden** (eastern Jews). They developed a vocal nativism, regarding the Easterners as unproductive, lazy and filthy. Such feelings towards the immigrants facilitated in some aspects, the communications between the different western élites. However, the specific interests of the élite in each particular country to prevent immigration or, at least, to get **bessere mentchen** (better people) created continuous difficulties. In spite of those frictions, the communications between the Jewish leaders was maintained with the hope that international co-operation would prevent, redirect and control immigration. The classifications developed by the élites for the selection of those whom they regarded as the most preferred immigrants, were based on rigid anti-alien and prejudiced feelings. Basically, the immigrants were seen as coming from countries considered unenlightened and backwards, an inferior species of lower morality and technological development; the immigrants' developed religious education and **Yiddishkeit** (Jewishness, including

Jewish culture) compared to native Anglo-Jewry, was disregarded as largely obsolete and irrelevant.

One of the most severe rules of the Board which reflected its determination to prevent and control mass immigration, discussed in this chapter, was the 'six months qualifying period' following the arrival of the immigrant during which the Board refused to offer any assistance, except for repatriation, a sort of 'survival of the fittest' Social Darwinistic test. The mass repatriation to Eastern Europe implemented by the Board between 1882 and 1914 (54000 individuals, one of every two immigrants) reflects the great efficiency which these harsh methods used. Beyond this period the Board enabled large numbers of poor to maintain themselves at a minimal level of subsistence during periods of unemployment and sickness. Some punitive aspects of the policy of the Board and its position with respect to the developing State's collectivism will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 10
DISCIPLINING AND DETERRING THE POOR:
JEWISH PHILANTHROPY AND THE POOR LAW

The chapter focuses on the policy of the Board in regard to the use of the workhouses for those who were defined as 'incorrigible cases' or as a deterrent to particular groups of Jewish poor, including immigrants. The resentment of at least a part of the middle classes and, of course, of the poor to this policy was reflected in the establishment of a Jewish Workhouse with a large public financial and moral support in spite of the fierce opposition of the Board. This chapter also explicates the policy of the Board in enlarging the rights of the Jewish poor, including immigrants, to the mandatory services offered by the Government and/or parochial authorities.

The Board regarded itself as the representative of the Jewish tax and ratepayers and, as such, having the discretionary power to turn the responsibility for the relief of the poor onto the Unions as a matter of principle. (The poor rate paid by the London Jewish population was estimated by the Board as approximately 1 per cent of that of the total Metropolitan population - three and a half million souls.) The law formulated at the establishment of the Board stated 'Applications may be made to the different parishes in which paupers reside to obtain outdoor relief for them' (Board's Law 19, Laws and Regulations 1859: 7). The adjustment requested from the Unions for the special arrangements needed for avoiding the infringements of dietary laws of the poor placed in the workhouses, reflected the sense of security that the Jewish élite felt in the 1860s. The idea of passing 'Confirmed paupers' to the Poor Law was envisaged by Alex in his Scheme and intended by other members as a deterrent measure to special groups of immigrants (A Scheme, 1859: 7).

The Board preferred to make use of the parochial workhouses where the poor resided - a much cheaper

arrangement than establishing and maintaining its own workhouse. To implement this policy, the Board attempted to convince the Poor Law authorities to permit Jewish inmates certain religious observances through special provisions. This policy was a continuation of the effort made in this respect by the Board of Deputies since the Poor Law Amendment Bill of 1834. In 1861, Sir Moses Montefiore, as President of the Jewish Board of Deputies, applied to the Poor Law Board in order to expedite the arrangements requested by the Board (Letter of City of London Union to the Editor of the Jewish Chronicle, 15 November 1861).

The Board of Guardians continued to co-operate with the Board of Deputies in this matter making joint representations to the Poor Law Commissioners.

Encountering difficulties in convincing the Poor Law authorities to make the dietary arrangements for Jewish inmates - the Board proposed to substitute the Workhouse Test with a Labour Test.

It is therefore respectfully urged that, as regards the able-bodied poor, an order in the form of instructions, laying down the principles on which guardians are to act, when Jewish able-bodied paupers apply for relief, relaxing in their case the provisions of the "out-door relief orders," and recommending the substitution, as far as practicable, of the labour test for the workhouse test, would seem a proper foundation for an improved practice (JC, 4.10.1861).

The outdoor relief could be given according to this proposal either in cash or in tickets upon tradesmen.

The test, itself, was to be carried out in the workhouse yard, possibly chopping wood or breaking stones. The purpose of the proposal was to show that 'no impediment need exist to the able-bodied Jewish pauper complying with

the regulations of the union, save and except residence in the house' (JC, 4.10.1861).

The Board regarded the lack of concerted action in the framework of the Poor Law as an obsolete and unnecessary policy especially after the publication in 1869 of the Minute and Circular of George Goschen, President of the Poor Law Board, defining the appropriate functions of the Poor Law and charity and requesting increased co-operation between the Poor Law's arrangements and public and private philanthropies. In 1859 the Board contemplated the establishment of its own workhouse:

The Board proposes, or rather hopes at some period however remote, to aid in the formation of an institution in which those poor who receive relief, and know trades, may be compelled to practise them, and even instruct others in their pursuit. The public would probably soon supply sufficient work for the inmates, who would thus be in a great measure maintained by the produce of their labour, instead of being an absolute burden. An accumulation of funds for many years will be wanting to carry out any such scheme as this, and it is merely mentioned as proving, with other contemplated measures, that it is not the intention of the Board to confine itself to its present limited sphere of operations (First BGHYR 1859: 20).

However, this plan was abandoned in favour of the use of the existing statutory provisions. In 1861 a Sub-Committee of the Board was appointed to study the implications of the Poor Law legislature, with the assistance of Alderman Salomons, M.P. and Sampson Samuel, Solicitor and Secretary of the Board of Deputies. During the same year the Sub-Committee had an interview with the highest authority of the Poor Law. The several Unions in the East End regarded the requests of the Board, mainly for special

dietary arrangements, as prone 'to fetter their discretion' and promised to relate favourably to each case submitted on an individual basis. The Union claimed that they

had never found any reluctance on the part of the Jewish poor to enter the workhouses. The reply [of the Board] was obvious that application was never made until the applicant had been brought to the verge of starvation (Fifth BGAR 1862: 24).

Indeed the struggle for the use of the Poor Law's services was largely carried at the expense of the tremendous suffering of the poor, especially those selected by the Board as test cases. A proposal for a Bill according to which the Jewish Boards of Guardians were to be vested with official powers by the Poor Law Boards appeared in the Jewish Chronicle of 21 March 1862. According to this proposal the Board had to have 'the right of parochial authorities, so far as concerned the Jewish poor, that might voluntarily seek relief from it'. The Jewish Boards were to send to the central authorities detailed accounts of the relief given to each of the applicants naming the parish to which the applicants belonged.

The Unions were to recover 'not the amount of relief given for it, but the amount that it would have cost the Union had its guardians themselves relieved the applicant' (JC 21.3.1862). The Board did not expect opposition to this proposal from the Liberals nor from the Conservatives.

The Liberals would see no reason for opposing the measure as it would not at all affect the existing poor law system, lay any new burden upon the ratepayers, or do violence to the conscience of anybody, since the Jewish poor would after, as before the passing of such a Bill, be still at liberty to repair direct to the union for relief. Nor would the Conservatives oppose such a

measure; for, although many of them ardently seek the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, yet it is admitted that, whilst they remain Jews, they ought neither directly nor indirectly be impeded in the exercise of their religion (JC 21.3.1862).

In 1870 the Board, even more apprehensive of the expenditure that could be involved in founding its own workhouses, strongly rejected the idea of establishing such an institution 'To found separate workhouses or separate hospitals at a time when the State seems about to make that exist available to Jews seems an unnecessary and unjustified step and one which the good sense of the community will surely disown and repudiate' (Twelfth BGAR, 1870: 21). This was a message of the Board to those members of the Jewish middle class and working class intelligentsia who were horrified by the idea of placing Jewish poor in workhouses and about a year or so later were involved in establishing an alternative Jewish workhouse outside of the Board's orbit. Voices against the Poor Law system had been intermittently echoed in the Jewish Chronicle since its foundation (see for instance the issue of 25 February 1842). This was recognised by the Board:

the Jewish public, to their credit be it said have an instinctive and deep-seated natural aversion to allow their poor to become inmates of a workhouse. Apart from the disregard to Jewish dietary laws, which a residence in the workhouse entails, the community have felt it an outrage on that feeling of charity which is interwoven with every precept of their religion, not to allow the poor Jew free support and assistance among his own brethren (Eighth BGAR, 1865: 19).

In 1870 the Board acknowledged again 'that considerable doubt is entertained in some quarters as to the policy of claiming parochial aid on behalf of the Jewish poor. But

surely this is a prejudice which a little investigation will dissipate. Jews are unfairly prejudiced by being excluded in participation in funds to which they are equally bound with others to contribute' (Twelfth BGAR 1870: 21). During this period the infringement of the principle of 'Jews take care of their own' was repulsive to a part of the Jewish middle class which opposed even more the idea of placing Jewish poor in parochial workhouses. Therefore, addressing itself to the Jewish public the Board omitted the arguments presented to the Poor Law Authorities (deterrent workhouse test and so on).

A Jewish workhouse was established by Solomon A. Green, a shopkeeper in Goulston Street, E.1., near Wentworth Street, in 1871. The founder became the president of the institution. According to the Jewish Chronicle his initiative was supported by 'a few worthy men of the working class'. The number of initial subscribers was one thousand, four hundred which a few weeks later rose to one thousand, nine hundred. The inmates were fourteen aged destitute Jews. In May 1871 James Stansfeld, the president of the Poor Law Board, agreed to the request of a deputation of the Jewish Workhouse to allow the transfer of local rates from the parishes where the Jewish inmates lived (JC, 5 May 1871).

A report on the first general meeting of the subscribers and donors of the Jewish Workhouse was held in Spittalfields in November 1871. At this meeting the plight of different Jewish persons who suffered and died in the workhouses without being removed therefrom by the Jewish philanthropies which knew about their existence, was raised as a reproach to the Jewish community (JC, 24.11.1871).

The founding of such an alternative institution was seen by the Board as a clear oppositional act to its policy and position within the community

It appeared that while the Board had been negotiating with the Unions and with the Government Board to run the workhouses available to Jews without violation of their religious scruples, and to obtain parochial subventions for inmates removed from the workhouse to denominational institutions, a new association had been started at once to remove and take charge of any Jew who happened to be in a workhouse. It became, therefore, useless for the Board to trouble the constituted authorities with arrangements for the benefit of Jews, of the charge of whom, while this association exists, the community may be supposed willing to relieve them; and, although convinced of the good policy and advantage of the course which it advocated, that of rendering the parochial system generally available to Jews, the Board was reluctantly compelled to pause just on the brink of success. (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 26).

In 1874 there were negotiations between the committee of the Jewish Workhouse chaired by S. A. Green and representatives of the Executive Committee of the Board, F. D. Mocatta, Lionel L. Cohen and the Secretary of the Board, S. Landeshut. At the meeting that took place on 15 June 1874 the representatives of the Board insisted that:

With respect to the provision inserted by the Committee of the Workhouse as to applications on behalf of persons in a Christian workhouse, it was unanimously decided that special reference to persons so circumstanced was undesirable, as affording an inducement to applicants to go to a Christian workhouse, and use their stay there as a leverage wherewith to open to themselves the doors of a Jewish Institution (BGMBOC, 1874: 63b).

It was proposed also, that:

It shall not in future be necessary for intended inmates

to pass through a Christian workhouse, but that all deserving cases should be admissible (BGMBEC, 1874: 62).

The suggestion of the Board reflected its tactics to override the purpose of the Jewish Workhouse to relieve Jewish poor from the Unions' workhouses and, in this way, to enable the Board to control the admission of inmates according to its own policies, this is, a preference of the 'deserving'. The Board suggested that 'applications for admission be made to the office of the Board, and a report of the same be submitted to the Committee every week.' (BGMBEC, 1874: 63). This Management Committee was intended to include three members of the Board of Guardians. F. D. Mocatta, and Lionel Cohen, the President of the Board, also suggested that 'children shall not be admitted into the Jewish Workhouse', again in this way preventing the Jewish Workhouse from removing Jewish children from Union workhouses, one of the main motivations of the Jewish middle class members who established the Board.

The Jewish Workhouse was closed in 1877, six years after its foundation, being opposed by the Board (JC, 21.4.1871). In order to terminate this middle class project, the élite prevented vital financial support and used its power to persuade the larger, disinterested middle class of the rationale of its own policy.

To facilitate the logistics of special provisions such as kosher food, exempting Jewish inmates from work on the Sabbath and Jewish holidays, the Board had initiated the concentration of the Jewish inmates in a particular parochial workhouse and in 1861 Sir David Salomons, M.P. was instrumental in legalising such an arrangement by introducing in the Metropolitan Poor Law amendment a particular section (no. 17) which enabled the poor of any one religious denomination to be put together in a selected workhouse. However, such requested concession was

contradictory to the tendency of the English legislation to prohibit a predominance to any one religious class. In 1871, after meeting Mr Corbett, the Poor Law Inspector, the delegation of the Board had requested an interview with The Right Hon. James Stansfeld, the President of the Local Government Board. While conferring with him, the delegation was informed however, 'that the Local Government had no power to compel any parish to send any denominational class of poor to another parish where special provisions could be made for them' (Thirteenth BGAR 1871: 25). Stansfeld was, however, ready to consider 'any clause which the Board might desire to introduce in the next Poor Law Bill' (idem). This meant that the Poor Law Board was not ready to burden the ratepayers of one parish with the maintenance of Jewish poor from other parishes.

The struggle of the Board to reach a *modus operandi* with the Poor Law Authorities in order to use the Unions' Workhouses was continued until the 1880s. Apparently the Manchester Jewish Board of Guardians, which co-operated in this matter with the London Board, was more successful in obtaining concessions in being allowed to lapse in favour of out-relief for the Jewish poor. (Williams 1976: 287-9) The importance of this struggle by the London and Manchester Boards is evident in the personal involvement of David Salamons, 1797-1873, who received his knighthood in 1855 following his election as Lord Mayor of London and his Baronetcy in 1869. In the light of the resistance of the Poor Law authorities the general optimism of the Board was unwarranted. However, during the 1860s and 1870s the Board was alternatively encouraged to continue its struggle by small concessions made by the Unions mistaken by the Board as 'substantial boons' and important precedents, such as the agreement of the parish of St George in the East End to pay a subvention of 3s. 6d. a week for the maintenance of a poor widow removed to the Jewish Widows' Home Asylum. (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 26).

The Board had regarded itself as disadvantaged by its inability to impose the workhouse test as enforced by the parochial authorities. The Board complained about the necessity to relieve the able-bodied through outdoor arrangements. In 1861 two hundred people were assisted 'for whom some labour test could have been imposed' (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 14). In 1861, the Board was much more firm in this matter and regarded the workhouse test as an essential element for avoiding fraud and mendicity, 'The Board will never tire of reiterating, that some means should be found either through the instrumentality of the general parochial system or by the independent exertions of the community of providing work or labour test for the able-bodied Jewish poor' (Fifth BGAR, 1862: 13). (The Mendicity Committee functioned from the commencement of the Board.) The Board also regarded itself as incapacitated in its efforts to prevent or at least to curb immigration because of its inability to use the deterring impact of the labour test. This situation was presented as an important argument to the Whitechapel Union in 1870 (Twelfth BGAR, 1870: 37-8).

The right of the Jewish poor to make use of the Unions' workhouses was presented to the Poor Law authorities as a matter of principle rather than primarily financial facilitation.

The Jewish Board of Guardians applies for a share of parochial relief to be administered without violation to the conscientious scruples of Jews, not so much because any funds which it could raise would be inadequate to the discharge of the burdens cast upon it, as because it feels that an irresponsible system of relief acting without concert with parochial administration, is prejudicial alike to the poor themselves, and to the district in which they reside. (Twelfth BGAR, 1870: 37).

For intra-community purposes, however, the financial

problems involved in the issue of using statutory services was fully acknowledged,

it may be fairly assumed that these cases were left to shift in some measure for themselves, dependent to some extent on the uncertain distributions of the Synagogues, on the casual alms of the public, or still more on the charity and sympathy of their own poor neighbours, while many, if not the majority of them, gradually found their way to the workhouses, and became by degrees lost and forgotten ... The Board itself feels, that it would certainly lose the confidence of the public, as well as its own self-esteem, if it permitted a single case of a Jewish pauper to sink into the oblivion of the Workhouse, while the funds at its disposal remained unexhausted, and its power to influence the community unabated. [Emphasis added] (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 19).

In this statement the Board had presented its nice face to those members of the community who sympathised with the underdog but also prepared them for an eventual change in its policy caused by budgetary problems. In line with the disclaiming last underlined sentence the Board was increasingly preoccupied by its efforts to make use of the provision of the Poor Law. In fact a large proportion of the Annual Reports of the Board and its other published documents were dedicated to the struggle for statutory provisions.

In this struggle the Board presented the poor as if they were interested in entering the Unions' workhouses 'the disability under which the Jewish Board practically laboured, from their being unable on religious grounds to enter the workhouse ... ' (Seventh BGAR, 1864: 22).

In 1870, the statistician, Joseph Jacobs, found few Jewish inmates in workhouses (Alderman, 1989). Obviously, this

relative small number can be explained by the reluctance of the Poor Law authorities to make the concessions that the Board requested and the unpopularity amongst the Jewish middle and poor classes of placing the poor in a system known for its brutality. It is possible that at least some of the Jews that had been 'lost and forgotten' in the workhouses mentioned by the Board's Fourth Annual Report, 1861 - previously mentioned - preferred not to identify themselves as Jews for different reasons, including the low standard of assistance provided by the Board to the considered undeserving poor.

In respect of the aged and sick poor, the élite could not completely evade making provisions for them. In its effort to shift this burden to the statutory services, some concessions were obtained by the Board for outdoor parochial relief without the imposition of the workhouse test (Ninth BGAR, 1866-1867: 26). Further attempts of the Board to receive such support had been unsuccessful, coinciding with the State policy in the 1870s to restrict outdoor relief in the East London parishes (Lipman, 1990: 34). Additional attempts were made by the Board in 1874 to prevent the intended 'deserving' aged from passing through a Christian workhouse prior to being admitted to a Jewish old age home. In regard to deserved children the Board faced a dilemma:

Jewish children, deserted by their parents, were either left in the parochial schools and lost to the community, or if the Board assumed the care and charge of them, it not only undertook a duty for which its machinery was completely unfitted, but it absolutely secured immunity for the worthless parents who, under the law, are only liable to prosecution by a parish officer, which prosecution cannot not be initiated till the children had become chargeable to the Union. (Tenth BGAR, 1868: 22).

In 1868 Nathan M. Rothschild, M.P., the first Lord Rothschild, assumed the chairmanship of the Poor Law Sub-Committee, the other members being Prof. Waley, member of the Royal Commission on Law and Transfer of Real Property and Jacob Franklin, founder and editor of the Voice of Jacob (1841-1846). This committee was instrumental in establishing a new law (Act 25 and 26 Vic., Cap. 43) according to which the Guardians of any Parish or Union could send any poor child to any school certified by the Poor Law Board. The Act 29 and 30 Vic., Cap. 113, made provisions for educating children in the religion to which they belonged. This arrangement permitted the removal of Jewish children from the Unions' workhouses at the expenses of the respective Unions. In 1869 the Jews' Hospital was registered as a certified school under the above mentioned Act and application was made to remove a Jewish child from the Whitechapel Union to the Jews' Hospital. The subvention of the Poor Law was assessed at 6s. per week for each child. The Board paying 2s. 6d. per week to make up for the difference in cost (Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 21). Further orders for removal of the children became a matter of routine. In the meantime, the Jews' Orphan Assylum became a certified school. Some children removed from the workhouse whose fathers' residence had been detected by the Board, were returned to them. No comments related to the other aspect of the problem involved in such desertion were added to the detailed descriptions of the legal and procedural aspects. The Board concluded 'Thus and thus alone, could desertion of children by their parents be legally prevented or punished' (Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 21).

Encouraged by this achievement, the Board continued its negotiations with the Poor Law authorities without being able (in 1869) to disclose their nature in the Annual Report of the same year (22). Under the less expensive arrangement the Board expedited the process of removal of deserted and other Jewish children from the workhouses,

preventing in this way the previous pressures of the more sensitive members of the middle classes and workers' élite. In parallel, the Board tried to obtain parochial subventions for double orphaned children without having to go through the workhouse.

Amongst the groups for which the Board intended to use the workhouse, were the families whose breadwinners emigrated to America in search of work and accommodation in order to be able to bring their families over. The Board denoted wives of such emigrants and their children as 'deserted'. The Board did not hesitate to send deserted wives to local workhouses as an additional means of deterrence, punishment and detection of their deserting husbands. In 1865, the Visiting Committee, chaired by F. D. Mocatta, requested the Executive Committee to 'grant no other aid than toward sending the families so deserted back to the place whence they originally came'. The Visiting Committee regarded this measure as preventing 'unworthy heads ... to throw the wife and children on the community for support or to entail upon it the expense of sending the whole family after him' (Eighth BGAR, 1865: 59). However, the Executive Committee felt that, at that time, the Visiting Committee went too far and that it 'could only in very exceptional cases assume the responsibility suggested by the Visiting Committee ... thereby widening the gulf which exists among them' (Eighth BGAR, 1865: 13-14). Sometimes the Board expressed an understanding for the plight of those families. Notwithstanding this fact, the Board was determined to deal with them sharply. 'It is greatly to be feared that unless some severe and stringent measures of dealing with the unfortunate families thus deserted by their natural protectors, be adopted this wicked and mischievous practice will continue to increase' (Report of the Visiting Committee, Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 57-58). This practice was in line with the policy of the COS which was not to offer assistance to deserted wives and to

recommend the workhouse (Fido 1977: 26). The differences between the policies of the COS and the Board in regard to the State interventions in terms of income, maintenance and so on - in spite of their significant common denominators and opinions - were discussed by Jones (1977: 92, 275n 21). Kosher food had been supplied as an 'organised system' within the East London Union in 1869 to accommodate six destitute women and their children whose husbands emigrated directly to America: 'the Board was greatly embarrassed by their presence and it was impossible to find lodgings where they could be received' (Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 22). The extra cost of those rations were defrayed by the Board. A special ward was provided for those Jewish inmates so that they might not be exposed to the arrogances of other inmates. This concession proved, however, to be an ad hoc arrangement rather than a permanent one, as sometimes made by the Unions during the period of Jewish holidays.

The Board attempted to make those women chargeable upon parish aid with the hope that the parochial authorities would agree to make representations to the country from which they came to assume responsibility for their maintenance (Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 22). This was an overestimation of the Board as to the willingness of the Unions to embark on the precedential intervention proposed by the Board. Finally, the Board assumed responsibility for transferring the six women and their children to America. This proposal of the Board represented a trend to request the interference of the State in respect of the immigration of Jewish poor, which developed into a fully fledged restrictionism by the turn of the century.

Since the end of the eighteenth century the Poor Law was interpreted as applying to whatever nation or religion lived in Britain. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 did not interfere with this interpretation. This policy was thought necessary in order to ensure the comprehensive

application of the principle of 'less eligibility' and was in line with the larger laissez faire laissez passer doctrine in regard to immigration. In spite of this general policy, the Unions in the East End overburdened by a poor population feared to make additional concessions that could, in their opinion, attract Jewish immigration from the Continent. In its reply to a Memorial of the Board, the Whitechapel Union stated that

It thus becomes not only a serious question whether any material modification of the workhouse dietary can be effected in the case of Jewish inmates ... will not thereby be held out to foreigners to migrate to London, where a legal provision is made for their maintenance without violence to their religious feelings ... in view of this, the Guardians are bound to raise the question how far they would be justified, in the interest of the ratepayers, in offering a religious asylum to the destitute Jews of all nations ... arriving from lands where little or no legal provision is made for the destitute poor ... it is evident that once the existing "difficulty" is removed, an English workhouse will be regarded as a most desirable asylum which no internal discipline will induce its foreign occupants to leave. (Reply of Whitechapel Union, 7.12.1870, quoted in B's Twelfth BGAR, 1870: 33).

While the Board was eager to use the discipline of the workhouses in order to minimise outdoor relief, the Whitechapel Union feared that the modification of workhouse dietary arrangements could not be made 'without prejudicing the discipline and arrangements of a mixed workhouse' (34).

The approach of the parochial authorities to the question of immigration was very careful and ambiguous. The Annual Reports of the Board do not reflect a consideration of the standard of the workhouse intended for the placement of the

Jewish poor in view of the contemporary awareness that few workhouses had functioned satisfactorily for a considerable period of time (Marshall 1968: 14-15).

In 1870 the Board 'induced' a number of Jewish women and children suffering from relapsing fever temporarily into East London Union, apparently to prevent contamination (Twelve BGAR, 1870: 30).

At this time the Board found that

the best mode to arrest pauperism, or to mitigate it, is to temper the administration of stipendiaries (Bound to spare the rates) by the action of charitable associations impelled by sympathy ... for if all conscientious scruples that now operate to prevent their entry into the Workhouse were removed, the special grievance which restricts them, at present to application for out relief only, would disappear. (Memorial of the Board to the Guardians of the City of London and Whitechapel Unions attached to a letter to the Right Hon. G. J. Goschen, M.P., President, Poor Law Board of 12.1.1871: 26, 31).

In its effort for a comprehensive control of the poor, the Board criticised the community for encouraging the '"begging letter" writing system 'which has recently been largely on the increase'. The Board requested such letters to be referred 'for investigation and when desirable for relief, that the mischievous practice can effectually be suppressed' (Thirteenth BGAR, 1871: 58). According to the Jewish tradition of charity, it is prohibited to ban begging from door to door or in any other form.

While the arrangements for maintaining Jewish religious observances in the workhouses were continuously sought by the Board - the splitting of families in the workhouses and

their halachic implications were ignored, as were the feelings of the Jewish immigrants in regard to the workhouse as non-Jewish institutions. In accordance with the shtetl tradition brought over by immigrants from Eastern Europe, it was unusual for a Jew to apply to a non-Jewish institution. Such applications were viewed by all Jewish classes as a sign of relegation and/or depreciation of Jewish service and as a stigmatisation.

The motivation of the Board to continue the struggle can be explained by the deterring power attributed to the workhouse. It can also be viewed as an integral part of the Board's policy to reduce sectarianism as much as possible. While some of the contributors resented the consequences of the policy of the Board on the Jewish poor - the Board itself remained unmoved. In view of the sensitivity of some parts of the middle class the deterrent elements were sometimes disguised by the Board denoting vaguely those placed in the workhouses as appropriate or special cases. Lipman interpreted the characteristic of such poor as 'undesirable immigrants such as those who tried unreasonably to avoid the responsibility of maintaining their families' (Lipman 1990, 34).

In fact, however, the workhouse was intended (Lipman 1959: 29) and used amongst others for special groups of immigrants rather than problematic individuals. (For an additional discussion of the approach of the Board towards the deserted women and their children, see Chapter 9.)

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Jewish élite as its host counterpart wanted to be left alone - a standpoint that was compatible with 'Jews take care of their own' to which the Jewish élites in Diaspora have been long accustomed. It was a consequence of their business interests and the result of the ineffectiveness of the domestic government. During the nineteenth century, however, this stance had started to conflict with the

increasing efficiency of the central and municipal government's interventions. The validity of public intervention, on the other hand, has had a dynamic of its own that 'tempted' the wealthy classes, and the Jewish élite was ready, at this stage, to use the opportunities offered to cut the costs of 'Jews take care of their own' caused by Jewish poverty and the influx of poor immigrants. Moreover, as the 'importation' had seemed boundless and uncontrollable.

Other important factors that can explain the metamorphosis in the specific position of the Jewish élite to State interference, were its relative rapid political emancipation and interests in the sound function of central and local government, especially in domestic issues. For different reasons, the members of the Jewish élite were official participants in internal politics rather than foreign affairs. Their increased security as members of the larger British upper classes increasingly motivated them to claim rights of the Anglo-Jewry as equal taxpayers. The interests of the Jewish élite, primarily for its own sake, were to have a close control on the social problems created by the Jewish immigration and poverty in order to prevent and overcome the rising anti-Jewish feelings, (always existing in Britain but not as severe as on the Continent) and much more pronounced after the starting of the mass immigration. Until this time the Jewish élite had felt that the predicaments of the Jewish poor were under its relative control and no mandatory restrictionism was suggested by its leading members.

The social services established by the Jewish élite and the middle and working classes prevented an active test of the capacities of the host community to solve problems related to the relief of the immigrants and the education of their children. However, in the field of housing, sanitation and medical care, Jewish immigration increased significantly

the demands upon the local facilities, especially in the parishes where the Jews resided in the East End.

The use of the workhouses by itself as evidenced in this chapter was perceived by the poor and other groups within the Jewish community as a malevolent abuse of power functioning to serve the interests of the élite. This chapter has indicated that the Board, from its very foundation, was very alert to the increasing involvement of the State and made intensive and continuous efforts to obtain financial support for Jewish poor without their having to pass the Workhouse Test and to persuade the Unions' authorities to make special arrangements which were supposed to enable Jews to remain in their workhouses. This policy of the Board to cooperate with the developing Welfare State was based on the increasing security of the wealthy class. The problems connected with the financing of the Board's activities are related to in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 11

FINANCING: CHECKS AND BALANCES

In this chapter the limitations of funds available to the Jewish philanthropies and the Board for their main activities are evidenced and analysed. It is argued that the motivation to finance proposed and existing philanthropic services were permanently influenced by the élite's constant fear of becoming a victim of its own generosity by providing incentives for the immigrants and even the longer settled poor to remain in London.

The wealth of the Jewish élite became proverbial. 'Some few hundred families among them possess enormous wealth, so much so, that they appeared to have given rise to the proverb "as rich as a Jew"' (JC, 9.12.1864). Those families permitted themselves to exceed in extravagancy.

In a Letter to the Editor of the Jewish Chronicle, a sermon of the Chief Rabbi of the New Synagogue was quoted according to which 'the destructive consequences of over-indulgence in luxuries and especially the extravagance in dress which the late years has become conspicuous among us to a fearful extent'. The rabbi believed that the outward show prevented the inward joy required for rejoicing the Festival of Tabernacles. (JC, 9.10.1887).

The willingness of the élite to contribute to the Jewish philanthropies was limited. The existence of distress was to a considerable extent admitted by the Jewish wealthy and middle classes at the end of the 1850s, as reflected in the Jewish Chronicle. The small charities such as the Jewish Ladies' Benevolent Loan Society, for instance, were overwhelmed by the number of applicants in comparison with their restricted resources. A son of one of the committee's ladies wrote to the Editor of the Jewish Chronicle

For how is it possible that a small band of ladies can devote, or even find, sufficient leisure or opportunity

to visit the dwellings of ten thousand poor, as frequently as their unavoidable destitution demands ... If funds were placed more liberally than at present at their disposal, their visits would be more frequent; for they would then possess something more substantial than mere advice to offer for the consolation of the starving (JC, 25.2.1859).

A meeting was held at Sussex Hall in March 1859 in respect of Jewish distress and a series of articles entitled, 'Appalling Distress Among the Jewish Poor', appeared in the Jewish Chronicle (for example, JC, 15.2.1859).

This distress continued well after the Board was established. In 1861, a Letter to the Editor wrote 'what a squalidness exists in those places! How dirty and loathsome is everything you see! How noisome are the effluvia you inhale! What miserable objects claim your sympathy at every turn! Here nothing seems to live but poverty'.

In its formative years the Board was supported by the subventions of the three City Synagogues (£220 from the Great Synagogue being its average annual expenditure for the 'strange' poor, and £110 voted as quota by each of the other Synagogues, (First BGHYR., 1859: 13). The Jewish Chronicle Editorial commented in regard to those contributions,

Incidentally we learn that the three city congregations annually spent in the relief of the strange poor £440. At the smallness of this sum we are truly astonished. When we recollect the constant complaint of the influx of the foreign poor which incessantly re-echoed in our ears, we cannot help expressing our surprise at the hollowness, we should almost say hypocrisy, that lay at the bottom of this outcry. Three of the leading

congregations in Europe, in the largest and wealthiest city, the thoroughfare of the world, constantly lamenting the enormous expenditure entailed upon them by foreign poor, when the total amount of the annual relief did not exceed £440! (JC, 2.3.1860).

In the same editorial it became clear that the 'magnificent sum' which the Conjoint Board of Synagogues distributed on special recommendation only and to the most honourable applicant was a five shilling piece (JC, 2.3.1860)

Those subventions increased to almost £1,300 in 1872 and subsequently remained almost at the same level. In view of the large expenditure incurred at the very commencement of the Board's activities, the Board increasingly depended on the willingness of the wealthy members of the élite for support outside of the Synagogal framework. Its main resources were yearly gifts, trust funds, legacies and special donations such as memorial offerings. The activities of the Loan and Work Departments were increasingly based on trust funds.

The Board lacked a system of budgetary planning. The expenditure depended to a large extent on the number of immigrants, the unemployment as a result of trade depressions and the severity of the winters. One of the main mechanisms by which the Board had reduced its expenditure, was the variations in the amounts of relief given, such as decreasing allotments and grants. Money relief casually given by the rota - Relief Committee - was 'restricted within the narrowest possible limits' (Fourth BGAR, 1861: 15). In this way, the Board ensured that it would not become 'a magnet attracting both the unfortunates and the enterprising' (Fifth BGAR, 1862: 10).

The Board had been backed by the contemporary unanimous consensus among the governing classes that provisions for

the destitute should be of a quality that was 'less eligible' in comparison with the poorest independent labourer. This consensus influenced the philosophy and practice of the Board. According to a series of letters published in the Jewish Chronicle the resources and the apparatus of the Board were far too limited to deal with the problem of Jewish poverty.

The staff of relieving officers is too small, and the time allowed to receive applications is not sufficient for every case to be thoroughly investigated. How many, unable to obtain admission, go away hopeless and discomfited, and obliged to seek relief from house to house. This is not what it should be, nor will the public be satisfied with such an administration of their money (JC, 26.4.1861).

In 1867 the number of fixed allowances of the Board was twenty eight at a weekly cost of £5.16s.6d.. The number of periodical allowances was twenty seven at the cost of £5.2s.6d. per week. This expenditure absorbed nearly one fifth of the entire amount of general relief at this time. It was regarded by the Board as very 'serious' and requiring a more careful decision of the Relief Committee. (Nineth BGAR, 1866-7: 16). The Board found 'no alternative' but to support those poor until they eventually found places in one of the communal institutions rather than send them to the workhouses. The way in which the Board regarded this expenditure can explain its struggle for obtaining concessions in the use of the workhouses and outdoor relief subventions (Nineth BGAR, 1866-7: 16).

The amount that the Board received from the Poor Law authorities was, at this time, still insignificant in comparison with the total annual expenditure of the Board. It was, however, important to the Board in light of the

prospective potential increase of mandatory contributions. In the next year - 1868 - the amount of parochial relief which was received by the Board for the poor collecting fixed periodical allowances, was 15s. and seventeen loaves per week. The Board reporting that:

it would be to a great extent unjust to blame the various Unions for the inadequacy of this sum for the greatest difficulties arise in overcoming objections of the recipients to apply for it at all, and whatever has been obtained, has generally been through the interposition of the Board (Tenth BGAR, 1868: 14).

The avoidance of the Poor Law authorities by the Jewish poor, despite their extreme poverty, is an evidence of their dependence on the inadequate Board's allotments. The Board, however, reported that

the greatest care is taken to restrict, as far as is consistent with humanity an expenditure so serious. [£9.16s. per week in 1868] (Tenth BGAR, 1868: 14).

Obviously, this permanent policy in regard to the well known incapacitated poor, contradicts the myth of the élite's generosity. Moreover, during the late 1860s, the wealth of the Jewish élite reached a very high point in its progressive accumulation.

According to the Scheme, the Board was to function also in the contemporary pattern of voting charities 'Contributors to the Board were to be furnished with tickets of recommendation' (1859: 7). The tickets represented relief in kind, usually bread, grocery, meat and coal provided to the protégés of the donors through the Board. It is possible that the Board attempted to convince some donors to place the tickets under its responsibility, for distribution based on investigation. The Board was,

however, ready to comply with the wishes of the donors, which contradicted its declared principle of indiscriminate relief.

In 1870 the grand total of the expenditure of the various departments of the Board was £5,067 - compared with £4,244 in 1869.

The great part of this increase was attributed

to the augmentation of the amount of disbursements made by various benefactors to specific cases indicated by them but which they preferred to disburse through the Board (Twelfth BGAR, 1870: 2).

Such direct grants to specific persons - for the distribution of which the Board acted as intermediary - increased to £693 in 1869 compared with £121 two years previously. Still the Board regarded its technical intermediacy in this sort of voting charity as 'conclusive evidence of the hold it has acquired on the confidence of the public'. (Twelfth BGAR, 1870: 2). This arrangement reflects the dependency of the Board on the middle and wealthy class private benefactions. During a later period, F. D. Mocatta, Vice President of the C.O.S. became also Chairman of the Charity Voting Association which had opposed the voting charity system and advanced more equalitarian concepts of philanthropic administration.

The revenue income in the 1870s was approximately £6,400, the revenue expenditure was £5,200 and the expenditure for administration £1,100.

The revenue expenditure was used as follows:

Relief in kind - loaves and bread tickets, meat,
grocery and coal - approx., £1,125.

- Money relief - fixed weekly and periodical allowances, special orders of the Hon. Officers, emigration and other allotments, mourners in the week of mourning, childbirth, etc. - approx., £1,400.

- Special relief - blankets, rugs, flannel, bedding, clothing, prayer books, tools purchase - approx., £200.

- Medical relief - surgical fees, drugs, maternity charity, midwifery cases, port, wine, brandy, gin, milk, bath tickets - including salaries to medical officers and apothecaries - approx., £1,250.

- Loans, Work and Work rooms - sewing machines and other implements, salaries of supervisors - approx., £1,050.

- Administration - Rent, salaries of secretary, clerk, relieving and investigating officers and other administrative staff, sanitary inspector - approx. £1,100.

(Based on Twelfth BGAR, 1870, Analysis of Expenditure signed by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, Treasurer)

In 1890 the revenue income and revenue expenditure were about £17,500 and the cost of administration almost £1,850. Yearly deficits were incurred by the Board in the early 1860's of about £50 and reached an accumulated deficit of almost £12,000 in the 1900's. At this time, suggestions were made to suspend the law in regard to the funding of legacies and donations in memoriam, in order to increase

the capital. Such arrangements reduced the deficit. Fears were continuously expressed by the élite that the 'importation' of the needy would force the Board in transcending its financial possibilities and cut into the endowment and exhaust all the resources available to the Board and other institutions dealing with the immigrants, largely pauperising the community. The purpose of such statements was 'inter alia' to justify the restrictionist policy of the Board.

Between 1851 and 1881 the Jewish population in London increased considerably and then dramatically until the First World War (see Appendix III). During the years between 1869 and 1882, the Board dealt with seven to eight thousand persons yearly (two thousand cases of individuals and families), twenty to thirty per cent of whom were assisted by some Jewish philanthropy - including the Board. The total number of persons the Board dealt with represented twenty to twenty five per cent of the total Jewish population (Lipman, 1990: 33). The number of applications to the Board increased between 1894 and 1900 to more than five thousand per annum. (Lipman, 1959, p.81) In order to function in this period of mass immigration, the Board needed much larger resources.

The continuous activities of the Board depended mainly on the large subscriptions of a small number of the wealthy members of the élite, consequently increasing their authority and control (JC, 5.6.1885). The list of contributors at the end of each annual report symbolised respectability and generosity of the wealthy and middle classes. However, it was very important to the Board to show that it was supported by the community as a whole and efforts were made in this direction. In 1902 the Board formed the East End Aid Society for the purpose of enabling the poor to assist the Board by weekly contributions of one penny. In this way, the solidarity incentives were

provided to middle class adherents.

The Board was able to maintain itself financially because of the shift of the larger expenditure connected with health and education to the State and other sources depending on public revenues, following the implementation of more collectivistic concepts. At the same time the Board avoided the responsibility of maintaining institutions where residents lived on the premises which could have been very expensive to support. The Board remained responsible for other facets of relief. However, the élite and the Board continued to claim that they were taking care of the Jewish poor from their own resources, largely disregarding subsidies from public tax and rate payers. The main services that the Board continued to partly provide on a voluntary basis, were for children and the aged.

The expenditure of the members of the Jewish élite for philanthropic causes included also, those that they incurred as wealthy and aristocratic British who lived by the principle of noblesse oblige as well as owners of country houses. In supporting the opening of the parliament to Jews (the 1841's Bill), in the House of Commons Lord John Russell praised the families of Rothschild, Solomon, Montefiore and others which 'have long been established in the country and well known to be deeply interested in the prosperity of the country, have a great stake in it ... ' (quoted from Finestein 1993: 25). According to Finestein, when extended to churches such Jewish philanthropy was perplexing to some Christians and David Solomon's donations as High Sheriff of Kent for building churches were severely criticised by Inglis (House of Commons, 10.3.1841, quoted from Finestein, 48n49). It is evidence of the extent to which the élite was interested to please the host society and the large implications of those interests. The contributions of the Jewish élite

were an integral part of the ways by which acceptance into the English larger wealthy class was achieved. It also can be explained in the context of the situation of the wealthy Jewish class that moved away from the Jewish concentration and into a non-Jewish environment

'Nathan Mayer Rothschild was somewhat apprehensive at the prospect of taking a villa in 1816. [At Stamford Hill,] His prosperity had been much commented upon, not always favourably, and Herries, the Commissary-in-Chief, warned him that possession of a villa would only encourage backbiting ... Nathan found time to serve as a vice-president of the newly established local dispensary, besides making various improvements to his own estate. The family stayed on until 1835, when they bought Gunnersbury (Brown, 1990: 81).

Obviously, the *élite* donated large amounts of money. The question can be asked, however, did the *élite* give until it hurt or rather from their super abundance? Could they have not given more in order to ensure a fairer distribution of resources? Was its motivation what can be termed as altruistic behaviour that entered the *élite's* utility function as pleasure at another's pleasure, and pain at another's pain, this is, based mainly on sympathy - or rather altruistic choices that contributed to the *élite's* collective security and welfare, but did actually counter their sympathy, this is, interested commitment? Whatever the historians' opinion was in respect of the Anglo-Jewish *élite's* generosity, there is a consensus that they donated their large amount of money in spite of their antipathy towards the poor in England. Philanthropy enabled the Jewish *élite* to deny its presentation as acquisitive, thrusting and aggressive and to prove that it was not selfishly preoccupied only with material success. The Jewish *élite* developed the Board as a voluntary, powerful organisation with elaborate checks and balances able to

prevent commitment beyond what the élite itself desired.

According to the concept of **tzedakah**, summarised amongst others by Maimonides, Jews who by their own exertions are unable to support themselves and provide their elementary needs as well as other components of their social and religious life - have positive rights to some of the resources of the other Jews. This means that the wealthy are required by the Jewish law to share their resources to an extent necessary to fulfil the basic needs of the needy. How much should one give a poor person? - 'sufficient to provide him with what he is lacking' (Deuteronomy 15, 8). 'You are thus obliged to fill his want you are not, however, obliged to restore his wealth'. (Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Chapter VII, 3-8, Appendix I, see there for how this is fulfilled) As to the amount of the **tzedakah** that an individual has to give and its relation to his earnings, there are upper and lower limits. In regard to the lower limit

a man is obliged to give his own sustenance priority over that of any other person. He is not obliged to give charity until his own sustenance is met, since scripture states that your brother should live together with you - your own life takes precedence over that of your brother. (Tur Yore Deah, 251, based on Saadia Gaon).

However, Rabbi Yechiel Michal Epstein wrote that the above mentioned injunction, applied only to the very poor who can provide for themselves only bread and water, and persons who eat meat and cooked dishes and are able to clothe themselves are obliged to give charity in a normal manner. Otherwise, only the very rich would be obliged to give charity (Aruch Hashulchan, 251; 4, 5, according to Domb 1980: 38). S. Z. Auerbach - a contemporary authority - pointed out that 'if a person earns sufficient for his

needs, the maaser [monetary tithes] obligation applies to his full income and not only toward what is left after paying his personal subsistence' (Chapters 3 & 4).

In respect to the upper limit, there are differences of opinion among the Hallachic authorities as to whether the upper limit of one fifth is to be interpreted strictly.

More recent authorities proposed that this limit is relevant only to persons who might jeopardise their own financial security by giving more. 'A very wealthy person may distribute more than one fifth of his possessions' (R. Abraham Danzig, Chayyei Adam, 144; 10).

The standpoint of the **hallacha** on the issue of the upper limit which is relevant to the wealthy can be concluded as follows:

- (i) Where there is pressing need and the donor can afford one-fifth without difficulty, one-fifth is obligatory, and more than one-fifth is commendable or obligatory, according to circumstances.
- (ii) Where there is pressing need and the donor can afford one-fifth only with difficulty, giving one-fifth is "the choicest way of fulfilling the **mitzvah**" (a commandment of Jewish law), that is for the person who is prepared to cause himself a certain amount of hardship in order to fulfil a **mitzvah** in the best possible way; one-tenth constitutes an "average fulfilment", and less than one-tenth an ungenerous attitude.
(quoted in Domb 1980: 37-38).

It should be noted that the concept of equality in its present meaning cannot be found directly in the Bible and the **halachic** traditions. Apparently, the **halacha** does not support the more radical redistribution which could reduce

the wealthy to a level close to that of the impoverished and it will force the wealthy donor to apply for charity.

A person should not distribute more than one fifth so that he should not himself need the support of others.
(R. Moshe Isserles, Yoreh Deah, 249, 1)

If such a situation is not envisaged a wealthy man has the obligation to contribute the greatest possible amount.

Taking into consideration that in the pre-welfare states the Jews had to 'take care of their own' - the retention of the economic power of the wealthy 'big donors' was regarded as a guarantee for a continuous provision of the community's needs.

The preceding description and analysis has indicated that according to the Judaic concepts of the **tzedakah** there are meaningful limits on the rights of the wealthy to dispose of their wealth according to their personal preferences.

The empirically based assumption of the wealthy Jewish élite in England was that no justification existed for limiting the rights of Jewish philanthropists over their wealth by reference to the basic needs of the London Jewish poor and more so in respect to the new immigrants. This assumption was based on the Liberalist trend of the period and its emphasis on the right to freedom which had involved exclusive possessions. Indeed, Herbert Spencer denounced State intervention and regarded private charity as adverse to social advance, but allowed it in order not to interfere with the liberties of the potential donors.

This chapter has shown that the paternalistic structure of the relationship between the élite and the poor was characterised by an overwhelming control of funds enabling the élite to play an 'imperialistic' role in developing

services, establishing priority, and so on. Instances of Jewish magnates who endangered their personal and family security because of their donations to philanthropic purposes are not represented to the writer's knowledge in the Anglo-Jewish historical literature. Taking into consideration the extremely large possessions of a part of the Jewish philanthropists, an estimation of their donations to Jewish philanthropies in proportion to their excess wealth might be an interesting subject for research. Some of the consequences in the limitation of funds in more specific areas are elaborated in Chapters 12 and 13 and their more general significance in Chapters 14 and 15.

CHAPTER 12
RESTRICTED ARRANGEMENTS:
WORK, LOANS, MEDICAL RELIEF AND HOUSING

This chapter examines the activities of the Board in the related subjects of work and loans as well as medical relief and housing. These areas provide examples of the policy and practice of the Board when it was confronted with a range of substantial social problems. The late and reluctant recognition it gave to the collective needs of the poor, as against a narrow concentration on a personal or individualistic approach, varied from area to area. The departments of work, loans and medical relief, as well as other departments, cooperated between themselves acting as a network of social control. The sanitary inspections provided by the Board were intended to prevent epidemics which were symptomatic of the severe housing conditions discussed in the chapter.

Work

This section discusses the approach of the élite to the basic problems of unemployment and lack of vocational skills of the poor. It is contended that the laissez faire orientation of the élite was detrimental to a more significant intervention in this area.

The Work Committee was one of the first to be established. Continuous efforts were made by the Board in the teaching of trades to apprentices. In regard to the girls, the Board emphasised the inculcating of habits which it considered as lacking, such as cleanliness, regularity and industry. In 1869 for instance, it became obvious to the members of the Work Committee responsible for the Work Rooms, that it lacked sufficient involvement and intimate knowledge of the dynamic developments in the work market.

Notwithstanding some pressure put by the Board of Guardians upon applicants for relief, the highest number of apprentices obtained was 46 - the Work Rooms

being able to accommodate 60 - they endeavoured to trace the cause which actuated the poor in exhibiting so paradoxical an indifference to an establishment which bid fair to confer upon them a very substantial boon. From various enquiries made upon the subject it appeared that the making of dresses, underclothing, and shirts was not sufficiently remunerative to offer to poor girls a prospect of obtaining a livelihood, and that the great majority of them preferred to become tailoresses, which, during six or seven months of the year, proves to them more lucrative.
(Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 9).

The distance between the classes was further complicated by the Victorian middle class moral paternalism. 'But one of the objects contemplated by the Board in calling the establishment into life, was to obviate, if possible, the constant intercourse of Jewish girls with uneducated men which is rendered necessary in the tailoring trade, and cannot fail frequently to lead to immorality' (Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 9).

The Work Committee included some pioneering women volunteers. A sense of social obligation combined with a deep conviction caused those women, members of the élite, to devote a considerable amount of time in attempting to improve the conditions of the 'girls of the industrial class'. Women were active in the conjoint visiting and assumed activities for the Board's Work Rooms, apprenticeships and clothing. Towards the end of the century, wives of the leading male members of the Board were involved in prestigious British associations dealing with conditions of maltreated children and prisoners. However, as a whole, women members of the Board identified themselves with the prevalent philanthropic concept of the male members accepting them without the more profound questions that could arise from a more feminine frame of reference.

In 1869 the Work Committee resolved to diversify its operations by introducing several other trades. The immigrants and the poor presented a threat of poverty and displacement to some non-Jewish workers in competing branches and thus created anti-Jewish feelings. However, the attempts to prevent further Jewish concentration in the garment industries were far from having some impact on the capitalist market powers. Moreover, the Board's intensive lending of sewing machines and advancing of loans for their purchase, increased the Jewish massive concentration in tailoring, contradicting the attempts to vary the Jewish occupational structure. The Board itself recognised its inability to take positive action in regard to the largest number of the unskilled Jewish poor.

The number of cases which can be materially assisted by being visited, forms but a small proportion of the aggregate relieved by the Board, the great majority of which is naturally composed of helpless persons, - either the aged or infirm, or those who are without any regular means of subsistence, or the knowledge of any remunerative trade. Very many of such cases are of the class which under ordinary circumstances would be handed over to the workhouse; but at present the Board is forced to devote a large portion of its aid towards their relief. Nevertheless, the comparatively few persons who appear likely to be permanently helped by a well-directed, and well-timed effort, by a somewhat liberal grant in money, and by intelligent advice, form precisely the class which the Board would most cheerfully and liberally relieve.

(Report of the Visiting Committee signed by F. D. Mocatta, Chairman. Eleventh BGAR: 52).

By opting for strict preferential assistance of certain categories of applicants, the Board excluded the largest part of the poor, reflecting a pessimistic view in regard

to their capabilities. (Allowing for a number of old and handicapped people or otherwise incapacitated who could not be rehabilitated) This is an example of the checks and controls that the Board used to limit the responsibilities that it took upon itself and the subsequent expenditure incurred.

The Work Committee encountered serious difficulties in placing youth of both sexes from 'our working classes'. The Board appealed to potential Jewish employers such as heads of firms in the various departments of trade and commerce. The complaints about the unwillingness of the Jewish wealthy class to employ Jewish persons were mentioned several times in the Jewish Chronicle for instance in the issue of 26 April 1861. In a Letter to the Editor, 'Henricus' complained,

Our richer brethern, such as merchants and business men, have a great objection to employ their co-religionists, because these are not able to work on Saturdays and holidays; these, therefore have no chance of procuring a livelihood among their own people, but are driven to our neighbours ... But charity, sir, is not what we want: we are a proud people. More good would be done by employing us than by giving us charity; we wish to work for our livelihood, and make a position of our own; by which means our condition as a people would be greatly elevated. It is a stigma on our community that the rich do not employ the poor. (JC, 18.9.1863).

The period beginning from the middle of the nineteenth century was characterised by a significant growth of the Jewish middle class, strongly dominated by its economic interests which, apparently, were not compatible with the employment of Jewish workers and labourers.

The Jewish poor including the immigrants, dovetailed into economic life and there was no need for a productivisation of the Jewish poor as sometimes was suggested by the Jewish wealthy and middle classes.

The immigrants developed the British cheap trade of clothing and footwear, increasing British exports and contributed to the mobility in the general host society. Working for low wages and living in hard conditions, the Jewish poor proved their remarkable ability to adjust to the hardship of the labour market and living conditions.

On 8 February 1892 a sub-committee of the Jewish Board of Guardians was appointed 'to enquire into the present system of relief to the able-bodied unemployed. Mr L. L. Alexander, the Hon. Secretary of the Board was good enough to attend' on the two meetings of this sub-committee (BGMB, 16.3.1892, Book 3: 59). In its report the sub-committee reacted to a proposal made by Mr Herman Landau, a member of the nouveau riche group of the élite. Landau's proposal was that:

a Wood-Chopping Yard should be established by the Board, with the object of decreasing the number of applicants for recurrent relief (BGMB, 16.3.1892, Book 3: 59).

However, Landau's proposal was rejected by the sub-committee, one of the main reasons for this rejection was that:

The Sub-Committee believe that the number of persons belonging to this class [able-bodied unemployed], who, under the existing arrangements of the Board succeeded in obtaining relief from the Board is extremely small. [emphasis mine] (BGMB, 16.3.1892, Book 3: 59).

The limited help offered to the Jewish unemployed by the Board proves the correctness of the thesis of Piven and Cloward (1971) in respect to the extensive role of the relief offered by different institutions to the temporary unemployed in the regulation of the market labour.

The structure of Jewish employment necessitated the continuous assistance of the Jewish philanthropies to 'carry' the Jewish workers through the long months of unemployment until the market was ready to absorb them, again intermittently. However, this assistance was at a very minimal level. The avoidance of the workhouses by the Jewish poor, for instance, was explained by Jones, *inter alia*, in terms of the 'greater self-sufficiency and as an evidence of Bentham's predictions that 'the truly rational, economic, man would turn to the Poor Law only as his very last resort (Jones, 1977:89).

Philanthropy was certainly not the solution to the basic problem of Jewish poverty nor could philanthropy change the forces of the capitalist mode of production. On 12 July, 1894, a deputation on behalf of the Committee of the Jewish Unemployed Committee visited the Board's premises and presented the following suggestions to the Executive Committee of the Board:

1. That the Jewish Board of Guardians should immediately relieve those cases of the Jewish Unemployed which are now in distress.
2. That a Bureau should be established for the registration of the Unemployed.
3. That the Jewish Board of Guardians should supply work in lieu of charity.
4. That a Conference be called together of Employers of Jewish labour, with a view to take some action to reduce the hours of labour, and by that means to reduce the number of Unemployed.

5. That the Jewish Board of Guardians should approach Jewish Members of Parliament, with the view of urging the matter of the restriction of shorter hours of work, upon the House of Commons.
6. That an Inspector of Factories and Workshops, who is able to speak 'Yiddish', should be appointed by the Government.
7. That a member of the Committee of the Unemployed should accompany the Investigating Officer of the Board, in the investigation of cases of the Unemployed in need of relief.
(BGMB, 12.7.1894, 3: 124-26).

The recommendations of the Executive Committee were as follows:

1. The first function of this Board is to relieve, after investigation, persons who are in distress, and especially those who are out of employment, which always has been done; and having regard to the distress now existing, they are applying the Funds at their disposal with as much liberality as they can.
2. That a Committee of the Board might be appointed for the purpose of considering this question.
3. The Executive are of opinion that it is impossible to carry out this suggestion.
- 4 & 5. That this matter is outside the scope of the Board.
6. That this is a matter which requires some consideration, and we therefore refer it to the Board.
7. That we think such an arrangement undesirable.
(BGMB, 12.7.1894, 3: 124).

The Board's Minute Books include a resolution of the more detailed reply that was given to the delegates of the

Jewish Unemployed Committee. As they reflect the position of the Board in regard to the important problem of Jewish unemployment they are quoted almost in their entirety.

The Board desires to express its deep sympathy with the unemployed in the privations that follow from the dearth of employment and hopes that the demand for labour will shortly increase and that the sufferings of the unemployed will be thereby alleviated.

Resolved that the Delegates be informed:-

1. See Recommendation (1) of the Executive Committee above.
2. That the Board is unable to concern itself with the establishment of Labour Registers, which appear to the Board to come rather within the province of the workers themselves
3. That the Board adheres to its Resolution, if not impossible to establish a Labour Yard or other means of supplying work in lieu of charity.
- 4 & 5. That the Board is unable to concern itself with general economic labour questions that are absolutely outside its scope.
6. That it is inexpedient to ask the Government to reconsider its decision not to appoint a Yiddish-speaking Inspector of Factories & workshops.
7. That the Board, while always prepared to receive any information from all reliable powers, considers that it has in its own officers and a large band of visitors a sufficient means of investigation.

I am, Sir, Your Obedient Servant (Signed) N. Stephany,
Sec.

A vote of thanks to the chair concluded the meeting.

12 July 1894

B L Cohen

(BGMB, 12.7.1894, 3: 125-26). [Emphasis mine]

As shown in the following chapter, such pressures of the Jewish working class had some long range limited impact on the leaders of the Jewish philanthropies, however, its main tendency continued to be directed by a trend of paternalistic intervention on an **ad hoc** basis, however ineffective. Imbued with the laissez faire spirit, the Jewish élite rejected the demands of the Jewish Unemployed Committee. Those demands were based on larger, collective arrangements against adversity and deficiencies caused by unemployment. The establishment of a Labour Register appeared to the Board 'as within the province of the workers themselves' (BGMB, 12.7.1894, 3: 124). The interventions required by the Jewish Unemployed Committee were possibly regarded by the Board as unwise and unscientific philanthropy, and as such, irrelevant and hazardous. According to the doctrines of self-help and a free market economy, they had to help themselves.

It is evident from the foregoing that the limited apprenticeship and retraining programmes of the Board did not have any significant impact on the labour market characterised by a tremendous rate of Jewish unemployment. The efforts made by the élite to disperse the Jewish working class from the East End in order to enlarge their occupational opportunities were largely unsuccessful.

Loans

In this section on the provision of loans it is shown that this form of assistance was intended to help a part of those considered deserving poor to become rapidly independent economically.

The free loans were supplied by the Board, amongst others, to artisans for purchasing tools such as glazier's diamonds, bookbinders', carpenters'. In 1861, through

donations by Charlotte Baroness Lionel de Rothchild (at first anonymously presented), an arrangement was established by the Board for hiring out sewing machines which the borrowers were given the option of purchasing on weekly reduced terms. By 1874 a few hundred sewing machines had been issued. All applicants for loans of tools and implements were to find sureties, however, sometimes they were advanced loans even if they were unable to find a surety (Nineth BGAR, 1866/1867: 19). The applicants were thoroughly investigated through personal visits of volunteers, their character and competence were considered primordial.

Through loans and other types of relief the Board was able to maintain order and control. The regulation of the flow of labour in and out of the market was achieved by loans to the temporary unemployed during the slack seasons, a process that Mizruchi denoted as an 'abeyance device' (1983: 104). This system operated by the Board was particularly important taking into consideration the pitifully low wages of the garment, shoe and boot makers as well as other workshop trades. The earnings of those workers did not usually permit them an accumulation of savings and the seasonal precariousness forced the workers to live off loans from the Board, relatives and friends.

Lipman regarded the procedures applied by the Loan Committee to able-bodied poor and other categories as much more humane in comparison with those of the Poor Law (1959: 59).

While the Board fulfilled a parallel function to those of the parochial authorities in regard to the Jewish poor - comparison with voluntary services could be more relevant. In fact, the person assisted by the Loan Committee did not represent the majority of the applicants or users of the Board's services, as the loans were granted mainly to

'deserving' borrowers. The extended use of the term 'deserving' by the members of the Loan and Visiting Committee indicates a clear preferential policy towards those belonging in the past to the Jewish middle classes. It appeared that the members of those committees felt that the 'deserving' applicants were closer to their mentality.

Through such activities as advancing free loans the Board influenced the structure of the community as well as its political orientation by increasing the dependence on the élite and the identification with its aims. The loans encouraged economic independence and to some extent improved the standards of life of those who became owners of small shops. However, they also strengthened social economic individualism and conservatism. At the same time this intervention of the Board curtailed the influences of the Jewish socialist movement. While it may be argued that those evolvments were unavoidable, the Board certainly expedited this process. Consequently, the free loans, hiring and subsidising of sewing machines and other work implements - contributed to some splitting of the Jewish working class. This emerging cleavage was also possible because of the tendency of many of those who had begun to present upward mobility to turn away from their own group. Obviously there were additional factors that can help explain why the élite was able to divide to some extent the solidarity of the Jewish working classes.

Thus, the expansion of loans, hiring sewing machines and the provision of tools increased the social mobility of many poor, but this arrangement conflicted with the policy of the Board to diversify the occupational structure of the Jewish poor.

Health

Here the services created in the area of health are examined. The Board was motivated both by recurrent epidemics and by the fear that the Jews, and especially immigrants, would be accused of spreading infectious diseases.

The medical care of the poor was traditionally assumed by the doctors employed by the Three City Synagogues. In 1824 the Society for Supporting the Destitute Sick, Mishenet Le-Holim (Support for the Poor [Heb.]) was established supported by weekly one penny subscriptions. By 1835 the members of the Society proposed a scheme to establish a Jewish Hospital. An article in favour of erecting this hospital was published in the Hebrew Review and Magazine of Rabbinical Literature (11 Sept. 1835).

In the 1840s twenty four beds were allotted for Jewish patients with arrangements for dietary observances, such as in the Metropolitan Free Hospital in Devonshire Square (eight beds). Different proposals in this respect continued to appear in the Jewish Chronicle criticising the insufficiency of the existing arrangements. Those deficiencies were acknowledged by Dr D. H. Dite, Doctor to the Board (Medical Officer) (JC, 13.9.1867: 20.9.1867).

In addition to the hospital treatment provided by the voluntary hospitals subsidised by public donations, the Jewish poor made use of the workhouses' infirmaries supplied by the rates and the medical services of the Christian Missionary Society. Only the Sephardim possessed a hospital, Beitholim, established in 1748 at Leman Street and transferred to the Mile End Road in 1792. However, this institution ceased to function as a hospital, limiting acceptance to some maternity cases.

As an integral part of the expansion of its activity the Board took over in 1862 the medical relief given by the three main Synagogues. At this time the Annual Report

showed more sensitivity to the medical needs of the poor in comparison with their other predicaments. The Board employed its own doctors and apothecary. In 1869 the Board reported that 'To the patient visited at his home the attendance of a Jewish doctor who can understand his language and sympathise with his habits is doubtless a valuable boon'. However, 'doubts are beginning to be entertained whether it is necessary to maintain a surgery for the supply of medicines to Jewish poor, when hospitals and dispensaries are freely open to them and resorted to by them' (Eleventh BGAR., 1869: 15).

The Gathorne Hardy's Act passed during this period, providing for the establishment and the extension of the parochial dispensaries for the sick poor, also influenced the decision of the Board to discontinue its medical services (BGAR 1869: 15). However, the Board still hesitated. In 1869, the Medical Committee refuted the rumour that a relapsing fever epidemic had been imported by Jewish immigrants from Poland following which the Board decided to employ temporarily the services of a Sanitary Inspector as a preventive measure (14).

In 1873, the Board discontinued the functions of its dispensary and in 1879 terminated the medical advice and the dispensing of drugs, port wine, gin and whiskey, which according to the records were widely prescribed throughout the period, and possibly may give some indication as to the level of the medical care offered to the poor (see expenditure of the Medical Committee in Chapter 11). Both discontinuations were made after periods of trial. Lipman wrote that 'The Medical Committee watched carefully for complaints but none were received ... a careful watch was kept to see whether hardship was involved but the Medical Committee found none' (Lipman 1959: 62). No comments were made by Lipman in regard to the validity of the Board's investigation as to the effects of the discontinuations.

The number of attendances at the medical services of the Board (dispensary, surgery and urgent cases at home, etc), according to the statistics of the Board increased from five thousand in 1863 to more than forty thousand in 1871 (61). Allowing for the existence of alternative services that could satisfactorily substitute the Jewish existing one - the Board used pseudo scientific methods of investigation to prove that none of the users were affected negatively by its discontinuation. The tendentious conclusions of the Board implies either that the service was not significant or that its extent was greatly exaggerated. This is an indication of the power of the élite over the poor and the working class as well as of its ability to manipulate the middle class including the intelligentsia.

The ambitions of the Board to control different aspects connected with poverty, such as health, brought the Board to expand its medical services for a period of nine to eleven years. However, in the light of the large expenditure involved the élite decided to re-shift the burden of health onto the Metropolitan hospitals and the Poor Law Union's infirmaries. The formal justification for this step was that 'there was nothing of a specifically Jewish character' in medical relief. (Magnus, 1909: 119).

The termination of the free medical care by the Board was also in line with the policy of the COS according to which, poor in receipt of wages were to contribute small amounts towards their medical care and they were encouraged to join provident societies which offered infirmary services. The continuous opposition of the élite to the establishment of a Jewish hospital was based on a trend which increasingly attempted to move away from a sectarian approach; financial considerations were possibly even more important (JC. 10.6.68). Instead, the

élite preferred to enlarge the provision of kosher food in London hospitals. A renewed movement to establish a Jewish hospital in 1909 was again strongly opposed by the élite headed by Nathaniel (Natty) Rothschild. The policy and practice in the field of medical relief shows how significantly the Board was influenced by the contemporary expansion of the medical services on a local level through central intervention.

As most of the East End of London was populated by non-Jews, the increased demand for medical facilities caused by the termination of the Board's services was felt mainly in the few parishes in which the Jewish poor resided. For a discussion on the burden created by the immigration on the local non-Jewish arrangements, see Jones (Jones 1877: 4).

The general tendency of the Board to avail itself of the facilities that the State provided was particularly reflected in the field of medical relief, possibly more than in any other field. To the extent that the Board continued to be involved in medical relief, it was 'to supplement not to supersede which is common to all' (BGMB 26.5.1873, 1: 80).

The Board maintained that 'the State knows no creed in its provision for medical relief and it is the duty of the Board to avail itself of the facilities which the State provides' (80). However, the Board was still regarded as responsible for the prevention of the risk of the spreading of cholera. In a letter sent by the Assistant Secretary of the Local Government Board, Whitehall, S.W. London on 31 August, 1892, to Benjamin L. Cohen, the President of the Board, he expressed the thanks of the Local Government Board for the letter received from the Board [no longer in the Board's Letter Box]. The Local Government Board also wrote that:

they will rely on your Board of Guardians to render Sanitary Authorities and other Officers every possible assistance in tracing and keeping under observation all Jewish immigrants recently arrived or arriving in this country under conditions which, in the judgement of the Authorities or of the Jewish 'Sanitary Committee', involve any risk of the introduction or spread of Cholera. (Letter of Local Government Board to the Board, 31.8.1892, BGLB).

The continuous increase in tax supported facilities permitted the Board to rely on their services, reducing its own expenditure accordingly. On 23 October 1911, the Medical Sub-Committee of the Board decided:

it is of the opinion that the Board would not be justified in incurring large additional expenditure for the purpose of sending tuberculous patients to sanatoria. That for the present all such patients as it shall be deemed proper to send for sanatorium treatment shall be sent to Daneswood or some other sanatorium where their reception will be free of cost to the Board (BGMSC, 1885-1911, A Report of the Medical Sub-Committee).

In the report of the Medical Committee of 26 May 1873 (Memorandum), it was

further submitted to the Board as being worthy of consideration whether or not the system of provident medical relief could be introduced among the Jewish poor. At the Brewer Street (Clerkenwell) Dispensary, a charge of one penny is made for each supply of medicine, and during 1872 these pence amounted to the handsome sum of £101. 6s. 4d. The result produced is not to be measured altogether by the amount of money but it is rather to be looked for in the feeling of

independence and self-respect which the system is calculated to encourage and foster.

(BGMB, 26.5.1873, 1: 80).

Such tendencies were obviously in line with the contemporary policy of the COS which associated indigence with moral failure, social reform and punishment. The élite regarded the free provision of medical care to the poor and as an erosion of their prudence and responsibilities.

The inadequacies of medical help available to the Jewish poor following the decisions of the Board to discontinue such services, is reflected in an extended letter sent to B. L. Cohen, Esq., M.P. by M. Hyamson, Hon. Secretary of the Jewish Dispensary, a philanthropic organisation established by the Jewish middle class. The purpose of this letter was to obtain access to the Register of the Board in order for the Dispensary to limit its philanthropic services to persons on relief. Some of the following views of the Committee of the Dispensary, expressed in the letter, are quoted at length, and they represent the problems encountered by the poor following the discontinuation of the Board's medical services

The aim of the promoters of the Jewish Dispensary is to benefit the Jewish Sick Poor who are so destitute that they are not even in a position to pay the moderate contributions required by the provident Medical Societies. Anyone conversant with the large number of cases permanently on the books of the Jewish Board of Guardians will not deny the existence of such a class, steeped to the lips in abject poverty and having every claim on our consideration and sympathy. Destitute Jews are prostrated by sickness they are referred to the parochial machinery. It is respectfully contended that there is no distinction in principle between

medical relief and relief of any other kind, between a loaf of bread and a bottle of medicine. At present, between 700 and 800 cases of Foreign Jews apply for medical relief to the Parish Authorities. Sometimes, days elapse before they are attended to. The Parish Doctors whom they at length see do not understand Judisch. It is believed that many breadwinners will be saved from disablement and death ... this class will be treated, in periods of illness, not like dumb brutes but like intelligent human beings - by medical men with whom they can freely converse (BGLB, Letter of 30.11.1896).

The discontinuation of the medical services by the Board, was explained and justified (Eleventh BGAR, 1869: 15). Defending its policy, the Board used a pedagogical and rehetoric approach, emphasising, amongst others, the alternatives of providential arrangements for the poor. However, middle class philanthropists speaking on behalf of the poor, sensed that the poor needed greater security, irrespective of their ability to provide against the adversity of disease and chronic illness. The medical services of the Board were discontinued prematurely, before alternative sufficient services were available, causing considerable suffering and hardship to the poor.

Here it has been shown that the Board retreated from the field of health, expecting the poor to apply to the statutory and voluntary non-Jewish services which became increasingly available. However, during the transition periods a great deal of suffering was caused to the poor.

Housing

The continuous severity of the housing problem throughout the nineteenth century is described and analysed, along

with the Jewish élite's perception of the problem and its failure to deal with it.

Only a few Almshouses and Homes were built by Jewish philanthropists from the 1830s to the 1870s intended to accommodate a very limited number of aged members of the City Synagogues' partly 'respectable' paying residents. Gradually, the Board assumed responsibility for some of them but had not engaged in building new ones, considering the resources needed for such projects and maintaining them as beyond its scope and possibilities. The First Half Yearly Report of the Board in 1859 promised 'at no distant day a scheme for bettering the homes and dwellings of the poor' (Third BGHYR, Dec. 1860: 21). The urgent necessity to improve the dwellings of the poor was mentioned in the Jewish Chronicle of 2.3.1860, and in 25.1.1861 the establishment of a Building Society was suggested. A public meeting of the important members of the élite was held in May 1861 on the Model Lodging Houses for the Jewish poor; the chairman was Sir Francis Goldsmid, Bart., M.P. The resolution taken at this meeting was the establishment of a Jewish and general Model Lodging House Association Limited, Jewish applicants to be given priority of place. (JC, 25.1.1861) However, there was no implementation of this project. (Some dwellings in which Jews lived existed on Commercial Street, JC, 6.12.1867).

In 1865 Nathan S Joseph, architect and one of the youngest members of the Board, drew the attention of the Executive Committee to the defects in the sanitary conditions of the dwellings of the poor. Amongst others: the absence of supplies of drinking water, defective or non-existent drainage, poor ventilation and accumulation of refuse.

During this period there was a serious danger of epidemic which brought about some pressure on the Board to

undertake some repairs of the tenements of the poor in lieu of the landlords. However,

Mr Lionel L Cohen was also averse to any work being undertaken by the Board; the sanitary defects he admitted to exist, but he considered that the Jewish poor were no worse off in this respect than their neighbours, and could not expect to be in a better position ... On the other hand, it was argued by the President that the emergency with which it was intended to grapple called for a rigid sacrifice of a principle to expediency; that apart from the social view it would be a direct economy to undertake works of a limited nature, as by preventing disease the burden which illness in a poor family threw on the Board's relief funds would be spared (JC, 4.8.1865).

Following this report, the Board appointed its own sanitary inspector to detect such defects and to press the landlords and the local authorities to improve the sanitary conditions (Eighth BGAR, 1865: 21). In the same year the Board expressed its hope that the Jewish poor could somewhat improve their housing conditions following the munificent Peabody donation (29). However, during 1867 no sanitary inspections were made on behalf of the Board. No explanation was given for this discontinuation and the fact that in the previous year the East End was affected by a cholera, one of the recurrent epidemics in the East End of London during the nineteenth century. The annual report does not reflect the consequences of the epidemic for the inhabitants, however the subsequent significant increase in the cost of medical services provided by the Board was specified (Tenth BGAR, 1868: 13). In 1863 the Modern Lodging Houses in Commercial Street were opened. The record hoped 'that they will prove to be sufficiently remunerative to induce the establishment of similar buildings on a larger scale'

(Sixth BGAR, 1863: 44). However, in 1865 the Board reported in regard to the 'dwelling of our lower classes':

Unfortunately the profits realised by these undertakings are not as yet inviting for financial investment; but it seems now to be an ascertained fact that 5 per cent, can be obtained by the erection of suitable dwellings for the labouring classes, if conducted with prudence and on a sufficiently large scale (Eighth BGAR 1865: 61).

A request to the Montefiores, Rothschilds and Goldsmids to come forward and help the severe situation in the dwellings of the poor was published in the Jewish Chronicle.

The Jews in the East End were in the poor, or near-poor, categories; the new immigrants moved to the cheapest, derelict accommodation with poor sanitation, usually those in a process of decline or abandoned by previous poor working class tenants. Small workshops were often located in the houses occupied by immigrant large families. Bedrooms too were used as work rooms. Sanctions were contemplated by the Board, to discontinue relief to the tenants of those houses. The Jewish Chronicle Editorial suggested the refusal of relief to those who lived in overcrowded housing (12.8.1881), an attempt to punish the victims. The dwellers of those houses had to pay exorbitant rent to landlords who, in the large part, neglected their properties, making only cosmetic reparations at the request of the Sanitary Inspector of the Board. The Sanitary Inspector demanded, without being challenged, that the tenants keep their rooms clean and whitewashed - an evidence of the quasi-authority of the Board (Gartner, 1973 rev.: 153).

After the beginning of the mass immigration in the 1880s, the housing conditions of the Jewish inhabitants in the East End had worsened, the housing problem becoming more politicised and as such more visible. In 1885, the Four Per Cent Industrial Dwellings Co. was established by the Rothchilds and shortly after a model housing project was erected in the East End. The immediate impetus for this action on a very severe issue neglected for decades was the appointment of the Royal Commission on Housing, presided over by the Prince of Wales. The motivation of the élite was to appear in a more favourable stance before the Commission. Also, the impact of the immigration on the living conditions in the East End had been too severe to be ignored. Possibly, the Jewish élite feared that the Jewish immigrants would be accused of forcing the already resident Gentile population to more inadequate accommodation. The Four Per Cent Industrial Dwellings denoted by the population (the Rothchild's Buildings) comprised of one hundred and ninety eight units. Additional tenement houses were built by the company in 1890 (two hundred and eighty five units), 1893 and 1896. However, during this period of mass immigration those solutions were far from solving the severe housing problems. The model project of Rothchild was also a political gesture intended to defuse the severe housing problems. The scheme of Rothschild combined a fair profit element to the investor with the education of the poor to respectability, correctness and frugality.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the resentment of the Jewish population in the East End over housing conditions grew considerably because of exploitative rents and landlords' abuses. Insanitary houses were continuously bought by landlords who, after superficial repairs, rented out the tenements. At least some Jewish landlords and housing brokers were involved in such transactions. In order to be able to pay the increasingly

raised rents, many tenants had to sublet further the already overcrowded apartments.

The resentment of the abused tenants was somewhat calmed down by Samuel Montague who feared that a more assertive protest would endanger his interests in the East End. At the mass meeting on high rents which he chaired on 19 December 1898, Montague denied a personal ownership of property in the East End, expressed sympathy for the Jewish working class by accusing the exploitative landlords and stressed the need for modern housing projects. Finally, Montague announced the donation of twenty six acres of land that belonged to him in Edmonton, to be used for building houses for three to four thousand people through the London County Council. Typically, the élite regained and maintained control by enhancing its virtue and creating an additional area of dependence of the poor on both the existing and the new institutions; in this instance the East London Tenants' and General Legal Protection Committees, both of which functioned in close co-operation with the Board and under Montague's tutelage (JC, 20.1.1899).

During the nineteenth century the élite was not ready to provide alternatives to the security, social and religious advantages that the poor felt in the East End. Some incentives for deconcentration were offered by Montague to respectable working class persons while, according to his policy, the '**schlemiels**' (bunglers, dolts) were to remain in the East End. The term emphasised the responsibility of this category for their situation, and as such they were not eligible for better working conditions or social mobility. Montague rather preferred to keep them in the East End in order for them to maintain a low profile. There is in the Heb. Yid. language an alternative term '**schlimazels**' (an extremely unlucky person) whose failure and ineptness is due more to '**mazael**' (luck). Both

Montague and the Board encountered difficulties in convincing candidates to move out of the East End and the East Enders were accused of resisting co-operation with the philanthropic institutions (JC, 12.2.1904, 19.2.1904).

In regard to the solution of the severe housing problem in the East End, Samuel Montague expected availability of local government resources. Alderman wrote 'no matter how admirable the record of the Four Per Cent and other philanthropic ventures in this field, local people looked to the Council rather than to private enterprise to provide the necessary volume of new housing needed' (1989: 32). Notwithstanding, the standpoint of the majority of the élite represented by the Conservative Rothschilds and Cohens was different. In 1898 the Progressives in the London County Council proposed to take advantage of the 1890 Housing Act in order to erect working class dwellings and to do the clearances involved at the sole cost of the Council. The Conservative MP, Sir Benjamin Cohen, (brother of Lionel, stockbroker and president of the Board from 1887-1900) attacked the proposal of the Progressives as a restriction on private initiative, 'Dwelling companies (he told the Council) could do the housing of the working classes in suitable tenements in refined quarters at reasonable rents and yet pay a fair return to their shareholders' (Alderman 1989: 36). In regard to the activities of the Board in this area, the Sanitary Committee was in intensive contact with the London County Council. The Board of Works of the Whitechapel District was in continuous communication with the Board in regard to the sanitary conditions in the areas where Jews resided (BGLB, Reply to the Report by Dr. Haner, upon the Sanitary Condition of the Whitechapel District, December 1894). Co-operating with the Unions and Whitechapel District Board - the Board made efforts to pressure the Metropolitan Board of Works for improvements (33). Using its sanitary inspector in the Jewish areas of Whitechapel:

Bethnal Green, St George's and Mile End, the Board provided the London County Council with valuable information which was considered reliable by the latter. The Board also functioned as a pressure factor in the field of public health.

However, the primary policies of the Board in regard to the problem of overcrowding in the East End were based on transmigration and repatriation. Montague, and to some extent the Board, attempted also a policy of dispersion of the Jewish working class to the provinces. In order to facilitate this process, Montague considered the establishment there of alternative religious and other Jewish services. However, the need to find work within a narrow range of occupations compatible to their skills, made such prospective projects largely impracticable. Obviously there were other considerations in the 'social mind' of the poor and the immigrants, amongst others the security they felt living together with their families, kin and **lendsleit** (see Glossary).

The mass immigration and the collectivistic trends forced the Jewish élite to adopt a more structuralist approach in terms of relating to the housing problem as a predominantly physical need for shelter. At the same time the élite continued to focus on a culturalist approach, reflected in anglicisation.

Under different pressures from below and those exercised indirectly by the Royal Commission on Housing, the élite had no choice but to regard the housing needs in the Jewish East End as similar to those of the underprivileged English population of London. The Housing Project also signified some shift from a predominant pattern of helping the poor individually to a more comprehensive support of community needs. The problem-solving modality of the élite was based on a remunerative profit making criteria.

The housing projects built by the élite are an example of complementary interests but the implementation developed at the tempo set by the élite according to its particular interests.

Only late in the nineteenth century was the problem of housing tackled to some extent by the Jewish philanthropist. This was done considerably under the influence of non-Jewish projects in this field. The housing problem involved a great deal of class antagonism as many of the landlords were Jews.

While there were some differences in the approach of the Board in regard to its various fields of practice stemming from historical precedents or the preferences of some large donators - the deployment of the Board's services was based on some unifying concepts of the contemporary philanthropy such as thorough economic and moral investigation. The emphasis on the personal defects legitimised the neglect of the broader problems dealt with in this chapter.

CHAPTER 13

ACCULTURATION, SCHOOLING AND COMMUNICATION

This chapter considers the activities of the *élite* in the acculturation and socialisation of the poor. The Board itself supported such activities; for example, from the commencement of its activities in 1859 the Board required parents to provide proof of their children's attendance at school, as a pre-condition for receiving vital assistance. The Jewish Press, discussed in this chapter, continuously supported the efforts of the *élite* to expedite the acceptance of the poor into the host society by forcing them into a rapid and sometimes mechanical process of acculturation.

The Jewish *élite* was continuously preoccupied by the fear that their acceptance by the corresponding stratum in the host community could be undermined by the strangeness of the new immigrants.

Acculturation

In this section the influence of the Settlement Movement on the Jewish *élite* is described and analysed. However, the Jewish *élite* came somewhat late under this influence.

This chapter includes the activities of the *élite* in the acculturation of the poor. The Board itself supported such activities, for example, from the commencement of its activities in 1859 the Board required parents to provide proof of their children's attendance at school, as a pre-condition for receiving vital assistance. The Jewish Press, discussed in this chapter, continuously supported the efforts of the *élite* to expedite the acceptance of the poor into the host society by forcing them into a rapid and sometimes mechanical process of acculturation.

The fear that the accepted view of the Jewish *élite* by the corresponding stratum in the host community could be

undermined by the strangeness of the new immigrants, continuously preoccupied the Jewish élite.

Montague recognised the importance of social-cultural activities in the East End and was instrumental in founding the Jewish Working Mens' Club in 1874 under the ultimate auspices of the wealthy class, however, members of the workers' élite participated in the organisation of the activities - an unprecedented phenomenon in the philanthropy of the establishment. According to Gutwein (1992), the collaboration of the workers was a deliberate attempt to create a more independent Jewish poor class, however, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Montague's group did not envisage the Jewish community outside the framework of public control established by the élite (1992: 157). According to different sources the Club was not generally attended by unskilled labourers and newly arrived immigrants. Endelman (1983) wrote that the sponsors of the club,

hoped to attract the immigrants to the Club's extensive facilities in great Alie street, but the tone and character of the Club's activities did not appeal to the Yiddish-speaking newcomers, who could not be induced to join. Most of the Club's members continued to be drawn from the anglicized workmen of the area until its closing in 1912 (Endelman 1983: 116).

This is a representation of an increasing differentiation within the Jewish working class per se. The establishment of the Jewish Working Men's Club was influenced by the British Working Men's Club movement from which it borrowed its name (Williams 1990: 22). The cultural and educational system set up by the élite was an important agent in persuading the working class and the poor to believe that the system was just and to accept the constraints involved in the social structure of the

community. The Club fulfilled an important role in creating some impression of a closer relationship between the working class and the élite.

The East End Scheme advanced in 1896 by Nathaniel Rothschild was a concession, made in order to defuse the discontent, to prove that matters were dealt with and under control. By this process, allegiance was recruited to the traditional élite. The Scheme was based on a combination of charity and paternalism. Some of its main elements were the acculturation and conservative anglicisation of the alien poor who according to the Jewish Chronicle were to be civilised. Most of the plans included in the Scheme were implemented. They included youth clubs where enthusiastic young members of the élite and some professional middle class members were involved in different activities, including conservative anglicising. The aims of the youth clubs were: lowering strange visibility, moral uplifting, offering an alternative to radical leftist and counteracting delinquency. The aims of the club were dictated by the specific relations between the Jewish classes and the Jewish situation in England and as such differed in important aspects from the British counterpart movement. The clubs' leaders acted also as guardians of poor boys, assisting in the apprenticing activities of the Board under the supervision of the Work Committee. There is a general agreement amongst the historians in regard to the general success of the youth clubs, which can be attributed to the enthusiasm amongst the middle classes created by the Settlement Movement. This Movement also influenced the approach of the volunteers activated by the Visiting Committee of the Board. The Scheme was largely based on contemporary models taken from the host society. The Chief Rabbi suggested an institution modelled on the Toynbee Hall as a place where 'the indwellers of East and West could meet ... and where our working classes could be

taught correct conceptions of the relations of Capital and Labour, of employers and toilers' (JC, 13.3.1896). This is an example of the use of religious authority - and by implication, of religious teachings - as a political doctrine and instrument of control over the lower classes, implying the divine origins of a static social structure. The young members of the élite were exhorted to move to the East End, a somewhat belated version of the Settlement Movement emanating from the Toynbee Hall.

The Lads' Brigade - another feature of the East End Scheme - emphasised class discipline and knowing one's exact place in the social organisation, always obeying and honouring superior ranks. Such aims were manifested in the sermons delivered by rabbis to the lads. In 1902, the preachings of discipline of the ancient Israelites were evoked as a model (JC, 1.2.1902). In this way, ideas were identified with diverting remote historical situations. The discipline was to counteract what the Jewish élite perceived as the primitive disorderly Jewish mobs of Eastern Europe and manifested the fears that the concentration of the poor classes in the East End ghetto created amongst the members of the élite.

Given the scale of immigration and its accompanying need, the limited services established to acculturate the Jewish poor were restricted in their impact. But despite this, and their paternalistic and authoritarian character, their contribution was not insignificant.

Schooling

This section deals with the elementary schools established by the élite, which provided basic literacy and numeracy to the Jewish children and deliberately promoted their Anglicisation.

From its commencement, the Board was characterised by a tendency for a comprehensive paternalistic control which included education of the young generation and anglicisation. According to the original Board's Laws and Regulations (constitution,

Children of those receiving relief must attend a school, vouchers of which must be produced.

(Law 12: 5, 1859; Scheme by Ephraim Alex: 7, 1859)

The reporter of the Jewish Chronicle who was present at the reception of the Relief Committee, gave a vivid description of how this policy was implemented,

The next applicant was a man whose very countenance had starvation written on it. His tale was short and concise. He was a foreigner, with four children; he had no work, nor was there a prospect of any. While making the preliminary inquiries, we were much struck with the altered tone of the president; all his usual kindness seemed to have vanished, and had he been a relieving-officer of the "Oliver Twist" school, it could not have been more harsh. "Where have your children been today? he enquired.

"They have remained at home with me, sir," was the reply.

"I knew it, and they remained at home with you yesterday and the day before as well. Now, sir, let us clearly understand each other. Send your children to school tomorrow, and keep them there the whole of the week; if you do not, you will receive nothing more from us (JC, 6.1.1865).

It is possible that the presence of the Jewish press reporters somewhat 'softened' the approach of the Relief Committee to the applicants for relief.

The financial support that the Rothschilds gave to the

Board, for which they also fulfilled the role of treasurers for long periods of time, was always paralleled by the enlargement and maintenance of the largest Jews' Free School. Opened in 1817, and moved to Bell Lane, Spitalfields in 1821, this school included some important elements of philanthropy such as clothing and apprenticing, characteristic to the other Jewish free schools. This endeavour considerably increased the prestige of the Rothschild family. It was considered as important in providing religious education and combating the activities of the Christian missionaries. For a long period the school was maintained by the family only, as governmental grants for children's education through the Treasury were available only to Jewish schools which admitted children of all faiths and permitted the withdrawal of children of other denominations from Jewish religious instruction. The Jewish Free School was very much a multi-generational Rothschilds' project and their favourite charity. At the beginning of the twentieth century school uniforms with the colours of the Rothschild family were provided yearly to approximately four thousand pupils. In the framework of providing an elementary knowledge according to the contemporary standards for education of the poor, - the school was the main instrument of anglicisation and for inculcating middle class value. It also continuously propagated the mythos of the Rothschilds in the East End. As such, it was considered a stronghold vis-à-vis Montague's arriviste group.

In this section it has been shown that the enlargement of the responsibilities of the State enabled the Jewish élite to minimise its expenses in regard to formal education of the children. Few Jewish voluntary day schools were opened after the 1870's.

Communication

This section presents evidence of the self-justification and legitimisation by the élite supported by the manipulation of communal opinion through the Jewish Chronicle, as the main organ of communication. It also deals with some of the alternative perspectives provided by the Jewish press.

The Jewish Chronicle and the Voice of Jacob were founded in 1841. In its revised form of 1844 the Jewish Chronicle was entitled the Jewish Chronicle and the Working Men's Friend. Joseph Mitchell, its owner, (d.1854) was a wealthy 'self made man' who regarded himself 'as a representative of the working classes'. Mitchell, however, campaigned for civil rather than social equality. (Cesarani 1992: 261).

Abraham Benisch, the editor of the Jewish Chronicle, contributed in the late 1850's to the establishment of the Board by its own scheme and the campaign advanced under his editorship, however once founded, Benisch accepted the policies of the Board in an uncontested way. Jacob Franklin, the founder, editor and owner of the Voice of Jacob between 1841 and 1846, became a member of the Jewish Board of Guardians (1865-1877) and Chairman of the Committee for Legislative and Parochial Affairs.

Lionel Louis Cohen, the dynamic Honorary Secretary of the Board and its President after 1869, was one of the three members of the consortium that nominated the editor of the Jewish Chronicle in 1868.

Becoming the community's leading weekly newspaper, the Jewish Chronicle generally supported the status quo in the application of the plutocratic principles of the élite. It reported on the meetings and developments of the Board

and related to Jewish poverty in terms of the contemporary discussion.

During the mass immigration the Jewish Chronicle most often supported the efforts of the élite in discouraging the immigrants from staying in England and acted as the Board's public relations organ expressing its official opinions. In this way the Jewish Chronicle created an inhospitable atmosphere stressing that immigration could be detrimental to the immigrants themselves. According to the Jewish Chronicle's restrictionism, repatriation could prevent the formation of a 'pauper colony thrown upon the rates' causing anti-Semitism

For let there be no mistake the interests of the wealthy Hebrew are as much at stake as those of any other class (JC, 6.12.1901).

Here was an attempt to divert the immigrants already living in England from class consciousness and enlarge the number of the middle class members who opposed immigration especially artisans in the same occupational field as the immigrants. At the same time the Jewish Chronicle had tempted the 'better class of members' of the East End to join the West End synagogues. The Jewish Chronicle also suggested that the Board should request a fair ability of speaking English as a condition for being given assistance (JC, 22.7.1904).

The Jewish Chronicle had welcomed any help offered by the élite to the poor, generally avoiding its condemnation of deficiencies. To the extent that concern about the situation of the poor was expressed, it was rather restrained, hesitant and as such could not force public expectations in regard to the responsibilities of the wealthy. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century/early twentieth century the Anglo Jewish press was

characterised by a lack of criticism and the initiative needed to incite action, such as creating an East End movement for social reform.

Only at the beginning of this century is there more evidence of some attempt to shame the rich in order to provoke them into initiating and improving projects relating to the collective needs of the poor. The Jewish Chronicle accepted for publication some articles by bearers of opposition, largely moralists, provided they did not challenge the balances of social forces within the contemporary structure or did not burden too much the middle class conscience.

The more determined critics of the establishment were readily labelled 'extremists' and rejected as such. The Hebrew Socialist Union was established in 1876 by Aron Lieberman, an immigrant from Lithuania, in August 1875. The socialist paper, Arbeter Fraint (the Workers' Friend), expressed the resentment of the radicals against the establishment. It was influenced by the revolutionary movement in Russia and the previous experiences of the Jewish proletariat of Eastern Europe in class clashes. This paper presented the opposition of the working class to the values imposed by the élite through its philanthropic activities of anglicisation. It had rejected the helplessness attributed to the Jewish working class and the way in which the institutions of the élite flaunted its social superiority (for instance, JC, 22.8.1884). Another paper which reflected the opinion of the immigrants maintaining their identity was the Polishe Yidl-Die-Zukunft.

While sometimes critical voices could be heard, they were generally limited by self-censorship and the propagation of conservative predilections to marginalise subversive ideas. The most bitter criticism of the orientation and

policy of the Board and of the Jewish élite came from the immigrant press basically denouncing the lack of proper institutions for the absorption of immigrants resulting from fear of attracting them.

The efforts of the wealthy class to transform the poor immigrants in order to make them as similar as possible to their English counterparts and invisible as a distinct group stemmed from its fear of anti-Jewish feelings. This process of assimilation to the host society which was to some degree inevitable and indeed necessary, assumed however 'mechanical' characteristics. This was greatly encouraged and reinforced by the Jewish Chronicle which represented the Jewish élite within the community to the other Jewish classes and outside to the host community.

CHAPTER 14
BEYOND THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE ÉLITE:
SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION

This chapter deals with the institution established by the poor themselves emphasising their independence versus the domineering philanthropy of the élite. It contains related areas in which the poor acted or organised themselves independently or with the help of middle class members. The chapter also includes philanthropic institutions that attempted to remain outside the orbit of the Board. The common denominator of those related areas was some consciousness of the Jewish poor and working classes in regard to their particular interests within the Anglo-Jewish community.

A considerable number of Jewish philanthropies co-existed in parallel with charities associated with synagogues and with the services offered by the Board. Most of those institutions were established by the Jewish middle classes and often derived their name from their counterparts in the host society. While they differed in scope or specialisation, the common denominator of those philanthropies was the differentiation between the 'deserving and undeserving' poor. The manifest aims were generally to enable the recipient to reach or regain as soon as possible the ability to help himself and become economically and socially independent in the spirit of the period. The small philanthropies emphasised what they regarded as the need of the poor for moral support and adopted a rather educational and didactic approach in regard to the immigrants' matters of daily living.

While the different forms of assistance offered by those philanthropies were often inadequate and unsystematic, the range of their usefulness and comfort to the poor may have been generally underestimated. It is possible that those less centralised institutions were - despite their doctrinaire declarations in the spirit of the period - more flexible and sensitive to the needs of the poor.

They were less formal and trusted the poor more, giving them the needed leeway.

Still many of those philanthropies continued to operate on a voting system (balloting). The advertisements for forthcoming balloting published by the charity candidates to enhance their competitive probability concomitantly exposed them and increased the worth of the benefactors, legitimising what was considered a fulfilment of an important commendment of the Jewish law (**mitzvah**) and giving them a sense of power and pride. This random system effectively discriminated against those who could not afford an advertisement or could not obtain protection of the sponsors - naturally the most distressed persons.

The Board made a continuous and intensive effort to incorporate those philanthropies or at least to bring them into the orbit of its social philosophy. To the extent that the Board succeeded, those small philanthropies were used by the Board for specialised, auxiliary and supplementary services that it could not offer by itself. In the process of co-ordinating its own services with such satellite charities, the Board further instilled its philosophy and supervised their authorities. In the frame of reference of its 'imperialistic' tendencies the Board regarded pluralism in the field of philanthropies as dangerous to the fulfilment of its attempted comprehensive control.

However, the Board encountered great difficulties in succeeding in this policy in the light of the strong motivations of the members of the commercial middle class to expose their own generosity apart from the élite. Black regarded the attitude of the élite to the other philanthropies as hostile (179). Black cited the accusation presented by a middle class lady founder of a small charity in North London in 1891 presenting the élite

as 'insensitive, hiding humanity and equity behind the formalism of coldly Benthamite rules (Black: 179). This founder of the charity did agree to means tests and investigations to avoid misapplied relief but rejected the humiliation of the applicants by the Board. However, while the charity that she administered was enlarged, she acted in full co-operation with the Board (Black: 179).

By 1900 there were approximately one thousand two hundred unemployed or underemployed breadwinners who needed the seasonal winter services of the Soup Kitchen on Spittalfields (est. 1854). According to the Board this institution refused to provide the names of its beneficiaries. However, their list was open to the scrutiny of all its subscribers. The Board insisted on the avoidance of duplication, emphasising the criterion of the obligation of the community to relieve distress rather than poverty - again a concept which is not compatible with the Jewish traditional view of charity. The argument of the Soup Kitchen's sponsors in favour of avoiding stigmatisation was disregarded by the Board. The leaders of the Board were firm in their decisions and dealt sharply with what they regarded as an inducement to pauperism. Coming under strong pressures, the Soup Kitchen had to compromise and provide the weekly list of the beneficiaries required by the Board (JC, 6.10.1905). The Soup Kitchen had also depended on some wealthy 'big donors' and was especially susceptible to renounce its own more flexible principles.

Consequently, the philanthropies which strongly co-operated with the Board, were influenced by its 'hard line' policies. This is illustrated by the admission policy of the Jews' Hospital and Orphan Asylum at Norwood which refused to accept single orphaned immigrant children whose parents had resided for less than two years in England (except for double orphans under special

circumstances) even if the death of the late parents was caused by pogroms.

The initiatives of the poor were met with strong opposition from the Board. A shelter was founded by 'Simha Baker' (Simon Cohen) in an impoverished synagogue in Church Lane, East End to fill the vacuum created by the Six Months' Rule. The scope of this institution was to supply first aid to homeless poor immigrants and transmigrants, to provide temporary housing and clothing. Supplying such help to newly arrived immigrants, the Shelter infringed on the policy of the Board. Determined to close Simha Baker's Shelter, a delegation headed by F. D. Mocatta visited the shelter and were instrumental in influencing the local authorities to close it on sanitary grounds (A. Mindy, Jews' Temporary Shelter, Transcript, Mocatta Library).

The popular resentment and oppositional reaction that this step raised in the East End, including a protest meeting, led to the establishment of a new Jews' Temporary Shelter in 1885. This time with the support of Samuel Montague, his business partner Franklin, and a nouveau riche Hermann Landau (1844-1924), an immigrant who was a Hebrew teacher in Poland and had amassed considerable capital as a banker in London and was later to become a member of the élite. Only in 1900 did the Board finally consent to recognise the Jewish Temporary Shelter, again, in order to bring it under its control at least in some matters that were vital to the interest of the élite. This process was 'facilitated' by a large donation by the Rothschilds.

However, the establishment of the shelter represented an unprecedented antagonistic alternative to the institutional policy of the Board, initiated 'from below' and with the support of the popular reactions in the East End. The working class and the poor lacked the resources

and determination to act in an entirely independent way. Accepting the paternalism of the partly and temporarily divergent Montague and of Landau, the nouveau riche, proved in the long term to be detrimental to the interests of the poor immigrants. Despite this, the establishment of the shelter strengthened the consciousness of the East End juxtaposing their interest to those of the élite.

Although Landau declared his intentions to operate the Jews' Temporary Shelter in an humanitarian spirit, after being accepted as the first Pole in the élite, as a stockbroker and banker, Landau adjusted the activities of the Jewish Temporary Shelter to the line dictated by the Board with which he continued to co-operate closely. In this spirit the Managing Committee announced that it was its duty to

Remove any erroneous impressions that ... this Institution is a mischievous innovation calculated to encourage, rather than to check, the unhappily continuous immigration of destitute foreign Jews ... with a view to provide a further wholesome check to the immigration of any pauper adventurers who might be attracted hither ... as well as in contemplation to institute a Labour Test of such a character as not to interfere with the already over stocked market.

(A. Mindy, Jews' Temporary Shelter, Transcript, Mocatta Library).

The Spartan measures that were taken to make the Shelter as unattractive and deterrent as possible, were far from having any significant impact on the pushing and pulling forces which motivated immigration from the Continent.

In 1871, the Board estimated the amount distributed 'without registration, without concert and without system' at 'three or four times as great as that which the

organised institution (the Board) is enabled to devote in the same period' (Thirteenth BGAR: 18). The Board regarded the bulk of the community as indifferent to the 'evils' of promiscuous charity (idem), and the number of Jewish philanthropies which resisted subordination to the Board increased after the mass immigration which started in the 1880s.

The freedom in England sanctioned duplication, competition and separatism. Influenced by the COS (see for instance, JC, 14.5.1873), the Board emphasised the need for rational organisation, efficiency, and consolidation of Jewish philanthropies to amalgamation. It was in line with its search of order and control. However, such centralisation could cause the loss of the specific identities of the smallest charities (some of them had their roots in the traditional Judaism). This, in turn, could decrease the total amount of money donated to the poor. (Taking into consideration the readiness of middle class donors to give frequently small amounts of money.)

Many of the small charities were based on class protectionism and limited their help to middle class persons. Others, however, helped the poor and the immigrants, functioning as an alternative to the control of the Board.

The Ashkenazic Jews in the East End felt a kinship for each other as they laboured in shops; few were able to leave the East End before a generation or two elapsed and those who did were exceptions to the general rule.

They came to England possessing a common culture and historical past. Even though divided by regional backgrounds they managed to understand each other in spite of differences in their native Yiddish dialect. On arrival they were generally Orthodox. In spite of obvious intra-class frictions due to diverging interests

of workers, masters and landlords, the immigrants felt that they had much in common.

On this basis of social cohesiveness, a reciprocal form of help, partly semi-philanthropic, shielded many of the poor from dependence on the élite's charity and the potential stigma involved. Much assistance in providing immediate help, temporary loans, accommodation and finding employment, was provided in the informal circle of family, friends and neighbours. Both this informal and the more formal assistance provided a strong sense of community and interdependence.

The reciprocal help among this class can be understood in the light of their common background in eastern Europe. Hannah Arendt (1968) wrote

Humanity in the form of fraternity invariably appears historically among persecuted peoples and in the eighteenth century Europe it might have been quite natural to detect it among Jews (Arendt 1968: 13).

Unfortunately, there is an absence of substantial records and specialised study on such **hevras** and the larger phenomena of important acts of assistance which went quite unrecorded, although mentioned by some observers.

In 1865 the Jewish Chronicle reporter was present at the reception of applicants by the Relief Committee; he wrote about some of the cases that appeared before it,

a Prussian Jew, was quite blind, and led into the room by a child of one of the lodgers of the house he lived in. It was his first appearance in Devonshire square, and he informed the Board that he had been some weeks in England, and was utterly destitute. On being asked how he had contrived to live, he replied that the

poor Jews in Petticoat Lane had made a subscription for him, and he had received about eight shillings a week from the pence they had subscribed (JC, 6.1.1865).

The **hevras** were traditional Eastern European voluntary organisations in the East End. A **hevra** combined the function of a friendly society with those of a religious fraternity. Its social services included inter alia: interest-free loans, reciprocal help, social interchange and advice, assistance in overcoming crises caused by immigration, or during illness and **shiva** (a seven day period of formal mourning observed after the funeral of a close relative) and other valuable forms of support. Its religious activities comprised the operation of small synagogues, worship and study, religious education for children and Passover supplies. The **hevras** had their own patriarchal leaders and functioned in the Old World residential pattern. The **hevras** were established in the East End, indigenously providing a more gradual and viable adjustment to the new conditions of life in England. They were characterised by more personal and structured equalitarian contacts; they were more 'democratic' and less hierarchic. The **hevras** included strong elements of **Gemilut Chasadim** - acts of loving kindness - personal charity which always existed alongside communal (public) charities. **Gemilut Chasadim** involved the personal activities of the charitable such as visiting the sick, during the shiva, and acts of charity that cannot have a quid pro quo and cannot be reciprocated, for example, burying the dead.

Some of the **hevras** were named after East European towns. There were some fifteen to twenty **hevras** that functioned in the 1870s in London. The services offered by the hevras negated those of the élite as they were not made conditional on modification of socio-cultural behaviour and not based on deterrent or formal stipulations. The

relief of the **hevras** was based on, or was closer to, the precept of the Jewish traditional charity being also more discreet. Some of the **hevras** came under the influence of contemporary Friendly Societies and adopted secularised elements of compensatory insurance with some redistribution variants (in case of illness, burial and **shiva**). The **hevras** were an integral part of the working class' milieu.

The Fabian, Mrs Sidney Webb (née Beatrice Potter), who had visited the East End in 1889, had been impressed by the tendency to clanishness of the newly arrived immigrants from Poland and their social obligations for the maintenance of the 'family and charitable relief of co-religionists' (1902: 171, 191-2).

The very existence of the **hevras** was evidence that the Board did not respond sufficiently to the wishes and pressures of the Jewish population in the East End - providing assistance in an autocratic and despotic way, the élite felt that nothing should be done by the poor themselves for their collective needs. The **hevras** indicated that the estranged assistance of the Board was largely resented.

Because of the help offered by the **hevras**, together with the reciprocal assistance within the family and neighbourhood in the East End, the policies of the Board to limit immigration met with partial success only.

The **hevras**, together with the Jewish trade unions, the Zionist and the anarchist groups, had functioned outside the institutional network of the élite, threatening its security.

The functions of the **hevras** had been ignored and denied by the élite. The establishment regarded them as a serious

obstacle to a proper anglicisation of the immigrants. The Jewish Chronicle had suggested that the **hevras** should be eradicated (JC, 5.12.1884). They had been denoted by the Jewish élite as 'makeshift' **hevras** or 'bedroom' **hevras** (JC, 3.4.1896), and were accused of duplicating services and distributing indiscriminate charity. Moreover, they were regarded as symbols of the ingratitude of the poor. However, the **hevras** were supported by the somewhat more independent group of arrivistes within the élite headed by Samuel Montague.

In its opposition to the **hevras**, the élite was joined by the religious establishment which criticised them for undermining the Anglo-Jewish religious discipline and wasting their financial resources. The establishment attempted to suppress the **hevras** collectively and possibly individually. Williams, writing about the Manchester Board, pointed out that on 'at least one occasion, relief was refused to an applicant on the grounds that he was an official of a "clandestine society", a **hevra**' (quoted in Manchester Board of Guardians Minutes Book, 6.1.1875, Williams 1976: 286, 418).

The **hevras** provided social prestige to middle class and workers' aristocracy donors and organisers. Their leadership reflected a process of differentiation and gradual embourgeoisement in the Jewish East End and the working class per se. Some of the supporters of the **hevras** had belonged to the middle class. A relative few middle class persons had joined the élite, they gained status and power in the **hevras** and other organisations created for the immigrants. They did not belong to the upwardly mobile who detached themselves from the cause of the East End working class. The financial supporters of the **hevras** were also less assimilated and many of them had remained in the East End and were aware of the fundamental realities of the immigrants and their poverty. Other supporters were owners of workshops who, according to

Polins (1981), were 'at no great economic advantage over their employees' (1981: 4). Still other owners of workshops had exploited the labour of the newcomers or 'greeners', in other ways and, as such, were opposed to the workers' demands for better working conditions.

In their opposition to the Jewish radicals, the middle class donors had identified themselves with the *élite*. The very rich members of this class were eventually accepted into the *élite*. Williams (1990), relating to the counterpart of this class in Manchester, denoted its members '**alrightniks**' (American Yiddish slang). (1990: 23, 26).

The demise of many of the **hevras** can be explained also by the difficulties of the East End communities to maintain financially the numerous charities. Nor were the resources of the East Enders sufficient to create alternative larger philanthropic institutions of their own, independent of those of the *élite*. However, in spite of their limited resources they permitted the working class and the poor to cling to their own institutional experiences and associations.

The decline of the **hevras** after a relative short period of time can be explained by their shortcomings deriving from the dilemmas of the voluntary social action and by the emergence of more universal, collective and compulsory arrangements.

Marxists recognised that the ability of the working class to realise better how the social structure influenced their lives and how to bring about change, lay generally in large workplaces. Most of the Jewish workers were employed in small sweatshops in the Jewish area of the East End.

The continued irregularities of employment deriving from the seasonal nature of the needle trade industry caused to some extent difficulties in developing their common identities and grievances into a more forceful power.

The same irregularities made the working class continuously dependent on the temporal and intermittent assistance expanded by the Board and other Jewish philanthropies. In turn, those institutions

were ancillary to economic arrangements, their chief function was to regulate labour ... to absorb and control enough of the unemployed to restore order; then as turbulence subsides, the relief system contracts. (Piven & Cloward, 1971: 2.).

The most popular radicals among the Jewish working class were those who recognised their need for 'immediate and tangible ameliorations in their daily life' (Kerchen, 1990: 43). Countering the accepted view that the poor immigrant Jews were a sort of 'pariah **Ostjuden** capitalists' (Cuddihy, 1976 edn: 139, 140), lacking in class consciousness and harder to organise, Kerchen emphasised their class orientation. She claimed that 'some sixty five per cent of the organised tailoring workforce in London was Jewish, though in total it represented only thirty per cent of the whole' (Kerchen 1988: 4).

In 1901, twenty thousand tailors in the United Kingdom were Jewish, most of them living in London and Leeds and working in sweatshops in the Jewish areas. However, according to Finestein (1993) 'this evil was neither introduced by nor limited to Jewish employers' (1993: 189).

The City of London Jewish Tailors' Society was established already in 1867. From 1874 to 1940, about forty Jewish

trade unions were initiated, however only a dozen were active for more than one year. In the context of this study, it can be assumed, that the applicants to the Board were not passive acceptants of the harsh policies and procedures of the Board but that their contacts with the latter was imprinted with tensions derived from class antagonisms.

The aspirations to social mobility of immigrants was regarded in some historical studies as 'false consciousness', however, whether or not it existed, such consciousness could not last too long in the light of the harsh realities of their life in England.

Therefore, except for some immigrant arrivistes, the permanency of the membership in the working class did characterise a consistent number of persons during a considerable period of time.

Obviously, the increasing heterogeneity and upward social mobility in the East End contributed to a lack of an antithesis to the philanthropic institutions of the élite. While in the 1800s there was no real Jewish middle class in London and the majority of Jews could be regarded as poor or paupers (Green, 1991: 33-4), by the 1880s, the middle class consisted of half of the community (Liebman, 1975: 151, 155). The middle class adopted a emancipationist ideology of laissez faire liberalism and individual success. The communal positions to which the middle class aspired were under the tutelage of the élite.

The intelligentsia, as a group within the larger middle class, was closed to the opinions of the domineering classes on which it had depended economically many times and, consequently, was ready to fulfil its expectations. There were some tensions between the intelligentsia and the middle classes but they manifested themselves as family quarrels, rather than class conflict. The tendency

of the intelligentsia for secularisation and co-ordination of the synagogal social facilities was compatible with those of the leaders of the Board, to achieve overall control of the poor.

Many of the members of the Jewish middle classes, including the immigrant parvenus, created congregations west of the City and accepted the authority of the élite out of a 'free rider' comfortableness but also admiration for the élite's achievements and willingness to imitate its attitudes (Endelman, 1980: 7).

This chapter has demonstrated that the lack of sufficient funds impeded further development of independent institutions and the incorporation of some of them under the orbit of the élite by financing them. It is also evident that the preservation of their semi-independence by the élite prevented a deeper antagonism and split.

CHAPTER 15
JEWISH PHILANTHROPY AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY:
INCREMENTALISM AND SURVIVAL

This chapter focuses on the incremental approach adopted by the Jewish élite in order to accommodate some limited demands of the increasingly enlarging working class in the East End.

Bermant referred to the Cousinhood as a member of that 'compact union of exclusive brethren with blood and money flowing in a small circle' (1971: 1). This group formed an oligarchic regime in the sense that exercised its political control through a substantially close group of individuals.

However, not all the members of the élite were deeply or even moderately involved in philanthropic activities. Some limited themselves to the holding of honorific positions, accompanied by giving relatively large donations.

Financially and socially secure and enjoying the aura of 'big givers' committed philanthropies, increasing members of the élite in the late 19th and early twentieth centuries lost interest in Jewish affairs or considered them as marginal. They increasingly found scope in political and social activities of the host society and were caught up in the larger West End indifference. This process became evident to the more sensitive members of the Jewish middle class at mid century. A contributor to the Jewish Chronicle, Hertz Ben Pinchas, stressed the need for supporting elementary adult education as more important to the community 'than that so many esquires race in their chariots' (JC, 27.3.1850).

Leopold de Rothschild (1845-1917), partner in N.M. Rothschild & Sons, bankers, Nathaniel's youngest brother, was the honorary treasurer of the Board from 1879 to his death and presided over other important institutions.

While he headed some other important Jewish institutions, his passions were the owning and breeding of race horses and motoring. Leopald considered the greatest moments of his life to be his election to the Jockey Club in 1891, and breaking the contemporary speed limit by six miles per hour in 1902. He initiated the formation of the Royal Automobile Club. Those achievements coincided with the crisis caused by severe persecution of the Russian and Rumanian Jews culminating with the Kishinev, Bessarabia pogrom. Those events in Eastern Europe were the impetus for large waves of immigrants to England. In 1881, Albert Edward (the future Edward VII) struggled through a snow-storm to reach the Central Synagogue where the wedding of Leopald was officiated - the first time that a member of the English Royal family attended a synagogual service (Black 1988: 9).

The other Rothschild brother, Alfred (1842-1918), concentrated his expenditure on eighteenth century French art and furniture, which he collected in the country house that he built at Halton. Alfred was interested in British foreign affairs disregarding important diplomatic interventions on behalf of the outraged Jewish population in eastern Europe that largely attracted the Gentile attention in England at this period. Alfred was not a member of the Jewish Board of Guardians nor did he gain any reputation for significant donations. Like the other Rothschilds, he socialised primarily with non-Jews and figured in the circle of King Edward VII (Endelman 1990: 17-76). T. H. S. Escott reported in 1886, that the West End Jews were habitually to be seen in the drawing and dining rooms of society 'including the very crème de la crème, the possessors of the bluest of blue blood available' (Endelman 1990: 17-76). With such competing interests for more members of the élite, the control of the Jewish working class and the poor through paternalistic philanthropy lost much of its attractiveness

in favour of national affairs.

However, as a whole, the Cousinhood represented its fundamental interests and enjoyed a virtual monopoly of power by keeping decisive control over significant community divisions throughout a network of interlocking relationships. It headed the communal institutions, philanthropic and religious, averting the challenges of the working and lower middle classes. However, inside the decision making processes the Rothschilds were able to exercise control of their own, adding an additional autocratic variant to the oligarchy. The oligarchy remained self-selective and stood in an autocratic relationship to the remainder of the community.

Sometimes the élite was responsive to the more articulated demands of the poor working and middle classes in order to achieve a retention of its power. The élite was characterised by its closeness and exclusiveness and only wealthy salient members were given important roles in the decision making process and operation of its institutions. The élite functioned as discreetly as possible, however serious conflicting situations sometimes escaped its control to emerge as a threatening matter of public controversy.

Contrary to the accepted view of a cohesive élite, Gutwein, in his book The Divided Élite - 1881-1917 (1992), recently published, maintained that there were conflicting economic interests amongst the members of the élite reflected in ideological divisions and approaches to communal issues. Gutwein (1992), using a pluralist approach, related primarily to the dispute between Nathaniel Rothschild and Samuel Montague. It seems that the divisions that he suggested were predominantly motivated by divergent views as to the strategies and tactics through which the élite was to maintain the status

quo rather than substantive ideological differences. Indeed those divergences were aggravated by personal ambitions to advance communal careers within the conservative tendencies of the élite not related to changes in the implementations of its institutions, such as the Board.

Gutwein (1992) did not provide evidence to prove intrinsic dichotomy in interests. The élitist conflicts were ultimately resolved by co-operation and reciprocal favours leaving out the basic interests of the immigrant poor and the working class. Moreover, the power of the élite, as a whole, was not democratised by the dispute over the domination of the élite in the East End. To the extent that compromises were reached by the conflicting members of the élite they proved profitable to the élite itself, although some marginal concessions were made to the demands of the working class and the poor. Those concessions were related to a continuation of an independent administration of their institutions, and some projects of the élite such as housing, social and cultural activities in the East End.

The Cousinhood included amongst others, the sons of the houses of Rothschild, Cohen, Samuel, Montifore, Goldsmid. The time dedicated to philanthropic policy making and management by many important members of the élite was important in establishing a tradition of institutional control and its continuation.

The regime of the Anglo-Jewish élite was a continuation of the plutocratic and oligarchic dominance prevalent in the autonomous Jewish population in the feudal countries of Europe. The rise of the élite in England coincided with the increasing religious and ethnic toleration of the Victorian age. The emancipation of the wealthy Jewish class in England and its increased acceptance into the

non-Jewish society, generally weakened their contact with the community. Consequently, the ability of the community to support the poor decreased considerably, at the same time augmenting the power of those members of the *élite* who continued to assume leading roles in the establishment of communal institutions. The tremendous increase in the financial power of the *élite* and the continuous arrival of penniless immigrants widened its social differentiation.

From the 1880s the class conflict in the East End was increasingly manifest, even though the encounter between the classes was not accompanied by a more direct and violent attempt of the working poor to actualise their power. This change was caused mainly by the mass immigration of the pauperised proletariat heavily concentrated in the East End Jewish 'ghetto'. The social and economic structure of the East European working class in the East End was the basis of a few ideological movements. Their common denominator, however, was the opposition to the domineering features of the *élite's* supremacy. Concomitantly during the latter part of the nineteenth century the more independent and discontented middle class, including professional intelligensia, started to undermine the *élite's* prerogatives and controls by a more gradualist strategy rather than through radical changes in the services rendered to the poor. The issue relating to the immigration policy created controversy between the *élite* and some parts of the middle class.

After more than half a century during which the Jewish *élite* persistently dominated all other Anglo-Jewish classes, especially the poor, it started to encounter more manifest opposition. The conflicting but quiescent strained relationships developed into open class struggle. Some of the public figures that dared to protest vociferously on behalf of the poor and the immigrants were the Romanian born Sephardi Chief Rabbi, Moses Gaster, and

the Zionist leader, Leopald Greenberg. They did so despite political repercussions and xenophobia caused by the mass immigration.

This immigration that the élite could not prevent, became, in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth century, an important and urgent public issue, such as the Reports of the Board of Trade and the Royal Commission on Aliens. The opposition to the élite within the community and the exposure of its activities to the scrutiny of the non-Jewish nativism forced it to expand and intensify some of its social services. Efforts were made by the élite, to better some of the most abhorrent and appalling conditions of the immigrants in addition to a more intensified anglicisation. By doing this, the Jewish élite had succeeded in maintaining its control and continued to represent the community to the host society in the light of its interests.

On the larger political scene, the majority of the Jewish élite shifted its allegiance from the Liberals to the Unionist and Conservative parties, paralleling a similar trend of the non-Jewish bourgeoisie.

Samuel Montague, First Baron Swaythling (1902), (title taken from his country seat in Hampshire), was an MP for Whitechapel between 1885 and 1900, a member of the Board of Guardians (1865-1883) and Chairman of the Loan Committee (1873-1882). As a member of the Visiting Committee, he introduced systematic visitation. He was a relative of the the Cohens and Rothschilds by marriage. During the last part of the nineteenth century, Montague and Landau were accepted more by the Jewish population and, as such, were able to compete successfully in the East End with the prestigious position of Rothschild - although his electoral achievements were maintained at great pains. Montague's popularity can be attributed also to his political style and fluency in Yiddish. Black

commented 'He walked amongst them (the poor) better than other princes of the community who stood however benevolently at a distance, embarrassed, if not outraged, by their vulgarity' (Black 1988: 18). Allowing for his populism, it seems that his large and consistent donations to the more independent religious and social institutions in the East End contributed more to his status than his style. Through his contributions Montague was able to control the small institutions created by the population in the East End.

Montague accepted communalism as a means of social control which would aid in gradual absorption of the immigrants. Under his supervision, he was prepared to give the East Enders an interest in directing their small synagogues and hevras. Montague was orthodox and not an ignoramus in religious matters and he made visible his appreciation for Jewish ethics and religious values. Montague largely supported institutions established in the East End, including the semi-independent Jews' Temporary Shelter, in this way strengthening his parliamentary status. Through his intensive intervention one representative of the Federation of Minor Synagogues was accepted to seat at the Board's meetings.

The opposition of the Board to allow for the representation of the non-wealthy and non-contributory classes and its reluctant readiness for very limited concessions in this respect, is reflected in the description of the meeting of the Executive Committee on the representation of the Minor Synagogues at the Board.

The Executive Committee were favoured at their Meeting with the presence, as Delegates from the Federation, of Messrs. Samuel Montagu, M.P., H. Landau, and I. Webber, who stated that the request to be represented at the Board, was made as much in the interest of the Board as

in that of the Federation. It was contended that the proposed representation would afford the Board an increased influence over the members of the Minor Synagogues, particularly in the work of the Sanitary Committee, and also in the direction of obtaining financial support. It was also urged that the Federation of the Minor Synagogues were entitled to Representation at the Board, in the same way as the United Synagogue, and the Berkeley Street Congregation now possessed it; and that a nominal sum should be fixed to be paid by the Federation annually to the Funds of the Board.

The delegates further expressed their opinion that the Federation could, through its representative, render valuable assistance in the administration of the relief given by the Board.

The Executive Committee desire to impress on the Board, that the admission of a Representative from the Federation, would mark a distinctly new departure, since the Board from its foundation has been constituted entirely on the basis of representation of contributors, and not of recipients of relief; and the Committee would further state their confident belief that the latter class have never in any way suffered from any want of knowledge by the Board, of their claims and requirements.

The Executive committee, however, recommend that one gentleman should be admitted to a seat at the Board, as a Representative of the Federation, and this they advise in the expectation that some greater means may be thereby afforded for influencing the poor in sanitary and other matters, and also in the hope, held out by the Delegates of the Federation, that some considerable financial support would be thus obtained from a class which at present gives very little, but which, they are led to believe, could contribute in small amounts a substantial sum to the funds of the Board (BGMB, 1.3.188, 2: 514).

The annual contribution of this Federation to the Board was regarded as a symbolic relinquishment of the dependency stigma attached to the East Enders. This contribution was intended to prove that the East Enders were no longer objects of relief and control.

Montague regarded the Federation as an important mechanism for improving the conditions of the Jewish working class in the East End. With his tacit acceptance and possible encouragement, the Board was blamed for not supporting the liberation of the working class from charity by the reform of the communal policy.

Montague severely criticised both the Rabbinical authorities and the West Enders' upper middle class for seeing the East Enders as 'uneducated, charity cases'. In 1889 he demanded that a new synagogue proposed to be erected in the East End by Nathaniel Rothschild (in the framework of the Rothschild's East End Scheme) should be a part of a larger complex of social services, including the local unit of the Jewish Board of Guardians in which the indigenous inhabitants would be also represented. In an article published in the Fiftieth Anniversary Issue of the Jewish Chronicle entitled 'The Jewish Charitable Administration', the Board of Guardians was criticised by Montague suggesting the establishment of an alternative to the Board in the form of a Federation of Autonomously Operating Agencies, supervised by a central Charity Board composed of the representatives of all the independent social services. The implementation of this proposal could weaken the élite by reducing the domination exercised by the Board of Guardians in the field of philanthropy. The publication of this critique and proposal are an evidence of some democratisation and politicisation in regard to the aims and functions of the Board in the institutional structure of the community controlled by the élite and headed by Rothschild.

Notwithstanding his criticism, Montague shared the basic beliefs of the *élite* which did not motivate him to a more complete and radical politicisation in regard to the Board. Indeed, Black wrote 'these banking Titans (N. Rothschild and S. Montague) however, always set aside their struggle for pride of place within the Anglo-Jewry when great issues arose ... the two worked harmoniously on the thorny political and organisational issues of alien immigration. They agreed on which poor and immigrant Jews should be socialised. They deferred on how those things were to be accomplished' (Black 1988: 18). At the same time, however, Black complained that Montague's monumental work among the East End poor is written 'down or off and described as a cynical manipulation' (18).

Montague described himself as a 'self-made man' while, in fact, he originated from a rich Liverpool middle class family. He believed in a *laissez faire* doctrine and regarded the collectivistic trend as debilitating and enervating. He 'had little sympathy with the men who failed to get on' as his daughter wrote (L. H. Montague, 1912: 31). Montague represented the *élite*'s use of social Darwinism to rationalise views about their own superiority over the immigrants. By implication, the *élite* concluded 'logically' that capitalistically developed England was evolutionary superior to the East European less developed economies. There are some current historical reports that described Montague as an oppressive capitalist concealing authoritarianism behind the facade of religiosity.

Montague had belonged to a *parvenu* group within the *élite*. The whole group can be regarded as representative members of a somewhat more moderate and enlightened capitalism. More sympathetic to the un-met needs of the Jewish working class in the East End, he recognised the importance of some reforms in the policy of philanthropic institution. However, this was for the sake of the stability of the

contemporary socio-economic regime and its need for a healthier workforce.

The major quarrels between Montague and Nathaniel Rothschild ended in some 'rapprochements' . Ultimately, Montague identified himself with the general aims of the élite led by Rothschild, for instance, Montague offered Rothschild the presidency of the Federation of Minor Synagogues in the East End and accepted to serve as Vice-President under Rothschild). In this way Montague could share his financial responsibility to the Federation with Rothschild. Montague knew that despite the hard feelings of the East Enders towards the establishment and its institutions, Rothschild's benevolence was highly appreciated in the East End, consequently Montague preferred to criticise the establishment rather than Rothschild personally.

Both Montague and Rothschild feared the appeal of radical doctrines for a part of the Jewish proletariat and were keen to undermine such influences. In Montague's opinion the neglect of the working class by the establishment was the cause of the rising socialism and anarchism in the East End. The Jewish radicals, on the other hand, criticised both the orthodoxy and the philanthropic paternalism.

Indeed, it was difficult to rival Nathaniel Rothschild, the 'Financial Lord', as he frequently acted behind the scene by making his intentions clear to a few close friends only. In his autocratic way Rothschild indicated to the important members of the élite what causes were to be supported, preventing them from giving to the 'unworthy' and 'impractical' ones - known as 'Rothschild's diktats'. Older members of the 'Cousinhood' acknowledged Rothschild as their supreme leader and his preferences were comparable to the laws. He was known to donate the

largest amounts of money and was regarded in some sections as the leader of the whole world Jewry.

Rothschild was consistently interested in the management of the Board and maintained his strong connections with it through his close allies, the Cohens, the presidents of the Board. In regard to philanthropies, Rothschild emphasised efficient, uniform and economical administration and avoidance of multiplication of institutions with similar aims. Rothschild wanted the poor Jews to be dealt with according to the laws of the land through the adoption of hard hearted laissez faire philosophy rather than traditional sectarianism.

The Chief Rabbi, Dr Nathan Adler, accepted, without question, the principles and practices of the Board acting in harmonious co-operation with the Rothschilds and Cohens.

Rothschild had feared, along with other members of the élite, that the emphasising of differences between Jews and Gentiles could be interpreted as separatism which he conceived as an alien disloyal spirit contradictory to the supreme aim of anglicising the Jewish poor. However, it is argued that giving more leeway to the immigrants and allowing for a more natural process of absorption could forestall much suffering by the poor.

In England, in the nineteenth century, no legislation or official policy enforced Jews to give up some of their heritage, rather such pressures were applied voluntarily on the poor by the Jewish élite in a tacit consensus between the leading English classes and the Anglo-Jewish patriciate.

It is also argued that the large subscriptions of the Rothschilds to their preferred causes somewhat slackened the involvement of the Jewish middle classes and other

subscribers and strengthened the dependence of all the community on the richest members of the élite, preventing the establishment of more flexible institutions. The large donations increased centralised control and reduced the moral worth of many small contributors. In spite of the opposition of the East Enders, supported by Montague and his group, and the fear of the élite that its authority was being eroded by the rising tide of poor immigrants. Rothschild's ability to control the community had remained unshaken. Rothschild had derived his power from his tremendous wealth and status as the chief spokesman for big business in Britain. In 1885 he became a member of the British Peerage.

However, later on during the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the controlling power of the Jewish élite was affected by the weakening of its economic power, based mainly on financial and commercial capital. It was also connected with the decline of family partnerships and the City of London, the decrease in the rate of industrial profits and wealth of the rich classes. This process was accompanied by the failing dogmatic thinking of the unregulated capitalistic economy.

The right to vote was an additional source of political power which became available to the working class. The constituency of Whitechapel was created in 1884 following Gladstone's Reform Bill. It was made possible by some increase in the electoral power of the naturalised Jewish voters in Whitechapel, mostly Yiddish speaking, almost all of whom worked for Jewish employers, orthodox by religious affiliation and concerned with issues of Jewish charity. By the end of the nineteenth century half of the Jews in Whitechapel had the right to vote comprising a quarter of all the Jews in London, and in 1885 Montague became a Liberal M.P. for Whitechapel. In the General Election of 1900 the Rothschilds supported at Whitechapel the

restrictionist, David Hope Kyd, who belonged to a group of Conservative M.P.s who made the mostly Jewish immigration the predominant issue of their campaigns (Alderman 1989: 39).

Despite his basic subordination to the policy of the élite as dominated by Rothschild, Montague represented a somewhat divergent ideological current within the élite. He proposed a more decentralised social and religious policies of the community and more progressive taxation. During the period that followed the mass immigration until his death, Montague was considered the champion of the Jewish working and poor classes and their small synagogues in the East End. He was the foremost opponent to the extreme conservatism represented by Nathaniel Rothschild and his ally and brother-in-law, Lionel Louis Cohen who, from 1869 until his death in 1887 was the president of the Board and of the United Synagogue.

Montague was blamed by Rothschild and other members of the élite for causing intra-communal class antagonism in order to gain undeserved popularity. He supported some of the moderate demands of the Jewish working class for improved working conditions while, at the same time, placating their more radical ones. The strategy of Montague was to obtain some compromises between the Jewish workers and their employers. The election of Montague, as the MP for Whitechapel, politicised the issue connected with the organisation of Jewish institution dominated by the élite including the Board of Guardians. In 1882, Montague advocated a more sensitive and humane policy regarding the Board as responsible for all the poor Jews in London, this is, according to the original definition of its purpose by the Synagogues. However, the Board insisted in being responsible only towards those who belonged already to the community. In the light of the consensus between Montague and the élite to a significantly reduced immigration, the

controversy about the scope of the Board in regard to new immigrants, lost much of its meaning.

The institutions established by the *élite* and those initiated by the poor were characterised by reciprocal suspicions and fears. The absence of a more personal contact between the *élite* and the poor permitted the emergence of the intermediary upper middle class group headed by Montague. The advent of this group prevented a complete split and further polarisation of the community. This intermediary group consisted of persons who served in secondary positions in the Jewish Board of Guardians for a considerable period of time before attaining social acceptance by the *élite* and the first generation immigrant, Herman Landau.

The instrumental contacts of this group with the poor and their organisational ability in providing communal and welfare services, as well as financing them - were motivated by the basic interests of the wealthy class. So, in spite of being more sensitive to the social needs of the immigrant poor in comparison with the *élite*, this group did not encourage the development of the working class as a political force which could replace the institutional structure.

Such a different framework could solve the most pressing problems connected with the status and welfare of the immigrant poor. As such, the emerging upper middle class intermediary group acted as a conservative force restraining the resentment and discontent in the East End and enabling the Board of Guardians to continue its restrictionist policy undisturbed.

Concomitantly, the intermediary group enabled the *élite* to make the institutional changes needed to accommodate the alternative institutions established in the East End and,

in this way, to avoid the complete realigning of the separated social formations. Those institutional changes occurred through an incremental process which included the expansion of the services offered to the poor immigrants by the Board, and some concessions to the initiative of the middle classes and the poor themselves.

The other factor that supported the incremental processes rather than a basic realignment was the motivation of the élite to placate the resentment against the Board's functions, especially in regard to the immigrants, in order to prevent the expansion of the radical and leftist activities in the East End.

It was this intermediary middle class group of second and third generation native that, although sometimes critical in regard to the community services predominated by the élite, had supported institutional complementarity rather than the competition of a divisive process. This deliberate conscious choice of the intermediary group had been dictated by the overlapping interests with the élite. The criticism by the intermediary group of the élite, combined with the availability of models of expanded social concerns on the contemporary national scene, flexed the position of the élite and made it possible to maintain the long established and enduring mechanism of control. The survival of the Jewish Board of Guardians at the end of the nineteenth century and beyond it, can therefore, be explained also by its readiness to deliberately adopt a general policy of gradualism, in order to retain the existing institutional structure.

The pragmatic approach of the élite towards the poor and its readiness to accept the intermediary intervention of the upper middle class has been analysed, showing that this approach enabled the Board and the Jewish élite to endure this stormy period of mass immigration.

CHAPTER 16

CONCLUSIONS

In Victorian Britain, one of the most powerful and richest empires that ever existed, the Jewish élite accumulated tremendous wealth. The social and religious tolerance permitted it to translate its economic influence into political power. The confluence of this power outside the community with the internal one and the symbiotic relationship between them, created an unprecedented mechanism of quasi-official controls over the poor. In its known non-interventionist outlook the British government issued no charter to legalise the communal organisation. The Jewish community remained a voluntary corporate body, comparable to the other religious groups which were not members of the established Church. Until the Jewish mass immigration in the 1880s, the manifest interest of the British government in Jewish affairs was minimal. Nor were national or local authorities interested to establish collective responsibility for Jewish vagrancy, delinquency and poverty, as initiated in the scheme of Colquhoun and van Owen at the very beginning of the nineteenth century. This scheme proposed to give the Jewish élite legal power over the poor - a privilege granted by the Old régimes in Europe.

Whereas it was a decree issued by Napoleon I which placed the Jewish notables over the French Jewry as an instrument of state control, the power of the Anglo-Jewish élite, seized within the Jewish community, permitted it to fulfil 'voluntarily' the controlling functions. The liberty that the Jewish élite enjoyed in Britain was clearly differentiated from the establishment of Napoleon's Consistory system in France, with its manifest tendency of productivisation of the French Jewry and the obligatory regulation of religious and communal methods under the State's supervision.

The Jewish élites on the Continent had exercised authority

and power in the internal life of their communities, such as the nexus of welfare and charitable institutions (Katz 1993: 90).

Philanthropy was regarded as commendable and highly desirable, because the fulfilment of the basic needs of the poor were regarded by the **Hallacha** as a matter of rights.

In reality, however, the deterioration of the communal arrangements based on mandatory elements and their substitution by voluntaristic arrangements, aggravated the inadequacy of the relief given to the poor. Other socio-economic and political factors contributing to the large poverty amongst the Jewish population, increased the importance of optionality, contingency, generosity or mere charity, which permitted the Jewish individuals and groups to shirk their mandatory duties and the use of their surplus wealth for philanthropic purposes. This change had increased considerably the discretionary power of the wealthy class over the way their money was distributed, resulting in a more preferential assistance to protégés and impoverished previous middle class members. This tradition was continued in London.

The division of the community along such lines had crystallised before the beginning of the nineteenth century. During the nineteenth century the élite gradually achieved great wealth and considerable influence. As such, it came to share many of the economic and political interests of the wealthy classes in Britain.

The élite's economic and political interests were inter-related with its philanthropic involvements. The main interest of the élite was its furthering of business and profits, undisturbed by the impact of economic and

social problems related to Jewish poverty and immigration, this is, they felt that Jewish poverty could bring about negative reaction from the host community, detrimental to its position. However, a significant outburst of anti-Jewish feelings did not occur until the mass immigration of the 1880s, and the Jewish *élite* continued to prosper financially in spite of the anti-alien movement created at that time.

The Jewish *élite* had continuously claimed and attempted to convince the other strata in the community that it represented the whole Anglo-Jewry. This view was accepted *prima facie* and amplified by the middle classes in the host society.

The Jewish wealthy and middle classes had adopted extravagant ways of life and had distanced themselves from the concentration of the Jewish working class in the East End. While the Jewish *élite* was strongly influenced by the approaches to the poor prevalent in the British society, the Jewish poor classes were continually 'strengthened' by the import of traditional approaches to charity brought over by the waves of immigrants and, as such, were less influenced by the parallel English classes.

The *élite* had showed eagerness to adopt individualistic and *laissez faire* concepts which were compatible with its economic interests. The whole ideological climate was used by the *élite* to justify its long-term policy towards the poor. However, the *élite* also claimed that it continued to apply universal and Judaic principles of morality and charity. In this way, the *élite* had lost sight of the collectivistic aspects of traditional charity. To the extent that some awareness existed in regard to the significance of such aspects, the *élite*

preferred to omit them and did not evidence the flexibility needed to synthesise between the Jewish tradition and the contemporary social philosophy. Rather, the Jewish élite adopted such 'ready made' philosophy en masse. Sometimes, the members of the Jewish élite selected from the context of Jewish tradition of charities some parts which corresponded with their interests as an evidence of their use of the continuation of Jewish tradition. Beyond this level, no consideration or analysis was necessary. After the separation from the synagogues' relief with the establishment of the Board, there was no question whether the work of Jewish charity should be exercised according to Judaic principles. It was assumed that no contradictions existed between the **hallacha** and the contemporary philosophy and that they were syntonetic in all aspects and could be interchanged. By equating loyalty to the philanthropic organisation with loyalty to Judaism, each institution claimed authenticity as a continuation of historical Judaic tradition.

The Jewish élite had been also attracted to an optimistic view of a liberal and progressive society which was basically individualistic (especially under the influence of the Jewish Enlightenment). As far as the relief of the poor was concerned, the class interests of the élite overrode ethnic solidarity.

However, the threatening result of the disorganisation of Jewish charity during the first half of the nineteenth century caused by the institutional fragmentation had moved the Jewish Ashkenazic élite belonging to three separate synagogues, to consider joint action. Several times such considerations waned when the anxieties of the élite over impending calamities subsided temporarily. Institutional arrangements for a comprehensive control had been proposed by members of the élite, in the form of different schemes which did not come into fruition until

the establishment of the Board.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century and until the founding of the Board in 1859, the schemes proposed were to be financed mainly by special taxes on Jews. However, the Jewish élite was not ready to accept such an additional obligatory burden. Moreover, the élite feared that such mandatory arrangements could 'invite' the interference of State or local government in its affairs. The tendency of the Jewish élite to remain independent was characteristic also to non-Jewish voluntary associations. An additional factor that can explain the failure of the schemes was the fear of the élite that, if successful, they could attract even greater numbers of immigrants.

The disorganisation of the Jewish charities, reflected in the lack of a competent and permanent mechanism able to assess and relieve the needs of the poor, acted intermittently, at least, as a deterrent factor in respect to immigration. The less organised the institutions were, the weaker was their appeal to potential immigrants and transmigrants from the Continent. At the beginning of the century, such factors were underestimated by Colquhoun, a police official and follower of Bentham.

The élite had been interested to control the Jewish poor and immigrants on a voluntaristic basis, assuming, however, a quasi-official status in respect to the host authorities. Dinur claimed that attempts by the Jewish wealthy class to pre-empt the prerogatives of Jewish autonomy were a long-standing tradition.

By the late 1850s, the Jewish élite could no longer evade the results of disorganisation. Moreover, its increasing political emancipation implied a fulfilment of the expectations of the host society to uphold social order, this is, the solution of the severe social problems of the

Jewish poor. The mechanism of the Board was supposed to replace the haphazard synagogal arrangements with their former ineffectual control. Instead, the poor, and especially the 'foreign' poor, were to be subordinated to the secular (but not secularist) Board.

The Board generally reflected the views of the *élite* who financed its activities and assumed leadership positions within its hierarchy. During more than half a century, the Board drew its power from a subsistent number of such members of the *élite* who were continuously recruited and integrated into its course of activities. The ability of the Board to co-ordinate the responses of its wealthy members can help to explain its endurance.

The watchwords of the *élite* conservatism were control and efficiency. Both of those tendencies combined to maintain the Board's monopolistic status in dominating communal philanthropy and, generally, receiving unquestionable deference until the 1880s. To the extent that immigration continued, it enforced on the Board open-ended needs that required corresponding acts of succour. From its foundation the Board negated the positive rights of the newly arrived immigrants by refusing to be the primary and immediate respondent to their needs. It did so by a rule instituted at the establishment of the Board. The newly arrived immigrants were refused any assistance during a period of six months, which meant that the interventions of the Board excluded some extreme distress of the new immigrants, mostly in urgent need of assistance.

In regard to immigration, which was the main issue, the Board had been faced with two extreme alternatives: The first was to accept the positive duties derived from the needs of the immigrants according to the Hallacha and to increase significantly its burden. The second extreme was the *laissez faire* approach, that is, complete

indifference. The 'middle way' that the Board had chosen, in the form of the rule of six months imposed on newly arrived immigrants, reflected that it was less than willing to give the immigrants the initial help that they needed. Excluding new immigrants from relief for a period of six months in order to make them 'malleable' for re-emigration or transmigration and for deterring potential immigrants abroad, was a sort of control by inaction. However, the lack of a more immediate and comprehensive control over the newly arrived immigrants, encouraged the expansion of the institutions created by the lower and middle classes as an alternative to those of the élite.

While the Board had insisted on its continuous responsibility for all the Metropolitan Jewish poor, it was, in fact, structured to take action only in respect of a relatively small number of applicants. The others were regarded as suited to be handed over to the workhouses and assisted periodically in cases of emergency. The latter category included those that the Board was unable to transmigrate or repatriate.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Jewish élite had preferred to maintain its own poor, seldom allowing them to apply for parochial relief, although, as ratepayers, they were entitled to claim it. The Anglo-Jewish leaders had felt that such applications would cause serious antagonistic reactions from the British public. Moreover, dietary laws had prevented the Jewish élite from placing the poor in the workhouses. Throughout its existence, the Board continued to be alert to the contemporary definitions of the problems related to poverty and proposed solutions in an attempt to maintain 'a good place' on the British philanthropic scene. In this process, however, the Board had been selective, opting for the conservative trends of this philanthropy.

Since its establishment, the Board was characterised by a tendency to take on the organisational characteristics of its host environment, including the Poor Law arrangements. From the middle of the nineteenth century, members of the Jewish middle class had gained experience as Poor Law Guardians, elected as individuals in their parishes of domicile (Alderman 1989: 3). From the early 1830s, the Jewish élite had been increasingly interested to make use of the Poor Law arrangements, partly as a means through which the Jewish poor could be deterred and controlled. The voluntary charities in working in complementary lines with the statutory Jewish élite had been strongly influenced by the strict principles of the New Poor Law.

In 1869, with the establishment of the COS and the publication of the Gochen Minutes, the Board joined the English sectors, re-emphasising the need for deterrence, especially for those considered 'undeserving'. Feeling much more secure, the Jewish élite had gradually renounced the principle of 'Jews take care of their own'. The élite continued to support the poor from its own resources however, at the same time, increasingly attempted to harness the central and local authorities, shifting a considerable part of the burden to them.

In the twenty years old struggle, although only partly successful, the Jewish élite recruited the most politically influential and able persons to follow the developments of statutory provisions and to obtain as many concessions as possible from the Poor Law authorities. This strife reflected the importance that the Board attributed to the use of the Unions' policies and arrangements to deter those considered paupers, 'unwanted' immigrants and those that the Board regarded as recalcitrant or otherwise to be isolated or penalised. In this struggle, the Board used its quasi-official status to bring about significant legal changes affecting the

lives of the poor. In fact, the fears of the Poor Law Authorities to attract immigrants and to assume increasing responsibilities for them in lieu of the Board, was the main obstacle in the way of the Board to make extended use of the workhouses in parallel to the local authorities.

It is also assumed that the alternative Jewish Workhouse - an old age home, established by a member of the middle class in direct opposition to the policy of the Board - had some restraining effect on the Board in this matter. The relative small number of Jewish poor in the workhouses is an evidence of their independence and self-sufficiency. Their ability to immigrate can be seen as a sign of the power that they possessed as a group that had uprooted itself in order to escape dangers and to improve its social situation. The reciprocal help amongst them, and the small institutions that they established, had been the main oppositional element vis-à-vis the Board.

The ability of the immigrants to receive help from such institutions as **hevras** and other sources, had made the Board's Six Month Rule partly unworkable. Their power was reflected also in their ability to stand aloof or to be minimally involved with the mechanism designed by the élite, paying lipservice to the élite's notions and its attempts to conceal aspects of the social realities of the poor.

By providing for education of the children of the poor, the élite had facilitated a continuation of their religious and ethnic life as well as a preparation for integration into the host society. The implementation in the area of education had manifested a mixture of paternalistic social planning. The children of the poor were considered in their formative years and as such more malleable. It implies that the parents were less educable and, as such, not included in the social planning, this is, a tendency to abandon the families to their fate.

Together with educational institutions, the Board had attempted to impart discipline, obedience, punctuality, cleanliness, thrift and gratefulness. The conservative anglicising meant that the Jewish working class were to be imbued with the value of English citizens who knew their correct place in the hierarchical order.

Ambitious and rapid anglicisation meant that immigrants were expected to give up their culture and language. Yet, elimination of the original culture as a means of adaptation left the immigrants with few resources of their own and caused unnecessary alienation from both themselves as well as from the dominant élite. Under the influence of the élite through the contemporary Jewish media, the deficiencies attributed to the poor, sometimes described in sub-human qualities, became a matter of middle and upper class consensus and therefore a 'truism' permitting unrestricted generalisation and accusation. The emphasis of the institutions of the élite had been on searching for personal defects and imposters rather than identifying the underlying conditions that generated poverty or were an obstacle in the adjustment of the new immigrants. This tendency largely continued until the end of the century and in some aspects, beyond it.

Founded for the relief of the 'strange' poor only and in order to eradicate mendicity, the Board had engaged in continuous efforts to prove its ability to assist the native and long-settled poor, including the stipendiary poor of the three City Synagogues. The Board presented to the Jewish middle classes a systematic and more humane approach to the 'better classes' of the poor. Such an approach was characteristic to other philanthropic societies before the establishment of the Board and reflected the contemporary developments in the field.

In the distribution of its resources, the Board evidenced the clear continuous preferential treatment for the better

classes of the poor, amongst them the impoverished members of the middle class. This preferential treatment largely contradicted the other claims of equity in regard to the criteria for the relief of the poor.

The elements of planning of the Jewish élite to the extent that can be discerned, evidenced preferential provisions and services for members of selected small groups, especially children of previously middle class poor, promising healthy young unburdened by family responsibilities. This planning was the alternative offered as an immediate solution for the contemporary acute and chronic poverty of the Jewish masses.

Consequently, the criteria for eligibility were based mainly on the future potential of the applicants rather than their presenting distress. This withdrawing policy allotted very limited resources to the sick, the handicapped and the widespread multi-children families.

The reluctance of the Jewish élite to relate to the needs of the main categories of Jewish poor and to use the relative tranquil years before the 1880s for a realistic preparation based on a consistent well articulated policy, caused severe suffering to the immigrants and an anti-alien movement with anti-Semitic overtones. It is argued that those two developments could have been avoided and that the élite had had the financial abilities to do so.

The élite attributed the prevention of a more severe anti-Jewish outbreak to its restrictionist policy implemented by large scale continuous transmigration and repatriation, this is, exporting the problem, as well as to other measures of preventing immigration, such as the Six Months Rule. However, the outbreak could have been avoided by more constructive and humane means.

In addition to the regular subsidies received from the

Synagogues, the Board recruited additional resources, mainly from the wealthiest members of the élite, in this way strengthening their control over the Board's policy. Those resources, however, were far from being sufficient for a fairer redistribution of resources. The major shortcoming of the Board was not that it was too generous but that it was too restrictive in its expenditure and dominated by an exaggerated prudence. The Board often expressed its fear of becoming the victim of its own generosity, encouraging pauperism and immigration. However, the Board recognised that most of the immigrants fitted the Smileanian prototype and became economically independent within a relatively short period of time after their arrival in Britain.

In instituting a policy of under-provision from its foundation, the Board found justification in the ideas derived from the classical economists and laissez faire economics. According to those philosophies, relief interfered with the supply and demand in the labour market, pushing down production and profits. In this context the Board regarded human misery as aggravated by an unwise liberality, consequently, the meagre assistance provided to the poor was considered the root of all problems.

The most controversial issue that faced the Board was the influx of immigrants and the relief of those that settled in London in spite of all the measures taken by the Board and its allied organisations. The immigration to Britain was an integral part of a west-bound movement that comprised millions of people and was caused by expanding economics and their consequent exigencies. As far as the Jewish immigration was concerned, those general circumstances were aggravated by additional political discriminations and economic exploitation.

Obviously, the restrictionist policies of the Board could not have any serious impact on such forces. From the 1880's, the Board was unable to stop immigration in spite of all its efforts in this direction. Moreover, in the final analysis, the lack of statutory measures which could prevent immigration expressed the interests of the ruling industrial class (of which the Jewish élite was an integral part) in a continuous stream of cheap labour, lowering prices and motivating people to work even harder for minimal wages.

The dilemma of the Board and other Jewish charities managed by the élite was also how to provide the minimal necessities of life to the poor immigrants without creating, by this very relief, the slightest incentive for them to remain in England; how to encourage transmigration rather than integration. Still another dilemma that faced the Board and other Jewish institutions was in regard to the use of the legal power of the State to prohibit immigration of Jewish poor, as opposed to the continuation of the limitations instituted by the Board in its quasi-official status.

In this context, to the extent that the Board accepted responsibilities for aiding the immigrants, it did so in spite of finding them distasteful and unwanted. Rather than adapting itself to the growing needs and demands caused by the immigration, the Board attempted to maintain a status quo ante, hampering as much as it could the initiatives of the other classes to create their own alternative institutions. The conservatism of the Board was also evident in its reluctance to relate to the collective problems of the poor. The crises of immigration were not individual ones and, as such, they required large scale interventions to correct the institutional structure that generated or exacerbated the situation of the poor, for example, only towards the end

of the nineteenth century was the first model housing project erected by Rothschild.

The institutions established by the *élite* and those initiated by the poor, were characterised by reciprocal suspicions and fears. From the beginning of the nineteenth century and even before, the Jewish *élite* was afraid of the relative large number of Jewish poor demanding and pressing for relief *en masse*, resenting their power, despite the fact that they did not belong to any formal organisation. On the other hand, the *élite* regarded with apprehension the significant number of poor who did not apply to the Board and the other institutions.

The confrontation between the *élite* and the poor was to a large extent muted, sometimes latent, however real.

After the 1880s, the large waves of immigrants added, in part, to the conflict leading to the establishment of social and religious institutions of the immigrants in the East End, creating some redistribution of power in the community. The tenacity of the *élite* in defending its position can be explained by its ability to avert a deeper conflict with the working and lower middle class in the East End. This was done by keeping their institutions from becoming completely independent and more extremely antagonistic to those of the establishment. Using flexible tactics, the *élite* was able to incorporate some of those institutions, albeit allowing them some independence. Some of them became mechanisms of control of the *élite* itself when the latter succeeded in inducing them under its orbit, by financing their expenditure.

Within certain limits, such institutions were allowed to express class protests publicly (such as those headed by Samuel Montague).

While confronted with opposition, the Board was ready to compromise on partial or temporary control, such as, in

regard to the Jews' Temporary Shelter and to limit itself to the control of some aspects of the functions of the institutions tactically waiting in its typical pragmatic way for opportunities to expand its control. According to Lukes, actual conflict is not necessary to power 'the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent such conflict existing' (1973: 23).

The élite was not able to eliminate the conditions that created independent organisations in the East End but had forestalled larger and deeper immigrant conflict and possibly another order of social arrangements. This process by which the élite maintained its institution was possibly through the large financial resources that the members of the élite and especially Rothschild consented to donate for different social, educational and religious projects in the East End.

Sustaining its power, the élite was able to do '"the defining", to determine what was considered a social problem, to shape legislation, etc.' (George and Wilding 1976: 2). In this process, the Board served the interests of the élite in the most crucial issues e.g., immigration, transmigration and repatriation, by determining policies and carrying them out through its mechanisms. The Board was instrumental in maintaining the political stability of the élite by ameliorating some of the most severe and aggravating situations of the poor in the East End.

The absence of a more open and direct contact between the élite and the poor had permitted the emergence of the intermediary upper middle class group headed by Montague. The advent of this group had prevented a complete split and further polarisation of the community. This intermediary group consisted of persons who served in secondary positions in the Jewish Board of Guardians for a considerable period of time before attaining social

acceptance by the *élite* and the first generation immigrant, Herman Landau. The instrumental contacts of this group with the poor and their organisational ability in providing communal and welfare services, as well as financing them, had been motivated by the basic interests of the wealthy class. So, in spite of being more sensitive to the social needs of the immigrant poor in comparison with the *élite*, this group did not encourage the development of the working class as a political force which could replace the institutional structure. Such a different framework could solve the most pressing problems connected with the status and welfare of the immigrant poor. As such, the emerging upper middle class intermediary group had acted as a conservative force, restraining the resentment and discontent in the East End and enabling the Board of Guardians to continue its restrictionist policy undisturbed.

Concomitantly, the intermediary group enabled the *élite* to make the institutional changes needed to accommodate the alternative institutions established in the East End and, in this way, to avoid the complete realigning of the separated social formations. Those institutional changes occurred through an incremental process which included the expansion of the services offered to the poor immigrants by the Board, and some concessions to the initiative of the middle classes and the poor themselves.

The other factor that had supported the incremental processes, rather than a basic realignment, was the motivation of the *élite* to placate the resentment against the Board's functions, especially in regard to the immigrants, in order to prevent the expansion of the radical and leftist activities in the East End.

It was this intermediary middle class group of second and third generation native that, although sometimes critical

in regard to the community services predominated by the élite, had supported institutional complementarity rather than the competition of a divisive process.

This deliberate conscious choice of the intermediary group had been dictated by the overlapping interests with the élite. The criticism by the intermediary group of the élite, combined with the availability of models of expanded social concerns on the contemporary national scene. The increasing demands for restricting aggressive economic behaviour, introducing collective social morality by State interference for mitigating severe social distress, had flexed the position of the élite and made it possible to maintain the long established and enduring mechanism of control. The survival of the Jewish Board of Guardians at the end of the nineteenth century and beyond it, can therefore, be explained also by its readiness to deliberately adopt a general policy of gradualism in order to retain the existing institutional structure.

The lower middle class and the working class did not possess sufficient resources and political experience in order to act by itself or in collaboration with the middle class in order to create, amongst others, an independent alternative to the Board. Such establishment of alternative services could materialise the latent potential for the polarisation of the community.

Despite the general decline of the élite because of the decrease in its financial power, the oligarchic régime of the community had continued. Between 1900 and 1947, three of the Presidents of the Board were descendents of Louis Cohen and no one served less than seven years, the same family that had controlled the Board since its foundation.

As discussed in the introduction, philanthropy has been treated in this study as a collective action of a group or

a class, reflecting its main interests. In the main part of this thesis the philanthropic activities of the Anglo-Jewish élite and its principal mechanism for controlling and regulating the Jewish poor, has been examined.

The evidence shows that under the influence of contemporary individualistic ideologies, the Jewish philanthropic élite was at once limited and punitive. The ability of the Jewish philanthropy to absorb external influences was potentially a progressive feature to the extent that it proved conducive to improving the situation of the Jewish poor.

The Anglo-Jewish philanthropists of the nineteenth century were part of a wider society, the predominant ideology of which contributed to the individualism of their approach, further aggravated by the perceived threat presented by immigration and its concomitant problems. In other circumstances, the more collective strands of Jewish tradition might have been more in evidence.

GLOSSARY

The following term is used in this thesis in a particular sense.

Board When capitalised the term indicates the London Jewish Board of Guardians.

Unless otherwise indicated, the following terms are transliterations from Hebrew in Sephardic pronunciation, except where a word is widely used in Ashkenazic form.

Aliya (**pl. Aliyot**) (lit. ascent): Being called to the Torah (which see); an honour bestowed on a worshipper.

Arbayters (German): Workers.

Arev (**pl. Arevim**): Guarantor.

Ascamot (lit. Agreements): Regulations or communal statutes of the congregations.

Ashkenazi (**pl. Ashkenazim**): A central or eastern European Jew, generally Yiddish-speaking.

Aufklaerer (German): Enlightener; Maskil (which see).

Betteljuden (German): Jews who were forced to leave their original communities and moved continuously from Jewish community to Jewish community, seeking charity.

Beytler (Yid.): Beggar.

Chutzpa : Brozennes, gall.

Evion (pl. Evionim: Poor.

Gabbai Tzedakah : Charity treasurer, collector and distributor of charity.

Gemilut Chassadim : Deeds of loving kindness, sometimes combined with material help made through personal involvement; not confined to the poor.

Gvir	(pl. Gvirim) : A wealthy and influential person
Hallacha	: The legal part of the Talmudic literature (which see); an interpretation of the laws of Scriptures.
Haskala	: The westernising enlightenment Jewish movement.
Hevra	(pl. Hevrot ; Yid. Hevras) A society or fraternity, generally formed for social and religious purposes, often forming the congregation of a small synagogue). Also spelt Chevra.
Kasher or Kosher	: Usually used in connection with food prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary laws; ritually pure or fit.
Kehilla	(pl. Kehillot): A self governing community, typically with its own social and religious institutions.
Koved	Honour.
Landsleit	(Yid.): A fellow Jew who comes from the same district or town, especially in eastern Europe.
Landsmanschaft	(German) (pl. Landsmanschaften): Organisation or fraternity of persons originating from a particular town or district.
Lefi Kyodo	: According to his status.
Maskil	(pl. Maskilim): Adherent of Haskala (which see).
Minyan	: Quorum of ten adult males required for divine public service; a prayer-group.
Mitzva	(pl. Mitzvot): A religious obligation.

Nedava	(pl. Nedavot): Alms given to a beggar.
Orchim	: Visitors, guests; worshippers in the synagogue who do not pay a membership fee to the congregation. The term was used to indicate 'foreign' poor.
Ostjuden	(German): Jews of eastern Europe.
Parnas	: Chairman or president of a congregation, community or synagogue warden.
Rachmunes	: Profound feelings for the misfortune of others and a desire to help them; compassion.
Schlemiel	(Yid.): A habitual bungler; dolt.
Schlimazel	(Yid.): An extremely unlucky person, a habitual failure.
Schnorrer	(Yid.) Beggar, scrounger, one who takes advantage of the generosity of others; parasitic.
Sephardi	(pl. Sephardim): Jews of Spanish or Portuguese descent.
Sepher Torah	: Scrolls of parchment containing the Pentateuch, read in a synagogue during services.
Shammash	: Synagogue sexton; beadle.
Shivah	: A seven day period of confined formal mourning after the funeral of a close relative.
Shiva Tuve Ha'ir	(lit. seven good citizens): Executive of a local community.
Shtetl	(Yid.): A small Jewish community in eastern Europe.

Talmud	: The collection of ancient Rabbinic writings consisting of the Mishna and the Gemara, constituting the basis of religious authority for traditional Judaism.
Torah	: The entire body of Jewish religious law and learning, including tradition.
Toshav	(pl. Toshavim) (lit. inhabitant): A person who pays a membership fee for a seat in the synagogue.
Tzedakah	: Means both charity and social justice, the latter implying assistance as a right and social equality.
Tzedakah Beseter	: Secret charity that spared the beneficiary the shame of public knowledge, sometimes even not knowing himself who had helped him.
Westjuden	(German): Western European Jews.
Yikhus	: Family with respect to wealth and learning.
Yiddishkeit	(Yid): Jewishness.

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The Quarterly Review

The Voice of Jacob

APPENDIX

Excerpts from: Laws concerning Gifts for the Poor
Mishneh Torah by Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon
[MAIMONIDES, 1135 - 1204]
Book Seven - The Book of Agriculture
Chapters: VII, IX, X
[Including The Eight Degrees of Charity]
Translated from the Hebrew by
Isaac Klein
Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1979

(All emphases are in the original translation)

CHAPTER VII

1. It is a positive commandment to give alms to the poor of Israel, according to what is fitting for them, if the giver can afford it, as it is said, Thou shalt surely open they hand unto him (Deut. 15:8), and again, Then thou shalt uphold him; as a stranger and a settler shall he live with thee ... that thy brother may live with thee (Lev. 25:35-36).

2. He who seeing a poor man begging turns his eyes away from him and fails to give him alms, transgresses a negative commandment, as it is said, Thou shalt not harden they heart, nor shut thy hand from thy needy brother (Deut. 15:7).

3. You are commanded to give the poor man according to what he lacks. If he has no clothing, he should be clothed. If he has no house furnishings, they should be bought for him. If he has no wife, he should be helped to marry. If it is a woman, she should be given in marriage. Even if it had been his wont to ride a horse, with a manservant running in front of him, and he has now become poor and has lost his possessions, one must buy him a horse to ride and a manservant to run before him, as it is said,

Sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth (Deut. 15:8). You are thus obligated to fill his want; you are not, however, obligated to restore his wealth.

4. If an orphan is about to be wed, one must first rent a house for him, spread a bed for him, and provide all his furnishings, and only then have him marry a wife.

5. If the poor man comes forth and asks for enough to satisfy his want, and if the giver is unable to afford it, the latter may give him as much as he can afford. How much is that? In choice performance of this religious duty, up to one-fifth of his possessions; in middling performance, up to one-tenth of his possessions; less than this brands him as a person of evil eye. At all times one should not permit himself to give less than one-third of a shekel per year. He who gives less than this has not fulfilled this commandment at all. Even a poor man who lives entirely on alms must himself give alms to another poor man.

6. If a poor man unknown to anyone comes forth and says, "I am hungry; give me something to eat," he should not be examined as to whether he might be an impostor - he should be fed immediately. If, however, he is naked and says, "Clothe me," he should be examined as to possible fraud. If he is known, he should be clothed immediately according to his dignity, without any further inquiry.

7. One must feed and clothe the heathen poor together with the Israelite poor, for the sake of the ways of peace. In the case of a poor man who goes from door to door, one is not obligated to give him a large gift, but only a small one. It is forbidden, however, to let a poor man who asks for alms go empty-handed, just so you give him at least one dry fig, as it is said, O let not the oppressed turn back in confusion (Ps. 74:21).

8. A poor man traveling from one place to another must be given not less than one loaf of bread that sells for a pondion when the price of wheat is one sela' per four se'ah. We have already explained the value of all measures. If he lodges for the night, he must be given a mattress to sleep on and a pillow to put under his head, as well as oil and pulse for his repast. If he stays over the Sabbath, he must be provided with food for three meals as well as oil, pulse, fish, and vegetables. If he is known, he must be supplied according to his dignity.

9. If a poor man refuses to accept alms, one should get around him by making him accept them as a present or a loan. If, on the other hand, a wealthy man starves himself because he is so niggardly with his money that he would not spend of it on food and drink, no attention need be paid to him.

10. He who refuses to give alms, or gives less than is proper for him, must be compelled by the court to comply, and must be flogged for disobedience until he gives as much as the court estimates he should give. The court may even seize his property in his presence and take from him what is proper for him to give. One may indeed pawn things in order to give alms, even on the eve of the Sabbath.

11. A munificent person who gives alms beyond what he can afford, or denies himself in order to give to the collector of alms so that he would not be put to shame, should not be asked for contributions to alms. Any alms collector who humiliates him by demanding alms from him will surely be called to account for it, as it is said, I will punish all that oppress them (Jer. 30:20).

13. A poor man who is one's relative has priority over all others, the poor of one's own household have priority over the other poor of his city, and the poor of his city have

priority over the poor of another city, as it is said, Unto thy poor and needy brother, in thy land (Deut. 15:11).

CHAPTER IX

1. In every city inhabited by Israelites, it is their duty to appoint from among themselves well-known and trustworthy persons to act as alms collectors, to go around collecting from the people every Friday. They should demand from each person what is proper for him to give and what he has been assessed for, and should distribute the money every Friday, giving each poor man sustenance sufficient for seven days. This is what is called "alms fund."

2. They must similarly appoint other collectors to gather every day, from each courtyard, bread and other eatables, fruits, or money from anyone who is willing to make a free-will offering at that time. They should distribute these toward that same evening among the poor, giving therefrom to each poor man his sustenance for the day. This is what is called "alms tray."

3. We have never seen nor heard of an Israelite community that does not have an alms fund. As for an alms tray, there are some localities where it is customary to have it, and some where it is not. The custom widespread today is for the collectors of the alms fund to go around every day, and to distribute the proceeds every Friday.

4. On fast days food should be distributed to the poor. If on any fast day the people eat all through the night without distributing alms to the poor, they are accounted the same as if they had shed blood, and it is they who are referred to in the verse in the Prophets, Righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers (Isa. 1:21).

When does this apply? When the poor are not given bread and such fruit as is eaten with bread, for example, dates and grapes. If, however, the alms collectors merely delay the distribution of money or wheat, they are not accounted shedders of blood.

5. Contributions to the alms fund must be collected jointly by two persons, because a demand for money may not be addressed to the community by less than two collectors. The money collected may, however, be entrusted for safekeeping to one person. It must be distributed by three persons, because it is analogous to money involved in a civil action, inasmuch as they must give to each poor man enough for his needs over the week. The alms tray, on the other hand, must be collected by three collectors, since the contribution to it is not set, and must be distributed likewise by three distributors.

6. Contributions to the alms tray are to be collected every day, those for the alms fund each Friday. The alms tray is to provide for the poor of the whole world, while the alms fund is to provide for the poor of the town alone.

7. The residents of the town may use alms fund moneys for the alms tray, or vice versa, or divert them to any other public purpose that they may choose, even if they had not so stipulated when they collected them

8. Alms collectors are not permitted to separate one from the other in the market place, except as one turns to enter a gate while the other turns to enter a shop, in order to collect contributions.

12. One who has resided in the city for thirty days may be compelled to contribute to the alms fund, together with the other residents of the city. If he has resided there for three months, he may be compelled to contribute to the alms

tray. If he has resided there for six months, he may be compelled to contribute to the clothing given to the poor of the city. If he has resided there for nine months, he may be compelled to contribute to the burial of the poor and to the other expenses connected therewith.

13. He who has food sufficient for two meals is forbidden to partake of the alms tray. If he has food sufficient for fourteen meals, he may not partake of the alms fund. He who has two hundred zuz, even if he does not use them to engage in trade, or he who has fifty zuz and uses them in trade, may not take of the gleanings, the forgotten sheaf, the corner crop, or the poor man's tithe. If he has two hundred denar less one, he may partake of all of these, even if a thousand persons give them to him at the same time. If he has money in his hand, but owes it as a debt or has it mortgaged against his wife's ketubbah, he is still permitted to take of these gifts to the poor.

14. In the case of a needy poor man who has his own courtyard and home furnishings, even if these include utensils of silver and gold, he may not be compelled to sell his house and his furnishings; rather he is permitted to accept alms, and it is a religious duty to give him alms. To what furnishings does this apply? To eating and drinking vessels, clothing, mattresses, and the like. If, however, he has other silver and gold utensils, such as a strigil, a pestle, and the like, he should first sell them and buy less expensive ones. When does this apply? Before he comes to ask for public assistance. If he has already asked for it, he must be compelled to sell his vessels and buy less expensive ones and only then may he be given alms.

15. If a householder traveling from town to town runs out of funds while still on the road and finds himself with nothing to eat, he is allowed to partake of the gleanings, the forgotten sheaf, the corner crop, and the poor man's

tithe, as well as to benefit from alms, and when he reaches his home he is not obligated to repay, since at that particular time he was in fact a poor man. To what can this be compared? To a poor man who has become wealthy, and who is not obligated to repay past assistance.

16. A person who owns houses, fields, and vineyards, which, if sold during the rainy season would fetch a low price, but if held back until the summer would fetch a fair price, may not be compelled to sell them, and should be maintained out of the poor man's tithe up to half the worth of these properties. He should not feel pressed to sell at the wrong time.

17. If at the time when other people are buying such properties at a high price, he cannot find anyone to buy his property except at a low price, seeing that he is hard pressed to sell, he may not be compelled to sell, but is rather allowed to continue eating out of the poor man's tithe until he can sell at a fair price, with everyone aware that his is not pressed to sell.

18. If the amount collected for a poor man to provide adequately for his wants exceeds his needs, the surplus belongs to him. The rule is as follows: The surplus of what was collected for the poor must be used for other poor; the surplus of what was collected for the ransoming of captives must be used to ransom other captives;

19. If a poor man contributes a perutah to the alms tray or to the alms fund, it should be accepted. If he does not, he may not be constrained to do so. If when given new garments he returns to the distributors his worn-out ones, they too should be accepted, and if he does not return them, he may not be constrained to do so.

CHAPTER X

1. It is our duty to be more careful in the performance of the commandment of almsgiving than in that of any other positive commandment, for almsgiving is the mark of the righteous man who is of the seed of our father Abraham, as it is said, For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children, etc., to do righteousness (Gen. 18:19). The throne of Israel cannot be established, nor true faith made to stand up, except through charity, as it is said, In righteousness shalt thou be established (Isa. 54:14); nor will Israel be redeemed, except through the practice of charity, as it is said, Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return of her with righteousness (Isa. 1:27).

2. No man is ever impoverished by almsgiving, nor does evil or harm befall anyone by reason of it, as it is said, And the work of righteousness shall be peace (Isa. 32:17).

He who has compassion upon others, others will have compassion upon him, as it is said, That the Lord may ... show thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee (Deut. 13:18).

Whosoever is cruel and merciless lays himself open to suspicion as to his descent, for cruelty is found only among the heathens, as it is said, They are cruel, and have no compassion (Jer. 50:42). All Israelites and those that have attached themselves to them are to each other like brothers, as it is said, Ye are the children of the Lord your God Deut. 14:1). If brother will show no compassion to brother, who will? And unto whom shall the poor of Israel raise their eyes? Unto the heathens, who hate them and persecute them? Their eyes are therefore hanging solely upon their brethren.

3. He who turns his eyes away from charity is called a base fellow, just as is he who worships idols. Concerning

the worship of idols Scripture says, Certain base fellows are gone out (Deut. 13: 14), and concerning him who turns his eyes away from charity it says, Beware that there be not a base thought in thy heart (Deut. 15:9). Such a man is also called wicked, as it is said, The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel (Prov. 12:10). He is also called a sinner, as it is said, And he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin in thee Deut. 15:10). The Holy One, blessed be He, stands nigh unto the cry of the poor, as it is said, Thou hearest the cry of the poor. One should therefore be careful about their cry, for a covenant has been made with them, as it is said, And it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto Me, that I will hear, for I am gracious (Exod. 22:26).

4. He who gives alms to a poor man with a hostile countenance and with his face averted to the ground, loses his merit and forfeits it, even if he gives as much as a thousand gold coins. He should rather give with a friendly countenance and joyfully. He should commiserate with the recipient in his distress, as it is said, If I have not wept for him that was in trouble, and if my soul grieved not for the needy? (Job 30:25). He should also speak to him prayerful and comforting words, as it is said, And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy (Job 29:13).

5. If a poor man asks you for alms and you have nothing to give him, comfort him with words. It is forbidden to rebuke a poor man or to raise one's voice in a shout at him, seeing that his heart is broken and crushed, and Scripture says, A broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise (Ps. 51:19), and again, To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isa. 57:15). Woe unto him who shames the poor! Woe unto him! One should rather be unto the poor as a father, with both compassion and words, as it is said, I was a father to the needy (Job 29:16).

6. He who presses others to give alms and moves them to act thus, his reward is greater than the reward of him who gives alms himself, as it is said, And the work of righteousness shall be peace (Isa. 32:17). Concerning alms collectors and their like Scripture says, And they that turn the many to righteousness (shall shine) as the stars (Dan. 12:3).

[THE EIGHT DEGREES OF CHARITY]

7. There are eight degrees of almsgiving, each one superior to the other. The highest degree, than which there is none higher, is one who upholds the hand of an Israelite reduced to poverty by handing him a gift or a loan, or entering into a partnership with him, or finding work for him, in order to strengthen his hand, so that he would have no need to beg from other people. Concerning such a one Scripture says, Thou shalt uphold him; as a stranger and a settler shall he live with thee (Lev. 25:35), meaning uphold him, so that he would not lapse into want.

8. Below this is he who gives alms to the poor in such a way that he does not know to whom he has given, nor does the poor man know from whom he has received. This constitutes the fulfilling of a religious duty for its own sake, and for such there was a Chamber of Secrets in the Temple, whereunto the righteous would contribute secretly, and wherefrom the poor of good families would draw their sustenance in equal secrecy. Close to such a person is he who contributes directly to the alms fund.

One should not, however, contribute directly to the alms fund unless he knows that the person in charge of it is trustworthy, is a Sage, and knows how to manage it properly, as was the case of Rabbi Hananiah ben Teradion.

9. Below this is he who knows to whom he is giving, while the poor man does not know from whom he is receiving. He is thus like the great among the Sages who were wont to set out secretly and throw the money down at the doors of the poor. This is a proper way of doing it, and a preferable one if those in charge of alms are not conducting themselves as they should.

10. Below this is the case where the poor man knows from whom he is receiving, but himself remains unknown to the giver. He is thus like the great among the Sages who used to place the money in the fold of a linen sheet which they would throw over their shoulder, whereupon the poor would come behind them and take the money without being exposed to humiliation.

11. Below this is he who hands the alms to the poor man before being asked for them.

12. Below this is he who hands the alms to the poor man after the latter has asked for them.

13. Below this is he who gives the poor man less than what is proper, but with a friendly countenance.

14. Below this is he who gives alms with a frowning countenance.

15. The great among the Sages used to hand a perutah to a poor man before praying, and then proceeded to pray, as it is said, As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness (Ps. 17:15).

16. ... Whosoever serves food and drink to poor men and orphans at his table, will, when he calls to God, receive an answer and find delight in it, as it is said, Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will answer (Isa. 58:9).

17. The Sages have commanded that one should have poor men and orphans as members of his household rather than bondsmen, for it is better for him to employ the former, so that children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob might benefit from his possessions rather than children of Ham, seeing that he who multiplies bondsmen multiplies sin and iniquity every day in the world, whereas if poor people are members of his household, he adds to merits and fulfillment of commandments every hour.

18. One should always restrain himself and submit to privation rather than be dependent upon other people or cast himself upon public charity, for thus have the Sages commanded us, saying, "Make the Sabbath a weekday rather than be dependent upon other people." Even if one is a Sage held in honor, once he becomes impoverished, he should engage in a trade, be it even a loathsome trade, rather than be dependent upon other people. It is better to strip hides off animal carcasses than to say to other people, "I am a great Sage, I am a priest, provide me therefore with maintenance." So did the Sages command us. Among the great Sages there were hewers of wood, carriers of beams, drawers of water to irrigate gardens, and workers in iron and charcoal. They did not ask for public assistance, nor did they accept it when offered to them.

19. Whosoever is in no need of alms but deceives the public and does accept them, will not die of old age until he indeed becomes dependent upon other people. He is included among those of whom Scripture says, Cursed is the man that trusteth in man (Jer. 17:5). On the other hand, whosoever is in need of alms and cannot survive unless he accepts them, such as a person who is of advanced age, or ill, or afflicted with sore trials, but is too proud and refuses to accept them, is the same as a shedder of blood and is held to account for his own soul, and by his suffering he gains nothing but sin and guilt.

Whosoever is in need of alms but denies himself, postpones the hour, and lives a life of want in order not to be a burden upon the public, will not die of old age until he shall have provided maintenance for others out of his own wealth. Of him and of those like him it is said, Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord (Jer. 17:7).

APPENDIX II

SELECTIVE TIME CHART

Developments in the field of English* and Jewish Social Policy and Philanthropy

- 1656 Official resettlement of the Jews in England
(expulsion in 1290).
- 1690 The Ashkenazic Great Synagogue established in
Dukes Place, City of London. The management of
the synagogues was lay rather than ecclesiastical
and oligarchically controlled by small self-
perpetuating groups. Newly prosperous more
recent arrivals founded new congregations, again
attempting to exclude the new generation of
nouveaux riches.
- 1701 Bevis Marks Sephardic Synagogue erected in the
City of London.
- 1707 Hambro's Synagogue, Ashkenazic breakaway
congregation in the City of London.
- 1744 - Persecutions of Jews on the Continent -
1745 motivating emigration.
- 1761 Ashkenazic New Synagogue erected in the City of
London.
- 1771 Robbery at Chelsea by Jewish criminals, outbreak
of anti-Jewish feelings. Memorandum submitted by
representative of the Great Synagogue in London
according to which limitations were imposed on
Jewish poor immigrants from Holland. Deportation
of Jewish peddlers arrested by police in an
extensive round-up throughout England. Lord
Suffolk, Minister, offered thanks by a delegation
of the Great Synagogue. Stern attitude of both
Sephardic and Ashkenazic élites towards the
immigrant poor.
- 1772 **Opinion given by Attorney General (Thurlow) 'The
poor of whatever nation must be maintained by the
officers of the parish where they are found. No
other person is compellable to relieve them.'**
- 1779 The establishment of Bread, Meat and Coal Society
'Meshebat Nephesh' (Heb. literally 'Restoring the
Soul') by Louis Cohen.

* Shown by bold print

- 1800 Patrick Colquhoun's sixth edition of Police of the Metropolis emphasised the great extent of Jewish delinquency and proposed, together with Joshua van-Oven - philanthropic advisor to Abraham Goldsmid, Jewish magnate, the establishment of a system for 'the entire management of the poor' to be financed by the poor rate and an additional statutory rate on all Jews in London. The scheme included a Jewish workhouse.
- 1801 **First census.**
- 1802 **Health and Morals of Apprentices Act.**
- 1802 Failure of the Colquhoun-van Oven Scheme, mainly due to the opposition of the members of the élite to the mandatory tax proposed.
- 1806 Jews' Hospital, a children's home founded in Mile End, East End of London, with money collected by A. Goldsmid for the Colquhoun-van Oven Scheme.
- 1807 Jews' Free School established.
- 1808 **National Vaccine Established.**
- 1815 Untenable Treaty between the Three City Synagogues regarding the relief of the 'foreign poor' who had no claim on them.
- 1820 Richer Jewish families moved to the west central and then to the West End of London.
- 1827 According to the regulations of the Great Synagogue, claims for relief could be established by proving membership's connections (similar to the establishment of parochial settlement under the Old Poor Law).
- 1828 **Madhouse Act, first asylum inspector.**
- 1830 **Oastler's letters on 'Yorkshire Slavery'.**
- 1830 - Struggle for Jewish political emancipation embarked by the most prominent members of the élite who succeeded to abolish the exclusion of Jews from Municipal corporations and Parliament.
- 1858
- 1831 **Central Board of Health (Cholera).**
- 1831 Following the great cholera epidemic Jews' Orphan Asylum was founded by Abraham Green, a streetseller of Dutch pickled cucumbers, with the money collected from the poor and the lower middle class in the East End.

- 1834 **Old Poor Law reformed, Poor Law (Amendment) Act.**
- 1834 East End Unions' where most of the Jews lived, were faced with low resources and great demands.
- 1834 on Jewish élite generally pretended to prevent Jews from having to turn to the Poor Law, except as a deterrent for 'incorrigible cases' or for supplementation of Jewish communal assistance.
- 1834 The Jewish Board of Deputies suggested to Lord Althorp an amendment to enable Jewish poor to receive relief without violation of their religious principles.
- 1835 -
1839 The 1834's Treaty between the Three City Synagogues (the 'Conjoint Synagogues') modified through the special efforts and prestige of N. M. Rothschild.
- 1836 The restrictions on immigration imposed in 1793 were abolished.
- 1836 Registration of Aliens Act. Imperfect system by which all masters of arriving vessels were obliged to provide a list of aliens to Customs officials.
- 1837 **Civil registration.**
- 1839 **Committee of the Council for Education.**
- 1840 **Free vaccination.**
- 1842 **Chadwick Report.**
- 1844 **Factory Act, Health of Towns Commission.**
- 1844 Henry Faudel's Scheme - comprehensive plan for the amalgamation and centralisation of Jewish charities.
- 1848 **Lunacy Act.**
- 1853 **Compulsory vaccination.**
- 1856 Collective action of Jewish cigar-makers in industrial dispute against Jewish employers.
- 1857 -
1858 Abraham Benisch, the editor of the Jewish Chronicle proposed in a series of editorials the establishment of a 'coordinating body' to act as Board of Guardians 'for want of a better name'.

- 1858 Baron Lionel de Rothschild, first Jewish M.P.
- 1859 The Board of Guardians for the relief of the 'strange poor' established. The Relief Committee of the Board started to consider twice weekly applications previously investigated by a paid officer.
- 1859 Restricted Jewish life in the German States, aftermath of the 1848's rising on the Continent motivating, amongst others, immigration to England. While the Jewish élite was advocating restrictions on immigration, Britain as a whole, was indifferent to the issue or pro-immigrant. In London Jews concentrated in the eastern part of the City (Whitechapel, Mile End Road, Brick Lane, Spittalfields and adjacent areas). Most of the Anglo-Jewry was native born. The situation of the Jewish poor aggravated as a result of the geographical distance between the rich who moved westward and the poor.
- 1859 The publication of Ephraim Alex's pamphlet A Scheme for a Board of Guardians to be formed for the relief of the necessitous foreign poor. The London Jewish Board of Guardians established by the Three City Synagogues. Ephraim Alex Overseer of the Poor of the Great Synagogue was nominated President. Lionel Louis Cohen was the Honorary Secretary and from 1869 to 1887 President. L. L. Cohen was a foreign banker and member of the Stock Exchange, later Conservative M.P.
- 1861 Visiting and Work (named Industrial since 1983) Committees of the Board formed. The Board made arrangements under which sewing machines and tools could be hired and/or purchased on easy terms.
- 1862 Medical Committee of the Board formed.
- 1862 **Certified Schools Act authorised Poor Law Unions to send workhouse children to schools of their own denomination at the expense of the Union concerned.** The Board made intensive use of this arrangement.
- 1866 Loan Committee of the Board formed to help the setting up of small businesses.
- 1866 **Sanitary Act.** A Sanitary Inspector was appointed by the Board from the middle of the century intermittently and from 1884 on a more permanent basis.

- 1867 **Metropolitan Poor Act.**
- 1867 Investigating Committee of the Board formed.
- 1868 Poor Law Sub-committee of the Board conducted negotiations with the statutory authorities.
- 1868 The Jewish electorate in the East End not large enough to be influential in the election campaign.
- 1869 Statutory Committee of the Board established.
- 1869 **Charity Organisations Society.** F. D. Mocatta, important supporter and active member of the Board, became the Vice-President of the C.O.S.
- 1869 **Poor Law Amendment Act empowered unions to put the poor of any one denomination together in a particular workhouse.** Section 17 inserted in the Commons on the motion of Sir David Solomons related specifically to Jews to whom outdoor relief may have been afforded by the Metropolitan Union. Opposition from those parishes where Jews were to be located - fearing that paupers from other parishes and even from abroad would become a charge on their rates.
- 1869 **'Goshen Minute' suggesting cooperation between the Poor Law statutory authorities and voluntary organisations.**
- 1869 - The Jewish Board of Guardians remained under the
1947 presidency of members of the Cohen family (except for the period 1920 to 1930).
- 1870 Committee for Legislative and Parochial Affairs established to protect the interests of the Board in relation to the wider community.
- 1870 **Forster's Education Act.**
- 1870 Jewish voluntary day school regarded as appropriate for immigrant Jewish poor only and no longer open to the native who increasingly used the School Board system. Jewish day schools which submitted themselves to Government inspection succeeded in receiving grants (as did other denominational schools). Those arrangements further reduced the financial burden of the Jewish élite.
- 1870 United Synagogue founded by Lionel Louis Cohen, the President of the Board.

- 1870's Rapid economic success of the members of the Jewish élite.
- 1870's Significant services of the Board partially financed by the Government, whilst preserving its organisational independence.
- 1870 - Jewish Trade Unionism.
1914
- 1871 Sir George Jessel became the first Jewish member of Government (Solicitor General).
- 1871 Significant numbers of East European immigrants expelled from Russian border areas. Rumanian Jews fleeing persecution.
- 1871 Jewish Workhouse established in the East End by Solomon (Sholey) Green with large lower middle-class financial and moral support, survived for three years in spite of the fierce opposition of the Board. Its purpose was to absorb Jewish inmates from parish workhouses.
- 1872 **Public Health Act.**
- 1873 Canvassing Committee of the Board formed.
- 1874 Short lived organisation of Jewish tailors from Lithuania in east London.
- 1875 - Russo-Turkish War.
1876
- 1875 **Artisans Dwelling Act.**
- 1876 First Jewish socialist worker organisation 'The Hebrew Socialist Society'.
- 1876 Aaron Libermann, Jewish socialist leader, departed to America (returned 1879-1880), lack of proper leadership for those Jewish workers who were conscious of their difficult conditions and willing to organise themselves.
- 1876 on Different Jewish clubs established in the East End inspired by the Settlement Movement.
- 1879 Emigration Committee of the Board established.
- 1881 on Serious discriminations and restrictions on the economic and social life of the Jews in Russia and eastern Europe. Atrocious pogroms.

- 1881 - Debates on immigration generally misinformed in
1906 regard to demographic data. Suspicion in regard to the returns of Jewish organisations. Restrictive legislation represented by some members of the Jewish élite as a violation of the free trade principles.
- 1881 - The Board used an indistinct and ambiguous system
1914 of classification of immigrant influenced by the Social Darwinism of the period. An application for relief before the end of the 'six month qualifying period' was regarded as a proof of failure in the struggle for adaptation to the life in England.
- 1881 - Fifty four thousand Jewish immigrants were
1914 repatriated by the Jewish Board of Guardians. A further unknown number by other Jewish agencies, sometimes in cooperation with the Board.
- 1882 Promulgation of the 'Temporary orders concerning the Jews' ('May Laws') in Russia. Savage persecution continued until the 1917 Revolution.
- 1882 The Russo-Jewish Committee established with the help of Mansion House funds to assist persecuted Russian Jews.
- 1883 - The Socialist movement in Britain condemned
1914 restrictive legislation (with few exceptions).
- 1884 **Toynbee Hall founded.**
- 1884 The Lancet published a special report on 'The Polish Colony of Jew Tailors' emphasising the poor sanitation in the East End.
- 1884 Socialist Jewish Centre established in the East End. Taken over by the Jewish anarchist group in 1892.
- 1884 - Polische Yidel (Little Polish Jew). The first
1889 Socialist paper in Yiddish, it became Die Zukunft (The Future). Arbeter Frint (Workers' Friend) the organ of the left wing Jewish Socialists.
- 1885 on More successful attempts to organise the Jewish proletariat.
- 1885 Jewish Temporary Shelter founded by Hermann Landau, a nouveau riche immigrant, in spite of the strong resistance of the Jewish élite. The Shelter provided immediate assistance, something that the Board did not. However, Landau agreed

to cooperate with the Board by promising to discourage 'the helpless, the sick, the worthless and the drones'. (JC 15, 29.5.1885.) The inmates of the Shelter that could not find employment after fourteen days in England and even before that were turned over to the Board for repatriation.

- 1885 **Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, Housing of the Working Classes Act.**
- 1885 Four per cent Industrial Dwellings Company established by the Lord Rothschild, S. Montague (Liberal M.P. for Whitechapel) and N.S. Joseph in cooperation with the Board and the United Synagogue.
- 1887 Effort made by the élite to expedite assimilation of the established immigrants 'to Anglicise, humanise and civilise them'. Festive sermon at New West Synagogue by Rabbi Hermann Adler (Chief Rabbi from 1891).
- 1887 Federation of Minor Synagogues founded by S. Montague (later the First Lord Swaythling) to group the congregations formed by recent immigrants.
- 1888 **The House of Lords Committee on the Sweating System.**
- 1888 **House of Commons Select Committee on Immigration.** Neither committee saw need for immediate action to restrict immigration.
- 1890's **Tightening of the system established by the 1836 Registration of Alien Act.**
- 1892 The Trades Union Congress passed a protectionist ('fair trade') resolution against alien immigration (repeated in 1894).
- 1892 N. S. Joseph, active member of the Board, became Chairman of the Executive of the Russo-Jewish Committee and the Conjoint Committee of the Russo-Jewish Committee and the Board, working from the Board's offices.
- 1893 The Russo-Jewish Committee started repatriation in spite of lacking the mandate to do so.
- 1900 The Anti-Alien Movement became an important factor in the East End and Parliament. Increased Anglo-Jewish élite fears to anti alienism.

- 1900 Public demonstrations and letters of protest to newspapers, etc, by relatively large groups of young Rumanian Jews who reached London and were 'offered' repatriation in lieu of relief or assistance to emigrate to Canada.
- 1900 Resolution against repatriation advanced before the Federation of Synagogues failed due to the opposition of Sir Samuel Montague and Hermann Landeau, considered to be generally more sympathetic to the immigrants.
- 1900 on Repatriation opposed by the Zionist Movement.
- 1902 **Royal Commission on Alien Immigration.** Lord Rothschild, Conservative M.P., concurred with the Royal Commission's minority report opposing legalisation of restrictive measures against immigration.
- 1902 **Balfour's Education Act.**
- 1900 - Anti Semitic outbreaks most probably prevented
1905 by the voluntary immigration control instituted by the Jewish élite.
- 1904 The repatriation continued after a brief stop due to severe pogroms in Russia such as the Kishinev outrage. Many repatriated promptly upon their arrival. The aim of the élite to make the parliamentary legislation superfluous.
- 1904 Strong anti alien movement. Anti alien legislation introduced before Parliament.
- 1904 Annual Meeting of the Board - the President, Lionel Cohen, justified continuous repatriation by claiming that the repatriated 'had provided themselves failures'. The Board accused by Leopold Greenberg: 'Jewish charities were supposed to help the Jewish Board not the convenience of the Jewish rich'.
- 1904 - The Russo-Jewish Committee repatriated over
1905 one thousand individuals. Controversial repatriation of highly visible Jewish military deserters from the Tsar's army who received sympathetic publicity in British press.
- 1905 **Unemployed Workmen's Act.**
- 1906 **The Aliens Act** aimed at Jewish paupers, laying the basis for future legal control over immigration in Britain. (The Jewish charities

could repatriate those who applied for relief only.) The act proved highly effective in keeping immigrants out of England.

- 1906 Report according to which some of the Jewish deserters sent back to Russia had been shot by the Tsar's firing squads.
- 1909 **Majority and Minority Poor Laws Reports.**
- 1911 **National Insurance Act, health and unemployment.**
- 1914 First World War interrupted immigration from the Continent.

APPENDIX III

SELECTIVE STATISTICAL CHART

LONDON JEWISH POPULATION*

Immigration and Increase in Population

1800	2000 - 3000 Sephardim (Spanish Jews) - numerically almost static, 15000-17000 Ashkenazim (German and East European Jews).
1840's - 1860	Immigration from East Europe. The incentive to leave Russia - Nicholas I persecution including conscription of Jewish children for long terms of military service. There had been about 12000 immigrants from Russia and Poland and 7000 from Germany and Holland.
1850 - 1880	Increase from 12000-15000 to 30000.
1858 - 1881	The Jewish population in Britain increased from 36000 to 60000 due to the immigration of approx. 15000 following the Crimean War.
1859	25000 Jews in London
1870	The Jewish population was approx. 45000-46000.
1881 - 1905	Average of 5000 immigrants yearly.
1881 - 1914	The great exodus of the East European Jewry, 2750000 Jews emigrated to seek shelter overseas.
1881 - 1914	120000 Jewish immigrants from Poland and Russia settled in Britain, the majority in London. During this period the Board sent back to their countries of origin in Europe 17500 'cases' representing 54000 individuals. An additional unknown number of immigrants in London, probably several thousand, were repatriated by other Jewish agencies. For approximately every two Jews who settled in London one was repatriated.
1883	46000 Jews in London.

* Based on: Feldman, D., (1994) Englishmen and Jews, London and New Haven: Yale University Press.
Jacobs, J., (1891) Studies in Jewish Statistics, London.
Lipman, V.D., (1990) A History of the Jews in Britain since 1858, Leicester: University Press.
Mills, J., [Rev.] (1853) British Jews, London.

- 1905 144000 Jews in London of which 1200000 lived in Stepney.
- 1909 - Immigration increased again to approx. 5000 per
1914 year.
- 1914 Nearly ¹300000 Jews in England; 186000 in London.
- 1914 - Immigration from Russia and East Europe
1918 curtailed by the First World War.

Social Structure and Welfare

- 1851 It was estimated that of a total London Jewish population of about 25000, almost half were considered as poor and in need of at least occasional charity.
- 1859 The amount spent on organised Jewish charity was estimated at £30000 per annum with an additional amount of £20000 spent by private philanthropy.
- 1869 - The Board dealt with over 2000 'cases' a year
1882 (from 7000-8000 persons), about twenty to twenty five per cent. The number of Jewish poor who received at least occasional relief from some Jewish source was estimated at twenty five to thirty per cent.
- 1870 The number of working men who joined hevrass (fraternities) and other religious friendly societies was estimated at approx. 5000. Membership was not possible for the poorest.
- 1881- A distinct Jewish proletariat was expended by
1914 great immigration. Most of them lived in the East End, especially in Stepney, which included forty per cent of all the aliens in London.

¹ It was estimated that from 1856 to 1859 the birth rate increased from 30.3 to 45 per 1000 and the marriage rate increased from 8.2 to 9.6. At the beginning of the 1890's 26% of the Jewish males were under 20; 63% from 21 to 46; 10% from 41-60 and only 0.5% were over 60. Males comprised of 55% of the immigrants, 25.6% were women and 17.20% children. The high marriage and birth rate and low death rate, including a low rate of infant mortality amid the immigrants was evident throughout the last quarter of the 19th century.

- 1881 - The supply of small capital by the Board in the
1914 form of loans, tool and implement hiring
grew from 268 (£1279) to 3079 (£21648)
with an average of £5 to £7 per individual
enabled entrepreneurial activities of the
immigrants.
- 1883 The upper middle class (14.6%), family income
over £1000 per year.
Mostly merchant bankers, stockbrokers. This
class comprised some 200 families largely linked
by marriage leading the community organisations.
The middle class (19.6%), family income between
£200 to £1000 per year.
Mostly manufacturers (textiles, clothing,
footwear).
Lower and working class (42.3%), family income
approx. £100 per year.
Small shopkeepers and manufacturers.
The poor class (23.6%), family income between
£10 to £50 per year. Many seasonally or partly
in receipt of at least occasional relief.
- 1901 Significant increase in the number of Jewish
hevras and Jewish friendly societies (176 such
societies with over 22000 members, mostly male).
- 1901 Occupation of inhabitants born in Russia or
Poland (mostly Jews):
40% male and 50% female in tailoring.
12.5% male in boots, shoes and slippers.
10% male in cabinet making.

Social and Political Orientation

- 1880 - Jewish membership in the House of Commons.
1895 1880 - four out of five were Liberals.
1885 - five out of eight were Liberals.
1886 - three out of seven were Liberals.
1895 - one out of eight was Liberal.
The majority of the Jewish electorate was
Liberal.
- 1890 1000 Jewish tailors went on strike in the East
End.
- 1906 8000 - 9000 Jewish garment workers went on
strike.