Abstract

This thesis examines the Anglo-Jewish community in the three decades following its so-called emancipation as legally equal citizens. Beginning with Lionel de Rothschild's entry into Parliament in 1858 and concluding with the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition's encomium to Jewish life of 1887, this era witnessed the re-conceptualisation of Anglo-Jewish identity as the minority completely entered British society after centuries of marginalisation. This thesis focuses upon three interlinked case-studies of different strands of Jewish leadership as they experienced their new identity and numerous practical issues regarding everyday interaction: the first Jewish MPs; the representative Board of Deputies of British Jews; and the community's religious infrastructure. Through analysis and comparison of these elite groups this work explores questions of inter-faith and inter-ethnic dialogue, minority-majority relationships, acculturation, and subculture formation in late nineteenth-century Britain.

It argues that Anglo-Jewry's emancipation was ambiguous; British acceptance was not neutral but carried reciprocal expectations. The community thus felt the dichotomy of Diasporic Jewish existence – being particularist in a universalist society – acutely in these years. Moving in tandem with British society forced many concessions from Jews' sectarian identity, the form and extent of which remained indeterminate as a result. The expected acculturation was forthcoming and the community fashioned itself a distinctive British variant of Jewish existence. However, this thesis contends that this was not always a forced or unpleasant experience. Many Jews willingly embraced aspects of British identity they appreciated. There were also

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numerous instances of the community being able to preserve its exceptionality. The British state and wider society showed a remarkable willingness to accommodate cases of Jewish particularity. This thesis demonstrates the tolerant nature of Britain's civil society (and indicates some of the boundaries to this), whilst also revealing the remarkable level of confluence between Anglo-Jewish and British ideals at this time. Fundamentally, it suggests, with some reservations, that Anglo-Jewry be viewed as an example of successful integration.

Extended Abstract

This thesis analyses the identity and development of the Jewish community in Britain during its immediate post-emancipation era, 1858-1887. These decades witnessed the re-conceptualisation of Anglo-Jewish existence, as the minority was accorded equal rights as full British citizens after centuries of marginalisation. For both British society and the Jewish community it created interesting questions of definition and identity, as well as numerous practical dilemmas concerning everyday interaction. Focusing upon the varied experiences of elite Jewish groups operating at different levels within British state and society, this research delineates the nature of the Anglo-Jewish subculture in Britain and examines the causes and events that led to its formation. It begins with Lionel de Rothschild's July 1858 entry into the House of Commons, the right to sit in Parliament having been the symbolic feature of Jewish emancipation so-called, and concludes with the April 1887 Anglo-Jewish Exhibition. This, held in the same year as Victoria's jubilee, was both an encomium, and as it would transpire, a eulogy to the emancipatory ideals that had dominated Anglo-Jewish life for the past thirty years, and which after this point, began to buckle under the impact of mass Jewish immigration, rising European antisemitism and the concomitant emergence of political Zionism.

This thesis argues that emancipation was ambiguous. British acceptance was neither precocious nor neutral but carried reciprocal expectations. Whilst it nationalised Jewish identity it also continued to imbue it with ambivalent and negative connotations. Far from creating an acceptable and conclusive mode of existence, emancipation established an uncertain situation where the nature of

Jewry's presence in society was still undetermined and open to debate. Contrary to the Whiggish and sanitised conception that has long-dominated Anglo-Jewish historiography, these decades were not a 'golden age' of peaceful accord but a crucially formative time, as Jew and Gentile tested the new settlement. Indeed, the community felt the essential dichotomy of Diasporic Jewish existence – the dilemma of being particularist in a modern, universalist society – acutely in these years. Moving in tandem with British society, itself experiencing dramatic developments as it exited the 'age of equipoise', forced many concessions from Jews' sectarian identity, the form and extent of which remained indeterminate as a result. The expected acculturation was forthcoming and the community fashioned itself a uniquely British variant of Jewish existence.

However, this thesis contends, in contrast to the perceptions of more recent scholarship that has focused on the loss of traditional Jewish culture in the face of a homogenising Britishness, that acculturation was not always a forced or necessarily unpleasant experience for the minority. Many Jews willingly embraced British attitudes and models, across a variety of areas from religious practice and charity organisation, to international diplomacy and political activism. There were also numerous occasions when the community was able, if especially motivated, to preserve its exceptionality; by, for instance, obtaining special legislative provisions. The British state and wider society, at multiple levels, showed a remarkable willingness to accommodate cases of Jewish particularity. This work demonstrates the tolerant nature of Britain's civil society (and indicates some of the boundaries to this), whilst also revealing the remarkable level of confluence between Anglo-Jewish and British ideals at this time.

Chapter one draws upon existing historiography to review and outline the basis of Anglo-Jewish settlement and communal formation in Britain. This began in 1656, when Cromwell tacitly permitted Jews to resettle in England for the first time since the expulsion of 1290. The minority were not granted any formal legal status however, which facilitated quicker cultural adaptation than many European Jews achieved, as they faced few specific disabilities but also made their presence insecure and susceptible to repeated challenges. In this situation the community slowly developed; growing in size, constructing institutions and increasingly acculturating to British socio-cultural conditions. By the beginning of the nineteenth-century Jewry was well-integrated and members of its elite began to identify themselves as native Englishmen. When Parliament emancipated Protestant dissenters in 1828 and then Catholics in 1829, these anglicised Jews initiated a campaign to likewise relieve their community – now the only politically disadvantaged minority in Britain. This effort lasted thirty years as the possibility of becoming equal Englishmen split Jewry, which was not used to intellectually contemplating its condition. A spectrum of ideals regarding the community's future emerged and occasioned a similar variety of approaches to achieving equality. This lack of unanimity, as well as considerable indifference, hampered Jewish efforts to obtain emancipation. On the Gentile side, widespread negative perceptions of the Jews' condition and the concept of a national Christian identity delayed support for equality. Eventually the logic of political principle made emancipation inevitable and the right of a professing Jew to sit in Parliament was conceded.

Chapter two begins the first of three case-studies upon different yet interlinked sections of the Anglo-Jewish leadership. It focuses upon the initial Jewish MPs as they entered national politics for the first time and faced the questions of Jewry's new status particularly sharply. A diverse group of individuals with variegated connections to the community, these Jews found it relatively easy to break into Parliamentary politics. Throughout this era the number of Jewish representatives steadily rose and there were few antisemitic incidents. Indeed, many seem to have been appreciated as local politicians, even if they were not that energetic in the House. The major Jewish development in domestic politics was the intrusion of their minority specificity into general British politics, contrary to the rhetoric of emancipation. The Jewish MPs, although obtaining their authority from sources extraneous to Jewry, were widely perceived as the community's political spokesmen. As such, they advanced various measures to protect communal interests in the face of general legislation – such as the Factory Acts or Ballot Bill, for instance. Alongside such partisan interventions, Jewish MPs continued to support measures of religious equality in this period, as the minority began to establish its own standpoint within British politics. Regarding foreign affairs, Jewish MPs tended to follow their party's line but were able again, to pursue Jewish concerns in the form of appeals for persecuted foreign communities. This became problematic however, during the Bulgarian Crisis and subsequent Eastern Question of 1876-78, when Jewish interests were popularly viewed as divergent from British ones. This occasioned considerable anti-Jewish prejudice and alienated many Jews from their previous Liberal party allegiance. It also demonstrated the precariousness of Jewish politics, which were generally integrated but not beyond questioning.

Chapter three concentrates upon internal communal government, focusing particularly upon the activities of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. This quasi-democratic, quasi-oligarchic institution claimed sole responsibility for representing Anglo-Jewry to the Gentile world. On various levels it managed to obtain remarkable cooperation with British organisations. It interacted harmoniously with the Registrar General to coordinate Jewish marriages, for instance, and had a close working relationship with the Foreign Office, which saw frequent collaboration to halt persecution and prejudice against Jews abroad. Many of these endeavours were based upon a remarkable correlation of British and Jewish ideals, demonstrating the success of communal integration. However, the Board, possessing an older, more cautious understanding of Jewish identity, was not uniformly popular within the community; in part, because it was restrained in its promotion of Jewish interests. Wary of appearing too particularist the Deputies frequently subordinated minority concerns to the perceived requirements of British equality. This made many of their actions ineffective; no serious attempts could be made to permanently ameliorate foreign coreligionists, for example. The Board was also set upon imposing its idea of Jewish life upon the rest of the community. Using its statutory power of marriage regulation and closely cooperating with the Chief Rabbinate it sought to stifle reform movements and prevent irregularities of practice surfacing within the minority. Emancipation had, though, reduced the community to being a voluntary confession and there was a reaction to the Board's attempted control that saw a rival organisation created and many Jews bypass its authority to regulate their own affairs. The community remained divided in its self-conception, despite the regular overlap in English and Jewish outlooks.

Chapter four has a slightly broader character, examining the Jewish religious situation in Britain, including its educational arrangements. Continuing the pre-emancipation trend, this aspect of Jewish life became ever more anglicised and acculturated in these decades. The organisational structure, ritual and clergy of Anglo-Jewry were all modified to incorporate environmental elements in place of traditionalist Jewish practice. Doctrinal matters were not altered, though: changes related more to form than faith. Alterations were consistent with the elite's approach to religion, which, echoing the situation of their Christian countrymen, was not particularly learned or fervent but more concerned with propriety and social expectations. Anglo-Judaism, as a result, was an undemanding faith; able to incorporate much internal plurality but also susceptible to laxity among its adherents. The minority's education system played a significant role in perpetuating this situation. Designed to impart only a minimum of Jewish knowledge, the community maintained specifically Jewish schools whose primary objective was the occupation and elevation of the poor. Wealthier Jews sent their children to mix with Christians in general schools. Jewish education was ordered upon British class conceptions rather than the need to inculcate religion. All of these factors did not, however, occasion a great estrangement from Jewish identity, as it did for many European Jews. Facing less pressure to assimilate in Britain's tolerant society, Anglo-Jewry retained remarkable group cohesion. On issues such as conversion, proselytism and endogamy the minority successfully acted to preserve its solidarity and most Jews retained at least a nominal attachment to the community.

The final chapter, five, returns to the smaller, less empirical format employed for chapter one. Concentrating upon the community in the 1880s, it shows how

Anglo-Jewry's identity began to change as the circumstances of their existence altered. The impact of the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews fleeing repression in the Russian Empire from 1881 onwards was revolutionary. The socio-economic patterns of the community, until now characterised by steady embourgeoisement and gentle integration, were turned upside down. The hundreds of thousands of foreign Jews who settled in England reverted the community to an older, poorer and more segregated formation. In the process of doing so, the immigrants overloaded communal charity. They also sparked an anti-alien prejudice within British society, which, in an atmosphere of growing ethnic and racial thinking, raised fears of antisemitism. Reacting to these events many Anglo-Jews began to emphasise the racial aspect to their identity that had been technically renounced during emancipation. Others created a more extreme interpretation of equality and forsaking all nationalistic elements, adopted a purely confessional Judaism. The flexible identity established by the post-emancipation community was threatened and, realising this, the community sought to remember its experiences and rediscover its position. The product of this burgeoning historical consciousness was the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition; an event that can be taken as a useful endpoint to the immediate post-emancipation phase of Anglo-Jewish history.

In conclusion this thesis demonstrates that emancipation did not provide a solution to the perennial debate about Anglo-Jewry's position within British society. Post-emancipation, the community, though now officially possessed of a combined British and Jewish identity, still had to negotiate the details of its existence. Although different individuals pursued different strategies, the elite often attempted to construct a compromise suitable to both sides of their definition. The ambiguity inherent to

their position, whilst causing continuing insecurity, was also embraced to provide flexibility and amorphousness to Jewish existence. Without establishing a hard-and-fast definition of themselves Jews could adjust their image to fit their particular requirements: becoming dissenters in politics but seeking to emulate the Established religion, for instance. This spacious identity only became a problem when the two sides of their persona clashed: with no justificatory structure to fall back upon Anglo-Jews were open to criticism if their Jewish interests transgressed their English ones. Fortunately, in the tolerant British environment this seldom happened. A correlation of Jewish and British ideals was much more common than a conflict. The Anglo-Jewish experience, with some reservations, can be viewed as an example of successful integration and emancipated existence.

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Identity and Equality
The Anglo-Jewish Community in the Post-Emancipation Era
1858-1887

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Abbreviations

Alliance Israélite Universelle	AIU
Anglo-Jewish Association	AJA
Conjoint Foreign Committee of the Board of Deputies and Anglo-Jewish Association	CFC
Jewish Board of Guardians	JBG
Jewish Chronicle	JC
Jews' Free School	JFS
Jewish World	JW
Law, Parliamentary, and General Purposes Committee of the Board of Deputies	LPC
United Synagogue	USyn
Voice of Jacob	VJ

Abbreviations in footnotes:

Board of Deputies Annual Reports	BDAR
Jewish Journal of Sociology	JJS
Jewish Social Studies	JSS
London Metropolitan Archives	LMA
Minute Books of the Board of Deputies	MBBD
Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England	TJHSE
United Synagogue Papers	USP

Introduction
Emancipation and the Modern Jewish Identity

I.

Jewish identity is an elusive concept. Unique among modern definitions it resists all historical categories and cannot be fitted into general models. There is a Jewish 'nonclassifiability'.[1] Standard schemes of nation, race and creed are insufficient to delineate what Freud termed the 'innere Identität'.[2] Manifest in the individual consciousness and expressible at a collective or international level, Jewish identity yet remains a conundrum.[3] Blending various elements in a multitude of combinations 'Jews are a group without a single foundation, a heterogeneous linking of the non-identical.'[4] Levels of intensity range across an existential gulf. The diffuse ambivalence of Jewishness embraces a gamut from assimilated and apostatised to separatist and national; either end of this identity continuum having no contiguous characteristics with the other. A mass of confusion therefore exists regarding self and group definition; what one Jew constitutes as identity is often dissimilar, perhaps even antithetical to another's construct. The resulting psychological issues often add a further problematic to Jewish identity. Isaiah Berlin talked of the 'very doubt' being 'unbearable'.[5] Unable to locate themselves, to harmonise their presence, Jews could suffer from cognitive dissonance and might become insecure in their self-understanding. For both the Jew (and the non-Jew living beside him) this generated

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[1] M. Buber, 'The Jews in the World' (1934), in Idem., *Israel and the World. Essays in a Time of Crisis* (New York 1948) p.168.

[2] S. Whitfield, 'Enigmas of Modern Jewish Identity', *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol.8. Nos.2-3. (Winter/Spring 2002) p.162. Freud made this statement in a seemingly offhand remark to the *B'nai B'rith* in Vienna in 1926.

[3] M. Meyer, *Jewish Identity in the Modern World* (London 1990) p.4.

[4] J. Steyn, *The Jew: Assumptions of Identity* (London 1999) p.18.

[5] I. Berlin, 'Benjamin Disraeli, Karl Marx and the Search for Identity', in Idem., *Against the Current. Essays in the History of Ideas* ed., by H. Hardy (London 1979) p.275.

what Zygmunt Bauman describes as 'the great fear of modern life...that of undetermination, unclarity, uncertainty – in other words, ambivalence.'[6] Historically this has led to efforts, from both inside and out, at anchoring Jews, at incorporating them within established criteria and providing recognisable boundaries to their 'boundary-transgressing persona'.[7] This thesis examines one such period of formation and change within Jewish identity.

The notion of identity is one of the most ill-defined in historians' terminology. Erik Erikson suggested identity as a category linking the psychological growth of individual persons with the norms of society but admitted the concept remained '...a term for something as unfathomable as it is all-pervasive.'[8] Not wishing to indulge in semantic wrangling or to impose possibly limiting theoretical frameworks to empirical research, this thesis will avoid employing a strict understanding of the term. Instead, it will take a broad sweep, regarding identity as a complex and amorphous entity, observable through the interconnected range of characteristics, opinions and attitudes exhibited by both individuals and groups within the multitude of circumstances and situations that comprise modern society.[9] Understanding identity to be thus a construct – formed from a mixture of choices embedded within historically contingent circumstances and operating within inherited frameworks – this work undertakes to analyse the nature of Jewish existence in a particular situation, at a particular time and under particular conditions, delineating the themes

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[6] Z. Bauman, 'Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern', in B. Cheyette and L. Marcus (eds.), *Modernity, Culture and 'the Jew'* (Cambridge 1998) p.149.

[7] D. Feldman, 'Was Modernity Good for the Jews?' in Cheyette and Marcus (eds.), *Modernity, Culture* p.178.

[8] Quoted in Meyer, *Jewish* p.5.

[9] For more discussion of these ideas see: Whitfield, 'Enigmas' p.165; and B. Lammers, *A Superior Kind of English: Jewish Ethnicity and English Identity in London's East End, 1905-39* (Facsimile of PhD Thesis submitted to the State University of New Jersey, Oct. 1997) p.11.

and influences that determined and comprised Jewish definition in Britain during the post-emancipation era, 1858-1887. An historical period established on one side, rather obviously by the achievement of Jewish emancipation and, on the other, by the holding of the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition. This event, held in the same year as Victoria's jubilee, was both an encomium and, as it would transpire, a eulogy to the emancipatory ideals that had dominated Anglo-Jewish life for the past thirty years but were subtly altering under the impact of mass immigration, rising prejudice and the concomitant emergence of political Zionism.

These Jewish identity issues were (and are) a product of modernity. For Jews in medieval and early modern Europe, the question of their definition was unproblematic. Centuries of particularity and exclusion had fused Jewish religion, nationality and ethnicity into a self-sufficient identity. Jews viewed themselves – and were viewed by others – as a distinct and separate people. Links between Jewish and non-Jewish society were primarily instrumental and there was little neutral ideological ground between them to facilitate greater interaction.[10] This existence was secure and continuous, as it had been for generations. The political, economic and social consequences of European states' transition to modern forms – the 'melting of solids' into 'liquid modernity' – destroyed this automatic Jewish identification.[11] Under the Enlightenment's aegis belief in rationality and human progress, elevating science and philosophy at the expense of religion, transformed European societies over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[12] Industrialisation and urbanisation took

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[10] T. Endelman, 'Making Jews Modern: Some Jewish and Gentile Misunderstandings in the Age of Emancipation' in M. Raphael (ed.), *What is Modern about the Modern Jewish Experience?* (Virginia 1997) pp.18-9. and Meyer *Jewish* p.12.

[11] Z. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge 2000) pp.6 & 15.

[12] D. Sorkin, 'Jewish Emancipation in Central and Western Europe in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth

place as corporate distinctions were abolished; secularisation and plurality increased as the centrality of religion declined; civil and bourgeois society developed as hierarchies loosened and wealth created new groupings; and more centralised, bureaucratic and often representative government organised to mediate these other changes.[13] These alterations and their triumphant liberal justifications necessarily included the Jews.[14] It would have been an 'outright anachronism' for new nation states and individualistic societies to allow Jews to remain separate and autonomous.[15] A similar reconstitution was therefore required of them, they had to adapt to modern times. Emancipation was the mechanism by which the transference of Jewish identity occurred. Emancipation removed Jews from their defined position, re-located them within the national collective and provided access to modern ideas and conditions: legal equality, civil participation, economic freedom and individuality.[16]

The impact upon their identity was revolutionary. The totality of Jewish life was irreversibly fractured as the possible parameters of their existence massively expanded.[17] Multiple components previously beyond Jewish boundaries intruded upon their identification and overturned its former existential basis grounded in the enforceability of tradition.[18] Jewishness became only a part of Jews' sense of self.[19] It

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Centuries', in D. Englander (ed.), *The Jewish Enigma. An Enduring People* (Milton Keynes 1992) pp.81-2.

[13] D. Sorkin, 'Port Jews and the Three Regions of Emancipation', in D. Cesarani (ed.), *Port Jews. Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres, 1550-1950* (London 2002) p.37 and Feldman, 'Was Modernity' p.171.

[14] Sorkin, 'Jewish' p.108.

[15] Endelman, 'Making Jews' p.19.

[16] P. Birnabaum, and I. Katznelson, 'Emancipation and the Liberal Offer', in Idem., (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation. Jews, States and Citizenship* (Chichester 1995) p.4. Care must be taken of course, not to establish too dichotomous a split between tradition and modernity – the transition varied considerably in form, pace and extent.

[17] D. Vital, *A People Apart. A Political History of the Jews in Europe, 1789-1939* (Oxford 1999) p.165.

[18] J. Katz, 'Introduction', in Idem., (ed.), *Towards Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New

was now to be combined with other components: national, political, socio-economic and limited increasingly – as Gentile society stipulated – to the religious orbit. Bereft of their former self-validation and now judging themselves primarily by non-Jewish standards, this reduction also made Jews 'intimately alive' to others' opinions of them and therefore, sensitive to their criticism.[20] Emancipation made Jews self-conscious of their (negatively perceived) differences and anomalies, creating what Nietzsche termed a *ressentiment*-prone situation. This, as developed by Max Scheler '...refers to a psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility of satisfying these feelings...' *Ressentiment* may occur when a perceived equality exists between the subject and the object of envy, so that in principle they are interchangeable but in reality the inequality that exists precludes the practical achievement of the theoretically existing equality.[21] This often results in a 'transvaluation of values', whereby the originally supreme values of a group are denigrated and replaced by exterior notions that were formerly unimportant or even negative.[22] Such a condition became widespread among European Jews undergoing emancipation and led in varying degrees, to the abandonment of Jewish cultural markers and constituents.[23] In such a manner '...European emancipation presented Jewry with its most serious crisis of definition since the birth of rabbinic Judaism.'[24] The entirety of Jewish existence and indeed,

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Brunswick 1987) p.2.

[19] T. Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830. Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (Philadelphia 1979) p.4.

[20] T. Endelman, 'Jewish Self-Hatred in Britain and Germany', in M. Brenner, R. Liedtke and D. Rechter (eds.), *Two Nations: British and German Jews in Comparative Perspective* (Tübingen 1999) p.337.

[21] L. Greenfeld, *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity* (London 1992) pp.15-6.

[22] Ibid., p.16.

[23] Z. Gitelman, 'The Decline of the Diaspora Jewish Nation: Boundaries, Content, and Jewish Identity', *JSS*, Vol.4. No.2. (Winter 1998) p.125.

[24] J. Sacks, *One People? Tradition, Modernity, and Jewish Unity* (London 1993) p.viii.

that very existence itself, was questioned and challenged by the logic of equality. According to P. Birnbaum and I. Katznelson:

> As Jews traversed paths to emancipation, their new condition as members of voluntary communities confronted them with choices that functioned as solvents to dissolve pre-emancipation patterns of Jewish solidarity. These options were concerned both with how to try and engage the wider non-Jewish world in all its dimensions, and about how to be Jewish in the circumstances of emancipation; that is, how to define the character of theological Judaism, the social organisation of Jewry, and the qualities of Jewishness as a way of life.[25]

Unsure and divided regarding both the viability and desirability of settling these questions in any particular direction, and without any guiding framework within which to operate, Jews encountered 'a multiplicity of conflicting forces interacting in unpredictable ways' as they sought to define themselves.[26] Ambivalence became central to modern Jewish existence.

With such an impact emancipation has become a dominant theme in modern Jewish history. The tempestuous transition from tradition to modernity has been the leitmotiv of modern Jewish life according to Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.[27] Whilst central however, emancipation's effect upon European Jews has been far from uniform. The removal of legal impediments to Jews' participation and their subsequent internal and external transformations were not a unitary or singular experience. Emancipation was a 'multi-layered process' with a 'plurality of passages'.[28] It occurred in different states at different times and under a variety of conditions, all of which conduced to individualise the Jewish route to modernity in each of its national contexts. Appreciating these differentials, several methodological

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[25] Birnbaum and Katznelson, 'Emancipation' p.11.
[26] J. Frankel, 'Assimilation and the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Towards a New Historiography', in J. Frankel and S. Zipperstein (eds.), *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge 1992) p.31.
[27] Sacks, *One People* p.x.
[28] Birnbaum and Katznelson, 'Emancipation' pp.10-1.

commonalities are apparent and have led to types of emancipation being identified. Two basic categories exist: the revolutionary and the reformist or tutelary. The originator and paradigm of the revolutionary approach was France. Where in 1791 under the influence of *liberté, egalité et fraternité*, Jews were automatically granted all the rights of French citizens.[29] Successful Revolutionary and Napoleonic armies then disseminated this procedure across significant areas of Western Europe; Dutch Jewry, for instance, was accorded full and instant equality under French rule in 1796.[30] Emancipation in Germany on the other hand, already necessarily uneven and partial due to the fragmentary nature of its various polities, is often cited as exemplifying the tutelary method. Protracted in application, this approach witnessed incremental advances in Jewish rights, with the possibility of occasional reverses, based upon a contractual, quid pro quo arrangement requiring concomitant Jewish assimilation, as opposed to liberal principles.[31] Werner Mosse has suggested four broad stages in German Jews' 'tortuous and thorny path' to emancipation: 1781-1815, where initial debate accompanied an attempted pan-German solution through the Congress of Vienna; followed by 1815-47 that witnessed retrograde measures and a retreat from equality; this was briefly succeeded in 1848-9 by another failed effort at general emancipation; and the final phase 1849-71 of gradual advance eventually completed by unification.[32]

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[29] F. Malino, *The Sephardic Jews of Bordeaux: Assimilation and Emancipation in Revolutionary and Napoleonic France* (Tuscaloosa 1978) p.55.

[30] J. Michman, *Dutch Jewry during the Emancipation Period, 1787-1815* (Amsterdam 1995) pp.23-5.

[31] M. Meyer, 'Introduction' in Idem., (ed.), *German-Jewish History in Modern Time: Emancipation and Acculturation: 1780-1871* (Four Volumes Chichester 1997) ii, pp.1-3.

[32] W. Mosse, 'From "*Schutzjuden*" to "*Deutsche Staatsbürger Jüdischen Glaubens*": The Long and Bumpy Road of Jewish Emancipation in Germany' in Birnabaum, and Katznelson, (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation* p.60. and see R. Rürup, 'The Tortuous and Thorny Path to Legal Equality: "Jew Laws" and Emancipatory Legislation in Germany from the Late Eighteenth Century', *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol.31. (1986)

These two generalised categories are obvious simplifications of a complex process and their applications were far from straightforward or exclusive. Under Napoleon the French employed reformist tactics, withdrawing certain Jewish rights to encourage greater integration, whereas many German states first implemented emancipatory measures in response to French victories or following their own revolutions of 1848. Some historians also caution that this dualistic conception is centred upon Western Europe and therefore chronologically limited to its periodisation of approximately 1770-1870. Eastern Europe, where the Jewish and non-Jewish adaptation to modernity was considerably different and often much later – Jews in the Russian Empire gained few rights before being emancipated after the February 1917 revolution and consequently, non-traditional forms of Jewishness were more limited – is often excluded from analyses of emancipation, despite containing the vast majority of European Jews.[33] This has prompted David Sorkin to develop a more comprehensive formula incorporating the whole continent and a much wider timeframe. Beginning in 1654 when Amsterdam Jews gained rights as burghers and concluding with the 1919 signing of the minority rights treaty, Sorkin's assessment highlights four overlapping but not necessarily sequential gradations of status through which Jewish communities might pass en route to full emancipation.[34] This appreciation, recognising different types and speeds of equality yet locating them all within a generalised movement, adds a necessary subtlety to the study of Jewish equality. It is certainly useful in the British context, which began a century before

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[33] B. Pinkus, *The Jews of the Soviet Union: The History of a National Minority* (Cambridge 1988) pp.22-39.

[34] Sorkin, 'Port Jews' pp.35-40. The four stages Sorkin proposes are: Toleration; civil inclusion; partial emancipation; and full emancipation.

Central Europe's and contained many singular features, as will be discussed further in chapter one.[35]

The manifold circumstances of emancipation elicited a corresponding multiplicity of Jewish reactions. Jews were far from passive recipients of modernity and their responses to the possibilities of equality determined to a great extent the future contours of Jewish existence in that state. In France, for example, in the civilly conscious atmosphere of the Revolution, Jews explicitly bargained with the state to reduce their separation and promote inclusion, whereas in Russia, downtrodden and unable to initiate dialogue in a closed society, Jews increasingly turned to radical and revolutionary solutions.[36] In respect to such responses, it is not so much the Western experience but more specifically that of German Jewry that has been advanced as paradigmatic. Formulating the most intellectually sophisticated of European Jewish adaptations, German Jews did develop several seminal movements. Modern interpretations of Judaism from the neo-Orthodoxy of Sampson Raphael Hirsch to the ultra-Reform of Samuel Holdheim, alongside scholarly movements examining Jewishness, such as *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, were born in Germany and would go on to alter Jewish identity around the world.[37] More crucially, the revolutionary thinking underpinning these new definitions had first been articulated in Berlin. In 1783 Moses Mendelssohn sparked the *Haskalah* with his publication: *Jerusalem or on Religious Power and Judaism*; the first attempt to reconcile Judaism and

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[35] Sorkin's conception also allows the Sephardic experience to be adequately accommodated. These Jews encountered unique forms of toleration and modernity, often earlier than most other Jews, but appear only briefly and sporadically in most historical accounts as they fall outside typical legal conceptions.

[36] J. Berkovitz, *The Shaping of Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century France* (Detroit 1989) pp.72, 78-82. and Pinkus, *The Jews* pp.39-45.

[37] M. Meyer, 'Jewish Self-Understanding' in Idem., (ed.), *German-Jewish History*, i, pp.132-5.

rationality, and thereby justify a modern and Jewish existence.[38] Jacob Katz claims 'Mendelssohn's contribution became of decisive importance; due to him Jewish aspirations to have access to non-Jewish society were not simply displayed in practice, as in England, but carried out under the cover of intellectual vindication.'[39] The German example was undoubtedly the most cerebrally impressive of transitions but as Katz himself admits, other Jews, notably the English, did not require such theoretical assistance. Operating under dissimilar conditions Anglo-Jewry pursued a very different transforming effort, gradually absorbing aspects of modernity from their more open environment and eschewing the cognitive effort German Jewry was forced to utilise. Moreover, as Todd Endelman has emphasised, socio-economic disparities within the same national setting could lead to radically divergent experiences: Jews '...did not enter the modern world like a well-disciplined army...The dual processes of acculturation and integration were acted out in countless thousands of private acts and encounters, mostly but not entirely unrecorded and unobserved, far from the limelight of public discussion.'[40] No single model of Jewish transition could be relevant to all European Jews considering such national and individual particularities. Most historians now accept that the German Jewish tradition cannot be viewed as typical of Jewish adaptation elsewhere.[41] This national uniqueness has become a further divisive factor within modern Jewish identity. Traditionally Jewish definition was universal and trans-national but as a consequence of emancipation it became context-bound and state-specific. It is in regard to the

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[38] M. Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem or on Religious Power and Judaism* Trans. A. Arkush (London 1983)
[39] Katz, 'Introduction' p.11.
[40] T. Endelman, 'The Chequered Career of "Jew" King: A Study in Anglo-Jewish Social History', in F. Malino and D. Sorkin (eds.), *From East to West. Jews in Changing Europe, 1750-1870* (Oxford 1990) p.181.
[41] Feldman, 'Was Modernity' p.178.

British situation that this thesis seeks to analyse and outline the nature of one such form of Jewish identity.

II.

'Jewish emancipation in England was by no means precocious'.[42] Equality came to the Jews of Britain in a piecemeal fashion. The process lacked an overtly tutelary logic but was certainly characterised by gradual reform over a period of nearly thirty years: 1830-58. In 1833 the first Jew was admitted to the bar; 1835 saw Jews gain the vote; 1837 the University of London dispensed with religious qualifications concerning degrees (Oxford and Cambridge were to do the same in 1854 and 1856, respectively); and in 1845 all municipal offices were opened to the minority.[43] The final right to be conceded was the symbolically significant ability of professing Jews to sit in Parliament.[44] Including the first Jewish Relief Bill of 1830, this took some thirteen legislative attempts to enact; all save the first and last passed the Commons only to be rejected by the Lords. There were mitigating factors excusing this delay: in the early 1830s Parliamentary reform dominated the agenda; in the late 1840s Chartism at home and revolutions abroad decreased receptivity to

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[42] D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews. Social Politics and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (London 1994) p.3.

[43] D. Katz, *The Jews in the History of England 1485-1850* (Oxford 1994) pp.386-8.

[44] The July 1858 entry of Rothschild into the Commons was not technically the end of Anglo-Jewry's emancipation. The political compromise thrashed out between the Lords and Commons meant that it was possible to swear a modified and de-Christianised oath only in the lower House, and then only if the chamber approved such a move. Jews' ability to sit as MPs was thus a matter of sufferance not right. An 1860 statute corrected this situation in the Commons but it was not until 1866 that the Parliamentary Oaths Act instituted undenominational admission procedures for both Houses and thus extended the principle to the Lords. The final act of legal equalisation in Britain came in 1871 with the removal of religious tests for entry to higher degrees, fellowships and offices at Oxford and Cambridge. Contemporaries however, considered emancipation to have taken place in 1858 when Rothschild took his seat and this thesis will therefore, whilst appreciating these technicalities, also treat this year as marking the attainment of Jewish equality, as does most historiography.

change; and the 1850 re-installation of the Catholic hierarchy heightened religious tensions – to name a few.[45] There was little British Jews could do to advance the process. They had long been allowed to participate in Britain's civically construed nationalism. Quietly pursuing the extensive social and economic opportunities already available to them, Anglo-Jews sought to demonstrate their integration in a manner practically designed to include them in English cultural thought, which remained determinedly universalistic and monogenetic.[46]

This adaptation and Anglo-Jewish emancipation in general, has not received due historiographical consideration. Few works, most of which are now rather aged, have addressed the subject directly. The two most substantial are M. Salbstein, *The Emancipation of the Jews in Britain: The Question of the Admission of the Jews to Parliament, 1828-1860* and A. Gilam, *The Emancipation of the Jews in England, 1830-1860*, both of which were developed from their authors' doctoral theses.[47] The former concentrates upon Parliamentary debates and political action, while the later pays closer attention to the Jewish side – both usefully detail the proceedings and underline the major issues of emancipation in England. However, both now appear unsophisticated in light of more recent historiography that has executed a more critical and analytical appraisal of Anglo-Jewry and its emancipation. Geoffrey Alderman's article 'English Jews or Jews of the English Persuasion? Reflections on the Emancipation of Anglo-Jewry' is the most recent work to directly address the

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[45] D. Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge 1994) pp.20-1.

[46] P. Mandler, ''Race and 'Nation' in mid-Victorian Thought' in S. Collini, R. Whatmore, and B. Young (eds.), *History, Religion and Culture: British Intellectual History, 1750-1950.* (Cambridge 2000) p.225.

[47] M. Salbstein, *The Emancipation of the Jews in Britain: The Question of the Admission of the Jews to Parliament, 1828-1860* (London 1982) and A. Gilam, *The Emancipation of the Jews in England, 1830-1860* (London 1982)

topic in this new vein.[48] Locating emancipation within the surrounding Jewish and Gentile contexts, it reveals the complex interplay of issues propelling and retarding the process, as well as highlighting the long-term implications these had upon the Jewish community. These conclusions were preceded by several articles of Israel Finestein's that first took note of various internal Anglo-Jewish differences concerning equality; as well as U. Henriques' 'The Jewish Emancipation Controversy in Nineteenth-Century Britain' that assessed the campaign through vicissitudes of non-Jewish opinion.[49]

The state of emancipation historiography regrettably reflects the general paucity of serious historical research upon the Anglo-Jewish community. Although the situation has greatly improved in the last couple of decades, both British and Jewish historians have tended to overlook the minority. In the British case Todd Endelman finds a 'benign neglect' that treats Jews superficially, as either victims or exemplars of other British themes – anti-alienism or the rise of finance capital, for instance – whilst ignoring their specific existence.[50] This 'breathtaking omission' he ascribes to the structural obstacles of the Jews' identity, which eludes easy definition '...and thus cannot be fitted comfortably into the standard categories of British historical writing.'[51] C. Richmond suggests that such classificatory difficulties are often compounded by British historians' conscious or unconscious desire to minimise

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[48] G. Alderman, 'English Jews or Jews of the English Persuasion? Reflections on the Emancipation of Anglo-Jewry', in Birnbaum and Katznelson (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation*

[49] See I. Finestein, 'Some Modern Themes in the Emancipation Debate in Early Victorian England', in Idem., *Jewish Society in Victorian England*, (London 1993); I. Finestein, 'Anglo-Jewish Opinion during the Struggle for Emancipation (1828-1858)', in Idem., *Jewish Society*; I. Finestein, 'A Modern Examination of Macaulay's Case for the Civil Emancipation of the Jews', in Idem., *Jewish Society*; I. Finestein, 'Jewish Emancipation in Victorian England: Self-Imposed Limits to Assimilation', in Frankel and Zipperstein (eds.), *Assimilation and Community*; and U. Henriques, 'The Jewish Emancipation Controversy in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Past and Present*, No.40. (July 1968)

[50] T. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (London 2002) p.5.

[51] Ibid., pp.6-7.

the presence of minorities that may cast a poor light upon the general British situation, and thereby detract from the portrayal of a tolerant and progressive British culture.[52] Similar reservations have contrived to exclude Anglo-Jewry from the attention of Jewish scholars. Once again, the British community do not fit the pattern. Comparatively undramatic, Anglo-Jewish history witnessed an absence of violence and turmoil that prevents the use of a familiar framework of analysis: the Jews as a persecuted minority.[53] A corresponding lack of internal disturbance and hence the dramatic cultural or intellectual innovation that tended to occasion this, has led those historians who examine Jewish modernisation in terms of the creation of new ideologies to also marginalise Anglo-Jewry.[54] Even the possibility that British Jews, with their relatively untroubled integration and one of the longest undisturbed Jewish experiences of modern times, may represent a paradigm, or at least an interesting case study, of Jewish toleration and successful Diaspora life has not elicited historical attention. The Eastern European school of Jewish history, pessimistic regarding modernity's impact upon the Jews, considering emancipation the beginning of decline and dissolution, and believing that Jewishness survived best in the less affected communities of the East, has little sympathy for this perspective. This school, with its emphasis upon the Jewish people's cultural and political autonomy, attained the status of a 'great orthodoxy' after the Holocaust and the creation of the state of Israel, and long-shifted Jewish interests away from the Anglo-Jewish condition.[55] On isolated occasions British and general Jewish history have intersected – such as the 1917 Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate in Palestine – and thrust Anglo-Jewry

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[52] C. Richmond, 'Englishness and Medieval Anglo-Jewry', in T. Kushner (ed.), *The Jewish Heritage in British History. Englishness and Jewishness* (London 1992) p.44.
[53] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.2.
[54] Ibid., pp.2-3.
[55] Feldman, 'Was Modernity' pp.174-5.

into the limelight.[56] However, for most Jewish historians the importance of such events lies more in their British context, the role of the power in the region and its attitudes towards Jewish settlement, as opposed to the actions of the community that coincidentally happened to be involved, and involved in an unsure and divided manner at that. All of these reasons have combined to make Anglo-Jewry something of the historiographical black sheep of European Jewish research.

Anglo-Jewish history developed from this background of dual neglect by its two constituent parts. Aware of its presumed exceptionalism and proud of its staid experiences, communal historians adopted a celebratory and triumphalist outlook. Tapping into contemporary conceptions of British cultural success and superiority, early Anglo-Jewish historiography presented a narrative of the community that was highly Whiggish.[57] Appreciating the high degree of toleration the minority enjoyed in Britain, this history was founded upon an attitude described as 'meliorism': a central belief in the continuously positive evolution of Anglo-Jewish life, steadily assisted by the unique liberalism of Britain.[58] Two interrelated themes dominated this writing. There was an assimilatory aim demonstrating the duration of Jews' settlement in Britain and their contribution to the host society, and an apologetic tendency that sanitised, usually by ignoring, discordant or insalubrious elements of Jewish existence.[59] The product was a one-sided portrait emphasising the harmony of Englishness and Jewishness by lauding the establishment of charities or the success of

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[56] D. Cesarani, 'Introduction', in Idem., (ed.), *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry* (Oxford 1990) p.1.

[57] D. Cesarani, 'Dual Heritage or Dual of Heritages? Englishness and Jewishness in the Heritage Industry', in T. Kushner, (ed.), *The Jewish Heritage* p.37. Cesarani observes in mitigation that to some extent Anglo-Jewish historians were merely reflecting the unquestioning patriotism and adulation of institutions characteristic of many contemporary historians, such as J.B. Seeley, J.R. Green or Edward Freeman.

[58] W. Rubinstein, 'The Decline and Fall of Anglo-Jewry?', *Jewish Historical Studies*, Vol.38. (2002) p.16.

[59] Cesarani, 'Introduction' p.2.

financial dynasties, whilst ignoring many realities of Jewish life, such as criminality, immigration, moneylenders, or antisemitism.[60] The other salient feature of this Anglo-Jewish writing was its unprofessionalism. The vast bulk of research was undertaken by amateurs, usually communal dignitaries or functionaries and often associated with the Jewish Historical Society of England.[61] This compounded the above problems, as lacking suitable training and rather filio-pietistic in attitude these amateur historians approached the subject with 'uncritical admiration'.[62] For decades the sole exponent of professional Anglo-Jewish study was the Oxford historian Cecil Roth, who was University Reader in post-Biblical Jewish Studies. Unfortunately, Roth represented the apogee of Anglo-Jewish historical Whiggishness. Writing during the 'blackest era of Jewish history', Roth explicitly called for communal history to be used in defence of the Jewish image, in 'vindication of the Jew as an Englishman'.[63] Consequently, his research continued Anglo-Jews' partisan presentations focusing upon integration, success and toleration. His *A History of the Jews in England*, written in 1941, ends its analysis in 1858 with the achievement of emancipation – implying that afterwards Jews ceased to have a separate history and thus required no specific study.[64] The following eighty-years, some of the most turbulent and important in Anglo-Jewry's existence, are surveyed in a mere four pages, most of which are spent eulogising English society before terminating with a paragraph encapsulating the hagiographic conceptions of such historiography:

> In this happy land they have attained a measure of freedom (and thereby of collaboration) which has been the case in scarcely any other. That this has been

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[60] T. Endelman, 'The Englishness of Jewish Modernity in England', in Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity* p.91.
[61] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* pp.4-5.
[62] Ibid., p.5. and L. Gartner, 'A Quarter Century of Anglo-Jewish Historiography', *JSS*, Vol.48. No.2. (Spring 1986) p.106.
[63] D. Katz, 'The Marginalisation of Early Modern Anglo-Jewish History', in T. Kushner (ed.), *The Jewish Heritage* p.61. and C. Roth, *The Jew as a European* (London 1938) p.3.
[64] C. Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford 1941)

> possible is due in no slight measure to the process of Anglo-Jewish history – a gradual acceptance based on common sense rather than on doctrine, consolidating itself slowly but surely, and never outstripping public opinion. Hence it has been possible for the English Jews to exemplify how men can enter a society by methods other than descent, and to absorb traditions which are not those of their physical ancestors.[65]

This tradition dominated the minority's historiography until the 1970s. A slackening had slowly occurred throughout the 1960s, sparked by Lloyd Gartner's seminal work *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870-1914* that bought American familiarity with intra-Jewish pluralism to bear upon the stifled British scene, but it was not until the late 1970s that transformations in British society facilitated its overthrow and the opening of Anglo-Jewish study.[66] A notable stimulus was the occurrence of mass immigration to Britain and the subsequent creation of a multi-ethnic society. Promoting interest in minority-majority relations and more specifically, social and political policy regarding immigrant communities, this prompted an examination of historical precedents.[67] In tandem the contemporaneous revolution in historical thinking – legitimising social history and a raft of more targeted thematic subjects: socialism, feminism, regionalism – was conducive to exploring diversity, neglected narratives and contentious issues.[68] These phenomena filtered into Anglo-Jewish study and facilitated the investigation of previously taboo areas; as, for instance, in W. Fishman *East End Jewish Radicals, 1875-1914.*[69] Over the 1980s and 1990s, with more, younger and increasingly professional attention, Anglo-Jewish studies has developed a more respectable historiography, engaged with

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[65] Cesarani, 'Introduction' p.2. and Roth, *History* p.267.
[66] L. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870-1914* (London 1960)
[67] D. Feldman, 'Jews in London, 1880-1914', in R. Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity* (Five Volumes London 1989) ii, p.207.
[68] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.10. and Cesarani, 'Dual Heritage' p.37.
[69] W. Fishman, *East End Jewish Radicals, 1875-1914* (London 1975)

all aspects of its experience, offering a variety of interpretational schools, and possessing areas of controversy.

Endelman has identified three themes in particular that, irrespective of topic or period, have been explored by this more critical research to reveal ignored features of the British Jewish experience: first, emphasis upon intra-communal conflict over the old consensualist model; second, reassessment of the nature and extent of British antisemitism; and third, in light of these, demonstration of the erosion of Jewish identity and interests.[70] In the first strand, the cohesiveness of Anglo-Jewry has been challenged by examination of various forms of internal stratification and division. Most recently contention has been centred upon the community's reception of Jewish immigrants, particularly those from Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth-century. The division is between those who follow the 'minor orthodoxy' of Gartner that ethno-cultural bonds linked different Jews together despite minor differences and the conflict-exaggerating class analysis of historians such as Joseph Buckman, who adopts Marxist criteria to stress communal tensions.[71] Since the 1990s a more sophisticated trend recognising the intersecting importance of both ethnicity and class to both Jewish solidarity and division has developed in the works of Bill Williams and David Feldman.[72] British antisemitism, studiously ignored by older historiography, had not provoked much interest from more general historians either.[73]

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[70] T. Endelman, 'English Jewish History' *Modern Judaism*, Vol.11. No.1. (Feb. 1991) p.92.

[71] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.144. and see J. Buckman, *Immigrants and the Class Struggle. The Jewish Immigrant in Leeds, 1880-1914* (Manchester 1983)

[72] See Feldman, *Englishmen*; B, Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740-1875* (Manchester 1985) and B. Williams, '"East and West": Class and Community in Manchester Jewry, 1850-1914' in Cesarani, (ed.), *The Making*

[73] Only two significant studies have been made of British antisemitism: G. Lebzelter, *Political Antisemitism in England, 1918-1939* (London 1978) and C. Holmes, *Antisemitism in British Society, 1876-1939* (London 1979) Holmes remains the standard work, although his efforts have been substantially augmented by more recent historiography that has illuminated several specific instances and types of prejudice in Britain, see, for instance: T. Kushner, and N.

Regarded as marginal, the long history of antisemitism in Britain had been surprisingly underestimated until recently.[74] Since the 1990s historians such as Williams, Feldman, Tony Kushner, David Cesarani and Bryan Cheyette, often working with new evidence, have shifted the conceptual framework to highlight the extent of antisemitism in Britain.[75] Dispensing with the comparative analysis that facilitates the downplaying of English hostility, these historians have relocated prejudice within the British national context, revealing a distinctive form of hostility: 'the antisemitism of tolerance'. The toll this took upon the community forms the third theme of recent study. The above historians, to whom should be added Geoffrey Alderman, have identified a '...disabling compulsion among Jews to justify their emancipation and demonstrate that they were worthy British subjects'.[76] This, enforced by Britain's liberal yet homogeneous culture, they argue, coerced Anglo-Jewry into transcending their own cultural differences, to abnegate many aspects of Jewishness in an effort to conform to Britishness.[77]

The current of recent historical work has not, of course, flowed constantly in this direction of critical inquiry. So pervasive was the original tradition that its influence can still be detected in recent research. The works of Vivian Lipman, Roth's heir, continued it most brazenly but more scholarly and forceful arguments in

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Valman, (eds.), *Remembering Cable Street: Fascism and Anti-Fascism in British Society* (London 2000)

[74] Richmond, 'Englishness' p.57. and W. Rubinstein, 'The Jews of Britain, 1656-2000. A Review Article', *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol.44. Nos.1-2. (2002) p.85.

[75] Endelman, 'English Jewish' p.99. See D. Cesarani, *Reporting Antisemitism: The Jewish Chronicle, 1879-1979* Parkes Lecture (Southampton 1993); B. Cheyette, 'The Other Self: Anglo-Jewish Fiction and the Representation of Jews in England, 1875-1905' in Cesarani, (ed.), *The Making*; T. Kushner, 'The Impact of British Antisemitism, 1918-1945', in Cesarani (ed.), *The Making*; and B. Williams, 'The Antisemitism of Tolerance: Middle-Class Manchester and the Jews, 1870-1900', in Kidd and Roberts (eds.), *City, Class and Culture*

[76] D. Feldman, 'Jews and the State in Britain', in Brenner, Liedtke and Rechter (eds.), *Two Nations* p.142. and see G. Alderman, *Modern British Jewry. Second Edition* (Oxford 1998)

[77] Cheyette and Valman, 'Introduction' p.4.

favour of an optimistic assessment have been advanced by William Rubinstein.[78] Rubinstein feels there is a need to defend Roth's basic premises and his work offers a history remarkable free of antisemitism, presenting numerous spectacles of inter-Jewish cooperation and admiring of British inclusiveness.[79] 'Coinciding with the apogee of Victorian liberalism, the status of the Jews in England seemed to provide living evidence of the doctrine of progress and a mood of optimism.'[80] Although Rubenstein's portrayal of a 'benign *sonderweg*' shifts the argument back too far in the other direction, it is a useful corrective to complete acceptance of the critical historiography.[81] Other historians have also sought to qualify the recent trend; they appreciate that its discoveries have been of immense value but cannot, any more than the older tendency, be taken as the full picture. Endelman observes also that whilst contextualisation is valuable, the comparative is still a useful historical instrument concerning antisemitism and, as such, it demonstrates Britain as an unusually benevolent environment. The antagonism that existed should not, he feels, detract from the more remarkable examples of toleration and even support for Jewish particularity – in the form of legislative exemption or statutory backing for communal bodies; especially as the basic societal integration of Jews was never questioned.[82] Abigail Green in her work on the Jewish philanthropist and celebrity Sir Moses Montefiore, warns against simplifying the Jew-Gentile relationship. Noting that in a period, the late 1870s-1880s, when historians such as Feldman have traced the rise of mainstream anti-Jewish feeling, Montefiore's public popularity paradoxically peaked,

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[78] V. Lipman, *Social History of the Jews in England, 1850-1950* (London 1954); W. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English Speaking World: Great Britain* (Basingstoke 1996)
[79] Rubinstein, *History of the Jews* p.85. and Feldman, 'Jews and the State' p.141.
[80] Rubinstein, *History of the Jews* p.89.
[81] R. Robertson, 'The Representation of the Jews in British and German Literature: A Comparison', in Brenner, Liedtke and Rechter (eds.), *Two Nations* p.411.
[82] Endelman, 'English Jewish' p.101. and Endelman, 'Making Jews' p.26.

even though he represented (increasingly) an overtly Jewish figure.[83] Feldman himself admits: 'It is clear that the ambitions of modern states to purge themselves of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity has been grossly overestimated.'[84] Thus, while the critical perspective remains strong, historiography has been moving towards a compromise. The work of Todd Endelman perhaps best encapsulate this balance.[85] Concentrated upon the less illustrious and less studied aspects of the community – the lower-classes, criminals and apostates – his research offers full opportunity to discover the manifold communal divisions, as well as the counteracting factors solidifying Jewry. The Anglo-Jewish experience is seen to be heterogeneous; a myriad of paths to modernity discernable, where some Jews encounter prejudice and some do not, where some relinquish their associations and some do not.[86]

This blending of critical, realistic and exceptional components, based around the varieties of Jewish existence, currently provides the most sophisticated level of Anglo-Jewish historiography. This thesis follows in this vein. Investigating the 'constellation of interdependent factors' – intellectual, social, religious, political and to a lesser extent economic – that formed British Jewry's world, it examines both centrifugal and centripetal factors operating upon Jewish identity, with an appreciation of the varying exceptionality or particularity of their dual existence as an

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[83] A. Green, 'Rethinking Sir Moses Montefiore: Religion, Nationhood and International Philanthropy in the Nineteenth Century' *American Historical Review*, Vol.110. No.3. (June 2005) pp.646-7.

[84] Feldman, 'Was Modernity' p.176.

[85] See, for example, Endelman's: 'Chequered Career'; 'Communal Solidarity among the Jewish Elite of Victorian London', *Victorian Studies*, Vol.28. (1984-5); *Jews in Georgian England*; *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington, Ind. 1990); and *Jews of Britain*.

[86] Endelman, 'English Jewish' p.100. Feldman also endorses the concept of multiple routes to Anglicisation and acculturation, see: Feldman, 'Jews in London' p.208.

integrated minority.[87] It engages with all three of the recent historiographical trends: although Jewish immigrants do not feature greatly due to periodisation, discussion of dissolving or cementing issues within the community is prominent; while it does not set out to assess levels of antisemitism, the ability and nature of Jews' access to and treatment by British society are crucial aspects; and the ramifications upon Jewish identity are at the centre of this study. Conceptions of Anglo-Jewry's congenial situation and the effect of unique toleration upon their acculturation, such as were more popular in older writing, will also be assessed throughout.

With this approach this thesis will apply current historiographical understandings to a previously neglected era of Anglo-Jewish history: the immediate post-emancipation decades, 1858-1887. Sandwiched between the more dramatic episodes of emancipation and the commencement of mass Jewish immigration, these years have often been overlooked by earlier historians who used to consider them perhaps '...the most benign period of Jewish life in Britain.'[88] More recent historiography focusing upon the period 1870-1945, has touched upon the era but its research has been confined primarily to features related to the Eastern European newcomers, and as such has not explored the time in depth or as a unit in itself. Yet as Cesarani recently noted it was in these crucial decades that the issues and problems appearing from the 1880s onwards were formed and initially expressed.[89] Both he and Endelman have consequently called for greater study of the period and its impact upon Jewish existence.[90] Emancipation was not a panacea to Jewish questions but an

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[87] Herman, *Jewish Identity* p.21.
[88] Rubinstein, *History of the Jews* p.78.
[89] D. Cesarani, 'British Jews', in R. Liedtke and S. Wendehorst, (ed.), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Manchester 1999) p.36.
[90] Endelman, 'English Jewish' p.104.

enabler, providing Jews with the opportunity to participate equally.[91] Post-emancipation, the discussions about Jewish identity had to be realised in practice. The time was therefore one of the most formative in Anglo-Jewish history. Questions regarding Jews remained unsettled. The hyphenated Anglo-Jewish identity was being tested for the first time in this period, against the background of an expectant yet far from static British environment. Although less dramatic than some episodes, the decisions and events of these three decades were vitally important in determining the future of Anglo-Jewish existence. This thesis sets out to examine the Anglo-Jewish subculture of this time: to investigate their inter-faith and inter-ethnic dialogue with English state and society; to discover the identity boundaries created by and imposed upon them; and to analyse how Jews reconciled being a particular minority in a universalist world. Using the overarching framework of identity it seeks to delineate the impact emancipation had upon the nature of Jewish existence in Britain, rather than concentrating upon limited episodes. It will explore questions of minority-majority relationships, acculturation, integration, subculture formation and identity development within the British and Jewish context; as well as empirically illuminating the events of a neglected period. In doing so, this thesis goes some way to filling one of the lacunae of Anglo-Jewish historiography.

III.

The thesis concentrates its analysis of these themes through study of the Anglo-Jewish elite, the leadership of the community. These Jews were a tight-knit and readily identifiable group, nicknamed the 'Cousinhood' by Chaim Bermant on

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[91] Sorkin, 'Port Jews' p.40.

account of their blood and financial interrelations, who dominated the formal and informal running of the community for most of the nineteenth-century.[92] They were at the forefront of Anglo-Jewry's transition to modernity; publicly negotiating the terms of Jewish life, they pioneered trends of acculturation and provide the researcher with the most articulate example of Jewish identity. The group, small and self-perpetuating, directed all communal institutions and so also set the internal agenda for Jewish existence, as well as being able to determine the outward image presented. Investigating their attitudes and actions in the post-emancipation age therefore becomes crucial to understanding Anglo-Jewish identity and its interaction with non-Jewish environments. This has been undertaken, however, with the knowledge that no culture or community possesses a unitary identity. Inhabiting many different political, class, generational, or cultural contexts, functioning as individuals as well as group members, no single formulation could sufficiently contain all British Jews.[93] This thesis mentions a variety of Jewish groups – women, religious dissidents, working-class Jews, and provincials – not generally found among the elite leadership in an effort to more completely demonstrate Anglo-Jewish existence and as both contrast and support to the main focus. Immigrant Jews, in particular, especially those from Eastern Europe, would have diverged significantly from the pattern of the acculturated elite. Chapter five examines some of the differences these immigrants wrought upon the identity of the British community but the restrictions upon this study entail that the immigrants' experiences cannot be fully researched or the specifics of their situations fully discussed.

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[92] C. Bermant, *The Cousinhood. The Anglo-Jewish Gentry* (New York 1971)
[93] P. Hyman, 'Gender and the Shaping of Modern Jewish Identities', *JSS*, Vol.8, Nos.2-3. (Winter/Spring 2002) p.153.

It has likewise been necessary to establish geographical limits to this work. This thesis, like much other historiography, centres overwhelmingly upon London and its Jewish residents. During the nineteenth-century between two-thirds to one-half of all British Jews lived in the capital and important Jewish persons and institutions were correspondingly concentrated there. Whilst provincial communities encountered different conditions and the London experience cannot be taken as representative, it was easily the most important example and most contemporary debate regarding Jews was inevitably aimed at the Jews of London.[94] Considering location it is essential for the historian of Anglo-Jewry to keep in mind the minority's context, the so-called 'horizontal dimensions' of modern Jewish history.[95] By the mid-nineteenth century, '...Jews were so successfully integrated into so many areas of English life that to speak of the autonomous history of Victorian Anglo-Jewry is meaningless...'[96] Close attention will be paid therefore, to the complexities of the British situation within which Jews lived and operated. In doing so, as historians such as Feldman have demonstrated, the Anglo-Jewish experience can reveal new angles upon aspects of British history.[97] Regarding such, this thesis attempts to modestly contribute to areas of British history that interact with the Jewish experience; such as, for instance, state and society's toleration of minorities, British culture's receptivity to deviant patterns, and levels of antisemitism.

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[94] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.16. It should be mentioned whilst discussing geography that this thesis, in line with conventional historiographical practice, will use the term Anglo-Jewry to refer to all Jews in Britain, unless specifically indicated in the text. The descriptions 'English', 'British' and 'Anglo' Jewry have also been used interchangeably, unless obviously designed to indicate a particular context, as they were by contemporaries.

[95] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.11.

[96] Katz, *The Jews* p.383.

[97] Feldman, *Englishmen* pp.12 & 388.

A five chapter structure has been adopted to accomplish these tasks. It comprises two smaller, parenthetical chapters, one and five, and three interlinked but sociologically variant case-studies. Chapter one is designed to offer background to the period, surveying historical knowledge of Anglo-Jewry's resettlement and their campaign to achieve emancipation. It establishes emancipation as a 'symbolic point of departure' for English Jews, not necessarily a hard-and-fast historical discontinuity but a milestone inaugurating a new phase and thereby sets-up the following analysis.[98] The subsequent three chapters examine the impact of emancipation upon the community through a series of case-studies, each of which employs original research to detail a different strand of the community's leadership. Chapter two investigates Jewish Members of Parliament. These individuals exercised the privilege that had come to represent Jewish equality and did so in the most British of environments, where their responsibilities to the community were ambiguous. Jewish MPs were at the forefront of realising equality; their political decisions at party, local, national and international level had wide repercussions upon Anglo-Jewry's identity and its perception by others. Chapter three's focus is upon internal communal government, in particular the activities and operation of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. This quasi-democratic, quasi-oligarchic institution claimed sole responsibility for representing British Jews to the outside world, whilst also seeking to maintain a coherent group governed by a certain pattern of Jewish existence. Its success and failure in these endeavours reveals much about both the desired identity of a section of the Jewish elite and their ability to attain this persona; whilst the body's (and its opponents') considerable interaction with the British state discloses much about the polity's opinion of the minority and its presumed position. The

[98] Sorkin, 'Port Jews', p.31.

subject of chapter four is broader in scope, dealing with a more amorphous group of issues connected to Jewry's socio-cultural life. The main thrust is on the nature of the community's religiosity, modifications within this and how this fundamentally Jewish sphere adapted to Englishness. Sections deriving from this address the community's educational structure and the related issues of cultural achievement and language use, so as to examine the importance placed upon the transmission of Jewish tradition. The final chapter, five, returns to the smaller, less empirical format. Examining alterations to the community's social and economic status during the 1880s, addressing the problem of escalating Jewish immigration and the perception of changes in their British environment, the chapter analyses the burgeoning of the community's historical consciousness to demonstrate the closure of this period of Anglo-Jewish experience.

Each main chapter contains specific historiographical information and mention of archival holdings relevant to it but it is germane to briefly mention those sources that are of general importance to this study and that have been employed throughout. There are four main types of evidence that have been utilised across this work: Newspapers and journals; institutional archives; individual records; and miscellaneous publications. The single most important source for the nineteenth-century historian of Anglo-Jewry, if it is possible to identify one, is the *Jewish Chronicle* newspaper. The oldest most continually published Jewish newspaper in the world, and since its inception in the 1840s, the most widely read in Britain, it is, as Cesarani has documented: '...almost impossible to understand the emergence of a modern Jewish identity in Britain without appreciating the paper's contribution.'[99]

[99] Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle* p.248. Sadly, besides the paper itself, there are few remaining sources

Carrying verbatim reports on the proceedings of communal bodies, allowing impartial debates in its correspondence columns, interpreting the general and wider Jewish world to English Jews through its features, and employing editorials that acted as the 'community's monitor', the paper had a semi-official status as the communal mouthpiece.[100] Other Anglo-Jewish newspapers, operating at different times and catering to different levels, are used to supplement this coverage.[101] A variety of British journals, in particular that staple of propertied opinion, *The Times*, are also employed to gain non-Jewish perspectives on events. Anglo-Jewry is also well-served in regard to institutional records. Despite some unavoidable loss, many Jewish organisations from representative bodies and charities to synagogues and schools have preserved considerable quantities of data in many forms: minutes, letter-books, reports, or accounts.[102] The information contained within these holdings is often far from perfect – minutes, for instance, tend to offer minimal detail and usually require further investigation – but the researcher is able to quite accurately reconstruct the activities of Anglo-Jewish organisations. Less plentiful are individual records; private memoirs, journals and correspondence do not exist in great numbers. In comparison to their Continental brethren British Jews were 'strikingly reticent about recording their experiences'.[103] Nevertheless some material exists in sufficient quantity to make crucial contributions to the study of the minority. Correspondence collections such as

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upon the *Chronicle,* as its offices were destroyed during the London blitz.

[100] *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 Sept. 1863, p.4.

[101] The other less important Jewish journals researched are: *The Voice of Jacob*, published 1841-8, was the first production of the Anglo-Jewish press and contains useful comment upon the state of the community during the emancipation campaign; and *The Jewish World*, founded in 1873 and published into the twentieth-century, which catered to a lower status audience. Less impartial than the *Chronicle*, the *World* offered a distinctly partisan approach to Jewish issues and is therefore useful to the historian despite its smaller audience.

[102] L. Gartner, 'A Quarter Century of Anglo-Jewish Historiography', *JSS*, Vol.48. No.2. (Spring 1986) p.105. The 1941 destruction of the Mocatta Library, another archival victim of the blitz, means that not all Anglo-Jewish institutional records are extant; the vast majority of sources upon the *Beth Din*, for instance, were lost here.

[103] T. Endelman, 'The Frankaus of London: A Study in Radical Assimilation, 1837-1967, *Jewish History*, Vol.8. No.1-2. (1994) p.118.

those of Moses Montefiore, the Rothschilds, or Chief Rabbis Nathan and Hermann Adler are particularly useful, containing the private opinions of central actors over a long period upon a vast range of Jewish and British affairs. There is also considerable scope for obtaining information on Anglo-Jewry from the more numerous private collections of non-Jews who were involved with the community. The last category of sources, publications, are less universally useful to this thesis – Anglo-Jews were not prolific writers or critics – but contribute particularly to several areas. Any evaluation of British Jews' religion, for instance, needs to be cognizant of the many sermons that were published to edify and admonish the community. With these varied sources as a foundation, augmented by more specific collections as appropriate to each chapter's subject, this thesis has examined post-emancipation Anglo-Jewry.

It will argue that after emancipation Anglo-Jewry was a remarkably integrated and acculturated minority within late nineteenth-century Britain. This thesis's three case-studies all demonstrate that upon varying levels and across a range of topics, cooperation and interaction between Jews, both individually and communally, and their surroundings – whether Parliamentary, municipal, educational or social – occurred easily and regularly. Upon many issues there appears a mutuality of ideas between English Jew and Gentile. An understanding that culminated in the complementary conception both held of their providentially-inspired place within the world. This made Jews' minority existence comparatively easy and demonstrates the significant toleration and inclusiveness of British state and society, which was even receptive to assisting the perpetuation of certain levels of Jewish particularity. Anglo-Jews appreciated their beneficent situation and sharing many of its ideals, substantially acculturated. The largely voluntary Anglicisation of Jewish identity in

Britain is a major theme of this work. However, the thesis will also highlight the friction and dissonance apparent within Anglo-Jewry's dual identity and between the community and its host society. For all their potential consonance, the uptake of English attitudes and opinions frequently entailed loss and modification of traditional Jewish ones. This occasioned a significant decline in various aspects of the community's Jewishness, such as Diasporic connections, Hebrew culture and religious commitment. Post-emancipation, there were, this study will reveal, numerous restrictions operating upon British Jews' self-expression. Also, it concludes that the success of Anglo-Jewish integration was distinctly limited. The community could not convince others (or itself) that it was just another nonconformist grouping, as pro-emancipationists had asserted, and Jews were still viewed in certain circumstances as foreign and otherwise not British. Anglo-Jewish identity was not correlative with any other contemporary formation. This created the potential for isolating clashes between 'mainstream' British and particular Jewish views, and would ensure the continuation of a level of anti-Jewish prejudice in the period. Anglo-Jewry's emancipation had not solved the contradictions inherent to their dual definition. The community suffered from the ambivalence that characterised most other Jewries' modern existence. The ambiguity of Anglo-Jewish life is an essential theme within this analysis; in regard both to its more usually noticed negative aspects, as well as its less appreciated positive ramifications. It was this ambiguity, this work asserts, which was advantageously used by the community, exploiting the space available in Britain and keeping their position fluid, to pursue an Anglo-Jewish existence that often satisfied many requirements of their combined identity, even if its lack of structure provided slender support in times of crisis. Exploring these elements

this thesis will outline how and in what capacity a unique version of Jewish identity was formed in Britain during the post-emancipation era.

Chapter One
Establishment and Emancipation: The Formation of Anglo-Jewish Identity, 1656-1858

I.

The Jewish experience in modern Britain began in 1656. Following the mass expulsion ordered by Edward I in 1290, this year witnessed the Resettlement or Readmission of Jews to England. Following a petition from the Dutch Rabbi Menassah Ben Israel, Oliver Cromwell sympathetically raised the possibility of a Jewish return at the Whitehall Conference of November 1655. The inconclusive decision of this meeting would determine the character of Jewish residence in Britain until emancipation. Whilst it baulked at inviting Jewish settlement and did not recommend readmission, the Conference did concede that '...there is no law that forbids the Jews' return into England.'[1] This ambivalent response left Jews in a sort of legal limbo. No stricture was imposed upon possible Jewish immigration and the few Marranos already resident were not placed under any restrictions. A Jewish presence was thus tolerated de facto, as government turned a 'blind eye' to the question.[2] But without official sanction, the Jewish position, de jure, was highly insecure and frequently challenged. In 1660, 1664 and 1673 City merchants attempted to persecute the minority using legislation designed to suppress non-conforming religious services; Charles II intervened each time to protect the Jewish interest. Similarly, in 1685, James II ordered the release of 37 Jews arrested for recusancy at the Royal Exchange.[3]

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[1] D. Katz, *The Jews in the History of England 1485-1850* (Oxford 1994) p.144.
[2] Ibid., p.241.
[3] T. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656 to 2000* (London 2002) pp.27-8.

The ambiguity of their position left a deep impression on the Jewish community. Whilst the lack of legal regulation allowed considerable freedom in comparison to many Continental Jewries and facilitated communal self-determination, historians such as Harold Pollins and Geoffrey Alderman postulate that the Resettlement represented a 'negative freedom'.[4] The minority could never be certain of its position and this imbued it with a deep insecurity, which forced Jews to live in a virtual ghetto, even though not compelled to do so.[5] The community became preoccupied with appearing quiescent and inconspicuous.[6] A tradition developed that the original settlers had unofficially contracted an agreement with Cromwell, a quid pro quo arrangement whereby Jews were permitted to return so long as they observed certain 'rules', such as making no converts and maintaining their own poor – generally, made no demands upon their hosts.[7] As Charles II decreed in 1664, the continuation and justification of Jewish residence in England was not to be based upon any permanent legal solution but the conditional criteria of their good behaviour: '...so long as they demean themselves peaceably and quietly with due obedience to his Majesty's laws, and without scandal to his Government.'[8]

In these tenuous circumstances a Jewish community developed in Britain. From the estimated 160 Jews of the Resettlement, the community had increased to around 850 by the turn of the century, and reached approximately 8,000 by the mid-eighteenth century.[9] By the 1780s there were as many as 20-26,000 Jews in Britain.

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[4] H. Pollins, *Economic History of the Jews in England* (London 1982) p.40.
[5] G. Alderman, *Modern British Jewry. Second Edition* (Oxford 1998) p.33.
[6] A. Barnett, 'Sussex Hall – The First Anglo-Jewish Venture in Popular Education' *TJHSE,* Vol.19. (1955-9) p.65.
[7] *JC*, 02 Mar. 1877, p.4. No such compact has ever been discovered.
[8] Quoted in Pollins, *Economic* p.38.
[9] Ibid., p.242. It should be remembered that Jews were not a united minority at this time. The historic division between Sephardim and Ashkenazim was imported to England, where, at times, it generated substantial antagonisms between the two bodies who developed separate

The community's formation was organisationally unique. Unlike its European counterparts it was not a *Kehilla*, there was no corporate dimension to the group, which was ostensibly a voluntary collective. Power was diffuse: there were no 'court Jews' or *landesrabbinat* to mediate between state and community, and no *Yeshivot* to religiously direct the minority.[10] This meant there was a comparative absence of intracommunal guidance and restraint in Britain, which facilitated greater contact with the surrounding society. As a result, Anglo-Jewry acculturated to their environmental standards faster than other European Jews. English social habits and aspirations were quickly adopted and utilisation of the vernacular became pervasive. The minority suffered a concomitant decline in commitment to traditional Jewish customs. The particular atmosphere of Britain encouraged this Jewish transformation. Undergoing a long-term transition to a modern, capitalist society, the polity (at least from the eighteenth-century onwards) managed this within a stable political framework and with a remarkably open civil society.[11] Such a situation did not require Jews to theorise explanatory systems or create modernising institutions to aid the relativisation of their identities. As Todd Endelman has asserted, Anglo-Jewish acculturation proceeded smoothly, in a non-reflective and spontaneous manner.[12] David Ruderman has questioned this version of Anglo-Jewish acculturation. Whilst appreciating that British patterns were indigenous, he attempts to demonstrate the existence of a *Haskalah*, an intellectual effort by Jews in Britain to accommodate their environment. But, echoing the earlier search of Cecil Roth, Ruderman locates only a handful of Jewish intellectuals, and the majority of these were foreign born and

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institutional structures. It was not until the nineteenth-century that the two groups became intimate and began properly cooperating as a unified community.

[10] Alderman, *Modern* p.38.

[11] T. Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830. Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society* (Philadelphia 1979) p.34.

[12] T. Endelman. 'The Englishness of Jewish Modernity in England', in J. Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New Brunswick 1987) pp.226-9.

educated.[13] This scarcity does much to undermine Ruderman's proposal; these cases were individuals not a movement, and even he admits they obtained little moral or financial support from the community.[14] Anglo-Jewish acculturation was not then, a cognitive endeavour, as it often was for Continental Jews but more akin to a process of osmosis – the gradual and unconscious absorption of thoughts and actions.

The identity shift experienced by British Jews prior to the nineteenth-century should not be over-exaggerated. It took many decades for Jews to stop regarding themselves as aliens and begin to conceive of themselves as Englishmen. More problematically, acculturation did not necessarily entail integration. As much as the Jew might adopt English habits, that he be included in society was reliant not just upon his actions but those of Gentiles. Socially, considerable integration was allowed but Jews still remained on the margins of English society. For British Christians' opinions of the minority, while tolerant, were also often equivocal or negative. Jewish toleration in Britain was largely a consequence of existing religious pluralism. The prevalence of religious dissent in Britain made harsh persecution impractical, if not impossible and promoted a necessary acceptance of confessional plurality.[15] The result of this situation was that whilst Jews could achieve considerable acculturation, many Englishmen thought of them as different, as foreigners possessed, to use F. Felsenstein's term, of an 'exo-cultural otherness'.[16] The extent of Gentile prejudice was startlingly revealed in 1753 over the matter of the 'Jew Bill', which provoked

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[13] See D. Ruderman, *Jewish Enlightenment in an English Key. Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought* (Oxford 2000) pp.89, 135, 184 & 215. and C. Roth, 'The *Haskalah* in England', in I. Finestein, J. Rabbinowitz and H. Zimmels (eds.), *Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (London 1967)

[14] Ruderman *Enlightenment* p.88.

[15] B. Van Oven, *Ought Baron de Rothschild to Sit in Parliament? An Imaginary Conversation Between Judaeus and Amicus Nobilis* (London 1847) p.24.

[16] F. Felsenstein, *Antisemitic Stereotypes. A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660-1830* (London 1995) p.3.

England's worst antisemitic incident of modern times. Passed by the Pelham Ministry in May 1753 with the intention of easing naturalisation for wealthy Jewish immigrants, the Bill was repealed that November after an unprecedented agitation. Though mixed up as T. Perry has shown, with the factionalism and low ethical standards of contemporary politics, the outcry soon became a full-scale debate upon the Jewish presence in Britain.[17] Arguments motivated by political and economic interest soon stimulated latent hostility and the full range of 'vile invective' centuries of Christianity had concocted against Jewry was employed.[18] The actual ramifications of Jewish naturalisation were largely ignored; the agitation was an exercise in identity formation, an assertion that the boundaries of eighteenth-century Englishness could not include Jews.[19] Once this had been accomplished the agitation quickly subsided. British xenophobia had excluded an alien group from closer identification with society, after which it could return to practically tolerating them.

II.

The 1830 introduction of a Jewish Relief Bill into Parliament inaugurated a new phase in Anglo-Jewish existence: the age of emancipation. In comparison to other Western Jewries, this experience came to English Jews late. The period 1780-1820 had seen French and Prussian Jews, among others, agitating successfully for increased rights but the British community had been silent, even though other nonconformist groups were actively pursuing religious equality. The reason for such

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[17] T. Perry, *Public Opinion, Propaganda, and Politics in Eighteenth-Century England. A Study of the Jew Bill of 1753* (Cambridge Mass. 1962) pp.75 & 177. and Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.75.

[18] M. Scult, *Millennial Expectations and Jewish Liberties. A Study of the Efforts to Convert the Jews in Britain up to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Leiden 1978) p.58.

[19] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.76.

inertia was that Anglo-Jewry's situation was simply not that grievous.[20] As David Vital claims 'by the end of the eighteenth century the Jews of England had little to complain of.'[21] Emancipation in England concerned the removal of a much less significant range of disabilities than it did on the Continent. Jews were not rootless aliens, they were merely discriminated against for not being members of the Established Church; a non-specific set of restrictions they shared with all non-Anglicans.[22] By the first decades of the nineteenth-century, Jews' growing affinity with England had begun to stimulate a desire for equality of status. Despite its lack of practical consequences, emancipation had developed a symbolic importance to some of the Anglo-Jewish elite, who were concerned that discrimination impeded perceptions of them as natives. But it was only in conjunction with a perceived alteration in Jewry's status in 1830, that the need for equality was more widely accepted and a campaign for its achievement launched. The key to this was Parliament's emancipation of Protestant dissenters in 1828, then of Catholics in 1829, followed by the failure of a subsequent Jewish Relief Bill in 1830. Although its legal position remained unchanged, this represented a downgrading in the community's status. Anglo-Jews were now no longer part of a broad excluded group but a deliberately stigmatised community; the only politically disadvantaged minority in Britain. This situation was psychologically burdensome; as the Bishop of Dublin informed the Lords in 1833 it entailed a 'positive injury' to the group.[23] This special condition spurred a desire for equality: emancipation had become necessary to relieve burdens to Anglo-Jewry's identity.

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[20] Endelman, *Jews of Georgian* pp.176 & 276.
[21] D. Vital, *A People Apart. A Political History of the Jews in Europe, 1789-1939* (Oxford 1999) p.39.
[22] Endelman, 'Englishness' p.240.
[23] Quoted in D. Salomons, *A Short Statement on Behalf of His Majesty's Subjects Professing the Jewish Religion* (London 1835) p.7. and Endelman, *Jews of Georgian* p.281.

The possibility of becoming equal Englishmen confronted Anglo-Jewry with the existential dilemma that beset all European Jewish communities in the period of emancipation: how to reconcile being Jewish in the modern world. Having previously adapted gradually to modernity the sudden question of emancipation abruptly forced British Jews to consider aspects of their existence they had been content to let drift. Bereft of any coordinating system of explanation this fractured communal opinion, revealing a spectrum of Jewish identities and related future models, upon which a Jew's position would determine how emancipation affected him or her. Two distinct poles buttressed this scope: the ultra-Orthodox rejection and the highly anglicised acceptance. The former, a very small minority, religiously believed that Jews were meant to be outcasts; a separate race, prevented from becoming natives by divine injunction. This cause was championed by Joseph Crooll, a reader in Hebrew at Cambridge, who collaborated with Gentile opponents of equality to demonstrate the alien character of Jews.[24] Emancipation had little impact upon such Jews, who did not recognise the validity of its questions. At the opposite end of the scale was a small, self-selected section of the Jewish elite who were to become the main protagonists of emancipation. These Jews, men such as Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, his son Francis Henry, Joshua van Oven and David Salomons, had already undergone a 'reorientation in Jewish consciousness'; anglicised in both mentality and lifestyle, they believed it possible to simultaneously combine life as Jew and Englishmen.[25] This contention was based however, on downgrading Jewishness from an all-encompassing mode of existence to being merely a religious creed, the faith aspect of an individual's identity. They were Englishmen of the Jewish faith. Jewish ethnic and national

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[24] A. Gilam, *The Emancipation of the Jews in England, 1830-1860* (London 1982) p.40.
[25] Endelman, *Jews of Georgian* p.273.

connotations were forsaken. Their nationality was henceforth to be located solely within Britishness.

Situated in between these two antithetical extremes, was a broad and undefined middle section encapsulating the mass of Anglo-Jewry. This amorphous grouping contained various positions on emancipation but all were imbued with a level of uncertainty and ambivalence regarding their future as Englishmen and Jews. This scepticism was championed by two stalwarts of the communal establishment: Moses Montefiore, President of the Board of Deputies and Chief Rabbis Solomon Herschell and, from 1845, Nathan Adler. Committed to more traditional conceptions of Jewish existence, these men were determined not to submerge aspects of Jewishness beneath the freedom of English universalism.[26] They both therefore, played a reticent role in the campaign. Montefiore, particularly in the 1830s, did some work supporting appeals but his efforts were not prodigious and his approach was fundamentally constructed upon the oft-quoted commitment he recorded in his diary of 1837: 'I am most firmly resolved not to give up the smallest part of our religious forms and privileges to obtain civil rights.'[27] Adler's contribution was so anonymous that he was forced in March 1858 to write to *The Times* denying that he thought equality would subvert Jewish law and was therefore opposed to the measure.[28]

This reaction was not however, an ultra-Orthodox rejection of any acculturation. Most of these Jews considered themselves Englishmen and were convinced of the virtues of British culture. The Adler Rabbinate would witness

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[26] I. Finestein, 'The Jews and the English Marriage Law during the Emancipation' in Idem., *Jewish Society in Victorian England* (London 1993) p.70.
[27] L. Loewe, (ed.), *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore.* (Two Volumes London 1890) i, p.111.
[28] *The Times*, 24 Mar. 1858, p.9.

considerable Anglicisation of Jewish religious forms; Montefiore was an exemplary Victorian gentleman: public-spirited, well regarded, he also held a Baronetcy. Neither was opposed to emancipation and trusted it would be achieved. For this middle section of Jewry the question of their reaction to modernity was still open and the impact of emancipation created confusion over their self-definition. A possible dichotomy arose between the two facets of their identity: Englishness and Jewishness. These leaders wished to continue as before, gradually melding the two together as and when they could, rather than be forced to prioritise. This engendered what Michael Salbstein refers to as a 'passive conception of emancipation'.[29] Unfortunately, this position provided no solution to the existential issues raised by emancipation and the elite were continually pulled between contradictory poles and pushed to decide the balance of elements within Anglo-Jewish definition. The modern nation state, treating all its citizens as equal individuals, could not tolerate special groups operating under peculiar conditions and as the Jews' integration increased so the community's particular interests clashed with their universal environment.

In 1850, for instance, the minority sought exemption from the provisions of the Metropolitan Internment Bill, which would have violated Jewish burial rites.[30] A more telling incidence was provided by the 1857 Matrimonial Clauses Act. This, *inter alia*, ended religious authority in matters of divorce, granting civil courts the power to dissolve clerically sanctioned marriages. Alder and Montefiore, attempting to preserve Jewish religious control, successfully lobbied for the inclusion of a clause

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[29] M. Salbstein, *The Emancipation of the Jews in Britain: The Question of the Admission of the Jews to Parliament, 1828-1860* (London 1982) p.86.

[30] A. Gilam, 'The Burial Grounds Controversy between Anglo-Jewry and the Victorian Board of Health, 1850', *JSS*, Vol.45. No.2. (Spring 1983) pp.149, 151 & 155. The Bill made burials a public service, closing private cemeteries. All internments were in future to take place in national cemeteries under the authority of the Board of Health. Widely resisted by all religions in Britain the Act was never effectively enforced and was repealed within two years.

exempting Jewish marriage. Despite Gentile acquiescence, at the third reading of the Bill in the Lords the clause was struck out. This was a direct result of counter-lobbying by Salomons and Lionel de Rothschild, who feared perpetuating a special situation for Jews and thereby, damaging their case for inclusion. 'As Englishmen, when they were seeking their rights as such from the country, they ought to submit to the general laws, like the professors of every other religion.'[31] The *Jewish Chronicle* (*JC*) was shocked, predicting a '...collision between the law of God and the law of man...'[32] But such an outcome was typical; in this period conflicts were inevitably decided to the detriment of religious particularity. Modernity required concessions at tradition's expense, as emancipationist Jews realised.[33] Adaptation rather than separation had always held sway in Britain.

The lack of unanimity regarding emancipation's desirability produced a corresponding multiplicity of strategies concerning its attainment. The most eager Jews adopted a doctrinaire approach, demanding immediate equality as Englishmen on the principle that religious conscience was a private concern. This argument removed the particularity of the Jewish case, enabling them to associate with other confessions and broader causes to petition for the same rights. Jews became *soi-disant* nonconformists: 'We desire to be placed on an equality in point of civil privileges, with other persons dissenting from the Established Church...' began one of Isaac Goldsmid's pleas for relief.[34] Since other minorities had been granted equality under the liberal principles governing British politics, it was inconsistent and irrational to deny Jews them, ran the logic. This approach had suffered an early blow

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[31] *JC*, 03 July 1857, p.1063. The statement was made by Mr. Magnus at a Deputies meeting voting upon whether to lobby for an exemption clause in the Act.
[32] Ibid., p.1060.
[33] Gilam, 'Burial', p.147.
[34] *JC*, 07 Mar. 1845, p.109.

in 1830 with the rejection of the first relief proposal, and with continuous resistance from the Lords, it became increasingly obvious by the latter 1830s that a doctrinaire appeal was not going to achieve its goal. The other main Jewish strategy: a pragmatic, step-by-step acceptance of rights as they were offered was both more realistic and successful, being more in tune with the habits of the legislature, which was wary of dry principle but receptive to practical advance. For the middle section of Jewry this approach had the advantage of ensuring their demands did not outstrip the pace of Gentile acceptance whilst also allowing them to keep a closer watch over their traditions. Those Jews, like Montefiore, prepared to wait for their equality, thought '...that they should take what they could get', when they had an opportunity to get it.[35] A more active interpretation of this approach was pursued by David Salomons, whose idea was to progressively obtain honours barred to Jews, fulfil them and thereby force the removal of what had become a practical grievance rather than a theoretical hardship. To this end he was elected sheriff of London in 1835, alderman in 1844, MP in 1851, and mayor of London in 1856. At each stage Salomons and liberal Gentiles were able to challenge the logic and legality of Jewish exclusion, accumulating increasing proof of Jewish ability to bring to bear the next time.[36] To fair-minded Englishmen this approach was persuasive and Salomons is credited with eliciting Bills from Parliament in 1835 allowing Jews to attain the freedom of the City and in 1845 opening municipal offices to them. In this vein the 1847 election of Rothschild made the ultimate outcome of the emancipation campaign merely a matter of time.

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[35] Loewe, *Diaries*, i, p.79.

[36] D. Salomons, *The Case of David Salomons, Esq., Being His Address to the Court of Alderman on Applying for Admission as Alderman of the Ward of Portsoken* (London 1844) p.24.

The danger of this gradualist tactic was that for the unconvinced it could easily lapse into apathy. Patient waiting did not appear that different to disinterest. Indeed, accusations of indifference had dogged the campaign from the beginning. *The Times* discussing the possibility of Jewish equality following that of dissenters and Catholics in 1829, believed

> ...it was a surprise to some that the professors of the Mosaic law did not stir to claim a share in the general freedom, or even to obtain the common privileges of natural-born subjects....But perhaps this very indifference is the best evidence that that they do not feel their exclusion; and offers the best apology for our delay in removing it.[37]

This latter sentiment was 'industriously urged' by Gentile opponents throughout the campaign.[38] Jewish emancipationists were keen to refute it and there were attempts to demonstrate popular Jewish support through the organisation of societies, such as the Jewish Association for the Removal of Civil and Religious Disabilities, formed in 1847.[39] Most historians agree though, that the majority of the Anglo-Jewish community, including its upper-classes, was unmoved by the cause of political equality.[40] The privileges on offer could only be enjoyed by a few and most Jews were far more concerned with earning a livelihood or pursuing financial success, to which the law provided no barriers. Interest mounted after Rothschild's election and his eventual entry into the Commons elicited communal celebration but for much of the time most Jews were not engaged with the cause.[41] Amongst themselves Jewish emancipationists admitted the low-level of general commitment and frequently reproached their brethren for it.[42]

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[37] *The Times*, 28 Aug. 1829, p.2.
[38] *Two Letters, In Answer to the Objections Urged Against Mr. Grant's Bill for the Relief of the Jews* (London 1830) p.11.
[39] D. Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge 1994) p.15.
[40] Katz, *Jews* p.323.
[41] Alderman, *Modern* pp.52 & 63.
[42] *VJ*, 21 July 1848, p.129.

The emancipation campaign was a long-drawn out affair. Beneath all the rhetoric and fuss, Anglo-Jews had to live their lives as their future definition was debated around them. Communal life generally continued along the path that had led it to the nineteenth-century; gentle acculturation continued and integration slowly increased. Use of the vernacular became evermore widespread, penetrating particularly into the religious sphere. Attempts were also made by certain synagogues to improve the forms of their services; efforts that were systematised by Adler in 1847, when he issued a code of regulations to all British synagogues that incorporated many acculturated religious concepts.[43] Other areas where notable progress was made by the minority include poverty reduction – with the three City congregations agreeing in 1835 to collaborate over poor relief – and educational provision – enhanced by the 1812 establishment of the Jews' Free School and its expansion in 1820, 1848 and 1855.[44] There were significant differences however, in the nature of these developments compared to the previous communal pattern. Crucially, they were far less spontaneously achieved. From the beginning of the nineteenth-century the community, unable to ignore the surrounding dialogue upon its existence, began contemplating its condition. A general belief prevailed that the minority required improvement. Inside the community, acculturated Jews sharing English social aspirations, were often dissatisfied with the socio-cultural standard of their brethren – experiencing a sense of inferiority, they looked to raise standards.[45]

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[43] D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews. Social Politics and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (London 1994) p.53. The code included many stipulations designed to increase decorum and piety in the service, such as: exclusion of children under four; limit on recitation of monetary offerings, and loud responses being forbidden.

[44] J. Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History*, (London 1975) p.293; S. Levin, 'Origins of the Jews' Free School' *TJHSE*, Vol.19. (1955-9) p.97. and Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 153 Photocopy of Report of the Jews' Free School, May 1860, pp.8 & 10.

[45] I. Finestein, 'Anglo-Jewish Opinion during the Struggle for Emancipation (1828-1858)' in Idem., *Jewish Society* p.16.

But the main force motivating these attempts at self-development came from outside: the context of the emancipation debate. One of the most frequently expressed arguments in opposition to Jewish relief was that the minority lacked civilised values and could not equally participate in the majority culture.[46] Even Gentile proponents of emancipation tacitly admitted this and regularly advised Jews to advance their case by first proving their capabilities. The pragmatic strategy toward emancipation was implicitly founded upon this idea of Jewish improvement – accepting piecemeal gains in order that Jews might at each stage demonstrate their worthiness for advancement to the next level. This never became the keystone of the process, as it was in Germany, for instance. But a perceived connection between improvement and emancipation was pervasive in the British context.[47] It stimulated action by the communal leadership to cultivate their coreligionists, the most overt of which was the establishment of the Jews' Literary and Scientific Institution, popularly called Sussex Hall after its location, in 1844. It was designed '...for the intellectual and moral improvement of the Jewish people...'.[48] A free library was available, regular lectures were delivered and the Institution was nondenominational to facilitate social intercourse with Gentiles. Little of the programme was, though, dedicated to Jewish culture; by 1848 not one of the planned lectures had a Jewish title.[49] The elite's intention was not simply to promote knowledge but to demonstrate that Jews could participate in general culture; as Joseph Mitchell, proprietor of the *JC*, stated at a celebration of Rothschild's first election: '...by the establishment of that institution, the reproach that the Jews spent all their energies in obtaining wealth, and devoted no portion of their time to literature, had been removed. Sussex Hall would refute

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[46] Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle* p.22.
[47] Ibid., p.22.
[48] Barnett, 'Sussex' p.67.
[49] Ibid., p.73.

charges of that nature...'[50] Considering this functional approach to the Institution by the communal elite, it seems no coincidence that Sussex Hall closed due to lack of funds in 1858, just after the achievement of emancipation and with its job therefore, done.[51]

III.

There was another aspect to communal developments in the emancipation era. On the Continent most Jews were bound into statutorily-regulated communities, where membership was compulsory and legal powers existed to enforce cohesion. In Britain the group operated within an associational framework with no powers of coercion beyond social exclusion. To this unregulated situation emancipation presented several problems. How was the community to be governed when equality placed the relationship between Jews and the state on a completely individual basis? The community had relied upon the external constraints of legal disabilities and Gentile prejudice, augmented by minority endogamy and strict synagogue codes, to maintain and justify communal authority, but emancipation threatened to override all of these.[52] Exacerbating this difficulty was the state of flux Anglo-Jewish identification was experiencing. Just as emancipation stimulated self-referential questions (who am I?) so it had a similar impact upon the collective consciousness of the minority, what are we? The ambiguity concerning the boundaries between Jewishness and Englishness thus permeated the institutional level, as the Jewish

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[50] *VJ*, 24 Sept. 1847, p.3.
[51] Barnett, 'Sussex' p.77.
[52] T. Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington, Ind. 1990) p.7.

leadership pondered how to guide the community into the modern age. To overcome these interrelated challenges the Jewish leadership constructed and consolidated various communal institutions during the emancipation campaign.

Fearful of the weakening of group cohesion historically occasioned by greater integration, it was primarily those Jews more ambivalent towards equality's blessings who sought to solve the problem of governing Jewry in the modern age. The twin pillars of this effort, representing the religious and lay powers, were to be the Chief Rabbinate and the Board of Deputies. Both of these institutions coalesced into their modern forms in response to emancipation. Adler used his position as the first elected and hence, legitimate, Chief Rabbi to centralise religious power. With his 1847 Laws and Regulations he obtained near dictatorial control: only he could possess the title of rabbi and all synagogue officials were approved by him.[53] The Board of Deputies attempted to establish similar autocracy in Jewish public affairs. Under the presidency of Montefiore this was transformed in 1836 from an ad-hoc and rather aimless body into an officially recognised council with statutory powers. With these power centres Adler and Montefiore, frequently collaborating, hoped to prevent the emergence of heterodox opinions and limit the loss of tradition as they steered the community into the modern era. Unfortunately, these institutions offered no solution to emancipation's questions. Like the figures that headed them, they embodied the ambivalence of Jew and Englishman. Such a traditional attempt to organise the community was out of step with modern English society. The 'deferential foundation' of these institutions and their oligarchic, patrician ethos contrasted with Britain's increasing democratisation and was perpetually criticised by those, such as provincial

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[53] L. Gartner, 'Emancipation, Social Change and Communal Reconstruction in Anglo-Jewry, 1789-1881', *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, Vol.54. (1987) p.96.

congregations or professional men, who were excluded.[54] Perhaps more serious was the denial of pluralism inherent to these methods of governance. Claiming to espouse the only viewpoint of the minority, as if it were homogeneous, was an anachronistic idea, contradicting the logic of emancipation. Having fractured Jewish identity in the spirit of equality, emancipation had also invalidated any claims to an exclusive Jewish communal character. Attempting to impose one led, inevitably, to conflict and the eventual realisation of the identity split at a communal level.

The most serious breach in nineteenth-century Jewish communal relations began on 15 April 1840, when twenty-four Jews declared their intention to establish '...a synagogue in the western part of the metropolis, where a revised service may be performed at hours more suited to our habits, and in a manner more calculated to inspire feelings of devotion...'[55] With this act Reform Judaism was established in Britain. The main concern of this movement was to acclimatise Judaism. The most anglicised of Jews, they sought a form of faith more compatible with their upper/middle-class British perceptions. There was little ideological underpinning to these alterations. The more theologically minded within the movement exhibited certain neo-Karaite beliefs – bibliocentricity and downplaying the significance of the Talmud – but these were more 'shapeless tendencies' than a 'crystallised doctrine'.[56] Some historians have speculated that the motivation for the breakaway was however, inspired by the German model. David Philipson and Michael Meyer have viewed the

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[54] I. Finestein, 'The Anglo-Jewish Revolt of 1853' in Idem., *Jewish Society* p.114. and T. Endelman, 'Communal Solidarity among the Jewish Elite of Victorian London', *Victorian Studies*, Vol.28. No.3. (1985) p.497.

[55] Quoted in A. Kershen, and J. Romain, *Tradition and Change. A History of Reform Judaism in Britain, 1840-1995* (London 1995) p.3. Uniquely in the European context Reform Judaism in Britain emerged in the main, from the Sephardic rather than Ashkenazic community.

[56] Endelman, 'Englishness' p.236. The Karaites are a Jewish sect that arose in the eighth-century, rejecting the Oral Law they believe in a literal approach to the scriptures.

movement as an echo of German Reform, highlighting points of contact between leading figures on both sides.[57] Most historians though, dismiss causative links with Germany. Religiously, the two were very different. The radicalism of German Reform was condemned across the Anglo-Jewish community, which feared it would lead to dissolution.[58] Reform in Britain was much more conservative. Modifications were mainly limited to the manner rather than the content of worship. No crucial beliefs were tampered with; most significantly, nothing of a nationalist nature was removed.[59] British Reform was not a major overhaul of the faith but a re-adjustment.

It was also bound up with domestic communal issues. There was a demographic aspect to the foundation of a separate synagogue. Since the turn of the century there had been growing pressure from the increasing number of wealthy Jews migrating to the West End for the establishment of a local synagogue to make their attendance less strenuous.[60] Connected to this was a desire amongst the rebels to have more influence in communal authority. The revolt was not only ecclesiastical but temporal. The West London Synagogue of British Jews, consecrated on 27 January 1842, provided politically active Jews with a forum through which to challenge the monopoly of communal authority and push their agenda of full equality.[61] With its various motivations the Reform development in Britain can fundamentally be seen as a response to modernity, an attempt to reconcile the dichotomy presented by emancipation. These Jews had chosen the balance of their identity. Judaism was to be

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[57] For a summary of these and other positions see D. Langton, *Claude Montefiore. His Life and Thought* (London 2002) pp.176-9.

[58] Ibid., p.177.

[59] Endelman. 'Englishness' p.233. The case was slightly different for the smaller Reform congregations established in Manchester (1858) and Bradford (1873). A large proportion of their congregants were German-Jewish immigrants and accordingly, Continental influences were significantly more prominent. These synagogues were still under the nominal patronage of West London however and followed the British movement's liturgy.

[60] Langton, *Claude* p.178.

[61] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.50.

confined to the religious sphere; nationally and culturally – as stressed by their synagogue's title that abolished the old distinctions between Jewish types – they were British.

This was exactly the reaction to emancipation the middle section of Anglo-Jewry feared. Reducing the faith, as they perceived it, to embrace Englishness was anathema to them. The *Mahamad* of Bevis Marks declared it '…an infraction of the religious compact binding the whole of the Jewish nation…'[62] The Orthodox authorities reacted with due harshness, proclaiming a *herem* against the new congregation. This placed the Reformers outside the pale of Judaism, prohibiting contact between them and Orthodox Jews. Montefiore excluded them from representation on the Deputies, as well as refusing to provide their synagogue with a marriage license.[63] After issuing a warning against association with Reformers, Bevis Marks purged itself of members involved with the movement.[64] The community was generally more sympathetic. After denouncing the initial split, the Anglo-Jewish press became more understanding of Reform and called for rapprochement whilst advocating some of their modifications.[65] The Western Synagogue refused to acknowledge the ban, as did several provincial congregations.[66] Even at Bevis Marks there was regret, which led in 1849 to the lifting of the caution upon Reformers, though their congregation remained barred from communal participation.[67]

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[62] Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Maida Vale, MS 113 Minutes of the Meetings of the *Mahamad*, 1833-44, x.
[63] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 259 Copies of Papers of Sir Moses Montefiore, 1793-1885, Letter from Montefiore to Goldsmid, 09 Feb. 1842.
[64] Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue Maida Vale, MS 113 Minutes of the Meetings of the *Mahamad*, 1833-44, x.
[65] Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle* pp.12 & 17.
[66] A. Barnett, *The Western Synagogue through Two Centuries, (1791-1961)* (London 1961) p.181.
[67] Picciotto, *Sketches* p.382.

The very existence of Reform threw into sharp relief the issue of whether a Jewish community existing on a voluntary basis could maintain an effective structure.[68] To protect their position the authorities were determined to isolate and limit Reform, hoping to extinguish a movement that demonstrably ended the nominal homogeneity of Jewry in Britain. No compromise was possible. In 1853, for instance, four Reformers were elected as Deputies for Orthodox provincial synagogues, sparking a debate at the Board as to whether they might be allowed to sit. The discussion was highly controversial and arguments got so heated upon one occasion the police were summoned. Montefiore, as President, eventually cast his vote over the evenly divided Deputies to exclude the Reformers.[69] The ramifications of such exclusion extended beyond the community. During the emancipation campaign Anglo-Jewry was under observation. Prohibiting internal dissent and establishing religious tests for communal participation appeared hypocritical, as Jews requested an end to such prejudice in wider society. Not only in principle but also in practice was this lack of cooperation damaging to the emancipation campaign. The separate and conflicting deputations made by Montefiore, as President of the Deputies, and Isaac Goldsmid, on behalf of West London, to Sir Robert Peel in 1845 concerning the possibility of municipal relief for Jews are an oft-cited example of how division retarded emancipation.[70] Adopting different stances and requesting different outcomes, these representations exposed the lack of unanimity within Anglo-Jewry and allowed Gentiles to dictate the pace.

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[68] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.66.

[69] Finstein, 'Anglo-Jewish Revolt' pp.121-4. The inclusion of the Reform deputies was tied up with a wider progressive agenda that some congregations wished to implement at the Board. Alongside admission of West London, other major issues included greater weighting for provincial representation and increasing democratisation to open the Deputies' ranks to professional and middle-class men.

[70] British Library, Peel Papers, see MS 40,540 f.126, f.128 Letters from Goldsmid to Peel, 18 Feb. 1845 and 07 Mar. 1845; and MS 40,567 f.249 Letter from Montefiore to Peel, 20 May 1845.

IV.

Emancipation was a dialogue. It was not just the approximately 35,000 English Jews whose identity would be changed by the outcome of the campaign. The nature of the English state would also be altered and consequently, great interest was evinced towards the subject by Gentiles. The attitudes of Christians toward the minority in their midst had a profound impact upon the self-perception of Anglo-Jewry. At the beginning of the nineteenth-century, considerable anti-Jewish prejudice still existed in Britain. Objections to the possibility of equality were numerous and multiform: based on religious grounds, national grounds, and grounds of moral character, which often bridged the other two.[71] Jewish emancipationists recognised this but expected a quick improvement.[72] Over the next few decades this gradually occurred, as many anti-Jewish caricatures diminished in potency and frequency. By 1849 the *JC* felt sanguine enough to proclaim: 'At no epoch in the Christian era were the relations between the confessors of the ancient faith of Judaism and those who profess the modern one of Christianity, more amicable than at present...'[73] The community was the more surprised then, that for some people prejudice was too ingrained to be reformed, particularly as this group seemed to include a large number of Peers whose intractable opposition restricted Jews' station for many years. The most persistently held argument against Jewish emancipation was that it would end the shared Christianity that provided one of the few bonds within the British political

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[71] U. Henriques, 'The Jewish Emancipation Controversy in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Past and Present*, No.40. (July 1968) p.131.

[72] UCL Special Collections, Mocatta MSS 22 (1) Goldsmid Letterbooks, i, Letter from Joshua van Oven to Goldsmid, 09 Apr. 1829,

[73] *JC*, 04 May 1849, p.237.

community.[74] Sir Robert Inglis, Tory MP for the University of Oxford, explained to the Commons in 1850:

> Our legislature has never assembled except under Christian sanctions. We had sacrificed much...when within these 21 years persons not previously admissible were admitted to the legislature; but the case then was different; they all looked to the same common saviour...The profession of a common Christianity was the birthright of this nation, and it should not be lightly sold for any such advantage as Baron de Rothschild might furnish to their deliberations.[75]

This belief in the interrelation of Christianity, the nation and political authority delayed emancipation in England; for as David Feldman shows the conviction could not be altered by Jewish improvement.[76] Their non-profession of Christianity automatically disqualified Jews from full citizenship.[77] To these people the Jew was simply outside the parameters of English identity. Lord Derby, as late as July 1857, warned the Lords that 'an impassable gulf' separated Jew and Englishmen, '...what the Jews were in Egypt, they are in England...though among us they are not of us.'[78]

Standing in contradiction to this Gentile opposition was a notable level of support for Jewish claims. It was derived from a variety of opinions and principles. The argument that the Jew had a right to participate equally in the society of which he bore an equal burden, irrespective of his religion, was a staple of the pro-emancipationists. Gladstone's conversion to the measure was partly justified by this sentiment and for Lord Russell it was the only issue: 'I place the question on this simple, but, I think, solid ground – that every Englishman is entitled to the honours and advantages that the British Constitution gives. I state further, that religious

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[74] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.34.
[75] Rothschild Archive, 000/924/4 Volume of Press Cuttings entitled 'Baron Rothschild and the House of Commons – Debate etc. 1850'
[76] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.36.
[77] Gilam, *Emancipation* p.25.
[78] Quoted in I. Finestein, 'A Modern Examination of Macaulay's Case for the Civil Emancipation of the Jews', in Idem., *Jewish Society* p.91. and Finestein, 'Anglo-Jewish Opinion', p.8.

opinion, of itself, ought to be no disqualification for the enjoyment of those rights.'[79] As the campaign rumbled on and the Lords continually blocked a measure favoured by the Commons, and thereby continually denied, after 1847, the electors of London the ability to select their own representative, further political principles became involved, adding weight to the Jews' cause.[80]

The cause also had its Gentile religious supporters. Whilst opponents invoked Christian identity to deny Jews' equality, others looked to a shared religious heritage and emphasised the Judaic basis of Christianity to support their inclusion.[81] This kind of religious support was not an unalloyed blessing for the community. British philosemitism was based on the hope and expectation that Jews would eventually convert, and hence, cease to exist as Jews. Religious support for emancipation was no different; many thought its greater integration would speed conversion.[82] Besides this, many religious supporters continued to hold negative conceptions of Jews and Judaism; belief in their deicidal guilt, divinely ordained exile and lower standard of religious morality were commonplace.[83]

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[79] Rothschild Archive, 000/573/6 Sundry MSS and Pamphlets: W. Gladstone, *Substance of a Speech on the Motion of Lord John Russell for a Committee of the Whole House with a View to the Removal of the Remaining Jewish Disabilities; delivered in the House of Commons, on Thursday, December 16, 1847.* (London 1848), p.4. and J. Russell, *Jewish Disabilities. A Speech delivered in the House of Commons, December 16, 1847, on the Jewish Disabilities* (London 1848), p.7.

[80] See *The Times*, 01 Feb. 1848, p.3. and 17 July 1851, p.4.

[81] Phoenix, *Scriptural Reasonings in Support of the Jewish Claims to Sit in the Commons House of Parliament Addressed to the Conscience of the Christian People of the British Empire.* (London 1850) p.3. Another common theme running through many of these religiously argued pamphlets was the idea that British Christians owed the Jews a debt in light of past mistreatment. Emancipation it was reasoned might go some way towards redeeming this abuse.

[82] B. Montagu, *A Letter to the Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Chichester upon the Emancipation of the Jews* (London 1834) pp.16 & 19.

[83] See, for instance, A Country Vicar *Jewish Emancipation. A Christian Duty* (London 1853) pp.21-2.

Ambiguity regarding the actual subjective existence of the Jew in Britain, separated from whatever objective principle demanded his emancipation, was not limited to the faithful. It was a constant for most Gentile pro-emancipationists. There was a widespread presupposition that centuries of oppression had degenerated Jewry. Thomas Babington Macaulay, whose speeches in favour of emancipation became 'the main statement of the case', displayed an inherent belief in Jewish exclusivity and need for improvement.[84] His advocacy of Jewish rights frequently utilised negative images to demonstrate the inefficacy of opposition:

> That a Jew should be a privy councillor to a Christian king would be an eternal disgrace to the nation. But the Jew may govern the money-market, and the money-market may govern the world....The scrawl of the Jew on the back of a piece of paper may be worth more than the royal word of three kings, or the national faith of three new American republics. But that he should put Right Honourable before his name would be the most frightful of national calamities.[85]

Given these qualifications, Gentile support for emancipation was double-edged. It did not represent the positive acceptance and validation of a Jewish presence but reflected more a recognition of the 'impracticability of exclusion' informed by wider constitutional or religious principles.[86] 'The emancipation of the Jews is but a natural step in the progress of civilisation' wrote William Hazlitt in *Tatler*; sympathy for the community was often merely a by-product.[87]

These ambiguous Gentile attitudes were internalised by the minority and scarred the Anglo-Jewish consciousness.[88] Emancipation forced upon the Jew the

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[84] I. Abrahams, and S. Levy, (eds.), *Macaulay on Jewish Disabilities* (Edinburgh 1909) p.10.
[85] Ibid., p.24.
[86] I. Finestein, 'Jewish Emancipationists in Victorian England: Self-Imposed Limits to Assimilation' J. Frankel and S. Zipperstein (eds.), *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge 1992) p.46.
[87] Quoted in I. Finestein, 'Some Modern Themes in the Emancipation Debate in Early Victorian England', in Idem., *Jewish Society* (London 1993) p.130.
[88] G. Alderman, 'English Jews or Jews of the English Persuasion? Reflections on the Emancipation of Anglo-Jewry' in P. Birnbaum and I. Katznelson (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation. Jews, States, and Citizenship* (Chichester 1995) p.138.

realisation of his degradation. Reinforced by the unexpectedly long struggle and its expedient rather than principled resolution, this imbued Jews with an identity paranoia. This, Cesarani states, '...meant that English Jewry still felt itself to be on trial...' after emancipation.[89] Gentile equivocation was mitigated to some extent however, by the positive aspects of equality. The minority had after all been included. Jews felt their status enhanced and their worth as citizens appreciated.[90] The campaign had been long but it had also been smooth; there was no backsliding or violence such as marred many Continental experiences.[91] This contradiction meant that emancipation could not resolve the dilemma it had produced. The settlement of 1858 did not provide a solution to the accommodation of Jewish differences within English society; '...it had only altered the emphasis on how they were to be regulated and in what ways their differences would be defined.'[92]

For Gentiles the debate had at heart been one regarding not Jewish but British definition; a preoccupation with the relationship between citizenship and nationality pervaded Christian discussion.[93] Using emancipation as a foil, rival conceptions of the nature of Britishness vied for realisation. In this atmosphere the actual condition of the Jews was a secondary consideration and the demands made upon them were vague.[94] There was a general understanding that cultural diversity and minority particularism would not be tolerated. The proscription of these had been the *sine qua non* of European emancipation since the Count de Clermont-Tonnerre established the

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[89] D. Cesarani, 'British Jews', in R. Liedtke and S. Wendehorst (eds.), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London 1998) p.44.
[90] Endelman, *Radical* p.1.
[91] Endelman, 'Englishness', p.242.
[92] Cesrarani, 'British Jews', p.54.
[93] Ibid., p.37.
[94] T. Endelman, 'Making Jews Modern: Some Jewish and Gentile Misunderstandings in the Age of Emancipation', in M. Raphael (ed.), *What is Modern about the Modern Jewish Experience?* (Williamsburg, Va. 1997) p.20.

terms of French Jews' inclusion in 1789: 'The Jews should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals...It is intolerable that the Jews should become a separate political formation or class in the country.'[95] Beyond this though, 'what sorts of Jewish identification were legitimate and which should be discouraged was a recurrent debate both within Jewry and Gentile society.'[96] Perennial questions regarding the appropriate combination of Jewish tradition and English citizenship continued to be asked. Equality would narrow the parameters: reorienting Jewish definition toward the anglicised end of the identity spectrum. But the dichotomy remained. Caught between competing elements the Jews had sought to downplay the significance of their existence and therefore their inclusion, by associating themselves with other nonconformist groups.[97] This rhetoric clashed with everyday reality however, which revealed Jewry as a peculiar phenomenon: integrated yet distinct, patriotic yet alien.[98] Emancipation had provided no structured space within which to be Jewish and it was unclear how the minority was supposed to resolve the contradictions suffusing its existence. What was normative Judaism in this situation? Echoing Resettlement, emancipation left Anglo-Jewry with an inderminancy of status. Jews still possessed remarkable freedom to decide the boundaries of their dual self-definition in Britain but they were unsure and exceedingly self-conscious about the possibilities of doing so. The essential ambivalence of modern Jewish identity remained. In this uncertainty Anglo-Jewry entered the post-emancipation era.

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[95] The French National Assembly, 'Debate on the Eligibility of Jews for Citizenship', 23 December 1789, in P. Mendes-Flohr and J. Reinharz (eds.), *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History. Second Edition* (Oxford 1995) p.115.

[96] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.5.

[97] Finestein, 'Some Modern' p.143.

[98] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.77.

Chapter Two
Position and Politics: The First Jewish MPs

I.

On 28 July 1858 Lionel de Rothschild entered the House of Commons to take his seat as the first professing Jewish MP. It was a momentous occasion. Ending an eleven-year struggle to sit for the City of London (which had returned him five times), it also marked the culmination of Anglo-Jewry's emancipation. Although the act would have few practical implications for the community, as a principle the ability of Jews to enter Parliament was of massive importance. It was a symbol of their capacity to be Englishmen at the highest level and the recognition of this by their Gentile peers. Being able to participate in directing the future of England was the ultimate sign of Jewish acceptance. This continued to remain the case throughout the immediate post-emancipation period. In 1880 the *Jewish World* (*JW*) was still portraying the increasing number of Jewish Parliamentary candidates as an indication of communal progress, proving how '...completely our sentiments are assimilated with those of the people amongst whom we live!'[1] For the community, the Jewish MP represented the archetype Jew, the very personification of their aspirations. But this was an ambivalent distinction. The terms of Jewish inclusion had been unclear. Jewish politicians were consequently faced with competing and contradictory expectations regarding their participation in British politics. They were required, by dint of good example, to demonstrate that Jews could be politically responsible and independent Englishmen, as much as (if not more than) the next MP – to be MPs of the Jewish persuasion; at times though, they were also expected to bring a minority

[1] *Jewish World*, 19 Mar. 1880, p.7.

perspective to politics and support Jewry's specific needs – to be Jewish MPs.[2] The MPs themselves, like other Jews, were unsure of how to reconcile these expectations; unlike other Jews though, the MPs were regularly forced to make a choice, to confront the quandaries of Jewish existence. Operating at a national level, their actions scrutinised alike by both Gentile and Jew, Jewish politicians were at the forefront of debates concerning Anglo-Jewry's place in English society and confronted the issues of Jewish identity especially acutely.

Their experiences have though, largely escaped historiographical attention; there has been very little research on Jewish MPs or Jewish political activity between 1858-1887. Only two historical works exist that place questions concerning these topics at the centre of their study. The first was Geoffrey Alderman's *The Jewish Community in British Politics*; a work elucidating the relationship between Jewish voters and the British political system.[3] In exploring this formally taboo subject, Alderman established the importance of political study for understanding Anglo-Jewry's development and highlighted several useful aspects of the relationship between Jewish political activity and Jewish identity. Notably, examining the employment of a Jewish vote, Alderman demonstrates the existence of a particularly Jewish dimension to British politics. The second work, David Feldman's *Englishmen and Jews, Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914*, seeks to illuminate how Jewish social development and political activity influenced discourse concerning their place in British society.[4] Reversing Alderman's focus, Feldman turns the Jewish

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[2] These two terms, Jewish MP and MP of the Jewish Persuasion, will be used interchangeably throughout this work; unless, as above, specific connotations are implied by their deliberate use, which will be explained in the text. Otherwise, for the sake of convenience, the two terms will not be differentiated, a practice in conformity with their contemporary usage.

[3] G. Alderman, *The Jewish Community in British Politics* (Oxford 1983)

[4] D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews. Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (London 1994)

presence in British politics inside out, showing that debates about Jewish identity in this period were also, essentially, debates about British identity. This is exceedingly useful – revealing the (changing) perceptions of Jews within the British polity and the consequences of their presence and interests on national political discussion. However, as a result of this focus, Feldman tends to lose sight of the Jews themselves. His evidence is drawn predominately from Gentile sources and the Jews' voice is too seldom heard. Consequently, the ramifications of these issues on Jewish identity are often overlooked. Valuable as this and Alderman's work are then, they by no means constitute a comprehensive examination of the relationship between political participation and Jewish identity, which, of course, was never their intention. One area considerably neglected, in this respect, is the activity of Jewish MPs. This chapter seeks to redress this omission.[5]

In analysing the actions and attitudes of Jewish MPs and their ramifications upon Anglo-Jewish identity this study will adopt a tripartite structure. The first section initially assesses the nature of Jewish MPs as a group before proceeding to examine this group's activity as politicians, both in regard to performance and representation. It will evaluate the MPs' experiences, particularly at constituency level, revealing the integrated nature of Jewish participation, which nonetheless maintained certain confessional specifics. The next two sections will analyse, in turn, Jewish MPs' behaviour in respect to domestic political matters and issues of British

[5] Unfortunately, the scarcity of secondary research upon Anglo-Jewish MPs is echoed by a dearth of primary source information. Several contemporaneous biographies exist but few MPs left substantial personal holdings and some of those that did destroyed the overtly political records among these – as did the Rothschild family. Other records somewhat compensate for this, however: the better preserved holdings of many major political figures often contain records of their interaction with Jewish MPs; *Hansard*'s proceedings detail their Parliamentary activity; and local newspapers provide comment upon constituency activities.

foreign policy.[6] The second part, detailing the MPs' attempts to obtain special legislative treatment for Jews in Britain and the role of Jewishness in determining their political opinions, will show how a distinctive Anglo-Jewish domestic agenda was beginning to emerge in this period. The section will also consider how Jewish politicians dealt with the functioning of British politics, specifically, how their party allegiances developed. The final part will extend this investigation to foreign affairs, discussing Jews' reaction to British policies and their own efforts on behalf of persecuted co-religionists abroad. Noting the formulaic and generally subordinate role Jewish issues played in comparison to English interests, this section will highlight Jews' identification with national issues and the continuing contention concerning political Jewishness in Britain.

II.

There were eighteen individual Jews who sat as Members of Parliament between 1858-1887. Lionel de Rothschild, having won the right, was the first in July 1858. In the next general election, 1859, he was joined by two co-religionists. The Jewish presence in the legislature jumped to six in 1865; hovering between four and seven for the next two decades, it reached a peak of nine in the elections of 1885 and 1886, see appendix one. These Jewish MPs were a diverse group, as regards both background and political activity, ranging in notability from international banking

[6] The majority of Jewish politicians only concerned themselves with a very limited number of political topics, largely those with some implication for their religion and/or the great constitutional matters of nineteenth-century British politics: Franchise reform; the Church (and Anglican privileges); and Ireland. Consequently, this work will focus upon these, with the addition of British foreign policy – also quite a popular topic among the politicians. Regarding these 'British' issues the selection is, of course, somewhat artificial but as broad topics and ones that were the most prominent and contentious in contemporary politics, they perhaps offer the best opportunity to evaluate Jewry's position within national political discourse. It is nonetheless, a method preferable to the alternative of randomly selecting issues through which to effect a comparison.

magnates, like the Rothschilds, to obscure pottery manufacturers from Yorkshire, such as Stuart Woolf. Initially though, as might be expected, men connected with finance dominated Jewish representation. All three MPs in 1859, a Rothschild, a Goldsmid and David Salomons, derived their principal income from banking. Financiers continued to remain important throughout the period; members of the Cohen and Montagu banking dynasties joining scions of the Rothschild and Goldsmid ones in the 1880s. Comprising nine individuals, financiers were the largest occupational grouping among Jewish MPs of the period.[7] Second to this was a legal group, which encompassed seven MPs. That barristers should form so comparatively large a contribution is unsurprising. The ability to practice law had been a notable right gained during the emancipation campaign and Jews pursuing their equality in this direction were also drawn to similar efforts in the political sphere; as the early presence of emancipationist Jews like Francis Goldsmid (the first Jewish barrister) and Salomons (the first Jewish magistrate) demonstrates.[8] Over-time though, the Jewish legal presence in the Commons was to become professionalised, through the entry of such men as George Jessel and Arthur Cohen – who had nationally recognised legal expertise. The remaining five MPs came from a variety of occupational backgrounds: there were three provincial industrialists, Woolf, colliery owner Saul Isaac and lace manufacturer James Jacoby; an engineer in Lewis Isaacs; and the merchant, non-practising barrister and politician Henry de Worms.

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[7] See W. Rubinstein, 'Jewish Top Wealth-Holders in Britain, 1809-1909', *Jewish Historical Studies*, Vol.37. (2001) Unsurprisingly, this financial group was exceedingly wealthy: Six of them left liquid assets of over one million, most several million, pounds upon their deaths and another two left several hundred thousand. Rubinstein does not offer any information on the ninth, Montagu, who would most probably have also bequeathed a legacy of several millions. This is likely to have made them substantially wealthier than the majority of MPs.

[8] Goldsmid and Salomons were simultaneously bankers and solicitors and have been counted in both occupational groups. They or their families owned banking businesses from which they drew the majority of their income but both took up legal practice in order to further Jewish equality. The multi-talented de Worms has also been counted as a Barrister, despite not practising.

Irrespective of their background few Jewish MPs were outstanding politicians. Commentaries and biographies (both contemporary and historiographical) are replete with lamentations regarding their inability to speak, their lack of involvement in debate and their general inactivity in the House.[9] Only two Jews, Jessel and de Worms, attained government office in this period, a fact perhaps partly attributable to lingering prejudice but more likely a reflection of poor political performance connected to the disinterest of busy career-men, more concerned with stock markets or legal cases. Moreover, only de Worms, as Secretary to the Board of Trade (1885-6, 1886-8), held a political post. Jessel, as Solicitor General (1871-3), fulfilled primarily legal tasks.[10] The majority of Jewish MPs had far less notable Parliamentary careers. Some died before gaining the opportunity; Frederick Goldsmid, for instance, elected in July 1865 expired the following March. Some seem to have been concerned only with regional political issues; James Jacoby spoke on only five occasions over 1885-7, of which, four related to mining in his mid-Derbyshire constituency.[11] Others were simply not interested in Parliamentary politics. As was the case with Lionel, Mayer and Nathanial de Rothschild, who collectively spoke in the House only twice, restricting their activity to voting, infrequently. Ferdinand's record was little better. So anonymous was their presence in Parliament that the *Jewish Chronicle* (*JC*) publicly, if politely, complained of the impression of indifference it conveyed.[12] Historians have been less kind, Alderman surmising in regard to Lionel: 'For the man

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[9] See entries in P. Emden, *Jews of Britain. A Series of Biographies* (London 1944), who tends to comment on the Parliamentary performance of the MPs.

[10] M. Jolles, *A Directory of Distinguished British Jews, 1830-1930. With Selected Compilations Extending from 1830 to 2000* (London 2002) pp.85 & 94.

[11] *Hansard*, Third Series, General Index 1883-6 and 1887.

[12] *Jewish Chronicle*, 21 June 1878, p.2.

at the centre of the battle the yoke he had won for himself proved too heavy.'[13] But this is an unfair assessment, too heavily reliant upon performance in the Commons. Lionel and Nathaniel were keenly and actively interested in politics, if not in Parliamentary participation. Rothschild political relations with the British establishment were from the beginning based on the family's economic standing.[14] They did not need to cultivate influence in the House, being able to work more easily through the intimate world of Victorian politics: the City, the West End Clubs, and society events. As Lionel's obituary noted: 'His inability to walk had long prevented him from taking part in any but the most important divisions, although Mr. Goschen had told the electors that from his writing-table in New Court Baron Lionel de Rothschild exerted more influence on their behalf than a much more active member could have done.'[15] It was within this environment that the Rothschilds were politically influential, offering financial aid and advice, as well as information from their extensive Continental contacts, to both Liberals and Tories.[16] Their Parliamentary presence was simply a matter of status, a reflection of their wealth and membership of the ruling class.[17]

There were many Jewish MPs though, who took their role more seriously. Lily Montagu described her father's motivation for entering Parliament as recognition of the need to fulfil his social and civic responsibilities.[18] Months before his first

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[13] Alderman, *Jewish Community* p.31.
[14] D. Gutwein, *The Divided Elite. Economics, Politics and Anglo-Jewry, 1882-1917* (Leiden 1992) p.127.
[15] *JC*, 06 June 1879, p.11.
[16] Bodleian Library, Hughenden Papers, 141/3 fols.106-43, Letter from Nathaniel to Disraeli, 08 Dec. 1879.
[17] Gutwein, *Divided* p.126.
[18] L. Montagu, *Samuel Montagu. First Baron Swaythling* (London 1913) p.66. Lily was Samuel's

election Arthur Cohen detailed his resolve that if '...I could be of any real use to the [Liberal] party I would certainly stand', claiming that he did '...not care a jot about entering Parliament for any social consideration, nor for the purpose of getting a judgeship'.[19] In spite of these sentiments Montagu and Cohen, like so many other Jewish MPs, played little more than a peripheral part in British politics. Neither forsook their previous occupations, which consumed much more of their time and interest than Parliament. Their contributions to politics were predominately concerned with this work. The vast majority of Montagu's speeches involved topics such as currency exchange or bimetallism, whereas Cohen's contributions were predominately limited to discussing the legal technicalities of legislation. This was a familiar pattern for Jewish MPs, who tended, as a rule, to restrict their political activities to previous areas of expertise. Only de Worms abandoned all alternative interests in favour of concentrating upon a political career.

Given this general lack of political accomplishment among Jewish MPs it might be wondered why many were ever selected as candidates. The example of the Rothschilds provides a clue. Enormously rich, hugely influential and very well known, their representation could endow any constituency with prestige and promise an increase in fortune. Irrespective of their potential legislative aptitude, the family's suitability for public life had been demonstrated by success in other areas and this proved persuasive with electors. Mayer, for instance, appealed first and foremost to

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daughter and though somewhat estranged, the historian must be careful of bias in this work, which is far from an objective account. Nevertheless, Montagu was known as a man with a strong sense of civic duty and the quote is probably little of an exaggeration.

[19] Bodleian Library, Papers of Sir William Harcourt, MS Harcourt dep 208, fols.143-4, Letter from Cohen to Harcourt, 04 Nov. 1879. Again, there is the possibility of bias in this source; Cohen was attempting to become a Liberal candidate and was therefore, trying to recommend himself to Harcourt. He later proved good to his word though, when in 1881 he refused a judgeship after Gladstone, not wanting to risk a by-election, persuaded him to stay.

the economy of his Hythe constituents: 'By means of my business I hoped to be of service to you as a commercial community, situated as you are, the connecting link between this country and the various cities on the continent of Europe.'[20] Although the Rothschild case was *sui generis*, virtually all Jewish MPs could boast success in business or a profession, and most had also participated in municipal office. Salomons justified his coming before Greenwich against a local man whose father had previously represented the borough on such terms:

> He had been a magistrate for the County of Kent 22 years; he had filled the office of High Sheriff of the county also, and likewise the office of Lord Mayor of the City of London, and on retiring from the latter position had carried with him such a testimonial...which warranted him in seeking the suffrage of any metropolitan or other constituency in the kingdom.[21]

Not all Jews could recount such an impressive record but most had occupied some position of note or authority. The group contained, *inter alia*, seven Deputy Lieutenants, one Lord Lieutenant, seven Justices of the Peace, three privy councillors, two mayors, three QCs, two knights, three baronets, four foreign-titled barons, five sheriffs and an alderman.[22] A surprising fifty percent had received a university education, an achievement not particularly common in the wider Anglo-Jewish community.[23] The majority frequented London's most important political clubs – among those MPs with known associations this included three Brooks's, one Carlton and nine Reform members.[24] The contacts Jews established in these influential circles were to provide many with an entry into the political arena. Montagu, having worked for thirty-six years in the vicinity of Whitechapel, befriended the sitting MP and

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[20] Rothschild Archive, 000/235, Report of Mayer's Hythe election address; n.d. (c.1868)
[21] *Kentish Mercury*, 12 Feb. 1859, p.4.
[22] See entries in Jolles, *Directory* and *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament* Vol.1: 1832-85 and Vol.2: 1886-1918 (Sussex 1976 and 1978)
[23] Ibid., Three of these attended Cambridge, five graduated from UCL and one studied at University College Frankfurt.
[24] See entries in *Who's Who*, i-ii.

leaders of the local Liberal Council, who, upon the seat becoming vacant, wrote to him requesting he stand in their interest; until which point, Montagu claimed, he had not considered entering Parliament.[25] Lionel Cohen's political career was immensely boosted by his intimacy with Lord Randolph Churchill, who recommended him to other party figures and provided 'much prized and valued support' by appearing, occasionally with his mother in tow, at several of his election meetings.[26] These Jews were evidently at home in and indeed, a part of, the leading stratum of society. Having succeeded vocationally, participated in public life and associated with elite figures, it was natural, from both their and others' perspectives, that they now enter politics. This would seem to apply as much to the lesser lights among the MPs, who operated at more provincial levels, as it does to eminent City Jews. The Radical Liberal Association that invited Jacoby to contest Mid-Derbyshire was most impressed with his civic service in Nottinghamshire – where he had been a member of Nottingham town council for three years and also Sheriff of the county – and countered hostility at his not being a local man by praising his record as at one time the youngest councillor in England.[27]

It was at the local level that Jewish MPs were most politically successful. Few performed well upon the national stage but throughout the period they were generally assiduous representatives of their constituencies.[28] Most would raise local matters in Parliament and took care to frequently address their localities. In some cases these

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[25] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 117, Papers of Lord Swaythling, Scrapbook of Press Cuttings, p.4.

[26] Cambridge University Library, Papers of Lord Randolph Churchill, Add. MS 9248/5/604, Letter from Cohen to Churchill, 06 May 1885.

[27] *Derby Reporter*, 16 Oct. 1885, p.4. The paper claimed Jacoby held this record in 1876, at the age of twenty-four.

[28] Jewish MPs represented a variety of constituencies with little similarity between them, though they were all in England, see appendix one. Apart from Lionel de Rothschild's City seat, Montagu was the only one to have a significant number of Jewish voters, see below.

were actions of expediency. Salomons' attempts to win Greenwich from a native rival were based upon pledges to tackle local issues, such as the London coal-tax and conservancy of the Thames.[29] But others seem to have genuinely enjoyed grass-roots politics. Mayer de Rothschild, who never spoke in the House, eagerly defended his seat against the Tories, undertaking 'very tiring' efforts in doing so: 'I have been hard at work all day canvassing at Hythe and the local districts & have found the people very largely in favour of your humble servant except when under the pressure of Squire Deeds...'[30] This, in most instances, occasioned a good relationship between the two. Besides the indication of popularity provided by some MPs' impressive re-election success, for example, Lionel de Rothschild six times for the City, Simon four times for Dewsbury, Francis Goldsmid and Salomons both three times – see appendix one – there are numerous other examples of their local support. Isaac was petitioned by residents of Nottingham to stand and praised by the local Tory Chairmen, 'as a neighbour, as a friend, as an employer of labour, and as a bringer of money to Nottingham...' He was celebrated excessively, even by nineteenth-century standards, wherever he appeared: 'Mr. Isaac, on rising, was greeted with enthusiastic applause. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and the whole audience rose and cheered lustily for several minutes'[31] In Buckinghamshire the Rothschilds, a massive electoral influence in the county due to their extensive landholdings, were returned with 'quasi-feudal fidelity'.[32] Nathaniel and Ferdinand seem to have had a particularly intimate connection with their constituents; Ferdinand declaring to cheers in 1885: 'I am living in your immediate neighbourhood – I may say that all of you are members

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[29] *Kentish Mercury*, 12 Feb. 1859, p.4.
[30] Rothschild Archive, XI/109/95, Sundry Private Correspondence, Letter from Mayer to his brothers and nephews, 16 Oct. 1868.
[31] *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 06 Feb. 1874, pp.2 & 5.
[32] R. Gibbs, *A History of Aylesbury with Its Borough and Hundreds, the Hamlet of Watton, and the Electoral Division* (Aylesbury 1885) p.300. and Gutwein, *Divided* p.126.

of my family...'[33] This attachment was significantly augmented by Rothschild philanthropy, which funded many a public improvement in Buckinghamshire. The good will such charity generated is difficult to overestimate; when Nathaniel presented a new building to the Aylesbury Literary Institution in 1880, the editor of the district paper compared it to the 'tale of Aladdin and his wonderful lamp'. Another local offered a more realistic assessment: 'Sir Nathaniel manifested great interest in the town and neighbourhood; he spent money freely, and when they looked at their educational institutions and his efforts for the working men especially he said Sir Nathaniel had a great claim on their gratitude.'[34] Several other Jewish MPs similarly utilised largesse to supplement their popularity: Francis Goldsmid was famous for his generosity, which included a £5,000 donation towards Reading's new town hall.[35] Montagu made much of the £1,000 he had given to constitute an East End apprenticing fund during his 1886 election campaign.[36]

This is not to suggest that Jewish MPs had an easy life. Like all politicians they regularly encountered dissent and were at times pressured to support policies or deliver promises they were not keen on. In many Liberal constituencies this often seems to have entailed placating nonconformist voters. Nathaniel was urged by his dissenting audiences to support the abolition of Church rates and later the abrogation of Clause 25, issues about which he himself was ambivalent.[37] His successor Ferdinand, enthusiastically attested the merits of temperance to similarly appease this

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[33] *Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News*, 21 Nov. 1885, p.3.
[34] Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Papers of Robert Gibbs, D15/4/1, Scrapbook
[35] A. Löwy, and D. Marks, *A Memoir of Sir Francis Henry Goldsmid. Second Edition* (London 1882) p.139.
[36] Anglo-Jewish Archives, Papers of Lord Swaything, MS 117, Scrapbook of Press Cuttings, p.67.
[37] *Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News*, 15 July 1865, p.2. and 31 Jan. 1874, p.3.

group.[38] Failure to sufficiently propitiate local opinion cost some MPs popularity. Greenwich Radicals publicly censured Salomons for neglecting the borough's interests in 1870. Interrupting a proposed vote of confidence at a constituency gathering they moved:

> That this meeting is of opinion that Sir David Salomons has regarded the interests of the Corporation of the City of London, of which he is an alderman, as superior to the claims of the local interests of Greenwich, Woolwich and Deptford; that he has not consistently adhered to the pledges upon which the nonconformists of the borough gave him their support... [39]

This was a product of the distressed state of the borough, which had recently suffered the loss of a major employer when the Liberal government closed its dockyards. Salomons, who had always faced hostility to his London origins, had for years done little to prevent this eventuality; in 1865 he twice avoided a deputation of dockyard workers seeking his assistance and upon finally meeting a third, duly fell asleep mid-discussion.[40] The biggest problems for Jewish MPs regarding constituency protest came from local Liberal Associations. Arthur Cohen and Ferdinand both faced a 'fratricidal challenge' in the 1880s from rival Liberal candidates put up by local Associations in an attempt to dominate the party.[41] But it was Simon who faced by far the greatest threat. Specifically invited by 'real Liberal' working men to contest the new seat of Dewsbury against another Liberal candidate chosen by a Committee (that would become the Association), he faced contention from the start.[42] Simon triumphed in 1868 but could not unite the party and his 1871 refusal to submit his candidacy to the Association's approval sparked nine years of intra-party conflict. In 1874 'ultra-Radicals' disturbed his meetings, organised rival gatherings and

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[38] *Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News*, 31 Oct. 1885, p.7.
[39] *The Times*, 29 Sept. 1870, p.12.
[40] *Kentish Mercury*, 01 July 1865, no page.
[41] For Rothschild see: *Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News*, 03 July 1886, p.7. and Cohen: *JC*, 19 Mar. 1880, p.3.
[42] C. James, *M.P. for Dewsbury* (Yorkshire 1970) pp.10-1.

sponsored an alternative candidate, as Dewsbury became 'a house divided against itself'.[43] Simon lambasted his opponents as a clique: 'A few Liberals activated by personal spite, and by a feeling of revenge on being defeated, were presuming to dictate to the party throughout the borough as to who they could have as their member...'[44] But in 1880, despite eleven years of representation and letters of recommendation from prominent Liberals, he was only just re-elected with a 345-vote majority.[45]

The worst case of internecine strife was experienced by the most politically active of Jewish MPs, Henry de Worms, whose selection, success and eventual secession from the seat of Greenwich provide an excellent example of the multifarious experiences of Jews in constituency politics. De Worms, who unsuccessfully contested Sandwich in 1868, had gained political notoriety in the late 1870s with a series of books and lecture tours defending 'Beaconsfieldism' and promoting an aggressive foreign policy. The electors of Greenwich feeling ill-used by the Liberals were casting around for a Tory candidate and sent a deputation soliciting his candidacy.[46] Eager to enter Parliament, de Worms canvassed the borough and met with much success; his national outlook complimenting local concerns much better than had his uncle's (Salomons): 'The peace-at-any-price party wished to see their great arsenal closed and converted into tea gardens (laughter)...'[47] He was easily elected, missing the top of the poll by merely three votes.[48] The next four years

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[43] *Dewsbury Chronicle*, 31 Jan. 1874, p.8. and 20 Mar. 1880, p.8.
[44] *Dewsbury Chronicle*, 20 Mar. 1880, p.8.
[45] *Dewsbury Chronicle*, 03 Apr. 1880, p.8. This was out of a total 8,439 votes polled. Simon had letters of support from Hugh Childers, John Bright and even Joseph Chamberlain, the Liberal Association's head. In 1885 he was the only Liberal candidate.
[46] *Kentish Mercury*, 13 Mar. 1880, no page.
[47] *Kentish Mercury*, 27 Mar. 1880, p.3.
[48] *Kentish Mercury*, 03 Apr. 1880, p.5. De Worms' achievement is more impressive when it is

proceeded peacefully but the division of the borough into three single-member constituencies – the safe Tory seats of Greenwich and Woolwich, and the open Deptford – following the 1885 Redistribution Act precipitated a Conservative civil war. De Worms, attending what was ostensibly only a lecture of the Greenwich Conservative Club at their local public house, was presented with a unanimous resolution in favour of him representing Greenwich, which he 'unhesitatingly accepted'.[49] Two days later, a meeting of the Greenwich Conservative Association, which de Worms did not patronise, assigned instead his fellow MP, Mr. Boord, to Greenwich, gave Woolwich to de Worms' former election agent Mr. Hughes, and left him with Deptford. A bitter dispute ensued, dominating parochial concerns and splitting local opinion, as neither side would submit.[50] Boord asserted his seniority in Greenwich and criticised de Worms' tactics: 'This supposed representative meeting was a mere lecture taken advantage of by the Baron and his friends'.[51] Hughes attempted to smear his reputation, accusing de Worms of paying illegal claims during the 1868 Sandwich campaign.[52] De Worms retaliated, suing Hughes for libel and denouncing the caucus' tyranny of selection: 'I entirely repudiate the principle that a candidate has, either by seniority or predilection, the prescriptive right of choosing his constituency.'[53] After ten months of acrimony – all ameliorative efforts, including arbitration by senior party figures, having failed – de Worms suddenly withdrew his

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considered that this was his first election, compared to the third for his fellow Tory who came top.

[49] *The Times*, 11 Dec. 1884, p.4.

[50] The local press was divided in its loyalties: the *Kentish Mercury* favoured de Worms, whereas its rival the *Kentish Independent* backed Boord. *The Times*, where bitter correspondence was exchanged for some months, attempted to maintain a neutral stance.

[51] *The Times*, 18 Dec. 1884, p.9.

[52] *Kentish Mercury*, 23 Jan. 1885, p.5.

[53] *Kentish Mercury*, 16 Jan. 1885, p.4. and 26 June 1885, p.5. The case was settled in de Worms' favour after a jury deliberation of three minutes. Hughes was ordered to pay £500 damages and costs.

candidacy. A move motivated seemingly, not by fear of political defeat but the duty of success.

> In deciding to take the step of retiring his candidature for Greenwich, he felt that in the responsible position he had accepted as a Minister of the Crown he could neither measure swords with one whom he considered immeasurably beneath him...nor could he take upon himself the responsibility of splitting the Conservative vote...[54]

No doubt the prospect of a safer seat elsewhere sweetened this decision. Only days after withdrawing de Worms was addressing East Toxteth, his new constituency, selected from some fourteen that had offered him refuge.[55] Specifically targeted by the Chairmen of the Liverpool Constitutional Association, in preferment to several local men, de Worms was welcomed on Merseyside as a 'distinguished and statesmanlike politician'; emphatically returned in 1885, he was to represent the seat for the next seventeen years until elevated to the peerage. [56]

So far, these experiences were probably typical for many MPs and do much to demonstrate how easily Jews operated within and integrated into British political life. There were though, occasions when Jews met opposition specifically because of their religious confession. The candidature of Salomons in Greenwich, 1859, provoked accusations of 'Judaistical tricks'; Mayer's victory at Hythe in the same election witnessed the parish church refuse to permit the customary bell-ringing.[57] Julian Goldsmid suffered the worst example of the period during the 1870 Rochester by-election. He had come to Rochester with previous Parliamentary experience and was selected, out of eleven total applicants, to replace the deceased member by an

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[54] *Kentish Independent*, 19 Sept. 1885, no page.
[55] *Liverpool Courier*, 18 Sept. 1885, p.4.
[56] Ibid., p.4. and P. Waller, *Democracy and Sectarianism. A Political and Social History of Liverpool, 1868-1939* (Liverpool 1981) p.65.
[57] M. Salbstein, *The Emancipation of the Jews in Britain: The Question of the Admission of the Jews to Parliament, 1828-1860* (London 1982) p.216. and *Kentish Mercury*, 13 Feb. 1859, p.3.

'overwhelming majority' of the local Liberal party.[58] Conservative supporters immediately instigated a campaign of stereotyping – attacking him as a man devoted to commerce and denigrating the validity of Old Testament religion.[59] Goldsmid, openly baited on the nomination platform, sought to publicly rise above such sordidness. 'Our opponent has in a somewhat illiberal sentence objected to me on account of my religious opinions. I am rather proud of that, because it shows he cannot object to me on any other ground...My religious opinions are not a question for him but for me alone.'[60] This drew a derisive shout from the crowd: 'What have you done with Lazarus?', which occasioned considerable laughter. It was rapidly followed by similar interjections: shouts of 'Jew, Jew' and 'who sold the saviour?' [61] Unfortunately for Goldsmid, such sentiments were not confined to the borough's Conservatives. As the local Tory paper observed, with a certain amount of schadenfreude, he had proved an injudicious choice for Rochester Liberals: 'That a feeling of aversion to such a selection was aroused in the minds of the independent portion of the Liberals must be acknowledged...'[62] The poll testified the accuracy of this claim; for despite the support of the party and sitting MP, Goldsmid received approximately five-hundred fewer votes than his predecessor had in 1868.[63] The paper, through a series of annoyed correspondents, subsequently entertained requests for the organisation of an apolitical voting league '...with the object of obtaining the seat for a Christian representative.'[64] Although this never materialised, Goldsmid was unable to overcome the city's prejudice. He was re-elected on a combined ticket in

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[58] *Rochester and Chatham Journal and Mid-Kent Advertiser*, 16 July 1870, p.4.
[59] *Rochester and Chatham Journal and Mid-Kent Advertiser*, 23 July 1870, p.3.
[60] *Rochester and Chatham Journal and Mid-Kent Advertiser*, 16 July 1870, p.3.
[61] *Rochester and Chatham Journal and Mid-Kent Advertiser*, 23 July 1870, p.3.
[62] Ibid., p.4.
[63] Ibid., p.4. The Liberal candidate had polled 1,458 votes in 1868; Goldsmid only gained 987 in 1870, managing only a 437 majority over his independent rival who had been in the field just two days.
[64] *Rochester and Chatham Journal and Mid-Kent Advertiser*, 30 July 1870, p.3.

1874, when there was little serious opposition but the depth of feeling against him was evident again, in 1880, when, despite being the senior member in an election that produced a general Liberal victory, he came bottom of the poll.[65] Such politically-sparked anti-Jewish incidents continued throughout this period; Ferdinand encountered some in 1885. But they were noticeable primarily because of their scarcity.[66] These events were isolated and small-scale; anti-Jewish sentiment in Britain had traditionally lacked political resonance.[67] In each event the Jewish candidate was elected and expressions of support easily dwarfed those of hostility. Jewishness was evidently not an insurmountable problem in constituency politics, even if occasionally it was an issue. Some MPs, in fact, exploited it to their advantage. Both Francis Goldsmid and Salomons talked up their Jewish allegiance and the hardship attendant to it, in a bid to associate themselves with the cause of freedom. This was certainly appreciated by the voters of Greenwich, where several election songs where composed to propagate the theme:

Success to the worthy alderman!
Who has been tried and prov'd;
Known to this borough as the man
For worthy deeds, approv'd.

He is well vers'd in all we need
To do the borough good
From disability now freed
He is with zeal imbued

Choose him to represent us now
He's free as you or me,
Choose Salomons, and he'll soon show
He prizes liberty

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[65] *Rochester and Chatham Journal and Mid-Kent Advertiser*, 31 Jan. 1874, no page and 27 Mar.1880, no page.

[66] *Bucks Advertiser and Aylesbury News*, 05 Dec. 1885, p.4. The Tory candidate apparently used inappropriate racial innuendo and described Rothschild as a Shylock character; on account of which, the inhabitants of Waddesdon stoned him when he entered the village. There was also an isolated episode on polling day in the village of Missenden, where a placard was hawked around the streets proclaiming: 'Who persecuted Christ? The Jews.'

[67] T. Endelman, 'The Englishness of Jewish Modernity in England', in J. Katz (ed.), *Toward Modernity: The European Jewish Model* (New Brunswick 1987) p.237.

He sought his own, He'll seek yours too
He'll not two faces wear
But shine in Parliament to show
He is no truckler there.[68]

The most overt use of Jewishness to gain political credit was, understandably, undertaken by Montagu. With an electorate estimated by local Liberals as nearly fifty-percent Jewish, Montagu's membership of and beneficence within the community naturally featured heavily in his electioneering.[69]

These politically designed Jewish appeals were controversial. Montagu's campaign elicited criticism from his Tory opponents, who styled him the 'Hebrew candidate' and intimated that he was more concerned with Jewish interests than Liberal policies.[70] Fellow Jewish MP, L. Cohen, also took issue at Montagu's tactics and wrote to the *JC* in complaint. Describing his own refusal to advertise Jewishness in pursuance of electoral ambitions, he '...held it objectionable personally to appeal to my Jewish brethren *as Jews* on behalf of any Jewish candidate, in any political contest which affects them only in common with their fellow-countrymen at large.'[71] Cohen's objections were not an isolated outburst but formed part of a perennial communal debate concerning the propriety and possibility of Jewish MPs appealing to and representing their co-religionists, *qua* Jews, in the political sphere. Montagu's Whitechapel was a flashpoint for discussion in the late 1880s but it had a significant Jewish community that could justify a certain sectarian approach. Virtually all other Jewish politicians sat for constituencies with either non-existent or exceedingly small

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[68] Greenwich Local Archives, 'Salomons, the Friend of the People' 1859
[69] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 117, Papers of Lord Swaythling, Scrapbook of Press Cuttings, p.4.
[70] Ibid., p.17.
[71] *JC*, 20 Nov. 1885, p.6. Italics in original

Jewish electorates. Their basis of authority, as politicians, was derived from sources wholly external to Jewry.

What relationship then, connected them to Anglo-Jewry? On the simplest level was the fact that all retained some form of affiliation with the community, that they were all professing Jews. [72] This was the one commonality uniting an otherwise disparate group of individuals. Reflecting the situation within the community, this identification was far from homogeneous. Among the MPs levels of commitment varied considerably, from the strictly Orthodox faith of Montagu to the nominal affiliation of Jessel. There were also four MPs who practiced Reform: Francis, Frederick and Julian Goldsmid, and John Simon. Similarly divergent were the MPs' attachment to and position within the community. Some were located at the very top of the establishment, being members of the ruling Cousinhood: Lionel Cohen, for instance, was President of the Jewish Board of Guardians 1869-87. Others were involved at a lower level, such as Saul Isaac and Simon who were both Board of Deputies representatives and sat on the Council of the Anglo-Jewish Association. Only Sidney Woolf, merely a synagogue member, and Lewis Isaacs, a retired secretary of the Jewish Youths' Benevolent Society, seem to have had no active connection with the Anglo-Jewish establishment in this period.[73] There were thus

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[72] In examining Jewish MPs and their link to Jewish identity this work has eschewed comment upon MPs who were Jewish converts. There seems to have been little or no contact between the two groups and converts would constitute a separate factor too tangential to pursue here. This exclusion includes discussion of Benjamin Disraeli's Jewish identification, which has already received much historical comment. Henry de Worms however, who converted to Christianity shortly before his death has been included; for this period and much of his life he was a dedicated Jew, his conversion was secret and seemingly, the result of growing exclusion from the communal hierarchy combined with his wife's dying wish, rather than theological conviction.

[73] Jolles, *Directory* pp.84 & 93. So slender was Isaacs' connection to the community that in 1885 he requested that his name be omitted from a list of Jewish MPs the *Jewish Chronicle* was preparing.

gradations to the MPs' Jewishness. Such subtleties were however, lost upon Gentiles. The solidarity of Jewry in the popular mind meant that merely by being Jewish the MPs were perceived as exponents of communal opinion. 'Every movement and every vote of theirs will be identified with the community, and the latter held morally responsible for their public acts', the *JC* realised.[74] In Parliamentary debates relating to Jewish issues, Gentile politicians would look to them for inside opinion. When such issues occasioned party argument both sides attempted to use their Jewish politicians to adduce communal support for their positions.[75] Most Gentile politicians, to some extent, believed Jewish MPs '...spoke with great weight and authority as representatives of the Jewish community...'[76]

The community was at times concerned about this association. There was always the possibility that Jewish actions in Parliament might negatively reflect upon other Jews, as had happened to an extent even, despite his conversion, with Disraeli. As a result, the links between MPs and the community were officially played down in the Jewish press. The *JC* and *JW*, throughout the period, routinely stated that Jewish MPs did not represent any 'organised politico-religious party', or indeed, that there was any such thing as a 'Jewish Member of Parliament'.[77] Communal institutions, particularly the Board of Deputies, were viewed as the most appropriate channel through which to make Jewish political interests known. Parliamentary politics were a separate matter, where MPs had no mandate for Jewish issues. Many therefore, took no political interest in the minority's affairs. They behaved as politicians of the Jewish persuasion. For the most part though, Anglo-Jewry viewed their affiliation

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[74] *JC*, 08 Feb. 1861. p.4.
[75] *Hansard*, 03 Mar. 1882, cclxvii, pp.39-40 & 45-6.
[76] Ibid., p.63. The quote belongs to Charles Dilke.
[77] *JC*, 09 Apr. 1880. p.9. and *JW*, 12 Mar. 1880. p.5.

with Jewish politicians as a benefit. Jewish MPs were seen as 'worthy representatives' who would creditably uphold the name of Jew in public

> ...and by this means lessen in the best way whatever prejudices against them still linger in the popular mind. ...A career like that of the late Sir Francis Goldsmid was in itself a standing protest against the world's ill opinion of Jews, and did much to prevent such a protest being any longer needed.[78]

The MPs' representative nature also meant that they served the community as useful indicators of tolerance. That Gentiles elected them as Jews, and did so increasingly over the period, suggested to both the *JC* and *JW* a growing integration: 'That we have made enormous strides in social progress must be evident when it is observed how numerous are the Jewish candidates for Parliamentary honours...'[79] Numbers of Jewish MPs, in this way, became an index of Jewry's acceptance. Precisely because of this, the community did not want the MPs to represent it, to appear as the Parliamentary arm of British Jewry.[80] However, the community did expect them to watch over its interests. The *JC*, rejecting the possibility of completely severing 'synagogue and life', would remind MPs that '...besides the constituency that elected him, he has also to represent another, not by virtue of his choice, but of his birth'.[81] Claiming Jewish politicians had a responsibility to other Jews, the paper admitted that the Board could only achieve so much and that the communal voice be heard in Parliament depended to 'great extent' on them.[82] Some were happy to shoulder this responsibility. MPs like Salomons, Francis Goldsmid 'the member for Jewry', Simon who took over this mantle upon Goldsmid's death, de Worms, and to a lesser extent A. Cohen and Montagu, spent time and effort furthering Jewish interests, both large and small, domestic and foreign, in the House. In pursuing this political

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[78] *JC*, 09 Apr. 1880. p.3. and 13 Nov. 1885. p.9.
[79] *JW*, 02 Apr. 1880. p.4. For a *JC* example see 28 July 1865. p.4.
[80] G. Alderman, *Modern British Jewry. Second Edition* (Oxford 1998) p.65.
[81] *JC*, 08 Feb. 1860. p.4.
[82] *JC*, 04 Feb. 1870. p.9.

representation of Jewishness, the politicians acted as Jewish MPs. There were, of course, limits to this. It was an impression the politicians wished to avoid and on several occasions Salomons and Simon '...were careful to inform assemblages of Jews that they were not members of Parliament for the Jews...'[83] It also occurred within very circumscribed boundaries and under particular restrictions, as the next two sections will elucidate.

III.

Domestically, little legislation directly affected Jews as Jews in this period. The Jewish United Synagogues Act of July 1870 was the only item that dealt exclusively with the community. Purely a matter of internal organisation – it confirmed the scheme of the charity commissioner providing for the amalgamation of the main Ashkenazi synagogues – the Act was not contentious and occasioned no debate.[84] Jewish MPs had not needed to speak upon the subject. There were several issues in this period though, upon which Jews, to varying degrees, felt compelled to intervene in order to safeguard their religious specificity, notably: Sunday Bills, particularly those prohibiting work; religious education; and marriage regulations. Doing so was contentious. The Liberal fantasy of emancipation had anticipated the blurring of minority-majority differences, an assumption the principal Jewish emancipationists, who were also the community's original MPs, did much to facilitate. Men like Salomons, L. de Rothschild and Francis Goldsmid had desired

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[83] *JC*, 24 June 1870. p.9.
[84] *Hansard*, May-Aug. 1870, cci-iii, and Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 148/2 Papers of P. Goldberg, United Synagogue: Official Documents and Reports.

complete equalisation before the law and sought to ensure that no feature of Jewish life impinged upon English ones. To this end they were willing to sacrifice aspects of religious particularity, accepting, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the loss of rabbinical control over divorce brought about by the 1857 Matrimonial Causes Act.[85]

This remained the official attitude after emancipation; the *JC* declared in 1865: 'As a religious body we require nothing from the government.'[86] But underneath there had been a subtle shift in opinion. The above assertion was followed by a revealing sentence that hints at the change: 'Let by all means the Church and Rome contend for supremacy; let Dissent wrangle with her equality; the Synagogue just wants to be left alone.'[87] Not only does this establish Anglo-Jewry as a specific polity, it admits that, as such, the community had political requirements, namely non-interference in its religion. This view crystallised in the early 1870s when Gladstone's first ministry sought to implement a programme of overdue domestic reform. This encompassed a raft of issues from local government to Irish Church disestablishment but many, such as the inauguration of a national education system, promoted collectivist measures, thereby afflicting Jews with a host of regulations highlighting their peculiarity.[88] By 1874 the *JC* had become more truculent, calling for 'jealous vigilance' least the legislature unintentionally prove prejudicial to Jews' sacred interests as an 'exceptional people'.[89] Jewish MPs, understanding their special representative role, were prepared to provide it. Over the period they undertook action

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[85] I. Finestein. 'The Jews and the English Marriage Law during the Emancipation', in Idem., *Jewish Society in Victorian England* (London 1993) pp.55 & 67-8.
[86] *JC*, 28 July 1865. p.4.
[87] Ibid., p.4.
[88] D. Cesarani. 'British Jews', in R. Liedtke and S. Wendehorst, (ed.), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Manchester 1999) p.49.
[89] *JC*, 06 Feb. 1874, p.753.

ranging from verbal protest, delivering petitions, proposing amendments and introducing Bills to protect Jewish interests.

Remarkably, this was done initially by MPs who had, pre-emancipation, advocated strict equality. Salomons, once the leading protagonist against Jewish separatism, was by 1871 introducing a Bill designed solely to exempt Jews from general legislation. His Workshop Regulation Act Amendment would affect, he replied to a question, very few non-Jews; it '...was only intended to assist the poorest class of Jewish employers and Jewish workmen who keep their Sabbath.'[90] The community had been pushing for such a provision since the passage of the 1867 Factory and Workshops Acts, which, prohibiting the employment of women and children on the Christian 'man-made' Sabbath, disadvantaged many Jews, who observing their own day of rest on Saturday, were perforce limited to a five-day working week.[91] The *JC* had long castigated this arrangement and it praised Salomons' effort as '...the first endeavour made by a Member of Parliament of the Jewish faith to obtain from the legislature the mitigation of a hardship affecting the Jewish industrial classes.'[92] It was not to be the last; Jewish MPs continued to press similar claims throughout the entire period. Post-emancipation, Jews felt justified in protesting if national legislation compromised their religion, even though this meant perpetuating a level of exceptionalism.

This was a significant departure. Jews seeking special privileges, to have their otherness protected by the law, was a considerable reassessment of their presence in

[90] *Hansard*, 17 Mar. 1871, ccv, p.174.
[91] *JC*, 03 June 1870, p.9.
[92] *JC*, 19 May 1871, p.6.

society. The dynamic of pre-emancipation acculturation was tempered: there were obviously limits to assimilation. It might even be suggested that the community sought to reverse this trend, for their desire to maintain a certain speciality was not limited to contemporary legislation but extended retrospectively to correct measures existing prior to emancipation. The most striking example of this was the *JC*'s fervent and long-maintained agitation in favour of passing a Marriage to a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. Such Bills – a constant feature of Parliamentary business throughout this period, being considered every two-three years, if not more frequently – were designed to legalise unions between a widower and his sister-in-law that had been officially outlawed by the 1835 Marriage Act. This conjugal prohibition, based upon Anglican interpretations of Scripture, was perfectly permissible according to Jewish law and was not uncommonly practiced in communities.[93] The *JC* first protested the stricture in 1849; by the late 1860s complaints against it had become a regular feature of editorials.[94] The paper's initial arguments were based upon religious grounds: 'The only safe basis in this matter is not to go beyond scripture, precisely as the rabbis have done'.[95] But these gave way to less moderate reasoning as successive attempts at relief were denied: 'We need not here insist on the great advantages that would accrue to social happiness and public morality by a repeal of what we must characterise without affectation or exaggeration as a hideous law.'[96]

Jewish objections were not isolated but supplemented a considerable agitation led by nonconformists. So widespread was the demand for reform, in fact, that by the early 1870s the Liberal party had come to endorse it and Bills seeking to enact change

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[93] Finestein. 'The Jews' pp.58-9.
[94] *JC*, 25 May 1849, pp.265-6.
[95] *JC*, 09 Mar. 1866, p.4.
[96] *JC* 24 Nov. 1871, p.9.

routinely passed the Commons.[97] The *JC* was happy to associate the community's cause with that of other protesters but made no mistake in asserting that its sole interest lay in the restoration of Jewish particularity: 'We...contend that whatever else may be done, an exception should be made in favour of the Jews.'[98] To this end, it urged Jewish MPs to push the issue in the House, trusting that no 'false delicacy' would inhibit them.[99] Most MPs did vote in favour of the various Bills attempting legalisation; Jessel also presented the House with a petition from Jewish ministers but they were not moved to do more and Simon alone spoke in favour of the issue.[100] Moreover, his arguments were general; whilst they utilised Jewish examples to prove that the law had no detrimental moral impact, they were pitched in support of comprehensive relief rather than merely Jewish exemption. 'He protested against the authority of an ecclesiastical law which at least one-half of the people of this country did not recognise.'[101] After this Bill failed Simon never spoke on the subject again. The MPs were less willing than the *JC* to construct a legal enclave; in a more responsible position, they were less sanguine about their Jewishness and far more timid in its expression. They would have noted John Bright's comparison of the emotion driving Parliamentary opposition to any change with the sentimentality that had denied Jews admission to Parliament.[102] Perhaps more of a concern would have been the continuous resistance espoused by *The Times*, which, eschewing theological exegesis, characterised the movement as a destabilising minority: 'In short, we are convinced the country, on the whole, is perfectly satisfied with the existing law, and

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[97] *The Times*, 16 Feb. 1871, p.9.
[98] *JC*, 26 Feb. 1869, p.4.
[99] Ibid., p.4.
[100] *JC*, 15 Mar. 1872, p.9. and *Hansard*, 21 Feb 1872, ccix, p.846 and 17 Feb 1875, ccxxii, p.467.
[101] *Hansard*, 17 Feb 1875, ccxxii, p.468. Realistically, of course, by the late 1860s, with Bills regularly passing the Commons but consistently defeated in the Lords, there was little Jewish MPs could do to further its realisation. Their vocal support might have added further moral pressure though, and would certainly have done much to placate communal opinion.
[102] *Hansard*, 21 Apr. 1869, cxcv, p.1313.

we strongly deprecate an agitation which...can only serve to unsettle the minds of persons with respect to one of the most fundamental conditions of social order.'[103] In this atmosphere Jewish MPs preferred to downplay the specificity of their requests, to approach the issue as one of general principle, identifying with other protagonists and in effect, disguise the appeal they were making.[104] Evidently, in politics, Jewry's post-emancipation existence as a special interest group was to be circumscribed.

It was also to come at a price. Representing Jewry incurred responsibilities as well as opportunities. Viewed as communal paragons, Jewish MPs had to be ultra-careful of the image they presented but beyond this the safeguarding of Christian feeling was a particular priority. Reaction to Jewish emancipation had centred on the fear that it would damage the inter-relation of Christianity, the nation and political authority. [105] The burden of proof lay upon Jewish MPs. The community had no desire to be catalysts for a transformation in the political order, to be symbols of religious indifference and it was understood that any possibly de-Christianising implications were to be avoided.[106] The necessity for this was apparent early on in the period. In March 1860, debating the Religious Worship Bill, Lord Robert Cecil claimed that due to the presence of Jews '...there was no longer any community between the Christian religion and the House of Commons...' which consequently, had no right to discuss Christianity or quote from the Bible.[107] Francis Goldsmid was quick to refute him, politely upbraiding Cecil for not comprehending how it was

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[103] *The Times*, 03 May 1866, p.10.
[104] This was a tactic often utilised by Jewish MPs when seeking exceptional measures. One much-employed tool of which was the use of Gentile support: Salomons' Workshop Bill had been co-brought by three non-Jewish MPs.
[105] Feldman, *Englishmen* pp.35-6 & 41-2.
[106] I. Finestein. 'Post-Emancipation Jewry: The Anglo-Jewish Experience', in Idem., *Jewish Society* p.170.
[107] *Hansard*, 14 Mar. 1860, clvii, p.520.

possible for '...a member of the Jewish persuasion to combine attachment to his own faith with a wish that persons born in the Christian faith should be instructed in the doctrines of that religion.'[108] He continued to claim that, in fact, Jews viewed 'with favour rather than the contrary' measures to increase provision of Christian worship.[109] Despite the somewhat ridiculous position of a Jew arguing in favour of increased Christianisation the community certainly appreciated such actions. In 1865 the *JC* congratulated Jewish MPs on their behaviour, which had shown fears for Christianity to be groundless and their inclusion justified.[110] All this tended to make Jewish MPs hesitant to tackle ecclesiastical politics. On such matters they were expected to act merely as delegates for their constituents, offering no personal opinion.[111]

Naturally, this was impossible. As a religious minority, Jews would be affected by decisions concerning English Christianity and consequently, legislating from this perspective, held distinct positions on these questions. The issue that provoked Jewish opinion most was disestablishment, the ultimate goal of nonconformity's drive for complete religious equality and a perpetual Commons' topic, courtesy of Edward Miall's exertions. Historically, Anglo-Jewry had supported a strong Established Church and continued to do so throughout this era. Although they seldom voted on such measures, Jewish MPs often vocally defended the Church whilst campaigning. The Liberal Jacoby reassured his audience in 1885 that 'there

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[108] Ibid., p.521.
[109] Löwy and Marks, *A Memoir* p.90. Goldsmid referred specifically to incidences of Jewish landlords who '...are quite as anxious as other landlords are...' to establish houses of worship for their Christian tenants.
[110] *JC*, 28 July 1865. p.4.
[111] *JC*, 27 Nov. 1885, p.9.

was no intention to touch a stick or stone of the Church's property.'[112] Jewish Tories, backed by their party line, were more enthusiastic and openly endorsed Establishment. Lionel Cohen begged his audience in 1885 '...to remember that if you adopt this principle of disestablishment, you are in danger of undermining religious feeling and the religious education of children'.[113]

For some in the community such championing of the Church by a Jew was beyond the pale. 'Of all the shams which Conservative Jews propound this is the most hollow and insincere', proclaimed Montagu.[114] The *JW* moaned that not even Lord Salisbury '...has more warmly championed the state-subventioned Christian Church...' than have some Jews.[115] Both Montagu and the paper were puzzled by the stance of some Jewish MPs: 'To the Jew, as to every nonconformist, the very name of an Established Church has an evil sound', should not Jews, as advocates of religious liberty, be 'necessarily hostile' to it, pondered the *JW*?[116] This appeal was out of touch with the post-emancipation drift of Anglo-Jewish identity. Most Jews had perceived emancipation as a finality, unlike their dissenting comrades, who treated it as one step towards total religious equalisation in Britain.[117] After their inclusion, Jews had little taste for promoting spiritual progress and equality; they did not share dissenters' desire for a free competition of religions liberated from state control.[118] Such 'abstract principles' did not excite them. Analysing the situation from their own perspective Jews concluded that in terms of practical toleration, they had nothing to

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[112] *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 12 Nov. 1885, p.4.
[113] *JC*, 30 Oct. 1885, p.8.
[114] *JC*, 06 Nov. 1885, p.7.
[115] *JW*, 27 Nov. 1885, p.5.
[116] *JW*, 27 Nov. 1885, p.5.
[117] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.120.
[118] J. Parry. *Democracy and Religion. Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867-1875* (Cambridge 1986) pp.46 & 451.

gain from disestablishment.[119] The *JC* candidly admitted as much in 1872: 'Jews, as Jews, can have no interest in advocating the dissolution of Church and State, for under the mild rule of the Anglican Communion they enjoy greater freedom than they could possibly expect under the petty tyranny of conflicting schismatics.'[120]

Post-emancipation, Anglo-Jewry was moving away from the nonconformist model. Disestablishment was only one of several issues that highlighted a growing difference between nonconformist and Jewish politics. The Jewish community had, in many ways, been only default dissenters. Naturally excluded due to their minority and non-Christian nature, Jewry logically identified itself with the cause of religious equality in order to end its exclusion. Once equal legal treatment had been granted to their faith many Jews were happy for Christians to demonstrate loyalty to their religion. Jews wished to join rather than challenge the existing order; their connection to dissent had been more situational than ideational. In the immediate post-emancipation decades this trend should not be exaggerated. The distancing was gradual and on many political issues of the period Jewry and dissent still occupied the same position, as they did over the 1871 abolition of University Tests. Anglo-Jewry with little university experience was initially, remarkably little activated by this question, which is surprising because it represented the effective completion of their emancipation. Relative indifference gave way across 1868-9 to eager support, as the *JC* launched a belated propaganda campaign in favour, protest meetings were organised and the Deputies distributed petitions to all British congregations.[121] The

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[119] *JC*, 16 Mar. 1877, p.9.
[120] *JC*, 20 Sept. 1872, p.344.
[121] *JC*, 10 July 1868, p.4. and *The Times*, 23 May 1870, p.7.

catalyst for this transformation was the unprecedented achievement of Jewish students at Cambridge:

> That within the last few years persons professing the Jewish religion have respectively attained the rank of Senior, Second and Fifth Wrangler, and that they have all been deprived of their chances of obtaining Fellowships by reason alone of their conscientious objection to subscribe to the liturgy of the Church of England.[122]

The Tests had become a tangible indignity to the community rather than a theoretical injustice and Jewry's enthusiasm for abrogation had altered accordingly.

By this time though, repeal had been a staple of nonconformity's legislative aspirations for years and prominent Liberals had long advocated it in the House, where a favourable majority had been obtained as early as 1867.[123] This of itself does not suggest any great dissimilarity with nonconformity; both were going in the same direction, albeit at different speeds. Jewish Members were, however, decisively to re-affirm their association with dissenters and their core political principle of religious equality in a vexed vote over an amendment to the Bill designed to remove the exclusivity of clerical fellowships. Highly controversial, this amendment sharply divided opinion in the House. The overwhelming majority of nonconformists were favourable and *The Times* was similarly disposed: 'It is evident that the removal of this restriction is the logical and necessary accompaniment to the Bill, and that without it the reform must necessarily be incomplete...'[124] Gladstone and the government were opposed, being desirous of sending the Lords exactly the same Bill they had rejected in 1870 in the belief that this would ease its passage. The measure

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[122] *JC*, 20 May 1870, p.10. The success of Numa Hartog, who became Senior Wrangler in 1869, was particularly responsible for this enthusiasm.

[123] I. Finestein. 'Anglo-Jewish Attitudes to Jewish Day-School Education, 1850-1950', in Idem., *Scenes and Personalities in Anglo-Jewry, 1800-2000* (London 2002) pp.120-1.

[124] *The Times*, 21 Feb. 1871, p.7.

was rejected by the narrowest of margins: '...the Government had to encounter a Division which was little better than a defeat, for it obtained a narrow majority of 22 over its own supporters by the help of the Conservatives.'[125] Five of the six Jewish MPs who voted defied the party line.[126] Solidly backing religious liberty, they demonstrated their continuing empathy with dissent; as Simon chided Gladstone: 'He gave full credit to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government for his desire to give effect to the claims of the Nonconformists; but the Government were mistaken in the course they had adopted.'[127]

In domestic politics Jewish MPs supported measures of both equality and particularity. They did so independently and in opposition, at one point or another, to many of the various power groupings within the Liberal party. A distinctive Jewish political standpoint was emerging and it pursued a compromise agenda. Unable, it would seem, to position itself within existing political definitions Anglo-Jewry was attempting to carve out its own niche. This development was most succinctly demonstrated by the community's reaction to and MPs' reception of the 1870 Elementary Education Act. This, unlike University Tests abrogation, was a measure in which Jewry had long been interested. Celebrating the historic connection between Jews and learning, the *JC* opened its list of recommendations in an 1868 leader entitled 'A Programme for the New Ministry' with: 'Before all things, we look for some comprehensive measure for the promotion of education.'[128] The *JC* had lobbied

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[125] Ibid., p.7.

[126] *Hansard*, 20 Feb. 1871, cciv, pp.511-2. Francis Goldsmid was the exception and his reasons were technical rather than idealistic: '...he was convinced that the success of the amendment would be fatal to the Bill, he thought that, though abstractedly favourable to the amendment, he was acting quite consistently...in voting against it.' Jessel and Mayer de Rothschild did not vote.

[127] Ibid., p.511.

[128] *JC*, 18 Dec. 1868, p.4.

hard in favour of religious education – deriding the secularist camp as both misguided and a specific danger to their minority faith – whilst being careful to protest the need for protection of Jewish specificity. It was a strongly partisan position:

> ...the position of the Jew utterly differs from that of every Christian denomination in educational matters. ...What have the Jews in common with a Nonconformist? The Nonconformist system of theology does not broadly differ from the Anglican system. But the Jewish system of theology differs widely from every Christian system.[129]

Such fears of educational assimilation were alleviated by the Act's 'conscience clauses', which had been carefully monitored by the Board of Deputies in tandem with Jewish MPs.[130] Simon, even negotiated his own amendment through committee, guaranteeing that the Act would not '...require any child to attend school on any day or occasion set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs.'[131] Once such conditions were in place Jews were happy with a law that instituted the nationwide education for which they had been agitating. Opening a school in Aylesbury some years later, Nathaniel de Rothschild was fulsome in his evaluation, praising it as '...one of the greatest measures which had ever been passed by any government...'[132]

The majority of nonconformists were less enraptured. Severely exercised by aspects of the Act they believed infringed religious equality, notably its provision of increased funding for denominational schools and Clause 25, which permitted poor

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[129] *JC*, 15 Apr. 1870, p.7.

[130] Finestein, 'Attitudes', pp.60-1. These clauses were specifically included in the Bill during committee in order to safeguard religious liberty. The most significant sections were: 14(2), which prohibited any form of denominational teaching and 7(2) that allowed children to be withdrawn on conscientious ground from even this, which was especially useful to Jews as instruction was still Christian based.

[131] *Hansard*, 11 July 1870, cciii, p.59.

[132] *The Times*, 17 Jan. 1873, p.7.

children to attend Church schools at ratepayers' expense, they agitated to redress these throughout the 1870s. Jews were not similarly motivated. The Act's balance between general application with particular reservations perfectly suited their needs as a minority, providing increased revenue for Jewish schools but also safeguarding their ability to attend board schools, thus furthering social integration but without endangering their consciences. Clause 25 did elicit some activity. Several Jewish MPs pledged to support its revision in order to pacify their dissenting constituents. F. Goldsmid made this a central point of his 1874 election address in Reading:

> Of the many valuable laws passed by the present Parliament, we believe that none will be attended with more beneficent results than the Education Act. We are sensible, however, of the strong objection which nonconformists entertain to the 25th clause...and we think that the time has arrived when the legislature should repeal this clause, and thus remove the main impediment of the harmonious working of the measure.[133]

Others were prominent in upholding the provision. Isaac, who believed his return for Nottingham was due largely to advocacy of the clause, orchestrated an impassioned opposition to the 1874 Elementary Education Act Amendment Bill, which sought to remove the 25th clause from the original statute: 'I can perceive that a blow at the 25th clause would be a national calamity.'[134] His amendment that the Bill's second reading be put off three months was carried. Both of these politicians were principally fighting battles for their constituents, however. Anglo-Jewry, despite the occasional grumbling from the *JC* about a 'violation of conscience', was on the whole not bothered by clause 25.[135] Given the community's overall satisfaction with the Act, they were, unlike nonconformists, willing to overlook such minor infringements of principle.

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[133] *Reading Mercury*, 31 Jan. 1874, p.3.
[134] *Hansard*, 10 June 1874, ccxix, p.1320.
[135] *JC*, 25 Aug. 1876, p.328.

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On controversial issues of legislation that had no direct impact upon the community, Jewish MPs seemed to have maintained a certain reserve and been largely inactive. When circumstances pressed for decisions these tended to be made with reference to party allegiance. This pattern of behaviour was employed in regard to measures of electoral reform. Few spoke upon these over the period; those that did, often restricting their comments to matters of legal technicality. There was perhaps, a sense that Jewish politicians were not yet experienced enough to participate or that on such contentious topics it was best to practice a dignified silence. It is also likely that few were terribly excited by them. Salomons and Francis Goldsmid made several brief gestures of support in the early 1860s, asserting that a suffrage increase was fair, '...founded as it would be upon the increased education and intelligence of the working classes...'[136] Lionel de Rothschild, according to Sir Robert Lowe, inclined more towards opposition but not strongly enough to prevent him supporting revision; 'I have no doubt that you do not want a Reform Bill at all and that you think that a change in the direction proposed will not benefit the country, and yet I fully expect to see you voting for it.'[137] Montagu, in the 1880s, was a known supporter of manhood suffrage.[138] Aside from these examples no Jewish MP took a particular interest in electoral reform. Most were though, like Rothschild, prepared to vote for it and at times their support was crucial in furthering change. The second reading of the Representation of the People Bill, April 1866, passed by a majority of five, and all six

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[136] *Hansard*, 08 May 1865, clxxviii, p.1660.
[137] Rothschild Archive, 000/848, Papers of Lionel de Rothschild, Letter to Lionel from Sir Robert Lowe, 03 Feb. 1866.
[138] *Who's Who*, ii, p.253.

Jewish members had voted in favour.[139] This did not necessarily represent blanket Jewish support for democratic ideals but seems to have been largely a consequence of their party politics. Francis Goldsmid was highly critical of the 1867 Reform Act and its Tory progenitors.[140] De Worms voted against the second reading of the 1884 Reform Act, whilst three Liberal Jewish members supported it.[141]

The increasing democratisation of the period occasioned an immense change in British politics and Jewish MPs were, in spite of their official inertia, unavoidably involved in this as politicians. A well-established conception of the political nation was being overhauled as participation became popularised, the importance of public rhetoric grew and the notion of governments requiring a popular mandate developed.[142] British politicians reacted differently as the system altered around them. Gladstone and an increasingly Radical section of the Liberal party embraced the new situation; others preferred to retain older theories of government as being independent of public pressure, disinterestedly ruling for the common good; many unconsciously adopted a mixture of the two. Jewish members displayed similar behaviour, exhibiting a range of conceptions depending upon their English values and Jewish experiences. Discussion was largely intra-Liberal though; Tory Jews do not seem to have commented much. Partly, no doubt, as Conservative politicians had less of a need to adopt imaginative electioneering concepts, which risked alienating their traditional supporters, for whom orthodox methods were perfectly adequate.[143] De Worms did adopt the innovative tactic at Greenwich of printing a pamphlet

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[139] *Hansard*, 27 Apr. 1866, clxxxiii, pp.152-6.
[140] *Hansard*, 25 Mar. 1867, clxxxvi, p.525.
[141] *Hansard*, 07 Nov. 1884, ccxciii, pp.1328-32.
[142] M. Bentley, *Politics Without Democracy 1815-1914. Perception and Preoccupation in British Governments. Second Edition* (Oxford 1996) pp.137-9.
[143] H. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management. Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (London 1959) pp.207-8.

containing three of his election speeches and forwarding a copy to every elector in the borough. But he coupled this with denunciations of Gladstone as an 'irresponsible demagogue', employing 'flowers of rhetoric' in contrast to solid Conservative action.[144]

Many of the original Jewish MPs held what might be termed Whiggish attitudes concerning the political order. Believing government responsible for improving the people they thought it crucial that any reform not lead to '...the property and intelligence of the constituencies being swamped by the humbler voters now being admitted.'[145] Desire to maintain political power and avoid dissent in a more democratic state were seen as the necessary guarantees that ensured the upper classes fulfilled their obligations. It was a somewhat paternalist approach to ruling, the classic Jewish exponents of which were the Rothschilds. With their disinterest in Parliamentary activity, preferment of behind-the-scenes decisions but concern for the people's welfare, if not opinions, the family clearly possessed quite a traditional idea of governing. Lionel once even advised Disraeli to ignore public opinion, which he characterised as volatile and fickle.[146] Mayer, as did many of the 'Whig Jews', repeatedly trumpeted the impartiality of his candidacy:

> I need scarcely say that my position renders me totally independent of any Government; and that while I am not insensible to the proper ties of party, I have been guided in my political conduct solely by considerations of the public interest, without fear of, or favour to, any administration.[147]

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[144] *Home and Foreign Policy of the Conservative Government. Three Speeches Delivered by Baron Henry de Worms to the Electors of Greenwich* (London 1880) pp.52 & 65.

[145] *Hansard*, 13 April 1866, clxxxii, pp.1277-8. The quote was Francis Goldsmid's.

[146] Bodleian Library, Hughendon Papers, 141/3, Letter from Lionel to Disraeli, 08 Sept. 1876 and 14 Sept. 1876.

[147] Rothschild Archive, 000/235, Report of Mayer's Hythe election address; n.d. (c.1868)

The family were not ignorant however, of their representative responsibilities and seemed to appreciate their constituents' opinions. Mayer invested considerable effort in cultivating these, as he described to his brothers:

> ...I am obliged to go around & see nearly all the voters as I was told an old farmer who till now was Liberal & commands some votes, was on the point of turning because I had not yet called upon him. I still find myself the popular candidate, especially among the sailors & fishermen, with the latter in consequence of my speech...[148]

Rothschild perceptions adapted slightly as time progressed and the British context absorbed more democratic notions. Ferdinand was by 1885, describing the 'force of popular opinion' as a positive input.[149] They remained essentially Whig though, as Ferdinand reveals in a letter of censure to Dilke:

> ...I consider it unworthy of...yourself to court popularity with the masses by advocating such...measures as the abolition of the game laws for instance and stimulating an unhealthy desire for social and pecuniary equality the...results of which have been only too well illustrated in France, instead of governing the people on broad principles and leading them with wider issues.[150]

Not all Liberal Jewish MPs were so hostile to the new, popular style of politics. Simon was an early adherent; his political idea invested the people with responsibility: '...when they had a representative government and a system by which their public policy was regulated upon true and representative questions, then it was the nation which was to blame if their representatives went wrong...'[151] In Simon's vision popular opinion was to inform politicians' actions. It was a very Gladstonian conception that was shared by several other Jews inhabiting the Radical side of

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[148] Rothschild Archive, XI/109/95, Sundry Private Correspondence, Letter from Mayer to his brothers and nephews, 22 Oct. 1868.
[149] British Library, Add. Ms 58791 f.18, Papers of T.H.S. Escott, Letter from Ferdinand to Escott, 1885.
[150] British Library, Add. MS 43919 f.89, Papers of Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Letter from Ferdinand to Dilke, 1885.
[151] *The Times*, 18 Oct. 1871, p.6.

British politics. Jacoby premised his support for Home Rule on Irish desires, '...democracy should say that justice and equal rights with their fellow subjects should be granted to Ireland.'[152] Montagu, who almost hero-worshipped Gladstone, insisted that Britain be completely democratised to promote social reform.[153] All these MPs had entered Parliament after the second Reform Act and were generally of a lower socio-economic status than many of the Jewish Whigs. This, alongside their Radicalism, probably accounts for their more democratic understanding of the British political system. But Jewish experience, it seems, did exercise at least a small, complementary part in this. Simon and Jacoby were not members of the Cousinhood and whilst they participated in communal politics, they were never able to attain the highest offices. The quasi-oligarchic Anglo-Jewish system was highly restrictive; directed by a plutocratic elite, it was not very receptive to opinion, despite a growing restlessness for more representation at the grass roots.[154] The potentially frustrating experience of operating within this establishment likely inclined these MPs further toward democratic ideals. Montagu too, despite being a member of the elite, was exasperated with the narrowness of communal institutions. A *novi homine*, he found it harder to gain influence or implement reform and was eventually forced to create a new institution to facilitate his desire of providing immigrant Jews with communal representation.[155] In contrast, many of the Whiggish MPs, Salomons, the Rothschilds, the Goldsmids, were stalwarts of the governing Cousinhood and had, with their extended families, been running the community on a basis of *noblesse oblige* for decades. This approach echoed in their national politics.

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[152] *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 23 June 1886, p.3.
[153] Montagu. *Samuel* p.68. and Gutwein, *Divided* p.143.
[154] I. Finestein, 'Arthur Cohen QC, 1829-1914', in Idem., *Jewish Society* p.315.
[155] Gutwein, *Divided* p.125.

The overwhelming majority of Jewish politicians associated themselves with the Liberal party. Of the eighteen MPs, only four sat for the Conservatives, and the presence of these in Parliament was heavily weighted toward the end of the period. Saul Isaac was the first in 1874, ending sixteen years of solely Liberal Jewish representation. Isaac lost his seat in 1880 and de Worms replaced him as the sole representative of Jewish Conservatism. Not until 1885, twenty-seven years after a Jew first sat in the Commons, did the number of Jewish Tories rise beyond one, de Worms being joined by L. Cohen and Isaacs. Jewish MPs' political allegiance was dominated by adherence to the Liberals. This was not surprising. The Liberal party was both more electorally successful during this era and more representative of interest groups containing Jews, such as nonconformist religion and non-landed money. Jews' interests could be identified with Liberal interests and it was rational for the majority to support the party. This Jewish attachment was though, more complex than logical interest identification. For some it was also, in part, based upon a deeply emotional and peculiarly Jewish reasoning. As the *JC* explained

> ...Liberalism is not forced upon them from without...This Liberalism springs from within. It is not only a product of a feeling of gratitude for the triumph which the Liberal party has achieved for the Jewish cause, but also the firm conviction that it is the vital principle upon which rests the Revelation of Sinai and the indispensable condition of all progress.[156]

There was a belief, particularly among the more radical members, in the essential mutuality of Jewish and Liberal ideals, that the creeds were two sides of the same coin. Montagu, for instance, always justified his politics with reference to Biblical authority.[157] For these Jews, being Jewish gave them a special relationship to the

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[156] *JC*, 15 Feb. 1867. p.4.
[157] Montagu, *Samuel* p.79.

Liberal party; the most obvious manifestation of which was the community's conception of political gratitude.

The issue of emancipation had in reality blurred and transcended formal political lines but 'at the time it was fashionable to see it as a clash...between the forces of reaction embodied in the Tory party and the forces of Enlightenment represented by the Radicals, Whigs and Liberals.'[158] This simplification entered into popular Jewish conscience. Aggrieved by what it perceived as bigoted Tory opposition, the community was genuinely appreciative of Liberal efforts for its freedom and felt indebted to the party. Supporting the Liberals in these circumstances became a reciprocal Jewish duty. An 1865 *JC* correspondent was 'truly sorry' to have discovered members of Northampton Jewry voting Tory. 'It is true that every elector has a just right to record his votes as he thinks best; but I feel no Jew ought to be so impolitic, nay, so ungrateful...'[159] This almost quid pro quo understanding of their political affiliation bound Jews to the Liberal party in an obligatory relationship. These 'obligations' continued to be touted by some Jewish MPs throughout the period – in 1885, nearly three decades after emancipation, Montagu was still lamenting Conservative Jews' endeavours to '...divert the gratitude of the Jews from the great party which has given them religious liberty...'[160] So convinced was Montagu of Liberal-Jewish affinity that he sought, with Jewish Toryism in the capital on the increase, to modernise the age-worn commitment, rather tendentiously globalising its application and implications: '...however much his friends might forget the services

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[158] Alderman, *Jewish* p.17.
[159] *JC*, 11 Aug. 1865. p.5.
[160] *JC*, 06 Nov. 1885. p.7.

rendered to them by the Liberal party in this country' he lectured a meeting in Christ-Church school, Spitalfields

> they must not forget what the Liberal party was doing for the Jews in Germany, Russia, Poland and Romania...against the Conservative element, which was opposing them. It would be, he thought, little less than a disgrace for it to go forth to all the world that in Whitechapel, where the Jewish vote was the strongest, the Jews had handed over their allegiance from the Liberal to the Conservative party. Sufficient reason would then be given for Prince Bismarck and Ignatieff to ask the Liberal leaders of what use it was to defend the Jewish people, who, as soon as they received emancipation...left the Liberal party in the lurch.[161]

Montagu's efforts were increasingly in vain. The 1886 general election witnessed, for the first time, the virtually even spread of Jewish MPs across the political spectrum. A delighted *JC* welcomed this indication of acculturation: '...the Anglo-Jewish community, judged by its representatives may be fairly designated the microcosm of English political opinion.' [162] There had been a fundamental shift in Jewish political allegiance; the 'umbilical cord' binding the community to Liberalism had been cut and it was now 'eminently respectable' to be a Conservative Jew. [163] What had occasioned this change? The community's newspapers had been preaching the necessity of political neutrality since the late 1860s. In contrast to its earlier rhetoric the *JC* began repeatedly asserting Jewish independence at election times: '...every Jew should conscientiously follow his own convictions in the matter, and protest stoutly against every attempt to identify Judaism with any political party.'[164] The *JW* was also eager to demonstrate this. It pointed out in 1885, for instance, that in

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[161] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 117, Papers of Lord Swaythling, Scrapbook of Press Cuttings, p.105.

[162] *JC*, 23 July 1886. p.9. The breakdown the *JC* offered was: Two Tory; three Liberal; and two Unionist. There were in fact nine Jews elected in 1886, not seven. The *JC*'s oversight was probably a result of reporting before the conclusion of the election process. The final political spread of Jewish MPs was: Three Conservative; four Liberal; and two Unionist.

[163] Alderman, *Jewish* pp.41-2.

[164] *JC*, 04 Dec. 1868, p.4. and 20 Nov. 1868, p.5. This shift in the *JC*'s position was occasioned by a change of ownership; the paper was purchased by several communal notables who replaced the Bohemian born and quite outspokenly Jewish editor Abraham Benisch, with the English and more acculturated Michael Henry.

two constituencies rival Jewish candidates opposed each other.[165] The idea (and ideal) of projecting this official image of neutrality, despite the reality of a peculiar inclination towards Liberalism, was to 'sink the Jew in the Englishmen', which, as Simon – one of the more bullish Liberals – wrote to *The Times*, would serve as a 'striking example of the aptitude of Jews for assimilation with the nations.' [166] It reflected a desire, perhaps as the novelty of participation waned and issues concerning their inclusion were forgotten, to demonstrate that politically, Jews were indistinct from other Englishmen. Alderman distinguishes this assimilative urge as the essential cause of the transformation, claiming that Jews' distancing from Liberalism '...was a conscious and deliberate act, and was seen by them as a necessary demonstration of political maturity and...of social integration and acceptance'.[167] In other words, the move toward a variegated communal politicisation was deliberately undertaken in a desire to be more English. This seems unlikely. The action was certainly a conscious one and considerations of acculturation were important but it would appear that the fundamental factors were derived from Jewish reasoning.

Most influential was the Bulgarian agitation of 1876 and subsequent Eastern Question of 1877-8. An episode that deeply divided Britain, the crisis was sparked by Turkish massacres of Bulgarian Christians during the 1875-6 pacification of their rebellious Balkan territories. When reports of these reached Britain outrage erupted and Gladstone returned from retirement to lead a nationwide agitation, intent on

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[165] *JW*, 20 Nov. 1885, p.6. These were Whitechapel where Montagu faced alderman Cowan (Tory) and Tower Hamlets where Isaacs competed against A. Henriques (Liberal).
[166] *JC*, 04 Dec. 1885. p.4. and *The Times*, 22 Oct. 1879, p.8.
[167] Alderman, *Jewish* p.42.

dismantling the Ottoman Empire and liberating the Eastern Christians.[168] The Jewish community did not share this perspective, preferring the government's policy of upholding Porte rule to counter Russian influence in the region. Piqued at this, many Liberals, including Gladstone – never a great friend of Jewry – associated themselves with anti-Jewish criticism and questioned the community's Englishness. This deeply wounded Jewry. The *JC*, 'in the face of these persistent attacks', reprimanded the Liberals for appealing to the 'bigotry' of England in a movement of 'extravagances'.[169] 'Mr. Gladstone is undoubtedly, free from all these reproaches. But the party which under the shield of his great name fumes, frets, and spouts...cannot be absolved from this grave censure.'[170] Even the most devout of Liberal Jewish MPs felt compelled to protest: 'Mr. Gladstone's high-mindedness and generous nature we all know; but...he has been grievously misinformed and mislead with regard to the Jews as a body upon the Eastern question.' 'Never', admitted Simon, 'was the temptation to throw aside the ties of party greater...'[171]

A longer-term concern though, was the developmental dynamic within sections of Liberal opinion of which the agitation was symptomatic and which Jews, as Jews, found alienating. After the 1867 Reform Act, Liberal politics shifted to encompass a more populist base. An enlarged nonconformist presence pushed for a re-moralisation of politics and the party agenda was increasingly aimed at addressing long-term issues of social and religious inequality. This resulted, as mentioned, in

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[168] Feldman, *Englishmen* pp.97-8.
[169] *JC*, 05 Oct. 1877, p.9.
[170] *JC*, 20 Oct. 1876, p.451
[171] *The Times*, 18 Oct. 1879, p.8. The quote is taken from a letter Simon wrote to *The Times* in an attempt to heal the breach between Jewry and the Liberals; a task he devoted himself to for the rest of his political career. Simon was one of the few Jewish MPs to stick with Gladstone throughout the Eastern episode, that he admitted the Liberal leader was at fault was telling indeed.

measures that were, at best, ambivalent towards Jewish interests and which provoked the community and its MPs to assert Jewish exceptionalism. This did not endear Liberal interventionism to the community. 'We do not believe in too much government of any sort; that country is the most free and the most happy which is the least governed...' moaned the *JC* in 1870.[172] Increasingly alienated from nonconformist opinion and fearing the blurring of differences this trend entailed, many Jews began to doubt '...whether the Liberal party of the day is really the heir of the Whigs of the past.'[173] Anglo-Jewry was far from alone in this opinion and although vocalised through a specifically Jewish argumentation, the community's distancing from the Liberal party echoed and was informed by the general English trend of the period. This witnessed a shift in the allegiance of the propertied middle classes, for a variety of reasons – disillusionment with the Liberals in power, the unsettling growth of a mass democratic system, increasing Liberal radicalism, and several perceived threats to property – from Liberalism to Conservatism.[174]

This re-alignment was not only a product of Liberal alienation but derived also from a growing regard for Tory politics. Aside from pursuing what was construed as a 'pro-Jewish' line during the Eastern Question, Conservatism had been refashioned over the 1870s and imbued by Disraeli with a popular appeal. Most famously in speeches at Manchester and Crystal Palace in 1872, Disraeli located nationalist sentiment in Britain's ancient institutions, promoted the need for social reform and lauded the country's imperial achievements, investing Conservatism with

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[172] *JC*, 18 Mar. 1870, p.8.
[173] *JC*, 27 Nov. 1885, p.9.
[174] P. Smith, *Disraelian Conservatism and Social Reform* (London 1967) pp.323-4.

an appeal that was both national and inclusive.[175] The *JC* was impressed: 'The Conservative Government, although circumstances did not permit it fully to carry them out, had beneficial schemes and bright promise for the benefit of our race.'[176] Disraeli himself was notable for first stimulating Jewish interest in the Tories, as is illustrated well by the development of his relationship with the Rothschild MPs. Despite advising Lionel upon the Jewish Relief Bills, Disraeli was initially viewed with some suspicion by the family; 'I am not sorry that Dizzy has made mistakes, it is the natural consequence of hypocrisy; and no party can hope to present a bold front to the enemy which does not represent some principle...' Nathaniel wrote his parents from Cambridge.[177] As Disraeli proved his political and social ability though, so the Rothschilds warmed to the upstart. He became a regular and popular guest at their houses, charming all members of the family; 'You can have no idea how delightfully agreeable Mr. Disraeli was yesterday; we listened to him with intense admiration...It was a great treat to hear him, and even Mrs. Disraeli's presence was unable to mar the pleasure'[178] The proclivities of Lionel and Nathaniel tended increasingly toward Disraelian rather than Gladstonian politics as the period progressed. A shift reflecting not merely practicalities but a genuine fondness: 'You know my dear Lord Beaconsfield the great affection my brothers and myself have always entertained for you...'[179] Disraeli's protection of Jewish interests during the Bulgarian crisis cemented this closeness. Particularly notable, was the instrumental role he played in

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[175] T. Kebbel, (ed.), *Selected Speeches of the Late Right Hon. The Earl of Beaconsfield* (Two Volumes London 1882) ii, pp.506 & 524-8 and G. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield* (Six Volumes London 1920) v, pp.187-95.

[176] *JC*, 30 Apr. 1880, p.9.

[177] Rothschild Archives, Rothschild Family Correspondence, RFam C/3/90, Letter from Nathaniel to his parents, n.d. and RFam C/4/54, Letter from Lionel to Charlotte, July 1858. See also: 000/848, Papers of Lionel de Rothschild, Letter from Disraeli to Lionel, 26 Dec. 1847.

[178] Rothschild Archives, Rothschild Family Correspondence, RFam C/21, Letter from Charlotte to Leopold, 29 Jan. 1866.

[179] Bodleian Library, Hughenden Papers, 141/3, fols.106-43, Letter from Nathaniel to Disraeli, 30 Dec. 1879.

securing a Jewish equal rights clause in the Treaty of Berlin – that effectively ended the Eastern crisis in July 1878 – following Lionel's written request: 'May I...be allowed to ask your Lordship, that while Her Majesty's representatives advocate religious equality, they may also endeavour to remove those disabilities...under which the Jews in Romania and Servia [*sic*] are suffering.'[180] In the years after this event, Nathaniel was to refer to Disraeli, with only the slightest sense of flattery, as 'the greatest of British statesmen'. [181] Anglo-Jewry's reaction to Disraeli echoed in large-part this Rothschild experience. Impressed by his intimacy with their premier family, gratified by his glorification of the Jewish race and appreciative of his championing of Jewish interests, Anglo-Jewry claimed Disraeli as one of their own: 'Benjamin Disraeli belongs to the Jewish people, despite his baptismal certificate. His talents, his virtues and shortcomings alike, are purely of the Jewish cast.' [182]

Disraeli's appeal to Jewry exceeded the conventionally political. It addressed the very definition of their identity in the post-emancipation world; demonstrating the importance the community still attached to its exceptionality, which it could interpret ethnically, whilst at the same time coveting inclusion as full Englishmen. Disraeli, in both action and example, enabled such duality.

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[180] *JC*, 14 June 1878, p.10. and N. Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild. Volume 2: The World's Banker, 1849-1998* (London 2000) p.306. The Rothschilds' pro-Turkish stance in the Eastern question demonstrates the extent to which their politics were motivated by Jewish concerns and not as Gutwein suggests, based purely upon economic self-interest. The whole incident was generally hard on banks and war with Russia would have been ruinous for the Rothschilds' major stake in Russian bonds. See Gutwein, *Divided* pp.125-8.

[181] Bodleian Library, Hughenden Papers, 141/3 fols.106-43, Letter from Nathaniel to Disraeli, 29 Nov. 1880. This assessment starkly contrasts with Nathaniel's contemporaneous evaluation of the Liberal leader, whom he dubbed: 'that arch-fiend Gladstone', see Letter from Nathaniel to Disraeli, 09 Dec. 1879.

[182] *JC*, 18 Aug. 1876, p.312. Not all Jews were this enthusiastic about Disraeli. Julian Goldsmid for one, criticised him as '...the licensed romancer of a prosaic ministry...', see *Hansard*, 24 Mar 1879, ccxliv, p.1519.

It was these various Jewish-based considerations, operating in tandem with general trends, which broke the Liberal party's monopoly on Jewish affiliation. Jews in the 1880s were able to identify their particular interests with both political parties and Jewishness ceased to be a conclusive factor. The *JC* noted in 1881 that '...most City Jews are Conservative, but we contend that their Judaism has had nothing to do with it.'[183] Reference to English ideals was now essential to determining their allegiance and independent political interests became decisive. Simon and Montagu, for instance, who possessed very different Jewish identities, continued to locate their interests as Jews in the Liberal party because as Englishmen they both held radical views, believing the party to represent liberty and equality. Similarly, L. Cohen and de Worms, Conservatively inclined, appealed to Jews' imperial tendencies and sought to guarantee their interests in stable Tory government.

IV.

International politics and foreign affairs where obviously important to a community like the Jews, whose associations were historically cosmopolitan and supra-national. They could, as evidenced in the last section, have a dramatic impact upon the community's political stance in Britain. Jewish MPs, however, did not often participate in discussion of British foreign policy, though they regarded it as significant. Like most Victorians, English Jews attached great importance to British power in the world.[184] To preserve this they were eager for Britain to possess a strong military capability. Throughout his career Salomons urged the necessity of high

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[183] *JC*, 19 Aug. 1881, p.9.
[184] Finestein, 'Post-Emancipation' pp.168-9.

taxation in order to maintain the naval establishment on a 'large scale'.[185] Simon, motivated by the need to ensure the country's 'great maritime strength', lobbied in 1871 for England's withdrawal from the Declaration of Paris.[186] In these desires Jewish politicians were probably typical of many MPs. Jew and Gentile met on the common ground of their self-righteous belief in England's civilising role in the world.[187] Militarism was justified with reference to Britain's moral advancement and its duty to disseminate progress. As Simon explained: 'British interests meant the interests of humanity; and, England claiming to be at the head of civilisation, was bound in duty to herself and to the cause of civilisation to maintain her power...for the interests of mankind.'[188] Parallel to this support for English advancement, Jewish MPs denounced instances of foreign tyranny and persecution. Besides the activity regarding Jewish prejudice detailed below, the MPs protested a number of causes in the House, such as the 1863 Russian repression of Poland and the unsatisfactory situation of 'semi-despotic' Prussian oppression in the Schleswig-Holstein duchies.[189]

In promoting English power and deprecating less civilised nations, Jewish MPs were not bullish. Whenever possible they advocated non-intervention in foreign states; Britain's military was to be a deterrent only. In the event of a major war, like the American Civil War or Franco-Prussian conflict, most supported a position of neutrality and expressed hopes for a swift end to the conflict, preferably resulting from international mediation.[190] For all their chauvinism Jews were pacific; as Jessel wryly indicated during his 1872 campaign in Dover: 'At present England could boast

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[185] *The Times*, 24 Oct. 1861. p.7.
[186] *Hansard*, 21 Apr. 1871, ccv, pp.1479-82.
[187] Finestein, 'Post-Emancipation' p.169.
[188] *Hansard*, 22 Mar. 1878, ccxxxviii, p.1867.
[189] *Hansard*, 20 July 1863, clxxii, p.1123. and 07 April 1865, clxxviii, pp.1657-8.
[190] *Hansard*, 17 February 1871, cciv, p.414. and *The Times*, 22 Dec. 1864, p.6.

that she was at peace with the whole world, which was a good thing for England to be able to say, as it very seldom happened.'[191]

The rise of a popular and articulate policy of Empire during the 1870-80s was to challenge this Jewish approach to foreign policy. Posing a quandary for all Liberal politicians, imperialism simultaneously appealed through its ability to extend British influence and hence, a superior morality, and appalled due to its encouragement of conflict and oppression. Jews' understanding of Britain's foreign role was ambivalent to imperialism. Consequently, MPs tended to make decisions based upon party lines and as a group, split in their opinions. The few Tory Jews were supportive; especially de Worms, who had promoted the greatness of Empire in contrast to the 'selfish policy' of non-intervention since his first election. Appealing to the sentiments of his Greenwich constituents he extolled the economic benefits of imperialism:

> Free trade or fair trade were nothing as compared to the one great principle which governed every nation, that trade followed the flag. It was not a question of money they spent in taxation to defend the country, but of the money they would have to spend in taxation if they did not defend it.[192]

And, unusually for a Jew, he strongly advocated the aggressive use of Britain's power to maintain its foreign interests: 'I think the example of Zululand will prove most beneficial, because it will show that the grasp of England extends far beyond her own immediate shores. No matter how distant our colonies maybe, still the strong arm of England will protect them.'[193] Endorsement of Empire came too though, from some of the more Whiggish members, notably those good friends of Disraeli, the Rothschilds. Nathaniel always maintained his love of peace but driven by business interests the family had become leading members of the elite of imperial investors,

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[191] *The Times*, 02 Oct. 1872, p.12.
[192] *Kentish Mercury*, 12 Dec. 1884, p.3.
[193] *Home and Foreign of the Conservative Government* p.23.

and as such their role in furthering the British Empire was substantial.[194] Ferdinand was more openly enthusiastic; criticising the lack of support for Empire displayed by his government: '...who have sacrificed if not the interests yet the magic power of the English flag and name for the narrower issue of Parliamentary reform', he claimed the Union Jack should 'flutter in every island of Polynesia', 'on every minaret in the East'.[195] Those MPs who retained a Liberal outlook were critical, however. Julian Goldsmid excoriated Disraeli's ministry on several occasions for its actions in South Africa and Afghanistan, which he claimed were costly, ruinous and dubiously legal.[196] Simon often echoed these efforts and like Goldsmid, was not beyond censuring his own government if they perpetuated imperial policies, as well. His Liberal conscience was most irritated by the annexation of the Transvaal, where he called upon the government to treat Boers leniently '...for they had only fought for the liberties which belonged to them by right.' [197]

These foreign policy assumptions were to largely inform Jewish MPs' consideration of the technically domestic but often proxy imperial issue of the governance of Ireland.[198] With little direct implication for them as a minority, the MPs played no active role in Irish policy and seemed happy to either support measures calculated to promote peace or abstain entirely. The debate on Home Rule however, shattered this consensus. Polarising Parliament, the issue also divided Jewish politicians. Gladstone's characterisation of Home Rule as a measure

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[194] Ferguson, *The House* p.291.

[195] British Library, Add. MS 43913 f.89, Papers of Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Letter from Ferdinand to Dilke, 1885. Ferdinand stressed the metaphorical nature of his comment.

[196] *The Times*, 24 Oct. 1878, p.10. and 13 Nov. 1879 p.10.

[197] *Hansard*, 21 Jan. 1881, cclvii, p.1137. For Goldsmid see *The Times*, 13, 14, and 15 Sept. 1882.

[198] The question of Ireland would have been, of course, classed as a domestic issue for contemporaries, the country being an integral part of the Union at this time. Its inclusion in this chapter is therefore, something of a concession to the work's thematic organisation. Home Rule, was though, the beginning of Ireland's transformation from a 'domestic' issue into a 'foreign' issue within British politics and this to some extent mitigates the choice.

calculated to end coercion and concede the moral right of self-government, struck a chord with many Jewish MPs, who had often preached similar sentiments in regard to foreign policy.[199] Foremost among them was Simon, who had espoused Home Rule since 1873.[200] In his view the present Irish policy, entailing '...the suspension of the liberties of the people...' had failed. Was this debacle to continue indefinitely he questioned; 'Are we to allow our country to play the role of Russia towards Poland?'[201] Several other Jews endorsed this moralised perspective: Jacoby termed Home Rule a 'policy of justice'; Montagu portrayed the issue as one of toleration; and A. Cohen had been calling for some years for Ireland to be governed in accordance with its wants.[202] These men were motivated seemingly, by their shared Radical political outlook; only Montagu utilised Jewish argument in his support.[203] The substantial number of Irish voters in many of their constituencies no doubt though, augmented these convictions. A. Cohen had to overcome Tory opponents in Southwark who lauded their Irish ancestry and printed green-inked posters bearing proclamations such as: 'The past shows that the Conservatives have been truer friends to Ireland than the Liberals, and therefore every Irishman who loves his Church, his children, and his country, should vote for the Conservative candidate.'[204]

Politics also decided the opposition of Tory Jews. L. Cohen, Isaacs and de Worms, all denounced the 'pernicious' and 'separatist' Home Rule policy, which they

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[199] Parry, *Democracy* pp.445-6.
[200] *The Times*, 04 Oct. 1873, p.5.
[201] *Hansard*, 21 May 1886, cccv, pp.1700-1.
[202] For Jacoby see: *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 23 June 1886, p.1; Montagu: *JC*, 02 July 1886, p.9; and Cohen: *The Times*, 13 Dec. 1880, p.10.
[203] *JC*, 02 July 1886, p.9. Montagu reckoned Ireland had peculiar claims upon the gratitude of the Jewish people, for the country was almost the only one in the world not stained by blood-guiltiness towards Jews.
[204] Southwark Local Studies Library, Conservative Election Ephemera, 'To Irishmen of the South Metropolitan Boroughs'; 'Southwark Election. The National Vote'; 'Why I Vote for Mr. Edward Clarke'; and 'Why I Vote for Mr. Andrew Dunn', four posters variously addressed to Irishmen and Catholics, n.d.

believed would be not only ruinous for Ireland but the thin end of the wedge for eventual dissolution of the Empire.[205] De Worms, the avid imperialist, being the most forthright in condemnation: '...Home Rule was a spurious name for the disintegration of the British Empire, which under no circumstances would he sanction or countenance.'[206] A mixture of these reasons compelled two Jewish MPs to become Unionists. Julian Goldsmid and Ferdinand de Rothschild, relatively moderate Liberals, exhibited an ambivalent attitude toward Ireland. Fearful that Home Rule might hand the loyal minority over to a hostile government and concerned for imperial unity they resisted the proposal but wishing to avoid oppression, they were prepared to grant a 'fair and reasonable arrangement' for some self-rule.[207] Such a Unionist compromise was also favoured by the *JW* and Nathaniel (now Lord) de Rothschild. For Nathaniel, opposition to Home Rule, the issue most instrumental in his departure from the Liberals, was predicated largely upon socio-economic factors, notably a concern for property. The City, sharing these concerns, was overwhelmingly Unionist and this probably influenced Ferdinand and Goldsmid's attitudes.[208] There was then, no united Jewish position upon Home Rule. MPs based their decision upon party politics and to a lesser extent economic opinion. This spread them across the political spectrum and after 1886 Irish issues would always separate Jewish MPs along party lines.

In their approach to foreign affairs Jewish politicians pursued ideas complementary to both their English and Jewish beliefs and no friction occurred between the two. They followed views essentially indistinguishable from their

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[205] For de Worms see: *The Times*, 01 Sept., 1886, p.7; Isaacs: *Southwark Standard and South London News*, 19 June 1886, pp.2-3; and Cohen: *Paddington Times*, 19 June 1886, p.5.
[206] *Kentish Mercury*, 27 Mar. 1880, p.3.
[207] *Hansard*, 03 June 1886, cccvi, p.933.
[208] Ferguson, *House* pp.327-8.

Gentile colleagues. One incident in this period did however, set these two determinants in opposition: the aforementioned Eastern Question.[209] The majority of Anglo-Jews favoured Disraeli's policy of maintaining Ottoman control over the Balkans and actively opposed Gladstone's agitation for Christian independence in the area. The community had traditionally been pro-Turk. Using a nation's treatment of Jews as a barometer of civilisation, Jewish MPs had long found Balkan Christians wanting, claiming they possessed a 'taint of semi-barbarism.'[210] A similar conclusion was reached in 1876. Portrayed as brutal, lazy and drunk, Eastern Christians were judged to have always acted against minorities. Jews, noted the *JC*, were better off under Turkish rule and as a result, the community favoured its continuation.[211] In doing so they were obviously acting on Jewish instincts, not English ones. Although Disraelian policy might have been defended as part of a long-standing British effort to sustain Turkish dominion against Russian encroachment, Anglo-Jewry evaluated the situation only from the perspective of their Eastern co-religionists.

> There is, in the first place, a feeling of gratitude which sways our sympathy for Turkey...Things go by comparison, and if we institute a comparison between the woes inflicted on the Jew by Esau, as Christendom was figuratively designated, and those suffered from Ismael, as Mahometanism was called by the rabbis, the latter were found more endurable...Witness Eski-Zaghra, Kazaulik, and other cities in which Bulgarians, the moment they were at liberty to work their will, fell upon their peaceful neighbours the Jews...[212]

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[209] This thesis will not discuss details of the Crisis, which has been covered extensively by other works; see in particular Chapter four of Feldman, *Englishmen* and R. Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation, 1876. Second Edition* (Sussex 1976)

[210] *Hansard*, 29 Mar. 1867, clxxxvi, p.839.

[211] *JC*, 01 Sept. 1876, p.339.

[212] *JC*, 05 Oct. 1877, p.10. Other Jewish reasons probably reinforced this viewpoint. Some Jews had considerable investments in Turkey that would have been endangered if the Empire was dissected; most were generally anti-Russian and would have been naturally suspicious of Christian agitation. See Feldman, *Englishmen* pp.97-8. That this agitation was one of the greatest of all expressions of the 'nonconformist conscience', served only further to distance Jews from their erstwhile affinity with this group. See R. Blake, *The Conservative Party from Peel to Major* (London 1997) p.119.

Only De Worms, not yet an MP, attempted a more comprehensive vindication of his position, actively defending Turkey in lectures and his work *England's Policy in the East*, which went through five editions in 1877.[213] These endeavours helped establish his political reputation. Savaging Russian machinations – he was later to blame them for orchestrating the original massacres – and castigating the opposition for encouraging '...an unnatural alliance between free England and despotic Russia...', de Worms linked Tory policy in the East with the Palmerstonian tradition of defending English self-interest.[214] Referring often to the historical example of the Crimean War, de Worms professed: '...I am one of those who think that the existence of Turkey is a necessity, not *qua* Turkey but *qua* England.'[215] Problematically, this argument and the position of Jews generally, transgressed several of the English ideals they had previously advocated. Jews were defending Turkey, hardly a civilised state by British standards and one obviously prejudiced towards its minorities, through a policy that could well require intervention and conflict. This was an extraordinary prioritising of Jewish sympathy.

Unfortunately for Jewry, on this occasion, it could not be conflated with British concerns. The Bulgarian Agitation had sharply split public opinion and both sides claimed to represent the genuine values of the country.[216] In overwhelmingly backing Disraelian policy, when the population surrounding it was fiercely at variance, Jewry marked itself as different; a development that did not go unnoticed or

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[213] H. de Worms, *England's Policy in the East* (London 1877)
[214] Ibid., pp.45 & 51. and *Home and Foreign Policy of the Conservative Government*, pp.39 & 44.
[215] *Home and Foreign Policy of the Conservative Government*, pp.7 & 13.
[216] Parry, *Democracy* p.432. and R. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question. A Study in Diplomacy and Party Politics* (London 1971) p.236. These divisions even ran through political parties: moderate Liberals being suspicious of the agitation whilst most nonconformists and Anglo-Catholics supported it; the Tory party being split between pro-Turks and men like Derby who held war in greater horror than increased Russian influence.

uncriticised. Many Liberals (correctly, if somewhat pejoratively) ascribed this position to 'Mosaic tendencies', which they located outside the traditions of English morality.[217] Groups that had supported Jewish emancipation – nonconformists, radicals and Liberal intellectuals – now criticised the community as 'unpatriotic and anti-English'.[218] Gladstone himself, in an interview with the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*,

> ...lamented that the Judaic sympathies both within the Jewish community, but still more markedly among Jewish sympathisers, should be on the side of Turkey, which militated against the spread of civilisation, and was unnatural to the Jewish people, who themselves had suffered so much from persecution.[219]

The Jewish community unconvincingly protested its neutrality. The *JC* '...denying the existence of any Jewish policy in contradistinction and opposition to that of the general populations among which the lot of the Jew is cast...'[220] Some MPs did show a genuine empathy with the suffering Bulgarians; Simon presided over a protest meeting and Francis Goldsmid contributed £200 to the relief fund.[221] But bias over Turkey's future was difficult to refute. Goldsmid was prepared '...to risk his seat and to sacrifice all personal considerations of private friendship and party ties...' over the matter.[222] Simon, the one Jew to partake in Commons' debates concerning the crisis, only asked questions regarding Christian outrages against Jews and the guarantee of Jewish rights in any permanent settlement.[223] Even the attempts made by Arthur Cohen to maintain Liberal Jews' loyalty were pitched in confessional rather than national terms.[224] The Eastern Crisis was the starkest illustration of the confusion

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[217] *JC*, 05 July 1878, p.7.
[218] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.94. and *JC*, 05 Oct. 1877, p.9.
[219] *JC*, 03 Nov. 1876, p.486.
[220] *JC*, 05 Oct. 1877, p.9.
[221] *JC*, 29 Sept. 1876, p.402. and 12 Jan. 1877, p.12.
[222] A. Löwy. and D. Marks, *A Memoir of Sir Francis Henry Goldsmid* (London 1879) p.74.
[223] See *Hansard* General Index, 1877 and 1878. Julian Goldsmid did ask four miscellaneous questions in 1878, which were all related to minor details of a possible peace settlement and do not of themselves indicate an active interest or intervention upon the subject.
[224] *The Times*, 02 Feb. 1877, p.6. and 24 Dec. 1879, p.6. Cohen was among the minority of Jews who

remaining over the limits of Jewish definition in the post-emancipation era. The question of their identity, Jews realised, was still an unresolved issue; 'we have yet, completely, to prove to the world that we are integral parts of the state-organisation, and that we stand and fall by it alone, however much we recognise the fact among ourselves.'[225] Too much Jewishness in politics was controversial and could have dangerous repercussions for the Englishness of Anglo-Jewish identity.

The Eastern Crisis was an aberration.[226] Jewish politicians were usually careful to avoid clashes with Christian sensitivities and even more so, the appearance of possessing a supra-national identity. Such considerations had not witnessed Anglo-Jewry though, completely abandon representing the cause of their foreign brethren within British politics. Both before and after the Bulgarian Agitation a small group of Jewish politicians attempted to use their influence as English MPs to assist their co-religionists abroad, notably, to ameliorate cases of persecution. Denouncing foreign antisemitism, updating the state of House intelligence and inquiring of British ambassadorial intentions in disturbed regions, the MPs regularly highlighted international Jews' plight. A task they viewed as beholden upon them not merely as Jews, but as the most privileged of Jews. '...When I contrast the condition of my religious community here' moralised F. Goldsmid

> with their condition in Servia and Roumania [*sic*] – when I remember that we are here not only in the enjoyment of all civil and political rights, but that several of us have the honour of being members of this Assembly and can, in this place, make

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remained loyal to Gladstone during the crisis. More consistent than many in his attitudes, he criticised the Turks as a people incapable of progressive development.

[225] *JC*, 30 Apr. 1880, p.9.

[226] Whilst aberrant at the time, the Eastern Crisis, if the timeline be extended, might be seen as the start of a long-term phenomenon whereby elements in the British left espoused criticism of Jewish identity and actions they believed inconsistent with Britain's needs. The next manifestation of which came with the Boer War, where radicals, most influentially J. A. Hobson, credited the conflict to the interests and machinations of Jewish capitalists, see C. Holmes, *John Bull's Island. Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971* (Basingstoke 1988)

> our voices heard...I cannot, I must own, resist the appeal which has been made to me.[227]

As in the domestic sphere, Gentiles appear to have expected such partisan actions and even, been happy to accommodate them. No Jewish MP was ever abused for this activity. Some of their exertions were actually lauded by other politicians; as Mr. Darby-Griffith complemented Goldsmid: 'No part of the literary efforts of a right hon. Gentleman who held a prominent position in that House was more interesting or more to his credit than the defence he had opened for that race.'[228]

Principally, this was because they operated within the boundaries of acceptable Jewish behaviour. The MPs were aware of the delicate nature of their efforts, which were consequently, tightly self-regulated and very formulaic. Any possible conflict between Jewishness and Englishness was overcome by following a well-established pattern. Appeals were made for a start, not as Jewish MPs but as MPs of the Jewish persuasion. Particular interests were subsumed within the pieties of national ideology: England's responsibility to advance its morality and civilisation to the downtrodden.[229] Simon, protesting Romanian Jews' treatment, admitted his personal Jewish concern, 'he should, however, as an Englishmen have felt it to be equally his duty to raise his voice in behalf of the victims of these outrages had they been members of a different religious communion.'[230] In conjunction with this, much time was spent referring to treaty rights and the precedence of international law, to demonstrate that Britain was entitled to intervene.[231] As a result though, the

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[227] *Hansard*, 19 Apr. 1872, ccx, p.1586.
[228] *Hansard*, 05 July 1867, clxxxviii, p.1139.
[229] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.122. To further generalise these appeals calls for assistance were, whenever possible, made in the name of all non-Muslim or non-Orthodox religions, depending upon the territory. Jewish specifics were seldom prominent.
[230] *Hansard*, 19 Apr. 1872, ccix, p.1601.
[231] *Hansard*, 29 Mar. 1867, clxxxvi, p.839 and 17 Feb. 1880, ccl, pp.794-5.

geography of appeals was severely restricted. Whereas weak countries and those subject to international arbitration were frequently indicted, for instance Morocco, Romania and Serbia, independent powers, such as Germany, Austria or Russia, though they might experience considerable anti-Jewish agitation, were never reproached by Jewish politicians in the House.[232] Strict limits were also placed upon the action requested. The primary aim of most Jewish MPs was to publicise grievances and gain expressions of Gentile sympathy; it was '...hoped that the discussion of the subject in the British House of Commons would have a moral effect.'[233] If more direct action was solicited it was merely that the government make 'unofficial and friendly' suggestions to the country concerned.[234] Undertaken in this restricted manner, these efforts were ineffective. The continuing pleas of Jewish MPs demonstrate that they were unable to achieve any permanent improvements for foreign Jews. It is unlikely that they could have done more. These inhibited efforts were still a remarkable indication of the continuing bond English Jews felt with their international co-religionists, for whom they were willing to mobilise British resources. Emancipation may have constrained Anglo-Jewry's Diasporic connections but it had not negated them.

These constraints were, of course, largely assumed and by no means permanent. As the Bulgarian Crisis had seen Jews increase their partisan input to British foreign affairs, so the situation concerning these specifically confessional appeals could be adapted to changing circumstances. In a move that illustrates the fluidity of Anglo-Jewish definition within the political sphere, de Worms attempted to

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[232] The one exception to this pattern was Francis Goldsmid's indictment of Russia for the persecution of Jews at Saratow, June 1862. Relations with Russia were probably still frosty enough, post-Crimea, for criticism of the country to be acceptable.

[233] Löwy and Marks, *Memoir* p.192.

[234] Ibid., p.187.

re-assess the established pattern in 1882, over the matter of the Russian pogroms. Having niggled the Liberal ministry with standard questions in 1881, frustrated by lack of progress, he sought to achieve a more robust consideration of Jewish interests. In March 1882 he moved a Commons' motion urging the government to greater efforts to halt Russian persecution

> That this House, deeply deploring the persecution and outrages to which the Jews have been subjected in portions of the Russian Empire, trusts that Her Majesty's Government will find means...of using their good offices with the Government of His Majesty the Czar to prevent the recurrence of similar acts of violence.[235]

Gladstone's government, the Liberal party and most Tories were hostile. All de Worms obtained were a few routine expressions of ministerial sympathy and he was forced to withdraw.[236] Parliament had clearly indicated the extent of its compassion for international Jewry; de Worms' action had obviously exceeded an acceptable level of Jewishness. Interestingly, other Jewish MPs, it appears, shared this sentiment, for none supported the motion. Simon and Cohen had, in fact, led attempts to defeat it; ostensibly, because they did not believe it would be efficacious.[237]

Beneath this reasoning though, there were other motivations. Party politics exercised a notable influence. De Worms had been at pains to stress the apolitical character of his motion. But the very consistency with which he did so gave the lie to his efforts. Frequently quoting Gladstone, de Worms repeatedly attempted to embarrass the Liberal party by contrasting its interventionist attitude during the Bulgarian Crisis with its reticence concerning Russia: 'The appeal which was made in England on behalf of the Bulgarians was made in the same spirit of generosity as that

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[235] *Hansard*, 03 Mar. 1882, cclxcii, p.30.
[236] Ibid., pp.50-70.
[237] Ibid., p.43. Simon and Cohen claimed that any effort Britain might make, almost certain to be ineffective, would only serve to further agitate Russians against Jewry. De Worms expressed the opinion that it could not hurt to try, considering the present situation.

with which this appeal and this plea is made.'[238] A double standard in Liberal sympathy was suggested.[239] Simon, ever defending the Liberal cause, denied this and criticised de Worms' partisan tactics. He and A. Cohen, working in tandem, were though, perhaps more guilty of political sectarianism. Cohen had been passing inside information about the situation in Russia, obtained from Anglo-Jewish institutions, to the Liberals – 'I will, if you like, keep you fully informed of all that it might be useful for you to know' – and advising Dilke on how to mollify the community without making political concessions.[240] Months before the motion Simon had twice written to Gladstone imploring him to make 'some expression of sympathy' before the Tories could capitalise on the situation through de Worms' efforts.[241] His motivation, he stressed, was not concern for Russian Jewry; 'it is not on their account that I have ventured to trouble you but from a deep conviction that the interests of the Liberal party, as well as...the government require that something should be said...'[242] All three of these Jewish MPs thus exploited their involvement in Jewish interests to benefit their party politics; in the case of Simon and Cohen this was done seemingly, to the detriment of the Jewish cause.

The perception these politicians held regarding the appropriate role of Jewishness in politics motivated this. For Simon and Cohen, the two Jews most notable for their loyalty to Gladstone over Bulgaria, it could never transcend English

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[238] Ibid., p.31.

[239] *Hansard*, 19 May 1881, cclxi, p.805. As de Worms had accused before: 'Is it to be understood that, in the case of governments of importance like Russia, Her Majesty's government do not intend to protest cases of oppression, but that their protests are only to be directed against weaker governments?'

[240] British Library, Add. MSS. 43880 f.142, Papers of Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke, Letter from Arthur Cohen to Dilke, 07 Mar. 1882.

[241] Bodleian Library Microfilm, Add. MS. 44474 fol.103, Papers of William Ewart Gladstone, Letter from Simon to Gladstone, 29 Jan. 1882 and fol.133. 05 Feb. 1882.

[242] Ibid., Ms. 44474 fol.133, Letter from Simon to Gladstone, 05 Feb. 1882. Simon was probably playing to his recipient's sensibilities somewhat; it would have been unlikely that an appeal on Jewry's behalf would have convinced Gladstone to act.

issues; especially as, in this case, these were mixed up with vindication of Liberal party policy. De Worms too, would never have encompassed such a thing but he judged England's political context differently. Using the Bulgarian Agitation as a point of reference he misread the situation. Taking his lead from inflamed public opinion de Worms believed that Britain was now prepared to pursue minority issues and therefore, a more active style of Jewish protest could be advanced.[243] He was wrong. Unlike Bulgaria, the public mood of 1882 did not demand action; it demurred to Parliament, where neither party was interested in adopting the cause.[244] Simon and Cohen had a better grasp of the situation. Russia was an independent power, with whom Parliament had no legal or diplomatic right or ability to interfere. 'What right had this country to pass a vote of censure upon a foreign power?...It was' Simon pontificated 'the very A, B, C of international law that one independent country should not interfere with the internal affairs of another country.'[245] Furthermore, relations were becoming increasingly friendly between the two countries and an incident could not be risked on account of the Jews.[246] British realpolitik militated against action. Simon and Cohen realised this and as Englishmen, of course, concurred. In these circumstances Simon saw no benefit to '...dragging the unfortunate Jews and their sufferings before the House of Commons.'[247] Nothing said in Parliament Cohen agreed, could augment the good effect already achieved by a 'remarkable manifestation of public opinion'.[248] And it was in this arena that these two politicians felt it appropriate to exercise their Jewish sympathies: Cohen assisting

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[243] *Hansard*, 03 Mar. 1882, cclxvii, p.34.
[244] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.133. After this incident de Worms seems to have realised that he had overstepped the mark and all his subsequent Jewish appeals reverted to the established formula.
[245] *Hansard*, 03 Mar. 1882, cclxvii, pp.42 & 45.
[246] Bodleian Library Microfilm, Add. Ms. 44474 fol.133, Papers of William Ewart Gladstone, Letter from Simon to Gladstone, 05 Feb. 1882 and *Hansard*, Mar. 1882, cclxvii, pp.41-2 & 45.
[247] *Hansard*, 03 Mar. 1882, cclxvii, p.42.
[248] Ibid., p.58.

the Russo-Jewish Committee and Simon organising the fundraising Mansion House meeting.[249] The *JC*, having advised de Worms to withdraw his motion, endorsed this low-key perspective: 'Many noble examples of self-restraint have been given by prominent Jewish political personages during the agitation against the Russian atrocities.'[250] The paper's uncharacteristic timidity reinforced Simon's statement to the House that '...persons of position in the Jewish community, to whose opinion weight ought to be attached, did not wish this subject to be brought forward.'[251] This claim was somewhat disingenuous however, Simon having confided to Gladstone months earlier the existence of a contrary sentiment: '...there is beginning to grow up among some people a fear lest you might not be as willing to act for their brethren in Russia...as on behalf of the Bulgarian Christians.'[252]

Indeed, Jewish opinion on this emotional issue was far from unanimous. The council of the Anglo-Jewish Association strongly backed de Worms, uniformly passing a resolution of 'cordial thanks' for his action. Simon, present at the meeting, petulantly took the measure 'to imply a vote of censure on his own action in the same affair' and feeling that 'it was impossible to work longer with Baron Henry de Worms', resigned his vice-presidency before walking out.[253] De Worms gloatingly took revenge for his Commons' defeat, expressing thanks whilst maintaining '...that

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[249] Ibid., p.57. and Alderman. *Jewish* p.33.

[250] *JC*, 10 Feb. 1882, p.5.

[251] *Hansard*, 03 Mar. 1882, cclxvii, p.45. The *JC* endorsed Simon's conviction that the motion would not assist Russian Jews and was considerably upset by the temper of the debate. It lamented that Jewish politicians could behave so over a Jewish matter and wistfully remembered the 'cautious candour and the courteous argument' Francis Goldsmid had always used when discoursing such subjects. See *JC*, 10 Mar. 1882, p.11.

[252] Bodleian Library Microfilm, Add. Ms. 44474, fol.103, Papers of William Ewart Gladstone, Letter from Simon to Gladstone, 29 Jan. 1882.

[253] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 137, Papers of the Anglo-Jewish Association, Council Minute Book, Vol. 2. pp.16-20. and *JC*, 10 Mar. 1882, p.8. The meeting (and the next) subsequently passed resolutions denying any criticism of Simon and calling upon him to withdraw his resignation, though it remained unapologetically behind de Worms. Within days Simon had magnanimously done so: 'In the interests of the Association...'

the action taken by Serjeant Simon and Mr. Arthur Cohen had done more to injure the Jewish cause than the calumnies levelled at the Jews.'[254] There was evidently no consensus within the Jewish body about the level of political effort that should be risked upon the causes of their foreign brethren. Jewish MP clashed publicly with Jewish MP and due to their role as communal representatives, these disputes echoed within the community institutions they served. Jewish politics and the politics of Jewry were intricately linked, if not harmonised.

V.

Jewish MPs are a revealing source of study for both Jewish politics and Jewish identity. Few were energetic politicians but their numbers steadily increased and some achieved notable success, particularly at constituency level. An indication of the quick integration these MPs achieved in the political sphere, where their Jewish allegiance was generally unproblematic. This accommodation occurred even though Jewishness carried certain associations and requirements into the public realm; for Gentiles regarded Jewish MPs as politically representative of the community, as much as they themselves and other Jews did. Jewish politicians exploited this perception to introduce Jewish issues and bring a confessional perspective to their opinions. But in doing so they were usually deferent to their English influences and positions on matters of national interest, as well as issues of Jewish concern, were alike adopted primarily in accordance with an individual's party-political stance. There was little in Jews' behaviour to distinguish them from their Gentile peers and they seem essentially, to have acted predominantly like most other British politicians

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[254] *JC*, 10 Mar. 1882, p8.

of the time. Jewish MPs thus routinely held various and often opposing viewpoints. This ambiguous situation, in effect, meant these politicians operated as both MPs of the Jewish persuasion and Jewish MPs.

It was a duality that perfectly reflected, and indeed was a partial manifestation of – partial contributor towards – Jewry's post-emancipation identity. Reassured that they were indeed English, it became increasingly evident to Jews that their task in the decades following 1858 was to ensure they remained Jewish. Not in the old sense of '*imperium in imperio*', which was to be avoided at all costs, but still more than the whitewashed copy of nonconformity some emancipationists had expected.[255] The period witnessed various political events that both highlighted and threatened the community's distinctiveness, demonstrating that emancipation had not permanently resolved Jews' status. A specific Jewish standpoint thus began to emerge within British politics, as they attempted to negotiate an acceptable one. Mirroring the unique situation of the Anglo-Jew, this was to incorporate support for both equality and exceptionalism:

> The relation of the Jew to the peoples amongst whom he resides presents this startling anomaly – he is an alien whom no legal "naturalisation" can transform; and at the same time he is a countryman by birth...And this dual nature no amount of time can destroy; but, on the contrary, it will become more marked and intensified as the legislatures of enlightened countries afford the Jews opportunities of showing that whilst a religious principle is sufficient to preserve the homogeneity of an entire people, it is not incompatible with the sincerest devotion to the best interests of a state...[256]

There was no framework to guide this interaction – there were perceived boundaries, though no one was sure where to locate these – and Jewish MPs displayed a variety of

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[255] *JC*, 06 Feb. 1874. p.753.
[256] *JC*, 28 Aug. 1872, p.291.

opinions concerning the most desirable mixture of these English and Jewish elements. Jewish political identity incorporated a range of conceptions; it was fragmented but flexible. Crucially though, many MPs exhibited a desire for greater recognition of their particularity, to politically identify Jewry as a unique interest group within the body politic, rather than merely another confession with equal rights.

This shift in self-perception occasioned Jewry's growing break with the nonconformist model of existence it had emulated prior to 1858. Not all Jewish politicians endorsed this change, Simon 'remained an earnest Dissenter' his whole career.[257] The communal majority though, came to believe '...that Jews are not Dissenters; that their interests, as affected by their religion, differ widely and essentially from those of other denominations which are not of the state religion'[258] Jewry recognised that politically, more than other minorities, it had to take steps to protect its particular collectivity, which was united not solely by religious precepts – as was nonconformity – but also an undefined yet tenacious ethno-racial connection. However, if Jewry were to be allowed fidelity to its faith, so other religions must be accorded theirs. Being distinctive required the reciprocal appreciation of other religions' specificity and many Jewish MPs accordingly endorsed this, supporting for instance, the Anglican Establishment and the denominational clauses of the Education Act. This created a tension within Anglo-Jewish politics. The principles of equality Anglo-Jewry had previously championed could not be totally abandoned. They had been a fundamental argument of emancipation and, of course, remained crucial to the community's participation in all aspects of British life. Much of Jewry's political activity in this period therefore concerned an attempt to establish, as the situation

[257] *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 12 Nov. 1885, p.4.
[258] *JC*, 24 June 1870, p.9.

demanded, an appropriate balance between these two determinants. Jewish MPs, divided in their efforts at times on account of their political persuasion, pursued a compromise agenda between equality and particularity; a position that was anathema to nonconformists and that increasingly distinguished them from a considerable portion of Liberal party opinion.

It was not always difficult for Jews to achieve a balanced political participation. There was not a constant antagonism between the requirements of their English and Jewish elements. The British system, long used to treating with minorities, offered much scope for the smooth interaction of the two, which in many instances actually operated symbiotically, one complementing the other. The *JC* was being only slightly optimistic when it decreed: 'As Jews let us be earnest Jews; as Englishmen let us be earnest Englishmen. The duties of our faith and race will not interfere with our duties of citizenship...'[259] In this period, Jewish virtues correlated remarkably with accepted English ones. It was not, of course, an equal partnership. While Jewishness remained an important reference in the MPs' political value system, English considerations were almost always accorded paramount importance. Jewish issues, when advocated, were thus subjected to a variety of regulatory practices and usually sublimated to loftier causes in an attempt to prevent any conflict of interests. Nevertheless, Jewish political definition was nebulous enough for Jewish MPs to attain a considerable level of exception. The precise extent of this was never evident, however. Generally reliant upon the prevailing English climate, Jewish politicians occasionally misjudged their attempts, prioritising Jewishness to an unacceptable degree. This happened most notoriously during the Bulgarian Crisis,

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[259] *JC*, 06 Feb. 1874, p.753.

when an explicit demonstration of political Jewishness bereft of any justifying English conceptuality brought calumny upon the community and re-invigorated debate on their patriotism. Much pained by the episode, Jewry began explicitly re-orientating its party allegiance – till this time incestuously connected to the Liberals, into a more open position. The community was not politically confident enough to withstand such criticism; as much as Jews appreciated utilising their indeterminate identity to positively obtain specificity, they were not yet prepared for this to be openly discussed and possibly generate negative consequences.

Chapter Three
Representation, Coordination and Civilisation: The Board of Deputies of British Jews and Communal Government

I.

The Board of Deputies of British Jews was the pre-eminent Anglo-Jewish institution of the nineteenth-century. As '...the only recognised official medium of communication between the various departments of the state and the Jewish community', the Board's self-appointed task was to

> ...make observation of all proceedings relative to legislative and municipal enactments, and...use such means as they may deem requisite in order that no infraction of the religious rights, customs and privileges of the Jewish community may ensue there from; they shall also watch over the interests of the Jews of this Empire, and deliberate on what may conduce to their welfare and improve their general condition.[1]

Its aim was nothing less than the conciliation of the Jewish and British worlds – to mediate the existence of Anglo-Jewry in modern Britain. By the achievement of emancipation the Board had been fulfilling this role for nearly a century. British Jews traced its foundation back to a resolution of the Elders of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation in November 1760: 'That seven gentlemen of this body be appointed...to testify to his Majesty our homage; and thereafter to deal with the most urgent matters which present themselves in connection with our nation.'[2] With the adherence of Ashkenazi delegates to present condolences and congratulations to the Dowager Princess of Wales that December, the first communal organisation of Anglo-Jewry was born. The Board's activities, initially, were small-scale, its

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[1] London Metropolitan Archives, ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.250 and *Jewish Chronicle*, 23 Jan. 1874, p.713.

[2] C. Emanuel, *A Century and A Half of Jewish History. Extracted from the Minute Books of the London Committee of the Deputies of the British Jews* (London 1910) p.1.

meetings sporadic and its long-term future uncertain. But spurred by the prospect of emancipation the institution was reorganised and placed upon a permanent footing over 1835-6. The adoption of a formal constitution, the establishment of a representative basis, the beginning of Moses Montefiore's long presidency and the acquirement of statutory power to licence Jewish marriage all occurred at this time, as the Board developed its modern form. This period also witnessed the formal naming of the institution as the London Committee of Deputies of British Jews. The title was chosen in deliberate imitation of the nonconformist's representative organisation: the London Board of Dissenting Deputies – a clear statement of the place Anglo-Jewry believed it inhabited in Britain's religiously plural society.[3]

Post-emancipation, the Board continued to negotiate the minority's position and image within Britain and on the international Jewish scene, with varying rates of activity and success. Although not always achieving consensus, the Board was an undeniably important facet of the communal structure. C. Emanuel was not exaggerating when he stated in 1910: '...generation has succeeded generation, and, without show or fuss, the Board has made, and continues to make, Jewish history.'[4] As Anglo-Jewry's nominally representative body charged with overseeing the smooth interaction of Jewish and English responsibilities, the Board of Deputies is of paramount significance to any study of Anglo-Jewish identity. The causes it pursued, for whom, and under whose authority, do much to illustrate what was important to British Jews, and reveals much about the self-image they sought to portray and their ability to accomplish this. Also, being the Jewish institution supposedly most intimately connected with the British state, a survey of the Board's activities will

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[3] W. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English-Speaking World: Great Britain* (London 1996) p.71.

[4] Emanuel, *Century* p.vi.

reveal aspects of British history. This chapter will examine how the state on various levels, officially treated the minority: what was its approach to Jewish requests for special treatment; what does this indicate about the flexibility of British society and its attitude toward minorities, specifically the prejudice or lack thereof concerning Jews as citizens? The interaction of the Board and the state, particularly over foreign affairs, demonstrates the level to which Jews could participate within British identity as a specifically partisan body – compared to Jewish Parliamentarians who were working within a national institution – and the terms society established for this.

It is all the more remarkable therefore, that the Board should have virtually escaped historical examination. The historiography of the institution is almost nonexistent. The institution received some coverage in several early communal histories, the most substantial of which was C. Emanuel's *A Century and A Half of Jewish History* published in 1910.[5] The work contains a useful factual account, as might be expected from a man who was its secretary and solicitor. However, Emanuel's intimacy with the organisation also leads to bias, with disproportionate space devoted to Board successes and negative aspects being downplayed. The Board has fared little better in treatment from modern historians: merely one book and a smattering of articles have exclusively examined it. Aubrey Newman's *The Board of Deputies of British Jews, 1760-1985* offers a 'brief survey' of the major events and personalities that shaped the institution.[6] The history, written at the Board's sanction to mark its anniversary, is not intended as a detailed study and is of limited use to this research; particularly as it focuses upon more recent experiences: only seventeen

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[5] For other early communal comment see: J. Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History* (London 1875) and *Jubilee of the Joint Foreign Committee, 1878-1928* Pamphlet issued by the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association (London 1928)

[6] A. Newman, *The Board of Deputies of British Jews, 1760-1985. A Brief Survey* (London 1987)

pages are set-aside for the pre-1880 period. The existing articles are more relevant. N. Gizzard's 'The Provinces and the Board, 1851-1901' addresses a particularly neglected feature of the Board's history and contains useful statistics on participation rates.[7] D. Itzkowitz's 1992 work 'Cultural Pluralism and the Board of Deputies' highlights attempts to exempt the community from the provisions of general legislation, claiming that they represented a new kind of cultural pluralism within nineteenth-century Britain.[8] Information can also be obtained from a related subject that has attracted far more historical attention: Sir Moses Montefiore. As a long-time member and President of the Deputies, research upon Montefiore inevitably provides material on the Board. Unfortunately most histories focus on his more sensational foreign ventures or generous philanthropy and only a few concentrate upon his connection to the Board.[9] For the historian of the Deputies current historiography has therefore, little to offer and there remains a pressing need for a complete history of this central institution.[10]

This chapter will contribute to relieving this necessity and help rectify, in part, this historical oversight. Specifically, it will analyse the activities of the Board with a view to obtaining an insight into Anglo-Jewish identity and the nature of post-

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[7] N. Grizzard, 'The Provinces and the Board, 1851-1901', in A. Newman, (ed.), *Provincial Jewry in Victorian Britain* (London 1975)

[8] D. Itzkowitz, 'Cultural Pluralism and the Board of Deputies of British Jews', in R. Davis and R. Helmstadter (eds.), *Religion and Irreligion in Victorian Society. Essays in Honour of R.K. Webb* (London 1992) As this chapter will demonstrate though, Itzkowitz's premise is misconstrued; the exemptions Jews gained were perceived merely as another example of the religious pluralism that the British state had long accommodated, rather than any new arrangement.

[9] The two most useful to this study are: I. Finestein, 'The Uneasy Victorian: Montefiore as Communal Leader', in S. Lipman and V. Lipman, (eds.), *The Century of Moses Montefiore* (Oxford 1985) and I. Finestein, 'Sir Moses Montefiore: A Modern Appreciation', in Idem., *Scenes and Personalities in Anglo-Jewry, 1800-2000* (London 2002)

[10] There are good archival collections to facilitate this. Sources that have been used extensively throughout this chapter include: The detailed reports and minute books of the Deputies, which contain *inter alia* most of their correspondence; two extensive, separate collections of Montefiore's correspondence, considerable portions of which relate to the Board; and a series of Parliamentary Papers concerned with the Foreign Office's work for persecuted Jews.

emancipation Jewish communal existence in Britain. A three-part examination will be employed to accomplish this purpose, loosely imitating the Jewish MPs' arrangement to better facilitate an appreciation of the multiple yet interlinked levels upon which certain issues affected the community and the different – at times even antagonistic – levels of Jewish elite thought concerning them. The first section addresses the Board of Deputies as an organisation. Detailing its functions, operations and personnel, it investigates the Board's representative nature and perceived role in the community. The next two parts build upon this information, demonstrating how, with this remit and composition, the Board positioned itself, and by extension Jewry, in both Jewish and Gentile society. The second section is concerned with the domestic sphere. Having identified in the last chapter an ambiguous Jewish political standpoint within national politics, this investigates Board attempts to protect what it perceived as the community's interests from a variety of incursions within the broader scope of British society and upon a wider range of levels and issues. This section demonstrates the confusing and often conflicting stance of a minority espousing both equality and exceptionality of treatment, as the disagreements between Jewish MPs have already outlined. The final section surveys the international undertakings of the Deputies. Beginning with an evaluation of the Board's motives and methods, its scope will broaden through investigation of certain troublesome areas, in an attempt to explore the wider ramifications of Anglo-Jewish diplomacy upon both Jewish beliefs and contemporary British foreign policy. It will show that whilst Jewish MPs were able to introduce international Jewish issues into Parliament, communal institutions, using a more partisan identity, though similarly restricted in outcome, achieved a more remarkable conflation of Jewish and British ideals.

II.

The Board of Deputies was the representative body of Anglo-Jewry. All Jewish congregations in Britain, with the exception of Reform ones, had the right to send a delegate to the Board, with the franchise granted to '...all *Yehidim* and male renters of seats in each congregation above the age of twenty-one years, and not in arrears in their payments to the congregation more than twelve months...'[11] These relatively liberal electoral criteria supplied the foundation of the Board's claimed mandate to speak for all British Jews. This assertion was though, somewhat specious; for whilst the Board franchise was widely accorded it was far less actively employed. Comparing the number of synagogues that elected one or more Deputies with the number who registered marriage secretaries through the Board's agency, (a legal requirement and thus a good indication of the number of established Orthodox congregations), it can be observed that the Board's affiliates never comprised more than 55.9% of the community, see appendix two. This high was only reached in 1883, prior to which the level had hovered under 40% in the 1860s, peaked at 51.9% in reaction to Gladstone's government in the early 1870s, and then declined again to approximately 46% for the next ten years. The 1865-8 session was the lowest point, when merely 29.5% of British congregations were represented. There existed a major disjuncture between the Board's rhetoric of representation and reality. This anomaly did not go uncriticised in the community. 'A body acting for the whole community, while yet not resting upon the whole foundation offered by it, is an inverted pyramid', warned the *JC* in 1858.[12] This '...tends to foster a spirit of oligarchy and exclusiveness.'[13] The Deputies were slow to comprehend the connection between

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[11] *JC*, 23 Jan. 1874, p.713.
[12] *JC*, 04 June 1858, p.196.
[13] *JC*, 22 Apr. 1859, p.4.

their popularity and their legitimacy as a putatively representative organ in an age of increasing democratisation. A major constitutional reorganisation designed to '...extend the influence and usefulness of the Board' did take place in 1882.[14] It was a late but substantial move towards greater participation; introducing measures to encourage poorer synagogues and inviting imperial congregations to join, it increased representation by 10% at the next election. This still left some 46% of Orthodox congregations unaffiliated and the Board would not shed its patrician image and appear genuinely representative until the twentieth-century.[15]

During the post-emancipation era the Board's unrepresentative nature was exacerbated by the manner of those elections that did occur. These were hardly major affairs. In fact, most were hardly elections at all, merely nominations. Over the seven meetings of the Borough Synagogue to elect a deputy between 1868-86, only two involved a contest.[16] Similar scenes transpired at most other synagogues. Despite opening a ballot every time, in seven elections at the New Synagogue only one featured more than two candidates for two positions; at Bayswater, six meetings produced only one competitive election.[17] Those few elections that involved contest were neither close-run nor dramatic affairs. Four candidates were nominated at the New Synagogue in 1877, S. Schloss and H. Solomon, the incumbents, received 40 and 41 votes respectively, whereas Algernon Sydney and A. Silber, the challengers, managed a meagre seven votes between them.[18] This appears even less impressive when it is considered that New had 366 enfranchised seatholders, and, each having

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[14] LMA, ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1883, pp.12-14.
[15] A. Newman, 'The Board of Deputies', in Idem., (ed.), *Provincial* Jewry p.1.
[16] LMA, ACC/2712/BRS/002, USP, Minute Books of the Borough Synagogue, 1873-96.
[17] LMA, ACC/2712/BWS/004-5 USP, Minute Books of the Bayswater Synagogue, 1863-83 and ACC/2712/NWS/008B Minute Book of the New Synagogue, 1868-96
[18] LMA, ACC/2712/NWS/008B, USP, Minute Book of the New Synagogue, 1868-96, pp.109-11.

two votes, might have recorded 732 votes instead of the 88 cast. Consistently poor turnout is a reproach to any representative institution and as one astute, if acerbic, correspondent wrote in criticism, the organisation '...would be ashamed to publish the exact quantity of votes registered at its elections.'[19] Certainly, the method of electing Deputies was not the most democratic of processes and did nothing to encourage participation. It often had the appearance of an arrangement rather than an election. The candidates were always, at least, current or former members of their synagogue councils, if not wardens, treasurers, and not infrequently presidents. The ruling group within the synagogues clearly controlled events and used them to extend and perpetuate their power. In many ways it was a form of cronyism, an old boy's club. The disinterest this provoked in congregations, whilst certainly dissuasive for voters should not be exaggerated. For many in the hierarchical synagogue system it would probably have appeared quite natural.

Approximately, one hundred and thirty-eight individuals were elected as Deputies in the three decades following emancipation. There were twenty-five members sitting on the 1859 Board, a figure that rose steadily throughout the period, with the occasional fallback or large supplement, to fifty in 1886, see appendix two. These represented a similarly increasing number of congregations, from the initial fifteen to thirty-three by 1883. The post-emancipation Deputies were not the most notable of contemporary Anglo-Jews, see appendix three. The majority seem to have left little trace outside of the immediate Jewish world they inhabited. Anglo-Jewry (partly echoing their Victorian environment) had a very strong sense of community service but many chose to exercise this in other areas than the Deputies. It was a

[19] *JC*, 27 May 1870, p.4.

perennial lament of the *JC* that 'there are men amongst us who know perhaps, from the circumstances of their vocation, position, or self-imposed duties, more than others of the wants and nature of our community; and yet all of these men, whose names are "familiar in our mouths as household words," are not members of the Board of Deputies.'[20] Some eminent Jews were perforce excluded by the fact of their being Reformers, for instance the Goldsmids and John Simon. The prohibition on Reform representatives was maintained for the majority of this era. Its incongruity, as the Board cooperated with Reform MPs on causes of religious liberty, was recurrently lambasted in the Jewish press. Salomons, having fallen out with the Board during the emancipation campaign was another glaring exception. The Rothschild family, whilst repeatedly elected as Deputies for the Great, never once attended a meeting of the Board in this period – the family operated at a level far beyond the institution. Such absences could not but lessen the Deputies' authority. There were, of course though, notable men actively involved in the Board's work. The institution from its inception had attracted many of the community's leading lights. Post-emancipation, these included, *inter alia*, Benjamin Cohen – president of the Board of Guardians and Jews' hospital, JP and member of the LCC; Henry Israel – City alderman, sheriff and future mayor; Philip Magnus – educationalist, future MP and baronet; Benjamin Philips – City alderman, councilman, sheriff and mayor; and Joseph Sebag – millionaire, JP and Lieutenant of the City.[21] Such men were certainly a credit to the Board and demonstrate that some, at least, of the Jewish elite regarded it as a worthwhile venture.

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[20] *JC*, 17 Sept. 1869, p.7.

[21] See M. Jolles, *A Directory of Distinguished British Jews, 1830-1930. With Selected Compilations Extending from 1830 to 2000* (London 2002)

The most illustrious Board member was undoubtedly Sir Moses Montefiore. President at the time of emancipation, Montefiore had originally occupied the position in 1835 and despite numerous gaps, would not relinquish it until 1874. Having served a total of twenty-eight years as President, spread over a thirty-nine year period, during one of the most formative eras in Anglo-Jewish experience, Montefiore, more than any other person, became synonymous with the Deputies.[22] The *JC* talked of fusion: 'The respected and philanthropic President could with as much justice declare: The Board that is I, as a certain king said, *L'état c'est moi.*'[23] This was an immense boon for the Board's profile, as Montefiore was an international celebrity. The *JC* editorialising on his 1864 return from a mission in Morocco proclaimed: 'Modern Jewish history absolutely offers no parallel either to the man...or his glorious achievements.'[24] Gentiles were almost equally impressed with his efforts and Montefiore managed to meet a fantastic range of personages – Tsars, Shahs, Princes, Cardinals and a multitude of lesser statesmen – in his lifetime of protesting Jewish rights. In Britain, he received utmost respect and congeniality from the authorities. In 1871, after his office had unsuccessfully attempted similar dissuasion, Lord Granville personally wrote to Montefiore expressing concern for his safety and re-iterating the necessity of abandoning a journey to Persia.[25] Montefiore was intimate with the British establishment and also a hero figure for many Jews; it was the successful combination of Anglo and Jew to which the post-emancipation community aspired. For the Board there could be no greater role model, particularly as they could partake in his success. Montefiore's stature reflected back upon the body he headed and personified; 'Sir Moses's most glorious achievements were

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[22] Finestein, 'Sir Moses' p.169.
[23] *JC*, 13 Apr. 1877, p.9.
[24] *JC*, 18 Mar. 1864, p.4.
[25] LMA, ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.77.

performed in the name of the Board of Deputies...'[26] 'It cannot be invidious to say that the connection of Sir Moses with the Board is one of its greatest sources of strength.'[27] The Board recognised the advantage of this attachment and went to considerable lengths to maintain it. Despite attempts by Montefiore to decline re-election as President in 1862, 1865, 1868 and 1871 on the grounds of ill health and incapacity, entreaties and pleadings from the Deputies persuaded him to remain, even though on occasion he was 'too unwell' to receive their deputation. Only after the repeated assertion of how 'utterly impossible' resumption would be for a now nonagenarian Montefiore, was his retirement in 1874 accepted.[28] Yet the Board was still unwilling to let this connection end – the next three Presidents, governing from 1874-1903, were all his nephews. A move motivated not just by sentimentality but a desire to extend the legacy of the most important man to serve on the institution. Appointing Joseph Mayer Montefiore his successor in 1874 the annual report claimed it had chosen '...one closely related to Sir Moses Montefiore, and bearing his honoured name, and who, being in frequent communication with the worthy Baronet, it was felt would preserve and maintain the traditional policy of the Board.'[29] As one commentator observed, for much of the nineteenth-century, one-way or another, the Board of Deputies had been under the management of 'Montefiore and Co.'[30]

The Deputies gained immensely from their association with Montefiore but there were also considerable drawbacks to the relationship. As much as Montefiore's name '...shed a lustre on the body of which he was so many years the honoured

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[26] *JC*, 18 July 1862, p.4.
[27] *JC*, 03 July 1868, p.4.
[28] See LMA, ACC/3121/A/009-10, MBBD, 1859-64, ix and 1864-71, x.
[29] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.338.
[30] *JC*, 16 Feb. 1877, p.5.

leader', it cast perhaps a greater shadow.[31] When President the vast majority of appeals, correspondence and memorials, whether from persecuted Jews, foreign dignitaries or government officials, were addressed to him personally, making little or no mention of the Board. After he had retired there was a notable fall-off in aid applications, though Montefiore continued to receive many in a private capacity.[32] Montefiore was virtually an institution in himself, and one rivalling the Board. He often acted independently; in 1866, for example, he organised, through the Foreign Office, a petition to the Shah of Persia on behalf of oppressed Jews. Despite, in his words, the Board's 'deep interest' and previous involvement in this sphere, the first it knew of this endeavour was upon reception of Montefiore's rather self-aggrandising note: 'By the blessing of Divine Providence, my petition to his Majesty the Shah of Persia on behalf of our brethren, his subjects, resident in his dominions (in compliance with their memorial to me), has been crowned with success.'[33] The interaction between Montefiore and the Deputies was far from that of equals. Montefiore was perfectly capable of operating without the Board. His many missions abroad in relief of persecuted Jews, whilst often ostensibly undertaken in the Board's name, were all initialised and bankrolled by himself. The Board's role was merely to rubber-stamp their sanction, retrospectively, onto whatever venture Montefiore had arranged. At best they acted as a form of personal travel agent for him, obtaining letters of introduction from the government and arranging stages of his journey. Whilst it garnered vicarious achievement from these missions, the Board was in reality devalued, its superfluity being starkly revealed.

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[31] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.338.
[32] This decline might also have been influenced by the increasing stature of the Anglo-Jewish Association, see section iv.
[33] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.110.

The *JC*, commenting in general upon the Board's foreign affairs, concluded that 'In fact it was not the Board but its venerable President who acted, or at least gave impulse to action. The Board simply played the part of *la chambre introuvable*.'[34] Less flattering assessments were made. Nemo, the communal commentator, contrasting the Deputies' sporadic intervention abroad with their consistent support of Montefiore's actions, accused them of having '...no objection to dance and dance merrily, if Sir Moses pay the piper.'[35] This reliance upon Montefiore's initiative was symptomatic of a wider difficulty the Board suffered due to continued intimacy with its great man. Montefiore seldom attended the Board in the post-emancipation decades yet he remained centrally involved in policy and practice. This situation severely retarded Board operations. As Israel Finestein states: 'By holding onto office he marred the growth of new cadres of leadership and delayed the development of adequate communal machinery for the expanding, multi-faceted and increasingly diversified community.'[36] Much communal talent was in this manner, no doubt lost to the Board, as it locked itself into Montefiore's perceptions and ensured their continuation through presidential succession. As a result, the Board maintained several anachronistic positions for the majority of the period. It is notable, for instance, that only in 1883 were serious steps taken to enlarge the representation of the Board, and that only in 1885, after Montefiore's death, was an accommodation reached allowing Reform Deputies to sit; despite communal pressure for both objectives predating emancipation.

Unrepresentative and overshadowed by its former President, the Board was far from an efficient, modern organisation in the post-emancipation decades. An

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[34] *JC*, 13 Apr. 1877, p.9.
[35] *JC*, 22 Sept. 1871, p.9.
[36] Finestein, 'Uneasy Victorian' pp.230-1.

impression compounded by a glance at the statistics upon Deputies' attendance. Despite the organisation having on average less than ten meetings a year for most of the period, the average number of Deputies attending sessions was less than half the number sitting. The individual attendance figures in appendix three reveal that it was not just the Rothschilds who avoided the assembly. Deputies such as Charles Mosely for Liverpool (old); Philip Salomons for New Synagogue; Rueben Sassoon for Coventry; Jonah Jonas for Canterbury; or Lewis Davis for Southampton, had exceptionally poor records. Although the worst attendees the majority of their colleagues often performed little better and their absenteeism diminished the organisation's credibility. 'I venture to think' wrote the pseudonymous Felix Barbel in the July 1872 *JC*

> that if at least twenty out of the forty deputies who constitute the Board – many of whom are shrewd and experienced men – would attend to their duties in a more efficient manner, or resign their positions and allow others to occupy them, the exhibition of a deputy attending a Board meeting once in three years would no longer be witnessed.[37]

Counterbalancing this somewhat, were a not inconsiderable number of Deputies with distinguished records. Among them, several notable individuals from the older synagogues, including: Joseph Montefiore and Joseph Sebag of Bevis Marks; Henry Solomon at New; and David Lindo Alexander for Central, who all attended on average over twenty meetings per session throughout their careers. Special mention must be made of Solomon Schloss and Henry Harris as the two most diligent Deputies, both attending virtually every meeting called during their tenure. These active 'Boardocrats' also featured prominently on the various committees the Deputies appointed. Two permanent committees existed in this period: the Law, Parliamentary and General Purposes Committee (LPC), formed in 1854 to report on

[37] *JC*, 26 July 1872, p.235.

legislation and offer legal advice, and the Conjoint Foreign Committee (CFC), formed in connection with the AJA in 1878 to oversee communal foreign affairs.[38] These bodies considerably professionalised the Board's work; speeding up analysis of issues and streamlining the decision-making process, they went some way toward mitigating the generally relaxed stance of the institution.

At the root of the Board's amateur administration lay its finances. These were poorly structured. The Board had no reserves of its own and no guaranteed method of raising cash, facts that severely curtailed its capabilities. As the Anglo-Jewish community was a voluntary association the Board had no authority to impose taxes upon it. The 1882 report of the financial sub-committee realised:

> No rating power over the seatholders or over the electors of Deputies could be acquired without the aid of an Act of Parliament unless each congregation would adopt a code of laws which should include a power of assessment and have the same enrolled under the provisions of the friendly societies' Acts [but] it would be quite impracticable to induce them all to do this [and] an Act of Parliament would probably be considered out of the question...[39]

The Board was therefore, restricted to collecting subscriptions, effectively donations, from participating congregations. Its mode of doing so was quite inefficient. Every six months the institution's expenses were totalled and then divided in equal proportion according to the number of deputies serving. An individual deputy thus cost every congregation the same amount. There were a number of disadvantages to this system. For one, the cost of electing a deputy might fluctuate widely, even during sessions, and was impossible to predict beforehand. For instance, during the April-Sept. 1874 period the Board expended £192 5s 6d and the cost per deputy was £5 1s

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[38] Emanuel, *Century* p.67. This study will pay scant attention to most of the Board Committees, which as semi-autonomous bodies linked to other organisations, transitory in nature, and usually focused upon single issues, are too tangential to be examined. They will therefore, only be mentioned in regard to relevant matters. The two permanent committees were very important aspects of the Board machinery however, and will be included in the analysis throughout.

[39] LMA, ACC/3121/A/012, MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.202.

2d, whereas in Nov.-April 1886-7 the board spent £152 0s 1d at a price of £3 9s 9d a deputy.[40] Secondly, it made no provision for the size of congregations or their financial circumstances. This could lead to considerable inequities. In 1882 the eleven-member Coventry congregation was invoiced the same sum of £8 11 7, as was the prosperous Birmingham congregation of 418 members.[41] Smaller, usually provincial, congregations could not cope with this expense and some routinely went into arrears, forfeiting their representation. In 1883 the Board reorganised its financial system in an attempt to accommodate the less wealthy; introducing a capitation allowance that levied a flat fee of two shillings per renter on all congregations with less than one-hundred but more than ten male seat-renters.[42]

A third monetary problem, which continued despite this alteration, was the lack of independent funds. This was particularly restrictive for the Board, which constantly sought to restrain expenditure so as not to overburden the synagogues. The *JC* often inveighed against this: 'An authority without pecuniary resources of its own will never rise to be a power, but will always have to content itself with remaining purely a dignity.'[43] The Board sought to rectify the weakness in 1883 by creating a standing fund to receive '...donations, legacies, and other gifts...' but lack of revenue remained a major debility throughout the post-emancipation decades.[44] It forced the Deputies, whenever substantial sums were needed, to appeal to the community. These fundraising efforts could realise considerable amounts; Jewry was exceedingly generous: a Morocco Relief Fund generated over £14,000 by 1863, a similar effort for

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[40] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.41. and ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1887, p.25.
[41] *JC*, 28 July 1882, p.4.
[42] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1883, p.11.
[43] *JC*, 06 July 1877, p.9.
[44] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1883, p.13.

Persia reached nearly £19,000 in 1872.[45] But they suffered from the haphazard style that plagued the rest of the Board's monetary policy. There was no possibility of ascertaining the amount that might be obtained, no way of quickly raising money (a crucial factor when seeking to relieve emergencies), no scope for addressing small-scale needs unworthy of a community-wide appeal, and no opportunity to extend assistance beyond crisis-management to promote long-term amelioration. Most seriously, they became less effective as time passed, fresh crises arose, and communal care fatigue set-in. Montefiore had exclaimed misgivings since 1848 about the difficulty of rousing '...our brethren in England on the subject of foreign sufferings...'[46] By the 1870s the Board was carefully selecting the issues it presented to the community. Increasingly appeals had to be re-issued or regrets offered to the sufferers due to the 'feeble response' to a collection.[47]

In spite of its organisational flaws the Board functioned. It maintained relevance in, if not exactly keeping pace with a developing society and was recognised within the community and without as a legitimate governing interest. Many of its faults might be excused as attributable to the nature of the beast: a non-professional, Victorian interest group could not be expected to set the most sedulous or expert of standards. But what nature of institution was the Board? Of the six types of voluntary association described by B. Lewis, the Deputies correspond most exactly with a religious society, being concerned with promoting a denominational identity.[48]

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[45] Emanuel, *Century* pp.79 & 95.

[46] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 259, Copies of Papers of Sir Moses Montefiore, 1793-1885. Letter from Montefiore to Louis Loewe, June 1848. The raising of such communal funds was probably the function that Montefiore most depended upon the organisation to perform and one that he could not have accomplished individually.

[47] ACC/3121/A/012 MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.48.

[48] B. Lewis, *The Middlemost and the Mill Towns. Bourgeois Culture and Politics in Early Industrial*

It differed from other such societies however, in a number of ways. For instance, the Dissenting Deputies, the loose model for the Board, by the middle of the nineteenth-century concentrated almost exclusively upon dispensing legal advice to members.[49] The Board's scope was greater. It was also a pressure group, operating upon municipal and national levels and in this respect more akin to trade unions or political interest groups, such as the Liberation Society or the Social Science Association. But in the majority of their functions these organisations were also very different from the Board. Trade unions dealt primarily with economic questions arising from class issues, whereas the Board superintended all aspects of a cross-class minority; political interest groups, through varying levels of proactive agitation sought to inform popular opinion and generate political change on a wide range of issues, whereas the Board reacted only to defend Jewish interests, avoiding agitation and with no long-term agenda.[50] Unlike any other voluntary association at this time the Board was also invested with official jurisdiction over its area and used this to pursue members' interests inside as well as outside its constituency. In this respect it bore more similitude to structures of corporate Jewish governance upon the Continent, where certain leaders were granted self-governing authority by their respective polity and often utilised this power to enforce internal social and religious discipline. But again, the comparison is only partial. Traditional Jewish communal authority was localised and within a country there would exist numerous centres of power autonomously pursuing different courses – in Britain, the Board operated on a nationwide scale and

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England (Stanford 2001) p.249. The five other types of voluntary association Lewis identifies are: those promoting political cohesion; coercive or patriotic ones; local political societies or pressure groups; charitable; and cultural.

[49] D. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience. Chapel and Politics, 1870-1914* (London 1982) p.19.

[50] H. Pelling, *A History of British Trade Unionism. Fifth Edition* (London 1992) p.7.; L. Goldman, *Science, Reform, and Politics in Victorian Britain. The Social Science Association, 1857-1886* (Cambridge 2002) pp.1-2 & 61. and D. Thompson, 'The Liberation Society, 1844-1868', in P. Hollis (ed.), *Pressure from Without in Early Victorian England* (London 1974) p.210.

sought to restrict independent action from other sources. Seeking to represent Anglo-Jewry to majority society through one medium and therefore, in one voice, it also engaged in regulating the type of community it believed the modern minority should be, occasionally resorting to social control. The post-emancipation Board was a singular institution, as regards both its English and Jewish status.

III.

The Board of Deputies was formed to represent and protect the particular civil interests of the Anglo-Jewish minority in Britain, to be an agent of the community in its relations to the state. What role could such an institution play post-emancipation? In a world where Jews were legally equal citizens, differentiated from their fellow-Englishmen merely by denomination, was this partisan body necessary? Certainly, in the years immediately after 1858, the Board had little work during Britain's 'age of equipoise'.[51] In 1865, the *JC*, noting that '...in the present temper of the nation, it is not likely that the Legislature will wittingly enact any law calculated to interfere with any Jewish practice...' characterised the Deputies as 'the Board *Fainéant*'.[52] Whilst the newspaper supported the body's continued existence, if only for tradition's sake, others in the community were less hospitable. 'In the opinion of these...the best thing the Board can do is to dissolve itself, and the next best thing is to remain inactive, and thus sink into oblivion.'[53] Reduction to ceremonial functions or even dissolution might well have been the Board's fate had it not been for the activity of the first Gladstonian ministry. Faced with reforming, modernising and interfering legislation,

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[51] See W. Burn, *The Age of Equipoise. A Study of the Mid-Victorian Generation* (Hampshire 1994)
[52] *JC*, 28 Apr. 1865, p.4.
[53] Ibid., p.4.

the Jews became starkly aware again that despite the hopes of emancipation their differences were still problematic.

> Laws made to suit the habits, the belief, and the arrangements of millions of Christians – laws tacitly organised with a sole view to the governmental ideas, settled customs, and determinate practices of the Christian people – require, indeed, special handling when it is desired to preserve the Jews from unintentional hardships and obstacles necessarily proceeding from such laws, and likely to act unduly on a section of citizens whose habits, practices, and observances are diametrically different from those of the majority of their fellow-citizens – a majority who differ, it may be widely, among themselves; but never so widely but their broadest margin of divergence is but a narrow strip of demarcation as compared with the great extent of separation between them and the Jews.[54]

With Jewish exceptionalism again on the agenda, the Board's domestic *raison d'être*, mediating between minority and majority cultures, became of paramount importance. The Deputies were careful though, to restrict their sphere of responsibility. Involvement with the rights of the individual Jewish citizen was to be avoided; only causes affecting Jews as a minority were to be taken-up. As Lewis Emanuel, the Board's Secretary and Solicitor, explained:

> If a man suffers a wrong *as* a Jew, or *because* he is a Jew, or in *respects* of his Judaic faith or observances, the Board is always ready to interpose for his protection, but, excepting in such cases, I take it that a Jewish citizen, whose rights are attacked, must, like a citizen of any other denomination, seek redress through the ordinary tribunals of the country...[55]

The Board sought to protect the Jews' newly won equality without compromising their faith or impinging upon their civil integration. Its efforts in this direction were not confined solely to scrutinising legislation but covered a range of tasks designed to smooth the interaction of Jews and other Englishmen. These domestic undertakings can be grouped into four main areas of activity: Presentation of addresses; anti-defamation work; measures to protect Jewish equality; and regulation of Jewish marriage.

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[54] *JC*, 28 Apr. 1871, p.6.
[55] *JC*, 22 Feb. 1878, p.5. Italics in original.

The sending of a loyal address to King George III had been the stimulus behind the Board's formation in 1760. Since then 'the records of the Deputies present a series of addresses of congratulation and condolence to the reigning sovereigns of Great Britain on their accession to the throne, and on every auspicious and inauspicious event that happened in their lives.'[56] Post-emancipation this 'routine, but by no means barren' function was still an essential aspect of Board work.[57] A great number of addresses were transmitted to a diverse range of personages in this era. Each of which, alongside any reply, was carefully noted in the minutes and annual reports. The purpose of these presentations was manifold. On the most rudimentary level they operated as a means of conveying gratitude. Many British officials indulged Board desires or assisted distressed Jews and an expression of thanks would probably have been expected. It was also a useful way of praising their actions, flattering their egos, and thereby, storing up future goodwill. Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Porte, Austin Layard, was 'deeply grateful' in 1879 when he received the Deputies' address lauding his efforts for Jewish refugees in the Russo-Turkish war.

> It has been my most earnest wish and endeavour to do the utmost in my power to relieve the distress and sufferings of the unfortunate Jews...You may assure the Board that I shall always be ready to exercise what little influence I may possess for the protection and defence of the Jews who may need help.[58]

Beyond this practicality, the Board's addresses also served a useful function of identity statement and reinforcement. Every Jewish achievement was marked and every individual advancement feted, by a Board testimonial. Upon his appointment as

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[56] *JC*, 28 Nov. 1873, p.579.
[57] *JC*, 22 Apr. 1859, p.4.
[58] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1880, pp.34-5.

Solicitor-General, Jessel was informed: 'That in the elevation of a coreligionist to this high legal office in her Majesty's Government which has been for the first time attained by a Jew the Board recognises a happy and signal proof of the progress of the principles of religious toleration and equality.'[59] Such addresses served to remind the recently included minority of their continuing success. It was a form of self-celebration and a fillip to communal confidence. This confidence was apparent in the regular number of addresses sent to foreign governments with no connection to Jews or Jewish causes. The visits of Don Pedro, Emperor of Brazil and the Sultan of Zanzibar elicited messages of welcome. The deaths of US Presidents Lincoln and Grant saw condolences expressed to the American Government.[60] The Deputies evidently considered it appropriate to Anglo-Jewry's status to issue such missives, just as many other British corporations would have done. It was a sign of their growing sense of importance. The most notable instance of which was the 1872 journey of Montefiore to present Tsar Alexander II with the Board's congratulations upon the two-hundredth anniversary of Peter the Great's rule. This initially generated considerable dissension within the community, where many thought it '...an event which was in no way whatever associated with the fortunes of Israel (except unpleasantly, seeing that Peter the Great was by *no means* a friend of the Jews).'[61] But the mission was a triumph. According to Montefiore's recollection, the Tsar suspended his summer military manoeuvres and travelled back to the Winter Palace '...expressly to spare me fatigue, in consequence of my advanced age...I am at a loss for words in which adequately to describe the gracious sentiments which his Imperial Majesty, and the members of his government, evinced towards me.'[62] No other

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[59] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.41.
[60] Ibid., pp.28 & 347. and ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.92.
[61] *JC*, 19 July 1872, p.224. Italics in original.
[62] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.105.

Jewish community could boast of such international recognition. At home, too, these memorials achieved notable success. Culminating in 1887, when Anglo-Jewry received 'a signal mark of Royal favour' being one of the 'very few selected from a vast number of public bodies' to personally present their jubilee address to Queen Victoria.[63] Having used addresses to demonstrate its loyalty for several centuries, the Board in the post-emancipation period obtained through them a remarkable indication of Jewish acceptance.

A corollary of this self-promotion effort was the Board's defence of the Jewish reputation. Comparatively tolerant as Britain was, cases of anti-Jewish calumny still occurred. The Board usually took responsibility for refuting such bigotry. The earliest case recorded in the Board minutes, post-emancipation, was an 1861 exchange with *Chambers' Journal*, which had published an article intimating the accuracy of blood libel accusations. An initial complaint from the Board was unsuccessful and legal opinion was sought but a visit from alderman Philips to the editors achieved the requisite apology: '...whatever may have been the currents of popular prejudice regarding the Jews (to all of which we are heartily opposed) we cannot but feel sorry that the history in question was introduced into *Chambers' Journal*.'[64] A similar incident, this time concerning *The Globe* newspaper, took place in 1880. Again, the subject was the veracity of blood libel, and again, after a consultation with Joseph Sebag, the paper published an apology upon learning of Jewish offence.[65] The Board tackled such prejudice with conviction and was not afraid to remonstrate with British authority figures, if required. As happened in

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[63] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1888, p.4. The idea for this address originated at the Board but its preparation and presentation involved a cross-section of the community.
[64] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.179. Underline in original.
[65] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1881, p.22.

December 1884, when Mr. Justice Kay pronouncing judgement in the case of Jackson v. Harris made observations that '...fastened on the entire Jewish race the odium of usury.'[66] In what the *JC* termed a 'dignified vindication' of communal honour the Deputies wrote strongly in complaint:

> The Board fails to understand how the learned Judge could consider it, at the present day, either just or necessary to draw an invidious distinction between Gentile and Jew, and to impute evil practices to an entire community, or on what principle the race or religion of the defendants could be regarded as a matter relevant to the question...[67]

Clearly the Board believed it had right upon its side, that in the civil society of Britain such sentiments would not generally be countenanced. The paucity of defamatory incidents in this period, when Jews were first entering every aspect of the Gentile world, would seem to justify their confidence.[68] And indicate the continuance of a generally tolerant attitude towards the community – despite the growth of antipathy in certain sections of elite and press opinion from the late 1870s sparked by the Bulgarian Crisis, as mentioned last chapter, which historians such as David Feldman highlight to suggest a negative shift in Britons' approach to Jews.[69]

Underlying Board assurance however, was a considerable Jewish insecurity regarding their inclusion. The Deputies were uneasy about dealing with some anti-Jewish events, and increasingly so as European antisemitism began to intensify noticeably over the 1880s. The April-May 1884 outbreak of anti-Jewish violence at Limerick revealed these contradictions in the Deputies' attitude to Jewish defence.

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[66] Ibid., Apr. 1885, p.22.
[67] Ibid., p.22. and *JC*, 09 Jan. 1885, p.17.
[68] Besides the above-mentioned episodes the Board reports record one more example of a bigoted judge, this time in Middlesbrough, March 1881, see LMA, ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1881, pp.28-32. There were also several isolated occasions when individual Deputies wrote to *The Times* refuting prejudicial comments made by some other correspondents, see *The Times*, 12 Nov. 1864, p.5. and 02 Nov. 1870, p.10.
[69] D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews. Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (London 1994) p.120.

Whilst the ringleaders were prosecuted and imprisoned, the Board admitted that 'the actual cause of the attack upon the Jews appeared to be involved in a certain amount of mystery...'[70] A proposal was therefore made to appoint a deputy to inquire into the matter, presumably with a view to preventing any recurrence. This was defeated by eleven votes to eight.[71] A result justified in the subsequent report by the assertion that the Board '...after much deliberation, considered it wiser to allow the agitation quickly to subside rather than give it an exaggerated importance by taking measures...'[72] Unable to affect a solution through correspondence or a gentlemanly conversation, the Board preferred to remain quiet, leaving the British press to exhibit its sympathies and the proper authorities to take active measures.

The *JC* had long castigated such circumspection in the face of Jewish need, often criticising how 'the badge of sufferance of our tribe is needlessly paraded by...leading members, who seem to imagine that the more Jews, and their needs, requirements, and just claims are kept in the background the better.'[73] The Board of Deputies, more careful in its assertion of Jewishness, had perhaps the more realistic approach. When O. J. Simon, son of MP John Simon, took *The Spectator* to task for some indelicate remarks it had published in an otherwise complimentary article on Montefiore's ninety-ninth birthday, the periodical responded with a more explicit anti-Jewish harangue.[74] An article entitled 'Jewish Sensitiveness' denied any prejudice against Montefiore and claimed the journal had always supported Jews' emancipation, if only to more quickly cure 'their tribal exclusiveness'. Proceeding to

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[70] ACC/3121/A/012, MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.282.
[71] Ibid., p.283.
[72] ACC/3121/A/012, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1886, p.32.
[73] *JC*, 01 Aug. 1873, p.300.
[74] *The Spectator*, 03 Nov. 1883, p.1409. Simon's objections were to the description of Montefiore as a 'Jew philanthropist', the over-exaggeration of his wealth, and the comparison of his health with a pauper centenarian's in the article's conclusion.

indulge in several derogatory comments about Judaism, its 'partly meaningless ritual' and 'want of sincerity', *The Spectator* concluded: '...the truth is that Jews have now risen so high in Europe that like Americans before their great war, they are sensitively alive to any mention which implies they are separate from other nations; but why not accept this separateness...'[75] Discretion then, might have been wiser in such circumstances, where protest merely prompted further slur. This was obviously a grey area in English opinion, which would not condone overt intolerance but was still widely suffused with negative perceptions of the Jew as 'other'. The Board walked a fine line with its anti-defamation work. It realised that even as emancipated Jews the community could not aggressively assert itself and whilst manifest prejudice might be rigorously upbraided, more insidious statements had to be overlooked.

The primary task of the post-emancipation Board of Deputies in Britain remained as it had been during emancipation: ensuring the religious equality of Jews and Judaism. The institution understood this to mean asserting Anglo-Jewry's right to equality of socio-economic opportunity without compromising the tenets or practices of Judaism – the Jewish ideal of emancipation. Its role as interlocutor between the country and the community witnessed the Board attempt to overcome various factors that threatened to upset either side of this balance. In practice this entailed keeping a close watch upon legislation and negotiating with relevant authorities to resolve any friction. The LPC considered any Parliamentary Bills that might affect the community. The vast majority required no action. In some cases, where the principle did not directly involve Jewish interests, the Board merely notified relevant communal organisations, as it did with an 1859 Bill abolishing general exemption

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[75] Ibid., pp.1407-9

from local rates, which it forwarded to all Jewish charities and schools.[76] For others, where minority rights were central, the Board took responsibility for securing necessary alterations. In 1869-70, for instance, it drew-up several petitions pressing the passage of the University Tests Bill.[77]

Such activity frequently overlapped with the work certain Jewish MPs undertook for their coreligionists. Often striving for the same goal, an informal and ad-hoc relationship existed between the two groups. Typically, this saw the Board apply to Jewish MPs requesting their intervention with a Bill's promoter or their oversight of a particular clause. Jewish MPs were usually amenable to this type of low-key assistance. After the Board Secretary had an interview with Jessel and Simon concerning the community's needs *vis-à-vis* the 1870 Factory legislation, the former discussed Jewish requirements with the Home Secretary, whilst the latter agreed to suggest a clause during committee.[78] The Board occupied the subordinate role in this cooperation. It served as a prompt, suggesting action and bringing cases before the MPs, upon whom it was entirely reliant for action. The MPs never approached the Deputies. Not infrequently they operated independently and achieved alone what the Board had sought to attain in tandem. The conscience clause Simon moved in the Ballot Act Amendment Act was done 'without communicating with the Board', despite the institution having 'simultaneously taken action' in this direction.[79] If the MPs declined to help, the Board had little option but to drop an issue. The Deputies deemed it 'injudicious' to pursue special Jewish provisions in the 1869 Endowed Schools Act as '...Mr. Jessel had written to state that in his opinion it was not

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[76] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.19.
[77] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, pp.272 & 348.
[78] Ibid., p.368.
[79] ACC/3121/A/012, MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.234.

desirable to press for the insertion of the clauses suggested, and that other Jewish Members of Parliament with whom he had consulted were of the same opinion.'[80]

The Board's most frequent efforts were not though, concerned with legislation. As an independent organisation the Board could adopt a wider scope of action than the MPs, and as a partisan body might less controversially interfere in a broader range of Jewish issues, to which it could also devote its full attention. The Board's work for Jewish equality inhabited a more day-to-day, practical level than that of the busier, Jewish Parliamentarians. The Deputies dealt with the complications of being Jewish in modern Britain as they occurred, seeking to settle the community within its non-Jewish environment. In 1876, Ascher Green of Tower Hamlets complained of the hardship of serving on a coroner's jury over the Sabbath. The Board, personally interviewing the respective coroner, obtained his 'most happy' assurance to indulge the 'conscientious scruples of Jewish jurymen' if provided with formal notification.[81] During the general election of March 1880 the polling in three boroughs – Marylebone, Southwark and Chelsea – fell upon the seventh day of Passover, thereby preventing Jews voting. The Deputies waited upon the returning officers of each district, requesting alteration to obviate this disability. In each case, the poll was moved a day forward to accommodate Jewish qualms; in Marlybone, where cards and posters had already been printed, this entailed considerable trouble for electoral staff.[82]

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[80] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.292. and *JC*, 09 July 1869, p.9.
[81] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, pp.400 & 411.
[82] *JC*, 26 Mar. 1880, p.13. and ACC/3121/A/012, MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.81. The Board did have to bear the cost of this alteration, amounting to £15 7s 6d.

The Board did not merely react when complaints reached it or situations arose but would proactively seek to adjust possible areas of contention. Although none had lobbied the Board for assistance, over 1883-4 Deputies engaged in correspondence with the War Office to acquire a furlough for Jewish soldiers during Passover. Once this had been granted, they pressed for the privilege to be extended to all Jewish festivals – a total of twenty-one days exceptional holiday. 'Whilst the Board feels that it is making a very large demand upon the generosity of the military authorities, it ventures to believe that if the proposed concession were granted, it would stimulate the men enjoying its benefits to increased zeal and assiduity in the discharge of their duties.'[83] Such particularist requests were directed not just at state bodies but private institutions, as well. The Board successfully appealed to the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford in 1883 and 1885 respectively, to organise alternative local examinations if the originals took place on the Sabbath.[84] These allowances seemed to buoy British Jews in the early 1880s. Continuing to demonstrate the largely unproblematic nature of minority existence in British society, the concessions to Jewish particularity gained, with little difficulty, from public and private authorities, reinforced Anglo-Jewry's belief in English beneficence and the efficacy of emancipation. Reviewing the disturbing state of Continental antisemitism in September 1883, the *JC* looked to such accommodation for reassurance: 'It is with a feeling of satisfaction and pride that we turn from these gloomy records abroad to the unruffled prosperity of Judaism in England. Here on all sides we see both steady and solid progress...and increase of happy relations with our neighbours.'[85] Not all of the Board's efforts were so easily effected. It required three years, a Home Office recommendation, repeated communication with prison Governors, and an

[83] *JC*, 31 Oct. 1884, p.12. This request was granted.
[84] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1884, p.16. and Apr. 1886, p.23.
[85] *JC*, 28 Sept. 1883, p.10.

investigation from the Justices of Surrey in Quarter Sessions, before Jewish prisoners in Wandsworth were granted the privilege of rest on religious festivals.[86] Once moral appeal had been exhausted the Board had little power to influence the situation. It was, like most Jewish organisations in this period, reliant upon Gentile goodwill.

It is striking how small-scale and essentially limited were the Board's activities in this area – its principal justification for arrogating communal authority. None of the above issues were urgent or particularly onerous. Such problems did not occur with great regularity and the majority were quickly resolved. The number of Jews affected was small. In 1883 only three soldiers needing facilities to observe Passover could be located in garrison towns.[87] Despite countrywide advertising in 1887, the Deputies reported '...regrets that a larger number of the community did not avail themselves of the special provision made by the committees who superintended the Oxford and Cambridge local examinations...'[88] A meagre seven Jews had applied for the special provision. Such activity was it would therefore seem, rather negligible to the majority of the community. It could probably also have been accomplished by individual Jewish leaders or other institutions, such as the Jewish Board of Guardians or United Synagogue, both of which cooperated with the Board in certain of these projects. In this situation it was not surprising that calls for the Board's dissolution were entertained. To many Jews, a body claiming representation of the entire community whilst pursuing a line highlighting the exceptional Jewish presence in society – and on a rather petty level at that – would have contradicted their understanding of emancipation. This was relatively harmless, indeed, doubtless beneficial to some, when concerned with providing a choice for pious Jews that

[86] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, pp.133 & 393.
[87] ACC/3121/A/012, MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.233.
[88] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1887, pp.19-20.

otherwise might have compromised their faith or restricted their civil existence. Jewish soldiers and prisoners, for instance, gained the option to observe festivals if they desired to or continue as before, alongside everybody else. But on occasions the Board asserted its principles at the expense of individual Jews. In 1873, concerned over the possibility of Jewish children being subjected to Christian regimes in privately run industrial schools, the Board negotiated that

> ...Jewish children hereafter committed to any other industrial school throughout the Kingdom will be immediately transferred to the Gem St. School, where they will have the advantages of regular visitation and instruction from Ministers of the Birmingham Hebrew congregations and they will be exempt from a course of discipline repugnant to their religion.[89]

At this point there was not '...a single Jewish inmate in any of the institutions' but within a year a Jewish girl was remanded in Leeds and duly transported to Birmingham.[90] It is to be wondered whether it was truly in the interests of a troubled young girl to be transferred from her home, presumably away from her relations and friends, and placed in an unfamiliar environment under a special regimen that often separated her from fellow inmates, merely so that the Board was assured her religious scruples were not violated.

One issue dominated these Board attempts to arbitrate the Jewish and English spheres of existence in this period: Factory legislation. Significantly, the first area where Jewish MPs sought special treatment for Jews, the raft of Bills and Acts seeking to regulate the working conditions of women and children, also caused the Deputies greater trouble than any other. At first, the Board was not particularly agitated. Having obtained a sympathetic clause in the original 1867 Act, it was

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[89] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.133. This school was located in Birmingham as the Board was unable, after 'considerable difficulties' to reach agreement with any London ones. Industrial schools were used to discipline and educate juvenile offenders.

[90] Ibid., pp.90 & 215.

reluctant to further press the matter.[91] After Morris Oppenheim, a barrister, communal worker and deputy for Manchester (Old) at this time, called attention to the recent conviction of members of seven Jewish firms for infringing the Act, the Board, with its characteristic patrician sense of responsibility, resolved to seek 'whenever possible' a relieving amendment.[92] The Deputies were far more reluctant to pressure the state for this indulgence than the above ones. Even they shied at introducing an exclusively Jewish measure into the national assembly, being content to wait to amend any future Bill introduced. Again, the *JC* was bullish:

> We are well aware that we are treading on delicate ground, and that the governing classes in the community touch upon matters of this kind very reluctantly. They are fearful of giving offence to their neighbours, by claiming what might be deemed special privileges. But we contend that in entertaining this apprehension they wholly misunderstood the English character...[93]

The Board's hesitancy was justified though. When an LPC deputation waited upon the Home Secretary in January 1870, Mr. Bruce praised their patience, '...he thought the Board acted wisely in not asking for a special Act of Parliament, as the introduction of such a measure might very likely lead to misconception in some quarters...'[94]

This deputation was a symptom however, of changing attitudes at the Board. Weeks before the Deputies had received a petition from the City of London Jewish Tailors Benefit Society. Signed by 1,815 hands, this begged the Board to strive for amendment '...so that we may number the same hours as our Christian brethren,

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[91] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, pp.148-9. In this instance the promoters of the Bill agreed to insert the Board's desired clause, which allowed Jewish workshops closed on the Sabbath to open afterwards till 9pm on Saturdays. For large parts of the year though, this proved worthless, Jewish workers being reluctant to work for the 1-2 hours available.

[92] Ibid., pp.275 & 281.

[93] *JC*, 26 Feb. 1869, p.4.

[94] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.347.

without infringing on our religious principles...'[95] Such a direct appeal to the Board's protection could not be ignored, especially as it was noted that no member of these industrial classes actually served on the organisation.[96] An inquiry was immediately instituted, for which considerable effort was undertaken, the President visiting several Jewish factories and interviewing a variety of concerned parties. The conclusions were ominous. There were between 3-4,000 Jews working in the worst affected trades of tobacco and tailoring; '...their employment was precarious and their wages small...they have always, in fact, occupied the lowest stratum of industrial life, many of them being in a chronic state of want; but that since 1867 their condition has been rendered very much worse...'[97] Admitting their original amendment was not efficacious and Jews consequently lost twice as many working hours as Christians, the report warned: 'Unless these poor fellows can be allowed to work on Sunday instead of Saturday...the adoption of handicrafts by the poor of our people will...be greatly discouraged, the desecration of the Sabbath will be directly promoted, and the mass poverty in our community will continue to increase.'[98] These dire possibilities jolted the Board out of its complacency and the Deputies resolved to request special treatment. Able to plead a clear case of discrimination the Board became far more confident. 'To the objection that this would be asking for exceptional legislation for the Jewish community, your committee venture to think that they have established a clear case for exceptional legislation...'[99] This opinion was reinforced by the knowledge that Gentiles enforcing the regulations, from Inspectors to Magistrates, repeatedly expressed sympathy for convicted Jews; thereby 'tacitly admitting the

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[95] Ibid., pp.335 & 354.
[96] *JC*, 15 July 1870, p.7.
[97] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, pp.337-8.
[98] Ibid., pp.337-8.
[99] Ibid., pp.338-9.

harsh and oppressive incidence of the Acts.'[100] The Deputies' determination was checked somewhat by their meeting with the Home Secretary mentioned above. Bruce would agree only to introduce remedial clauses into the next relevant Bill, leaving the Board again, playing its waiting game.

This turnaround regarding workshop regulation is the best example of the Board responding to and working for communal needs, rather than its own interpretation of these, in the post-emancipation era. Despite this, its achievements were initially negligible. The first measure of relief came with Salomon's Workshop Regulation Act Amendment, March 1871. The Deputies had urged Salomons to extend the Act to cover all Jewish manufacturers: '...if the principle be a just one as applied to tobacco manufacturers it must be equally so in the case of all factories under the like conditions.'[101] Salomons rejected this logic; rebuffing the Board's aid he brought his limited Bill, correctly confident that only in such circumscribed format would it pass the House. The Board, powerless to influence events once persons of Gentile and Jewish authority had refused its demands, sought nevertheless to procure some kudos, claiming the Act as fruit of its preparatory lobbying.[102] The Jewish Tailors duly provided this esteem. Sending a memorial of appreciation, the Society stated its belief that in no small measure the Act was '...attained through your countenance and assistance.'[103] Many in the community were less generous. 'The plain truth is, that the Board tried to do something and failed. The Board

[100] Ibid., pp.338-9.
[101] Ibid., pp.407-8.
[102] Ibid., p.410.
[103] Ibid., p.432.

retired...Next year, Sir David Salomons tried to do something and succeeded. The Board then cried "halves"', commented 'Gazebo' in a more accurate appraisal.[104]

Salomons' Act only partially alleviated the problem and the Board continued to receive complaints. Increasingly, these came from Jewish factory owners, who, often employing large numbers of Jews, lost considerable working time. The Board remained committed and took the opportunity presented by the 1875 Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the Factory and Workshop Acts, to once more represent the Jewish cause. The Board submitted a classic plea founded on religious liberty and its reciprocal benefits to society: a '...concession to persons professing the Jewish religion would be at once an act of justice as between them and their rivals of other denominations, and conducive to public policy and morality by enabling persons to act up to the dictates of their conscience.'[105] The commissioners, possessing a stricter understanding of legal equality, expressed their hostility to such concepts: 'Special relations of the law in favour of particular classes or individuals are in themselves objectionable. In operation they cause jealousy and dissatisfaction in those to whom they are not granted.'[106] But, recognising the complexity of the Jews' circumstances, they felt such exceptions could not be disposed with in this instance.[107] The Board had succeeded – so well, in fact, that when approached by the Master Tailors' Protection Association in June 1885 for further adjustments, the Deputies could reply that '...the Jewish tailors suffered such a trifling disadvantage as

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[104] *JC*, 03 Nov. 1871, p.3.

[105] *Parliamentary Reports from Commissioners* 1876, xxix, Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Working of the Factory and Workshop Acts, with a View to Their Consolidation and Amendment; Together with the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index p.146.

[106] Ibid., p.36.

[107] Ibid., p.37. These exemptions extended the privilege of the 1871 Act to all Jewish manufacture and also permitted extra weekday overtime for Christians employed by Jews who shut their factories on the Sabbath and Sunday.

compared with non-Jews, that it would not be judicious to apply for special legislation on their behalf.'[108]

The other main function of the post-emancipation Board and the most important from a communal perspective was its regulation of Jewish marriage. The 1836 Marriage Act had invested the Board with responsibility for certifying Jewish marriage secretaries. In practice this meant that all synagogues wishing to solemnise marriages had to apply to the Deputies, who required that they obtain a reference from the Chief Rabbi or *Haham* testifying to their Jewish credentials. The Board would then recommend them to the Registrar General, who issued a licence. This system was convenient to both the Jewish and English authorities. It provided the Registrar with a useful means of ensuring that only *bona fide* synagogues received state sanction; avoiding the possibility of his office having to make complicated inquiries regarding the propriety of certain congregations or being drawn into wrangles over Jewish definition. For as the not infrequent requests he made to the Deputies for an 'authoritative reply' on questions of Jewish usage indicate, the Registrar was, unsurprisingly, quite ignorant regarding Jewish customs.[109] The Deputies benefited from the ability to manage the community. Jewish marriage practice could be kept Orthodox, malpractice reprimanded and wayward synagogues lent on to conform. The reciprocal advantages of this arrangement occasioned a very congenial working relationship between the Board and the Registrar, as both strove to realise the goal of a well-regulated community adhering to both English and Jewish law. Operating in tandem they sought to correct any misapplications or irregularities. In July 1864, for instance, the Registrar's office reported a case of marriage

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[108] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1886, p.21.
[109] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.129.

celebration in the Hartlepool congregation, which had no certified secretary. The Board duly communicated with the offending synagogue, informing them of the necessary procedures. Three months later the congregation was legally registered.[110] Generally though, the English authorities left supervision to the Board and relied heavily upon them to coordinate Jewish registration. The mutually advantageous relationship between the Board of Deputies and the Registrar General not only typified the institution's role as communal medium but in many ways epitomised the emancipatory ideal of Jewish and British interaction, combining respect for Judaism and English legality.

The Board's task of upholding the Jewish side of this arrangement was complicated by the repeated occurrence of irregular forms of marriage. The simplicity of basic Jewish marriage requirements allows unions to be easily solemnised, greatly facilitating the evasion of any official restrictions.[111] Across the period, numerous instances of this were recorded. The secretary of the Manchester Hebrew Congregation complained to the Board about '...a case of mock marriage in that city between a foreign Jew and Jewess, the rite being performed by a Polish Jew unauthorised to officiate...' in 1868.[112] December 1869, the Registrar drew attention to similar offences in Hull and Grimsby.[113] The *JC* published a harrowing account of forced marriage leading to attempted murder from Sheffield in January 1876.[114] All these sources noted that 'irregular marriages are almost confined to Jews of foreign birth' and '...who, being foreigners, have not been sufficiently impressed with that

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[110] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, pp.30-1.
[111] All that is required for the most basic form of Jewish matrimony is the placing of a ring upon the bride's finger in the presence of two witnesses and a rabbi who recites a Hebrew blessing formula.
[112] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.256.
[113] Ibid., p.340.
[114] *JC*, 18 Feb. 1876, p.747.

respect for law and order which characterises the English people.'[115] They all, also, petitioned the Board to prevent further occurrences. The Board itself was particularly anxious to 'repress the evil'.[116] The LPC exhorted action in the strongest terms, warning that if these marriages

> ...are not checked there is nothing to prevent small bodies of Jews, both in London and the provinces, separating themselves from the parent congregation, with self-certified ministers, both ignorant and unprincipled, who could connive at marriages taking place, despite the existence of grave impediments arising from former existing marriages, or from relationships within the degrees prohibited by statute, and that thus scandals might arise tending to the discredit and dishonour of the entire community...[117]

This was a terrifying possibility for an organisation devoted to maintaining an orderly and unified community in harmony with its British environment.

Irregular marriages threatened to undermine all that the Board represented. Exacerbating which, were genuine social concerns with such forms of matrimony that could be used to entrap and exploit women and made wife desertion difficult to punish.[118] Anglo-Jewry was eager to eradicate the problem. Ironically, previous legislative dispensation for Jewish marriage prevented any recourse to legal action.[119] '...it is but too evident that that which was probably intended as a beneficial exemption to the Jewish community has generated a very gross abuse.'[120] The Registrar General suggested affixing notices in Jewish areas pointing out the illegal

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[115] Ibid., and 28 Jan. 1876 p.699.
[116] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.253.
[117] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1889, p.19.
[118] H. Henriques, *Jewish Marriages and the English Law* (London 1909) p.55.
[119] Ibid., pp.21 & 27. This derived from the clause in Hardwicke's 1753 Marriage Act, which recognised the validity of Quaker and Jewish marriage according to their own custom, exempting them from other requirements binding Christians. The 1836 Marriage Act was enabling not disabling and merely added the registration process to existing marriage forms. Thus, Jews violating registration were still only acting irregularly, rather than illegally. Other types of clandestine marriage, such as those contravening degrees of consanguinity, were outlawed by specific clauses and were illegal to Jews and Christians alike.
[120] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1889, p.18.

character and consequences of these ceremonies.[121] Less keen to advertise its embarrassments the Board declined. Unable to prosecute the Deputies were forced to rely upon informal pressure to exert their social control and entrusted local communities with stamping out the menace. The Manchester Board of Guardians, for instance, brought people performing such marriages before local magistrates, hoping that severe punishments would dissuade others.[122] By the end of the period, unable to curb the problem and facing a dramatic increase in Jewish immigration, the Board considered it

> ...advisable to endeavour to introduce a clause to the effect that any person who, after the passing of the Act, shall knowingly and wilfully solemnise any marriage between persons professing the Jewish religion, in the absence of the secretary of the synagogue lawfully authorised to register such marriage shall be guilty of felony.[123]

By February 1889 the LPC had prepared a draft Bill to check irregular Jewish marriage.[124]

Fear of clandestine matrimony coupled with their paradigmatic interaction with British authorities made the Board of Deputies very jealous of its power over Jewish marriage. 'Vigilant attention', bordering upon neurosis, was paid to any possible alteration in their control.[125] The institution was therefore deeply agitated when the 1868 Royal Commission on Marriage proposed to devolve responsibility to individual congregations, removing the Board from the process.[126] In this step the Commission was following the recommendations of Salomons, the only Jew to

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[121] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.340.
[122] R. Liedtke, *Jewish Welfare in Hamburg and Manchester, c.1850-1914* (Oxford 1998) p.156.
[123] ACC/3121/B/02/013, Presidents and Secretaries' Papers, Charles Emanuel: Report of the LPC on the question of an irregular marriage at Manchester, 17 April 1888.
[124] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1889, p.19.
[125] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.240.
[126] *Parliamentary Reports from Commissioners* 1867-8, xxxii, Report of the Royal Commission on the Laws of Marriage p.85.

appear before it, who gave evidence as a private individual. Talking up the example of Reform Judaism, Salomons argued that the existence of a state-sponsored middleman enforcing a particular code through its certification prerogative '...promotes discord in a small body by one party being enabled to assume power over the other...' and '...puts the state in a very anomalous position in having to appear as a party to these religious disputes...'[127] His proclivity would be much more in tune with the rhetoric of emancipation, of universal treatment over particular privilege. 'What I want to see is the Jews put on the same footing of religious freedom as all other dissenters, that they shall have perfect liberty from the state, so that, when a congregation is established they shall at once be able to go to the Registrar General and have their society registered.'[128] The Board preferred a more partisan stance. It and Salomons had always possessed divergent views upon equality and its requirements, variant attitudes that continued after the event. Deeming Salomons' proposals 'most unwise and inexpedient' it pooh-poohed his claims that the community desired greater independence of expression

> ...those who are best acquainted with the practical workings of the present system, namely the Registrar General, the Jewish Ecclesiastical Authorities, and this Board, are opposed to change, and, as the great body of Jews entertain the same feeling, it would surely be unwise and impolitic to unsettle a law which deals with the most hallowed relations of life, in order to meet the case of a hypothetical and imaginary schism, which, it is assumed, <u>might</u> arise, but of which in reality not the remotest prospect exists.[129]

Naturally for an institution, the Board sought to preserve its power but it was not exaggerating the broad support for its stance. More synagogues successfully

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[127] Ibid., p.84.
[128] Ibid., p.84.
[129] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.250. and National Archives, HO45/8161, Report of the Board of Deputies on Jewish Marriages to the Home Office, 11 Dec. 1868. p.3. Underline in original.

affiliated mid-term, outside the constitutionally established election period, on the justification of wishing to prevent any change in marriage regulation than at any other point in this era; the Manchester Hebrew Congregation, for instance, elected two after an absence of ten years.[130] The Chief Rabbi wrote in complaint to the Commission. The *JC* and the majority of its correspondents were incensed. The initial fear was the emasculation of the organisation. The Board's

> ...chief connection with the congregations is owing to the power it has to certify secretaries...Take away that power, and nothing would remain but voluntary reasons for its cohesion. There would no longer be any definite object for congregations to send representatives to it, and bear the necessary expenses of the body.[131]

The demise of the Deputies might not have so perturbed all Jews but the loss of its regulatory responsibilities threatened a more alarming possibility. Although major religious schism was unlikely in the community, as Adler stressed to the Commission, 'experience has taught me, that petty dissensions, altogether unconnected with religious matters, have sometimes arisen in the smaller provincial congregations.'[132] Working in concert the Board and Adler had previously managed to sooth most intra-synagogal squabbles and stifle splits by refusing to endorse any new splinter congregations. The Hebrew New Synagogue Leeds, a breakaway from the Leeds Hebrew Congregation, was refused a Board marriage recommendation in 1874, so that Adler might effect reconciliation.[133] Anachronistically, the Board and Adler coercively used their marriage privileges to maintain communal coherence in an associational age.

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[130] *JC*, 20 Nov. 1868, p.3.
[131] *JC*, 29 Jan. 1869, p.4.
[132] *Parliamentary Reports from Commissioners* 1867-8, xxxii p.45.
[133] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.329.

More effective than social ostracism or financial sanctions, this statutory power was utilised by the Board to enforce not only unity but a communal standard of Judaism. Having excluded Reform pre-emancipation, the Board's main concern was foreign-born 'malcontents', who frequently practised versions of Judaism both more Orthodox and Reformist than Anglo-Jewry.[134] 'There are some towns in which only 10 foreign Jews reside...who might be ignorant both of the laws of the land, and of the laws, customs and usages of the Jews...' presently, as a *JC* correspondent observed, they are compelled to belong to the community 'for the purpose of securing the rights of marriage and burial; whereas, if the recommendation in question be adopted, we should have each of these form a distinct congregation, and adieu to all unity, good order, or authority.'[135] The majority of the community did not desire Salomons' equality, which in practice would have fractured Jewish fraternity in England. They preferred Jewish partiality. 'It is clear when the law granted the Quakers and the Jews this special exemption...it intended to grant them a privilege peculiar to themselves as distinct from the great mass of dissenters', was the *JC*'s verdict.[136]

The Board of Deputies was supposedly a secular institution. When lobbying the Home Office to maintain their certification responsibility the Deputies stated: '...no ecclesiastic either is or ever has been a member of the Board, the guidance of the community in religious matters is not interfered with by the Board.'[137] On several occasions when petitioned by congregations to resolve internal quarrels the Board

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[134] *JC*, 13. Nov. 1868, p.7. Malcontents was the description used by the *JC* correspondent quoted below, not the Board.
[135] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.127. and *JC*, 13 Nov. 1868, p.7.
[136] *JC*, 29 Jan. 1869, p.4.
[137] National Archives, HO45/8161, Report of the Board of Deputies on Jewish Marriages to the Home Office, p.2.

replied it '...could not interfere in matters of difference between the congregation and any of its members or officers...'[138] Despite lacking any invested authority over communal religiosity the Board evidently did interfere, contradicting its meekly professed non-religious stance. As Salomons told the Marriage Commission '...they assume to be in the interest of Orthodox ecclesiastical authority' and use marriage certification in '...an attempt to promote Jewish Orthodoxy by the authority of Parliament...'[139] It is hard to refute Salomons' assertion. Clause six of the Deputies' constitution stipulated that concerning religious matters it was 'governed' by the Chief Rabbi and *Haham*. This was modified slightly to 'guidance of the Board on religious matters' in connection with an offer of affiliation made to Reform.[140] Predictably, the Reform congregation still found this inconsistent with their principles and rejected a membership invitation that was little more than an attempt to place them under Orthodox jurisdiction. Not until 1885 was a genuine attempt to relax this restriction made and Reform allowed to participate. The *JC* reflected:

> The Board of Deputies has always been the embodiment of respect for rabbinical authority. Only those congregations could claim to have a voice in its councils which acknowledged the ecclesiastical authority of the Chief Rabbi. Now that fundamental principle is set aside. The Board imposes no longer any ecclesiastical test upon its would-be constituents.[141]

This did not, though, signal a dramatic shift, merely the inclusion of one (increasingly minor) difference. The Deputies were careful not to legitimise further secession and continued to act repressively towards new developments.

The power the Board conferred upon the Chief Rabbinate through this adherence was a critical prop to Adler's authority, which otherwise relied upon

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[138] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.458.
[139] *Parliamentary Reports from Commissioners* 1867-8, xxxii, pp.86-7.
[140] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.193.
[141] *JC*, 21 May 1886, p.9.

voluntary subscription. In reciprocation the Rabbinate lent its spiritual sanction to the Deputies, dignifying their existence at a time when many Jews were unsure of their necessity. The Board and the Chief Rabbinate were mutually reinforcing. Throughout this period, as prior to emancipation, they interacted to direct the character of the community, preserving its coherence and regulating its Orthodoxy. That the Anglo-Jewish community was closely united and suffered little fission in the nineteenth-century compared to many Continental communities, owes much to the Board's coercive use of its marriage powers in conjunction with the moral authority of the Chief Rabbi. Crucial to this symbiosis was the close relationship between Moses Montefiore and Nathan Adler. The two men shared similar conceptions of Jewry's place in the modern world and the necessity of tempering equality that encroached upon the faith. Even without this cooperation it seems inevitable that the Board, despite pretensions, would become involved in religion. Putatively non-religious, the Board's representation was paradoxically located in synagogue membership. Only religious members of Anglo-Jewry could participate, those unaffiliated to congregations had no access. The Board's function was also partisan, its task was to further the interests of a religious minority. Directed by members of the communal elite possessed of a natural inclination to guide their coreligionists as they thought best, it is unsurprising that the Deputies interfered to significantly influence Anglo-Jewry's religious character in the post-emancipation decades.

IV.

According to the terms of its constitution the Board of Deputies of British Jews had no mandate to interfere in the affairs of foreign Jews. Its purview was

restricted to the British Empire and, in reality, concentrated within Britain. But both before and after emancipation a large portion of the Board's activities were concerned with Jewish communities beyond these limits. Until 1873, when a constitutional clause was created to legitimise these actions, sympathisers justified them by 'prescriptive usage', whilst the critical characterised them '*ultra vires*'.[142] The *JC* supported Board intervention, deeming assisting foreign Jews '...the direction in which it has most successfully worked...'[143] There was indeed, a well-established tradition of intercession abroad, dating back to the very foundation year: 'From 1760 to 1783, from the Jews of Jamaica to the Jews of Romania, the representatives...have always been looked up to by our distressed coreligionists in the four quarters of the globe for support and help in every emergency.'[144] This continued into the post-emancipation decades, when for considerable periods – the early 1860s, late 1870s and 1880s – the majority of Board work involved Jews abroad. It was an age when many Jewish communities throughout the world, suffering, often increasing, forms of prejudice and persecution, needed assistance. The Board recognised its religious duty to provide it. Nathan Adler beseeched the Deputies in 1865

> Now, when our brethren cry into us that we may help them to *save life*, must not all our feelings of humanity respond to the appeal? It is surely the holiest duty of our brethren in a happier land, who have hands full of kindness and sympathy, to come forward and help the distressed...[145]

Backed by such injunctions the Board pressed Jewish rights in a multitude of places, from Morocco and Gibraltar, Romania and Bulgaria, to Palestine and Persia.

Numerous methods were employed to effect improvement in their coreligionists'

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[142] *JC*, 25 Aug. 1871, p.3. The new clause three read: 'That the Board shall also, when they deem intervention desirable, use their influence and exertions in favour of Jewish communities or individuals in foreign countries, in cases of oppression, wrong or misfortune, which may come under the notice of the Board.' See *JC*, 23 Jan. 1874, p.713.

[143] *JC*, 05 Nov. 1858, p.4.

[144] *JC*, 28 Nov. 1873, p.579.

[145] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.86. Italics in original

condition. Rulers were memorialised with requests for greater rights; the Foreign Office was spurred to exert a civilising influence; generous sums of money were donated; press publicity employed to garner sympathetic opinion; and, the ultimate measure, Montefiore undertook personal missions. Beneficial results were achieved, especially at the beginning of the period. In September 1860, after Board promptings, the Foreign Office secured restitution and permission to rebuild their synagogue for Jewish riot victims in Galatz.[146] In a *cause célèbre* of 1864, Montefiore obtained not only the pardon of several wrongly imprisoned Jews in Tangiers but a decree from the Sultan pledging justice to all Moroccan Jews in future.[147]

Despite such incidents, the Deputies' foreign assistance was distinguished more by its restricted and set nature than its achievements. Unlike other contemporary Jewish organisations seeking to relieve Jews internationally, such as the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* (AIU) or the Anglo-Jewish Association, the Board did not sponsor long-term ameliorative projects, promote Jewish education or attempt pre-emptive measures to avert anti-Jewish incidents.[148] It waited until directly appealed to by those already suffering. Abroad, the Board was fundamentally a reactive force. At times, the Deputies refused to take action even when informed of antisemitism by other agencies. When the AIU drew the Board's notice to the Jews of Servia being deprived of their benefits, it was informed that '...as this Board has not received from that community any application, official or otherwise, soliciting its aid, it has not thought fit at present to offer its intervention.'[149] The *JC* would frequently excoriate

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[146] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.96.
[147] *The Times*, 01 Feb. 1864, p.10.
[148] The exception to this was Board involvement, particularly the application of Montefiore's testimonial fund, for the Jewish population of Palestine, where, alongside emergency aid, efforts were undertaken to develop infrastructure and improve education.
[149] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.160.

the 'uncharitableness and unreasonableness' of this rectitude.[150] What happens the paper wondered, if '...the sufferers might be so situated as to be physically prevented from imploring help, or might be so terrified into silence as not to dare to make known their distress except by look and gesture.'[151] The Board had no answer to this trenchant point, and merely ignored the newspaper's urgings for swifter responses.

It was more concerned with justifying its intervention. Most appeals for aid were carefully checked and corroborated. Establishing their veracity was of paramount importance to an institution unsure of the propriety of its actions. On several occasions pursuing dubious claims had embarrassed the Board. British authorities noted in the above-mentioned Galatz incident that Servian Jews had exaggerated their losses when applying to the Board.[152] In 1862, having been advised both by the Chief Rabbi and AIU that a British-Swiss commercial treaty in negotiation required an equality clause, the Board made representations to the government only to be informed that no such treaty existed.[153] Mistakes like this revealed the Board's unprofessional nature and risked future cooperation with the state. A significant part of the problem lay in the Deputies' administration, which contained no provision for foreign action. Such activity being unauthorised, mechanisms had never developed to efficiently process appeals. Not until 1877 was a motion carried to establish a permanent foreign affairs committee. The financial system was most crippling. Bereft of independent resources the Board was forced to inform most petitioners '...that it has no funds whatever at its disposal available for

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[150] *JC*, 25 Sept. 1863, p.4.
[151] *JC*, 14 Aug. 1863, p.4.
[152] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.97.
[153] Ibid., p.250.

such a purpose...'[154] There was the consideration that too liberal and rapid aid '...might operate prejudicially...creating an incentive to bigotry and avarice, to commit similar acts of cruelty.'[155] But doubtless, it was at times convenient for the Board to have few resources. Pleading poverty enabled it to reject the majority of entreaties it received and thereby avoid the possibility of becoming a perpetual charity for foreign Jews. Post-emancipation, Board assistance for abused coreligionists abroad was seriously limited.

That it existed at all was in large-part due to the sympathetic attitude of the British Foreign Office. Not only did the department tolerate such Jewish activity, it was intricately involved with it.

> No matter what government was at the helm of affairs, whether Conservative or Liberal, whether headed by the Earl of Derby or Lord Palmerston, an application from the Board of Deputies to the Foreign Office invariably met with a prompt and friendly response. The Earls of Aberdeen and Malmesbury evinced the same benevolence as Earl Russell; and to the powerful interposition of humane England the Jews all over the world are indebted for the mitigation of much suffering...[156]

For once the *JC* was little exaggerating. Successive governments not only entertained Jewish suggestions but sought to incorporate the community in decision-making processes. Information flowed in both directions, the Foreign Office regularly forwarding relevant despatches to the community. Layard wrote to Derby from Turkey describing Jewish sufferings: 'I would ask your Lordship to have the kindness to forward these papers to some leading member of the Jewish community in London, as the information they contain might enable it to judge how far additional help is needed, and could be afforded.'[157] The government saw the Anglo-Jewish community

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[154] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.365.
[155] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.17.
[156] *JC*, 18 April 1862, p.4.
[157] *Parliamentary Papers* 1878, xxxvi, p.304. Turkey No.1 Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Turkey, Layard to Derby, 05 Sept 1877.

as the legitimate source for dealing with matters concerning foreign Jews. The Board was not treated merely as a supplicant but as an interest group; one of the 'special publics' or informed lobbies that influenced Britain's foreign and imperial policies in the second half of the nineteenth-century.[158] Calvert, HM Consul in Monastir, exchanged almost weekly correspondence with the Deputies throughout May-July 1864, as he oversaw the application of funds they had raised, at his behest, for the fire-ravaged Jewish quarter.[159] Henry Jones, Consul-General in Tabrez, wrote to Montefiore detailing the suffering of starving Persian Jews: 'I consider it my duty to bring the case to your notice trusting that it may be in your power in some degree to relieve the sufferers.'[160] Anglo-Jewish confidence was immensely boosted by such cooperation, which facilitated much of the Deputies' work abroad and reinforced their influence as a Jewish conduit to the government.

But the Board's relationship with the Foreign Office was something of a double-edged sword. The Board routinely submitted all memorials and plans for intervention to the government before proceeding with them. This had the practical benefit of obtaining British endorsement, or at least sanction – something that no doubt considerably bolstered their efficacy. But it also tied the Board to the government's line, curtailing its independence of action. Obsessed with maintaining this affinity the Board refused to act through any other means. If the British government would not pursue an issue, neither would the Board. The Deputies also worried about pestering the state with Jewry's continual problems and carefully screened those it referred. Many smaller grievances, alongside cases of chronic

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[158] J. Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion', *English Historical Review*, Vol.112. No.447. (June 1997), p.629.
[159] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.24.
[160] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.27.

complaint were thus ignored. Some in the community recognised that the Board's official attachment was not an 'unalloyed good'.[161] In the discussions preceding the formation of the AJA, Israel Davis observed that often, in fact, for the task of aiding foreign Jews, this connection was '...perhaps its greatest disqualification.'[162] Restricting, as it did, direct or autonomous communication or arrangements with foreign organisations: 'What would English ministers say to an English Board of Registration making direct appeals to a government at Bucharest?'[163] This was a sensitive argument. It struck at the heart of the emancipated community's identity. The Board, first and foremost the representative organ of Anglo-Jewry, had always scrupulously protected its Englishness when advocating Jewish causes by working only '...under the aegis of the British government', even though this limited its capacity to intercede.[164] The *JC* appreciated the necessity of this:

> If we Jews born in England desire to claim and retain the name and position of Englishmen...we must not imperil that right in any sense by recognising direct communication with any foreign prince or potentate whatsoever...it has been an invariable practice of Englishmen to regard with jealous eye any communication with foreign governments otherwise than by the medium, or at least with the aid of the government of England.[165]

The Board felt that to maintain the English aspect of their dual identity, Anglo-Jewry had to sublimate their Diasporic sympathies to the considerations of the British government.

One major ramification of this attitude was the Board's refusal to cooperate with foreign Jewish bodies in providing relief. At the achievement of emancipation there were few Jewish organisations that could attempt international relief and the

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[161] *JC*, 01 Sept. 1871, p.10.
[162] *JC*, 31 Mar. 1871, p.11.
[163] Ibid., p.11.
[164] *JC*, 10 Nov. 1871, p.11.
[165] Ibid., p.11.

Board was able occasionally to construct multi-national efforts under its leadership. This happened most notably over the Mortara Affair in 1858. When the Board '...appealed for cooperation to the Jewish congregational bodies in the principal cities and towns of Germany and the United States of America...to the Central Consistory of Israelites of France, and to the central Jewish authorities of Amsterdam' in recovering the child.[166] The international outcry and offence caused to British public opinion by this example of papal zeal assured the Board that its character would not be endangered in this instance.[167] Throughout the period, the Board was also very amenable to collecting international donations for the various funds it sponsored. These were sometimes considerable. The 'munificent amount' of £1,936 17s 8d was received from American congregations towards the 1866 Holy Land Relief Fund.[168] That the Board could elicit such contributions would indicate that it had a notable profile in the Jewish world. Never though, were such transactions reciprocated. All requests for pecuniary assistance or subscriptions to other community's fundraisers were routinely refused. This financial reticence reflected a general, unilateralist attitude that saw all collaboration offers rebuffed. The US Jewish Board of Delegates was keen for close interaction with the Board, offering to participate in their ventures and repeatedly requesting '...to exchange publications with your Board, and to communicate with you whenever the common interests both institutions have at heart may be served.'[169] The Board was, at best, tardy in this exchange of information and

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[166] National Archives, FO881/811, Foreign Office Correspondence about the Jew Boy, Mortara, 1858, p.14. For a complete account of the Mortara affair see: D. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (London 1997)

[167] The level of British sympathy is demonstrated by the public support Sir Culling Eardley, as President of the Evangelical Alliance, consistently displayed for the Board's attempts at restitution, assuring Montefiore that '...the Protestants of Christendom are resolved to sustain the Jews in their just claim.' See *The Times*, 28 Dec. 1858, p.5.

[168] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.102.

[169] Ibid., p.92.

continually resolved '...that it would be inexpedient to associate any delegate to and in conjunction with the Board.'[170]

Most illustrative of the Board's insularity was its (lack of) relationship with the AIU. The Alliance, founded in the aftermath of Mortara, represented a new development in Jewish organisation, being a body devoted to promoting Jewish interests through multinational effort. It immediately sought an *entente cordiale* with the Deputies, deferentially seeking their help '...to obtain for those still deprived of them, a complete civil and political emancipation.'[171] Despite this noble objective, the Board offered only its '...sentiments of respect and friendly consideration.'[172] The AIU continued attempts for several years to establish more intimate fraternisation but the Board consistently denied it access to intelligence and excluded it from activities. The Deputies were not interested in such partnership, even for the cause of distressed Jewry. Partly a matter of pride, as the more venerable institution it did not relish the offer of 'adhesion' to this nascent society, the fundamental reason lay in Anglo-Jewry's English nationalism, which it valued before this Jewish internationalism. Based in France, hoping '...to organise and unite with one accord the intellectual and pecuniary resources of the Israelite community throughout the world...' and described by the *JC* as: '...the first organised recognition in modern times of the brotherhood of Israel', the Alliance promoted a trans-national conception of Jewishness beyond the hyphenated emancipation image that placed Jewry firmly behind nationality.[173] The Anglo-Jewish Board, staffed by Englishmen of the Jewish

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[170] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.6.
[171] Ibid., pp.115 & 135.
[172] Ibid., p.154.
[173] Ibid., p.135. and *JC*, 02 August 1867, p.4. The Board, as noted earlier, had been willing to collaborate with the older *Consistoire centrale*, a French Jewish body not unlike itself in organisation and intention. The AIU, however, was another matter: a non-representative lobby

persuasion and connected to the British government, could not empathise with this interpretation of identity and avoided association with it. So did most English Jews. The *JC* reported in 1867 that of the 5,000 AIU members a feeble 29 were English; in 1870 British subscriptions were still 'amusingly small'[174]

There was however significant sympathy for the objects of the Alliance, if not its organisation, within Anglo-Jewry. Some suggested forming an English version. John Simon was an early supporter of such a scheme, which he pictured as bolstering the Jewish image: 'To the world, accustomed to regard our race as scattered outcasts...we shall offer the most signal protest, as we shall present the spectacle of a people undaunted by the oppressions of ages...'[175] The *JC* was hesitant.

> There is no occasion for such a body among us, when there is an organisation in existence which has within late years faithfully and successfully discharged the mission of oppressed Israel's pleader....It will be the Board's own fault should the period ever come when the intelligent and feeling portion of the community, dissatisfied with the coldness, petty-mindedness, and vacillation of the central authority, should deem it necessary for the welfare of Israel to have recourse to more enlightened views...and vigorous hands.[176]

With the Board's less than comprehensive involvement in Jewish relief this time soon arrived. By late 1868 communal commentators were beginning to suggest 'if our British pride does not allow of our acting a subordinate part as a branch of a tree planted on foreign soil, why is there not founded an Anglo-Jewish Alliance...'[177] A convenient opportunity was provided by French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war, which severely disrupted the AIU's work. 'At this crisis, then' the *JC* urged 'it is

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group with international membership was a concept alien to the Board. To compound matters the relationship between the institutions' respective Presidents, Moses Montefiore and Adolphe Cremieux, was less than convivial since the pair had disagreed during the Damascus blood libel, see J. Frankel, *The Damascus Affair. 'Ritual Murder', Politics, and the Jews in 1840* (Cambridge 1997)

[174] *JC*, 02 Aug. 1867, p.4. and 27 May 1870, p.4.

[175] *JC*, 04 Jan. 1861, p.5.

[176] *JC*, 18 Jan. 1861, p.4.

[177] *JC*, 13 Nov. 1868, p.5.

clearly the place of England – *especially* of England – to take up the work of the Alliance.'[178] In late March 1871 a conference of Anglo-Jewish notables resolved to found an Anglo-Jewish Association, whose catholic objectives were '...the raising of the status of the Jew, wheresoever situated, politically, educationally, industrially and charitably; in fact, to work everywhere on behalf of the Jews.'[179]

The Board, jealous of its position, fought the development. Having nationalised the act of aiding foreign Jewries, the AJA could not be opposed upon identity grounds, so Deputies attacked it as an extravagance. Morris Oppenheim railed that 'the existence in our community of two organisations with identical objects is unnecessary – a waste of power, and likely to be most injurious to the communal well-being.'[180] Lionel Cohen feared the precedent set, warning of further fission and the ruin of communal authority:

> The process is one capable of indefinite repetition, and imitation...why may not Mr. Moses Choverhop and his friends meet at the Middlesex Street School in London; send off a memorial, post haste, in the name of the Jews of London, through the 'kind agency' of the Rev. Dr. Schmuzerai, and drop it into the hands of the Grand Duke Constantine...[181]

The AJA threatened what the Board held most dear: a coherent community under its stewardship. No matter the noble cause of the new institution, the Board petulantly treated it as rival not a collaborator and in an ill-judged and self-defeating move, rejected interaction.[182] This sparked several months of caustic discourse in the *JC*, as supporters of each faction argued their case. The Board, adopting the specious line of asserting that its competence abroad rendered the AJA extraneous, had little real argument and was savaged. Several incisive correspondents exposed the faults of its

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[178] *JC*, 30 June 1871, p.8. Italics in original.
[179] *JC*, 07 July 1871, p.11.
[180] *JC*, 11 Aug. 1871, p.8.
[181] *JC*, 25 Aug. 1871, p.8.
[182] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.412.

inadequate foreign interventions, largely overlooked until now. The anonymous 'B' observed most tellingly, '...be it well understood, to the praise of the Board of Deputies, whenever they have interfered for our brethren in less happy circumstances than ourselves, they have done so, not because they were the Board of Deputies, *but in spite of so being*.'[183]

The Association quickly established itself. By September 1872 it boasted supplementary branches in Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester.[184] The Deputies refused to be reconciled to its existence and the two organisations settled into a period of protracted antagonism.[185] One particular, ongoing problem for the Board was the prominent presence of Reform Jews in the AJA. Reformers had played a significant role in its formation and many Orthodox were suspicious that the AJA would be used as a vehicle to advance their agenda within the communal power structure, from which the Board had excluded them. It was the most Orthodox Deputies – Montagu, L. Cohen, Oppenhiem – who most consistently and vociferously opposed the AJA. Their resentment echoed within the community. Notwithstanding notable exceptions, such as Salomons, de Worms and Jessel, the Honorary Secretary of the Leeds' AJA, had cause to lament in the *JC* of June 1878, that many leading Orthodox Jews '...held back from belonging to a society simply because it originated with those who follow what is termed "Reform"'[186] This Orthodox concern amplified the Board's fundamental contention: the threat to its self-ascribed monopoly over Anglo-Jewish – Government communication. At a June 1876 conference proposed by the AJA to

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[183] Ibid., p.13. Italics in original.
[184] *JC*, 27 Sept. 1872, p.360.
[185] The friction between the two bodies should not be exaggerated. There were individuals who served on both and after several years, slight cooperation was in evidence. By 1874, for instance, the Board was referring cases it received relating to Jewish education abroad to the AJA.
[186] *JC*, 21 June 1878, p.4.

construct a *modus operandi* between the institutions, the Board approved united action with the caveat: 'That provided the Anglo-Jewish Association will engage not to communicate with any Government or ruler except through the Board or the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* in Paris...'[187] De Worms denounced the Board's 'patronising tone' and criticised its 'assumed monopoly' as '...what all monopolies now are, abuses of the past and utterly incompatible with the progressive spirit of the age in which we live.'[188] The Board was still unwilling to accept reality. Its traditionalist vision of the community required one body, itself, to oversee the delicate reception of the 'proper' Anglo-Jewish image in the surrounding culture. The more dynamic, internationally connected and Reform-influenced AJA disrupted this and skewed the community's presentation.

The Board made a final effort to stamp its conception upon the situation over December 1876. During the early stages of the Eastern Crisis the AIU invited the Deputies and AJA to an international conference in Paris to consider the condition of Jews in Turkey. The Association accepted but the Board, chained to its Foreign Office shibboleth, sympathetically declined: '...it feels it could not render any assistance by being represented thereat, more especially as it had already addressed an earnest appeal to the British Government praying that the condition of the Jews of Servia and of the Turkish provinces may be seriously considered...'[189] This proved to be a grave miscalculation. Far from tainting themselves with Jewish cosmopolitanism by attending and thereby raising suspicions as to their Englishness, the AJA managed to subsume the Jewish project within it. In a conference conducted in French, de

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[187] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.390.
[188] *JC*, 28 July 1876, p.259.
[189] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, p.410. A proposed amendment to send Board delegates was lost 4 – 7.

Worms, AJA President, gave his banquet speech in English, '...the illustrious President has associated my name with my country, thereby rendering it almost imperative upon me to use my mother tongue.'[190] Upon returning to Britain the Association delegates waited upon Lord Derby in the name '...not only of the Jews of England, but the Jews of the civilised world...'; he expressed himself '...glad to communicate with your association on any occasion when you desire to see me...'[191] With the government not only happy to deal with the Association but happy to deal with them when they represented international Jewish concerns, the Board's myth was finally shattered. Without Gentile backing its position was untenable.

Worse, in this incident the Deputies had sacrificed much of their remaining communal credibility. Reluctance to participate in multi-national efforts might be understood given the public mood of 1876, where the Bulgarian Agitation had provoked questions concerning Anglo-Jewry's patriotism. Indeed, this episode, which Feldman considers to have revived the Jewish question within Britain, demanded careful handling.[192] But the Deputies were not actuated solely (or perhaps even primarily) by fear of anti-Jewish criticism. Their concerns were internal. So desperate were they to maintain their presumed privilege they had sycophantically informed the Foreign Office of their non-attendance, reiterating '...that the Board should, as heretofore, communicate with her Majesty's Government, as the proper medium of intercourse between the subjects of this country and foreign powers or their representatives.'[193] The obvious implication being that the AJA, deviating from this

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[190] *JC*, 29 Dec. 1876, p.619.
[191] Ibid., p.619. The British Press also gave generally sympathetic coverage to the conference. The *JC* of 05 Jan. 1877, p.12. noting positive comments from *The Times*, *Standard*, *Oriental Star*, *Spectator*, and *Saturday Review*.
[192] Feldman, *Englishmen* p.97.
[193] ACC/3121/A/011, MBBD, 1871-8, xi, pp.415-6.

accepted formula, was not therefore, a *bona fide* Anglo-Jewish organisation – not loyal like the Board. In suggesting this, the Board transgressed a golden communal rule. 'If there be dirty linen let it be washed *en famille*. Why should the Foreign Secretary be made acquainted with any difference of opinion existing in the community? Can the authority of the Board be raised by depressing that of any other communal organisation?'[194] Communal censure was long and harsh. 'One can but stigmatise such conduct as unworthy and unpatriotic – un-Jewish…' wrote one *JC* correspondent; another characterised it as 'ignoble jealousy' that 'passes all comprehension'.[195] The Board now had few options. After much stalling it formed the Conjoint Foreign Committee with the AJA in April 1878. This finally saw the Board concede its cherished principle of official Jewish interlocutor; from then on neither organisation '…shall communicate with the British Government upon the subject without the consent of the other.'[196]

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The Board's exertions for foreign communities occasioned involvement in many countries. But no region occupied their energy and resources more persistently than the Danubian Principalities, especially Romania. An area at this time of considerable geo-political instability, witnessing the creation of nations and shifting of the Great Power's influence spheres, Anglo-Jewish interference here was not merely philanthropic but had inevitable political ramifications. Executed under British patronage these consequences concerned not only Jewish life in the respective

[194] *JC*, 12 Dec. 1877, p.4.
[195] Ibid., p.5.
[196] *JC*, 19 Apr. 1878, p.5.

countries or Anglo-Jewish definition in England but were intertwined with the cause and principles of Britain's foreign policy. It is therefore an excellent case study illustrating the salient aspects of the Board's foreign ventures whilst also locating these within the context of the contemporary British and European diplomatic world.

The international agreement of 1858 granting internal autonomy to the Principalities was also supposed to guarantee legal equality for their citizens. In respect to the Jews, this measure was never enforced and frequently flouted by a number of states for the entire period. From 1861 onwards, the Foreign Office and locally situated British Consuls, often following direct petitions from native Jews, were engaged in attempting to dampen antisemitism and enforce civic equality. They interacted with a number of Anglo-Jews in this effort. The published Parliamentary Papers upon this subject record 146 communications sent by the Foreign Office to seven interested Jews and Jewish organisations; many more were received from them.[197] The Board did not feature prominently within this correspondence, receiving only eighteen letters – the third highest amount. Francis Goldsmid was most involved, accounting for half with seventy-three; followed by Montefiore the recipient of thirty-eight.[198] The Deputies were certainly far from their ideal of supervising community-state dialogue. In this instance, as with most, that they did not occupy the pivotal role was their fault. The Board displayed the slow and constrained attitude that characterised its activity toward foreign coreligionists. Its first notable attempt at relief was made via a memorial to the Prince of Servia in October 1864 conveying

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[197] See *Parliamentary Papers* 1867, xxxvii: Correspondence Respecting the Condition of the Jews in Servia; 1867, lxxiv: Correspondence Respecting the Persecution of the Jews in Moldavia and Further Correspondence Respecting the Persecution of the Jews in Moldavia; and 1877, xli: Correspondence Respecting the Condition and Treatment of the Jews in Servia and Romania, 1867-1876.

[198] The other mentioned correspondents were: Lionel de Rothschild with eleven; the AIU with four; the Chief Rabbi with one; and Salomons with one.

gratitude for his benevolence '...and also to express hope that the National Assembly, animated by the same kindly feeling, will remove any political or social grievances, the existence of which may debar the subjects of your Royal Highness of the Jewish faith from the full enjoyment of equal rights with their fellow-countrymen.'[199] This achieved little; within a matter of weeks antisemitic press diatribes, permitted by Servian censors, had incited the killing of several Jews. Despite Alliance promptings the Board did not react and entered a period of virtual hibernation until Goldsmid's Parliamentary condemnation 'refocused' their attention.[200] In its dormancy others took action. Goldsmid using his influence as an MP and regularly sharing information with the AIU was by far and consistently the most active Jewish party concerned with Servian and Romanian Jewry. His methods were also more productive than the Board's. Where the Board ineffectively memorialised, Goldsmid had evoked public sympathy through Parliament. While the Board avoided further action with such excuses as '...these aspersions have been refuted again and again...slanders of this calumnious nature were beneath the notice of this Board', Goldsmid pushed the agenda. [201] Unwilling to accept the lack of progress he was even prepared to express discontent regarding Foreign Office results:

> Although Mr. Green and Mr. St. Clair appear to have done all they could, the information contained in the papers as to the disposition of the Romanian Government, and the probable result of the kind exertions of Lord Stanley...on behalf of the Jews of Jassy, does not strike me as very satisfactory.[202]

No ameliorative effort was to prove satisfactory in this era. The 1886 Board report admitted that despite considerable Anglo-Jewish labours, 'unfortunately these

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[199] *Parliamentary Papers* 1867, xxxvii, p.10. Russell to Longworth, 31 Oct. 1864, enclosing Board memorial dated 01 Oct 1864.
[200] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.150.
[201] ACC/3121/A/009, MBBD, 1859-64, ix, p.44.
[202] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.21. Goldsmid to Hammond, 10 June 1867.

efforts, which have been chiefly directed through diplomatic agency, have not yet produced any appreciable results. The flagrant violation of the rights secured to the Jews by the Treaty of Berlin has continued unchecked...'[203] Nearly thirty years worth of remonstrance had achieved nothing. Yet the Board was slow to appreciate the inefficacy of its methods. Immediately following the above statement was a report of a CFC deputation to Salisbury, which had sought, again, to enlist his support for enforcing the Berlin Treaty in Romania.[204] The horse the Board was flogging was long dead; in truth, it had been still born. No measure the Board or other Jews employed could have hoped to relieve Romanian Jews. In 1867 the Board utilised its greatest weapon: a mission from Montefiore, the course of which demonstrates well the problems of Jewish diplomacy and its inability to prevent persecution. Montefiore had resolved upon travelling after receiving 'so frequently and so urgently' requests from Romania and sought the Deputies' sanction to go with 'great force and significance' as the 'delegate of our community'.[205] He set off auspiciously, carrying the endorsement of the British state and approval from five other European governments.[206] Over August and September he interviewed the Prince and several ministers, being very sanguine about the prospects:

> ...from the high character and intelligence of the Prince, and the assurances given to me by himself and by members of his Government, I have every reason to hope that the laws of the country, which provide for the protection of the Jews as well as of all the other inhabitants of Romania, will be carried out in their full integrity.[207]

This optimism was misplaced. Consul Green was impressed with his deportment but doubted it convinced the Romanians. As he reported to Stanley,

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[203] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1886, p.35.
[204] Ibid., p.36.
[205] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.157.
[206] *The Times*, 21 Sept. 1867, p.9. These governments comprised: Austria, France, Italy, Prussia, and Russia.
[207] Ibid., p.9.

> It was a great pleasure for me to mark...the irresistible impression produced by the dignified and modest language in which Sir Moses Montefiore pleaded the cause of his coreligionists. I have no doubt that both the Prince and his Minister had brought themselves to expect words of a very different import....I should be deceiving your Lordship were I to say that I at present perceive any symptoms leading me to hope that the Romanian Government will avail of the excellent opportunity afforded by Sir Moses Montefiore's presence here to get out of a difficulty created by their own folly, and to put an end to a disgraceful state of things...[208]

Indeed, if anything, Montefiore's presence exacerbated the situation. Antisemitic journals seized the opportunity to trumpet conspiracies of international Jewish power. The *Natinuea* opened a petition in the capital to prevent 'these bloodsuckers, the Hebrews' from 'transform[ing] our land into a Palestine'.[209] At one point a crowd of thousands surrounded Montefiore's hotel and called for his death. The country was so agitated that a trip to Jassy was cancelled on the British Consul's warning that it '...would be the signal for serious disturbances.'[210] Confronted with such prejudice Montefiore and the Board had little response. By April 1868 Montefiore was inquiring at the Foreign Office if he should return to 'remind' the Romanians of their 'repeated promises'. The Government was of the opinion that they had 'exhausted all the means' for interfering.[211] Having failed with its most direct option, the Board returned to its low-key attempts of periodically petitioning the government to remedy the 'habitual and virulent persecutions' that continued in the region. Although, being '...extremely reluctant again to address your Lordship

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[208] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.56. Green to Stanley, 24 Aug. 1867.
[209] L. Loewe, (ed.), *Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore* (Two Volumes London 1890) ii, p.200.
[210] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.58. Green to Stanley, 02 Sept. 1867.
[211] Ibid., p.92. Montefiore to Hammond, 10 April 1868. Montefiore did try and meet the Prince the next year when he was visiting Paris. But slow preparation, including a wait to procure letters of introduction from the Foreign Office, meant that Montefiore got no further than Dover before the Prince returned home, see: ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.320.

upon a subject which this Board has too frequently had occasion to bring under the notice of your Lordship, and your predecessors in office.'[212]

The Board's reserve drew communal criticism throughout the period.

> I do not agree with the views usually expressed by the Board of Deputies, that we should sit still and let things go as they may, and abide patiently. Such were the views of our ancestors in Egypt, when they complained to Moses that he had done them a great injury by his interfering; but had he not persisted in his course we might have been slaves to this day.[213]

But Anglo-Jewry's expectations of change were founded upon a fundamental misunderstanding of the possibilities. In common with the attitude of British officials, the Board always showed sovereigns due respect and refrained from blaming them for anti-Jewish enactments. It projected the tolerant rationality of British governance onto others. Consequently, by address or interview appealing in the name of civilisation, it consistently sought to work through rulers. In the Principalities this was a poor strategy. Prince Charles of Romania, occupying a recently revived throne, was weak and unable to contravene popular sentiment or government desires.[214] British diplomats by the end of the 1860s had begun to comprehend that the Romanian state was at least complicit in the anti-Jewish prejudice. Consul Green wrote to Lord Lyons

> I feel certain that Prince Charles would lay down his life rather than wittingly be a party to Jewish persecution....But the profits and advantages to be derived from a Jewish persecution...were too tempting to be abandoned by official underlings, unfortunately under the present system recruited from the worst classes, and secure in the approbation of their fellows.[215]

The situation was the same in Servia, where a mercantile class threatened by Jewish competition pressured the state to maintain discrimination. Even had the Board been more adroit and changed tactics, there was little it could have accomplished against

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[212] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.174. Joseph Montefiore to Clarendon, 25 Aug. 1869.
[213] *JC*, 02 Feb. 1877, p.5.
[214] U. Henriques, 'Journey to Romania, 1867', in Lipman and Lipman (eds.), *Century of Moses* p.248.
[215] *Parliamentary Papers,* 1867, lxxiv, Further Correspondence Respecting the Persecution of Jews in Moldavia p.4. Green to Lord Lyons, 16 July 1867.

the vested interests driving anti-Jewish prejudices. Consul St. Clair realised that an insuperable gulf in values ultimately prevented resolution. In an interview with the Prince he

> ...could not refrain from saying that I much feared that as soon as his Highness would leave abuses and illegalities would recommence, as the authorities were either weak or unwilling to do their duty, and this unhappy people was anything but fit for a European constitution and civilised laws, which they could not comprehend, appreciate, or respect, as they were foreign importations, and not the result of the history, habits, and the customs of the Rouman [*sic*] nation.[216]

In such circumstances, as Arthur Cohen comprehended, '...history had but too clearly shown how religious toleration could not be effectually secured by a sudden alteration of the laws of a country, how it was generally, the result of a long and arduous struggle in which the leaders of the oppressed sect or people take an active part...'[217] In such conditions the Board's actions could achieve little beyond salving Anglo-Jewry's conscience. On the ground they were often counterproductive, endangering rather than protecting. The Board's 1886 report noted a telling incident:

> Certain Romanian journals accused the Romanian Jews of calumniating their country, and even charged them with high treason in inciting the English Jews to bring false charges against the Romanian government....At Bucharest and other places Jews were required by the Prefects of police to sign protests, prepared by those officers, against the statements of English Jews. Enactments against the Jews followed with increased severity.[218]

The failure of Anglo-Jewish relief ultimately reflected the failure of British assistance. Jewish diplomacy was only as good as the Gentile Power backing it. The Board's efforts had relied upon its traditional source of influence: British diplomatic

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[216] Ibid., p.1. St. Clair to Green, 28 June 1867 enclosed in Green to Stanley, 06 July 1867. Henriques also notes that the Principalities' struggle for independence had bred an aggressive nationalism within the politically conscious classes, making them particularly hostile to foreign interference, see Henriques, 'Journey', p.232.

[217] *JC*, 09 Mar. 1877, p.6. This was a sensitive issue concerning Romania, where it was known to both the Board and British Consuls that wealthier sections of the Jewish population were not supportive of intervention on their behalf. M. Halfon, the local President of the AIU, for instance, had 'strongly advised' Montefiore against his visit, see Loewe, *Diaries*, ii, p.205.

[218] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1886, p.38.

clout. This had been provided throughout the period, in large measure and with considerable sympathy. The Foreign Office and British agents were almost as anxious to protect Romanian Jews as was Anglo-Jewry.[219] Lord Stanley instructed Consul Green in Bucharest after a lethal antisemitic episode in May 1867:

> Her Majesty's Government have learned with deep concern that the Jews of Jassy are exposed to cruel persecution, endangering their lives, and destroying their properties. Apply directly to the Prince...and represent in the strongest terms the earnest hope of Her Majesty's Government that orders will be immediately sent to the authorities in Jassy to put an end to such outrages, and you will say that unless this is done the Wallachian Government must not be surprised at any diminution of the interest which is felt by Her Majesty's Government in the prosperity of the provinces under their present system of administration.[220]

Romanian treatment of Jews was anathema to British perceptions and the Consuls enthusiastically pursued this condemnatory line. Upset not only at the barbarity but irritated by the hypocrisy of the Principalities: 'It was a standing reproach I said to a state like Servia' Consul Longworth reported to Clarendon 'owing its independence to the enforcement of the principles of toleration now acted upon by all civilised Governments, that it should continue to impose civil disabilities on religious grounds.'[221] Britain was not alone in its deprecation. Other European Consuls, particularly in the late 1860s, adopted similar strictures. The French Consulate at Jassy was ordered to take 'energetic steps to put a stop to an iniquity which is a dishonour to the Romanian Government' in 1867; the Austrian Government

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[219] British diplomats had long taken an interest in furthering the rights of Jews in the Principalities. Since negotiations concerning the territories' organisation following the Crimean war and particularly after the Convention of Paris, 1858, recognised the civil rights of Romanian Jewry, British officials had endeavoured to assist Jewish claims. See E. Feldman, 'The Question of Jewish Emancipation in the Ottoman Empire and the Danubian Principalities after the Crimean War', *JSS* Vol.41. No.1. (Winter 1979) pp.54 & 59.

[220] *Parliamentary Papers* 1867, lxxiv, Correspondence Respecting the Persecution of the Jews in Moldavia, p.2. Stanley to Green, 24 May 1867.

[221] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.139. Longworth to Clarendon, 13 Feb. 1869. Only one British agent, a Vice-Consul St. John, was less than sympathetic to Romanian Jewry's plight. St. John wrote to Granville in July 1872 claiming '...that persecution in the sense conveyed by Sir Francis Goldsmid's speech in the House of Commons does not exist and never has existed in the Principalities...Much ill-feeling against the Jews has been engendered in this country by the gross exaggerations promulgated...' Several months later Consul Green wrote to offer a more 'accurate' opinion upon the situation and explain that St. John's was at variance with all other agents' attitudes, see pp.264-270.

addressed a strong remonstrance and even 'shadowed forth' demands for compensation when injuries were inflicted upon some Jews under its protection in 1868.[222] Most notable was the joint protest of six Consuls at Galatz in July 1867:

> We are not aware if there was a foreigner among the Jews, but with respect to the persecution of which the Israelites are notoriously the objects in this country, we think it our strict duty to protest loudly in the name of the Governments which we represent here, against these acts of barbarity...[223]

The Principalities' anti-Jewish prejudice was clearly contrary to European governments' ideals of civilisation. It was Britain, of all the Powers, however, that protested most vigorously and most frequently and there was considerable justification for Adolphe Cremieux's, President of the AIU, grateful comment to Stanley: '*Cette manifestation du génie libéral de la Grand Bretagne, qui ne peut manquer d'exciter la vive admiration du monde entire, nous a profoundément touché.*'[224]

For all their good intentions British efforts produced little; '...the unremitting endeavours of this Consulate have been unavailing...'[225] There was only so much the Foreign Office could do. Lionel de Rothschild's request that British ships be sent to Galatz to quell disturbances was answered by Stanley, that '...as the Jews in Moldavia, who complain of having been cruelly treated by the authorities do not appear to be British subjects, Her Majesty's Government would not feel themselves

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[222] *Parliamentary Papers* 1867, lxxiv, Correspondence Respecting the Persecution of the Jews in Moldavia, p.12. Translation of telegram from Paris to French consulate at Jassy, enclosed in Green to Stanley, 04 June 1867. And *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.119. Lord Bloomfield to Stanley, 11 May 1868.

[223] *Parliamentary Papers* 1867, lxxiv, Further Correspondence Respecting the Persecution of Jews in Moldavia, p.9. Translation of the protest of the foreign Consuls at Galatz enclosed in Green to Stanley, 20 July 1867. The nations represented by these consuls were: Austria, France, Britain, Italy, Prussia and Russia.

[224] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.12. Cremieux to Stanley, 08 May 1867.

[225] *Parliamentary Papers* 1867, xxxvii, p.26. Longworth to Stanley, 14 Mar. 1867.

justified in employing or threatening the use of force on their behalf...'[226] The British government was careful to observe the rules of international diplomacy. The Consuls could resort only to friendly warnings and unofficial pressure, which seldom animated the Romanians, who resented even this. In July 1867 M. Lupascu, Prefect of Galatz, reproached Consul Ward:

> Great was my surprise at the contents of your note...Neither the dignity of your office, nor that of the office which I have the honour of holding, allow me to answer you in the language and in the tone you have thought proper to address me. You yourself, Sir, acknowledge that none of these individuals are subjects of your nationality. You can, therefore, well understand that I cannot consider myself competent to discuss this matter with you...[227]

Little could be achieved through these constrained methods.

In the early 1870s Goldsmid and later the Board, suggested to the Foreign Office that Romanian failure to ensure equality of citizenship breached treaty rights and therefore, justified aggressive intervention. Granville was sympathetic but considered '...that it would not be prudent or politic at the present time to invoke the Suzerain Powers to enforce upon Romania the provisions in regard to the Jews; it is, moreover, doubtful whether Russia would consent to join in a common representation of this nature.'[228] Herein lay the cardinal problem for Britain and Anglo-Jewry, the attitude of other Powers. The early failure of the concert of Europe to provide a system for international cooperation and then Britain's post-Palmerston foreign policy emphasis upon non-intervention militated against independent interference in this volatile sphere. Especially after 1872-3, when the formation of the *Dreikaiserbund*, closely following the defeat of France, left England somewhat

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[226] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.37. Hammond to Rothschild, 23 July 1867.
[227] Ibid., p.51.Lupascu to Ward, 20 July 1867, enclosed in Green to Stanley, 10 Aug. 1867.
[228] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, p.244, Hammond to Goldsmid, 10 May 1872.

isolated on the European scene.[229] Inquiries were repeatedly made by Britain concerning joint action but the example of the 1867 consular protest was never repeated. The Austrians worried it might embarrass Prince Charles, the German government feared to appear overbearing to a close neighbour, whilst the Russians '...restrained from urging on the Principalities a greater freedom for the Jews, being afraid that the same argument might recoil on themselves.'[230] Other Powers had other agendas, which often required mollifying the Romanians. Jewish diplomacy could accomplish no permanent improvement in this situation.

The Jewish problem occupied a space within international relations. Treatment of Jewish communities was an aspect of states' foreign policies, a part of the Power game. *The Saturday Review* believed Russia was lax in supporting Jewish relief in the Principalities because 'It has always been the mission of Russia to encourage maladministration in neighbouring states, and to propagate discontent; and the sufferings of a few thousands of Jews will be regarded as a cheap price for the eventual necessity or plausibility of Russian intervention.'[231] Britain, in a similar way, also used persecuted Jewish populations to advance its aims. In many places around the globe 'the condition of the Jews...was an insult to civilisation.'[232] Seeking to disseminate the progress it represented, Britain could target these conditions as a lever to raise the general state of nations. As Montefiore wrote to Gladstone prior to the latter securing Ionian Jews equality in January 1859: 'Any amelioration in the status of the Jewish inhabitants of the islands cannot fail to enure to the welfare of the

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[229] K. Bourne, *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England, 1830-1902* (Oxford 1970), pp.112-3 & 124.
[230] *Parliamentary Papers* 1877, xli, pp.203 & 250. Loftus to Clarendon, 05 Mar. 1870 and Loftus to Granville, 23 May 1872.
[231] *Saturday Review*, 17 Aug. 1867, pp.200-1.
[232] *The Times*, 11 Apr. 1864, p.11.

whole people, and advance the general progress of civilisation...'[233] Where the French might sponsor indigenous Catholic groups, or the Russians patronise native Orthodox Christians, the British government, usually bereft of a similar Protestant interest, could intervene for Jewry in the name of civilisation. Pushed by an Anglo-Jewish interest group at home, the Foreign Office adopted the cause of benighted Jewish communities to advance its own and humanity's interests, which were often viewed as coterminous. It was not quite 'commerce and Christianity' but to a bibliocentric trading nation, perhaps the next best thing. Certainly, the protection of Jewish populations saw that, as the Board noted '...fortunately, the cause of humanity was coincident with the cause of commerce.'[234] And sympathetic pockets of Jews under Western Jewish tutelage might have been thought preferable to Catholic duplicity, Orthodox barbarism or Muslim fanaticism running rampant. In 1864, when Montefiore obtained from the Sultan of Morocco a firman granting equality to his Jewish and Christian subjects, *The Daily Telegraph* exclaimed: 'What is Christianity, if not such deeds as his!'[235] Montefiore's mission had received official British patronage and substantial material support, including the loan of a naval frigate for transportation, which, no doubt, dramatically increased its likelihood of success.[236]

There was a remarkable synthesis between British conceptions and Anglo-Jewish ideals concerning the issue of Jewish relief. On his return from Morocco Montefiore was feted at the Common Council, where he received the thanks of the

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[233] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 259, Copies of Papers of Sir Moses Montefiore, 1793-1885, Letter from Montefiore to Gladstone, 13 Jan. 1859

[234] ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1881, p.41.

[235] Quoted in D. Littman, 'Mission to Morocco (1863-1864)', in Lipman and Lipman (eds.), *Century of Moses*, p.177.

[236] Ibid., 188. and *The Times*, 11 Apr. 1864, p.11.

corporation for '...representing the true type of Englishman.'[237] This significantly boosted Anglo-Jews' self-perception and they confidently bought into the civilising mission. The *JC*, too, thought Montefiore in Morocco above all else '...a spreader of Western humanity and European civilisation.'[238] For them efforts to succour foreign Jews were not simply inter-family affairs but executed under the British flag, '...the world-wide symbol of liberty and freedom', became a means to enlighten all nations.[239] The Anglo-Jewish Association's work was understood in these terms; 'its mission is to extend the light of English civilisation to the dark places of the earth...'[240] In carrying out its mission Anglo-Jewry displayed the 'cultural arrogance' of its British contemporaries.[241] Privileged in rights and comfort beyond most other communities, Anglo-Jewry felt duty bound to 'become the Joseph' of its brethren.[242] Something it undertook with a distinct superciliousness: 'It happens from time to time that circumstances occur abroad almost imperatively demanding the fraternal – perhaps we should more justly say the paternal – intercession of the Jews of England.'[243] Anglo-Jewry believed that with its successful emancipation the community had reached the pinnacle of Jewish development, which had to be diffused as an example for less fortunate coreligionists. Spreading civilisation on the British model was extended to disseminating Jewish existence on the Anglo-Jewish model.

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[237] *The Times*, 11 Apr. 1864, p.11.
[238] *JC*, 01 Jan. 1864, p.4.
[239] *JC*, 16 Dec. 1859, p.5.
[240] *JC*, 16 July 1880, p.9.
[241] R. Hyam, *Britain's Imperial Century, 1815-1914. A Study of Empire and Expansion. Third Edition* (Basingstoke 2002), p.75.
[242] *JC*, 16 Dec. 1859, p.6.
[243] *JC*, 10 Nov. 1871, p.9.

Quintessential to this effort was the inculcation of emancipatory logic, of the compromise necessary to prosper as both Jew and citizen. Montefiore's protection of Jewish rights in Morocco was coupled with a letter of advice to all congregations in the country preaching that

> you must never for a moment forget the loyalty, the affection and respect due to your sovereign...Let neither actions nor words from you induce your fellow-countrymen of the Mohamedan faith to suppose that you are in any way unmindful or regardless of your duties as subjects...Over the poorer and less educated classes of our brethren in Morocco, let your watchful care be exercised so far as in you lies, so that they pay due obedience and respect to the constituted authorities; let them be patient with small annoyances...[244]

Uniting and overlaying both the English and Jewish impulses for this Anglo-Jewish quest to improve foreign Jews were very Victorian beliefs in the inevitability of progress and triumph of reason.[245] Despite the scale of the task, despite the numerous setbacks experienced, the Board and the wider community maintained its efforts. They remained optimistic. Montefiore, the exemplar of Anglo-Jewry's (and, indeed, the wider British) mission, articulated this attitude most succinctly after his failure to rescue Mortara from the Papacy. As he explained to the British attaché, Odo Russell:

> At all times it is difficult to penetrate the veil that hides the future from our view, but we may feel assured that the cause of civilisation, however rude the shocks it may occasionally sustain, must progress, that the time cannot be very far distant when men of every creed will denounce laws, (if any such there be) that are in contravention of the Law of Nature, and when the rights of conscience will be universally acknowledged and respected, if so, however melancholy the immediate effects of the Mortara case, may this not be a link in the chain of events which under the directing eye of an all wise God are tending to mitigate individual suffering, and promote the moral, social and political condition of the human race.[246]

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[244] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.36.
[245] Finestein, 'Sir Moses' p.172.
[246] National Archives, FO918, Russell, Odo, Papers and Correspondence, 1851-1884, Letter from Montefiore to Russell, 26 July 1859.

The Board of Deputies of British Jews was a central institution in the post-emancipation community. Claiming superintendence of the minority's official interests and control of its dialogue with Gentile authorities, the Board sought to parent and police English Jewry in their first decades of equality. There had been no blueprint for Jewish existence developed during emancipation and the Board was positioned after 1858 to be a mediating factor in defining and guiding communal life. Its arrogation of responsibility for foreign brethren also witnessed the projection of these concerns onto an international level. In all of these spheres though, the Deputies' behaviour matched neither its rhetoric nor other Jews' expectations. The proportion of the community it spoke for was not commensurate with the proportion it actually represented; a fact that considerably impaired the Board's authority. It also meant that the assembly possessed something of an anachronistic character. Representing what was a collection of individual citizens via an ascribed authority based neither upon democratic opportunity nor volitional subscription, smacked of outdated corporate Jewish governance. The Deputies' stubbornly attested monopoly upon Jewish communication and petulant refusal to recognise institutions not deferent to this, displayed signs of governing in a manner inappropriate to the modern age.

The Board's greatest hangover from the traditionalist conception was its attempt to regulate the tone of Anglo-Jewry's piety. The Deputies were never monolithic in their opinion: on many issues debate and dissension occurred. But an 'Orthodox brigade' composed of some of the most active of the assembly – Montagu, Oppenheim, Schloss and crucially Montefiore – were able to push the agenda for

much of the period.[247] These Deputies asserted a monochromatic interpretation of Anglo-Judaism – closely backed by the ecclesiastical authorities. Using its only legal power, the licensing of marriage secretaries, the Board became a homogenising, centralising force within the community, enforcing mainstream Orthodoxy. This came at a price, however. The Board often appeared prejudiced in these actions, which excluded many Jews not only from its chambers but also from participation in the communal structure. Most glaringly, it was key to maintaining the outcast status of Reform Judaism long after communal opinion had become reconciled to its existence. In the emancipated age the prohibition upon Jewry's internal dissidents appeared hypocritical and damaged the Board's credibility.

The Deputies were functioning under an older understanding of Jewish identity than that possessed by the first Jewish MPs and leading emancipationists. In the domestic sphere the Deputies placed greater emphasis on preserving Jews' exceptionality from the universal requirements of modern life, as they and Montefiore had prior to emancipation. This was though, at all times, tempered. The Deputies were not knee-jerk traditionalists, they valued their combined identity and were aware of the delicate compromise required to sustain it. Whilst they often erred slightly more towards the particularist aspect, this usually concerned rather insignificant issues and on major areas of contention they were willing to strike a balance. Concerning marriage, for instance, the most jealously guarded of the Board's prerogatives, the Deputies accepted the loss of ecclesiastical influence over Jewish divorce without argument when informed by the Registrar General:

> ...I regret to say that, guided by the best legal advice to which I have access, I cannot coincide in the opinion of the London Committee of the British Jews, that a

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[247] *JC*, 16 Feb. 1877, p.5.

> marriage contracted between two persons of the Jewish persuasion, can be dissolved in England by a Jewish tribunal…I cannot recognise as valid a divorce, *a vinculo*, granted by the Jewish ecclesiastical board in London.[248]

Such a sacrifice, the Board understood, was the reciprocation of emancipation, of maintaining Jewry in an equal society.

The Board was even more conscious of its English identity in regard to activities on behalf of foreign Jewish communities. In this sphere its outlook was attuned very much to the general British one. With a sense of their own status the Deputies intervened across the globe seeking to relieve their coreligionists and through them contribute to the progress of civilisation. These efforts echoed British ones and considerable interaction occurred as the Board and the Foreign Office strove for a mutual goal: the improvement of mankind through British example. English and Jewish differences were here obviated through the syncretism of progress. But these good intentions were not sufficient to rectify the plight of persecuted Jews. All the Deputies' work in this era was merely palliative, never curative. The Board overvalued its relationship with the government and was excessively cautious regarding projecting a cosmopolitan Jewishness into the international arena. More involved measures, like the long-term projects of the AIU and AJA, were not countenanced. These institutions advocated an alternative version of Jewish identity, one allowing for a more robust internationality, and the Board consequently opposed them, despite their shared aims – a misjudgement that cost it dear. Many in the community desired more prominence in foreign Jewish affairs. The British state was evidently willing to tolerate considerable Diasporic connections, as Jewish MPs had proved in Parliament, and as early as 1861 it was communicating directly with the

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[248] ACC/3121/A/010, MBBD, 1864-71, x, p.127.

AIU. The AJA demonstrated that a trans-national Jewishness was compatible with English nationality and turned the Board's narrow emancipatory logic upon its head by claiming leadership of international Jewish organisation to complement Britain's leadership of the civilised world.

By the end of this period the Board of Deputies was not the institution it had been at the beginning. Individuals, including ex-members like Salomons, and absent ones, such as Lionel de Rothschild, pursued Jewish interests independently and often with greater success. This had from the start made a mockery of the Board's claim to officially channel communication. 'The Government of this country cares not a fig whether a grievance be distilled through the percolator of a Board kept warm by a cosy or simply an individual representation.'[249] Appreciating this, the Board's relative importance in the community had declined still further in this era. As the *JC* criticised: 'For some decades the Board of Deputies has ceased to take the position which belonged to it as a congregational representative institution. It allowed other bodies...not to usurp impetuously, but to undertake unavoidably, solemn and important functions which the Board should have fulfilled.'[250] In 1885 the Board discovered that the United Synagogue Visitation Committee, with whom it had cooperated concerning Jewish Reformatory inmates in 1873, was directly discussing new arrangements with the Home Office. When the Board requested that such negotiations proceed through it, the Committee rejected the idea as a 'retrograde step', it having been for some years '...the practice of the Visitation Committee to approach the various public bodies to whom it may have occasion to address itself upon matters concerning its working and it has always received the utmost

[249] *JC*, 22 Sept. 1871, p.9.
[250] *JC*, 03 Apr. 1874, p.89.

consideration at their hands.'[251] On the foreign front the Board also lost out, conceding its monopoly through the CFC. After emancipation the Board had been a central, if not crucial communal institution; by the mid-1880s it was falling increasingly to the periphery. In later decades, revitalised by increased provincial presence and a new generation of members, the Deputies would regain something of their importance but at the end of this period much, if not all, of their work could, and increasingly was, being undertaken by other organisations or individuals. The Board had persisted with an interpretation of Jewry's place in life (and its role within Anglo-Jewry) that was constructed pre-emancipation; the world meanwhile, had moved on. Its vision of Anglo-Jewish existence was no longer relevant to the majority of the community or the surrounding society by the 1880s.

[251] ACC/3121/A/012, MBBD, 1878-89, xii, p.368. A similar dispute with the Jewish Board of Guardians had occurred earlier in 1877; the Guardians informed the Deputies they had been taking independent action in the public sphere since 1871.

Chapter Four
Faith and Form: Anglo-Jewish Religion

I.

In February 1868 the *Jewish Chronicle* lamented the disorganisation of Anglo-Jewry's synagogal system. Commenting that synagogues were the 'only real communal centres' of Anglo-Jewry, the newspaper feared this neglect endangered elements of its solidarity.[1]

> It should be carefully remembered that a synagogue differs from a church or chapel in respect of the nature of the service to which it is devoted. A synagogue is not a house for the reading of prayers by one or more ministers only; it is a house of instruction; and...it is a house of assembly likewise.[2]

Religious practice and faith education were of fundamental importance to Anglo-Jewry's group existence. These factors had always been essential in maintaining and transmitting Jewish identity. The lack of any corporate dimension to the community after Resettlement meant that membership was associational and therefore, had to be carefully preserved and perpetuated. But they assumed especial importance in the post-emancipation age. When Jews were not only equal citizens, participating in all aspects of society and exposed to evermore non-Jewish influences, but according to the rhetoric and understanding of emancipation, after 1858, the confessional sphere was the one space within which Jews could express their particularity – to operate as a distinctive subculture. Ostensibly, religion would be the only quality defining the Jew as Jew. Examination of the religious state of the minority – in terms of organisation, practice and beliefs, and the associated issue of denominational education – is therefore crucial to the study of Anglo-Jewish identity in the period 1858-1887. The nature of Jewish existence in Britain should be most clearly exposed

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[1] *Jewish Chronicle*, 07 Feb. 1868, p.4.
[2] *JC*, 08 Oct. 1869, p.8.

here: the extent of religious acculturation, the types of religious institution, the depths of religious belief, the rationale underlying Jewish education, the role of religious inculcation within this, all reveal how the community viewed, understood, expressed and desired to continue being Jewish, and their capacity to do so, in modern Britain.

Fortunately for Jewry, if Britain was an industrial, urban nation, it was also a remarkably religious one.[3] Among the Victorian upper-middle classes Sunday church attendance and formal prayer constituted recognised properties of life.[4] Biblical criticism and anthropological theories alike, had little impact upon devotion till the end of the nineteenth-century, and if the working masses were never fully convinced, they prompted the various Christian denominations to undertake impressive measures of reorganisation, expansion and modification in efforts to gain and sustain allegiances.[5] This atmosphere encouraged notions of religious identity, which could justify adherence to Judaism. More problematically, the British religious milieu was robustly Christian, in both ethos and practice: state and society were ordered around and upon Christian, more specifically Protestant, values. There had been foreboding prior to emancipation that civil equality in such an environment might compromise aspects of Jewish faith or practice and religious leaders throughout the period were moved to remind Jews that it should not. *Haham* Benjamin Artom urged in 1866: 'We are citizens, and let us by all means act as good citizens; but, we must not forget that we are Jews also; nay, Jew before all – above all other titles and qualifications.'[6]

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[3] J. Obelkevich, 'Religion' in F. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950* (Three Volumes Cambridge 1990) iii, p.311.

[4] T. Endelman, 'Communal Solidarity among the Jewish Elite of Victorian London' *Victorian Studies* Vol.28. No.3. (1984-5) p.503.

[5] Obelkevich, 'Religion' p.329.

[6] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/94, Small Jewish Collections, B. Artom 'The Duties of a Jewish Pastor in the Present Age.' A sermon delivered on the occasion of his installation as *Haham*, 16 Dec. 1866, p.13.

The Chief Rabbi echoed more sternly in 1874: 'Do not say that you have other duties to fulfil to your country and therefore you cannot be Orthodox Jews.'[7] This was the Orthodox establishment's line on emancipation in Britain: that it was possible to be a dutiful participant in the majority Christian culture and to loyally remain part of a cohesive Jewish minority.

To supervise British Jews' religious identity and prevent the feared 'revolt from tradition' experienced by many Continental communities during the emancipation age, Anglo-Jewish leaders relied upon a unique version of Jewish religious organisation, the central construct of which was the Chief Rabbinate.[8] A hierarchical and centralised institution, the Chief Rabbinate provided Anglo-Jewry with one exclusive authority to decide all matters relating to Judaism in modern Britain. S. Sharot has termed this system 'mono-rabbinism', for the Chief Rabbi was officially the only rabbi in Britain. All other Jewish religious officials were prohibited from using the title and were predominately limited to performing non-rabbinic roles.[9] Such deviation from traditional Jewish models was designed to act as a centripetal force, helping to secure the institutional hegemony of Orthodox Judaism.[10] There was no *Yeshiva* in Britain to offer variant opinion, the Chief Rabbi presided over the *Beth Din* and through the *Shechita* Board exercised control over the provision of ritually slaughtered food.[11] Operating in tandem with lay authorities, the religious monopoly of the Chief Rabbinate was used to maintain communal cohesion – it cooperated, for instance, with the Board of Deputies to prevent splits within

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[7] *JC*, 04 Sept 1874, p.360.
[8] S. Singer, 'The Anglo-Jewish Ministry in Early Victorian London' *Modern Judaism*, Vol.5. No.3. (Oct. 1985) p.279.
[9] S. Sharot, 'Religious Change in Native Orthodoxy in London, 1870-1914: Rabbinate and Clergy', *JJS*, Vol.15. No.2. (Dec. 1973) p.167.
[10] Ibid., p.168. and T. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656-2000* (London 2002) p.120.
[11] A. Hyamson, *The London Board of Shechita, 1804-1954* (London 1954) p.29.

provincial congregations. The Rabbinate's principal partner in this endeavour and significant Anglo-Jewish organisation in its own right was the United Synagogue (USyn). Formally constituted in January 1871, this institution integrated the main metropolitan Ashkenazi synagogues into an overarching structure, which coordinated finance and procedure with the object of '...maintaining, erecting, founding, and carrying on, in London and its neighbourhood, places of worship for persons of the Jewish religion...'[12] It proved an effective vehicle for the lay elite to regulate and control the community, whilst also responding to and directing its expansion. Although Parliament, which had to approve the United Synagogue Scheme because it amalgamated several charities, refused to establish any compulsory Jewish authority by forcing a wording alteration proscribing the endorsement of a specific ecclesiastical head, the USyn founders agreed that, in practice, this would be the case: '...the Scheme shall be read and construed as if...the words, "the maintenance of the Chief Rabbi, and of the Ecclesiastical Board", were substituted for the words "the maintenance of a Chief Rabbi and of other Ecclesiastical persons."' The foundation of the United Synagogue cemented the minority's highly centralised and powerful religious structure, where authority was vested in a set of interlocking institutions that cooperated to supervise most aspects of the Jewish communion and prevent alternative versions of faith from arising.

This peculiar Anglo-Jewish religious establishment was a reaction to the modernisation of European society. Like most other English denominations, Jewish authorities sought to retain relevance in an industrially developed, increasingly democratic and increasingly secular environment. But for Anglo-Jews, it seems there

[12] LMA, ACC/2712/13/01/059, USP, United Synagogue Deed of Foundation and Trust, Jan 1871, p.2.

was another motivation: acculturation. Their ecclesiastical establishment was not merely a response to modernity but a specifically English product of it. It is generally received historiographical opinion that the community consciously modelled its organisation upon that of the Anglican Church: that its institutions were, in part, overt measures of Anglicisation. By 1880, Geoffrey Alderman claims, the USyn appeared, as it sought to portray itself, '...to be the Jewish branch of the Anglican establishment.'[13] With the Chief Rabbi occupying '...a position of authority somewhat parallel to that of the Archbishop of Canterbury...'[14] Some historians, such as Israel Finestein and M. Goulston, portray this as a natural adaptation to the dominant pattern; noting that the respectable and inclusive, yet well-organised and disciplined nature of the Church appealed to Orthodoxy's needs and provided a successful example of ecclesiastical structure.[15] Other historians have adopted more sceptical conclusions. S. Singer discusses the loss of Jewish identity occasioned by religious assimilation – the 'internalisation of Protestant values...to such an extent that they [the Jewish elite] were only able to view their faith in British Protestant terms.'[16] These strands of interpretation echo the wider historiographical contention within Anglo-Jewish history between those historians, such as Todd Endelman and William Rubinstein, who emphasise the comparative benignity of Anglo-Jewry's experience and those, such as Bill Williams or David Cesarani, who more critically appraise the situation and focus upon the assimilatory nature of British toleration.[17]

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[13] G. Alderman, 'English Jews or Jews of the English Persuasion? Reflections on the Emancipation of Anglo-Jewry', in P. Birnbaum and I. Katznelson (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation. Jews, States, and Citizenship* (Chichester 1995) p.154.

[14] Sharot, 'Rabbinate and Clergy' p.171.

[15] See I. Finestein, 'The Anglo-Jewish Pastorate (1840-90)', in Idem., *Anglo-Jewry in Changing Times. Studies in Diversity, 1840-1914* (London 1999) and M. Goulston, 'The Status of the Anglo-Jewish Rabbinate, 1840-1914', *JJS*, Vol.10. No.1. (June 1968)

[16] Singer, 'Anglo-Jewish Ministry' pp.282 & 287.

[17] See Endelman, *Jews of Britain*; W. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in the English-Speaking World: Great Britain* (New York 1996); B. Williams, 'The Antisemitism of Tolerance: Middle-Class Manchester and the Jews, 1870-1900', in A. Kidd and K. Roberts (eds.), *City, Class and*

The study of Jewish religion and its corollaries constitutes an extremely important part of this debate. The remarkably Anglicised version of Judaism developed in Britain, alongside the community's lack of religious education, would at first seem to support the more condemnatory critique. But a subtler examination moderates this viewpoint. The transformation of the Anglo-Jewish religious system, concerned, for a start, with practice and form – rather than doctrine or belief, was never fully implemented in practice. Optimist and pessimist historians alike, possibly distracted by the rhetoric of contemporary leaders, seem to have overestimated its popularity among the wider community, which at times favoured and towards the end of the period begin to reassert, more traditional methods. It should be remembered too, that there was little pressure, direct or indirect, from outside encouraging these alterations. Anglo-Jewry in these spheres largely self-acculturated, selecting those elements that most appealed to their composite identity. Also, at times English models provided marked benefits, such as facilitating group preservation.

Appreciated in these contexts the religious state of the community reinforces the contention that, despite inevitable change and loss of distinction, Anglo-Jewry existed in an essentially benign environment. But as this chapter will illuminate, the situation was fluid and never that simply demarcated. Issues changed over time, affected different Jews differently, had multiple ramifications within the community, echoed wider currents of activity, and might be seen as separatist or acculturative depending upon viewpoint. Ambiguity and ambivalence, as always, dominated the community's existence.

Culture. Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester (Manchester 1985); and D. Cesarani, 'British Jews', in R. Liedtke and S. Wendehorst, (ed.), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Manchester 1999)

This chapter concentrates primarily upon the religious component.[18] Detailing the nature of the community's religious organisation through the developments that occurred, as well as investigation of the motivations, popularity and consequences of these, it will initially assess the institutional nature of communal religiosity and its identity implications. Evaluating the nature of Anglo-Jewish religious practice – showing how it adapted to its modern situation as a British confession and the loss of traditional faith this entailed – the chapter will proceed to an essential determiner of this: religious education. Investigating the split between particular and general tuition of Jewish youth, this section reveals the existence of notable class differentiations within the community, as well as a general deficiency of faith instruction. The final section of the chapter addresses topics that demonstrated continuing religious feeling and group identity – out-marriage, proselytising, conversion – before moving on to examine issues influencing the dualistic character of the group – connections to the Holy Land, Restorationism, concepts of the Jewish Mission. Concerning the latter case this chapter, building upon the conflation of British and Jewish interests communal MPs and institutions achieved, will suggest that religiously, Anglo-Jewry managed to enhance these efforts to create a fully integrated identity.

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[18] Some of the most extensive and best preserved communal records concern Anglo-Jewry's religious state. Many institutions have left substantial archives, many containing excellent information in the form of correspondence, reports and minutes. Collections that are used throughout this chapter include those of the Chief Rabbinate, United Synagogue, various individual synagogues, Jews' College and the Jews' Free School. These records are supplemented by the considerable number of printed sources concerned with this area of Jewish life: sermons and tracts, for instance.

II.

'A red letter day in the Anglo-Jewish Calendar' was how the *JC* described the fourth of December 1870, the day members of five Metropolitan synagogues assembled for the first time to elect representatives to the United Synagogue.[19] After four years of negotiations, the union of the oldest English synagogues had been realised. Preliminary meetings had been held with an enthusiasm the *JC* found 'difficult to describe' and voter turnout for the initial election, where some vestry rooms were 'literally thronged' by voters and most were at least 'well filled', indicated the popularity of the measure.[20] Despite this interest, the USyn did not establish a conclusive form of religious organisation within Anglo-Jewry. For a start, it did not include all London synagogues and no provincial ones at all. A variety of opinions continued to be expressed among Anglo-Jews regarding the most appropriate religious system for their community. The congregation of the Western Synagogue were long-time dissentients. Refusing to adhere to USyn guidelines, they purchased a separate cemetery in 1880 and allowed other synagogues similarly unwilling to submit to the 'petty exclusiveness' of the central authorities to use it: 'The result has been that the ground at Edmonton has served as a cemetery for the members of the Federation, Finsbury Park, South-East London, North-West London, and Hackney Synagogues....The Western afforded them facilities for the use of their burial ground, whilst enabling them to preserve their independence.'[21] The impressively centralised structure of Anglo-Jewry was by no means monolithic.

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[19] *JC*, 09 Dec. 1870, p.10.

[20] *JC*, 24 Apr. 1868, p.4. and 09 Dec. 1870, pp.10-12.

[21] A. Barnett, *The Western Synagogue Through Two Centuries (1761-1961)* (London 1961) p.212. The term 'petty exclusiveness' is part of the bias against the Chief Rabbinate evident in Barnett's work; it has been used here however, in this knowledge, because it still addresses a valid point. For the rest of the quoted material see: M. Levy, *The Western Synagogue. Some Materials for Its History.* (London 1897), Reproduced in C. Roth, *Records of the Western Synagogue, 1761-1932* (London 1932) p.188.

Neither was it always popular among its constituents. An 1879 letter from 'T.' deplored the dominance of the Chief Rabbi: 'We are living under a hierarchy equally despotic as the papacy...'[22] It was not an isolated expression. Such dissent was at times significant enough to provoke rebuke from the *JC*: '...we desire deliberately to protest against a growing feeling of restiveness to, or restlessness under, lawful authority. Such restiveness is likely to lead to anarchy, and therefore to that disunion which is fatal.'[23] But dissatisfaction appears to have been endemic, if often more low-lying. An unflattering indication of the Chief Rabbi's popularity was revealed by an 1871 report, which discovered that twenty-one provincial and fifteen colonial congregations under his supervision had never contributed to his maintenance fund, whilst four metropolitan, nine provincial and one colonial had recently ceased to do so. As a result, his office could only cover expenditure through 'incessant solicitation'.[24] Even the *JC*, staunch supporter of the establishment, admitted a desire for modification. 'It [the Chief Rabbinate] is an institution which exactly suits the temper of English Jews, with their moderate views and their love of union' but 'the ecclesiastical authority, as at present constituted, does not satisfy the requirements of the age....The ecclesiastical authority needs reconstruction.'[25]

The paper's comment indicates that such grumbling was more than mere chafing against centralised power. A modernising urge was still apparent in elite Anglo-Jewish attitudes during this period. The creation of the USyn was partly a product of an ongoing desire to improve religious structures, particularly by

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[22] *JC*, 01 Aug. 1879, pp.4-5.
[23] *JC*, 17 May 1872, p.97.
[24] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Chief Rabbi's Board, 01 May 1871, p.38.
[25] *JC*, 18 Apr. 1884, p.9.

increasing their relevance to modern conditions. The nature of adjustments desired and the discussions these generated are thus good indicators of Anglo-Jewry's religious state; as the following example from an 1876 USyn Council debate demonstrates well. Initiated by Nathan Adler's request that the Council appoint a new d*ayan* upon the retirement of the previous incumbent, this meeting quickly degenerated into an argument upon the very necessity of the ecclesiastical authorities, as the proposal met fierce opposition. Noah Davis suggested it was unnecessary to appoint a successor, '...he thought that most of the litigation which came before the court [*Beth Din*] would not have arisen but for the existence of the court.' N.S. Joseph, architect, social worker and brother-in-law of Hermann Adler, supported him, claiming that:

> ...the "religious functions", such as he understood appertained to the office of *dayan*, had at all times been most mischievous. These rabbis had taken injunctions found in rabbinical literature of nearly two thousand years ago and tried to make them applicable to the everyday life of the present time. These functions had been discharged in a manner which had done far more harm than good.

Algernon Sydney and Lionel Cohen countered that such resistance was 'inopportune', as the seventy-three year old Adler, to whom the community bore a responsibility, had requested this assistance. The motion to provide a successor was just carried, 11 to 10, alongside a resolution that the Council confer with Alder to restrict the *dayan*'s functions.[26] The elite's conception of themselves as modern English Jews is clearly apparent here. The open hostility to an ancient ecclesiastical position, suggests there was slim identification with or sympathy for such facets of Jewish tradition that no longer seemed relevant to life in nineteenth-century Britain.

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[26] *JC*, 28 Apr. 1876, p.104.

Not all Anglo-Jews were so alienated. The appointment after all, proceeded; and some, like L. London and Samuel Montagu, appalled at the attack upon centuries of tradition, defended the *dayanim*. Most Jews though, to some degree, concurred with this disparagement. Lionel Cohen, for instance, whose support for the motion was motivated not by principle but personal considerations, speaking after Davis and Joseph, had stated that he 'quite agreed with much that had been expressed'.[27] The *JC* pushed a similar line. The 'antiquated system' of the *Beth Din*, it candidly announced,

> ...bears no relation whatever to the religious life of English Jews...what is wanted nowadays is a more liberal interpretation of Jewish law than the *Beth Din* in its existing form is inclined to give. The present ecclesiastical authorities have lost touch of the wants and feelings of the age...Government by the triumvirate of the *Beth Din* was well enough in former times when ceremonialism was at its zenith, and the purely spiritual requirements of the community were of a very unexacting order. But the times have changed, and ecclesiastical authorities ought to change with them.[28]

In this period, Anglo-Jewry was consciously rejecting aspects of its Jewish heritage, even though emancipation had guaranteed equal civil respect for Judaism. Calls for modification, for the religious organisation to parallel the understandings of the community, naturally resulted. The aforementioned 'T.' suggested Anglican Convocation and nonconformist assemblies as potential models; the *JC* from the early 1880s began advocating the formation of a Jewish synod presided over by the Chief Rabbi.[29] It is instructive of Anglo-Jewry's self-image, or desired self-image, that their chosen replacements bore a markedly English impress. The British community was acculturated to the point that, to a remarkably degree, it could better relate to religious structures founded upon British (and therefore, Christian), rather than Jewish, conceptions.

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[27] Ibid., p.104.
[28] *JC*, 18 Apr. 1884, p.9.
[29] *JC*, 01 Aug. 1879, p.4. and 29 Dec. 1882, p.10.

It was not only their religious organisation that Jews sought to update. Similar sentiments were evinced towards Anglo-Jewish ritual. There was talk of needing to improve Orthodox worship. 'There can be no doubt that there are parts...which are no longer in harmony with the communal intelligence or ethical standard, which are redolent of superstition, and which, justly so, are liable to misconstruction.'[30] The *Jewish World* similarly hoped for the removal of 'objectionable passages...which are at variance with the educational advancement of the present day.'[31] There were evidently concerns amongst the image-conscious minority about appearing recondite – both to themselves or, more seriously, outsiders. But there was more behind these demands than image projection. Fundamentally, they reflected developments within Anglo-Jewish identity. Aspects of traditional ritual now had little relevance for the acculturated community and were generating tension between their Jewish and their modern, Anglo-Jewish identity. The *JC* bemoaned the 'consciousness of this dissonance in our innermost being'.[32] Free and equal citizens, Jews no longer wanted a faith bearing the marks of persecution and the ghetto. Not all Jews felt this way, of course; there were some who rejected any alterations outright as irreligious. But the majority of the community were in favour and in 1879 and again in 1882, the USyn arranged conferences to modify the ritual. These were attended by all constituent synagogues, save the ultra-traditional Hambro, with the intention of instituting changes that would reconnect Jews to their faith without offending traditionalists.[33] The *JC* felt such a balance had been achieved after 1879:

> The Chief Rabbi has, happily, been able to steer a middle course between the scheme of the conference and the rigid *non possumus* of the ultra-Orthodox party.

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[30] *JC*, 12 Oct. 1877, p.9.
[31] *JW*, 28 Mar. 1879, p.5.
[32] *JC*, 12 Oct. 1877, p.9.
[33] See LMA, ACC/2712/02/001-2, United Synagogue, Agendas and Presented Papers, 1870-80 and 1881-5

> He has conceded a great deal of what has been asked of him; but he has withheld sufficient to conciliate those who would have him part with nothing.[34]

Such restrained compromise was to be the hallmark of Anglo-Judaism. There was a willingness to enact non-ideological alterations, so long as they did not transgress the boundaries of Orthodox law.[35] As the 1879 conference report indicated

> Judaism should never be viewed as fossilised in its forms....like everything else of human design, the outward forms of our religious service must of necessity be liable to change occasionally, with change of times and circumstances. Such alteration of form, when guided in a cautious, reverential, and conservative spirit, is one of the clearest signs of a vitality which is the best safeguard and guarantee for the preservation of Judaism.[36]

It was a method of advance the community had picked up from their environment. Noting the national impressions particular societies made upon Judaism, Anglo-Jewry realised their adaptations were part of, and subject to, wider currents in the British religious situation.

> Although by its conception of God, man's relation to Him, and the tenets imposed by Him on His people, Judaism forms a religious system quite distinct from that of any other nation...it has nowhere altogether escaped the prevailing influences of the countries in which its followers are scattered...in Germany it is rationalistic, learned and ingenious; in France it is superficial, impulsive and indifferent; and in our England grave, practical, conservative and unlettered. No wonder, therefore, that the agitation in the Church, called forth by the relation of the Book of Common Prayer to the clergy, should also find its counterpart in the synagogue. Not that the latter imitated the former but that one and the same cause...set them both in motion.[37]

Such was Anglo-Judaism. A faith sufficiently integrated to share reforming concerns with the Established Church but one that had, unlike some European communities, eschewed radical acculturation to environmental forms of Christian practice, and

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[34] *JC*, 25 June 1880, p.9.
[35] S. Sharot, 'Religious Change in Native Orthodoxy in London, 1870-1914: The Synagogue Service', *JJS*, Vol.15. No.1. (June 1973) p.67.
[36] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report to the Boards of Management of the synagogues represented at the conference of delegates to consider modifications in the service of the synagogues, p.760.
[37] *JC*, 13 June 1862, p.4.

rather transformed gradually, maintaining an accommodating balance that provided continuing relevance for various intensities of Jewish worship.[38] One group that would not have felt included within Anglo-Judaism however, were Eastern European immigrant Jews. Increasing in numbers throughout this period, these Jews would have a revolutionary impact upon Anglo-Jewry from the 1880s onwards, as chapter five explains. Until then, generally more traditional than native Jews, the immigrants exhibited hostility to the acculturated faith of USyn and preferred to worship outside communal institutions in their own small societies, or *shtiebal*.[39]

These post-emancipation revisions brought Anglo-Jewish Orthodox worship closely in line with British Reform Judaism. Not only in practice but also in rationale the two increasingly inhabited the same territory. The rancour of the 'schism' having largely abated, a rapprochement occurred and communal commentators began remarking from the late 1860s onwards that 'the separation has now become almost nominal.'[40] This was facilitated on one side by Reform's lack of further innovation.[41] As Israel Zangwill, journalist, writer and communal observer, commented in 1892, the Berkeley Street congregation was '...a body which had stood still for the past fifty years admiring its past self.'[42] The increasing receptivity of Orthodoxy to adjustment was however, the greater facilitator. Disgruntled Orthodox believers certainly thought this to be the case. Haim Guedalla, nephew of Moses Montefiore, criticising calls to alter rabbinical authority, advised the disaffected to join Reform, warning that

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[38] Sharot, 'Synagogue Service' p.67.
[39] G. Alderman, *Modern British Jewry. Second Edition* (Oxford 1998) p.142.
[40] *JC*, 13 Aug. 1869, p.13.
[41] For example see: Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 140/6/18, West London Synagogue of British Jews Records, Report of a sub-committee to consider the mode of introducing portions of the prophets into the Sabbath service, 1879, that discusses proposals for service modification encountering 'great divergence of opinion' and therefore being dropped.
[42] Quoted in A. Kershen, and J. Romain, *Tradition and Change. A History of Reform Judaism in Britain, 1840-1995* (London 1995) p.28.

'...unless a bold stand be made, they will actually be the more Orthodox Jews. Indeed, everything since 1840 has been but miserable copies of their actions'[43] Guedalla's opinion was not that of fringe ultra-Orthodoxy but represented a significant section of communal opinion, which, while the *JC* debated 'reconciliation', remained resolutely hostile to Reform. Moses Montefiore was the most high-profile exponent of this unforgiving hard-line, employing his influence to ensure Reform's long exclusion from the Board of Deputies.[44] Despite this notable discontent interaction increased; developing, on the whole, smoothly and through practical action rather than contrived philosophical harmonisation – as always was Anglo-Jewry's way. Calls for reunion may have been optimistic but they were also unnecessary, given the intimate level of cooperation achieved between the separate groups. This had begun in earnest by the second half of the 1860s, with Prof. David Woolf Marks, first (and founding) minister of Reform, testifying in defence of the Chief Rabbi's monopolistic control over *Shechita*, which had once been directed against his own flock, during an 1868 trial.[45] By 1887, incidences were manifold: ministers were invited to preach at each others' services; Reform contributed £50 per annum to Jews' College; another £50 was gifted to USyn's Burial Society and the

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[43] *JC*, 29 July 1870, p.3.

[44] Montefiore's intransigence was heartfelt and extended into his personal life. Writing to his estranged, seriously ill brother, Horatio, a Reformer, Montefiore expressed gladness at his supposed recovery but hoped this would serve as a lesson of his error: 'I am most happy to learn that you are gradually improving in strength – I am sure you must be grateful, for at no time is man's heart so filled with gratitude for all God's mercies as on rising from a bed of suffering to a new life, I greatly hope...given you by the mercy of the God of Israel may lead you to seek his Divine help to bring you back to the ancient faith of your fathers and to the love and union of family ties.' Horatio died shortly afterward. Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 259, Copies of Papers of Sir Moses Montefiore, 1793-1885, Letter from Moses to Horatio, 23 May 1867.

[45] *The Times*, 15 Dec. 1868, p.10. The case Schott vs. Rev. Dr. Adler was brought by an immigrant Jew in possession of a foreign license to sell kosher meat. Schott had opened a butchers shop in Whitechapel against the order of the ecclesiastical authorities, who had wanted him to operate in the Islington area after obtaining a licence from them. When their directions were ignored, Schott was called before the *Beth Din*, his produce declared *trepha* and these actions advertised amongst the Jewish public. Scott challenged the Chief Rabbi's authority to impose such conditions. The Court found in favour of Adler, concluding that the matter was an internal religious one.

congregation was represented on its committee; and by 1886, they elected representatives to the Deputies.[46] By the end of the period the two bodies were operating symbiotically in many spheres of communal governance and were closer than at any time since they separated. Indeed, if the formation of USyn be included, it might be considered that the outward level of communal cohesion was greater in this period than in any other since the early seventeenth-century.

One particular area of post-emancipation devotion in which Orthodoxy followed a similar pattern of development to Reform was the widespread institution of pulpit preaching. Reform had included a sermon as a regular feature from the establishment of its first synagogue in 1842.[47] Although English sermons were offered in Bevis Marks from 1833, uptake was initially sporadic among the wider community.[48] By the achievement of emancipation however, they were fast becoming a necessary feature and most major synagogues built in this period, the so-called 'Cathedral Synagogues' because of their architectural similarities to these Christian buildings, featured prominently placed pulpits.[49] In the decades after 1858 most important religious leaders extolled the essentiality of sermons within Jewish services, often espousing highly idealised perceptions of their usefulness. In 1866, *Haham* Artom enumerated what he thought sermons accomplished:

> From the Pastor's lips the truth must go forth to his flock, and it is from the pulpit that he has to declare it to the faithful...teaching men the ordinances of faith, and the precepts of civil life; teaching men their duty to their neighbour, and to the fatherland which is so dear to them...From his lips as the congregation throng

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[46] LMA, ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Apr. 1886, pp.15-6.; LMA, ACC/2712/02/002, USP, Report of the Executive Committee concerning representation on the Burial Committee of congregations contributing towards the cost of burial of the poor, Nov. 1883, p.196.; and *JC*, 22 Jan. 1886, p.9.

[47] A. Hyamson, *Jews' College, London, 1855-1955* (London 1955) p.16.

[48] Singer, 'The Anglo-Jewish Ministry' p.284.

[49] S. Kadish, 'The "Cathedral Synagogues" of England', *Jewish Historical Studies,* Vol.39. (2004) p.70.

> silently around him, must flow words of advice, admonition, reproof, and warning, and words of hope, comfort and promise![50]

Enthusiasm for sermons continued into the 1880s; the Boards of Management of Bayswater and New West End Synagogues concluding after investigating whether to institute a 'rotation of preachers', '...that the preponderating desire of the members of each synagogue was for sermons every Sabbath.'[51] This reflected the prominent and popular place occupied throughout this time by preaching in most British Protestant services. A fact that has led some historians to highlight Anglo-Jewry's passion for sermonising as a major sign of their religious acculturation; Singer, for instance, finds it one of the more blatant attempts to: 're-fashion Judaism in the Protestant mould.'[52] Sermons were certainly a significant aspect of British Jews' religious Anglicisation. Artom's speech displays considerable internalisation of Christian themes and terminology. But the depth to which such sentiments penetrated the community at large is debatable and seems to have been overestimated by current historiography, intent either, like Singer, to illustrate the abandonment of Jewish tradition or construed more positively, like Finestein, to demonstrate Jewish integration. Finestein claims that 'by 1880 residual inhibitions about sermons had waned into remote memory or distant paternal hearsay.'[53] Such statements miss the significant disparity that existed between elite rhetoric and communal reality in regard to preaching.

Though they broke no halachic rule, the fact that sermons were viewed as un-Jewish is evident from the attempts religious leaders made to justify their Hebrew

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[50] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/94 Small Jewish Collections, Artom, 'Jewish Pastor', 16 Dec. 1866, p.16.
[51] LMA, ACC/2712/BWS/005, UPS, Bayswater Synagogue Minute Book, 1873-90, Report on the proposed system of circuit preaching, by conjoint meeting of Central, Bayswater and New West End, 05 July 1883.
[52] Singer, 'Anglo-Jewish Ministry' p.286.
[53] Finestein, 'Anglo-Jewish Pastorate' p.73.

heritage. In 1892, Hermann Adler, delegate Chief Rabbi from 1880, Chief Rabbi 1891-1911, was still trying to convince the community: 'The minister should regard himself as the lineal successor of the greatest of all preachers, the prophets of old.'[54] Moreover, there is much evidence that the sermon, with its overtly didactic purpose, did not suit the religiosity of all Anglo-Jews. Letters in the *JC* from 1861 through to 1880 criticised sermons. 'Jacob' suspected that his fellow congregants were bored by sermons, '...the thin attendance, made thinner...' by them.[55] 'A Simple Worshipper' '...read with great disappointment the summaries of sermons delivered during the past few weeks', being '...pained to see the endless iteration of the same verbose platitudes, and the attempt to stretch or mutilate old superstitions to meet the procrustean tests of modern thought.'[56] Such opinion was not isolated, the paper itself noting in 1882 that the Great, New, Hambro, Borough, and East London congregations had no regular preachers and received perhaps only four sermons a year.[57] The top rank of religious leaders and their more acculturated followers thought the Jewish sermon a necessity. Using their influence and playing upon emancipation tendencies they sought to impose this opinion upon the congregations. These were less convinced. As time passed and the novelty wore off, communal opinion expressed its dissent and the installation of preachers became less important as more traditional practices re-emerged. No less a person than Lionel Cohen expressed the resentment some felt against the preaching emphasis with scathing comments during an 1883 USyn meeting:

> If the question be divested of sentimentality and the opinions of the congregations could be tested, it would be found that among the regular attendants at synagogue, the majority would if necessary dispense with the sermon...He himself would rather hear a service at which Hebrew was read correctly than any number of sermons.

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[54] H. Adler, *The Functions of the Jewish Pulpit* (London 1892) p.9.
[55] *JC*, 24 May 1861, p.6.
[56] *JC*, 01 Oct. 1880, p.4.
[57] *JC*, 15 Dec. 1882, p.9.

> The one was essential, the other a luxury. And yet he and those who agreed with him were told they belonged to a past age...A great mistake was committed in attaching a preacher to an individual synagogue. No one could stand 52 weekly sermons by the same man...[58]

The rise of the sermon was part of the evolution in character and duties experienced by the Anglo-Jewish religious office over the nineteenth-century. It was one of the more important aspects of attempts to professionalise and anglicise the Anglo-Jewish ministry, the motivation behind which, was again, the need of the integrated Jew to modernise his community. '...We have at last arrived at a stage when the Jew rivals his neighbour in science and the arts, in civic matters, and enlightened zeal for his religion. One factor in this moral revolution has undoubtedly been, and must continue to be, an enlightened, fully cultured, and zealous clergy.'[59] Besides any rabbinical accomplishments, the *JC*'s requirements for Jewish clergymen '...added the possession of a pleasant, strong and easily modulated voice, the manners and expressions of a gentleman, and an acquaintance with society and the world.'[60] To produce these urbane rabbis, the minority's seminary, Jews' College, placed as much emphasis upon secular as religious instruction, and its students were required to matriculate at UCL.[61] The College, echoing wider desires, placed great emphasis upon obtaining officials commensurate in class to their congregants. In 1880 it was sadly observed that of the fifteen boys training for the ministry all had parents of 'limited circumstances'.[62] USyn warned of

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[58] *JC*, 12 Jan. 1883, p.6. Cohen was a dedicated communal worker and prominent member of the Jewish elite. President of the Jewish Board of Guardians from 1869-87, he was one of the men most responsible for the formation of USyn, of which he was a Vice-President.

[59] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Jews' College Memoir, p.509.

[60] *JC*, 08 Aug. 1873, p.316.

[61] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Jews' College Memoir, p.512. Besides theological subjects, students regularly learned: English literature, history, geography, arithmetic, geometry, moral philosophy, chemistry, Latin, Greek, French and German.

[62] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Committee appointed 03 July 1877 concerning the training of Jewish Ministers, p.504.

> ...the urgent necessity which exists of providing fitting men to perform the duties of Jewish ministers...and not longer to subject the community to the dangerous hazard of drawing, from the Jewish public, men who may feel no calling for the profession which perhaps the poverty of their parents in the first instance selected for them...[63]

Even more important than status was nationality. Being British topped the list of desiderata for an Anglo-Jewish minister: 'We need men capable of fulfilling ecclesiastical functions who have received their education in England, from an English point of view – men of English birth and English rearing and men of English academical training are assuredly needed.'[64] Such men were required not only to reflect their congregants' identities but to competently undertake the increasing tasks expected of a Jewish minister. These were adopted from the concept of the Protestant pastoral ministry, which had become so important a part of the nineteenth-century Christian clergyman's role.[65] Hermann Adler preached that '...the clergy must be first and foremost in this goodly work of visiting the poor in their homes...'[66] The USyn in 1871, stipulated 'that the visitation and religious supervision of Jewish inmates of workhouses, asylums, hospitals, reformatories, and prisons...should be committed to the Jewish ministry in an organised and defined system.'[67] Such functions bore little resemblance to traditional rabbinic responsibilities, which concentrated more exclusively upon providing halachic interpretation. These were now being devalued by the community, who looked to their Christian neighbours for modern forms of religious guidance.

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[63] Ibid., p.505.
[64] *JC*, 15 Jan. 1875, p.672.
[65] G. Parsons, 'Reform, Revival and Realignment: The Experience of Victorian Anglicanism' in Idem., (ed.), *Religion in Britain* (Five Volumes Manchester 1988) i, p.27.
[66] H. Adler, *The Purpose and Methods of Charitable Relief. Two Sermons Preached at the Bayswater Synagogue,* March 1884 (London) p.10.
[67] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of Committee on the general administration of relief, April 1871, p.19.

The highly acculturated ideal was never realised. Geoffrey Alderman's assertion that under Hermann Adler a situation was almost reached in which 'Anglo-Jewish clergymen were clergymen who happened to be Jewish' overstates the case; and as with preaching, confuses the exemplar – clothed in Anglican-esque garb, self-entitled 'very Reverend', and talking of the Jewish 'communion' – with the general situation.[68] The state of most Jewish ministers was far less acculturated and accomplished than their head. The hoped for Anglicisation, for one, was not achieved in this period. Jews' College, whose Principal was foreign, was unable to produce sufficient native candidates of quality to satisfy demand.[69] Despite stipulating a good knowledge of English as a prerequisite, the Great Synagogue's advertised vacancy for a first Reader in 1871 was answered by fourteen foreigners and only four Englishmen; Rev. M. Hart of Breslau was hired.[70] By 1884, the New Synagogue had dropped the language requirement, '...it having been brought to the attention of the board that a much better class of applications will be received if this qualification is not made essential...'[71] Even less success was met in raising the socio-economic class of officials. An 1877 USyn report into the training of Jewish ministers was forced by their continuing low-status to ponder: 'Are there any special circumstances in connection with Jewish Orthodox practice which prevent members of the upper or middle class from becoming candidates for the Jewish ministry?' Concluding negatively, the report believed the only discouragement that could be thought of was '...the want of sufficient inducement.'[72] Here was the real problem facing the post-

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[68] Alderman, 'English Jews' p.153.

[69] Hyamson, *Jews' College* p.33. From 1865 the College Principal was Michael Friedländer, a German-Pole from Berlin. On this point it was also notable that the two religious heads of the community, Chief Rabbi Adler and *Haham* Artom, were not English, being German and Italian, respectively.

[70] LMA, ACC/2712/GTS/007, USP, Great Synagogue Minute Books, 1870-1937, entry for Jan.-June 1871.

[71] LMA, ACC/2712/02/002, United Synagogue Agendas and Presented Papers, 1881-5, p.255.

[72] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Committee appointed 03 July 1877 concerning the

emancipation clergy. For while expectations and responsibilities had increased, respect and remuneration had, tellingly, not. An 1873 USyn confidential report candidly admitted as much: '...the fact is patent that since the appointment of most of these officers their duties have, in nearly every instance, increased, while their salaries represent – in purchasing power – a considerably smaller sum; in other words the salaries have been gradually diminishing...'[73] Training facilities were permanently under-funded throughout the period. Jews' College lamented that it could not muster £300 per annum in subscriptions; 'the result, it must be assured, argues a singular want of appreciation on the part of the wealthiest Jewish community in Europe.'[74] Unsurprisingly, this did not produce the pastoral clergy some hoped for; '...I have to admit with shame and humiliation' commented Hermann Adler 'that many of our ministers are very remiss in the performance of this duty.'[75]

Not all in the community were similarly bothered. The Hambro Synagogue had never accepted the new standards and would employ Talmudic scholars and qualified rabbis as its readers.[76] The modest resurgence of sympathy for traditional forms detectable in the early 1880s in regard to sermons, also saw a certain rehabilitation of older conceptions of religious officials. The benefits of the *hazzan*, a cantor-like official, whose main duties involved Hebrew rendition, were again touted. In 1882, Liverpool Old Synagogue deliberately passed up the opportunity to appoint a preacher, preferring instead to employ a foreign-born *hazzan*, whose ability,

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training of Jewish Ministers, p.507.

[73] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Executive Committee to consider and report on the salaries of all officials, 1873, pp.174-5. Letters of complaint from Reform ministers indicate that clerical impecuniosity was a communal wide phenomenon, see Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 140/1/24, Correspondence with Ministers of the Synagogue, 1864-70.

[74] LMA, LMA/4180/*JC*/B/01/001, Jews' College Minutes and Annual Reports, 1874-9, Annual Report, 1878, p.10.

[75] Adler, *Purposes and Methods* p.10.

[76] Singer, 'Anglo-Jewish Ministry', p.283.

according to the *JC*, '...to discharge ministerial duty is simply nil.'[77] E. A. Franklin, banking partner and brother-in-law of Samuel Montagu, the next year, obtained sympathy from a USyn meeting in which he expressed veneration for 'old-fashioned *chasonos*'.[78] This sentiment should not be exaggerated. Many still looked with a degree of contempt upon such nostalgia; at this meeting Maurice Hart claimed Anglo-Jewry deserved better than a 'singing bird in a white cravat'.[79] But there was some quality in the *hazzan* that persistently appealed to Anglo-Jewry. Their more emotional and musical roles were consonant with contemporary Christian enthusiasm for hymnody, and more in tune with English Jews' religiosity that was seldom intellectual enough to appreciate rigorous preaching, but primarily expressed through Hebrew usage, their participation also represented a specifically Jewish devotion. For all its integration the community could not fully accept the image of a clergy so alien to its tradition. Even the progressive *JC* recognised this: 'It seems to us that too much stress has been laid on the necessity of having a Jewish clergy in a sense analogous or parallel to the clergy of the Church of England.'[80] The idea of a 'Jewish clergy' was, after all, an artificial one. Many of the pastor's duties were executed by the laity in Jewish communities. The synagogue was governed by laymen, not ecclesiastics. 'We Jews are...remarkably sensitive as to interference from the priesthood, and from time immemorial the Minister has occupied his office solely as long as he conformed to the will of his congregation.'[81] In this situation the Anglo-Jewish ministry developed as a hybrid; a blend of Jewish and English ideas. Stripped of traditional legal roles, expectations of religious officials had been substantially acculturated but without a concomitant alteration in the religious culture they were deprived of the position of

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[77] *JC*, 15 Dec. 1882, p.9.
[78] *JC*, 12 Jan. 1883, p.6.
[79] Ibid., p.6.
[80] *JC*, 08 Aug. 1873, p.316.
[81] *JW*, 30 May 1879, p.5.

respect Christian clerics enjoyed, whilst understated appreciation for customary Jewish roles continued. In reality, the Anglo-Jewish clergy was a confection.

This was the situation of mainstream Anglo-Judaism in London. Conditions in provincial communities, where approximately a third of Jews resided, were markedly different. The post-emancipation state of many of these, excluding the larger industrial cities, such as Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham, was not uplifting. Numerically small and precariously financed, their religious standard bore slim resemblance to the rhetoric issuing from the ecclesiastical authorities. Paul Hirsch, President of the Great Synagogue in Leeds, replied to Hermann Adler's suggestion that he employ a preacher in 1886: 'I am afraid judging from past experiences that the majority of our Leeds community are not only indifferent to the benefits of proper religious instruction and preaching but positively hostile to it.' He was willing to try however, if, of course, sufficient donations could be obtained from the capital.[82] A similar enquiry at Leicester brought equally disheartening news: '...in the course of a few years Judaism in Leicester will be a thing almost entirely unknown. At the present time it has reached its lowest ebb we have nothing but indifference and discord...'[83] The issue in many communities, it seems, was not modernisation of Judaism but its survival. It is notable that in this effort local figures cooperated with and sought assistance from the central London authorities. The archives of the Chief Rabbinate are replete with correspondence requesting aid or seeking advice, provincials evidently recognising the institution's jurisdiction. There is evidence however, that whilst recognised this prerogative was seldom effective on the ground. In 1884, for instance, the *Beth Din*, investigating a conflict within the Canterbury

[82] LMA, ACC/2805/02/01/098, Chief Rabbi's Office, Correspondence: Miscellaneous, 1886, Letter from Hirsch to H. Adler, 16 Mar. 1886

[83] Ibid., Letter from Leicester Congregation to H. Adler, 15 July 1886.

congregation, resolved that the sacked Rev. Rosenberg be reinstated. The congregation's President conveyed his 'surprise and discontent' with the verdict to Adler, alongside a thinly veiled threat of financial consequences

> You are aware also of the slender resources of our congregation and the chief burden of its support has laid [*sic*] upon my shoulders for many years past and how totally inconsistent it is to me to retain the services of a man who is not worthy of any support....I do not wish to set my face upon him in Canterbury again.[84]

The writ of the Chief Rabbi ran only so far as local lay supporters allowed. In congregations poor in both terms of organisation and money, the influence of wealthy patrons could be near dictatorial. This often contributed to the fractiousness that plagued much provincial Judaism. Internecine fighting in the Hull congregation, as two factions and various individuals quarrelled over synagogue honours, defied Chief Rabbinate and USyn intervention for over two years. In the interim it crippled services and demoralised the congregation.[85] 'Our meetings are rarely held without disturbances, insults are the order of the day, it has even reached the climax by an assault of an aggravated character at one of the committee meetings...The leading men of the congregation have quite deserted us...', the Secretary informed Adler.[86] The squabble severely damaged the Jewish reputation among locals. The *Hull Packet*, reporting in June 1878 on the 'wrangles of the pugilistic Jews' following the issue of a summons by one congregant upon another for alleged insult during a service, evaluated the case:

> If we are to believe him, it is the custom of some of the brethren to talk to each other during the prayers. At what should be the most impressive portion of holy worship, discussions on going to Goole, Berlin, beating wives, are quite common,

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[84] LMA, ACC/3400/02/01/025 London *Beth Din*, Clerks to the Court: J.H. Taylor and Predecessors, 1855-1948, Letter from Hart to Adler, 19 July 1884.
[85] See various letters in LMA, ACC/2805/02/01/02, Chief Rabbi's Office, Correspondence: Hull.
[86] Ibid., Letter from Hermann Bush to N. Adler, 25 Dec. 1877.

> interlarded with such choice epithets as villain, fellow, &c, and the possibility of going to an Irish fair.[87]

The newspaper urged respectable Jews to quickly resolve the dispute: '...the thoroughly conscientious Jew has the sympathy of all right-thinking, non-bigoted men, when by the act or acts of unworthy sons of Israel, the oldest religion in the universe is trailed in the dust.'[88] The Hull community was perhaps worse than most but the state of provincial Jewish religion was generally quite ignoble, if not squalid. The *JW* of April 1876 feared that if improvements were not quickly made '...and if the present causes of deterioration continue, many provincial houses of prayer will soon be extinct.'[89]

Jewish standards varied in London, of course. But strong lay governance was here allied to well-organised ecclesiastical authority, ensuring that the types of Judaism observed across the city were better regulated and more consistent. There still existed it would seem though, serious deficiencies in the religious condition of many London Jews. Post-emancipation there was little idea of secularism within the community and most Jews remained nominally associated with their religion.[90] What the communal elite feared was indifference. The *JC* had been criticising 'indifferentists' since emancipation and by 1867 was denouncing the 'lamentable religious ignorance in the Anglo-Jewish community.'[91] It was appreciated that these were challenging times for religion in general and that Judaism was not alone afflicted. Artom preached in 1866 against the 'reflective spirit' and 'terrible doubt' of the era; whereas the *JC* emphasised that 'ours is, by way of eminence, the age of

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[87] Ibid., Clipping from the *Hull Packet*, 21 June 1878.
[88] Ibid.
[89] *JW*, 28 Apr. 1876, p.4.
[90] S. Sharot, 'Secularisation, Judaism, and Anglo-Jewry', *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, Vol.4. (London 1971) p.134.
[91] *JC*, 12 Feb. 1858, p.68. and 11 Jan. 1867, p.5.

excitement and pleasure hunting.'[92] The generality of the phenomenon was cold comfort however, to a minority ostensibly defined by its faith only. For Anglo-Jewry, religious detachment presented a much more serious threat to their existence than it did for many English Gentiles, and the extent of communal indifference reveals much about the Jewish aspect of their identity.

This was apparently unconcerned with many matters of rabbinic doctrine, which seemed not only irrelevant but often absurd in the modern age. The *JC* enumerated in October 1882 a number of Sabbath laws forsaken *de facto* by many and that it wished to see forsaken *de jure*, including such prohibitions as carrying an umbrella on the Sabbath and using rail travel to attend the synagogue.[93] So prevalent was disregard for these injunctions that Gentiles noticed it. *Blackwood's Magazine* observed in 1868 that '...even among the strictest of their party tea is made and drunk on the Sabbath, though most of their Continental brethren would indignantly repudiate the practice...'[94] Whilst there can be few greater indications of how quintessentially British was Anglo-Jewry's religious laxity, Singer, commenting from a Jewish perspective suggests the community possessed '...a neo-Karaitic unwillingness to accept restrictions which were all of rabbinic origin...'[95] Accurate as this understanding is, it cannot entirely explain communal indifference; for there were also worrying incidents of negligence concerning more fundamental traditions. In 1883 the Board of *Shechita* was concerned at declining kosher consumption, there

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[92] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/94, Small Jewish Collections, Artom, 'Jewish Pastor', p.11. and *JC*, 30 Nov. 1865, p.4.

[93] *JC*, 20 Oct. 1882, p.9.

[94] 'The Jewish Reformation and the Talmud', Nov. 1869, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol.106, July-Dec. 1869. pp.545-6.

[95] S. Singer, 'Jewish Religious Observance in Early Victorian London, 1840-1860', *JJS*, Vol.28. No.2. (Dec. 1986) p.126. Singer perhaps invests this phenomenon with too much theological significance, Anglo-Judaism was not a philosophical faith and its approach to alteration was pragmatic. Nevertheless, the point that Talmudic knowledge was held in low regard by Anglo-Jews and its injunctions widely evaded is valid.

having been 1,213 fewer beasts slaughtered kosher compared to last year. With the community increasing in numbers, these figures '...must be taken to show that a diminishing number of persons pay respect to the dietary laws.'[96] Adler was disturbed enough by cases '...of Jewish parents who have, in flagrant disregard of our Law, abstained from having the rite of *Milah* performed on their sons...' that he requested USyn bar them from privileged membership.[97]

Sabbath desecration was a particularly widespread problem. Whilst some type of formal observance remained *de rigueur* for the Jewish elite, as it did for their Christian counterparts, for the middling and lower strata regular attendance was generally uncommon.[98] The problem was a nationwide one; the *JW* of April 1876 carried complaints concerning the 'truly awful disregard of the Sabbath' in Liverpool, for instance.[99] Some comfort was taken from festival attendance, which continuously remained high, but 'on the Sabbath, only the pious and the observers of ceremonies unite...'[100] A religious survey of attendance within 'smaller London' undertaken by *St. James's Gazette* in November 1881 included synagogues and discovered that out of an approximate 9,150 seats, only 2,790 were occupied during the Sabbath service – some 30.5%.[101] Neglect of traditional rites was augmented by disregard for modern, anglicised requirements. Imposing decorum upon the customarily boisterous Jewish service, for instance, was perhaps the most important alteration sought by religious authorities, who viewed it as necessary demonstration of Judaism's respectability. It

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[96] *JC*, 20 July 1883, p.4.
[97] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Sub-Committee appointed to prepare a draft code of bye-laws for the constituent synagogues, March 1878, p.498.
[98] T. Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington, Ind. 1990) pp.82 & 94-5.
[99] *JW*, 21 Apr. 1876, p.2.
[100] M. Angel, *The Law of Sinai and Its Appointed Times* (London 1858) p.364. *Rosh Hashanah* (New Year) and *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement), were noted as exceptionally popular, witnessing overflowing synagogues and necessitating temporary, extra accommodation.
[101] Reported in: *The British Weekly: A Journal of Social and Christian Progress*, 12 Nov. 1886, p.2.

was another modification never satisfactorily achieved. *JC* editorials and correspondence throughout the period perpetually lambasted '...sights which you would not see in either church or chapel – viz., people sitting, standing, lolling, in all sorts of positions; we also frequently see the snuff box passed round from its owner to his neighbours; we see people laughing, smiling, chatting...'[102] In 1876 the Chief Rabbi was obliged to issue a circular to all synagogues reprimanding congregants for the 'reprehensible scenes' that disturbed Yom Kippur that year.[103]

It would seem then, given the indifference evinced toward both traditional and anglicised practice, that significant sections of Anglo-Jewry were not merely detached from rabbinical Judaism but far more seriously irreverent, if not irreligious. The elite themselves realised this in regard to their poorer brethren. Lionel Cohen raised a motion at an October 1884 USyn meeting 'to call attention...to the spiritual destitution existing among the Jewish poor of the metropolis.'[104] Like their Christian countrymen, Jews had difficulties spiritualising the working classes. Something caused, at least in part, by religious institutions designed without them in mind. 'A poor Jew' angrily complained in the *JC* about being forced to 'squat' in the seat of an absent gentlemen and being ejected on his occasional arrivals; 'why, then, should I be shut out entirely from publicly joining in the worship of God at the most solemn time of year merely because I have the double misfortune to be poor and religious?'[105]

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[102] *JC*, 14 Feb. 1868, p.3. There is an issue of source-prejudice here. It is a feature of historical evidence that controversies and concerns are regularly mentioned and highlighted, whereas 'normality' often escapes notice as contemporaries had no cause to record it. The potential for exaggeration in these circumstances is thus great, particularly for emotive issues such as religion. Care must taken to avoid investing such sources with undue influence. They can still, of course, be immensely useful – they still provide information on the past – particularly in cases such as this, where instances occur continuously over a time period and a variety of other evidence exists to contextualise and reinforce the source.

[103] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, United Synagogue Agendas and Presented Papers, 1870-80, p.294.

[104] LMA, ACC/2712/02/002, United Synagogue Agendas and Presented Papers, 1881-5, p.255.

[105] *JC*, 04 Sept. 1874, p.367.

High seat rentals and the ranking of congregants by wealth were issues repeatedly debated in religious discussions of the time, but no significant resolution was achieved. A poor Jew's letter though, hinted at another problem: the lack of religious engagement of the higher classes – his gentlemen that only visited upon holidays. The *JC* worried that wealthy west-enders, those driving many reforms, were declining in spirituality. It described their innovation of a divided service with sarcasm: 'It commences a little after ten o'clock, thereby allowing for the late rising of the west-enders, for their having a suitable breakfast, and for then, in their morning leisure, paying the great compliment of attending the synagogue to praise the God of Israel…'[106] This was the paper's great fear, that for many Anglo-Jews the above transgressions indicated their faith was degenerating into '*opus operatum*'.[107] Abraham Benisch expressed the concern in 1874: 'To a large number of Jews their religion has become a thing of mere habit. It is the outward practice and not the in-dwelling idea, which chiefly occupies their attention.'[108] It would seem a conclusion difficult to refute.

III.

This Anglo-Jewish detachment was both a product and a reflection of the poor level of Jewish learning within the community. To a minority subculture participating in a state and society ordered around and permeated with alien ideals, promotion and knowledge of its own cultural and religious experiences are essential to perpetuating its specificity. Anglo-Jewry however, accorded a remarkably low importance to such

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[106] *JC*, 13 Nov. 1874, p.528.
[107] *JC*, 24 Oct. 1862, p.4.
[108] A. Bensich, *Judaism Surveyed: Being a Sketch of the Rise and Development of Judaism from Moses to our Days* (London 1874) p.118.

acts and this no doubt had an adverse effect upon the state of communal religiosity. There was, for instance, a '...great decline of Hebrew knowledge...'[109] Despite the centrality of the language to Orthodox observance, the excellent deposits in several British libraries and the appeals of religious leaders that it secured the 'devotional fellowship' between Diaspora Jews, Hebrew became increasingly redundant to most Anglo-Jews.[110] *Blackwood's Magazine* observed in 1869: 'Most English Jews are so ignorant of the principles of Hebrew, that they would find it a very difficult and uncongenial task to read their scriptures in their own tongue. The consequence is, that anything like a careful study of them is entirely neglected...'[111] Although the *JC*, supported by influential ministers, regularly deplored the '...barefaced perversion on the part of Anglican translators', the minority did not even possess a Jewish version of the Bible.[112] Since the end of the eighteenth-century communal intellectuals had failed to develop an alternative to the Authorised Version, which most Jews were happy to use and by emancipation, had come to regard as standard.[113] For many this was a measure of the acculturation of their religious-cultural values. The communal commentator 'Nemo' thought the AV '...despite all its archaisms, the most beautiful book in the English language. It breathes the very spirit of poetry; its hold on the feelings is fascinating: its accessibility is such that its phraseology has found its way into all literature current since its rendering...'[114] For the majority, it would also seem to have resulted from a more general adaptation: the assimilation of the utilitarian British nature. 'All the treasures of Judaism are buried in books written in Hebrew; and because Hebrew, as a language, has little to recommend it to the utilitarian, the

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[109] *JC*, 08 July 1864, p.4.
[110] *JC*, 14 Aug. 1868, p.5.
[111] 'Jewish Reformation, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, p.548.
[112] *JC*, 29 June 1862, p.2.
[113] D. Ruderman, *Enlightenment in an English Key: Anglo-Jewry's Construction of Modern Jewish Thought* (Oxford 2000) pp.219-21.
[114] *JC*, 24 Dec. 1869, p.9.

study of it is neglected.'[115] This was always the case with Anglo-Jewry, for whom the abstract and intellectual were generally seconded to the concrete and functional. A situation that lead, not only to a lack of specifically Jewish learning but a general dearth of cultural contributions. Anglo-Jewry, from both English and Jewish perspectives, was a 'cultural backwater'.[116] The community admitted this; otherwise quite self-assured, if not arrogant, this realm saw them concede inferiority to other Jewish communities.

> We unhesitatingly maintain that the palm of rare knowledge and superior education must be awarded to the Jews of central Europe, especially those of Germany. Compared with them the Jews of England lag far, far behind....We have, no doubt, in England a number of well-educated Jewish ladies and gentlemen. Some can even boast of scholarly attainments; but we unhesitatingly declare that both quantitatively and qualitatively they are excelled by any second-rate Jewish community in Germany.[117]

Unlike their central European brethren, English Jews had no appreciation of knowledge for its own sake, no craving for the virtues of *Bildung*.[118] But in Britain these were not necessary. Taking their lead from the English bourgeois environment, Anglo-Jews did not need to achieve a high-degree of cultural or educational proficiency to demonstrate their acculturation, as German Jews felt beholden to do.

The community's approach to educating its youth was predicated upon this rather perfunctory attitude to learning. Anglo-Jewry had a well-developed denominational schooling system by the post-emancipation era. In 1860 the *JC* estimated that 'out of 6,000 children, some of whom must be too young for school,

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[115] Angel, *Law of Sinai* p.v.

[116] N. Cohen, 'Non-Religious Factors in the Emergence of the Chief Rabbinate' *TJHSE*, Vol.21. (1962-7) p.309.

[117] *JC*, 02 Dec. 1864, p.3.

[118] *Bildung* expresses an idea of cultural and moral attainment by individuals through self-improvement of character; something that was a goal in itself but could also enable useful contributions to wider society. In early nineteenth-century Germany, where it became the mark of bourgeois society, it shaped a new social identity, the *Bildungsbürgertum*, to which many Jews sought to acculturate. See, M. Meyer, 'Becoming German, Remaining Jewish' in Idem., (ed.), *German-Jewish History in Modern Times* (Four Volumes New York 1997) ii, p.200

whilst others must have outgrown it, 3,204 are actually found within the walls of our educational establishments.'[119] Most Jewish schools in London had good academic records. No less an inspector than Matthew Arnold praised the Westminster Jews' Free School for girls and boys: 'The rate of failure is very trifling in both, but far more uncommon than a low rate of failure is the intelligence, accurate knowledge, and clear speaking which are found here. I have never inspected a school where they are surpassed, very seldom had one where they are equalled.'[120] Due to its excellent results the Jews' Free School (JFS), was awarded the largest government grant per head of child ever attained in 1884.[121] For all this however, these schools failed to imbue Jewish youth with more than a rudimentary grasp of their religion. The practicalities of integration got in the way again. 'The admission of the once secluded Jew into the general society of the civilised world has wrought a change...Hebrew is now no more than one of the branches of education which engage the time and attention of Jewish youth. A limited number of hours each week...is all that can be spared for its study' noted the *JC* in 1866.[122] So relaxed was the communal approach to religious instruction that the schoolbooks used in its institutions were not even Jewish-orientated. Despite recurrent press criticism of this 'urgent religious want', the communal elite were not sufficiently concerned to produce an alternative to standard Christian ones.[123] Even though this led to incidents that more responsible parents found 'very disgraceful': 'It has come under my notice that the Manchester Jewish school allows children to take books home...my own boys had a book entitled the "Child's Geography", giving the history of Christ, and all his miracles and performances...it is really deplorable that in our schools such blunders should be

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[119] *JC*, 10 Feb. 1860, p.4.
[120] *JC*, 13 Apr. 1883, p.5.
[121] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 153, Report of the Jews' Free School, 1884. (London 1885) p.13.
[122] *JC*, 16 Nov. 1865, p.4.
[123] *JC*, 09 Aug. 1861, p.4.

committed.'[124] If the approach of Jews towards educating the next generation is symptomatic of their attitudes towards a desirable identity, the Anglo-Jewish schooling system indicates a disregard for serious religious commitment.[125] A notable exception to this general remissness was the *hadarim*. These small, often one-room, after-school organisations were a prominent feature of immigrant districts, where they were established to ensure a traditional education for these more pious Jews' offspring. Of varying quality, imparting only religious rather than secular knowledge and staffed by foreign teachers, the *hadarim* were frowned upon by the established community, who perceived them as a barrier to integration.[126]

Communal education also reveals the crucial importance the Jewish elite invested in the English, class-conceived aspects of their identity. For these schools were not designed to inculcate religion. The separate Jewish schooling network was maintained in this era, primarily for the purposes of disciplining, occupying and 'improving' the Jewish poor. Moses Angel, long-term headmaster of the JFS, explained his school's purpose to the commissioners inquiring into the state of popular education in England in 1861, thus: 'A very large number of the Jewish poor in this district habitually receive charity; as a principle *they* beg least who are best educated.'[127] The school's report the previous year had been more candid:

> Many children who would have wandered idly about the streets, devoid alike of religion and knowledge, and who might easily have been ensnared in courses of vice and infamy, were, by means of this institution, instructed in their religious

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[124] *JC*, 31 May 1861, p.6.
[125] S. Singer, 'Jewish Education in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: A Case Study of the Early Victorian London Community.' *Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol.77. Nos.2-3. (Oct. 1986-Jan. 1987) p.163.
[126] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.146.
[127] *Parliamentary Papers*, 1861, xxi, Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the State of Popular Education in England, p.74.

> duties and the elementary branches of knowledge, and were thus trained to become respectable and useful members of society.[128]

For this reason communal schools were munificently funded in this period. The *JC* thought the financial state of Jewish education 'very satisfactory' and superior to that of most Christian equivalents.[129] This pecuniary support was not derived from the whole community. As early as 1860, the Committee of the JFS was regretting a fall in annual subscriptions, noting it relied upon voluntary offerings at the anniversary dinner to recoup a £1,200 deficit.[130] Four years later this situation had worsened, of the school's £3,500 annual expenditure only £465 was covered by its subscription list.[131] Such contributions would have come, in large part, it might be assumed, from the Jewish middle to lower classes and their paucity suggests a lack of interest from these groups. Consequently, Jewish schools relied upon the largesse of elite sponsors and were therefore, organised according to their interests. Foremost among which was the superintendence of the poor, and particularly, the significant foreign section of this, ever-present during the period due to constant Jewish immigration into the East End. Communal considerations were intermixed with this task. Anglo-Jewry's image would be generally raised if its poorer sections could be instilled with social responsibility, steered toward gainful employment and kept from criminality; and the achievement of this within a distinctly Jewish system, where Jewish children associated exclusively with other Jewish children and were taught at least the basics of their religious responsibilities, undoubtedly did much to reinforce their minority identity and prevent defection in a socio-economic class Victorian Britain traditionally found hard to evangelise. But the underlying imperative was class. Jewish denominational schools existed to educate the Jewish lower classes. The

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[128] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 153, Photocopy of Report of the Jews' Free School, May 1860, p.7.
[129] *JC*, 10 Feb. 1860, p.4.
[130] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 153, Photocopy of Report of the Jews' Free School, May 1860, p.10.
[131] *JC*, 27 May 1864, p.4.

generational transmission of Judaism was merely one facet of this task. Attempts to alter this and inject a more religious tone into communal schooling signally failed. Nathan Adler overcame fierce internal opposition to open Jews' College School in 1855, with the intention of offering middle-class children a solid Jewish education. A deficiency of financial support, reflecting widespread indifference to its intentions, forced closure in 1879; at no time in between had attendance approached his modest target of one hundred.[132]

The children of the Jewish middle, and more especially, upper classes were to receive, on the whole, an education in mixed schools. That is, they were sent to mingle with the rest of the population in general, English institutions, where the tradition and ethos were religiously Christian. The argument in favour of such schooling had gained dominance among communal opinion prior to emancipation and its integrative logic – the need of Jews to demonstratively participate as equal Englishmen – still resonated strongly afterwards. The *JC* warned in 1884 that '...there may be disadvantages rising out of exclusively Jewish middle-class schools. It is not desirable that the barriers which separate the Jew from his Christian neighbour should be needlessly multiplied.'[133] Asides from interactive opportunities, mixed schooling offered Jews an excellent forum to justify their newly-attained equality and obtain a fillip to their self-confidence.

> We feel that when our youths who are engaged in an intellectual struggle with their young fellow countrymen of other creeds and races, carry off trophies of merit, the honour is not theirs alone; it belongs to all Israel. Their renown reflects lustre on the

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[132] I. Finestein, 'Anglo-Jewish Attitudes to Jewish Day-School Education, 1850-1950', in Idem, Scenes and Personalities in Anglo-Jewry, 1800-2000 (London 2002) p.58. Bill Williams has identified a similar situation in Manchester, where the original free communal school, the Manchester Jews' School, was devoted exclusively to lower class, foreign children. See, B. Willaims, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740-1875* (London 1985) p.330.

[133] *JC*, 01 Aug. 1884, p.9.

> community to which they belong....The name of Jew is no longer a bye-word of scorn in the public school. It is a name of honour and respect.[134]

Anglo-Jewish participation in general schooling, increasing throughout the period as educational provision did and public schools began creating specifically Jewish houses, served to reinforce the Englishness of their identity, exposing them to Victorian values and encouraging them to think of themselves as English.[135] It simultaneously reduced the religious strength of their Jewish identity. The *JC*'s gossip columnist was warning by 1860: 'The Christian Dame school, the Christian governess, and the Christian day-school, and, alas, I should have to add, the Christian boarding-school, but too often totally obliterate every vestige of Jewish training.'[136] This situation was not rectified. The Jewish Association for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge, a perpetually under-funded organisation, cautioned in 1878, that there were many school board schools in London, largely attended by Jews, where no arrangement was made for supplying appropriate religious instruction.[137] That this trend for general schooling without particular augmentation represented a weakening of religious stricture amongst Jews was noted even by *Blackwood's Magazine*: 'As to education – there are no places of instruction for Hebrew children except a few free schools for the poorer sort. The consequence is, that they all go to Christian schools, where the sons of rabbis are able to be seen mingling freely with pupils whose very presence at such a time ought, on their own principles, to be pollution.'[138] It was also lamented within the community, where more astute

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[134] *JC*, 07 Aug. 1868, p.4.
[135] Endelman, *Jews of Britain* p.99. Clifton College, Bristol was the first school to open a Jewish house in 1878. It was followed by Harrow in 1880.
[136] *JC*, 17 Feb. 1860, p.2.
[137] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 157, Jewish Religious Education Board Papers, Minute Book of the Executive Committee, with annual reports, 1878-87.
[138] 'Jewish Reformation' *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, p.551.

commentators attacked the fundamental motivation for this situation: social aspiration. A *JC* correspondent railed in 1867:

> Why are our boys sent to Christian schools? They do not find there the facilities for acquiring a greater knowledge of their own language and religion our schools offer, or that could be derived from private tuition. We say a *better* education is to be had there, and by a *better* education we mean knowledge of mathematics, the modern and dead languages...the very religious liberty we enjoy, unless carefully looked to, may be the mine wherewith to spring the Jewish constitution; what torture could not accomplish, ambition may.[139]

English class-orientated thinking decided Anglo-Jewry's educational strategies in the post-emancipation decades and this caused the prioritising of temporal over spiritual instruction, in preparation for temporal over spiritual gains in adult life.

IV.

Laxity should not be confused with loss. The problems of observance and education featured prominently in communal discourse because most Jews retained at least a titular affiliation to their religion and remained within the pale. Their lapses were therefore more apparent than would have been the case had they completely deserted the community and abandoned their Jewish identity. As with the Victorian middle-class in general, Jews generally maintained a high-level of congregational affiliation.[140] The impressive turnout for the first USyn elections has been noted already. Similar enthusiasm was evident at the apportionment of seats for newly opened synagogues. At the New Central in 1870 '...the rush to secure seats was remarkable. From ten o'clock till half-past two or three, numerous ladies and gentlemen arrived in the building, and the executive had hard work to accommodate

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[139] *JC*, 05 July 1867, p.2. Italics in original.
[140] S. Sharot, 'Secularisation,' p.132.

the multitude of claimants.' Five hundred seats were taken in this time.[141] Such positive indications of religiosity gave hope to the devout among the Anglo-Jewish elite. The stoutly Orthodox Montagu, highlighting the 'thronged synagogues' during festivals, thought: 'even in England prosperity, the direst foe to Jewish observance, has not alienated any very large numbers of Jews...'[142]

Augmenting this general phenomenon of attachment were more specific instances of religious enthusiasm. Foremost among which was the multifaceted interest many Jewish women took in their faith. From the beginning of the period, the *JC* noticed greater female synagogue attendance: at the re-opening of Bevis Marks 'the large area of the synagogue was not quite filled, but the ladies' gallery was well-attended'; and at the re-opening of West London Synagogue 'the area of the sacred building was tolerably well filled...The ladies' gallery, however, was very full.'[143] Impressed with their devotion, the newspaper hoped women might redeem male indifference, '...let the Jewish feeling of our women be a counterpoise to the un-Jewish spirit occasionally animating our men.'[144] In certain areas women were at the forefront of promoting Judaism. Michael Galchinsky has noted that female Jewish writers, women such as Grace Aguilar, Charlotte Montefiore and Anna Maria Goldsmid, produced most of the minority's (admittedly limited) literary works.[145] Of the fifteen voluntary Sabbath school teachers working in the JFS, thirteen were women.[146] The activities of the Ladies Committee of the Jewish Board of Guardians,

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[141] *JC*, 18 Mar. 1870, p.8.
[142] *JC*, 22 Sept, 1882, p.3.
[143] *JC*, 30 Sept, 1859, p.5.
[144] *JC*, 07 Sept. 1860, p.4
[145] M. Galchinsky, *The Origin of the Modern Jewish Woman Writer* (Detroit 1996) pp.18-9.
[146] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 157, Jewish Religious Education Board Papers, Minute Book of the Executive Committee, 1878-87, Annual Report, 1878, p.6.

in visiting the poor to impart moral guidance, were repeatedly lauded.[147] Women also played a modest, if growing part, in defending the faith. 'A Daughter of Israel', in reaction to its publication of a critical sermon, wrote to *The Times* defending Judaism's humanity in comparison to Christianity's; in 1863 a conversionist journal spoke with irritation of the 'rich Jewish ladies' who zealously combated their East End mission.[148]

The vitality and importance of female faith was appreciated by leaders across the religious spectrum. Prof. Marks thought 'the attempt to train the rising generation in the fear of the Lord will prove utterly hopeless, unless the women take the leading part in the good work.'[149] Much later, Hermann Alder extolled the Jewish women: 'She gives the needy what money cannot purchase, and what is indeed beyond money's worth, *heart-service*, willing, personal help, the ministry of holy compassionate love, sisterly and motherly help…'[150] This praise however, revealed the circumscribed orbit of activity religious leaders still expected women to inhabit; their ascribed roles remained what they had traditionally been, primarily educational or philanthropic. Whilst these trends were reflected in wider society's separation of gender spheres, Judaism, particularly Orthodoxy, its followers realised, could be accused of disregarding women. Artom tackled this subject in 1870: 'So among the Jews woman has no public office, and she will have none, as long as Judaism is not undermined by rash and unreasonable changes. But a graceful office, as I said, is

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[147] *JC*, 08 June 1883, p.9. Such was Charlotte de Rothschild's renown in this area that upon her death Hermann Adler dedicated a sermon to her: *"Remember the Poor". A Sermon preached in memory of the late Baroness Lionel de Rothschild at the Central Synagogue* (London 1884)

[148] *The Times*, 04 Dec. 1862, p5. and *JC*, 09 Oct. 1863, p.5.

[149] 'The Law of Moses, The Great End of Revelation', March 1858, in D. Marks, *Sermons Preached at Various Occasions at the West London Synagogue of British Jews* (London 1885) p.25.

[150] Adler, *The Purpose* p.11. Italics in original.

reserved for her...the Jewish woman is the priestess of the home...'[151] Significant sections of communal opinion were unwilling to accept such restriction. The *JC* was particularly progressive. Recalling on numerous occasions the difference in women's position in the ancient and modern world – where it felt in many ways they were the equal of men – it pushed for this to be officially recognised within Orthodoxy's 'anti-natural, repressive system.'[152]

> The part assigned to women by Orthodox Judaism in the religious world cannot satisfy her spiritual cravings....why should Judaism be so callous to this evil, while the daughter religion with such marvellous tact, with such profound knowledge of human nature, turns the vast resources of the female heart to such an excellent account...[153]

Judaism's appreciation of female needs lagged behind that of most Christian denominations and much of British society in general. Some in the community were anxious this would lead to alienation and toward the end of the period there is evidence of gathering discontent among Jewish women. 'A Jewess' exposed the stultifying life of middle-class women in an 1886 letter to the *JC*. Complaining that '...the shadow of the harem has rested on our womankind', she decried an unfulfilling and divided world, where Jewish men

> ...scarcely feel the need of feminine society in its higher forms. Whereas the women, such of them as are beginning to be conscious of the yoke, are more readily adaptable, more eager to absorb the atmosphere around them; and by reason of their extra leisure, have in many cases outstripped their brothers in culture....The inevitable result is that Jewish men and women of any width of culture, are driven to finding their friends of the other sex in the Gentile camp.[154]

The possibility of such Gentile-Jewish intermixing frightened Anglo-Jewry. The *JC* considered this 'tender ground' a huge problem for the emancipated

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[151] 'Women and Passover', April 1870, in Artom, *Sermons,* p.90.
[152] *JC*, 24 Oct. 1862, p.4. and 28 Sept. 1877, p.3.
[153] Ibid., p.3.
[154] *JC*, 17 Sept. 1886, p.7.

community and the prevention of marrying out had been a prominent motivation behind the paper's drive for greater female religious involvement. 'In how far can the synagogue show indulgence to marriages beyond the pale? This is not a question of tolerance, but of principle – indeed, of "to be or not to be" to Judaism in free countries, in which the law opposes no obstacles to such marriages.'[155] In Britain, where Jews' subcultural cohesion was voluntary, such loss of members to other sects or seepage into wider society represented a potentially fatal phenomenon. The example of the original Sephardic families, who had re-established the community but by the end of the seventeenth-century disappeared into near complete absorption, stood as stark warning to a minority now unrestricted in its access to the surrounding world.[156] The *JC* resolutely denounced all instances of this 'evil'.[157] Even taking the Rothschilds to task in 1877, claiming that '...the community has experienced the most poignant grief at the intelligence received...' of Hannah de Rothschild's engagement to Lord Rosebery; 'the apprehension of the consequence which this alliance may produce in the community by the example thus set casts a still gloomier shadow over the communal sadness.'[158] But it seems the community were broadly in sympathy with the paper's opposition. When Henry de Worms sanctioned his daughter's Church marriage he was requested to resign his fourteen-year presidency of the Anglo-Jewish Association; in 1895, Arthur Cohen, not personally Orthodox, felt obliged to resign the presidency of the Board of Deputies upon his daughter's out-marriage.[159] Out-marriage was not acceptable to Anglo-Jewry. Despite their lax standards of observance, such levels of fraternisation were still anathema.

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[155] *JC*, 31 May 1867, p.6.
[156] M. Davis, 'Mixed Marriage in Western Jewry: Historical Background to the Jewish Response', *JJS*, Vol.10. No.2. (Dec. 1968) p.183.
[157] *JC*, 31 May 1867, p.6.
[158] *JC*, 05 Oct. 1877, p.8.
[159] Endelman, 'Communal Solidarity' p.509. and I. Finestein, 'Radical Assimilation in Anglo-Jewry',

Evidently, though, it was happening. Abraham Benisch realised that no matter the religious proscription, greater interaction with Gentiles made cases inevitable: 'Whether parents approve of it or not, intimacies of the tenderest nature will spring up between the young of two sexes...And what is the consequence?'[160] A hard-line in these circumstances could lead to division of families, alienation of the individual involved, and the consequent loss of their future children to the faith. Aware of this, and their inability to effectively prohibit such marriages, a subtle softening of opinion occurred within the community over the post-emancipation decades. Demonstrating the versatile nature of their identity Anglo-Jewry developed a casuistic differentiation between types of out-marriage. The *JC* explained this discernment in 1878:

> To begin with, marriage with Gentiles in the abstract is nowhere forbidden in the law...What was forbidden was not intermarriages, but mixed marriages. But when the Gentile partner embraced the religion of Sinai, as did Zipporah, the wife of Moses, as did Ruth, the wife of Boaz, the marriage did not with it carry the least taint. When Nehemiah insisted upon the separation of the Jewish husbands from their Gentile wives, it was because these unions were mixed marriages. And, indeed, anything more unhappy in society, anything more demoralising cannot be imagined than mixed marriages.[161]

Reform, with its greater emphasis upon written over oral law, was even more accommodating. Its second minister, Albert Löwy, opined that the rabbinical period had banned it, the *Shulchan Aruch* not holding mixed marriages valid, and that 'there is no biblical authority for excluding from the Jewish community any person contracting a mixed marriage.'[162]

Review Article, *JJS*, Vol.34. No.2. (Dec. 1992) p.134.

[160] Benisch, *Judaism Surveyed*, p.29.

[161] *JC*, 10 May 1878, p.4.

[162] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 140/10/6, West London Congregation of British Jews Records, Letter from Löwy to H. Henriques, 06 Jan. 1885. The *Shulchan Aruch* was the standard code of Ashkenazi law and practice, first codified and published by Joseph Caro in the sixteenth-century.

With these allowances marriages between Jews and Gentiles occurred throughout the period. In 1863, for instance, Abraham Fonesca was able to continue worshipping with the West London congregation, having civilly married a Christian but obtained her written assent to raising any children as Jews: 'It is my particular wish and desire that my children be brought up and educated as members of the Jewish community the same as my husband. I must take the liberty of informing you that I am a Protestant and do not intend in any way to change that...'[163] Bevis Marks had in a few exceptional circumstances accepted intermarriages since the eighteenth-century but its registers reveal a more continuous occurrence in this period; albeit at the still minor rate of six-seven a decade between 1861-80.[164] Despite concern, the issue never manifested itself as a substantial social phenomenon at this time. The below table shows that even among the Cousinhood out-marriage was minimal.

Table One: Endogamy-Exogamy among Upper-Class English Jews[165]

	Before 1825	1826-50	1851-75	1876-1900
Kinship endogamy	4	7	8	5
Religious endogamy	18	27	33	37
Exogamy	2	1	2	3
Unknown	0	2	7	0
Total marriages	24	37	50	45

That it was sanctioned at all is telling of Anglo-Jewry's accommodating religiosity. Though the community was careful to religiously justify this licence, its willingness to condone certain conditions of intermarriage seems to have been motivated not by conviction but the preserving necessity of endogamy to a minority.

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[163] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 140/131/11, West London Congregation of British Jews Records, Declaration of Abraham Fonseca, 22 June 1863 with supporting letter from his wife, Alice, 13 May 1863.

[164] A. Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England. A History of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Community, 1492-1951* (London 1951) pp.176-7. and G. Whitehill, (ed.), *Bevis Marks Records. Part III* (London 1973) p.6. There was though, a notable increase to twenty-three in the next decade, 1881-90.

[165] Taken from: L. Levi D'Ancona, *Paths of Jewish Integration: Upper-Middle-Class Families in Nineteenth-Century France, Italy and England* PhD. Thesis submitted to the University of Cambridge (Jan. 2004) p.85.

The occurrence of intermarriage raised in turn, another sensitive subject regarding Anglo-Jewry's group cohesion and relationship with other denominations: Jewish proselytising. The two issues were intricately linked. The rationale underpinning Orthodox toleration of intermarriage was that the non-Jewish partner would convert and the family therefore, remain within the fold. 'The admission of a proselyte under such circumstances is no doubt an evil. But it is an evil not of our seeking, and of the two evils it is undoubtedly the minor.'[166] Problematically, the community had refrained from accepting proselytes since the Resettlement, assuming this to be a reciprocal condition stipulated by Cromwell and Charles II in exchange for toleration. Potential proselytes were forced to sojourn: 'Every year...a considerable number of Christian women have gone over to Holland, Belgium, and France, and have there renounced Christianity in favour of the more ancient faith, the rabbis in these countries being under no obligation to refuse proselytes.'[167] Soon after emancipation the *JC* opened its columns to consideration of this situation.[168] Equal citizens, Jews now began to consider the propriety of this self-imposed restriction. As always, the traditionalist wing rejected any change. 'Israel desires no increase from without' was their stance.[169] But general opinion tended to be favourable. '...it certainly seems to me that we are bound to open our arms to those who, from conviction, desire to become Jews' commented a *JC* correspondent, demonstrating that support for proselytising went beyond practical motivations connected to intermarriage.[170] The paper concurred; calling for the re-institution of Proselytes of

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[166] *JC*, 26 May 1876, p.115.
[167] *The Times*, 02 Mar. 1877, p.11.
[168] *JC*, 17 Sept. 1858, p.318.
[169] *JC*, 22 Oct. 1858, p.6.
[170] *JC*, 18 Mar. 1859, p.4.

the Gate, it optimistically claimed some converting mechanism would not only benefit Judaism but also be a mercy to dissatisfied Gentiles:

> It would...be cruel to refuse the intending proselytes the spiritual satisfaction which they would derive from religious communion with those with whom they are mentally at one, as soon as it should be ascertained beyond all doubt that the creed which they are anxious to renounce can no longer afford them that internal peace and happiness after which every devout soul yearns.[171]

In this atmosphere the ecclesiastical authorities lifted restrictions upon proselytism in 1877.[172]

During the rest of the period there was a steady, if very small, flow of non-Jews into the community. The records of the West London Congregation show that whilst the majority of these resulted from intermarriage, there were occasional converts of conviction. The widow, Helen Lewis, was admitted in 1887 after she '...made declaration that in taking this step she was in no way influenced by any mundane consideration, but by an intense conviction of conscience.'[173] All proselytes underwent a course of Jewish instruction, upon which they were examined; men were also circumcised, while Orthodox women underwent ritual bathing. These requirements were not usually applied in a dissuasive manner. Prof. Marks and

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[171] *JC*, 28 Jan. 1876, p.705. Proselytes of the Gate are converts to Judaism who accept the monotheistic faith out of conviction but are not required to fulfil all the ritual observances incumbent upon Orthodox Jews. Proselytes of Righteousness are converts who accept both the doctrine and entire set of Jewish observances. It is possible to proceed from being the former to the latter.

[172] *The Times*, 02 Mar. 1877, p.11. This decision was no doubt influenced by the situation in some British colonies, over which the Chief Rabbinate claimed jurisdiction, where the number of Jewish men greatly outnumbered that of Jewish women, and inter-marriage was far more commonly practiced. Australian Jewry seems to have particularly experienced problems regulating rates of intermarriage during this time. See, for example, LMA, ACC/2805/02/01/010, Office of the Chief Rabbi, Correspondence: Australia, 1879-81 and ACC/2805/02/01/04, Correspondence: Melbourne *Beth Din*.

[173] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 309 A1069/1, Papers relating to converts to Judaism. Certificate of Helen Lewis signed by D. Marks, A Löwy and I Harris, 08 Nov 1887. The records of Reform concerning conversions have survived in much greater quantity than have Orthodoxy's. Unfortunately, the section of the *Beth Din* archives dealing with proselytism was destroyed in World War Two and so it is impossible to judge or compare the extent of conversions to Orthodoxy. The small amount of extant evidence does, at least, reveal that some conversions took place in this period though; see MS 309 A1069/4.

Isidore Harris having obtained satisfactory answers, accepted a convert in 1886 but noted:

> Our colleague Mr Löwy stated that he would offer no obstacle to Mr Lowinsky's admission, but that he would not sign in favour of any convert who was not sufficiently instructed in Hebrew to follow the synagogue ritual. We do not make the same objection, because if it were consistently held, more than half the congregation would be inadmissible as members, as they have even less Hebrew than Mr Lowinsky.[174]

The relaxed standard of communal religiosity also applied to this sphere. It was not though, a communal issue. The number of proselytes remained minute and the existence of these downplayed, for the minority remained extremely sensitive of the topic. Historically, Christian Europe had been murderously hostile to Jewish proselytism and Anglo-Jews, long unsure about its legality in Britain, were wary of provoking resentment. However, in a time of increasing racial thinking, reticence in this area could also be criticised. Prof. Goldwin Smith, for instance, thought it a mark of Jewish tribalism: 'If Judaism is universal, why, I ask again, is it not proselytising?'[175] When it came to proselytising, Anglo-Jewry could be upbraided whichever direction it took. A middle position was therefore adopted, once again. Proselytes, Claude Montefiore observed, 'they are neither sought nor rejected.'[176] This compromise perfectly suited the minority's needs, allowing it to accept necessary converts without having to risk reproach or dilution, whilst also avoiding the accusation of an exclusive ethnicity.

Anglo-Jewry's approach to intermarriage and proselytism reveal a tight-knit community – with minor exceptions, a remarkably cohesive group. This level of minority solidarity was retained, Todd Endelman shows, at a time when the offspring

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[174] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 309 A1069/1, Certificate of Mr. Lowinsky, 21 July 1886, signed by Marks and Harris.
[175] G. Smith, 'Can Jews be Patriots?' *Nineteenth Century* (May 1878) p.878.
[176] C. Montefiore, 'Is Judaism a Tribal Religion?' *Contemporary Review* (Sept. 1882) p.369.

of prosperous nonconformist families defected to the Established Church in large numbers.[177] The wry observation that 'the carriage only stops for one generation at the chapel door' could not be levelled at Victorian Jewry.[178] This situation existed even though Jews were under special pressure to abandon their faith. Conversion to Christianity had never been the 'ticket of admission' to British society but there had always been a significant strand within British Protestant thought interested in Jewish conversion. In the post-emancipation era there were several small but far from insignificant organisations devoted to missionising the community.[179] The oldest and most influential of these was the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews; presided over for much of this time by the Earl of Shaftesbury, with the Archbishop of Canterbury as patron, and the King of Prussia a long-term donor.[180] Founded in 1809, the Society boasted by the end of the period an annual income of around £37,000 and possessed twenty-seven agents working out of six mission-stations in Britain.[181] To convert the Jews of London it operated a chapel, free school and house of industry in the East End, where its followers also distributed religious tracts and Hebrew New Testaments.[182]

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[177] Endelman, 'Communal' p.491.

[178] Obelkevich, 'Religion' p.333.

[179] The *Jewish Chronicle* listed these four agencies as conversionist: London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews; British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews; the Scotch Society; and Parochial Missions to the Jews, see: 28 May 1886, p.7. M. Ragusis, *Figures of Conversion. "The Jewish Question" and English National Identity* (London 1995), p.299 lists also the East London Mission to the Jews and the Barbican Mission to the Jews. In regard to those societies mentioned by the *JC*, the great majority of their efforts were undertaken abroad, particularly in Germany, Poland and Palestine.

[180] *The Times*, 03 May 1844, p.6. and 07 May 1858, p.9. The Society also conducted significant operations in Liverpool and Manchester.

[181] Bodleian Library, Church's Ministry among the Jews Papers, Dep. C.M.J. d.22 Miscellaneous Papers concerning the society in mission work at home and abroad, 1868-1940.

[182] R. Smith, 'The London Jews' Society and Patterns of Jewish Conversion in England, 1801-1859', *JSS*, Vol.43. (1981) p.276.

The community was quite hostile to these activities, which, after emancipation, seemed to question their legitimacy as citizens.[183] The *JC*, claiming 'there exists an actual state of warfare...' between Jews and conversionists, scathingly denounced '...a society pursuing a most iniquitous object, a bubble scheme, an arrant folly, an absurdity as great as that of endeavouring to empty the ocean...' and exposed the hypocrisy of tactics that prayed upon poverty and infancy:

> ...we tell them plainly that they neither follow the example of their master whom they pretend to follow or of his apostles. When Jesus...sent his disciples forth to preach he did not enjoin on them to enforce a hearing among those that were unwilling to listen to them, but advised them to shake off the dust, and to travel on to some better disposed place.[184]

Sentiments that were echoed by the general press from time to time, as British society indicated its distaste for aggressive missionising. 'Jewish conversion is indeed dear if it is purchased at this cost of the commonest Christian charity and decency' commented *The Times* during the 1869 trial of a Wesleyan couple accused of enticing and converting a Jewish girl.[185] With societal disapprobation reinforcing their antagonism, Anglo-Jewry pursued a pro-active defence against the missionaries. Members of the elite wrote to preachers to make them '...aware that the Jews of the educated classes resented the interference of the missionaries among their poor'; the Board of Guardians established rival facilities to combat conversionist free services;

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[183] T. Endelman, 'Introduction', in Idem., (ed.), *Jewish Apostasy in the Modern World* (New York 1987) p.1.

[184] *JC*, 12 Feb. 1858, p.68.; 29 Jan. 1864, p.4. and 05 Feb. 1864, p.4.

[185] *The Times*, 02 Aug. 1869, p.9. The quote refers to the famous case of Esther Lyons, an eighteen year old Jewish girl from Cardiff, who, having quarrelled with her parents was put up by a local Wesleyan minister. The minister and his wife soon persuaded the girl to convert and spirited her away to London, refusing on several occasions to allow family members access to her, frequently lying about her whereabouts, and even forging correspondence. Though her father brought several legal cases, he was unable to regain his daughter because she was no longer a minor and judged responsible for her own actions. The details of the trial caused a local sensation and press coverage saw nationwide condemnation of the minister's behaviour. See, U. Henriques, 'Lyons vs. Thomas: The Jewess Abduction Case', in *Jewish Historical Studies*, Vol.29. (1982-6)

and sermons were infiltrated and interrupted.[186] Augmenting this was a near total estrangement of converted Jews by the community. A factor admitted as a great obstacle by conversionists:

> When a Jew becomes a Christian, he falls at once into a deplorable condition. He is cursed and thrown off by his family and friends. He is excluded from his trade. He becomes a pariah and an outcast among his people. There is reason to believe that there is a considerable number who accept but who dare not profess Christianity from fear of the Jews.[187]

In such conditions conversion activities in Britain had a miniscule impact upon the Jewish minority. Over 1871-2, after an expenditure of £1,941 6s 5d, the Society achieved only twenty-five conversions.[188] The quality of these converts was felt to match their paltry quantity; or as the *JC* put it: 'Conversion, as the societies practice it, means but the turning of a bad Jew into a worse Christian.'[189] The Society's records list 513 Jews baptised between November 1863 and January 1881. The vast majority of adults among these were foreign with occupations implying a low-class status; whilst the infants listed were generally English, virtually all were resident in traditionally immigrant areas of east London, suggesting they were second generation – when mentioned, their parents' occupations were predominantly working-class.[190] The settled, native community was untouched. '...the conversionist

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[186] LMA, ACC/2805/02/01/098, Office of the Chief Rabbi Papers, Letter from F. D. Mocatta to Adler, 15 Mar. 1886; Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/1, Archives of Jewish Care, Jewish Board of Guardians: Scheme for and Reports of, 1859-65, Annual Report 1865, p.60. and *JC*, 19 Apr. 1861, p.6.

[187] *The Conversion of the Jews* (April 1888), p.200. Endelman places considerable stress upon the dissuasive potential of this treatment for possible converts, terming the economic problems of being so outcast in a community where one's closest acquaintances were likely all Jews, a 'distinct liability'. T. Endelman, 'The Social and Political Context of Conversion in Germany and England, 1870-1914' in Idem., (ed.) *Jewish Apostasy* p.97.

[188] Bodleian Library, Church's Ministry among the Jews Papers, Dep. C.M.J.d.22 Miscellaneous Papers concerning the society in mission work at home and abroad, 1868-1940.

[189] *JC*, 09 May 1879, p.9.

[190] Bodleian Library, Church's Ministry among the Jews Papers, Dep. C.M.J.c.64, Volume containing personal records of Hebrew converts baptised at the Episcopal Jews' Chapel in Palestine Place, 1863-81.

tactics did us, upon the whole, no harm. Stragglers no doubt may be cut off, but on the fortress itself no impression was made.'[191] This abject failure of well-endowed conversion efforts became a source of pride for Anglo-Jewry, a witness to the continuing strength of its Jewish affiliation: 'A more splendid testimony to Israel's character, and the faithfulness of its members to the God of their fathers, could not have been borne than that given by this result.'[192]

For all its disdain of conversionists and their methods, there existed a significant existential commonality between Anglo-Jewry and the societies: eschatological belief in the Restoration of Israel. Although the London Society was never officially committed to this idea, in practice it became a major rallying ground for adherents of the concept.[193] At its sixtieth anniversary meeting the Society resolved: 'That the infallible promises of God to Israel of the recovery and salvation...and the interest still so remarkably manifested in present times towards the Holy City and its land by the Gentiles...should greatly encourage us in seeking the salvation of the remnant and in beseeching the Lord to hasten the time when all Israel shall be saved.'[194] The millennial expectations Christians invested in Jewish Return were not limited to conversion societies but pervaded British Protestant, and particularly evangelical, tradition.[195] The 'Gentile interest' mentioned included that of the British Government, which had taken hundreds of former Russian Jews in the Holy Land under its protection since instructing its newly established agent in January 1839 '...that it would be part of his duty, as British Vice-Consul in

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[191] *JC*, 12 Feb. 1858, p.68.
[192] *JC*, 24 May 1861, p.4.
[193] J. Frankel, *The Damascus Affair. 'Ritual Murder', Politics, and the Jews in 1840* (Cambridge 1997) p.288.
[194] Bodleian Library, Church's Ministry among the Jews Papers, Dep. C.M.J.c.61 Minutes of Annual Meetings, 1834-88.
[195] Frankel, *Damascus Affair* p.285.

Jerusalem, to afford protection to the Jews generally.'[196] Anglo-Jewry was not insensitive to this interest. The *JC* thought that most Protestants '...agree in expecting a new state of development in the world's history from the predicted restoration of the Jewish people to their former land....we profoundly sympathise with the Protestant opinion, which perceives a mysterious bond between Judaism and mankind's moral and religious development...'[197] But the community was more restrained in its discussion of any possible Return than were many Protestant enthusiasts. Appreciating the possible philosemitic results of such sympathy, Jews were also aware that besides stoking conversionist zeal, the question of Israel's Restoration possessed negative ramifications for the combined nature of their identity. It had been one reason advanced by Parliamentary opponents for denying emancipation and was increasingly appropriated for modern antisemitic ends.[198] If their identity as Orthodox Jews was to remain in any way valid however, the community could not abjure its connection with the Holy Land and the Jewish communities present there.

In the post-emancipation decades it did not do so. Chapter three has noted the financial appeals Anglo-Jewry issued for Palestine Jews. These were supported by important sections of the community. Moses Montefiore was famous for his devotion to Palestinian Jewry, and his journeys of amelioration to the Holy Land were widely

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[196] National Archives, FO 881/4907, Confidential Memorandum Relative to the Grant of British Protection to Foreign Jews in Palestine, 02 Feb. 1884, p.1. The 'adoption' of these former Russian Jews was facilitated by an 1847 directive to the British Consul instructing '...that whenever an Austrian, Russian, French, or other Jew, should be suffering under persecution or injustice, and should be repudiated, and refused protection by his own Consul, the British Consul in the district, upon ascertaining the fact, might without impropriety ask the repudiating Consul whether he have any objection to the British Consul interposing his good offices on behalf of the Jew...' The British Government was attempting to phase out its protection of these Jews, which, having been extended beyond the original generation, was becoming a local problem by the post-emancipation decades. For details of British Consulate activity in Palestine see: A. Hyamson, (ed.), *The British Consulate in Jerusalem in relation to the Jews of Palestine* (Two Volumes London 1939)

[197] *JC*, 17 Feb. 1860, p.4.

[198] Smith, 'Can Jews' p.885.

and favourable reported in the British press.[199] However, the majority of the community was less enamoured, it seems. Donations to appeals quickly petered out. In August 1874, that year's Holy Land Relief Fund had collected just £37 14s 7d from the Great Synagogue, compared to the £150 10s 4d donated by its congregants on 'Hospital Sunday'.[200] Even Montefiore's Testimonial Fund, which he wished devoted to practically aid Palestinian Jews, could not overcome Anglo-Jewry's negative opinions; as the *JW* admitted:

> It is useless to disguise the fact that the Montefiore Testimonial is not achieving the speedy success which we anticipated would fall its share; the community generally have failed to support it, not from any disregard for the claims which Sir Moses Montefiore has upon their admiration and gratitude, but from a mistaken notion of the character of the people for whose advantages the funds will be disbursed.[201]

Modern and anglicised, British Jews held their Palestinian brethren in poor regard and whilst there was sympathy, there was little empathy. Even the *JC* partook of this sentiment occasionally: 'The repeated journeys of the venerable philanthropist, Sir Moses Montefiore, to Jerusalem, proved of little permanent benefit to the Hebrew population...Misery, sloth, superstition and ignorance have long held sway over the Israelites of Palestine...sympathy for them has greatly abated in Western Europe.'[202] Anglo-Jewish attitudes towards the Holy Land communities were ambivalent – as was their approach to Restoration more generally. Literal belief in or desire for the Return had long been discarded. 'Why pray for the termination of a captivity in which we are free?' pondered N. S. Joseph.[203] The concept was never removed from the liturgy, however and prayers for the Return still occupied a prominent place in Anglo-Jewish worship, both Orthodox and Reform. Its consonance with popular Protestant

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[199] *The Times*, 13 Aug. 1875 and *The Daily Telegraph*, 20 Sept. 1875, p.3.
[200] LMA, ACC/2712/GTS/007, USP, Great Synagogue: Minute Books, 1870-1937.
[201] *JW*, 23 July 1875, p.4.
[202] *JC*, 13 Sept. 1878, p.4.
[203] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/57, Small Jewish Collections, Manuscript of N. S. Joseph: *Religion, Natural and Revealed. A Series of Progressive Lectures for Jewish Youth*, 1879, p.226.

ideals meant that in Britain, Jews were never pushed to formally renounce their messianic hopes; '...because we love England much, we need not love Zion less.'[204] Restoration still held dangerous implications for Jewish patriotism – the antisemitically minded viewed it as evidence of a dual loyalty – but the community circumvented these by abstracting Restoration to a providentially-ordained future point, which could not be hastened by human endeavour. The Zionism that existed in the community was religious not political. It was also, as with many particular Jewish concepts, filtered through and blended with English nationalism. In 1858 a national prayer concluded with good wishes for the queen: 'May the supreme King of kings, through his infinite mercy, incline her heart and the hearts of her councillors and nobles, with benevolence toward us, and all Israel. In her days and ours may Judah be saved, and Israel dwell in safety; and may the Redeemer come unto Zion...'[205] The Return was hereby connected with Victorian Britain; the temporal glory of that country linked with the spiritual glory of all mankind.

The Return did not feature greatly in post-emancipation, Anglo-Jewish religious discourse. Having smoothed the possible antagonisms between present citizenship and future promise, the community kept the idea in the background. Its religious hopes were based upon another strand of Jewish messianism: the Jewish Mission, which, with some environmental re-conceptualisation, came to epitomise the possibilities and ideals of their combined identity. Anglo-Jewry began to articulate this idea after emancipation.[206] Suffused with the intellectual atmosphere of the mid-

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[204] *JC*, 20 Aug. 1869, p.6.

[205] LMA, ACC/2805/01/05/01, Office of the Chief Rabbi Papers, General: Orders of Service, April 1858, Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving to be used in all synagogues of the united congregations for the success granted to our arms in suppressing the rebellion and restoring tranquillity in Her Majesty's Indian Dominions.

[206] The Anglo-Jewish Mission never developed into an ideology or systematised theory. It represented

Victorian age – Jewish conformity was not limited to socio-political or religious concepts – the Anglo-Jewish mission was based upon a panacean belief in progress. Emancipated Jews had always looked to educational and technological advances for the destruction of the ignorance they thought generated prejudice. But their modernised mission applied the (roughly) linear progress of civilisation, currently exemplified by Britain, to religious destiny, where Judaism was the acme. 'It is with the progress of religion as with that in the physical sciences', explained the *JC*, various stages can be determined between the base and the pinnacle: '...the distance from the gross fetishism of the negro to the pure monotheism of the Jew, [via] the byways of the worship of the elements in Sabbeism, deified man in Roman and Greek idolatry, and restricted polytheism in Christianity...'[207] Judaism was posited as the agent and outcome of this progress. 'Let any man turn to our Pentateuch and enquire from it...He will learn that there is no limit to human progress' preached O. J. Simon.[208] Contradicting the critical Christian image of Judaism as a legalistic creed, this understanding placed the faith in the van of progress, a civilising force compatible with modern sophistication.[209] This force was to act not only internally, among the Jews, but also externally, among the Gentiles. Anglo-Jewish religious leaders, frequently quoting Isaiah's prophecies, portrayed Israel as 'the instructor of all nations'.[210] By precept and example they were to teach pure monotheism and the

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more a series of beliefs that contemporary religious leaders, in particular Hermann Adler, gradually connected to form a high-brow component of Anglo-Jewish theology.

[207] *JC*, 03 June 1864, p.4. This idea differed substantially from the progressive conception of Judaism German Reform Jews held. Anglo-Jewry viewed progression as linear between religions, the Germans believed progression also took place within faiths, thinking that Judaism had evolved from Biblical, Talmudic to contemporary, and would evolve further. This idea received no support in England, see M. Meyer, 'Jewish Religious Reform in Germany and Britain', in M. Brenner, R. Liedtke, and D. Rechter (eds.) *Two Nations: British and German Jews in Comparative Perspective* (Tübingen 1999) p.71.

[208] *JC*, 22 Sept. 1882, p.4.

[209] I. Finestein, 'Hermann Adler (1839-1911): Portrait of Jewish Victorian Extraordinary', in Idem., *Anglo-Jewry in Changing Times* p.224.

[210] *JC*, 20 Aug. 1858, p.285.

moral law; as Artom expounded: '...Israel has no political task. His mission is entirely moral. He may be called, so to say, the *ideal-people*, the people that must always offer the spectacle of morality and virtue.'[211] Jewry was to be a didactic model; a reserve 'kept back by Providence' as 'a light to the Gentiles'.[212] This conception imbued Jewish particularity with positivity; in fact, made its continued religious distinction imperative. British Christians could also appreciate this interpretation of the Jewish mission. Writing in 1878, Rev. Fremantle admitted that whilst 'less readily accepted' than Restorationism, he thought:

> It can hardly be denied that, as a matter of fact, they have been witnesses of the truth, and that the presence of the Jewish factor in religious history has been a constant protest against superstition and the multiplication of dogmas....The spectacle of a community with a high morality, and a faith of rugged and extreme simplicity, may justly be considered as a Providential anecdote to the excess of *Aberglaube.*[213]

Not all Christians however, accepted this interpretation. Some assessed the mission negatively, especially towards the end of the period when antisemitic rhetoric began to infiltrate debates on the Jews' future. The conversionist pamphlet penned by S. Kellogg fretted over 'the confident expectation and determination of these enfranchised Jews, that not Christianity, but Judaism...shall yet win the world against Christianity...'[214] No doubt in part to counter such fears of an insular Jewish salvation and in reaction to the sinister undertones of ethnic solidarity that often accompanied them, the Anglo-Jewish mission was invested with a third commitment. Its benefits were to be universal. Prof. Marks explained this early on in a pre-emancipation sermon:

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[211] 'The Heifer and the Calf', March 1871, in Artom, *Sermons*. p.272. Italics in original.
[212] *JC*, 25 Sept. 1863, p.4. and Isaiah xlii.6.
[213] W. Fremantle, 'The Future of Judaism', *Contemporary Review* (July 1878) p.784.
[214] S. Kellogg, *The Jews or Prediction and Fulfilment an Argument for the Times. Second Edition.* (London, 1887) p.210.

> That is our essential vocation as Israelites, to be constantly employed in the promotion of our own improvement and of the comfort and well-being of our fellow creatures. Between mankind of every nation and of every faith a universal bond of brotherhood should be recognised, for the inspired prophet hath said "We have all one and the same Father: One God is the creator of us all."[215]

Hermann Adler, defending Anglo-Jewry from accusations of tribalism in 1878, talked up Israel's messianic catholicity, which predicted for the future: 'Not Israel, the triumphant, enthroned in majesty at Zion as the conqueror of the earth, but all the nations of the globe beatified by the possession of truth and the acknowledgement of the divine unity.'[216] Throughout the era, Anglo-Jewish religious leaders were at pains to emphasise that their mission and the messianic era it would culminate in were designed for mankind entire. With this rationale Anglo-Jews became, as R. Huttenback suggests, a 'doubly distilled elite': 'While Jews through their chosen status were in a spiritual sense charged with the final redemption of mankind, the British bore a similar responsibility in the temporal sphere.'[217] As British Jews the community was, therefore, twice privileged. Symbiotically participating in Britain's civilising mission, whilst also advancing their religious mission, Anglo-Jewry found both components of its identity synchronised. Jewish particularity was reconciled with English universalism and the community's dual identity could now be understood beneficially. The reformulated Jewish mission overcame, if only theoretically, the dichotomy of emancipation.

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[215] 'Never Miss an Opportunity for doing Good', Nov. 1854, in Marks, *Sermons* p.153. Passage quoted is Malachi ii.10.

[216] H. Adler, 'Can Jews be Patriots?' *Nineteenth Century* (April 1878) p.639.

[217] R. Huttenback, 'The Patrician Jew and the British Ethos in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *JSS*, Vol.40. No.1. (1978) pp.51-2.

V.

In the post-emancipation era Anglo-Jewry completed development of a unique version of Jewish faith: the *Minhag Anglia*, an Anglo-Judaism. It was a religion that mirrored the community's identity, both reflecting and moulding their minority subculture. As with the community's approach to politics, compromise was its essence: the space required to successfully balance multi-layered identities in a modern society, its defining feature. Nathan Adler had talked at his 1845 inauguration of his 'very arduous' task '...in a time when some rest their hopes on rapid innovation, and others on steadfast adherence to whatever time has sanctified...to find the golden mean.'[218] Anglo-Judaism was to become this middle-ground. Under its inclusive rubric, Jews from across the devotional spectrum satisfied their differing spiritual needs. This situation resulted from emancipation; the need to resolve religious duties and beliefs with full participation in modern society. The *JC* astutely assessed the problem of being religious Jews after emancipation:

> In the minds of these people a terrible conflict must arise in Judaism. The question with them will be, how to reconcile these injunctions represented to them as part and parcel of Judaism, with the duties of which their social position, their vocation, and their career imposed upon them. Men placed in this painful position, must become, as it were, judges in their own cause, and of their own accord fix the line which they are bound to come up to and may not pass. They have to propose a compromise to themselves.[219]

Anglo-Judaism developed to relieve, as far as possible, the pain and indecision of Jews unsure of their identity in the modern world. A highly centralised ecclesiastical structure was constructed to superintend this process and ensure a framework within which the vast majority of Jews could remain Orthodox. Suppressing fission, the

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[218] N. Adler, *Sermon Delivered at the Great Synagogue on the Occasion of His Installation into Office as Chief Rabbi of Great Britain.* (London 1845) p.11.

[219] *JC*, 05 Feb. 1869, p.4.

authorities sought to guide Anglo-Jewish religiosity by gradually modernising and anglicising Judaism, often in reaction to communal opinion.

Uptake of official alterations was voluntary. Some congregations were eager, others reticent. Whilst an overall acculturation was obvious, its intensity fluctuated widely from synagogue to synagogue, and even individual worshiper to individual worshiper. Heterogeneity, in both practice and belief, was endemic. 'Really one ceases to know at what time one ought to attend to synagogue; or what one will hear when one gets there; what part of a service, or whether any service at all.'[220] All were considered Orthodox by Anglo-Judaism, however, which accepted differentiation so long as the fundamentals of Jewish law were not transgressed: '...our rule must not be uniformity in ritual, but common belief in the immutable truths which all Jews hold and reverence' summarised Prof. Marks in 1870.[221] These sentiments typified the spirit of Anglo-Judaism to the extent that, by 1887, there was little to separate, in terms of practice and ideals, Reform Judaism from the Orthodox establishment. Indeed, it was partly as a result of this compromise, which circumvented painful choices between aspects of their identity that often resulted in radical change in European communities, that Reform remained comparatively limited in England.[222]

Anglo-Judaism was a product of its environment. Its solution to emancipation was founded upon significant acculturation to British religious patterns, which allowed internal plurality and prioritised formal engagement over exacting adherence.

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[220] *JC*, 07 Feb. 1868, p.4.
[221] *JC*, 23 Sept. 1870, p.14.
[222] Anglo-Judaism probably contributed also, to another favourable comparison: that '...English Jews seemed to have been less prone to neurotic self-loathing than their Continental cousins...' see T. Endelman, 'The Frankaus of London: A Study in Radical Assimilation, 1837-1967, *Jewish History* Vol.8. No.1-2. (1994) p.131.

Anglo-Jewry had never devised explanatory systems to justify their adaptation to modern British life, and this lack of relativising theory naturally extended to the religious realm. Not always consciously or deliberately, though sometimes so, Anglo-Judaism assimilated ideals prevalent among its Christian neighbours. This absorption was ad-hoc. Such relaxed modernisation suited, and no doubt informed, Jews' individualistic approach to their faith – not all had to adopt the same pace of change. It did not however, encourage theological interest or passionate piety. Taking its cue from the respectable Gentile society it emulated, the religion, certainly of the Anglo-Jewish elite, increasingly became one of form and association, rather than devotion. Jewish traditions that the community now found irrelevant to or which were deemed incompatible with, modern life fell into desuetude. Increasingly, even fundamental strictures were dismissed, as Anglo-Jews became detached from a view of Judaism as the mainspring of life. This had been the community's choice. Anglo-Jews' religious needs had changed; they now needed a faith compatible with both sections of their identity. This was more apparent from their approach to religious education. If, as Eugene Black contends, 'schools were the frontlines in the campaign to shape the Jewish subculture', Anglo-Jewry's minority existence was distinguished by religious values subordinated to anglicised aspirations of socio-economic class.[223] Surveying religious instruction in 1866, Artom lamented 'Alas, the golden age of Judaism is but a dream.'[224]

The detachment many Jews evinced toward crucial tenets of their religion, the decline of Hebrew, the failure to create a native clergy, and the lack of Jewish studies would support suggestions that Anglo-Jews were verging towards irreligiosity. But

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[223] E. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1880-1920* (Oxford 1988) p.104.
[224] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/94, Small Jewish Collections, Artom, 'Jewish Pastor' p.12.

this is to misunderstand the nature of Anglo-Judaism and Jews' adherence to it. As mentioned, it was a faith demonstrated more through formalities than devotion. Those Jews who only occasionally or no longer observed all traditional rites still remained, for the large part, religiously associated with the community through congregational membership, synagogue attendance – even if only on festivals – and involvement in communal organisations. Post-emancipation, subcultural existence had to be confined to confession and Anglo-Jews appreciated this – they still wanted to remain Jews. For all its laxity, there was very little leakage from the community via conversion or out-marriage. More importantly, these factors demonstrate the continuing cohesion of the subculture in free society. Whilst this bond was attacked by hostile Gentiles, by the end of the period, Anglo-Jewry had formulated a religious conception that justified retention of their Jewishness. This Anglo-Jewish mission was the extreme example of the complementary combination of identities that, if only ideally, comprised Anglo-Judaism.

Anglo-Judaism was a singular faith in nineteenth-century Britain. No other denomination could compare with its minority, non-Christian and tightly-grouped identity. It was unique. Yet it was not isolated. In the post-emancipation period, as over the Victorian era more broadly, the faith participated in many of the major religious developments that occurred in Britain. The common themes of modernising Victorian religion affected it: institutionalism and better organisation; professionalisation of clerical roles; refined services; and internal diversity.[225] This experience was not premised upon adaptation to any particular denominational model but was a general phenomenon; shared alike by Jews and Christians seeking to

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[225] G. Parsons, 'Introduction: Victorian Religion, Paradox and Variety' in Idem., (ed.), *Religion in Britain* (Five Volumes Manchester 1988) i, p.10.

relativise religion. However, when Anglo-Jewry sought more detailed guidance for implementing these changes – organisational templates or clerical archetypes – it, as the historiography generally agrees, turned to the Established Church. This was a logical choice, predicated not so much upon religious considerations as the requirements of a minority identity. For a start, the effective, centralised and vertical Anglican authority structure suited the needs of a small subculture seeking to maintain discipline and cohesion, better than did the more diffuse and grass-roots organisation of many dissenting congregations.[226] A notable socio-economic compunction reinforced this. The Church was the spiritual home of the upper classes, whereas, in general, dissenting religions attracted the majority of their adherents from the middling or lower classes.[227] The Anglo-Jewish elite, sensitive to British class conceptions and wishing to have their aspiring status reflected in their religion, naturally looked to emulate Anglican prestige. Overlying these considerations was the simple fact that Anglicanism was the dominant national pattern. The Church was part of the Establishment, headed by the monarch it remained a symbol of patriotism and English nationality. Affiliation with it could mitigate Jews' minority status.

It was logical therefore, that Jewry acculturate to this model, which offered integration, rather than adopt one of the varieties – and their (continual) fragmentation would have proved another deterrent – of nonconformity that would only have reinforced their excluded position. Moreover, whilst there was no question of Anglo-Judaism appropriating Christian doctrine no doubt the evangelical bent of most nonconformity provided a further disincentive. In contrast to the muted piety and broad theology that, in the main, characterised Anglican worship, the emphasis of

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[226] Goulston, 'The Status' p.64.
[227] A. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England. Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914* (New York 1976) pp.61-2.

dissenters upon uncompromising and particularly Christocentric doctrines – salvation, atonement, rebirth, justification by faith – would have been especially alienating to Jews.[228] For these reasons it is also inappropriate to view Reform Judaism as the community's equivalent of dissent. Reform was non-expansive and London-based; its upper class congregants remained theologically conservative and were desirous of greater association with the surrounding social-political order. Dissent was none of these things. Methodism might provide the best abstract comparison but purely because it remained the sect closest to Anglicanism, as Reform remained independent yet interlinked with Orthodoxy in these decades. Recognising this similitude, Anglo-Jews themselves tended to refer to Reform Jews as seceders, a term stressing institutional separation, rather than as dissenters, which implies more fundamental divergences of thought. 'We say it in all respect, there is probably less discrepancy between the Jews forming what are called Orthodox congregations, and those Jews who are members of the Reformed congregation of London, than is evident within the bosom of a single denomination of Christians' claimed J. Picciotto.[229] Finally, it is germane to note that, unsurprisingly, Anglo-Jewry never considered Catholicism as a viable religious example. Although the Catholic position in Britain came nearer to approaching Jewry's than any other Christian faith, with its 'foreign' traditions, large immigrant base and internationality, Jews were not looking for solidarity in exclusion. The chiefly working-class, clerically organised, ever more aggressively Continental and anti-modern nature of British Catholicism had nothing to offer Anglo-Jewry.[230]

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[228] Ibid., p.71. and D. Englander, 'The Word and the World: Evangelism in the Victorian City', in G. Parsons (ed.), *Religion in Victorian Britain* (Five Volumes Manchester 1988) ii, p.18.

[229] J. Picciotto, *Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History.* (London 1875) p.367.

[230] G. Parsons,'Victorian Roman Catholicism: Emancipation, Expansion and Achievement', in Idem., (ed.), *Religion in Britain* (Five Volumes Manchester 1988) i, pp.152-60. The sole area of positive identification between Jews and Catholics was the retention of non-vernacular

Whilst comparing Anglo-Jewry's religious existence with those of other British denominations it is relevant to briefly mention the contentious idea often applied to the general experience of all religions in modern Western history: the secularisation thesis. Callum Brown's caution that religion has never achieved an 'ideal state' but has always adapted to evolving socio-economic contexts and such changes do not necessarily entail secularisation – in terms of individual loss of belief or collective loss of social significance, independent of the growth or decline of ecclesiastical structures – should be borne in mind regarding the community.[231] Anglo-Jews' dismissal of many Talmudic injunctions, for instance, need not imply a lack of piety but a re-adjustment of faith to better facilitate continuing belief in a changed world. Appreciating this however, the community appears as a good example of many of the major elements within the secularisation thesis.[232] It experienced considerable social differentiation, as services previously incorporated within the religious sphere were separated and apportioned to specialist, non-religious institutions. Education was implemented through separate schools, and often non-Jewish ones; the next chapter will discuss how charity was also withdrawn from the synagogue and systematised in a secular organisation. Alongside this the community had seen the emergence of stratified class interests, which intruded upon the religious sphere so that socio-economic divisions often disrupted the unity of common faith. The second major aspect of secularisation, societalisation, would seem to be

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services; as the *JC* mentioned in defence of Hebrew: 'The Roman Catholic Church prays in Latin, and there is something beautiful in preserving a separate language for prayer.' See *JC*, 23 Jan. 1885, p.9.

[231] C. Brown, 'A Revisionist Approach to Religious Change', in S. Bruce (ed.), *Religion and Modernisation. Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularisation Thesis* (Oxford 1992) p.39.

[232] These are taken from: R. Wallis and S. Bruce, 'Secularisation: The Orthodox Model', in Bruce (ed.), *Religion and Modernisation* pp.11-4.

particularly relevant to the Jewish case. No other religion was so bounded within a community and no other, therefore, faced the dissolving dangers of integrating into mass society so sharply. The acculturation of Anglo-Jews and the active participation of many in the Gentile society from which they had long been excluded, was no doubt a substantial cause of their increasingly nominal affiliation to Judaism.

Rationalisation, the last subdivision, was also widely apparent within post-emancipation Anglo-Judaism. It can be detected in many of the demands for ritual reform and the dismissive attitude to many obscure Talmudic rules, for example. What makes the concept of secularisation particularly applicable to Anglo-Jewry is that the group also displayed classic signs of the countervailing factors the thesis accepts sustained religions: cultural defence and cultural transition.[233] The former applies to the established community that suffered little fragmentation, lost few members to conversion and still centred its socio-cultural world within Jewry. The later was experienced by many Jewish immigrants, who often used religion to provide a familiar environment whilst adjusting to a new society, and revitalised the general communal standard by doing so. With its post-emancipation development Anglo-Jewry underwent a process of secularisation that fits the orthodox thesis well and indicates its applicability to all modern, Western religions, rather than just Christian ones.

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[233] Ibid., pp.17-8.

Chapter Five
Immigrants and Exhibitions: Expanding the Boundaries of British Jewry

I.

The decade between 1880 and 1890 witnessed developments that dramatically and permanently altered the situation of the Anglo-Jewish minority in Britain. It marked the end of the immediate post-emancipation era for British Jews. The emancipated definition of Jewry as a religious confession, with space for a malleable if understated particularity, would afterwards no longer characterise the community. The decade's events ended this stage of Jewish consciousness; Anglo-Jews would emerge with a changed conception of their identity. This chapter will explore a variety of factors, both Jewish and non-Jewish, that contributed to this transformation and their ramifications upon the minority. Undoubtedly, most significant was the mass immigration of Jews from the Russian Empire. Between 1881 and 1914, some 2.5-2.75 million Jews fleeing violent antisemitic persecution, alongside harsh economic and political discrimination, left Eastern Europe. An estimated 500,000 spent at least two years in Britain during this period as transmigrants, with approximately 120-150,000 of these settling.[1] These Jewish immigrants caused a sensation in British society. Predominately inhabiting overcrowded areas of East London or cramped provincial cities, engaging in labour intensive trades and being conspicuously foreign in an age of growing nationalism, their presence became a

[1] T. Kushner and K. Knox, *Refugees in an Age of Genocide. Global, National and Local Perspectives during the Twentieth Century* (London 1999) p.19.

social and political controversy that made Jews topical, and eventually led to the 1905 Aliens Act.[2]

For the Anglo-Jewish community the immigration was a revolution. The approximately 60,000 Anglo-Jews of 1881 were deluged. By 1914 only one in four Jews would be a native. Many provincial communities rapidly expanded as their Jewish population – 20,000 in 1881 – swelled 50% by 1891, increasing their independence and investing them with much greater significance within the minority.[3] Although historians such as Bill Williams have cautioned against seeing this immigration as a distinct break in the evolution of all provincial Jewry, preferring, in his Manchester example, to view it as the culmination of a long-history of continuous immigration that had created notable communities since the mid-1840s, for most provincials the immigration of the 1880s marked a decisive turning-point in their development.[4] Ernest Krauz, for instance, has examined how this influx very suddenly transformed Leeds Jewry from an anodyne group of congregations to the leading provincial community after Manchester; its population exploding from an estimated 1,000 in 1871 to possibly 25,000 by 1911, when it would constitute 5.8% of the city's entire inhabitants.[5] This extraneously derived population explosion had a massive impact upon the character of Anglo-Jewry. The immigrants, many coming from bounded Jewish communities, having had restricted contact with surrounding Gentile environments, traditionally Orthodox and largely from poor or pauperised economic conditions, were exceedingly different Jews from the emancipated British

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[2] S. Hochberg, *The Jewish Community and the Aliens Question in Great Britain, 1881-1917* Facsimile of doctoral thesis submitted to the University of New York (1989) pp.136-7.
[3] V. Lipman, *Social History of the Jews in England, 1850-1950* (London 1954) p.103.
[4] B. Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740-1875* (Manchester 1985) p.328.
[5] E. Krauz, *Leeds Jewry. Its History and Social Structure* (Cambridge 1964) p.28. and G. Alderman, *Modern British Jewry. Second Edition* (Oxford 1998) p.119.

variety. 'The Russian Jew is among us, but not of us. His dress, his food, his habits, his speech, his mode of prayer, are near as possible here what they were in the half-civilised village in which he was born' despaired the *JC*.[6] Significant cultural, religious and class disparities existed between the Eastern European newcomers and the native community. The immigrants' customs and practices were viewed negatively by the Anglo-Jewish elite, who feared for their carefully constructed, equal identity and the possible regression of the Jewish image in Britain.[7] Invariably though, as the resident community was numerically swamped, the immigrants began to transmute the minority and consequently, Gentiles' perception of it. This did not happen instantly. It was not clear at first how long the migration might continue or how much Britain might be involved with it. But by the mid-1880s the scale and continuing nature of the movement began to be appreciated and its transforming effects upon Anglo-Jewish life, while taking longer to manifest, were increasingly evident.

One aspect of the Anglo-Jewish community that was quickly modified by the immigrants' presence was its economic profile. For most of the nineteenth-century, and particularly the post-emancipation decades, the Jewish community had followed a trend of steady embourgeoisement. In the early 1850s Vivian Lipman has estimated that a third of the community were middle class, by the 1880s this proportion had risen to half.[8] This meant that the community contained a larger proportion of middle-

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[6] *JC*, 12 Dec. 1884, p.11.

[7] One aspect of immigrant life that was widely viewed as a rare positive was their greater piety, even if all the expressions of this were not necessarily appreciated. See: H. Adler, *The Ideal Jewish Pastor* (London 1891) p.17.; O. Simon, *Faith and Experience. A Selection of Essays and Addresses* (London 1895) p.156.; and *JW*, 09 Jan. 1885, p.5.

[8] Lipman, *Social* p.78. The experience of embourgeoisement was common to most Western European Jewish communities, accompanying the trend toward complete emancipation over the nineteenth-century. See D. Feldman, 'Was Modernity Good for the Jews?' in B. Cheyette and L. Marcus (eds.), *Modernity, Culture and 'the Jew'* (Cambridge 1998) p.173.

class people than did the general population.[9] Joseph Jacobs, the communal statistician, surveying London's approximately 46,000 Jews in 1883, illustrated this more clearly in his estimate of the community's economic strata:

Table Two: Estimate of Jewish economic interests in London, 1883[10]

Position:	Number: (inc. family members)
Professionals and retired living in West	1,200
Rich Merchants living in the West	5,400
Merchants with private houses, North, East, South	3,600
Professionals and retired, North, East, South	800
Shopkeepers, etc	15,000
Petty traders recently on the Guardians	8,000
Servants and Assistants	1,000
On Guardians as casual or chronic poor	7,911
Other paupers and afflicted	2,242
Russian Refugees	947

There had been a concomitant decrease in lower order occupations formerly associated with Jews. Hawking or petty and itinerant street trading had dramatically declined as Jewish activities over the Victorian era. The *JC* noted in 1864 that the trade in old clothes and oranges, formerly a Jewish monopoly, was being taken over by the Irish, though not from want of aptitude: 'We believe this is the gratifying effect of educational efforts which have been made for a number of years in the London Jewish community. The decline of the trades referred to among the Jews, far from being the subject of regret, is rather a matter of congratulation...'[11] Writing in 1867 the Gentile commentator Joseph Stallard supported this assertion, observing that the cry of 'old clo', long-used to satirise and stigmatise the Jewish poor, was much less commonly heard than previously.[12] At the other end of the economic spectrum,

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[9] H. Pollins, *Economic History of the Jews of England* (London 1982) p.90.

[10] J. Jacobs, *Studies in Jewish Statistics, Social, Vital and Anthropometric* (London 1891) p.13. Jacobs based these estimates upon research from trade directories, charity figures, burial returns, school numbers and location of synagogue memberships. He admitted that his figures might contain substantial inaccuracies, as often he was forced to rely on the speculative probability that someone with a Jewish name was a Jew.

[11] *JC*, 02 Dec. 1864, p.3.

[12] J. Stallard, *London Pauperism amongst the Jews and Christians. An Inquiry into the Principles and*

Jewish fortunes also advanced. Jacobs thought London in 1891 'probably the richest Jewish city in the world', estimating that it contained a third of all Jewish millionaires.[13] William Rubinstein has calculated that Jewish top wealth holders rose to a peak of 23% of non-landed millionaires deceased during the decade 1910-9, making it probable that many of these Jews actively obtained their wealth during the latter post-emancipation decades.[14] At the end of the post-emancipation era, Anglo-Jewry was an upwardly mobile economic community: increasingly prosperous, increasingly middle-class and topped by an exceedingly rich elite.

This success was achieved within a narrow occupational structure. At the top end of the spectrum this saw wealthy Jews concentrated in financial areas, especially the stock exchange and merchant banking.[15] At the opposite extreme, according to the Jewish Board of Guardians (JBG):

> ...the great bulk of our lower classes follow occupations of a most precarious nature. Labourers, artisans, or skilled workman in the various trades are excessively rare, and where we can point with pride to a watchmaker, a boot-maker, or a bookbinder here and there at long intervals, we notice with regret a vast company of cigar-makers, cap and slipper makers, clothes-renovators, itinerant glaziers, sellers of fruit in the streets, and shoe-blacks.[16]

A small Jewish professional class was developing toward the end of the century but the minority's restricted occupational situation was compounded and exacerbated by the East European immigrants. Their arrival reset the pattern of economic progress. If not poor or unskilled upon entry, the immigrants were quickly proletarianised in

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Practice of Outdoor Relief in the Metropolis and the Result upon the Moral and Physical Condition of the Pauper Class. (London 1867) p.9.

[13] Jacobs, *Studies* p.11.

[14] W. Rubinstein, 'Jews Among Top British Wealth Holders, 1857-1969: Decline of the Golden Age', *JSS*, Vol.34. No.1. (1972) p.76.

[15] Pollins, *Economic* p.108.

[16] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/1, Archives of Jewish Care: Jewish Board of Guardians: Scheme for and Reports of, 1859-65, Annual Report, 1865, p.59.

London, where their pre-industrial economic experiences were long outmoded.[17] As a result, they were forced into the already overstocked trades the Jewish poor had long occupied; by 1901, 42% of Polish and Russian men and 52% of women in London were engaged in the tailoring industry.[18] Although the newcomers rapidly adapted and soon began participating in Anglo-Jewry's embourgeoisement, their sheer numbers radically altered the economic composition of the community, reverting its diamond-shaped class structure back to a bottom-heavy pyramid.[19] For the first time in many decades the majority of the community were located among the working-class.

Anglo-Jewish institutions had been trying to obviate the communal poor's occupational constriction throughout the post-emancipation decades. Encouraging the apprenticeship of Jewish youth to more remunerative and stable trades, particularly toward the end of the 1870s when immigration began to substantially increase, was viewed as the most viable solution by the various Jewish Boards of Guardians established in London and several major provincial cities. In 1875, the London Guardians founded an Apprenticing Department. It was not a great success. Managing to place seventeen boys in its first year, it had improved to eighty-five youths four years later.[20] This level of activity did little to relieve the problem. The JBG acknowledged severe impediments against which its efforts made little headway: 'The greatest difficulty encountered by the committee is the small number of Jewish

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[17] Hochberg, *Jewish* pp.85-7.

[18] G. Alderman, 'English Jews or Jews of the English Persuasion? Reflections on the Emancipation of Anglo-Jewry', in P. Birnbaum and I. Katznelson (eds.), *Paths of Emancipation. Jews, States, and Citizenship* (Chichester 1995) p.141.

[19] D. Englander, 'Booth's Jews: The Presentation of Jews and Judaism in *Life and Labour of the People in London*', *Victorian Studies*, Vol.32. No.4. (Summer 1989) p.566.

[20] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/3, JBG Annual Reports, 1873-9, Annual Report, 1875 p.75. and Annual Report, 1879 p.15.

masters in general trades, to which it would be advisable to apprentice Jewish youths.'[21] The Liverpool Guardians admitted a similar lack of progress, citing a problem perhaps more intractable than the paucity of masters: 'The difficulty is to overcome the very natural, but short-sighted prejudices of the parents, who are averse to apprenticing their children because of the somewhat long period during which their labour must be unremunerative.'[22] Similar problems beset the Manchester Guardians' attempts, which between 1875-1900 managed to apprentice only three or four dozen boys.[23] These unsuccessful apprenticing exertions were merely a small facet of the charitable endeavours Anglo-Jewry had employed since the Resettlement to ameliorate the condition of their poor. Expanded during the post-emancipation period, philanthropic activities would be at the forefront of elite attempts to manage the immigration.

Charity and philanthropy were considered extremely important by Anglo-Jews, who inherited strong imperatives to such benevolence from both their Jewish and British identities. Poverty, the *JC* proclaimed in March 1865, '...is a serious fact in its civil aspect; a solemn question in connection with our religious obligations. Not as citizens, not as men, but especially not as Jews, do we dare dismiss it from attention...'[24] A sphere of activity compelled by their intertwined personas was supported not just with words but substantial action. Jacobs estimated that there existed 47 charitable institutions in 1891 designed solely to succour London Jews and supported at a cost of at least £37,000 per annum.[25] Besides prodigious confessional

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[21] Ibid., Annual Report, 1875 p.75.
[22] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/141, Small Jewish Collections, Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish Poor of Liverpool, Annual Report, June 1878 – May 1879, p.4.
[23] R. Liedtke, *Jewish Welfare in Hamburg and Manchester, c.1850-1914* (Oxford 1998) p.92.
[24] *JC*, 10 March 1865, p.4.
[25] Jacobs, *Studies*, p.17.

work, Anglo-Jews, as Englishmen, also tended to generously donate time and money to nondenominational and national causes. Doubtless, this was in part seen as an integrative measure, in terms of both class and community. Like dissenters and Catholics before them, Jews (successfully) utilised beneficence to promote their acculturation.[26] For wealthy Jews this had the further purpose of demonstrating their appropriate behaviour as members of the British upper classes. But as Abigail Green cautions in her treatment of nineteenth-century Jewry's greatest philanthropist, Sir Moses Montefiore, such utilitarian considerations were seldom the whole or even primary motivation actuating Jewish generosity.[27] Jews were already well-integrated and their impulse to aid fellow-countrymen regardless of creed can be attributed to their English feelings of responsibility and sympathy. Certainly, by the post-emancipation era they were acting as Englishmen, rather than trying to become Englishmen.

Anglo-Jewish charity had undergone considerable reorganisation, both in principle and methodology, after the achievement of emancipation. A shift occurred from an approach established upon traditional Jewish concepts, ad-hoc and universal in relief, to a more systematic strategy, incorporating many contemporary British notions. The concrete manifestation of which, was the 1859 establishment of a Jewish Board of Guardians. Operating parallel to municipal authorities, the JBG sought to organise all necessary aspects of communal charity with the twin aims of ensuring

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[26] F. Prochaska, 'Philanthropy' in F. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950* (Three Volumes Cambridge 1990) iii, p.378. The generosity regardless of creed of individuals such as Moses Montefiore and David Salomons was praised during the emancipation campaign by Gentile supporters, such as Lord John Russell, who adduced it as another reason Jews deserved equality, see I. Finestein, 'The Struggle for Emancipation, 1828-1858; in Idem., *Jewish Society in Victorian England* (London 1993) p.48.

[27] A. Green, 'Rethinking Sir Moses Montefiore: Religion, Nationhood and International Philanthropy in the Nineteenth Century' *American Historical Review*, Vol.110. No.3. (June 2005) pp.648-9.

that no Jew became a burden to the state and that the conscientious were not deprived of relief by arrangements '...not calculated to meet the peculiar exigencies of the Jewish poor'.[28] The *JC* hoped the organisation would effect their wish for '...the elevation of benevolence into a science.'[29] Echoing ideas of 'scientific philanthropy' prominent in mid-Victorian thought and championed by the Charity Organisation Society, to which the JBG sent a representative, rather than the indiscriminate ethos that governed the Poor Law Boards, the Anglo-Jewish elite believed the requirements of charity had altered with societal development.[30] Eleemosynary aid alone was thought no longer adequate. The impoverished now needed encouragement and moralising, rather than merely money and the Guardians created a variety of departments designed to alleviate all the ill-effects of poverty: the Sanitary Committee recommended hygiene improvements, the Industrial Committee encouraged self-assistance through small loans, the Medicine Department sought to improve health, and the Visiting Committee demonstrated moral elevation.

The fundamental understanding underlying these actions was a belief that poverty was curable. There would always be poor but pauperism was a condition that could be eradicated with appropriate treatment. Quintessential to this was the differentiation of the destitute into the deserving and undeserving. The Mendicity Department, which kept records upon all current and former relief applicants, so that the philanthropically inclined might research cases before giving privately and thus

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[28] *JC*, 04 Oct. 1861, p.4. The Guardians' remit had initially extended only to relieving the foreign poor and although in practice it administered to all applicants regardless of origin from the start, it was not until January 1871 that USyn officially transferred responsibility for all of the community's poor to it, see LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Overseers' Committee for the Relief of the Poor of the United Synagogue, Jan. 1871, p.13.

[29] *JC*, 18 Nov. 1870, p.4.

[30] D. Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge 1994) p.58. and *JW*, 26 Nov. 1880, p.5.

avoid the 'self-elected pauper', was considered one of the most important of the institution.[31] The communal elite sought to change both donor and recipient attitudes: 'A large mass of the poor will have to be broken of the habit of applying at once for relief...They will have to unlearn the notion that to be a *yudekeend* is sufficient claim to be indulged in idleness and beggary', whilst 'the benevolent people will have to unlearn giving indiscriminate charity...and will have to learn the very grave lesson that the thoughtless charitable person, giving to every applicant without previous inquiry, is as injurious to society as the miser refusing aid even to the most meritorious.'[32] These ideas were taken up across the community, even gaining precedence in religious charity. Over 1873-5, for instance, the United Synagogue overhauled its ancient practice of Matzo flour distribution to better embody this contemporary thinking. Traditionally, flour was dispensed to all who applied but an investigation revealed that a 'regular repetition of cases', who were not in need, nevertheless sought the boon as a perceived right of synagogue membership.[33]

Admitting a feeling that perhaps such a religious duty '...is not to be governed by the ordinary rules of charity', the authorities, fearing they '...had fostered a special habit of improvidence, and a feeling of dependence', decided to restrict provision to persons in 'absolute want', whilst encouraging the formation of a savings cooperative among members to facilitate self-sufficiency.[34] In its first year of operation, this saw applications decrease by 600 and saved USyn about £400.[35]

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[31] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/1, JBG Scheme for and Reports of, 1859-65, Half-Yearly Report 1860, p.8.

[32] *JC*, 18 Mar. 1859, p.4.

[33] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Overseers' Committee on the Matzo Distribution to the Poor, 1873, p.185.

[34] Ibid., p.185. To effect an even more coherent and efficient system, the USyn invited the Sephardic congregation to merge its distribution services with its efforts; the offer was declined, see Maida Vale Synagogue, Spanish and Portuguese Jews Records, MS 116, Minutes of the Meetings of the *Mahamad*, 1874-90, xiii, p.3.

[35] LMA, ACC/2712/02/001, USP, Report of the Overseers on the Matzo Distribution for 1875, p.270.

These developments represented a significant increase in contemporary English input into the combined identity area of British Jewish charity. Some historians, most notably Mordecai Rozin, have highlighted this shift to suggest that the post-emancipation, anglicised elite had appropriated philanthropy to serve as an instrument of class control, to the detriment of its Jewish roots. Believing the elite to have forsaken the universal duty of traditional charity and welfare, *tzedakah,* Rozin asserts that organisations like the JBG were '...controlling mechanisms...designed and continuously directed to enforce upper-class interests throughout the nineteenth-century'. [36] The Anglo-Jewish leadership did have class-bound attitudes that displayed a blend of disdain, pity and patronisation towards the poor. 'They are like children, always needing a helping hand and watchful eye' thought the *JC* in 1883.[37] A year later Hermann Adler concurred: '...you must think and act for him. You must consider how he can be made to earn an honourable living.'[38] Notwithstanding this approach, Joseph Stallard defended Anglo-Jewish relief as more humane and efficient than that of the Parish: '...it is clear that the Jews are stealing a march on the Christians around them...'[39] Overall though, it is apparent that Jewish charity partook of social manipulation as much as its Gentile compeers, especially the JBG, whose beneficiaries were '...made to feel the opprobrium of poverty.'[40]

Despite this, Rozin's argument is overstated and unbalanced; too concerned with negative perceptions of elite motives, it does not offer an objective account of

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[36] M. Rozin, *The Rich and the Poor. Jewish Philanthropy and Social Control in Nineteenth-Century London* (Brighton 1999) pp.2, 136 & 217.

[37] *JC*, 08 June 1883, p.9.

[38] H. Adler, *The Purpose and Methods of Charitable Relief. Two Sermons Preached at the Bayswater Synagogue,* March 1884 (London) p.5.

[39] Stallard, *London Pauperism*, p.174. Stallard's intention was to highlight the deficiencies in general poor law provision by contrasting this system with Jewish charity. He is thus notably bias in favour of the JBG's activities. This does not however, prevent his work from usefully making comparisons between the two systems.

[40] E. Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1880-1920* (Oxford 1988) p.73.

their intra-Jewish charity, in which moral responsibility and concern for poor coreligionists was prominent. The Jewish Guardians' raison d'etre was, after all, to succour the Jewish indigent. 'If our poor are not to be handed over to the parish or to the unsectarian societies, the Board must exist to relieve them.'[41] Whilst this realisation was partly founded upon a long-held belief that it would irreparably damage the minority's image if Jewish paupers came upon the rates, in spite of Jews' contributions to them, it was more compassionately (and from a communal leadership viewpoint, responsibly) concerned with providing assistance acceptable to their scruples and preserving them within Judaism. In 1861 the JBG considered the situation of 'permanent paupers': the disabled, widowed, orphaned, '...who gradually found their way to the workhouses, and came by degrees lost and forgotten.'[42] In a decision that prioritised Jewish concerns over the dictates of economy and social science, the Guardians decided to support these cases with doles, rather than abandon them to irreligious conditions:

> It would be asked, and with reason, to what purpose could a Board of Guardians specially appointed to watch over the religious and moral interests, and protect the wants of the Jewish poor, direct the funds entrusted to its care more beneficially, than to the support of those, who by the dispensation of providence, had become physically unable to support themselves; and 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...[43]

Jewish philanthropy took its commitments to the minority seriously.

Further evidence of this is provided by the repeated attempts of the JBG to convince its Gentile equivalents to accommodate Jewish particularities. The

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[41] *JC*, 10 Dec. 1880 p.9.

[42] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/1, JBG: Scheme for and Reports of 1859-65, Annual Report 1861, p.19.

[43] Ibid., p.19. Upon this resolution the Board voted 24 fixed allowances. By 1873, this number had risen to 155 monthly allowances and 123 fixed weekly allowances, see MS 173 1/12/3, JBG Annual Reports, 1873-9, Annual Report 1873, p.12.

Whitechapel Union was persuaded to provide kosher food for its Jewish inmates in 1871. Such an arrangement had existed in Manchester since 1869, and for the entire post-emancipation period the JBG lobbied the Metropolitan Guardians to apply outdoor relief, rather than the workhouse test, to Jewish paupers.[44] The desire for such religious concessions had nothing to do with social control. Such actions, alongside the JBG's separate, parallel organisation, did however, emphasise Jewish peculiarity; demonstrating, in contrast to emancipation's logic, that Jews could not participate in the standard but required specialised arrangements. This was not necessarily problematic though, as the vast majority of British charities were denominationally based. Jewry was merely copying the prevailing tendency:

> ...here in England it is the religion and not the state which takes charge of these ministrations, and that whilst all religious communities, or as many of them as can consistently join, perform united the social duties devolving upon them jointly, each then separately has to provide for its special social wants.[45]

The organisation, centralisation and impressive exertions of Jewish charity in this age, whatever its purposes, did not lead to the hoped-for mitigation of communal poverty. There was some initial success. The Guardians claimed in 1873, when two-thirds of previous applicants did not re-apply, that pauperism had both relatively and absolutely decreased.[46] But by the end of this decade and the beginning of the next, significant problems were becoming apparent. Escalating Jewish immigration, coupled with an economic downturn, strained the resources of the minority. Lionel Cohen, President of the Guardians, bemoaned the institution's lack of funds in 1880, when it was forced to obtain an advance of £800: 'It might seem that the Board,

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[44] L. Magnus, *The Jewish Board of Guardians and the Men Who Made It, 1859-1909* (London 1909) p.133. and *JC*, 12 Feb. 1869, p.6.
[45] *JC*, 08 Apr. 1859, p.4.
[46] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/3, JBG Annual Reports, 1873-9, Annual Report 1873, p.10.

holding, as it does, a unique position among the charitable organisations of this community, ought to be saved from the necessity of having, year after year, to beg, cap in hand, for aid in order to meet the ordinary demands upon its resources'.[47] This was a nationwide challenge for Jewish charity. The Liverpool Guardians reported similarly in 1880: an increase in applications, a concomitant rise in expenditure, but a £47 decline in ordinary income that required a special gift from Baroness Lionel de Rothschild to prevent a deficit.[48] The Liverpool charity attributed this deterioration to depression of trade and severity of winter, though its statistics on recipients' nationality reveal the paramount cause: of 180 cases, only sixteen were English.[49] When the mass immigration of Eastern European Jews got underway, Anglo-Jewish charitable structures were overwhelmed. Notwithstanding a rule denying immigrants aid during the first six months of their residence, the JBG calculated that 98% of its applicants were foreigners by 1886.[50] A year before, in his annual appeal for funds, Lionel Cohen was forced to disclose that '...at present *the Board of Guardians is absolutely in debt.*'[51] And in debt it would stay for the next three decades, as between 1881-1914 the number of claims upon it annually increased by 200%.[52] By 1905, the JBG was forced to establish an emergency fund simply to liquidate its arrears, which exceeded £6,000.[53] Anglo-Jewish charity could not cope with the immigration. Its post-emancipation optimism that poverty was curable gave way in the mid-1880s to modest hopes of palliating the worst aspects of immigrant destitution and concerns of institutional survival. Jewish indigence soared to levels not experienced for nearly a

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[47] *JC*, 10 Dec. 1880, p.9.
[48] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/141, Small Jewish Collections, Board of Guardians for the Relief of the Jewish Poor of Liverpool, Annual Report, June 1979 – May 1880, p.6.
[49] Ibid., p.7. and Annual Report, June 1878 – May 1879, p.3.
[50] *JC*, 12 Feb. 1886, p.9.
[51] *JW*, 04 Dec. 1885, p.3. Italics in original.
[52] Alderman, 'English Jews' p.142.
[53] *JC*, 07 July 1905, p.2.

century. The progressive and middle-class image of emancipated Anglo-Jewry was tarnished by the immigrants' stubborn poverty, which created what the *JC* termed a distinct 'communal embarrassment'.[54]

The immigrations' economic impact had equivalent social ramifications upon the minority. The integrative pattern that had quietly prevailed for most of the nineteenth-century was abruptly reversed. Pre-emancipation, the upper tier of Anglo-Jewry had penetrated the highest echelons of British society; their acculturated socio-cultural condition being a prime justification for demanding equality. After 1858, social integration accelerated for all classes of Jews. The wealthy, of course, continued to lead the way. In 1873, Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales, wrote in thanks to Anthony de Rothschild and his wife for a week of 'kindness and hospitality'; 'my only regret is to have been forced to leave you this afternoon.'[55] Such an event was not uncommon. The Prince was genuinely friendly with a remarkable number of the Jewish elite, in particular, at this time, the Rothschild family, and there can be no greater example of the successful acceptance of upper-class English Jews than this royal affection. But this relationship was merely the peak. The Jewish elite mixed freely and on equal terms with all the worthies of the day – literary, political or aristocratic. T. H. S. Escott, in an anonymous discussion of the London scene, observed the social prominence of Jews: 'There is no phenomenon more noticeable in London society than the ascendancy of the Jews....His Royal Highness regards the best class of Hebrews with conspicuous favour. In that, as in other matters, he sets a fashion.'[56] David Cesarani thinks that by the mid-1880s, Jews

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[54] *JC*, 22 Jan. 1886, p.9.
[55] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 43 Letters to members of the Rothschild family, 1863-1925, Letter from Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales to Anthony de Rothschild, 10 Jan. 1873.
[56] A Foreign Resident [T. H. S. Escott], *Society in London* (London 1885) p.87.

had become intrinsic to the country's social fabric; an opinion borne out by contemporary evidence.[57] For although in private many upper-class Gentiles expressed cultural misgivings about parvenu Jews, and aristocrats could be suspicious of their international, plutocratic fortunes, in public behaviour and interaction Jews were treated as equal Englishmen.[58] An article in the *Pictorial World* on Sir Moses Montefiore declared: 'It would be difficult to select from the muster-roll of our notabilities one who is more thoroughly a representative man than this eminent Jewish Baronet.'[59] The conclusive proof of Gentile acceptance came, for Anglo-Jewry, with the elevation of Nathaniel de Rothschild to the peerage in 1885. Arthur Cohen thought the event '...marks the complete attainment by the Jews of England of *all* political and social rights and privileges...'[60] Nathaniel's aunt, Louisa, remarked on the equanimity of the occasion: 'What changes in the last forty years, when the...title barely would have appeared on the envelope of a begging letter - - - now causes not one surprising or deferential exclamation.'[61] Jewry had made it.

This generational difference in social integration across the post-emancipation decades applied to and was recognised among the middle and lower classes, as well. The *JC* pondered this at length in 1886:

> The younger Jew, who has enjoyed all the educational and social advantages which, thanks to modern toleration and modern generosity, are now open to him, perceives the unsatisfactory nature of a limited range of society. He may spend the greater part of his time with his Gentile friends...The ghetto barriers have been completely levelled and a new stream of life has rushed in upon us...In many cases the difference between generation and generation is so great, as to be described as of

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[57] Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle* p.69.
[58] D. Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London 1998) p.91. and T. Endelman, 'The Frankaus of London: A Study in Radical Assimilation, 1837-1967, *Jewish History,* Vol.8. No.1-2. (1994) p.146.
[59] *Pictorial World*, 03 Apr. 1875, p.83.
[60] LMA, ACC/3121/G1/01/002, BDAR, 1880-9, Annual Report, Apr. 1886, p.32. Italics in original.
[61] L. Cohen, (ed.), *The Journal of Lady de Rothschild, 1837-1854 and 1867-1906* (London 1932) p.210.

> kind rather than of degree. It is not a mere difference of size; the younger men are not only so far ahead of their elders as the advance of the times has made inevitable; they are on a completely different plane of culture...[62]

Stark geographical evidence existed to reinforce such perceptions; for as Jewry operated increasingly within Gentile orbits, so the solidity of the Jewish group waned. All classes of London Jew had for centuries been concentrated in several East End districts but over the nineteenth-century this residential cohesion dissolved.[63] Anglo-Jewry dispersed across the capital, following the class pattern of their Christian peers. The wealthiest constructed country estates, the rich and middle-classes moved ever westward; the east was abandoned to the lower orders.

There is a danger of exaggerating Anglo-Jewish social integration in the Victorian era. A strong sense of solidarity still existed; particularly among the middle and lower classes, who, reinforced by a constricted occupational structure, often continued to keep apart from Gentile circles, many practising what Jacobs termed 'shoolism': an inclination to limit acquaintances, especially friends, to the members of their own synagogue.[64] Nevertheless, the dissipation of Jewish society and its assimilation to Christian mores had proceeded to the extent that the *JC* began fearing for Judaism's loss of adhesive power.[65] The *JW* was similarly anxious by the mid-1880s:

> We hope we are giving utterance to no "tribal" sentiment, when we say that we much prefer that young Jewish men and women should form their own literary societies than be dependent on those established and managed by non-Jews. Our unhampered intercourse with the Gentile has already broken down too many of the barriers which separate Jews from Gentiles.[66]

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[62] *JC*, 03 Sept. 1886, p.9.
[63] Williams, *Making* p.336.
[64] T. Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington, Ind. 1990) p.92. and Endelman, 'Making Jews' p.24.
[65] Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle* p.90.
[66] *JW*, 23 Jan. 1885, p.3.

Ironically, just as the communal press were fretting over dissolution, Jewish immigrant settlement was regressing the minority's social condition to an older and less welcome version. The Russian immigrant was crowded into the East End, making significant parts of it exclusively Jewish once again. With little or no knowledge of Gentile culture – certainly no English habits – and unlikely to speak the language proficiently while garbed in traditional apparel, immigrant neighbourhoods quickly began to resemble, as Inspector Reid and Sergeant Trench explained to the Booth survey team, a foreign town.[67] There was little mixing of nationalities and Jewish areas tended to be completely segregated, constituting, in effect, a wall-less ghetto. David Englander states that, apart from possessing more obvious characteristics, the Jewish immigrants, in both scale and concentration, were a far more identifiably distinct group than any other, such as the Irish.[68] Native Jews deplored the situation of '...whole streets in Mile End crowded with these hapless paupers in every phase of dirt and wretchedness...'[69] This, they realised, presented the spectacle of Jewish separatism decades of acculturation had sought to dispel. Soon, the majority of Jews in Britain would have only the most limited of social interaction with the surrounding Gentile environment.

II.

The potential consequences of this upon Jews' relationship with the majority society worried Anglo-Jewry. As the immigration continued and it became evident that thousands of foreign Jews would permanently settle in Britain, the Anglo-Jewish

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[67] Englander, 'Booth's Jews', p.566.
[68] Ibid., p.552.
[69] *JC*, 26 Nov. 1886, p.6.

elite began to fear for the community's acculturated identity. Heirs to a long-standing tradition of collective responsibility, British Jews realised their image was inextricably linked to that of the immigrants: 'Our fair fame is bound up with theirs; the outside world is not capable of making minute discriminations between Jew and Jew, and forms its opinions of Jews in general as much, if not more, from them than from the anglicised portion of the community.'[70] This stimulated efforts to promote a positive perception of the newcomers, garner sympathy for their plight, and promote the benefits to Britain of free immigration and asylum. The intention was to convince the public that, as Charles Emmanuel would later explain to the 1902 Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, the Jewish immigrant was exceptional, that unlike other foreigners he came to England to be English, rather than to get rich and leave.[71] To ensure the truth of this assertion, the community embarked upon aggressive programmes of repatriation and Anglicisation. David Feldman estimates that between 1881-1906, the JBG alone returned some 31,000 persons to Eastern Europe.[72] This massive operation was undertaken in an attempt to moderate the number of settlers and, more importantly, to remove those considered particularly unsuitable: 'A man who shows himself incapable of becoming a good citizen ought to be expelled'.[73] Repatriation was executed with little regard for the Jews involved, who were often returned to disturbed areas, receiving no assistance at the other end; in 1883, the Guardians reported the return of 419 cases 'probably to their homes'.[74]

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[70] *JC*, 12 Aug. 1881, p.9.

[71] *Parliamentary Reports from Commissioners* 1903, ix, Report on the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration p.602.

[72] D. Feldman, 'The Importance of Being English. Jewish Immigration and the Decay of Liberal England' in D. Feldman and G. Jones (eds.), *Metropolis London. Histories and Representations since 1800* (London 1989) p.63.

[73] *Parliamentary Reports from Commissioners* 1903, ix, p.530.

[74] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 173 1/12/4, JBG Annual Reports 1880-6, Annual Report 1883, p.17. Repatriation, with its intention of removing the least useful, frequently targeted the most vulnerable groups of immigrants: the old, the sick, and others incapable of work. Returnees

Those foreign Jews who remained were subjected to various measures of Anglicisation. Some form of acculturation was inevitable as immigrant Jews adapted to their new environment but Anglo-Jewry sought to direct this, to impose their model upon the newcomers. Whilst there were benefits: assistance with learning English, provision of free education, improvement of sanitary standards, the process took slender notice of immigrant needs or desires. Believing that 'his civilisation is not his affair, but the community's...' Anglo-Jewry – erecting his dwellings, coordinating his religion and educating his children – sought to instil an appropriate combination of Jewishness and Englishness.[75] Anything that smacked of 'foreignness' or an unacceptable Jewishness was to be removed; teachers at the Jews' Free School, for instance, forced children to change Yiddish sounding names.[76] Many of these actions displayed antipathy toward the immigrant, whose own Jewish identity was little valued by the community. Anglo-Jews' understanding of their emancipated condition, as equal but responsible Englishmen, overrode their Jewish empathy. They sought primarily, therefore, not to succour their coreligionists but to preserve their hard-won position in British society. It was imperative that, like them, the Jewish immigrants appreciated the successful formula of Diasporic Jewish existence: '...that in accepting the hospitality of England they owe a reciprocal duty of becoming an Englishman.'[77]

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might include those classified as refugees. It was hoped that the return of such people would also have a dissuasive effect, serving to prevent potential migrants from leaving.

[75] *JC*, 20 Feb. 1885, p.11.

[76] R. Livshin, 'The Acculturation of the Children of Immigrant Jews in Manchester, c.1890-1920', in D. Cesarani (ed.), *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry* (Oxford 1990) p.82. The Anglo-Jewish elite so detested Yiddish that they would seldom refer to it by name, derogatorily describing it instead as 'jargon'.

[77] *JC*, 12 Aug. 1881, p.9.

Fear of Gentile prejudice drove these efforts. Notable acts of sympathy had greeted the beginning of the migration. Russian persecution was unanimously denounced, numerous public meetings were held in protest, and a joint Gentile-Jewish organised Mansion House Fund raised over £108,000 to aid the refugees.[78] But with the movement showing no signs of abating and ever more Jews pouring into the East End, local resentment soon manifested itself. Unfortunately for the immigrants, it was not an auspicious time to enter Britain. For much of the 1880s there was economic recession and high unemployment. The optimism of the Victorian era was giving way to pessimism, as the long-term decline in Britain's economic position began.[79] Against a background of socio-economic dislocation people were becoming uneasy about Britain's future; there was a sense of national self-doubt.[80] Besides being conspicuously foreign, the Jewish migrant was viewed as an economic competitor who overcrowded houses and trades, depressing wages and inflating rents. An anti-alien lobby formed and in 1886 began organising agitation against further immigration. This would succeed in 1905, after two decades of campaigning, in obtaining an Aliens Act from the Conservative Government. Introducing the first restrictions upon free immigration to Britain for sixty-nine years and abrogating the right of asylum, the Act effectively reduced the influx.[81] Participants in the long and occasionally fierce debate concerning immigration were, for the most part, careful to avoid anti-Jewish rhetoric. However, that virtually all the immigrants were known to be Jewish made this something of a moot point. The opprobrium levelled at aliens reflected automatically on to Jews. As the *JC* came to

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[78] Alderman, *Modern* p.113.
[79] T. Endelman, 'Native Jews and Foreign Jews in London, 1870-1914', in D. Berger (ed.), *The Legacy of Jewish Migration: 1881 and its Impact* (New York 1983) p.110.
[80] Hochberg, *Jewish* p.12.
[81] Ibid., pp.136-7.

realise: 'Theoretically anti-alienism is not antisemitism, though there are points of contact between the two creeds, but in practice they are much of a muchness.'[82]

The prospect that foreign Jews had imported antisemitism alongside themselves terrified Anglo-Jewry. The community was aware that prejudice against them had not ended with emancipation. The beginning of the Bulgarian Agitation saw the *JC* lament:

> High-minded, benevolent and enlightened as the English people in general are, large masses among it – and this by no means always among the lowest strata – have not yet overcome the hereditary unfortunate prejudices against the Jews. They crop up but too often and not rarely in places least expected. A portion of the general press is as infected by them as some popular authors.[83]

Aware of the organised and political antisemitism flourishing on the Continent, Anglo-Jewry feared least the presence and impact of the Jewish immigrants transform English prejudice into a more threatening animus. N.S. Joseph warned his fellow Jews in 1886, that 'it is not impossible that a *Judenhetze* may arise in East London from the presence of a starving population offering to work for starvation wages.'[84] There was mounting evidence to suggest that racial, or at least ethnic, conceptions of Jewry were gaining currency over the 1880s in Britain. Goldwin Smith continued his critique of the community, despite the end of the Eastern Question that that had provoked it; claiming in 1881 that Jews could not be patriots, if patriotism '...means undivided devotion to the national interest, there is difficulty in seeing how it can be possessed without abatement by the members of a cosmopolitan and wandering race, with a tribal bond, tribal aspirations, and tribal feelings of its own.'[85] Similar ethnic assumptions were to be found at grass-roots level: both enquirers and subjects

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[82] *JC*, 01 May 1891, p.11.
[83] *JC*, 21 Apr. 1876, p.40.
[84] *JC*, 26 Nov. 1886, p.6.
[85] G. Smith, 'The Jewish Question', *Nineteenth Century* (Oct. 1881) p.495.

participating in the Booth Survey expressed opinions of Jews as a peculiar people, often evaluating them according to stereotyped physiognomical traits.[86] Anglo-Jewry perceived this change in atmosphere. Concluding a pamphlet celebrating Moses Montefiore's ninety-ninth birthday, Dr. Louis Loewe, his friend and travel companion, having recounted at length the Baronet's achievements in combating prejudice in Europe, feared sterner efforts would soon be needed:

> We are now living in an age which presents to all reflecting men a strange and most extraordinary perversion of the rights of humanity in some civilised and enlightened countries. We hear the words of peace and love falling from the lips of many a man, but there is, nevertheless, nothing but hatred in his heart and strife in all his movements....we should see the pernicious effect of the hatred of races in its strongest light, so that we may endeavour, so far as lies in our power, to prevent its entering the heart of the rising generation, and where, unfortunately, it may already have taken root, remove it with all possible speed.[87]

Although Anglo-Jewry was unnerved by these developments, the community remained, overall, confident of its position in England.

> Not only have the attempts to excite prejudice against our poorer brethren entirely failed, but the failure has shown that the traditional, inherent love of justice and humanity among all classes of Englishmen can be trusted to prevent in England such senseless and shameless antisemitic crusades as disgraced Germany a few years ago

the *JC* reassured in 1887.[88] This Jewish trust was not misplaced. In terms of theorising 'race' and 'nationality' Britain lagged far behind the Continent. There existed no organic version of the nation and nearly all politicians and intellectuals, whilst happy to promote an undefined patriotism, had little sympathy for racial conceptions. Ideas of Teutonism did become popular in certain circles but were never

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[86] Englander, 'Booth's Jews', p.555.

[87] Jewish Musuem, Camden, MSS 199, Letters of Sir Moses Montefiore, 1869-83, Pamphlet: *The Sir Moses Montefiore Celebrations at Ramsgate on the Ninety-Ninth Anniversary of his Birthday, 08 Nov. 1883,* pp.14 & 16.

[88] *JC*, 16 Sept. 1887, p.8.

disseminated widely across Britain.[89] Increasing awareness of Jewish difference in England did not therefore, result in popular and politicised antisemitism. Anglo-Jews were associated more with 'foreignness', viewed more as an 'other' but this never went further than hostility toward their cultural pluralism – the Jewish presence, per se, in British society was never questioned.[90]

Anglo-Jewry reacted to its changing milieu. Taking their cue, as always, from shifts in Gentile opinion, English Jews also began employing ethnic and racial conceptions to describe their subculture. An unsophisticated belief in some form of Jewish nationality had continued throughout the post-emancipation decades. A residual ethnicity was ever-present behind the discourse of assimilation. Reference to it remained common in both the Christian and Jewish press; the *JC*, with surprising candour, not infrequently encouraged the matter:

> Let us teach our children, then, a little more often, and a little more warmly, how great is the race whence they spring...Let them understand that whilst they must tender the whole strength of their patriotism to the beloved country of their birth, strive for her prosperity and aid her in her adversity; while they must proffer the full love of brotherhood to all men among whom they dwell, whatever their class or creed; still their Judaism and the spirit of their race and faith must be the master pride of their hearts![91]

There had been no option during the emancipation campaign but to downplay and refute such non-religious bonds; it was obvious however, to both Jew and Gentile,

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[89] D. Lorimer, 'Race, Science and Culture: Historical Continuities and Discontinuities, 1850-1915', in S. West (ed.), *The Victorians and Race* (Aldershot 1996) p.32. and P. Mandler, 'Race and "Nation" in Mid-Victorian Thought', in S. Collini, R. Whatmore and B. Young (eds.), *History, Religion and Culture: British Intellectual History, 1750-1950* (Cambridge 2000) pp.225, 236 & 240.

[90] R. Robertson, 'The Representation of the Jews in British and German Literature: A Comparison', in M. Brenner, R. Liedtke and D. Rechter (eds.), *Two Nations: British and German Jews in Comparative Perspective* (Tübingen 1999) pp.432-3 & 441. Robertson also notes that Catholics were greater victims of this monocultural xenophobia. A larger minority than the Jews, with similar religious and ethnic (due to their substantial Irish contingent) disparities from English Protestants, Catholics provided a historic target for prejudice and probably served as a result, to shield the Jewish minority from certain levels of hostility.

[91] *JC*, 18 Sept. 1868, p.4.

that Lionel de Rothschild's entry into the Commons had not dissolved the social dimensions of group life or severed the centuries-old association with foreign brethren.[92] The arrival of the immigrants, coinciding with a European move toward racial and ethnological thought, stimulated Anglo-Jewry's suppressed ethnic self-consciousness. '...we find that antisemitism which seemed such a bane has brought with it a deepening of Jewish religious feeling that has far more than counterbalanced the evil it has done...antisemitism has in this way proved to Judaism a blessing in disguise.'[93] Utilising the space around their unfixed definition within the British polity, Anglo-Jewry, gradually, subtly and perhaps not always consciously, began re-interpreting their identity; once again, adjusting it to suit the times. Thus, increasingly over the 1880s, national and racial aspects of Jewishness were positively re-incorporated into the Anglo-Jewish self-image. The *JC* began to discuss 'the historic sense of the Jews', their '*volksgeist*', in the terminology of the period.[94] This was not done theoretically or with any clear-conceived notion of what constituted Jewish nationality. Like the racial ideas of the surrounding culture, Anglo-Jewry's ethnic claims suffered from conceptual confusion and often lacked strict definition.[95] One assertion was, though, universally touted: that the Jewish race and Jewish religion were inseparable bound together. Lucien Wolf, the communal journalist and foreign affairs expert, wrote in 1884: '...Judaism the religion and Judaism the race are almost interchangeable terms. The rigid observance during long centuries of a "peculiar" legalism by a peculiarly exclusive people has necessarily resulted in the people becoming the manifestation of the laws', explaining that, as a result, '...the Jews are

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[92] Endelman, 'Making Jews' p.27.
[93] *JC*, 31 Dec. 1886, pp.9-10.
[94] *JC*, 29 Sept. 1882, p.10.
[95] Endelman, 'Making Jews' p.28. and E. Feuchtwanger, '"Jew Feelings" and Realpolitik: Disraeli and the Making of Foreign and Imperial Policy', in T. Endleman and T. Kushner (eds.), *Disraeli's Jewishness* (London 2002) p.183.

as a race really superior, physically, mentally, and morally, to the people among whom they dwell'.[96] Judaism, the *JC* claimed, was the 'apotheosis of chauvinism' and according to O. J. Simon, 'Israel was God's race'.[97] With such descriptions Anglo-Jewry revealed that it was more than simply a confession. By historically linking race and religion, it could not be understood as merely another sect; no dissenter could admit of such an ethnic faith. With this gestalt Jewishness, Jews were again, as in reality they always had been, an exceptional minority.

Not all Jews approved. There was significant internal criticism of this renewed national emphasis. In 1882 'A True Jew' wrote to rebuke the *JC*:

> In common with many readers I have noticed with great regret how often your correspondents, and yourself in your leading articles have lately spoken of us Jews as a nation. It is a great many centuries since we have ceased to be nation. We are a religious community, and nothing else; and just as little as you would call English Protestants or Catholics a distinct nation ought you to apply that word to us.

The letter continued to astutely expose the contradiction ethnic sentiment created in Anglo-Jewish identity:

> The very writers who now so frequently use it would be indignant, and justly so, if our detractors and enemies were to deny us our English nationality, and they would be the first to proclaim that religion in no way affects nationality...It is by the injudicious use of words like this that we furnish handles to the Goldwin Smiths and others who maintain that we are not, and cannot be patriots.[98]

In other words: Jews could not have their cake and eat it.[99] Those Anglo-Jews embracing ethnicity did not however, consider they were. They conceived Anglo-Jewish identity as a multi-layered composite. It was not a case of stark choices between race or religion, British or Jewish, but a flexible compound of these sources.

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[96] L. Wolf, 'What is Judaism? A Question of Today.' *Fortnightly Review* (Aug. 1884) pp.239-40.
[97] *JC*, 29 Sept. 1882, p.9. and O. Simon, 'The Mission of Israel', a sermon preached Jan. 1887, in Idem., *Faith and Experience. A Selection of Essays and Addresses* (London 1895) p.178.
[98] *JC*, 10 Nov. 1882, p.5.
[99] D. Cesarani, 'British Jews', in R. Liedtke and S. Wendehorst, (ed.), *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Manchester 1999) p.53.

The balance between components could be altered, as it had been during emancipation. Promoting Jewish nationality was not then, choosing another identity but reformulating the mixture to emphasise a different element.

The community believed there was scope for this among the polyphyletic British. As Jews had portrayed themselves as one confession among many, so they claimed to be simply another ethnic group among the many in Britain.

> We have the Cymri in Wales, we have Saxons, Danes and Normans in England. We have the Scots and the Gauls in Scotland; and though composed of so many nationalities, we all live happily together in harmony...not interfering with each other's peculiarities of religion or race; but living together amicably and working in union for the common good.[100]

According to Linda Colley's assessment of 'Britishness' as a superimposed umbrella identity, underneath which 'in practice, men and women often had double, triple, or even quadruple loyalties, mentally locating themselves, according to circumstances, in a village, in a particular landscape, in a region, and even in one or two countries', Anglo-Jewry may have pitched correctly.[101] Jews were trying to '...make the notion of "race" work for them and draw the line where its influence ceased.'[102] And to a considerable extent they were successful. For all the community's racial ascription it remained devoted to the ideals of emancipation upon which its presence in Britain was constructed. Admittedly, the ideal had been stretched. The spacious ambiguity that had surrounded Anglo-Jewish existence and proven of such utility after emancipation was diminished and their identity invested with an even deeper ambivalence but the foundation was unchanged. The strengthening of racial sentiment was carefully limited; Jews, above all, remained emancipated Englishmen. Hence,

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[100] *JC*, 11 Dec. 1868, p.4.
[101] L. Colley, *Britons. Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London 1996) p.6. and L. Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol.31. No.4. (Oct. 1992) p.315.
[102] D. Feldman. *Englishmen and Jews. Social Politics and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (London 1994) p.126.

they were disinterested and hostile the following decade toward the rise of political Zionism. Hermann Adler led a stringent opposition to the concept, which proved popular with some of the Jewish immigrants: 'My brethren, I view the present movement with unfeigned concern, because I regard it as opposed to the teachings of Judaism, as impolitic, aye, as charged with great peril.'[103] Although sympathetic to Jewish settlements in the Holy Land, the Anglo-Jewish upper-classes received Herzl's ideas with 'studied silence'.[104] To conflate Jewish nationality with citizenship of a Jewish state went far beyond British Jews' comprehension of Jewish ethnicity.

The gravitation toward racial thinking and one pole of Jewish definition was paralleled by a similar development in the opposite direction. As the currents of the age had caused some Jews to embrace their nationality, so they caused others to deracinate it, to promote a purely religious group definition. The man who intellectually inspired and would become the leading figure of this configuration of Jewish existence was Claude Goldsmid Montefiore. Coincidentally born in the year of emancipation, Claude was to be Jewish equality's most extreme exponent in Britain. In February 1902 he would co-found the Jewish Religious Union, which in 1909 would open its first synagogue and institutionalise a Liberal Judaism movement. Under Claude's direction this version of the faith offered the first Anglo-Jewish attempt to reconcile Judaism with biblical criticism, whilst also incorporating numerous reforms designed to relativise worship and bolster commitment.[105] The Pentateuch was no longer treated as divinely inspired, the Talmud was rejected *in*

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[103] H. Adler, *Religious versus Political Zionism* (London 1898) p.7.
[104] S. Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews: The Communal Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1895-1920* (Princeton 1982) p.32.
[105] D. Langton, *Claude Montefiore. His Life and Thought* (London 2002) p.167. Examples of Liberal reforms: making head covering optional, having services no longer than seventy-five minutes and allowing men and women to sit together.

toto, and most importantly, the Return was forsaken. To 'denationalise' the Jewish religion had been Claude's primary concern since he first began publishing his ideas in a *Contemporary Review* article of 1882.[106] Reacting against the growing ethnic dimension in both Gentile and Jewish thought, he believed that only the attainment of complete universality could secure a settled Jewish existence. The combination of religion and nation was a 'doomed anachronism'; the hope of Reformers was

> ...to bring Judaism into harmony with the religious and political opinions of themselves and the many who think like them. For, in the first place, the only point in which they believe themselves to differ from the various peoples in whose lands they live lies in their religious doctrines and rites; the original difference in ancestry and blood has no influence upon their action or their thought.[107]

Emancipating Judaism from its national heritage was the only way to complete the community's emancipation in wider society. Therefore, Claude asserted, '...the rise of Jewish nationalism was even more a bitter disappointment to us than the diffusion of antisemitism.'[108] Prominent communal opinion contested this. The *JC* admired Claude's intellectual rigour but feared his theories, 'utterly false and impracticable', made 'vast concessions to the antisemites.'[109] Samuel Montagu protested that '...such opinions are diametrically opposed to those held almost universally by Jews, even in Western Europe.'[110] Claude thought otherwise. Pushing the logic of emancipation to its limit, he thought assimilation in all matters save religion was the only viable future for Jewry: 'My slogan, "Englishmen of the Jewish faith" is the solution of antisemitism and the answer to it.'[111] It was a formulation of Jewish identity located at another extremity of the post-emancipation balance. This conception also reduced

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[106] C. Montefiore, 'Is Judaism a Tribal Religion?', *Contemporary Review* (Sept. 1882) p.374.
[107] *JC*, 15 Sept. 1882, p.4.
[108] E. Kessler, (ed.), *An English Jew. The Life and Writing of Claude Montefiore. Second Edition* (London 2002) p.144.
[109] *JC*, 01 Sept. 1882, p.11. and 08 Sept. 1882, p.10.
[110] *JC*, 22 Sept. 1882, p.4.
[111] Kessler, *English Jew* p.147.

the elasticity of Jewish existence but, eschewing traditional Jewish ideas, skewed the compromise, this time, in favour of British elements.

III.

The world of Anglo-Jewry was changing. The community of 1887 was a different entity, facing different challenges in an altered situation, to that of thirty years earlier. Besides the revolutionary impact of the Eastern European immigrants, the minority's emancipation and integration at every level of English society had been completed with Rothschild's peerage. Meanwhile the generation that had fought for and gained equality had passed away. Moses Montefiore, so long the figurehead of Anglo-Jewry, had died in 1885. 'With his death much will doubtless die out of Judaism and great will be the changes that will now take place…' recorded Louisa de Rothschild in her diary.[112] The community also experienced new directions to match these terminal points: the Sephardic community, having slumbered for most of the century, opened '…a new chapter of its history and takes a new lease of life' with the election of the controversial and energetic Dr. Gaster as *Haham*, after an eight year spell without a religious head.[113] These Jewish developments were paralleled by, and inter-related with, broader changes in the surrounding atmosphere that reinforced the time as a period of transition. Against a background of growing political antisemitism and declining liberal sentiment across Europe, British politics were changing focus. The last great democratic measure of the century, the third Reform Act, was settled in 1884 and attention had turned to the intractable constitutional problem of Ireland, which had entered a new and divisive phase with Parliamentary consideration of

[112] Cohen, *Lady de Rothschild* p.211.
[113] *JW*, 18 Mar. 1887, p.5.

Home Rule over 1886-7. This, in turn, had repercussions upon notions of the Union and Empire and the nature of British nationality, which came in for much public discussion at a time of economic depression and the gradual diminution of the state's international prestige. The fifty-year jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887 saw widespread reflection alongside celebration, as Englishmen pondered their history in an attempt to grapple with contemporary challenges to their identity.[114] Anglo-Jews, as Englishmen, were no less caught up in this process than their Gentile countrymen but, as Jews, they admitted even more pressing reasons for reflection.

> In common with Englishmen generally we remember with joyous feelings the national blessings which the last fifty years has brought in their train; but as Jews we have the additional satisfaction of recalling the benefits which have fallen to our lot as a community during this period. The future Jewish historian will have to describe the Victorian age as the most marvellous era in Anglo-Jewish annals. For it is impossible to imagine another space of fifty years working a revolution equally vast in condition of the Jews of this country, and more truly causing a people that walked in the darkness to see a great light.[115]

As the identity of the post-emancipation years became strained and with different attitudes towards them manifesting outside the group, underlining the still unresolved basis of the Jewish presence in British society, so the community sought to remind both itself and the majority of its place. In an act of attempted self-location via self-celebration, the community organised and presented an Anglo-Jewish Exhibition at the Albert Hall in April 1887. One of the first of its type in Europe, the event was both an encomium and, as it would transpire, a eulogy to the emancipatory ideals that has dominated Anglo-Jewish life for over half a century.[116] An initial focus

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[114] M. Ragusis, *Figures of Conversion. 'The Jewish Question' and English National Identity* (London 1995) p.12. and D. Cesarani, 'Dual Heritage or Dual of Heritages? Englishness and Jewishness in the Heritage Industry', in T. Kushner (ed.), *The Jewish Heritage in British History. Englishness and Jewishness* (London 1992) p.31.

[115] *JC*, 17 June 1887, p.10.

[116] T. Kushner, 'Heritage and Ethnicity: An Introduction', in Idem., (ed.), *Jewish Heritage* p.13.

upon history was soon expanded to incorporate Anglo-Jewish art and Jewish religious objects, as the organisers looked to construct a heritage and present a more definitive guide to their conception of Anglo-Jewry.[117] All Jews were urged to attend. '...it is a duty of English Jews to support the Exhibition by attendance and interest. The outside world will look upon the success of the Exhibition as a test of the position of the Jews in public esteem' cautioned the *JC*, sweetening such strictures by carrying enticingly-illustrated supplements upon the exhibits.[118] Gentile participation was also encouraged. An expensive opening soiree was thrown to attract general attention; in which effort, the Council of the Exhibition believed themselves moderately successful, reporting that whilst most visitors were naturally Jews: '...a considerable number of Gentile visitors testified to the interest aroused in Jewish matters. Large numbers of Christian clergymen visited the exhibition, many on repeated occasions...'[119]

There were four categories of objects exhibited: class one included pre-expulsion relics, historical records, autographs of celebrated Anglo-Jews and details on Jews who had received honours in the British Empire; class two included portraits and prints of rabbis and representative Jewish families, as well as pictures illustrating Jewish family life; class three comprised written works upon or by English Jews; and class four contained religious artefacts, such as Passover requisites and Sabbath lamps, alongside Jewish medals, rings and Hebrew music.[120] The picture these artefacts presented reveals much about the aspects of communal identity the Jewish

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[117] Cesarani, 'Dual Heritage', p.30.
[118] *JC*, 01 Apr. 1887, p.12. For the supplements see: 08, 15 & 22 Apr. 1887.
[119] LMA, ACC/2805/02/01/099 Office of the Chief Rabbi Records, Confidential proof report to the members of the General Council of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, 28 Sept.1887.
[120] Anglo-Jewish Archives, MS 116/24, Small Jewish Collections, Notice for the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition, 1887.

elite were beginning to doubt – the elements they felt it necessary to factually promote. A disproportionate number of pre-expulsion objects, for instance, were placed upon display in an attempt to demonstrate the longevity of Jews' presence in Britain and acknowledge, in light of contemporary movements, that they were not an alien minority of recent immigration. The campaign for emancipation was also '...amply represented by the portraits of the men who bore the brunt of the fight'; reminding Jews and Gentiles of their hard-won equality of status.[121] Complementing these examples were records upon famous eighteenth and nineteenth-century individuals, touting Anglo-Jewry's achievements and proving their ability as citizens – there was much Montefiore paraphernalia among this. The overall effect was designed to show the '...remarkable progress in the position of the community...' To this end and wary of increasing prejudice in their day, 'the Exhibition Committee wisely included a certain number of caricatures...' to (hopefully) reassure the audience that 'the popular views they represented are now fortunately a phase of history that is past, and thus they form part of the history that began with vilification and is now a mark of progress.'[122]

The positive image of the Exhibition was, of course, far from accurate and the Jewish press received complaints over its skewed representation. A 'Student of Anglo-Jewish History' criticised that not only were provincial Jewish experiences overlooked, areas in which Anglo-Jews could not boast notable success, such as literature or musical composition, were also ignored. Preferring a smaller, less ostentatious affair, better calculated to impart communal history, 'Student' rhetorically wondered why the organisers had so expanded their scope.

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[121] *JC*, 01 Apr. 1887, p.12.
[122] Ibid.

> It was done to make the Exhibition *more attractive*, that is the one and only reason, and it is in this that may be found the cause that has defeated the object that some earnest workers and well-wishers have so much desired, viz., that the Exhibition should not alone induce our community to take an interest in their Anglo-Jewish history, but it would bring us the favourable appreciation of our fellow-countrymen.[123]

These observations were true but the complaint was perhaps misguided. The Exhibition was never envisaged as a purely internal educational project. The elite organisers from the start had hoped not only to publicise information upon the minority, to demystify it, but to widely propagate evidence of a particular form of Anglo-Jewish existence. The Exhibition's primary purpose was to empirically bolster the rationale underlying the group's combined identity as English and Jewish, to convince people of its continuing validity. Elements that did not substantiate this, such as the immigrant East End, were ignored. The Exhibition was designed to elevate; as the *JC* concluded:

> The Exhibition is a remarkable record of prejudice outlived by dint of honourable conduct, a record of which not only Jews may be proud, but of which England also has reason to be proud. England has to be proud of her treatment of the Jews, and Jews have to be grateful to the great country that has held up the beacon of tolerance through so many years of misrepresentation and ill-will. From this point of view the Exhibition is truly Anglo-Jewish, and in the best sense of the word, national.[124]

The hoped for interest in Anglo-Jewish history was stimulated. The Exhibition was quickly succeeded by a published series of lectures, the launching in 1888 of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, designed to be a medium for scholarly discussion of the minority's past and present, and the 1893 formation of a Jewish Historical Society of England. Communal history helped to reinforce Jewish pride, demonstrated the 'rootedness of Jews in English society' and perhaps most importantly, offered an

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[123] *JC*, 22 Apr. 1887, p.7. Italics in original.
[124] *JC*, 08 Apr. 1887, p.10.

existential guide during a period of uncertainty.[125] The first essay in the post-Exhibition collection, which covered issues ranging from medieval London Jewry to the development of synagogue music and included contributions from several communal luminaries: the Chief Rabbi, *Haham*, and Lucien Wolf, was reserved for Prof. H. Graetz's 'Historic Parallels in Jewish History'. Although German, the pioneering Jewish historian was accorded pride of place for a lecture that reinforced Anglo-Jewish presumptions, whilst at the same time reflecting upon the loss of direction plaguing the modern Jewish experience.

> ...if Israel is to think of realising its ideal task of bringing light to the nations it must first and above all have light within itself...for this it needs guidance, and this part you, more than any other community of Israel, seem called upon to fill. God has blessed you with special blessings. You dwell in a land blessed by God...[126]

The first article to appear in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, also by Graetz, was tellingly entitled: 'The Significance of Judaism for the Present and the Future'.[127] The holding of the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition, in the jubilee year, was the first act of an historicisation process stimulated by problems of the present; a recognition of changed and changing circumstances. It therefore marks a useful, if not hard and fast, boundary between periods of Jewish conception in Britain. The identity reminisced over, which had negotiated Anglo-Jewry through three decades of equality, had shifted. The post-emancipation existence of Anglo-Jewry had entered a new phase.

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[125] Cesarani, 'Dual Heritage', p.34.
[126] H. Graetz, 'Historic Parallels in Jewish History', in *Papers Read at the Anglo-Jewish Exhibition* (London 1888) p.17.
[127] H. Graetz, 'The Significance of Judaism for the Present and the Future', in I. Abrahams and C. G. Montefiore (eds.), *Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol.1. (1889)

Conclusion
Post-Emancipation Anglo-Jewry

Emancipation had a huge impact upon Anglo-Jewish identity but not a conclusive one. Undertaken in an ambiguous atmosphere, the 1858 achievement of equality confirmed Jews' existence as British citizens but left the nature of their Jewish definition in doubt, and the practical combination of these two elements uncertain. Ostensibly becoming another confession among Britain's many sects, Anglo-Jews were confronted with the existential dilemma that beset all European Jews making this transition to modernity: how to balance their particularities as a minority with the universal demands of citizenship. Anglo-Jewry's response, typically unthinking and experiential, rather than designed or theorised, was the evolution of a unique subcultural identity. Given that emancipation for tolerated British Jews was not a dramatic discontinuity many elements from their previous pattern were present within this and likewise, without subsequent further shifts in their legal status abruptly modifying this formulation and change being reliant upon gradual circumstantial alterations, many components continued to define the group for decades to come. Indeed, many Jews today, from historians to communal leaders, look to this period to discover the foundations of present Jewish life. Despite its longevity, this subculture was created in and represented a distinct phase of the Anglo-Jewish experience: the post-emancipation era, 1858-1887. A time of central importance in defining the modern existence of Anglo-Jewry, it was during this period that the minority first encountered the consequences of complete inclusion and made the initial effort at living a hyphenated identity.

Like all Britons, Anglo-Jews' identity was both multi-layered and composite, combining varying types of nationality, religion, ethnicity, and citizenship. But there was a more pronounced duality, a sharper dichotomy in the Jew's case. His minority identity was a singularity: un-Christian; trans-national; possessed of a non-European ethnicity inseparable from his religious conceptions; and operating within a culture long-excluded (at least partially) from its environment. Inevitably, it would be difficult to integrate this existence with a British citizenship based upon universal principles and requirements, yet still heavily infused with Christian overtones. Many Gentile Englishmen, alongside many Jews, had remained highly sceptical regarding the possibilities of a successful merger during the emancipation campaign. But it should be stressed that over the course of these decades the community increasingly forgot its suspicions and came to regard its emancipated definition as a success. As the minority's tutelary interference among foreign Jewish communities through the agency of the Board of Deputies and Anglo-Jewish Association, as much as their grateful prayers at home reveal, Anglo-Jewry believed they had surmounted or avoided the potential problems generated by their multifaceted identity. In fact, so successful did some British Jews believe themselves that they, sharing the cultural arrogance of wider society, advanced their subculture as the model of modern Diasporic Jewish existence.

Even at the end of the post-emancipation era the Anglo-Jewish elite continued to articulate an optimistic conception of their position in Britain. So integrated were they that they identified their experiences almost completely with those of wider society, compressing their differences under the ineluctable force of British progress and fashioning a Whiggish conception of their existence. 'Here in England we have

participated in all the modifications of thought and feeling which have made the England of 1887 so different from the England of 1837.'[1] Anglo-Jewry possessed a positive self-image of their modernised existence.[2] Reviewing the aspects of the subculture analysed in this thesis there seems considerable basis for such optimism. Despite an intractable pool of poverty, continually reinforced by immigration, a steady embourgeoisment continued to characterise the community's socio-economic profile, post-emancipation. Social interaction with Gentiles increased apace as they did so and with Rothschild's peerage Jews had penetrated every level of British society. In the lower tier of Parliament, the Jewish presence steadily grew. Encountering few problems of access, Jews comfortably integrated into the British political system, representing a variety of constituencies and interests. Careful to eschew partisan concerns, Jewish MPs were still able to obtain particular consideration from Parliament on a number of issues important to Jewry's specificity; whilst some also came to champion fundamental British principles.

Similar success was found throughout British political structures. Jewish organisations frequently cooperated with their general counterparts. This often led to the minority obtaining remarkable assistance from the state to tackle areas of Jewish concern, both at home and abroad. The Registrar General worked in close cooperation with communal authorities to regulate Jewish marriage, for instance, whilst the Home Office granted Jewish soldiers and prisoners special treatment on a number of occasions. Both the Deputies and AJA received Government and often popular endorsement and assistance for many of their efforts to relieve foreign Jewish

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[1] *JC*, 17 June 1887, pp.6-7.

[2] W. Rubinstein, 'The Decline and Fall of Anglo-Jewry?', *Jewish Historical Studies*, Vol.38. (2002) p.16. As Rubinstein notes, this optimistic understanding of Anglo-Jewish identity would have been most prevalent and more often articulated among the communal elite, who benefited most from Jewish equality and English status.

communities. Such interventions reveal a remarkable convergence of wider British and specific Jewish beliefs. Complementary and mutually esteemed ideals of disseminating progress and advancing civilisation motivated both sides and demonstrate the successful blending of identities inherent to Anglo-Jewry's dual definition. This connection could also be found within the religious domain, where there were many points of contact between British Protestantism and Anglo-Judaism, especially as the later increasingly anglicised. On the most rarefied of planes there was a remarkable intersection of values and self-conceptions. The Anglo-Jewish mission fitting perfectly into the Blake-esque perception many Englishmen possessed of their providential destiny. With the country around them considering itself almost a second Israel, it is not surprising that British Jews came to think of themselves as doubly-blessed. Britain and Anglo-Jewry were symbionts in this sphere, complementary organisms operating in tandem to improve the world. In this respect, no other European Jewish community managed to obtain so remarkable a correlation of values with their surrounding culture and so justify their subcultural existence as did British Jews.

This was far however, from the entire picture. In everyday reality and on more prosaic levels, Anglo-Jews encountered treatment that highlighted their continuing difference and implicitly questioned their equality. Allosemitism, the setting apart of Jews as a people different from others and therefore requiring separate forms of understanding, remained the normal British approach to the community.[3] Essentially non-committal, allosemitism often leads to anti or philosemitism. It can also, as happened in the post-emancipation decades, promote animosity towards the Jews as a

[3] Z. Bauman, 'Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern', in B. Cheyette and L. Marcus (eds.), *Modernity, Culture and the 'the Jew'* (Cambridge 1998) p.143. 'Allos' is the Greek word for other.

case of heterophobia – the resentment of the different, which caused European Jews so many problems during the emancipation age.[4] Equality had not resolved the contention of Jewry's presence in modern Britain. Many of the above achievements were made possible as much by the restriction of certain aspects of Jewishness as by the promotion of those in accordance with Englishness. Jewish MPs were exceedingly careful never to create a confessional lobby within Parliament and often ignored communal demands for certain legislation, despite such actions being commonplace among the various Christian denominations represented. Jewish activity in the public, national sphere was often undertaken in a self-limiting and paranoid manner. The Deputies' interventions abroad, subordinating foreign Jews' interests to maintenance of Foreign Office patronage, supply a prime example. The Deputies were an extreme instance and the community was to adjust its international identity projection through the AJA but the underlying compulsion to restrict Jewish elements non-correlative with English concerns was still present. Often it seems the community in its unusually tolerant environment was being overcautious but the Bulgarian Crisis demonstrated the potential for prejudice in Britain. The perceived divergence of Jewish and popular British interests and by extension identities, over this phase of the Eastern Question saw widespread use of antisemitic imagery and the questioning of Anglo-Jews' patriotism – both within and without mainstream political debate. For all their acculturation and integration, negative and separate associations of British Jews persisted. Post-emancipation, their combined identity was not secure enough to be beyond serious discussion.

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[4] Ibid., p.144.

More recent historiography has emphasised such tensions to argue that despite the considerable connections between Englishness and Jewishness at many points, the British community did not represent an exceptionally fortunate example of Jewish modernity. Evaluating its experience from the Jewish angle, these historians have concentrated upon the loss of identity that occurred when Anglo-Jewry's modern, combined persona was forming. Considerable decline in tradition was inevitable with emancipation and this was experienced by all European Jewries. But in Britain the erosion of Jewishness went beyond the minimum necessary to adjust to modern conditions. Macaulay stated in 1833: 'The English Jews are, as far as we can see, precisely what our government has made them'; in other words, as the adage goes, England had the Jews that it deserved.[5] The homogenising and universal pressure of English society and culture, whether it can be construed as exhibiting an 'antisemitism of tolerance'[6] or not, certainly left a deep imprint upon the minority and was responsible for moulding significant elements of its identity. The *JC* fretted about the abandonment of Jewish observances this occasioned in 1865:

> ...what are we to say of those Jews whose language asserts or whose conduct implies the existence of an incompatibility between Jew and Briton, to such an extent that they appear to be of the opinion that in proportion as their Jewish characteristics become reduced their quality of Englishman becomes increased?[7]

The urge to prioritise British over Jewish identification was not merely a peripheral phenomenon post-emancipation but was conducted centrally. Englishness penetrated the legitimately Jewish sphere of religion as Judaism was anglicised. A unique and context-restricted form of the faith was created by the community. With

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[5] I. Abrahams, and S. Levy, (eds.), *Macaulay on Jewish Disabilities* (Edinburgh 1909) p.29.

[6] See B. Williams, 'The Antisemitism of Tolerance: Middle-Class Manchester and the Jews, 1870-1900', in A. Kidd and K. Roberts (eds.), *City, Class and Culture. Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester 1985)

[7] *JC*, 17 Mar. 1865, p.4.

its reverends not rabbis, disregard for Talmudic erudition, emphasis on sermons and English usage, Anglo-Judaism was incomprehensible to the Orthodox immigrants arriving from Eastern Europe. They preferred to worship by more traditional methods and eschewed native synagogues that seemed to them more akin to other English religions rather than their own. The primary influence of Englishness can be detected also in Anglo-Jewish charity. For while the communal elite gave generously and accepted their responsibility to care for coreligionists, they did so increasingly via contemporary, British standards – with their class understandings, modern methods and degradation of the poor – rather than out of traditional Jewish compunction and compassion. Unsurprisingly, in such an atmosphere inadequate provision was made for the transmission of Jewishness; Hebrew was increasingly forgotten, whilst Jewish schooling was motivated by social as opposed to religion concerns. As Todd Endelman has discovered, this meant that the Jewish commitments of acculturated families weakened with each generation. 'The balance struck by those who first entered into the life of the country failed to hold.'[8] Like many other European Jews, the post-emancipation community in Britain developed an (increasingly) attenuated Jewish identity. Like many other Western religions, Anglo-Judaism's modernisation entailed significant secularisation.

The experience of modernity was not though, always detrimental to Jewishness in England. Positive and preserving factors also evolved. The post-emancipation age witnessed the completion of a communal structure that still provides the basic institutional framework for Jews today. At the time it provided for the most organised, non-corporate Jewry in Europe. This, in turn, was partly

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[8] T. Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington, Ind. 1990) pp.206-7.

responsible for ensuring Anglo-Jewry remained the most coherent and compact modern community in Europe: Reform was conservative, conversions limited, and in profession if not always in practice, the vast majority of Jews maintained an Orthodox allegiance under one hierarchy. Here, Anglo-Judaism's English emphasis upon religiosity over religion, its lax standards and absence of learning were an advantage in maintaining a Jewish group existence in a free, individualistic society. The minority, with this environmentally contingent Jewishness that substantially mitigated the psychological trauma many Jews suffered from inhabiting two worlds, therefore suffered little loss of personnel in the immediate post-emancipation decades.

In such respects acculturation and adaptation can also be viewed as voluntary and desired. The minority detected the advantages and virtues of certain British models and adopted them as a gain to their modern definition, rather than a loss. Selective acculturation, the Jewish elite believed, was the solution to living successfully as both Jew and Englishman. It was a conclusion undoubtedly assisted by the ability of acclimatised yet professing Jews to succeed at all levels in Britain; it may have been more difficult and required greater effort than for the average Englishman but by the mid-1880s there were many examples to emulate. Since the Resettlement, Britain, with its plural society and political familiarity with minorities, had provided Jews with a more tolerant atmosphere, an environment more accommodating of diversity, and a more versatile society, than any other European nation. Appreciating this, the argument returns to the idea of a successful Anglo-Jewish experience. Even the normally more cynically-inclined Bill Williams comments that in the post-emancipation era, applying a contractualist view of Jewish equality, both sides were duly fulfilling their commitments to the bargain: toleration

and acceptance in return for acculturation and loyalty.[9] Certainly contemporaries on both sides remained sanguine about the possibilities of leading a dual existence. *The Times* of 24 Oct. 1884, observing Sir Moses Montefiore's one-hundredth birthday exclaimed:

> Champions of his people, on whom his mantle of leadership falls, will, it is to be hoped, keep, most prominently of all his admirable virtues, before the eyes of his fellow believers his representative characteristic – the determination to show, by his life, that fervent Judaism and patriotic citizenship are absolutely consistent with one another.[10]

The *JC* was even more convinced in its profession of Anglo and Jewish coexistence:

> In every national joy, in every national danger, in every national anxiety and national hope, we Jews of England bear our part. We are not only *in* England – we are *of* England. We are not only English Jews; we are Jewish Englishmen. It is our boast and our pleasure and pride that we can claim and fulfil the duties of Briton without sacrificing our Judaism...[11]

The Anglo-Jewish situation had not escaped the contradiction and confusion evident in other emancipated Jewish communities. Britain proved uniquely advantageous to Jewish integration but this came at the price of forsaking Jewish particularity not consonant with British ideals and acculturating to a point where many of the community were more connected to their Christian countrymen than foreign Jews. Exceptional opportunities mixed with banal pressures in Britain and thus, as elsewhere, there was loss and there was gain. British Jews were certainly more accepted and in their pursuit of equality more successful, as compared to their Continental coreligionists. But their experience of modernity was far from unproblematic – there was no inevitable, Whiggish path to progress – and due to its peculiar context cannot (as no one example of such a complex phenomenon can) be seen as paradigmatic. Like other efforts English emancipation also failed to establish

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[9] Williams, 'Antisemitism of Tolerance' p.74.
[10] *The Times*, 24 Oct. 1884, p.7.
[11] *JC*, 29 Dec. 1871, p.7. Italics in original.

a terminal Jewish identity or a permanent justification for the Jewish presence. Ambivalence therefore remained fundamental to modern Anglo-Jewish identity.

In many ways this was natural and to a minority could be advantageous. The experiences of Anglo-Jewry, in this respect, were not isolated ones. This thesis has detailed a particular period of a particular people and its elucidation of their history is *sui generis*. But at the same time its investigations have wider ramifications; many of the issues concerning subcultural identity, minority – majority relations, and modernisation are relevant in more general contexts. The evidence of British state and society's willingness and ability to accommodate divergent groups within its civil identity, and the flexible space that possession of a universal 'Britishness' provided them to indulge in identity specificity, for instance, are usefully applicable to other minority and immigrant histories. The theme of ambiguity that this study has highlighted, in particular, can be profitably extrapolated to better understand the general nature of minority identity and, indeed, as the isolating and fragmenting forces of modernisation increasingly dissolve group definitions, the situation of the compartmentalised individual within modern society. The negative connotations of this, anomie and existential angst, have been explored by historians and sociologists[12] but a central theme of this work has been the creative potential and advantageous possibilities of ambiguity. To the minority or immigrant, ambiguity provides the necessary space to satisfy the multiple facets of his persona and to adapt these to situational changes as required. Whilst it can generate ambivalence and insecurity over identification, it also facilitates the construction of composite subcultures and the

[12] See, for instance: Z. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge 2000); F. Heinemann, *Exitentialism and the Modern Predicament. Third Edition* (London 1958); M. Kaplan, *Alienation and Identification* (London 1976); and D. Roberts, *Existentialism and Religious Belief* (New York 1959)

potentially simultaneous identification of individuals within several of these, whether differentiated by class, region or gender. It is the positive aspects of ambiguity, providing subtlety to the unsophisticated categorisation of people, which enable the peaceful existence of plural identities within the modern nation state.

Ambiguity was certainly a fundamental element within Anglo-Jewry's post-emancipation identity. On a positive level Jews' indeterminacy of status allowed them to continually adapt and maintain relevant integration, as the political and religious culture of Britain evolved around them; as, for instance, when they began adjusting their definitional balance to incorporate a more explicit ethnic dimension. With British culture now able to comprehend ethnic layers to identity, the community was able to revive an important facet of traditional Jewish definition they had previously found it necessary to deemphasise. It was also constructive in providing the minority with a sufficiently protean existence, a necessary amorphousness, to incorporate a diverse group of individuals with a wide range of interests spanning their multiple identities – and thereby avoid the sharpness of the emancipation dilemma. This undefined identity mixture facilitated the adherence of Orthodox to nominal Jews and their collective representation, depending upon the circumstances, as a group of dissenters entitled to equality or an Anglican equivalent justified in speciality. However, this meant the hybrid subculture would always remain fluid; a liquid constantly in motion: overlapping, retreating, absorbing, as it meandered and flexed around a core that prescribed only a vague, if powerful, loyalty to both Judaism and Britain. While there was considerable space to Anglo-Jewish definition, there was very little structure. With no boundaries – outside of the strictly confessional – where Jewishness was ostensibly defensible, there was no foundation upon which to base or

justify anything but a religious Jewishness that could never adequately encapsulate Judaism's requirements. This opened the community, who maintained ideals (if muted ones) of international and ethnic Jewishness, to criticism from all sides and left Jews susceptible to events that could divide their allegiances along English and Jewish lines. These positive and negative outcomes of ambiguity served to deepen the ambivalence inherent to the Anglo-Jewish subculture. This subculture was the result of the community's emancipation in England; of their peculiar transition to modernity. It was a genuinely combined and modern identity but one without permanent balance, where the specific formulation altered depending upon the individual and the circumstance involved. Post-emancipation, Anglo-Jewry possessed this unique version of Jewish identity.

Appendix One
Jews Elected to Parliament

(e = elected; f = failed to be elected; L = Liberal; LU = Liberal Unionist; C = Conservative)

Date	Constituency	Candidate	Party	Result
July 1847	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
	Great Yarmouth	F. H. Goldsmid	L	f
	Hythe	M. de Rothschild	L	f
	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	f
04 July 1849 (By-election after Rothschild had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds)	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
28 June 1851 (By-election)	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	e
July 1852	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	f
March 1857	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
28 July 1857 (By-election after Rothschild had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds)	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
Jewish Relief Act allows L. de Rothschild to take his seat, 28.07.1858				
15 Feb. 1859 (By-election)	Hythe	M. de Rothschild	L	e
16 Feb. 1859 (By-election)	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	e
April/May 1859	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
	Hythe	M. de Rothschild	L	e
	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	e
11 Jan. 1860 (By-election)	Reading	F. H. Goldsmid	L	e
16 July 1860 (By-election)	Brighton	F. D. Goldsmid	L	f
16 Feb. 1864 (By-election)	Brighton	J. Goldsmid	L	f
July 1865	Honiton	F. D. Goldsmid	L	e
	Reading	F. H. Goldsmid	L	e
	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
	Hythe	M. de Rothschild	L	e
	Aylesbury	N. de Rothschild	L	e
	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	e
28 Mar. 1866 (By-election)	Honiton	J. Goldsmid	L	e
November 1868	Reading	F. H. Goldsmid	L	e
	Surry Mid	J. Goldsmid	L	f

	Dover	G. Jessel	L	e
	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	f
	Hythe	M. de Rothschild	L	e
	Aylesbury	N. de Rothschild	L	e
	Greenwich	D. Salomons	L	e
	Dewsbury	J. Simon	L	e
	Sandwich	H. de Worms	C	f
22 Feb. 1869 (By-election)	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	e
19 July 1870 (By-election)	Rochester	J. Goldsmid	L	e
25 Nov. 1871 (By-election)	Dover	G. Jessel	L	e
February 1874	Lewes	A. Cohen	L	f
	Reading	F. H. Goldsmid	L	e
	Rochester	J. Goldsmid	L	e
	Nottingham	S. Isaac	C	e
	City of London	L. de Rothschild	L	f
	Aylesbury	N. de Rothschild	L	e
	Dewsbury	J. Simon	L	e
April 1880	Southwark	A. Cohen	L	e
	Rochester	J. Goldsmid	L	f
	Nottingham	S. Isaac	C	f
	Aylesbury	N de Rothschild	L	e
	Dewsbury	J. Simon	L	e
	Greenwich	H. de Worms	C	e
	Pontefract	Sidney Woolf	L	e
19 May 1880	Sandwich	J. Goldsmid	L	f
18 July 1885	Aylesbury	F. de Rothschild	L	e
(By-election after N. de Rothschild was created Lord Rothschild, the first Jewish Peer)				
November 1885	Southwark West	A. Cohen	L	e
	Paddington North	L. L. Cohen	C	e
	St Pancras South	J. Goldsmid	L	e
	Finsbury Central	S. Isaac	C	f
	Walworth	L. Isaacs	C	e
	Derbyshire Mid	J. Jacoby	L	e
	Whitechapel	S. Montagu	L	e
	Aylesbury	F. de Rothschild	L	e
	Dewsbury	J. Simon	L	e
	Toxteth East	H. de Worms	C	e
July 1886	Southwark West	A. Cohen	L	e
	Paddington North	L. Cohen	C	e
	St Pancras South	J. Goldsmid	LU	e
	Walworth	L. Isaacs	C	e
	Derbyshire Mid	J. Jacoby	L	e
	Whitechapel	S. Montagu	L	e
	Aylesbury	F. de Rothschild	LU	e
	Dewsbury	J. Simon	L	e
	Toxteth East	H. de Worms	C	e

Information taken from M. Jolles *Directory of Distinguished British Jews* (London 2002) pp.95-9

Appendix Two: Synagogue Statistics at the Board

Board Triennial Session		1859-62	1862-5	1865-8	1868-71	1871-4	1874-7	1877-80	1880-3	1883-6	1886-9
Number of deputies in period not including replacements		25	27	23	30	39	39	40	38	47	50
Of which, represented Metropolitan synagogues		16	16	16	17	20	21	22	26	27	29
As percentage		64	59.3	69.5	56.7	51.3	53.8	55	68.4	57.4	58
Number of synagogues represented		15	17	13	19	28	26	27	27	33	33
Of which, provincial		9	11	7	12	19	16	16	13	19	18
As percentage		60	64.7	53.8	63.2	67.9	61.5	59.3	48.1	57.6	54.5
Number of synagogues with Board marriage licence		43	43	44	49	54	56	58	60	59	59
Synagogues on Board as percentage of this		34.9	39.5	29.5	38.8	51.9	46.4	46.6	45	55.9	55.9
Information taken from the minute books of the Board of Deputies, London Metropolitan Archives											

Appendix Three: Post-Emancipation Deputies and Their Attendence

Member	Synagogue Represented	Member of LPC	Member of CFC	1859-62	1862-5	1865-8	1868-71	1871-4	1874-7	1877-80	1880-3	1883-6	1886-Dec 1887	Average Attendence per Session
Abraham, Samuel V.	Western								14	16	11	10	6	12.8
Abrahams, L. B.	Bayswater											(res.Aug. 1883) 1		1
Abrahams, Israel	Cardiff							(1873) 7	20	11	6	3		9.4
Adler, Marcus N	Bayswater	Yes (1874)						24	22					23
Alexander, David Lindo	Central	Yes (1877)	Yes (1880)							23	18	21	4	20.7
Barnett, Barney	Hull											6	4	6
Barnett, P.	Liverpool (New)											1		1
Benjamin, M. H.	Sheffield							(1873) 6	12					9
Bernstein, W. F.	Manchester (South)												1	
Birnbaum, Bernard	North London								16	11	5	6	5	9.5
Brandon, Gabriel S.	Spanish and Portuguese											6	3	6
Castello, Manuel	Spanish and Portuguese	Yes (1868)	Yes (1883)				23	22	16	12	10	19	7	17
Clifford, Maurice	Coventry/Leeds (1886)										(Nov. 1882) 5	18	5	11.5
Cohen, Arthur	Edinburgh/Central (1880)	Yes (1869)	Yes				(Aug. 1869) 5	3	6	4	8	6	3	5.3
Cohen, Benjamin, L.	Bayswater											(Nov. 1883) 12	5	12
Cohen, John A.	Borough (New)											7	3	7
Cohen, Joseph F.	Newcastle (Old)/Dalston (1880)								18	12	9	6		11.3
Cohen, Louis	Great	Yes		22	13	18	17	22	9					16.8
Colaco, B.	Spanish and Portuguese								16	16				16
D'Avigdor, E.	Leeds									(1878, res.1879) 2				2
Davis, A	Leeds									(res.1878) 1				1
Davis, Benn	St. John's Wood									5	0	1	3	2
Davis, E. F.	Canterbury										(res. Apr. 1882) 0		0	0
Davis, Ernest Henry	Dover												4	
Davis, Frederic	Central										6	2	4	4
Davis, Lewis	Southampton											16	6	16
Davis, Louis	Liverpool (New)								3					3
Defries, Nathan	Wolverhampton			16	(d.1863) 5									10.5
De Pass, Abraham	Spanish and Portuguese	Yes		19	14	3								12
Emanuel, Emanuel	Portsea									10				10
Emanuel, Joel	Cardiff						(Dec. 1870) 5	(res.1873) 9						14
Engel, Jonas	Hambro			11	5									8
Eskell, Louis	Manchester (South)								(d.1874) 1					1
Ezekiel, S.	Spanish and Portuguese											23		23
Falk, Philip	Manchester (Old)									12	21	20	7	17.7
Franklin, Ellis A.	Bayswater/New West End (1883)							21	24	17	16	19	7	19.4
Freedman, Morris	Leeds											4		4
Friedlander, A.	Great												4	
Goldsmid, Julian	Merthyr Tydvil/West London (1886)	Yes (1883)										6	3	6
Goldsmid, A. E. W.	Newport (Mon)	Yes (1886)	Yes (1886)										2	
Gross, Leon	Leeds			3										3
Guedalla, Haim	Canterbury			9	8	9								13
Haldenstein, H. H.	Norwich												5	
Halford, Frederick B.	Hull	Yes (1877)								12				12
Harris, Alfred W. (Ald.)	Dublin											3		3
Harris, Henry	Maiden Lane	Yes	Yes	26	23	31	29	26	32	26	25	21	10	26.6
Harris, Henry S	Canterbury/Southampton (1880)								25	15	8			16
Harris, Samuel.	Merthyr Tydvil								(res.1876) 15					15
Hart, A. H.	Edinburgh			(ret. 1861) 12										12
Hart, Israel	Canterbury							7						7
Heilbut, Samuel	Bayswater											6	2	6
Henriques, Alfred G.	Portsea/Merthyr Tydvil (1886)	Yes (1872)						11					(res.Nov 1886) 0	11
Henriques, Cecil Q.	Newcastle-on-Tyne											(res. Feb. 1885) 4		4
Henry, Michael	Sheffield							(res.1872) 8						8
Hoffnung, Abraham	Liverpool (Old)	Yes (1877)								12	5	2	(res.June 1887) 0	6.3
Hyams, Louis	Nottingham										17	(res.July 1885) 21		19
Hymans H.	East London										1			1
Isaac, Saul	Dublin / Dover (1865)			22	10	10	8	1						10.2
Isaacs, Henry A.	Hambro					6	6	7						6.3
Isaacs, Joseph M.	Hambro							(1872) 5						5
Isaacs, Samuel	Liverpool (New)			3	(res. 1863) 1									2
Israel, Henry A.	Hambro								12	10	14			12
Jacobs, David L.	Hull/Borough (New) (1874)							11	10					10.5
Jacobs, J. I.	Chatham												4	
Jacobs, S.	Hambro'											7	8	7
Jaffe, M.	Newport (Monmouth)									7	8	4		6.3
Jonas, Jonah	Canterbury										(Apr. 1882) 0	0		0
Joseph, M. S.	Wolverhampton/Borough(New)(1877)						15	19		12	10			14
Keeling, Henry L.	Western				(July 1863) 11	17	21	19						17
Keyzar, Abraham	West Hartelepool							(d.1873) 11						11
Kisch, Henry	Leeds											(res.June 1884) 2		2
Kisch, S. A.	Swansea				7									7
Lazerus, I.	Exeter									(res.1877) 2				2
Lazerus, Joseph	Great							(d.1873) 2						2
Levy, A.	East London										17	7	1	12
Levy, Hyam	Central									(Feb. 1879) 2	1			1.5
Levy, L.	East London											8	2	8
Lewis, Isaac	Sheffield										0			0
Lewis, Lewis	Brighton										2	2	3	2
Lindo, Gabriel	Cheltenham/Spanish,etc (1880)	Yes (1877)	Yes					10	9	11	15	8	5	10.6
Lyons, J.	Chatham											6		6
Magnus, Philip	West London												4	
Marks, I. M.	Great										3	2		2.5
Mason, Jules	Leeds											(June 1884) 11	(res.May 1887) 6	11
Mendelssohn, H. S.	Newcastle-on-Tyne												9	
Meyers, Barnett	Glasgow							(res.1873) 3						3
Mocatta, A.	Spanish and Portuguese								22	18			9	20
Montagu, Samuel	Manchester(Old)/New West End(1880)	Yes (1880)					(Mar.1869) 14	14	15	9	12	17	3	13.5
Montefiore, A. J.	Spanish and Portuguese										12			12
Montefiore, Nathaniel	Spanish and Portuguese										(d. Apr. 1883) 0			0
Montefiore, Joseph M.	Spanish and Portuguese	Yes	Yes	12	25	27	27	29	32	28	(d. Oct. 1880) 3			22.9
Montefiore, Moses	Spanish and Portuguese	Yes		24	0	4	2	0	(Honorary) 0	(Honorary) 0				6
Mosely, Charles	Liverpool (Old)			0	0	0								0
Mosely, Ephraim	Newcastle-on-Tyne				4									4
Moses, Samuel	Great/Central (1871)	Yes		24	12	14	15	13	9					14.5
Myer, H. H.	Cheltenham											15		15
Nathan, Henry	Birmingham									4	12	9	3	8.3
Nathan, Louis	Great/Central (1871)			13	4	8	8	7	2	2				6.3
Nelson, Bernard	Liverpool (New)				(Oct. 1863) 1									1
Newgrass, B.	Liverpool (Old)												(June 1887) 1	
Oppenheim, Morris	Manchester(Old)/Bayswater (1877)	Yes (1869)	Yes				(Mar.1869) 16	21	19	21	(d. Jan 1883) 16			18.6
Ososki, Louis	New												1	
Phillips, B. S.	Great/Central (1871)	Yes		11	0	1	3	4	0	0				2.7
Phillips, Jacob	Birmingham			0	0	0	0	2	0					0.3
Picciotto, Moses H.	Spanish and Portuguese	Yes (1860)		17	23	20	7	10						15.4
Pick, Ignace	Hambro/Great (1880)								12	(res.1879) 4	4	4		6
Polack, Joseph	Dover											6		6
Pool, Marcus	Great								7	6				6.5
Rosenthal, John D.	Dublin					3	0	3	0	4	1		1	1.8
Rosenthal, Lionel H.	Canterbury												2	
Rothschild, Leopold de	Great										0	0	0	0
Rothschild, Lionel de	Great	Yes		0	0	0	0	0	0	(d.1879) 0				0
Rothschild, L. M.	Edinburgh/Leeds (1871)			(Oct. 1861) 3	17	11	(res. 1869) 1	10						8.4
Salomon, A.	Hambro'											3	2	3
Salomons, David L.	Newcastle (New)								1					1
Salomons, Philip	New			0	0	(d.1867) 0								0
Samuel, B. (Barnett)	Coventry									20	(d. July 1882) 11			15.5
Samuel, Edwin Lewis	Liverpool (Old)							15	5					10
Samuel, Ralph Henry	Liverpool (Old)						0							0
Samuel, Stuart M.	Sheffield												3	
Sassoon, Reuban D.	Coventry						(Sept. 1870) 3	0						1.5
Schloss, Solomon	New	Yes (1874)				(1867) 8	26	24	28	23	24	23		22.3
Sebag(-Montefiore), J	Spanish and Portuguese	Yes (1861)	Yes	22	16	14	16	24	23	13	22	31	11	20.1
Simon, Oswald J.	Sunderland												7	
Simons, Simon	Great/Dalston (1886)									3			1	3
Slazenger, R.	Merthyr Tydvil												1	
Solomon, Henry	New		Yes	25	17	25	25	21	25	13	19	24		21.6
Solomon, John I.	Chatham	Yes (1871)						25	21	13				19.6
Solomon, Joseph, M.	Newport (Monmouth)	Yes (1871)					(Aug.1869) 12		6					9
Solomon, Judah	Plymouth				11									11
Solomon, J. J.	Chatham	Yes (1868)		24	14	13	24							18.8
Solomon, J. W.	Western			16	(d.1863) 4									10
Solomon, Saul	Borough (New)						21	16						18.5
Spyer, Solomon	St. John's Wood												6	
Van Praagh, Moses	Hambro	Yes		24	11	16	16	(d.1872) 1						13.6
Van Stanveren, B. J.	Great												1	
Woolf, David	Glasgow						(Sept. 1870) 2							2
Woolf, Saul	New												1	

The 1886-7 column has not been included in the tabulations for average attendence per session, as the figures do not represent a full session, and have only been included for comparative purposes. Deputies that began their Board career after 1886 thus have no career average.

Key: d.=died; res.=resigned; ret.=retired. A date entered in a cell indicates the time the deputy joined that session.

Information taken from the minute books of the Board of Deputies, London Metropolitan Archives

Glossary

[Unless otherwise indicated the following terms are translated from Hebrew or Yiddish]

Aberglaube	(German) Superstition
Beth Din	Jewish Ecclesiastical Court
B'nai B'rith	(lit. Children of the Covenant) An international Jewish philanthropic fraternity
Dayan (pl. *Dayanim*)	Judge, member of the *Beth Din*
Hadarim (s. *Heder*)	One room, unregulated, private religious school
Haham	(lit. Wise one) Rabbinical head of the London Sephardi community
Haskalah	The Jewish Enlightenment
Hazzan (alt. *Chasonos*)	A cantor-like religious official
Herem	A ban designed to isolate nonconforming individuals from the community
Judenhetze	(German, lit. Jew-hunt) Pogrom
Kehilla (pl. *Kehillot*)	Self-governing community of Jews
Landesrabbinat	(German) State rabbinate appointed by many German states from the seventeenth-century onwards to fulfil civic, representational and religious functions.
Mahamad	The council of a Western Sephardi community
Milah	Circumcision
Shechita	Ordinances relating to the ritual slaughter of animals according to Orthodox Jewish law
Shtiebel	Small, informal congregation that meets in a private residence
Trepha (alt. *Trefa*)	Not kosher food and therefore forbidden
Tzedakah	Old Testament term which is taken in modern

	terminology to mean welfare or social service, generally giving to the needy as an act of duty
Wissenschaft des Judentums	(German) The Science of Judaism, a term used to describe the scholarly study of Judaism
Yehidem	Male synagogue members
Yeshivah (pl. *Yeshivot*)	Academy for the study of the Law
Yudekeend	(lit.) Jewish child

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