

few decades. Ultimately, however, they could not maintain that prosperity against the combined forces of the church, expanding royal power, and increasing antipathy from the local population. By 1268, the Jews of Champagne suffered a grievous blow. Count Thibaut V, in conjunction with King Louis IX, confiscated all Jewish movable goods and Jewish loans in order to finance a new Crusade (see CRUSADES).

Jewish Champagne never fully recovered from this major confiscation of wealth. Evidence of this is amply shown by the differential between the amount of taxes (70,000 *livres*) collected by Countess Blanche and her son in 1222, and the considerably lesser amount collected in subsequent assessments. In 1284, Champagne's only remaining heir, Countess Jeanne, was married to Prince Philip, and Champagne was annexed to royal France. The tax on Champenois Jews at that time was only 25,000 *livres*, a reduction of almost two-thirds.

From the time of Champagne's annexation to royal France, evidence points to the continued impoverishment and disintegration of Champenois Jewry. Few names of scholars or communal leaders appear in the records. The royal administration hired a network of Jewish and Christian tax collectors to gather decreasing amounts of taxes. Records suggest that even these lesser amounts were a growing burden. In the face of severe restrictions against lending, Jews moved from place to place searching for other means to make a living.

The massacre of 1288 in Troyes, a result of a BLOOD LIBEL against one Jew, Isaac Chatelaine, ended in the burning of thirteen Jews and the confiscation of their property. This event dealt the final blow to a once confident and thriving community. Less than twenty years later, in 1306, seventeen thousand to twenty thousand Jewish men, women, and children were expelled from Champagne, together with all the Jews of royal France. Although they did return several times after that for short periods, the Jews of Champagne never again enjoyed the success of past centuries.

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Charity

Leading rabbinic figures emphasized the great importance that Judaism attached to giving charity, as well as the lengths to which individuals and communities must be prepared to go in the fulfillment of this precept. MAIMONIDES (1138–1204) wrote that "we have never seen nor heard of a Jewish community which does not have a charity fund." NAHMANIDES (1194–1270) noted that charity is a weighty precept that engendered numerous exhortations and admonitions in biblical literature. "And I need not mention the sources in rabbinic literature because the entire Talmud and all prescriptive works are replete with such material." Judah the Pious of Regensburg (d. 1217) instructed that "if a community has neither synagogue building nor hospice for the poor, the hospice should be built first." MEIR OF ROTHENBURG



Box for collecting alms, Spanish, circa 1319. Photo: J. G. Berizzi. Copyright © Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.

(ca. 1215–1293), extending a passage in *Tosefta* that allowed members of a community to compel a resistant minority to participate in the building of a synagogue and in the purchase of Torah and other biblical scrolls, ruled that coercion might also be utilized to ensure that sufficient charity funds were collected. Although earlier Tosafists disagreed about whether charity should be coerced, Meir's legal decision was cited by subsequent Ashkenazic authorities.

Rabbinic thinkers also debated whether the precept of charity was directed primarily toward the betterment of the individual in society (*mišvah bein adam la-haveró*), or whether this precept was in essence a devotional one, since God could have provided a poor person's needs through another venue. Halakhic and ethical treatises mentioned numerous rewards to which one who gave charity was entitled. Above all, charity was to be given gladly and sympathetically. In *halakhic* constructs, money donated or even pledged to charity took on a status similar to that of funds or material that had been consecrated to the Temple. Indeed, charitable donations and charity funds were often referred to as *heqdesht/ heqdeshim*. Questions arose as to whether charity that had already been pledged or collected could be designated by the giver or by the collectors (*gabbai'im*) for a different cause than was indicated initially.

The purposes for which charity was given, as well as the nature of charitable institutions, were quite varied. The Cairo GENIZAH contains copious documentation of charitable contributions and disbursements. A representative sample of these records includes funds spent on synagogue repairs, the amount of bread that was distributed to the poor, and sums paid for the teaching of an orphan, for the settling of an outstanding debt, and for salaries, food, and clothing given to religious functionaries. Paying the poll tax on behalf of the poor was deemed a particularly important priority, tantamount to ransoming a captive, since nonpayment meant possible incarceration. Standing needs were often assigned particular sources of income. There are also detailed lists of the individuals who received funds together with the amounts that were given.

Funds were collected by medieval Jewish communities to care for the sick (larger settlements maintained hospitals) and to defray the education costs and wedding expenses of children from poor fami-

lies. Food and lodging were provided for itinerant scholars and wayfarers (although the guests [*akhse-na'e*] referred to in Ashkenazic rabbinic texts of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, who were apparently supported or boarded at community expense, were probably local paupers rather than traveling merchants or scholars). A responsum of Nissim Gerundi (ca. 1310–1375) refers to five circles or societies in Perpignan that were responsible for Torah study, care of the sick, charity (for the poor), lighting (for the synagogue), and burial, to which individuals might pledge either money or their services. ASHER B. YEHI'EL (d. 1327, Toledo) noted the existence of a circle that would assist the bereaved when a death occurred. Members would sleep in the mourner's home before the funeral, assist him with the burial, provide food for him, and pray with him during the mourning period.

In both Germany and Spain, charity funds were lent out to accrue interest or invested in fields or other productive real estate as a means of augmenting their value and yield. Individuals also bequeathed their property and other assets directly, to be used to generate perpetual incomes for Torah study and other charities. Genizah documents refer to homes that were leased or sold with the proceeds going to charity. The practice of lending charity funds to earn interest posed a problem for Jews who borrowed those funds. The trend in Germany during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was to create an investment instrument where the interest paid was not biblically prohibited. Solomon IBN ADRET (ca. 1235–1310) agreed that these monies were best invested in a manner that violated only rabbinic usury law. This could be countenanced since these monies had no legally defined owners and were being used for the benefit of the poor. But Ibn Adret offered an additional justification for collecting even biblically proscribed interest, which was apparently the common practice in Spain. Since the members of the community (in a case presented to Ibn Adret) had accepted the responsibility for supporting certain minors and students as evidenced by their attempts to lend out and further enlarge the funds collected for this purpose, those in the community who borrowed the funds and paid back additional amounts did not consider this to be interest since the support of the students was incumbent upon them in any event.

The control and management of charity funds raised other halakhic issues. Lawsuits involving the funds required that agents be appointed who could represent the funds. The cases had to be tried in other jurisdictions because the members of a community might be inclined to influence how their fund fared. Rabbinic decisors intervened when funds for a particular need were lacking, or to maintain the equitable distribution of resources. Meir b. Todros ha-Levi ABULAFIA (1165–1244) required all the members of a community to contribute to the salaries of elementary-level tutors, including those who did not have young children, because the small number of parents whose children were actually being served by the tutors could not sustain the full expense on their own.

R. Isaac of Dampierre (ca. 1180) ruled that wealthy people who left money to charity did not assume that their assets would be used only in their own locales because the numbers of poor and transients in each city at that time (in northern France) were relatively small. Isaac b. Moses *Or Zarua'* (ca. 1180–1250) noted, however, that sums pledged on the High Holidays to commemorate the dead by residents of small villages, who joined larger communities for prayer services, should be given to the charity funds in the small villages and not in the larger communities where they were first expressed. Ashkenazic sources in particular stressed the importance of making charitable contributions to mark happy occasions and to remember the departed. Several types of mandatory seasonal collections, such as the Passover provisions assessment (*mas ma'ot hitim*), were also common.

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Charles IV

Born on 18 June 1294, Charles IV was the third son of Philip the Fair and Jeanne of Navarre and Champagne. In January 1308, he was married with little fanfare to Blanche of Artois and Burgundy (younger sister of his brother Philip's wife, Jeanne), who with Louis X's wife, Marguerite, was imprisoned for adultery in the spring of 1314. Reputed to be simple and imprudent, Charles enjoyed far less authority than his brothers; not until 28 November 1314 did Philip the Fair grant him his appanage of la Marche. After the death of Louis X and his posthumous son, John, Charles fruitlessly attempted to obtain part of the kingdom of France, but his brother Philip V finally won him over by making him peer of the realm in March 1317. When Philip died without male heir in January 1322, Charles succeeded him unopposed and was crowned at Reims on 21 February; on 19 May he received the papal annulment of his marriage to Blanche, which he had long been seeking. Desperate for a male heir, he married Marie of Luxembourg on 21 September, and after her death on 21 March 1324 wed Jeanne of Évreux on 5 July; Jeanne quickly produced two children, both girls, and was pregnant when Charles died at thirty-three on 1 February 1328.

Dominated by his uncle Charles of Valois, Charles IV nonetheless proved an effective ruler. He attempted to rule justly and pursued Philip V's treasurer for speculation; he sanctioned the execution of the southern noble Jourdain de l'Isle in punishment for numerous crimes including robbery, homicide, and rape; in 1327–1328 he ordered an unprecedented general census of the realm's hearths and parishes. He demonstrated sufficient support for the Crusade to secure a grant from the pope. He settled the succession to the county of Flanders in favor of Louis II of Nevers, who did homage to him; in the winter of 1325–1326, he led an expedition to help Louis combat rebellious sub-

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