

## Charity, Status and Parliamentary Candidates in Manchester: A Consideration of Electoral and Charity Fields and the Social Basis of Power, 1832–1910

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**SUMMARY:** This article is concerned with the relationship which existed between Manchester's parliamentary candidates and their involvement with local charities. Both of these areas, "charity" and "parliamentary elections" formed distinct fields of activity, each with their own structures and each producing a particular set of dispositions. Success depended on the individual's habitus and having the right degree of personal or cultural capital. In the mid to late Victorian period parliamentary candidates were meant to possess the qualities of a local leader. The election field determined the need to prove fitness to represent the local community. Part of the criteria for this included involvement with local charities. This suggested moral worth and firm commitment to the area. The charity field provided a particular type of status for the individual. This article will explore the relationship between the two fields of activity and how entering the election field determined the need to also enter the charity field to provide the individual with its vital dispositions.

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Voluntary charities were a prominent and integral part of British society in the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> They provided a range of welfare institutions<sup>2</sup> and played an important role in the local urban environment.<sup>3</sup> Some historians have seen them as responsible for stimulating class formation and disseminating middle-class ideas.<sup>4</sup> None the less, it is often overlooked that voluntary charities had other important roles to play in local power structures.<sup>5</sup> While the connection between charitable involvement and local politics has been

1. See for example B. Harrison, *Peaceable Kingdom* (Oxford, 1982), ch. 5; D. Owen, *English Philanthropy, 1660–1960* (London, 1964).

2. See for example F. Prochaska, "Philanthropy", in F.M.L. Thompson (ed.), *Cambridge Social History*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1990); idem, *The Voluntary Impulse* (London, 1988).

3. See for example H. Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City* [on Bristol] (London, 1971); S. Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis* [on Reading] (London, 1976); M. Simey, *Charitable Effort in Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century* (Liverpool, 1951).

4. See especially R.J. Morris, *Class, Sect and Party* (Manchester, 1990).

5. By contrast much has been written about the political impact of the Poor Law. See for example D. Fraser, "The Poor Law as a Political Institution", in idem (ed.), *The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 1976), pp. 111–127.

recognized,<sup>6</sup> it is an issue still to be fully explored.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, this relationship was arguably an integral part of the social basis of power in the Victorian city and as such is in need of further investigation. This article will consider the relationship between charity, parliamentary elections and the social foundations of power in the community by means of a case study of Manchester. It will use Bourdieu's notions of the "field" and "symbolic capital" to consider how power was structured, acquired and maintained, thus offering a distinct direction for the study of power and society in the nineteenth-century urban environment.

Elections and charities will be considered as particular fields of activity. Success in each field demanded the fulfilment of certain criteria or the possession of personal capital.<sup>8</sup> Competing in elections meant having to fulfil notions of leadership. The criteria for leadership was determined by the electorate. As will be seen, the patterns of charitable involvement amongst Manchester's parliamentary candidates indicate that in the mid-Victorian period this criteria included association with local voluntary charities. By entering the charity field, by acquiring a charitable profile, the parliamentary candidates were able to acquire key dispositions associated with that field, such as compassion, benevolence and commitment to the area. These qualities were used to underline each candidate's suitability as a leader and representative of the community. Such considerations are valuable in providing a possible understanding of the social basis of power in the nineteenth-century community and the role of voluntary charities as a concomitant of that base.

## I

In considering the role of charity in British society there has been obvious emphasis on the role of individuals and their possible motives, and on the wider functional impact, including such issues as social control.<sup>9</sup> While these provide useful ways of considering the role of charity and its relationship with local power issues, they are also restricted in terms of offering new directions.<sup>10</sup> However, in looking at the role of voluntary charity as part of the social basis of power this article will consider the interaction of the individual, the "agent", with the structure of the social world in which he

6. See J. Garrard, *Leadership and Power in Victorian Industrial Towns* (Manchester, 1983); and idem, "Urban Elites 1850–1914: The Rule and Decline of a New Aristocracy?" (unpublished paper, Salford University, 1996). See also, R. Trainor, "Urban Elites in Victorian Britain", *Urban History Yearbook* 7 (Leicester, 1985), pp. 1–17.

7. For a discussion of the historiography see A.J. Kidd, "Philanthropy and the Social History Paradigm", *Social History* (May 1996), pp. 180–192.

8. These terms will be discussed below.

9. See Kidd, "Philanthropy".

10. *Ibid.*

operated, the “object” or environment; it will be looking at both the cultural and political significance of association with voluntary charities. By doing this it is intended to at least suggest an alternative way of looking at the value of charity in the nineteenth century. While making use of a case study such as Manchester provides the necessary focus for such an analysis, there are also obvious restrictions which need to be kept in mind. What may be true of Manchester may not be the case in other cities.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, in looking at Manchester it is possible to consider the interaction of parliamentary elections, charity and the social basis of power in the community. Furthermore, this may be relevant to other urban settings in which the voluntary sector enjoyed a high level of public credibility.

Central to this discussion is Bourdieu’s notion of the “field”, a distinct area of human activity. In this respect, elections and charities formed fields of activity.<sup>12</sup> The field constitutes an area of struggle in which individuals achieve varying positions. These positions are determined by the individual’s “capital” and “habitus”, that is, by the individual’s background and education, as well as personal ability, knowledge, and social esteem.<sup>13</sup>

In the electoral field success depended on possessing the right privileges and individual qualities needed to influence the electorate. The acquisition of political power, and the ability to get elected and to represent the community in parliament, meant not only supporting the right policies necessary to win votes but also fulfilling the unwritten criteria of a worthy public representative. The criteria was determined by the electorate, the “social world” which candidates sought to influence. In order to impress the electorate candidates had to transform their individual capital, their social, political and economic backgrounds, into “symbolic capital”. This constituted a legitimate form of domination based on a general consensus with the electorate.<sup>14</sup>

In the cultural climate of Britain in the mid to late Victorian period this meant offering proof of moral worth, of Christian care and compassion and of duty to the community. Voluntary charities offered such a demonstration of apparent individual values. This was a period when charity leaders were placed on a very public pedestal. Charity was a notion which suggested generosity, Christian duty, altruism and compassion towards the poor and needy. The construction of a charitable profile was a vital means of acquiring status,<sup>15</sup> allowing individuals to influence sections of the community.

11. For the importance of Manchester in the nineteenth century see A.J. Kidd, *Manchester* (Keele, 1993). See also A. Briggs, *Victorian Cities* (Harmondsworth, 1968), p. 87.

12. See for example R. Harker, C. Mahar and C. Wilkes (eds), *An Introduction to the Work of Pierre Bourdieu* (Basingstoke, 1990), pp. 1–21; and also C. Calhoun, E. Li Puma and M. Poston (eds), *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 4–6.

13. See Harker *et al.*, *Introduction to the Work of Pierre Bourdieu*, pp. 10–13.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

15. See for example J.M. Lee, *Social Leaders and Public Persons* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 13, 39, 42; see also Kidd, “Philanthropy”, p. 189.

This was not an overtly political form of leadership. Rather, theirs were positions of dominance based on the reverence and regard of sections of the community. A charitable profile provided a particular form of cultural capital. This capital derived from the status of a caring Christian. By entering the charity field each individual became associated with its distinct structures, including a discourse of charity which stressed the virtues of Christian benevolence and of firm commitment to the area. It was possible for parliamentary candidates to use this status at elections as a form of symbolic power. Candidates were able to use charitable involvement to acquire the status of worthy representative. However, once the criteria changed in the late Victorian period, then so did its value as a mechanism for power diminish.

This complex relationship between electability, charities and the social basis of power was precipitated by the structure of the election and charity fields. From Manchester's first election of 1832 a broad criteria for public representation emerged. The electorate expected their parliamentary representatives to possess certain qualities, and opportunities for electoral success, therefore, were enhanced by fulfilling this criteria. This was made all the more likely by the electoral system. Throughout the nineteenth century the electoral method was based on the "first past the post" system. This meant that there existed a personalized relationship between the electorate and the candidates. The size and character of the electorate itself changed over the nineteenth century following the introduction of three Reform Acts in 1832, 1867 and 1884. The franchise widened from a small male middle-class base in 1832 to include the majority of working-class men by 1884. The degree of representation also increased for cities like Manchester, with the number of seats in parliament rising from two in 1832 to six in 1884. These changes to the electorate mirrored alterations to the criteria for a public representative.

This shift in the value of a charitable profile is highlighted by the changing patterns of charitable involvement among parliamentary candidates between 1832 and 1910. These will be examined below. In the mid-Victorian period it became important to adopt a charitable profile. There were various ways in which voluntary charities could supply a tangible means of power. On one level local charities could offer opportunities for direct power over the poor and working classes.<sup>16</sup> Charities relied on public support for finance.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, control over each charity was given to the subscribers: power rested with the subscribers and their elected officials. They had the authority to change rules and shape policy. This meant they had the power

16. See for example P. Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics* (London, 1980).

17. For the organization and structure of voluntary charity see P. Shapely, "Voluntary Charities in Nineteenth Century Manchester: Organisational Structure, Social Status and Leadership" (unpublished thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 1994).

to mould responses to poverty in the urban environment. However, on another and less explored level, they could provide a valuable ladder to authority and status across the community. Charities were associated with a wide range of good causes, including hospitals, child welfare and Christian missions.<sup>18</sup> As such, they provided a particular set of dispositions for those who became associated with them. This process is significant in suggesting an insight into transmitting economic and political power into legitimate social domination.

## II

The value of charitable involvement in providing a power base for parliamentary candidates in Britain lasted only as long as the electorate viewed it to be of worth. Shifting values and the changing social composition of the electorate preceded changes to the electoral field and to the criteria for leadership. This was reflected in the rhetoric of elections and in the patterns of charitable involvement amongst parliamentary candidates. Charitable involvement either as an active committee member (including secretary, treasurer and chairman) or as an honorary title holder (including president, vice-president and patron), was not especially marked among candidates contesting elections during the years 1832–1852. In the early period the narrow electoral base of the middle classes demanded that their candidates should have local and commercial commitments and interests. At Manchester's first election in 1832 a total of 8,128 voters returned two candidates.<sup>19</sup> These candidates had been chosen by local elites to represent their views and interests. Party machines reflected the local power structure.<sup>20</sup> Notions of what constituted the ideal candidate were largely determined by the interests of local elites and the perceptions of the voters. In early to mid-Victorian Manchester these were dominated by supporters of the "Manchester School", firm believers in the merits of political economy.<sup>21</sup> As the size and social values of the electorate changed so did the criteria for candidature alter.

The changing patterns of association with local charities among parliamentary candidates reflected these altered values and perceptions. During

18. *Ibid.*: see esp. ch. 1.

19. By 1865 the number who actually voted had risen to 24,406.

20. See for example H.J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the Time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (London, 1969), pp. 92–93; J. Vincent, *The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857–1860* (London, 1966), pp. 58, 88, 95; S.H. Beer, "Great Britain: From Governing Elite to Organised Mass Parties", in S. Neuman (ed.), *Modern Political Parties* (Chicago, 1956), p. 13. For the mid to late Victorian period see also J. Garrard, "Parties, Members and Voters after 1867", in T.R. Gourvish and A. O'Day (eds), *Later Victorian Britain* (London, 1988), p. 178.

21. See for example D. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England* (Leicester, 1976); V.A.C. Gartrell, "Incorporation and the Pursuit of Liberal Hegemony in Manchester, 1780–1839", in D. Fraser (ed.), *Municipal Reform and the Industrial City* (New York, 1982).

the mid to late Victorian period the number of parliamentary candidates serving as elected committee officials or honorary members increased. Association with local charities became a more important criterion for a would-be public representative. In the year following the 1867 Reform Act the numbers who actually voted in Manchester increased to 71,414. The city was also given an extra parliamentary seat. This enlargement in the number of voters indicated a need for parliamentary candidates to have a wider appeal. Charities had become an established and obvious part of the political economy that opposed state interference but supported aid for the deserving poor. They were also part of the public sphere through which it was possible to construct the public image of individuals. Charitable association was a highly visual exercise. Entering the charity field meant association with a set of dispositions, suggesting Christian compassion for the poor and emphasizing the high moral value of the individual. They were portrayed as model citizens, indicating their fitness to be regarded as leaders in the community. Charitable association became an important political asset, a means of transforming political acumen into a form of symbolic power.<sup>22</sup> While charitable involvement was never central to the conduct of election campaigns it was still used to show a candidate's supposed merits. It helped some candidates to legitimize their political stature and broadened the base of their political acceptability. They could be portrayed as worthy of representative office by all sections of the community.

However, after the 1892 election the number of parliamentary candidates serving as active committee members or as honorary officials started to decline. This reduction coupled with a changing electoral discourse, suggests the criteria had begun to alter. New Liberalism and Labourism were gradually affecting political discourse. The 1884 Reform Act increased the number of Manchester seats from three to six and created distinct working-class and middle-class constituencies. Although the discourse of collectivism and state action did not replace the traditional discourse of individualism and the merit of charity, new values and the concerns of a more diverse and increasingly class-structured electorate were beginning to affect elections.<sup>23</sup> Association with local charities became a less important criterion for the public representative. Its significance for supporting the social basis of power was in decline. These criteria remained unchanged only as long as the voting public perceived charitable involvement as an integral requirement for the public man. The domination of symbolic power was based firmly on the consensus of the social world in which they operated, represented in this

22. Again, this term will be discussed briefly below.

23. For the gradual transfusion of New Liberal and collectivist rhetoric in the debates regarding poor relief see A.M. McBriar, *An Edwardian Mixed Double* (Oxford, 1987). The limited impact of these ideas is outlined in P. Thane, "The Working Class and State Welfare in Britain, 1880–1914", *The Historical Journal*, 27 (1984), pp. 877–900; see also idem, *The Foundation of the Welfare State* (Harlow, 1982), p. 63.

case through the judgement of the electorate. Changing patterns of involvement in voluntary charities indicate changes in public tastes and perceptions. They reflect general alterations in both the social background and size of the electorate and in the changing social values and ideologies of the nineteenth century, shifts which are mirrored in the rhetoric of elections and in the public portrayal of candidates across the century.

That shifts occurred in the number of parliamentary candidates who served as officials on at least one of Manchester's charities is suggested in the patterns of involvement. During the election contests of 1832–1852 a total of only six, or 24 per cent, of the 25 candidates had a definite association with local charities. In contrast, during the years 1857–1892 the level of association rose to 54 from 68 candidates, or 79 per cent of the total. However, the numbers fell during the elections contested between 1895 and 1910 to a total of 29 or 57 per cent of the 51 candidates, suggesting that charitable involvement among parliamentary candidates was most prominent in the mid to late Victorian period. Additional figures indicate that such involvement was especially marked for elected MPs. In the elections contested between 1832 and 1852 at least four or 29 per cent of the 14 successful candidates also served as officials on at least one local charity. However, only two or 17 per cent of the 12 unsuccessful candidates had any known charitable associations. In elections fought between 1857 and 1892 a total of 34 from 36 of the MPs elected at each contest was involved with local charities, contrasted with 20 or 63 per cent of the 32 unsuccessful candidates. Between 1895 and 1910 the degree of involvement declined in relative terms. Only 17 or 68 per cent of the 25 victorious MPs at each election served as charity officials, contrasted with 12 or 46 per cent of the 26 unsuccessful candidates.

These figures only reflect the level of charitable association for candidates contesting every election. Yet the trend is reinforced by figures indicating each individual candidate's charitable associations. Taking the period 1832–1910 as a whole, a total of 22 or 69 per cent of all individual MPs were associated with at least one local charity. This contrasted with only 16 or 37 per cent of the 43 candidates never elected. In the period 1832–1852, only one of the six individual MPs served as a charity official, contrasted with two of the ten candidates who first stood for election during this period but who failed to win. However, in the period 1857–1892 the degree of involvement among elected MPs increased significantly. A total of 14 from the 16 individuals who first stood for election during this period were also involved in local charities. This contrasts with only eight of the 16 who failed to win an election. In the final period 1895–1910 the rate of charitable involvement again declined. A total of only five from 12 elected MPs served as officials on local charities as opposed to six from the 12 who failed to win an election. Although some candidates were still involved with local charities in the early and late Victorian periods, the figures suggest that this factor was at its most

significant during the mid to late Victorian period. This was especially the case for elected MPs. During this period also, five of the successful MPs were involved in six or more local charities, suggesting an exceptionally high level of commitment.<sup>24</sup> These included such local notables as Jacob Bright and William Henry Houldsworth who were elected on six separate occasions during the periods 1867–1892 and 1883–1900 respectively, making them two of the most successful candidates between 1832–1914.<sup>25</sup>

The electoral success of these candidates, coupled with the generally high correlation with charitable involvement in the mid to late Victorian period, suggests that association with local charities was a positive aid on the path to Westminster. This is further indicated by the fact that at least 22 of the 32 individual candidates are known to have joined a voluntary charity before standing for election. The figures show that a minimum of 69 per cent of all candidates involved with local charities embarked on their political careers *after* being elected as charity officials.<sup>26</sup> The timing is important, suggesting charitable involvement was a constructive means of achieving parliamentary success. This could be due to either the contacts that might be made through such involvement, the social status acquired thereby or the experience gained of serving the public. Whether individuals consciously followed this path or not is unclear. Elected MPs would invariably be asked, and would often be willing, to serve as officials for charities because of the value of patronage for the charity and of added status for the MP.<sup>27</sup> They had the cultural capital to enter the charity field successfully. However, the fact that the majority served *before* being elected stresses the value of voluntary charities as a vehicle for initial parliamentary electoral success and, consequently, their significance as a means of underpinning the social basis of power.

The value of charitable association in this sense was further emphasized by the fact that members from all major parties became involved. Between 1832 and 1908 Manchester returned a total of 43 Liberals, 26 Tories, two Liberal Unionists and three members of the Labour Representation Committee. These figures refer to the total number of seats contested rather than individual serving MPs. Manchester returned 32 individual MPs between 1832 and 1910. Of these, 13 Liberals and eight Tories were associated with

24. The five successful candidates who were most actively involved with local charities were Jacob Bright, Sir Thomas Bazley (both Liberal), W.H. Houldsworth, Hugh Birley and W.R. Callender junior (all Tory).

25. During this period Bright was actually defeated on two occasions, but managed to win in each of the subsequent elections.

26. The figures are based on an analysis of 1,804 annual reports for 98 voluntary charities. This is not a complete record as many reports are missing or have been lost, but all extant reports have been analysed with the use of relational databases. In this instance the only effect of possessing more data would be to increase the figures, suggesting even more candidates became involved with local charities before standing for election.

27. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England*, p. 180.

at least one local charity. Proportionally, 80 per cent of all elected Tory MPs and 76 per cent of Liberals were associated with local charities. The fact that six of the seven Liberals and eight of the nine Tories elected during 1857–1892 were associated with local charities underlines its value as part of the criteria for success.

### III

The construction of publicly perceived criteria for an MP began with Manchester's first election. Domination by the local commercial elite in the city's elections was reflected in the electoral rhetoric reported in the local press. This emphasized the need to have a vested interest in commercial matters and evidence of local connections.<sup>28</sup> Liberals were in the vanguard in the development of these criteria.<sup>29</sup> A letter to the *Manchester Guardian* on 27 October 1832, for example, complained of C.P. Thompson's candidature because he lacked such basic criteria. "An Elector" claimed that Thompson was "wholly unconnected with the inhabitants or trade of this town", and that "by being united to us neither by the sympathy of old connections, nor by identification of existing interests", his candidature was to be viewed "principally as the means of promoting his rise in political life".<sup>30</sup> The writer contrasted this apparently selfish careerism with Samuel Loyd. He claimed that Loyd belonged to a family of "long standing and great respectability in this town", and that as his "prosperity is completely identified with this town", it was to be presumed that he "seeks the representation from a feeling of attachment which he has himself expressed in public life".<sup>31</sup>

The fact that Loyd's candidature was openly supported by the *Manchester Guardian* highlights the way in which this crucial vehicle of public opinion was willing to promote notions of fitness to represent the community. It was attempting to construct and direct public opinion for their candidate's advantage.<sup>32</sup> In this sense the press was a vital mechanism in the construction and manipulation of "public man" image.<sup>33</sup> Notions regarding the supposed qualities and characteristics essential to becoming a MP took their most conspicuous form in the public meetings covered and the letters published

28. Gatrell, "Incorporation and the Pursuit of Liberal Hegemony in Manchester", p. 38.

29. V.A.C. Gatrell, "The Commercial Middle-Class in Manchester, 1820–1857" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1971), pp. 164, 267.

30. *Manchester Guardian*, 27 October 1832.

31. *Ibid.*

32. The importance of the press suggests that candidates may not have been involved in a direct power relationship with the electorate but in a simulated form of power: see J. Baudrillard, *Forget Foucault* (New York, 1987); D. Kellner, *Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 133, 140–142.

33. See for example D. Beales, *From Castlereagh to Gladstone* (London, 1969), pp. 119–120.

in the local press. Early emphasis on local commitments and vested commercial interests reflected the strong business concerns and domination of party management by the local elite and middle-class electorate. Candidates had to identify with the electorate and with their perceptions of what constituted a fit representative.<sup>34</sup> The MP had to manage local affairs and give assurances that he would represent both the interests of the local commercial elite who chose him to contest elections, and the middle-class voters whose support was needed for electoral success.<sup>35</sup> As such, he also had to fulfil their notions of what constituted an ideal MP.<sup>36</sup> At the election of 1832 a leading article in the *Manchester Guardian* was keen to underline that newspaper's support for Loyd by stressing his "familiarity with commercial subjects" and his "extensive connection with this town".<sup>37</sup>

The Liberals had been successful in establishing the criteria for representation. Even in the first election of 1832 the Tory candidate John Hope had stressed his interest in commercial issues, his advocacy for the abolition of the Corn Laws and slavery, his support for free duty, electoral reform and a system of national education for the working classes.<sup>38</sup> The principles of political economy were always central to the city's early election campaigns. This is not to claim that it was a candidate's own qualities rather than the actual issues that were the most important factors during the city's elections.<sup>39</sup> Public meetings and newspaper reports always placed the important electoral questions and debates of the time at the forefront. Nevertheless, there is an underlying impression in the actions of some candidates that the construction and projection of a particular image, the need to highlight their role in the public life of the city, was also felt to be an important factor in electability.

#### IV

The increased level of charitable involvement among elected MPs during the period 1857–1892 suggests that it was in these years that charitable association grew to become a component part of the criteria for an elected MP.<sup>40</sup> Association with local charities became a means of signifying status and individual merit in the mid-Victorian period. Voluntary charities had become an established and necessary part of a political economy which rejected state interference but which still believed in assisting the deserving

34. See for example M. Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics* (Oxford, 1982), p. 4.

35. See above, footnote 7.

36. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England*, p. 179.

37. *Manchester Guardian*, 27 October 1832.

38. *Manchester Courier*, 8 December 1832.

39. See for example Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics*, pp. 67–68, 211; Beale, *From Castlereagh to Gladstone*, p. 200.

40. See for instance Harrison, *Peaceable Kingdom*, p. 221.

poor. As an integral part of political economy they were able to appeal to the middle classes who supported the system. They may also have enjoyed the support of some members of the working classes who feared the Poor Laws. Manchester's political culture was dominated by a *laissez-faire* mentality and both minimal and degrading government aid. This enhanced the opportunities for mass gratitude towards those providing alternative aid through charities.<sup>41</sup> The dissipation of resistance towards the Poor Law from the 1840s, together with an expansion of Poor Law institutions from the 1850s,<sup>42</sup> meant that the spectre of the workhouse was much more pronounced in the mid-Victorian period. Partly as a consequence the role and status of local charities in the community became even more prominent. Certainly support of charities became fashionable in the mid-Victorian period.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the increased level of charitable association with Manchester's parliamentary candidates corresponded with a significant revival in Tory fortunes both in the city and nationally.<sup>44</sup> The extension of the franchise in 1867 led to an increase in Tory support in many working-class areas.<sup>45</sup> In Manchester the Liberal domination of 1832–1865 was broken. Between 1867 and 1895 ten individual Tories, three Liberals and one Liberal Unionist were returned for the city.

The electorate's shift from the values of orthodox Liberalism towards Conservatism was already evident in the 1857 election.<sup>46</sup> This watershed in the city's political history saw the defeat of the Manchester School protagonists John Bright and T.M. Gibson by the Palmerstonians Sir John Potter and J.A. Turner. The election was ostensibly fought on Palmerstonian issues, but supplementing this was the question of whether voters wanted a local man or a Rochdale man to represent the city.<sup>47</sup> There were several references to the local connections and charitable activity of the successful candidates. During Turner's official nomination one of the speakers, Alderman Neild, stressed that "we shall send to Parliament two Manchester men (Potter and Turner)". A second speaker, Malcolm Ross, also claimed there was "no man in Manchester who has devoted more of his time, his talents and his money to promoting the best interests of the city", and that he could "point to any charitable object, to any amount of good sought to be done, but he stands forward to help you with his time and his money".<sup>48</sup>

41. See for example Garrard, "Urban Elites 1850–1914", pp. 10 and 16.

42. For a national study see M. Crowther, *The Workhouse System 1834–1929* (London, 1981).

43. For the national view see Harrison, *Peaceable Kingdom*, p. 216; I. Bradley, *Call to Seriousness* (London, 1976), p. 125.

44. See Kidd, *Manchester*, p. 158. For the national trend see Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics*, ch. 3.

45. For the national picture see *ibid.*, p. 81; Harrison, *Peaceable Kingdom*, p. 211.

46. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England*, pp. 203–210.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 208–209.

48. *Manchester Guardian*, 21 March 1857.

Turner added that in himself and Potter there had not been two men in Manchester who “are cultivated by more charitable and kindly feelings”.<sup>49</sup>

Charitable involvement became a signal used by candidates to reveal their personal credentials for the electorate. Turner and Potter were suggesting they possessed moral worthiness, a Christian interest in the welfare of the population and a connection with and knowledge of the city.<sup>50</sup> It was still necessary to be seen as “local” yet to be “charitable”, to be seen to be caring for the deserving poor and to be fulfilling a sense of duty was also valuable. Turner was attempting to use this to prove that he and Potter were “cultivated” by a particular kind of “feeling”.

Candidates in the mid-Victorian period were expected to forge some links with local charities.<sup>51</sup> It became part of the structure of the electoral field. As representatives of the community they were required to set an example by being generous.<sup>52</sup> They had to be model citizens as well as political leaders. This meant being prominent in the community, setting or conforming to moral standards and appearing to be benevolent. There was an inseparable correlation between charity, status and the social basis of power. Voluntary charities provided a vehicle for demonstrating supposed moral worth. It was part of the structure of the charity field. Moreover, it was part of the basis of their power in the community which they were able to exploit for wider political gain. Prominent local luminaries such as Hugh Birley, William Romaine Callender junior, Thomas Bazley, William Henry Houldsworth and eventually Jacob Bright were portrayed as model citizens. Their supporters claimed they were worthy of representing the community irrespective of their political values. At a public meeting in Hulme during the 1874 election it was claimed that Birley and Callender had “for many years taken a deep interest in the happiness and welfare of the people”, and that Birley’s “political opponents had admitted that they could not speak ill of him”.<sup>53</sup>

That Birley was regarded as someone difficult to speak “ill of”, indicates the degree of supposed legitimacy that they had acquired in the community and the willingness of the candidates and their supporters to exploit this position for electoral purposes. Birley was in a particularly strong position. He was boldly portrayed at public meetings and by the Tory press as worthy of the electors’ vote irrespective of their traditional political allegiance. During the 1880 election campaign *Momus*, a weekly satirical paper, commented that even Liberals could not deny Birley’s merits and claims upon voters’ loyalties. The writer claimed that there would have been a “genuine sense of disappointment among the best and most thoughtful Liberal in

49. *Ibid.*

50. See also Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian England*, p. 283.

51. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, pp. 254–255.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 256, 261.

53. *Manchester Courier*, 28 January 1874.

Manchester” if he were “to be displaced from his position as representative of this city”. He continued to state that the reasons for it were based on the fact that Birley and his family had been connected with “works of beneficence and social improvement”, including support for “churches, schools, and charitable institutions”. Furthermore, he claimed that there was “hardly any part of the city which does not contain some monument of its philanthropy”, and that as a result there existed a general wish “irrespective of party, that he should be returned at the impending election”.<sup>54</sup>

Such public statements were a clear attempt to influence the electorate by constructing an image of Birley as a figure of moral worth, a leader fit to represent the entire community. There is, of course, the question of political bias. Understandably party hacks and friendly newspapers promoted the appeal of favoured candidates. However, that the claims could be made at all, and so often repeated, implies a level of acceptability within the local electorate. Moreover, such portrayals served both to underline and enhance the status of individuals like Birley, Houldsworth and Bazley. They fulfilled the criteria of what it was to be regarded as a “public man”, offering proof of character and of local commitment.

This was a valuable form of cultural capital. By entering the charity field individuals transformed their social, economic and political positions into cultural capital. With it came the domination of symbolic power. Symbolic power in this sense relied on the acquisition of status through a charitable profile. The value of status was reflected in the type of charities with which prospective candidates became involved. Manchester’s medical charities were the most popular. A total of 51 out of the 130 positions filled by the candidates were with local hospitals, four with dispensaries and six with other medical-related charities. Education and children’s charities were the second largest group with 20 candidates serving as officials. This was followed by the ten candidates who served with women’s charities, nine who served with handicapped charities and eight who served with the Discharged Prisoners Aid Society (DPAS). Indeed, the DPAS had the largest single number of parliamentary candidates serving as officials of any charity. Enhancement of public image may explain the charity’s popularity with parliamentary candidates. It had been established in 1866 against growing local and national disquiet over control of released convicts,<sup>55</sup> and six of the eight candidates were among the first elected officials in that year. Thus, each had the opportunity to become associated with a popular and topical cause.

54. *Momus*, 18 March 1880.

55. For the emerging panic in Manchester see A.J. Kidd, “Outcast Manchester”, in idem and K. Roberts (eds), *City, Class and Culture* (Manchester, 1985), p. 49. For London, see J. Davis, “The London Garrotting Panic of 1862: A Moral Panic and the Creation of a Criminal Class in Mid-Victorian England”, in V.A.C. Gatrell, G. Parker and B. Lenman (eds), *Crime and the Law: The Social History of Crime in Western Europe Since 1500* (London, 1982), p. 191.

Following the DPAS in level of involvement was Manchester's Southern Hospital with seven candidates, the Manchester Royal Infirmary with six, and the Manchester Ear Hospital with five. In contrast, only one candidate, the 1895 Labour contestant J. Johnson, is known to have served as an official for a local ragged school. The preponderance of association with medical charities alongside the city's other prestigious charities such as the DPAS, indicates the value placed on supporting the most prominent charities. Besides the topical attraction of the DPAS, these would attract most publicity and, as they were among the charities that attracted most funds, they may have been most popular with the voters. In addition, association with medical and handicapped charities signified care and compassion, further suggesting an awareness of the possibilities they provided in enhancing a parliamentary candidate's own public status.

Joining these charities had at least two benefits. First, each individual could receive more public notice than if he patronized smaller charities. Second, the connotations of care and compassion, essential structures of the charity field, meant that involvement conveyed a high degree of status. The extent to which commitments both to the charities and the city were real rather than superficial was in some cases uncertain. This uncertainty is reflected in the positions held by prospective candidates in each charity. Of the 102 identifiable positions 63 were honorary titles, such as president, vice-president and patron, and 39 were active positions like trustee, committee member, treasurer, deputy treasurer or executive committee member. A total of 43 were vice-presidents while only 30 were committee members. Although the numbers serving as active officials were by no means negligible, the emphasis on honorary titles suggests voluntary charities fulfilled a desire for status rather than administrative responsibility.

This desire for status was emphasized in the appearance of MPs at local public charity events. These could be large and highly conspicuous. The "Theatre Festival in Aid of the Local Charities", for example, held for six consecutive nights at the Theatre Royal from 7 June 1852, was able to attract the patronage of members of the local and national elite. The magnitude of the event was reflected in the advertisement on the front of the *Manchester Guardian*. Patronage was given from Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, Earl Cathcart and the Earls of Ellesmere and Wilton. Additionally there were such leading local political and business figures as Sir John Potter (the Mayor), Richard Birley, leading cotton manufacturer, William Entwistle and Edward Loyd, both major bankers, Alderman W.B. Watkins and the MPs Thomas Bazley, Mark Philips and J.A. Turner. Significantly, these names rather than a resumé of events occupies most of the advertisement's space. The press were reinforcing the public image of each individual, allowing the MPs to occupy a public platform that served to reinforce their status amongst the electorate.

The need to acquire status alongside the mantle of "model citizen" and

“suitable representative” became a serious consideration for mid-Victorian voters. In 1879 *Momus* commented that the “road to Parliament nowadays lies often through local distinction”, and that the men “whom constituencies delight to honour with parliamentary favours” were often those who “have served a sort of *apprenticeship in offices of trust*”.<sup>56</sup> Charitable involvement provided an ideal vehicle for the mid-Victorian who held ambitions to acquire public office. It showed that he had served “an apprenticeship of office in trust” and, according to the writer, he had displayed the “multitude and quality of his virtues”.

Social prominence and the status achieved through charitable association were positive aids for an individual’s political career.<sup>57</sup> Conversely, however, non-involvement could be used to highlight apparent deficiencies in character. At the 1865 election William Romaine Callender senior used Jacob Bright’s non-involvement in local charities to underline his status as an “outsider”. He claimed that Bright was a “political nobody so far as Manchester was concerned”, because as far as he knew Bright “did not subscribe largely to local charities nor was he connected with any local institution”.<sup>58</sup> Callender manipulated Bright’s failure to become associated with local charities to claim that he was unfit to represent the community. Bright lacked the moral and social criteria that had come to determine the suitability of prospective candidates. Rival political camps could exploit non-involvement to suggest character flaws.<sup>59</sup> Bright, younger brother of John, came from nearby Rochdale but was stigmatized as an outsider with no connections or commitments to the city. During the same election Abel Heywood attempted to manipulate the situation further by asking the electorate if they were going to vote for a “townsman who had served them for thirty years”, or for “strangers who had not served them at all”.<sup>60</sup>

Bright’s rivals implied that he had not displayed any obligation to the city, failed to prove his moral worth and, therefore, had not served his apprenticeship. The situation was rectified when Bright joined several local voluntary charities. His efforts to become associated with local charities underlines their value to the individual seeking power. He may have simply joined other public institutions to suggest a connection with the city, but the fact that he chose to join a series of voluntary charities, either with or without joining other institutions, stresses their particular value in providing a social basis for power. By the time of his successful election campaign of 1868 he had become a member of the Executive Committee for the Children’s Dinner Society and in 1871 he was elected Vice-President of the

56. *Momus*, 17 January 1879.

57. See also Garrard, *Leadership and Power*, p. 33.

58. *Manchester Courier*, 28 January 1874.

59. See depiction of Potter and Turner in 1857, pp. 11 and 12 above.

60. *Manchester Guardian*, 13 July 1865.

Manchester Southern Hospital. In subsequent years he became a member of at least five other local charities.

Partly because of his charitable involvement Bright enjoyed a marked improvement in his public status. From the 1868 election up to his death he was portrayed as a representative who had served his apprenticeship and become a public man worthy of the city. In his series of biographical profiles J.E. Ritchie commented on these significant changes in Bright's public life, claiming that up to the election of 1866 "his appearances at Manchester" had been "confined to business" and the Anti-Corn Law League, but that "since then he has been more prominent as a public man".<sup>61</sup> By 1876 the *City Jackdaw* could claim that Bright had emerged as one of the city's most prominent public men. The writer claimed that Bright was a "public man in a more distinct and wider sense than any of those whose names have been mentioned in our series (on public men)".<sup>62</sup> At Bright's inaugural meeting of the 1885 election the chairman stressed how Bright had "rendered great services to the city of Manchester", and how he "occupied the position of a public man".<sup>63</sup> Moreover, at the same meeting Bright actually launched an attack on his opponent Lord Hamilton on the grounds that he was an outsider who had rendered no service to the city. He claimed that Hamilton was "little known in England", and that it would be "almost impossible to import a stranger into the division who was more completely ignorant than his opponent".<sup>64</sup>

Bright's transformation into "public man" had given him the confidence to use the same stigmatizing tactics his opponents had employed against him in 1865. Significantly, however, on this occasion they were to prove fruitless. In the midst of the Liberal split and the Irish Home Rule debate Bright was defeated by the Tory, Lord Hamilton. Hamilton had no known charitable associations with the city. His was only one of two victories in the period 1868–1892 by a candidate with no local charitable involvement. Bright returned to Parliament in 1886.

Bright's defeat in 1885 underlines the primacy of national politics at election time. Nevertheless, the value of charitable association was still apparent in the way candidates could exploit involvement as a political tool during election campaigns. Association with local charities gave a valuable social basis to their claims for representative power. Candidates and their campaign teams could make timely reminders of the charitable deeds performed in the past. At a meeting during the 1868 election, for example, Charles Pooley introduced Hugh Birley with a reminder to the audience of his philanthropic record. He claimed that so many "acts of philanthropy and

61. J.E. Ritchie, *British Senators* (London, 1869), p. 130.

62. *City Jackdaw*, 28 January 1876.

63. *Manchester Guardian*, 8 October 1885.

64. *Ibid.*

benevolence had been done by him” that his name had become a “household word”, and that each voter should “think himself wanting in his duty to himself and his fellow citizens if he did not support Mr. Hugh Birley”.<sup>65</sup> References to “duty” echoed the claims of paternalistic relationships. Charitable deeds from the benefactor placed a moral claim on the citizen to vote for him. Similar sentiments were voiced ten days later by the chairman of a meeting in Cheetham Hill. He claimed that “whatever charitable or benevolent work was to be done the family of Mr. Birley was ever ready to render their assistance” and they had done it in “such a quiet unostentatious way that always befits the gift”.<sup>66</sup> Reminders of Birley’s generosity and charitable involvement, and of the implied moral obligations that this placed upon the voter, were sometimes supplemented by visiting a function or meeting held by one of the charities. In the week before the final poll of the 1874 election, for instance, Hugh Birley was to be found opening the new premises of the Ancoats and Ardwick Dispensary. On the same day both he and Callender attended the annual meeting of the Chorlton-on-Medlock Dispensary. Reports of both meetings were to be found in the local press the following morning.<sup>67</sup> Tories seemed particularly adept at exploiting their charitable involvement in the mid-Victorian period. John Maclure and William Romaine Callender junior had successfully exploited their patronage of local charities and apparent support for welfare issues in an attempt to gain vital support in working-class areas.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Birley was most successful in the working-class districts of Hulme and Chorlton-on-Medlock.<sup>69</sup> The Tory revival after 1867 was based on their ability to make mass popular appeals. Large-scale Tory patronage in the East End of London, for example, had helped in making the local populace more likely to vote Tory.<sup>70</sup>

Although Tory candidates may have been proportionally more actively involved in local charities, as the figures above suggest,<sup>71</sup> Liberals were also both heavily involved and able to capitalize on their involvement. Voluntary charities were part of a political economy which by the mid-Victorian period was embraced by the ideologies of both political parties. Charitable patronage by politicians was not monopolized by any single party in Manchester. However, association with local charities was most readily available for those candidates who had enjoyed lengthy residence or familial connections with the city. Opportunities for using charitable involvement did not generally exist for those candidates who came from outside the area and were standing for election in the city for the first time. Without previous links with the

65. *Manchester Courier*, 2 November 1868.

66. *Ibid.*, 12 November 1868.

67. *Ibid.* and *Manchester Guardian*, 30 January 1874.

68. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, pp. 314–316.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 318–320.

70. See also Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics*, pp. 87, 95.

71. See figures cited above, p. 9.

city it was difficult to forge any effective charitable associations. The social basis of their power was obviously limited. It was a problem partly surmounted by making subscriptions to local charities in the period immediately before an election.<sup>72</sup> The Tories A.J. Balfour, Lord Hamilton and Sir James Fergusson, for example, gave nothing to the Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) in 1884. However, in the following year when they first stood for election they became subscribers of £3 3s, £5 5s and £10 respectively. Although Balfour and Hamilton continued to subscribe the same amounts during the ensuing years, Fergusson immediately reduced his subscription in 1886 to £5. Following his final election victory in 1895 he reduced his subscription to £2 2s. Two years later he cancelled it altogether. Similarly, the Marquis of Lorne only began subscribing to the MRI during his election campaign of 1895, and W.R. Peel only started supporting the City Mission in 1900, the year of his first election campaign.<sup>73</sup>

## V

Peel's subscription suggests that the implicit use of Manchester's voluntary charities as part of an electioneering programme retained some value at the turn of the century. However, the general pattern of charitable involvement during the late Victorian period indicates the beginning of a gradual and continual decline in the level of significance. In the campaigns of both 1895 and 1900 five of the six elected MPs were active in local charities. During the 1906 election, however, the numbers involved fell to only two from six candidates, and only five from the seventeen individual MPs returned between 1895 and 1910 are known to have served on at least one local charity. This decline is linked to a wider process of electoral change and developments in the political ideals of the period. In effect, the electoral field was changing. The 1880s were arguably a turning point in attitudes towards social reform and welfare provision, with a gradual move away from voluntary charity and towards more emphasis on working-class institutions and even state intervention.<sup>74</sup> The late Victorian period witnessed an emerging

72. Given that local elites and party machines often struggled to find or recruit more preferred candidates from their own areas, this could be an important means of forming a "local" connection. For problems of recruitment see J. Garrard, D. Jarry, M. Goldsmith and A. Oldfield (eds), *The Middle Class in Politics* (Salford, 1978), pp. 38–41.

73. Details from subscription lists of annual reports.

74. For the view that the extension of the suffrage was followed by a flood of social legislation see H.M. Lynd, *England in the 1880's* (London, 1968), p. 407. For the view that changes were much more gradual, particularly amongst working-class institutions such as the trade unions and friendly societies, and that pressure for change centred on better wages and regular work see Thane, "The Working Class and State Welfare", pp. 877–900; H. Pelling, "The Working Class and the Origins of the Welfare State", in idem, *Popular Politics and Society* (London, 1968), pp. 1–18; J. Hill, "Manchester and Salford Politics and the Early Development of the Independent Labour Party", *International Review of Social History*, XXVI (1981), pp. 181, 193.

challenge to existing public perceptions regarding poverty and its solutions.<sup>75</sup> Social investigations by Booth and Rowntree, coupled with the emerging ideals of New Liberalism, Labourism and socialism, began to at least suggest the inadequacies of voluntary charities in overcoming poverty and the need for welfare reform. While a belief in the intrinsic value of individual effort and voluntary effort was not superseded by notions of collectivism, interest in philanthropy was beginning to decline.<sup>76</sup>

These events coincided with a period in which political issues adopted a national rather than local character.<sup>77</sup> In addition, the 1884 Reform Act had created class-based constituencies. South Manchester, for example, was a distinctly working-class constituency. This intensified the need to appeal to class interests. Many working-class institutions such as friendly societies and trade unions were suspicious of state welfare reforms but did press for better working conditions.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, working-class pressure groups existed which called for direct state action regarding pensions and improved housing conditions.<sup>79</sup> These developments were mirrored in the election campaigns of the late Victorian period and also indicate why the value of charitable association for prospective candidates began to change. Although the influence of New Liberalism and socialism on the discourse of social reform was gradual, and though support for direct state intervention was fractured among the working-class movement, promises of social reform rather than association with local charities gradually became a more prominent part of the criteria for a public representative.

Expressions of concern for the welfare of the working-class voter became a valuable part of the canon for the prospective MP of whatever party. An example of its growing importance came in the same 1892 election when the Tory candidate for the North-East division of Manchester, Sir James Fergusson, felt the need to defend his record of voting for welfare provisions in Parliament.<sup>80</sup> Fergusson made his reply at a meeting in Ancoats, where he denied having voted against legislation to increase employers' liability and decrease the hours for rail and shop workers. The following day at a meeting in Miles Platting he again reiterated his apparent support for welfare legislation, claiming that "many of them knew that there was an earnest desire among the Conservatives to do justice to working men" and that

75. P.A. Kohler and H.F. Zacher (eds), *The Evolution of Social Insurance* (London, 1982), pp. 166, 170.

76. Harrison, *Peaceable Kingdom*, pp. 254–256.

77. Fraser, *Urban Politics in Victorian London*, p. 283; Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics*, pp. 9, 136.

78. Thane, "The Working Class and State Welfare", pp. 878–886.

79. *Ibid.*, pp. 887–888.

80. A rival placard had pronounced "Fergusson FOUND OUT – NOT The Friend of Labour": *Manchester Courier*, 28 June 1892.

“they had lately passed thirty four measures which directly tended to the improvement of the working classes”.<sup>81</sup>

Although only minimal legislation was passed by Parliament to alleviate the plight of the poor and needy in the fifteen years leading up to the turn of the century,<sup>82</sup> it was still important for candidates to voice support for social reform. Support for social reform provided supposed evidence of a candidate’s understanding and sympathy with the needs of the workers and poorer sections of the community. Association with a charitable deed was still occasionally used as an electioneering tactic. At the 1900 contest the Liberal candidate A. Birrell preceded one meeting by presenting local hero James Edgar with a testimonial from the Royal Humane Society for rescuing three boys from the Rochdale Canal.<sup>83</sup> Yet even charitable acts had started to become unfashionable and J.A. Hobson condemned charitable donations as conscience money.<sup>84</sup> Entering the charity field did not have the same benefits as before. Moreover, association with local charities and charitable acts during election campaigns was being eclipsed by other popular canvassing methods. At the 1906 election, for instance, A.J. Balfour could be found kicking off a football match at Manchester City’s Maine Road ground.<sup>85</sup>

## VI

As the structure of the electoral field changed, as the perceptions of the electorate regarding the criteria for leadership and parliamentary candidature shifted according to social trends and to its social compositions, so also did the value of charitable association decline. This indicated the fluid nature of the cultural criteria that underpinned the social basis of power. The role of charitable involvement in sustaining the position of parliamentary candidates only remained as long as the electorate found it to be of relevance. Success within the electoral field partly depended on understanding these changes. Throughout the century Manchester’s parliamentary candidates showed an awareness of this point and adopting the criteria strengthened their position as candidates. Fulfilling the criteria meant they were adopting symbolic forms of power that enabled them to influence the electorate and underline their fitness to represent the community. By the mid-Victorian period the franchise had been widened and broader-based social values had started to develop. Displays of philanthropy were a vital part of the conditional relationship underpinning urban leadership.<sup>86</sup> Voluntary

81. *Ibid.*, 29 June 1892.

82. See for example Pugh, *The Making of Modern British Politics*, p. 86.

83. *Manchester Guardian*, 28 September 1900.

84. J.A. Hobson, *The Crisis of Liberalism*, ed. P.F. Clarke (Brighton, 1974), p. 197.

85. *Manchester Guardian*, 19 January 1906.

86. See for example Garrard, “Urban Elites 1850–1914”, pp. 11–14.

charities provided an ideal means of acquiring the esteem of the electorate. Status was based on Christian connotations and notions of high moral worth and had a strong appeal to the respectable voters. The criteria of the good “representative” developed to place greater emphasis on the moral worth of the candidate. They needed to enter the charity field to provide themselves with these key dispositions. Parliamentary candidates could use charitable involvement to enhance their chances for electoral success while it was a useful basis for social power and, as such, it remained a vehicle to influence the electorate. This highlights the value of looking at the cultural and political significance of voluntary action. It indicates that the status implications for those with a high charitable profile might be considered at least as important in cultural terms as the significance of the charitable gift for the poor, either viewed as an act of benevolence or of “social control”. In any case, the charity field in the nineteenth century is worthy of further investigation and must be studied in its broad social context including its political implications. There could be particular value in studying other European cities.<sup>87</sup> Breuille’s work, for example, suggested that voluntarism was strong in non-Catholic Manchester, whereas in Catholic Lyon the Church remained central to welfare provision and in non-Catholic Hamburg it was the state which played a more interventionist role. In both cases the voluntary sector was less important and carried less public status. In Britain the state had played an increasingly large part in the provision of welfare prior to the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, but the Victorian period witnessed a sharp reduction in state provision and a rise in voluntary welfare. Further studies could assess the impact of different social and cultural traditions as well as the relative importance of different political structures.

87. The possible advantages of conducting a comparative study were highlighted in John Breuille’s work on Manchester, Lyon and Hamburg. See for example J. Breuille, *Labour and Liberalism in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Manchester, 1992). See also J. Innes, “The State and the Poor: Eighteenth Century England in European Perspective”, chapter in E. Hellmuth and J. Brewer (eds), *Rethinking Leviathan* (Oxford, forthcoming); J. Innes, “State, Church and Voluntarism in European Welfare 1690–1850”, conference paper, University of Kent, Canterbury 1996.