

Jewish Identity/Assimilation/Continuity: Approaches to a Changing Reality¹

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The current debate on "Jewish continuity"² reflects growing interest and concern with recent research findings that have shown diminishing levels of individual Jewish identification, and declining attachment to Jewish community life, all epitomized by unprecedented levels of intermarriage.³ These are different and complementary aspects of a general process often described as "assimilation". From the point of view of both a community and the individuals that compose it, assimilation comprises two components: one is the weakening and loss of elements of a group's distinctive complex of norms and culture; the other is the absorption and incorporation of norms and habits derived from the culture of other groups. Such multiform process of give and take characterizes in one form or another all cultural and social groups along history. It may become a matter of concern when the very survival of the given group—as expressed by feelings of group identity, attitudes and behaviors compatible with those feelings, and the uniqueness of a group's norms and culture—becomes endangered by the nature and depth of intervening changes.

□ Judaism□ is a multi-faceted complex of normative, cognitive, behavioral, affective and other types of expression. It can be at the same time religion, ethnicity, culture, organized community, social group, collective and personal historical memory, folklore, and more. Therefore, no single indicator or measure can adequately catch the complexity of Jewish

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² See, among many others, the optimistic views of C. Goldscheider and A. Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1984, and C. Silberman, *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today*, New York, Summit Books, 1986; the pessimistic outlook of D. Vital, *The Future of the Jews*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1990, and B.D. Wasserstein, *Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe since 1945*, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1996; or the thoughtful analysis of J. Sacks, *One People? Tradition, Modernity, and Jewish Unity*, London/Washington, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1993.

³ The single most influential study in this sense was the 1999-2000 national Jewish Population Survey in the United States. See: B. Kosmin, S. Goldstein, J. Waksberg, N. Lerer, A. Keysar, J. Scheckner, *Highlights of the CJF 1990 National Jewish Population Survey*, New York, Council of Jewish Federations, 1991.

identification. Jewish identification can and should be described and measured through a variety of different indicators.⁴

This article explores selected aspects of Jewish identity in the changing context of contemporary general and Jewish society. It briefly reviews (a) some essential terminology required in research on the topic, (b) the question of multiple poles within the overall identity complex, (c) two well-known models of patterns of identification maintenance or loss in modern and contemporary Jewish communities, (d) a further approach to a global understanding of contemporary Jewish identity maintenance vs. assimilation, (e) a rough attempt to translate such typology into Jewish population estimates, and (f) some exploratory materials about the map of contents of contemporary Jewish identity. We try to observe and classify Jews as individuals and as parts of a coherent collective, not as much through the interpretative discourse of intellectual elites, but rather through the use of comprehensive and as neutral and objective as possible, measurable social indicators.

Terms of Reference

Following a social scientific perspective developed among others by S. Herman,⁵ the cultural and ideological distinctiveness of a group can be assessed with reference to four main criteria:

1. the nature of group *identity*, or the deeper inner-felt sense of belonging of an individual with a given reference group. Group identity, no matter how powerful and relevant, is difficult to measure since it may be privately concealed, or deliberately unexpressed;
2. the nature of group *identification*, or the ways and means by which individuals actually externalize their sense of identity through clearly defined and measurable attitudes and behaviors;
3. the distinctive *contents* of a given group's culture, or the specific complex of ideas, values, symbols, and community institutions with which individuals identify and in relation to which they externalize their identification;
4. the *images* of the given group held by people who are not part of it, based on their bona-fide understanding of the same criteria, as well as on prejudice.

Complex interactions and mutual influences constantly operate between these various fundamental dimensions of the relationship between individual and collective frames of reference (see Figure 1). The inner dimension of identity is expectedly reflected in outer manifestations of identification, but a symmetric influence can also occur to some extent when organized beliefs or emotional feelings are the consequence rather than the cause of specific action. In turn, both identity and identification bear a significant relationship to the core of values and norms that uniquely define a given group and its culture. Such contents can be

⁴ Phillips, B.A. "Sociological Analysis of Jewish Identity" in D.M. Gordis and Y. Ben-Horin (eds.) *Jewish Identity in America*. Los Angeles, Wilstein Institute, 1991, pp. 3-25.

⁵ S.N.Herman, *Jewish Identity; A Social Psychological Perspective*, Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1977.

anywhere between rather fixed over time, and the product of constant change and influences of a changing historical and societal context. Specific contents tend to motivate individual identities and identifications, but the latter in the longer run may determine what contents continue to be relevant and what become obsolete and irrelevant. Furthermore, beliefs and behaviors of members of a given group tend to affect outsiders' perceptions about the same group, but at the same time they are not indifferent to those stereotyped perceptions, whether or not correct.

(About here Figure 1)

In the following we deal with some aspects of the first three concepts outlined here. The fourth aspect has attracted a large amount of scholarly and public attention⁶ and will not be treated here.

Overlap, Consonance and Hierarchy of Identities

Following the obvious assumption that any individual deserves first of all to be respected as such, a fundamental element of such respect is recognition of the right of each individual to an identity of his/her own. Identity encompasses both free acceptance by an individual of a body of notions, ideas and values generally defined here as culture, and a sense of proximity and solidarity with others that identify with that same culture, generally defined here as group identity. Clearly, as more than one identificational option exists for each individual, multiple group identities can be cultivated simultaneously. It is from the process of integration of all of such possible and overlapping identities that the unique identity patterns of each individual emerge along with his/her priorities in the choice of one or more significant reference groups.

We refer in particular to identity in relation to groups within which there exists a recognizable social interaction and group dynamics, or at least an awareness of group belonging, and whose defining characteristics can be transmitted from one generation to the next, such as national allegiance, religious tradition, mother tongue, ethnic identity. Besides *family bonds and roles* which usually determine a person's earliest and primary set of interactions and allegiance in life and can be considered virtually universal, three identificational poles, among many more possible, occupy an especially central place in the personal identities of the overwhelming majority of individuals:

1. *geographical space*, such as a *country* or other territorially defined *political-administrative entity*, evokes in the first place residential proximity but also common socio-historical experiences, languages, cultures, allegiances and bonds of solidarity;
2. *socioeconomic status*, expressed by *social class* or *occupational category*, often though not necessarily clustered residentially, determines material interests associated to rational choices in a broad

⁶ E.g.: T.W. Adorno, E. Frenkel-Brunswik, D.J. Levinson, R.N. Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality*, New York, Norton, 1969; C.Y. Glock, R. Stark, *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism*, New York, Harper, 1966; B. Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice*. New York, Norton, 1986.

range of personal and collective circumstances in life—reflecting the particular options and constraints of each stratum;

3. *ethnic or religious group*, also often clustered residentially and class-wise, primarily evokes unique cultural and normative commonalities, attitudinal and behavioral patterns, and memory.

Simplifying what would better be a three-dimensional representation, Figure 2 provides a description of the possible relations of a typical individual to these various, not mutually exclusive identificational frames of reference. Overlap between identifying with a given geographical region (e.g. Brazil), a particular socioeconomic status (e.g. middle class), and a particular religio-ethnic group (e.g. Jewish) may be total, partial, or non-existent. For example, a person may identify as Brazilian, middle-class, and Jewish, or with only two, one, or none of these three options. Assuming a person feels meaningfully related to more than one identificational pole, it may not be always possible to disentangle the boundaries and effects of each type of identification from another. Feelings toward these various identities may be hierarchically ordered, or may stand on an equal plan. The same relations may be rather fixed over time, or change their intensity and mutual influences over time.

(About here Figure 2)

Important historical processes such as secularization, individuation, or socioeconomic mobility are interesting in this context viewed not so much for the consequences for the single individual, but rather for the implications for collectives with shared cultural identities (whatever their specific contents), and recognizable group boundaries (whether freely determined or legally sanctioned). The continuous rise, fall and transformation of group identities indeed constitute a fundamental aspect of societal dynamics at the intersection of demographic and socioeconomic stratification and cultural change. In the case of the study of Jewish identity, Herman discussed the question of compatibility, consonance and overlap with other identities.⁷ He found a generally negative relationship between identifying as Jewish and having another national identity, but a positive relationship between a Jewish and an Israeli identity.

Particularly interesting is the verification of ranking of identities, namely whether Jewishness represents the primary, most salient and valued layer of identity, and a determinant of other layers, or it only comes as a subordinate element in an identity complex determined and dominated by other parameters and allegiances. In other words, (Jewish) ethnoreligious identity may include geographical-regional identities as subordinate sub-identities, or it may become itself a subordinate sub-identity within a given national-geographical identity. By the same token, (Jewish) ethnoreligious identity may be the primary determinant of someone's position in the socioeconomic ladder, or may be reduced to a secondary attribute

⁷ See Herman, cit.

compatible with that particular social stratum which turns to be the fundamental pole of reference in one's overall identity.⁸

Two Classic Models of Assimilation

Assimilation has attracted much attention on the part of sociologists who have suggested various typologies of its developmental stages in relation to a variety of time- and space-related circumstances. A typology is a parsimonious descriptive and predictive tool aimed at understanding some central feature in society. Such a synthetic characterization tends to reflect the obvious trade-off of depth and complexity for compression within limited space. In this general framework, Jewish communities in the twentieth century have been submitted to intensive study in the light of various theoretical models. Often it is the very study of Jewish communities that has provided the occasion for developing such schematic keys to the reading of a more complex reality. Models of the Jewish collective, whether they describe a diversity of contemporaneous situations or dynamically project intervening changes, may be interpreted as an attempt to assess the chances of Jewish continuity in a later generation in relation to the observed circumstances in the present generation. Belonging to each category or stage described in a typology implies a different probability of being Jewish at a later time, both for the population directly involved (as an aggregate, not necessarily for each single individual) and for the descendants from that population in the next or a later generation.

The early Ruppin

Writing at the beginning of the century, about one hundred years after the emancipation of European Jews, the German-born Jewish sociologist Arthur Ruppin sought to provide a concise picture of the major processes that were shaping the social and cultural experience of the Jews.⁹ Along with specifying the major stages and variables of the assimilation process, Ruppin tried to provide a quantification of the composition of world Jewry in relation to these main processes.

The main variables involved in his scheme include socioeconomic aspects (economic condition, educational attainment, urbanization), religious attitudes, demographic behaviors (birth rate), and identificational correlates of demographic trends (rates of intermarriage and conversion). By collating the relevant indicators for Jews in different countries, Ruppin suggested a four-fold partition of the 12 million Jews that lived at the

⁸ See on these issues M.C. Waters, *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990; M. Bozorghmehr, *Internal Ethnicity: Armenian, Bahai, Jewish and Muslim Iranians in Los Angeles*, Los Angeles, University of California, 1992 (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation); S. DellaPergola, G.Sabagh, M.Bozorghmer, C.Der-Martirosian, S.Lerner, "Hierarchic Levels of Subethnicity: Near Eastern Jews in the U.S., France and Mexico, *Sociological Papers*, Vol. 5, n. 2, 1996, pp. 1-42.

⁹ A.Ruppin, *Der Juden der Gegenwart*, Berlin, Calvary, 1904; A.Ruppin, *The Jews of To-Day*, New York, Henry Holt, 1913.

beginning of the century. Each section was typically represented by Jews in a particular geographical area or social class within geographic partition:

1. about one half (6 millions, mostly in East Europe) included the great mass of Jews in Russia and Galicia; workmen artisans and shopkeepers without means and of uncertain livelihood, educated in the *heder*, religiously Orthodox, with high birth-rates (30-40 per thousand Jews), and virtually no out-marriage and conversion from Judaism;
2. about one in four (3 millions, including the new immigrants in England and America, as well as Romanian Jews) consisted of artisans and merchants of modest but settled living, educated in Jewish elementary schools, religiously liberal, with moderate birth-rates 25-30 per thousand), and incipient rates of out-marriage (2-10%) and conversion (2-5 per 10,000 souls);
3. about one in six (2 millions, typically represented by German Jews) included the well-to-do bourgeoisie, educated in Christian elementary and secondary schools, religiously freethinking, still somewhat attached to Jewish culture, with lowering birth-rates (20-25 per thousand), and growing out-marriage (10-30%) and conversion (5-15 per 10,000);
4. finally, 1 million mostly composed the Jewish wealthy bourgeoisie in all the major towns, educated at public schools and universities, religiously agnostic, appeared on the verge of losing contact with any sense of Jewish identification, as shown by very low birth-rates (15-20 per thousand) and high rates of out-marriage (30-50%) and of conversion (15-40 per 10,000).

Ruppin's model, clearly implying a sequential-chronological evolution from the more traditional to the more assimilated types of Jewry, represents a significant statement about the supposedly unidirectional and irreversible nature of assimilation. Ruppin sees all major demographic, socioeconomic and identificational characteristics to be forming one cluster in which change in one variable tends to be synchronized with changes in each other variable. Geographical mobility, particularly movement from Eastern Europe to the west, and from small semi-rural settlements to large urban places, went hand in hand with general socioeconomic improvement, educational promotion, secularization, and declining demographic and cultural reproduction. A gradual transition is hypothesized from the one extreme of an ecologically segregated, poorly trained and economically marginal, religiously observant, and universally inbreeding Jewish community with high rates of demographic growth, to the opposite extreme of a wealthy, highly educated, geographically dispersed, agnostic, alienated and assimilated type with low or negative population balance.

In Ruppin's view, left to its own internal dynamics, the whole Jewish population would undergo the four stages of his assimilation cycle, down to the very end of complete disappearing. Besides a major reversal in the world societal conditions, which Ruppin considered unlikely, the major force able to reverse such a process would be Zionism. The new conditions expected to emerge in Palestine, such as return of the Jews to the land, a

closed Jewish economy, and the return to the Hebrew language, would create in his view the conditions to reverse the unavoidable erosion and demise of Diaspora Jewry.

One immediately apparent fact concerning the contemporary Jewish Diaspora is that many of the evolutionary trends devised by Ruppin do seem to have run their full course. The near totality of contemporary Jewish populations now live in large urban places. Levels of secular education have greatly improved, leading to academization of well above one half, and in some countries over 80% of the present young Jewish adult generation. Most of the Jewish labor force has been gradually but massively moving out of crafts and commerce, into management and the liberal professions. One of the most significant changes over the last century concerns the widespread improvement in health conditions and longevity. A further diffused transformation concerns the declining universality of the nuclear family, and has resulted in a generalized decline in birth rates. By and large, world Jewry (at least in the Diaspora) has become rather homogeneous with regard to its demographic patterns and socioeconomic characteristics. In spite of steady identificational erosion, numerically important and functioning Jewish communities do exist throughout the western world under conditions of modernity, whereas Ruppin's original approach would have predicted their disappearance. It seems therefore necessary to scrutinize further into the process of change affecting Jewish society in order to better assess its present trends and future prospects.

Milton Gordon

At the time of Ruppin's early writings, especially North America, but also Latin America and other western countries were in the process of absorbing mass immigration, and the respective Jews still carried many of the traits of the Jewish communities of origin in Eastern Europe, and to a lesser extent in the Middle East. Yet, Ruppin included Jewish immigrants in America and England in the *second* and incipiently modernizing section of his basic typology, thus implying that by the very process of geographical mobility and environmental change something became irreversibly modified in the original sociodemographic and cultural patterns of migrants. In his more mature writings of the early 1930s,¹⁰ Ruppin grasped some of the distinctive organizational and identificational traits of U.S. Jewry, by then already the largest community in the world. While recognizing the elements of diversity between the experience of American and European Jewish communities, most significantly German Jewry which constituted the fundamental platform of his analyses, Ruppin did not reserve to America a fundamentally different path in his assessment of the expected sociological evolution of Diaspora Jewry. By that he was taking

¹⁰ A. Ruppin, *Die Soziologie der Juden*, Berlin, Juedische Verlag, 1930-1931, Ch. 38.

an analytical stance which would become the object of a lively and still continuing debate.¹¹

It is precisely the analysis of the transformation of immigrant groups in the context of a veteran absorbing society that forms the object of a more systematic approach to the study of assimilation in America. The influential theory suggested by Milton Gordon in the early 1960s, while aiming to portray a general model of American society, provides an example still worth pondering in the contemporary Jewish context.¹²

Gordon suggested a model comprising seven different stages of assimilation, involving changes on the part of both the given immigrant group and the absorbing society. In the first part of his multi-stage model, which is the more immediately relevant to a discussion of changes occurring within the Jewish collective, Gordon looked at the assimilation process from the perspective of the assimilating group. He emphasized four distinct aspects:

1. *cultural assimilation*: adopting from the outside culture and society typical modes of daily presentation of self, language, communication and behavior, though still not touching the deeper layer of norms and values of one's own origin group;
2. *structural assimilation*: large scale entrance into associations with members of the majority of society or of other groups, in places of residence, occupations, political and cultural institutions, and similar frameworks;
3. *marital assimilation*: large scale formation of heterogamic marriages; and
4. *identificational assimilation*: adopting norms and values increasingly similar and eventually identical to those of the majority of society or of the particular groups which provide its leading role models.

These different processes were hypothesized to form a linear sequence of successive steps. It is immaterial, here, whether the sequence is seen as normatively good (as Gordon felt) or bad for the groups at stake or for society at large, and to what extent an ideological commitment to assimilate by the participants in the process would be a prerequisite to its final outcome. Merely focusing on the dynamics of the process, each stage was expected to constitute the necessary condition for the development of the next, until at some point the chain of assimilation was completed.

Observation of the American scene over the nearly forty years since Gordon's writing supports the conclusion that a greater variety of sequences and paths are possible within the overall process of assimilation. It has been proven possible to display high scores on one assimilation dimension without substantially becoming involved in the next one; or featuring frequent assimilation on a dimension supposedly coming later on the sequence, without yet having incurred substantial assimilation on an earlier dimension. A relevant case in point is frequent intermarriage

¹¹ S.M. Cohen, *American Assimilation or Jewish Revival?* Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1988.

¹² M.Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1964.

taking place in the presence of a substantial amount of social structural distinctiveness. In the U.S., persisting unique Jewish concentrations within distinctive geographical regions and residential areas, educational levels, occupational branches and specialization, and political or cultural organizations did not prevent the rate of intermarriage from reaching unprecedented levels during the late 1980s.

The fact that the predicted assimilation sequence may have been proven to be sometimes inconsistent or not true, however, does not detract from intermarriage to be a relevant indicator of assimilation, both a consequence of previous trends and a determinant of subsequent ones. Nor should Gordon's theory should be rejected altogether because of its partial fallacy. The recent findings in the U.S. and other countries data probably suggest that each of Gordon's four forms or stages of assimilation is better seen as a product and at the same time a determinant of each of the other three, rather than in linear sequence.

Gordon discussed the progressive disappearance of those barriers that prevent assimilation on the part of the host society in the later portion of his model. He distinguished between *attitude receptional* assimilation, *behavior receptional* assimilation, and *civic* assimilation. By that he meant the gradual to total disappearance of the legal, political and cultural obstacles that prevent full assimilation in complex modern societies.

While, then, pointing to the main stages and mechanisms of the gradual and virtual disappearing of distinctive groups in the context of American society, Gordon also indicated the main alternative models of the society that would emerge under the impact of diverse immigration. One, complete *segregation* of the different composing groups, along South-African *apartheid* lines, would appear to be undesirable and practically unfeasible for all purposes. Two significantly different alternatives, each implying nearly total loss of a separate group identity on the part of most, would be *Anglo conformity*—convergence toward the established patterns of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant group on the part of all other groups, and the *melting pot*—creation of a new unified social and cultural standard superseding all previous ones. As the relevance and feasibility of these two ideal models tends to diminish in front of the actual societal trends, the fourth theoretical alternative appears to be the more realistic, and perhaps also the most desirable. *Cultural-structural pluralism* implies a general process of Americanization on the part of all groups, while preserving some distinctive traits both regarding value orientations and population structural characteristics.

It is such intermediate situation that constitutes the real ground for the conflict between forces leading to assimilation and to continuity among Jewish communities in modern societies, primarily in the United States but also, with significant variations, in all other countries.

A Sociocultural Typology of Jewish Identification

The relationship between socioeconomic and ideational characteristics is a central aspect of both theories discussed so far. The contemporary sociodemographic characteristics of Jews basically conform the third and fourth stage of Ruppin's typology, and correspond to variable combinations of Gordon's second, third, and fourth stages. As already noted the deep and diffused transformation of Jewish social structure does not always or necessarily imply a parallel transformation in Jewish identification. At the same time, despite social structural homogenization, the amount of ideational-cultural differentiation within the contemporary Jewish population is still substantial. Patterns of social mobility have exerted visible effects on Jewish identification over time, but the relationship has worked the other way round, too. The noted convergence of many sociodemographic characteristics of Jews worldwide has prompted the expectation that social-structural similarity should enhance other, new forms of communal cohesiveness among the Jewish population.¹³ This tends to be true regarding Jewish social class concentration and a persisting distinctiveness in Jewish occupational distributions, but not necessarily in terms of the underlying patterns of Jewish identification.

It is probably correct to assume that most Jewish communities worldwide now experience a context of varying degrees of what has been defined as cultural-structural pluralism. Within such an assumption we turn to a re-evaluation of the main modes of cultural identification toward suggesting an updated cultural-identificational typology of world Jewry.

Jewish individual and Jewish community

We earlier mentioned *religion* as one of Ruppin's fundamental criteria for defining and measuring the intensity of Jewish identification. The sociocultural transformations that have occurred over the last several generations demand that we move beyond the concept of a one-dimensional variable displaying different intensities, from highest to lowest. In the context of widespread modernization and secularization, Jewish identification might possibly have evolved from one pattern, religion, to other patterns of a more secular nature, yet of no lesser intensity and significance for Jewish individual and collective continuity.

As a starting point we note that a person's Jewish identification can be expressed through *individual* beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, as well as by being part of a *collective* or community. We consequently define and briefly describe the two major alternatives to religion that have emerged for a positive and meaningful Jewish identification, and address further marginal situations now emerging at the periphery of group identification.

A first typical pattern of attachment to Judaism, defined here as *normative-traditional*, mainly expresses by holding a complex of particular beliefs, norms and values as well as consistently performing religious ritual practices. The latter are in a sense unnatural—a burden one takes upon oneself, not immediately and functionally related to some materially

¹³ C. Goldscheider, *Jewish Continuity and Change: Emerging Patterns in America*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1986.

defined (or economic) benefit. Judaism involves complying with relatively rigorous behavioral rules coupled with submitting self to possible sanction by a recognized authority or by the whole community. Numerous Jewish ritual acts require the presence of a quorum of other Jews. Active Jewish identification through religion hence necessarily involves simultaneously adhering to a unique complex of values, norms and behaviors, *and* belonging to an exclusive community of reference.

A second major mode of attachment to Judaism, here defined through a sense of shared *ethnicity* or *community*, typically consists of maintaining strictly or predominantly Jewish association networks, whereas in-group communication includes a far greater amount of spontaneous and non-specific cultural contents than would be the case with religion. Such an involvement with a Jewish collective, while involving at least some empathy for traditional Judaism, does not involve systematic adherence to Jewish peculiar beliefs and behaviors, nor clearly defined sanctions on the part of community in case of lack of compliance with such normative standards. A case in point is affiliation with a given Jewish *Landsmanshaftn*, or in a more recent context, Jewish Community Center. While participants tend to be exclusively or mostly Jewish, the contents of that interaction often incorporate a vast amount, if not an overwhelming majority of non-uniquely Jewish symbols and information. Jewish ethnic/communal identification may often involve the persistence of some element of religiosity, as shown by the diffuse though inconsistent presence of traditional observances among Jewish populations which on many accounts one would define as secular. This is why it seems justifiable to include in the *ethnicity/community* type of identification many Jews whose main attachment to Judaism is through a religious congregation. Where, as in the case of some contemporary non-orthodox congregations in the United States, the contents of collective interaction is transformed to incorporate large amounts of symbols and concepts taken from the outside, non-distinctively Jewish world, the sense of community is preserved indeed, but the element of religious, or in broader terms, cultural *exclusiveness* is lost.

Attachment to Judaism may still persist independently of a clearly recognizable pattern of personal behavior or associational involvement in the collective Jewish life. A person may display interest, curiosity and some knowledge in one's own Jewish historical past, tradition and culture. Knowledge of a Jewish language, extensive interest in Jewish scholarship, or even a sense of "home nostalgia", which once acquired may be indelible, may be cases in point. We define this third main mode of Jewish identification as a *cultural residue*. Viewed in this particular context, culture is a looser and subaltern concept, especially considering that most of those who display this mode of Jewish identification actually are illiterate in Jewish philosophy, Jewish literature, and out of Israel, the Hebrew language. A *cultural residue* therefore provides a more ambiguous and less binding parameter for defining Jewish identification, typical of the individual who is not affiliated with any Jewish community organization. It does not provide a mutually exclusive bond with regard to outsiders, as

may be the case with the *normative-traditional* and *ethnic community* types, and can be more easily acquired, shared, or lost. Sporadic elements of religion and of *ethnicity/community* involvement may accompany the *cultural residue* mode of Jewish identification which, however, is mostly expressed through individual intellectual or emotional attachment of variable and often quite low intensity.

Each of the three major modes of Jewish identification (*normative-traditional, ethnicity/community, cultural residue*) may be manifested through the whole gamut, from most to least intensive. Therefore, in terms of the identificational weakening typical of the assimilation process, each could theoretically be rated as a parallel, equally significant option. Passages of Jews from one mode of identification to another, which have occurred to a large extent in the course of the process of modernization and secularization, might be equated with a mere transformation of formal contents without impact on overall intensity. We shall nevertheless posit here that the different major patterns of Jewish identification can be arrayed on a hierarchic ranking. We interpret *normative-traditional* identification, involving exclusively Jewish individual attitudes and practice *and* an exclusively Jewish community of orientation, to be a stronger mode of Jewishness than *ethnicity/community*, which involves a (largely) exclusive community but no particular individual attitudes and practices. The latter, in turn, overpowers a Jewish identification consisting of a *cultural residue*, where neither element of particularistic individual practice or community of orientation is present.

The preceding discussion yields the following tabular classification of the major modes of Jewish identification:

Exclusively Jewish individual beliefs and practices	Exclusively Jewish community of orientation	
	Yes	No
Yes	<i>Normative-traditional</i>	x
No	<i>Ethnicity/community</i>	<i>Cultural residue</i>

In this scheme, an active expression of exclusively Jewish beliefs and practices at the individual level is not considered a realistic possibility in the absence of an exclusively Jewish community of orientation. However, in the changing context of western societies, and in the United States particularly, that alternative cannot be ruled out as impossible or inconsistent.

To these three major positive categories of Jewish identification, a fourth and weakest one should be added to take account of those Jews for whom *none* of the preceding modes and patterns of Jewish identification consistently apply. Some remnants of either three major modes may be present among Jews who belong to this fourth group. In practice, declining intensities of Jewish identification often tend to be compensated for by increasing identifications with alternative religious, ethnic, communal, or

cultural frames of reference. Otherwise, a weakened Jewish identification may simply be an indicator of a weaker overall sense of group identification among the relevant individuals. Many, indeed, while still formally belonging to a Jewish population, display weak or no attachment to Judaism coupled with a substantial presence of distinctively non-Jewish ritual behaviors and/or attitudes. The latter may reflect a person's increasingly non-Jewish proximate relational networks, or the active attempt to create a synthetic identificational solution (whether or not defined as religious syncretism). The existence of such *dual Jewish/non-Jewish* identities has been clearly documented in America through the 1990 NJPS.¹⁴ It has its counterpart among non-Jewish members of society who because of a previous Jewish background or current family attachments display some familiarity or interest toward Judaism.

One fundamental aspect of Jewish reality not adequately stressed by the typology just discussed, is the significant heterogeneity, differences, and sometimes cleavages that exist *within* each of the groups and categories of the model. Within-group cleavages and tensions may turn to be one of the most powerful elements of mobilization and of identity-definition.

The *normative-traditional* type, as defined here, is coherent if viewed from the outside, not necessarily so when viewed from the inside. It includes a variety of sub-groups separated by deep rivalries, antagonism, and even disagreement on fundamental issues of a religious nature, whose roots run deep in Jewish history and geography. In terms of inner coherence, the *ethnic/communal* type, too, may be quite fragmented and litigious. It manifests its Jewish allegiance through a variety of sub-ethnic cultural, political, or even economic-functional collective frameworks which may often shown to stand in mutual competition if not irreconcilable conflict. The *cultural residue* type is even less internally coherent, as each individual member is after his/her own particular incorporation of Jewish cultural elements within a world outlook dominated by general, non specifically Jewish individual behaviors and patterns of community association. The *dual Jewish/non-Jewish* type is by definition the least coherent, as it is dominated by a non-Jewish world of contents whose extension and variation is virtually infinite.

Nonetheless, we maintain that in term of the relationship between Jewish individual and Jewish community these *within-group* differences are of secondary importance when compared to *between-group* differences. Each of the populations, or evolutionary stages portrayed here, does share in its inside crucially important characteristics. These common patterns seem sufficiently strong to render the distinctions suggested analytically helpful in understanding the Jewish present and in projecting the Jewish future.

¹⁴ S.DellaPergola, "New Data on Demography and Identification among Jews in the U.S.: Trends, Inconsistencies and Disagreements", *Contemporary Jewry*, Vol. 12, 1991, pp. 67-97.

An attempt to quantify

Turning now to an attempt to translate the Jewish identificational categories mentioned above into rough quantitative estimates of contemporary Jewish populations, one has to compile the evidence from a large amount of sources. Quality and comparability of data is not always satisfactory.¹⁵ Data are available for Jews in the Diaspora thanks to the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) in the United States, a variety of other similar surveys in other countries, and Jewish institutional sources. Special attention should be paid to the substantial range of variation that prevails between Jewish communities worldwide. Our typology is based primarily on the frequencies reported regarding a variety of *actual Jewish behaviors*, especially observance of religious traditions and membership in Jewish organizations. Evidence on Jewish attitudes served as a complementary source for assessing the variation in modes of Jewish identification. Available data on ritual and other religious observance provide useful information to evaluate the number of the religiously identified. Significant country-by-country differences appear, although the ranking of Jewish rituals by observance frequencies tends to be quite similar in the various countries.

Clearly the presence of organized religion in Jewish community life tends to be greater in the United States than in the majority of other Diaspora communities, although this does not necessarily imply a particularly high frequency of religious behaviors.¹⁶ The presence of religion also tends to be greater in Great Britain¹⁷ than in France¹⁸ or most Latin American communities (with the partial exception of Mexico¹⁹), with Eastern Europe at the lowest end of the continuum. Concerning formal community affiliation, an important element in evaluating the number of Jews who mostly identify through an ethnic/communal mode, the percentages affiliated may be as high as 90% in Mexico, about 70% in England, less than 40% in France, between less than 20% and more than 70% in different cities in the United States, and, until recently, close to nil in the former USSR.

Our analysis tried to assess the presence of different combinations of religious observance, community affiliation, and other cognitive or

¹⁵ U.O.Schmelz and S.DellaPergola, "World Jewish Population 1992", *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol. 94, 1994, pp. 465-489. The data reported below, although quite dated, serve for illustrative purposes.

¹⁶ C.S.Liebman and S.M.Cohen, *Two Worlds of Judaism: The Israeli and American Experiences*, Yale University Press, 1990; B.A.Kosmin and S.P.Lachman, *One Nation Under God: Religion in Contemporary America*, New York, Harmony Books, 1993.

¹⁷ S.Miller, M.Schmool, A.Lerman, *Social and Political Attitudes of British Jews: Some Key Findings of the JPR Survey*, London, Institute for Jewish Policy Research, 1996.

¹⁸ D.Bensimon and S.DellaPergola, *La population juive de France: sociodémographie et identité*, Jerusalem, The Hebrew University, and Paris, CNRS, 1984; E.H.Cohen, *L'Etude et l'éducation juive en France ou l'avenir d'une communauté*, Paris, Les Editions du Cerf, 1991.

¹⁹ S.DellaPergola and S.Lerner, *La comunidad judia de Mexico: perfil demografico, social y cultural*, Mexico/Jerusalem, Universidad Hebrea de Jerusalem, El Colegio de Mexico, Asocxiacion Mexicana de Amigos de la Universidad de Jerusalem, 1995.

attitudinal aspects of Jewishness among each major contemporary Jewish population. In the case of the United States, which numerically dominates the Diaspora totals, preference for and affiliation with the major Jewish denominational movements (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform) was carefully considered in relation to actual religious practices and other aspects of Jewish identification. The respective estimates were obtained by carving out of each denomination the sub-population which appeared to fit better with each mode of identification according to our typology.²⁰ Thus, for example, our estimate of the normatively-traditionally identified in the US includes persons who identify with any of the three major religious denominations, but with different and declining proportions of each group. Interestingly, our overall classification of the modes of Jewish identification in the US conforms *ex-post-facto* with the 1990 NJPS finding that American Jews believe they are, in descending order, first a cultural group, second an ethnic group, and third a religious group.²¹ Changes in the relative importance of identificational modes appear throughout the Jewish world, in Israel and in the Diaspora.

Recent evidence on the modes of Jewish identification in Israel was provided by a national survey of family formation and fertility²² and by a national survey on beliefs, observances and social interaction among Israeli Jews.²³ Additional evidence was gathered through data on enrollment in the different religious and lay sectors of the Israeli educational system, and by analyzing the returns at recent Israeli political elections in conjunction with the stance of each party concerning religious and national issues.²⁴ The dual-Jewish/non-Jewish category in Israel reflects the presence of the more marginally identified sections among recent immigrants from the former USSR.

Regarding the early 1990s, based on these admittedly tentative evaluations, we may evaluate at about 2 millions the number of Jews whose main mode of identification is *normative-traditional* involving active religious participation, half of which in Israel (see Table 1). The largest number, possibly approaching 6 million of Jews globally, fitted the *ethnicity/ community* identificational mode. Within this sub-total, the largest section was represented by mainstream Jews in the state of Israel who, while basically secular, tend to maintain a visible amount of traditional practices and have incorporated them into a predominantly ethnic/national mode of Jewish identification. Over 4 millions, mostly communally unaffiliated Jews in the Diaspora, appeared to keep at least

²⁰ U.Rebhun, "Trends in the Size of American Jewish Denominations: A Renewed Evaluation", *CCAR Journal: A Reform Jewish Quarterly*, Winter 1993, pp. 1-11.

²¹ Kosmin et al., cit.; S.DellaPergola, "New data", cit.

²² I.Adler and E.Peritz, "Religiosity and Fertility among Jewish Women in Israel" in S.DellaPergola and J.Even (eds.), *Papers in Jewish Demography 1993 in Memory of U.O.Schmelz*, Jerusalem, The Hebrew University, 1997, pp. 381-392.

²³ S.Levy, H.Levinsohn, E.Katz, *Beliefs, Observances and Social Interactions among Israeli Jews*, Jerusalem, The Louis Guttman Israel Institute of Applied Social Research, 1993.

²⁴ U.O.Schmelz, S.DellaPergola, U.Avner, *Ethnic Differences Among Israeli Jews: A New Look*, Jerusalem, The Hebrew University, 1991.

some residual elements of a cultural attachment to Judaism. Close to one million Jews carried a *dual Jewish/non-Jewish* identity.

(About here Table 1)

Table 1 also presents tentative Jewish identificational profiles for Israel and for each of the major communities of the Diaspora. Significant variation can be observed or at least inferred from the existing data. While the deep differences that exist between national contexts should be kept in mind, in the United States, France, Russia, Hungary, and Belarus the predominant mode of Jewish identification was estimated to be the *cultural residue*. Low or very low levels of Jewish community affiliation prevailed in those diverse countries. An important distinction, however, is that whereas in the United States the Jewish cultural residue is often channeled into some forms of institutional religion, in most other countries the more relevant identificational options tend to be political and civic. The *ethnicity/community* mode tended to prevail, besides Israel, in Canada, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Germany and Mexico. The emphasis in Jewish communities in Latin America, and to some extent in the countries of the former British Commonwealth on strong Jewish sports, leisure and cultural centers, as well as the persistency of Jewish sub-ethnic communities²⁵ are important manifestations of the predominant mode of Jewish identification there.

By comparing estimates for the early 1990s with those for the beginning of the century,²⁶ it becomes clear how greatly the normative-traditional mode of Jewish identification has declined in the Diaspora. Conversely, both the intermediate and weaker modes of Jewish identification have become more typical. The *Shoah*, with its disastrous consequences for Jewish population, accounts for most of these changes. Further significant changes are related to gradual transformations in the Jewish identification of contemporary communities. The emergence of Israel's presence in the contemporary world is felt through the distinctive Jewish environmental conditions it created, and the reinforcement of an essentially ethnic/national/communal mode of Jewish identification, rather than by enhancing the religious mode of Jewish identification which predominated in the past in the Diaspora.

Israel's role

How can we reconcile in one and the same typology the substantially different parameters of a Jewish majority in a sovereign state with those of relatively small and dispersed Jewish minorities? In the first place, Israel's double role as a builder of Jewish identity should be mentioned:

1. as one of the most powerful symbolic poles of reference of contemporary Jewish identity, hence a strengthening element in the collective existence of the Jews;
2. as an existential option for the Jews, as such to be judged in terms of its own reality.

²⁵ DellaPergola, Sabagh et al., cit.

²⁶ A.Ruppin, *Der Juden*, cit.

Focusing on this second respect, interestingly, the major change introduced by Israel's presence in the identificational sociology of world Jewry seems to operate via a *social-structural* mechanism rather than through *cultural-identificational* distinctiveness. Each of the four different modes of Jewish identification we assessed may and in fact does exist in Israeli society, as it does in the Diaspora. While specific elements of the identificational and cultural experience of Jews in Israel and elsewhere may be different,²⁷ the main typological categories equally apply in Israel and in the Diaspora. Differences concern more the relative weight of each identificational type rather than the existence in Israel of an entirely innovative type of identity that could not be derived or adapted from the pre-Israeli Jewish experience.

What instead appears to be decisively innovative and mutually exclusive as against situations known from the Diaspora's experience is an entirely new level of what we may define *ecological density*. Jews in Israel not only have achieved a status of majority at the local level of residential neighborhood or even among all inhabitants of the respective towns, as frequently occurred in several Diaspora communities until World War I. Jews in Israel also constitute a very dense majority nationally to which they add the fundamental dimension of political sovereignty. For the purpose of our discussion, the critical manifestation of statehood as well as the quintessential instrument to express Jewish identificational preferences is an all-inclusive, integrated, pluralistic, competitive political system which provides the sole opportunity that exists today in any country or locale for *active and meaningful interaction among a whole Jewish population*. Such a measure of total participation in an activity of obviously Jewish as well as generally civic relevance cannot be ever achieved in the fragmented, sectorial, and voluntaristic organizational structure of Jewish communities prevailing in the contemporary Diaspora. In fact, the overwhelming diversity of existing Jewish organizations to a large extent reflects the different modes of identification (normative-traditional, ethnic/communal, cultural-residual, and even dual Jewish/non-Jewish) described above, and the separate and often conflicting needs of the respective Jewish constituencies.

Table 2 provides a synthesis of the main differences in the distribution of Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora, by main identificational modes. As noted, the more frequent type in Israel is *ethnicity/community*, followed at distance by *normative-traditional*, while for the aggregate of Diaspora Jewry it is *cultural residue*, closely followed by *ethnicity/community*. Israel held during the early 1990s about 34% of the total Jewish population globally, but its share of the two stronger identificational types was 50% or more, whereas it was only 10-12% of the two weaker types.

(About here Table 2)

Exploring the Contents of Jewish Identity

²⁷ C.Liebman and S.M.Cohen, *Two Worlds*, cit.

In the previous sections of this article we tried to grasp some of the fundamental transformations of Jewish society through a limited number of structural-functional variables, based on as representative as possible a sample of the Jewish population. The range of relevant indicators of Jewish identification was assumedly known, based on theoretical considerations and on previous research experience. Patterns and trends in Jewish identification were analyzed in relation to the reported behaviors and attitudes of the persons studied.²⁸

Recalling the conceptual distinctions in the introductory section, further attention needs to be paid to the contents aspects of Jewish identity. More than a question of quantity this is a matter of quality:

- What is Jewish and what is not Jewish in a person's or a group's total identity?
- Can a boundary be drawn between these various types of content?
- What is their respective position in the overall identificational configuration?

The matter investigated here is as large as possible a directory of the representations or shared cognitive systems stated or assumed to be Jewish, or at least relevant to Jews. Analysis focuses on mapping out the contents and boundaries of ideas and concepts expressed by members of the Jewish group. Emphasis here shifts from the actual frequencies of expressed concepts, beliefs or behaviors, to the mutual proximity and distance, central or peripheral position of these concepts beliefs and behaviors in the overall perception of the people investigated.²⁹

A first exploration is provided here of the possible internal structure of Jewish identification in Israel. Figure 3 presents the map of mutual relationships between 42 variables describing the importance of selected Jewish and Israeli values among a sample of students of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem during the late 1990's. While this is an admittedly limited set of data without any pretension at all in terms of representation, comparable results nicely fit the data of a large-scale survey conducted in 1991 by the Louis Guttman Israel Institute of Applied Social Research and

²⁸ One of the best studies based on such approach is S. Goldstein, C. Goldscheider, *Jewish Americans: Three Generations in a Jewish Community*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1968.

²⁹ S. Moscovici, "The Phenomenon of Social Representations" in R. Farr, S. Moscovici (eds.) *Social Representations*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 3-70.

therefore are worth examining.³⁰ The technique used for data analysis is Smallest Space Analysis (SSA-I).³¹

(About here Figure 3 and List of variables)

At the center of the configuration of value contents we find the integrative concept of "being an Israeli". Several possible interpretative keys help us in reading this map. The first is possible similarities between the 42 detailed values examined here (see appended list). Indeed, several such clusters appear showing similarity if not identity between the intrinsic contents of the respective questions. For example seven of the questions describe Jewish religious values and behaviors that appear to be highly intercorrelated. This means that respondents tend to attribute the same amount of importance (whether very high, intermediate, or very low) to all seven, as if they were one. Three further questions relate to the importance of Jewish study draw very similar answers, in turn very proximate to Jewish religious beliefs and practices. Other neighboring clusters refer to the importance of various aspects of Jewish family life and the lifecycle, including attitudes and practices related to different stages from circumcision to *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, marriage, and death; being Jewish and part of the Jewish people; and the observance of Jewish festivals. There appears, therefore, to be a highly coherent complex of ancient Jewish beliefs and behaviors inclusive of God, the Jewish people, religious

³⁰ Based on a representative sample of 2,399 individuals. See Levy, Levinsohn, Katz, cit.. The results of our unrepresentative sample are nearly identical to those of Levy et al. regarding the representation of their choice of 31 Jewish identification items. In our present study we selected 23 of these indicators and added 19 further items that were not included in Levy et al., thus obtaining our list of 42 items. The coefficient of alienation mentioned at the bottom of Figure 3 indicates the amount of information lost in translating a matrix of statistical correlations into a two-dimension map. The value shown (.202) is reasonably low.

³¹ L. Guttman, "A General Nonmetric Technique for Finding the Smallest Coordinate Space for a Configuration of Points", *Psychometrika*, Vol. 33, 1968, pp. 469-506. SSA theory and technique allow uncovering latent structures underlying a set of variables—hence the development of interpretative hypotheses about their meaning. The SSA-I computer program generates a two- (or higher order) dimension graphic plot of the correlation matrix of the different variables selected for a given analysis. Each variable on the plot is represented by one point. Reflecting similarity or dissimilarity in answers provided by the studied population, the stronger the correlation between two variables, the closer the two points representing those two variables will appear on the plot. Each bivariate correlation also accounts for relationships with and between all other variables examined. Two variables for which the studied population displays identical distributions will be plotted one on top of the other; diametrically opposed distributions will be plotted at most distant points. Intermediate correlation will be plotted accordingly. A variable more or less similarly correlated with all other variables, and therefore having a character of centrality or consensus, will appear close to the center of the plot. Such variable is usually defined as the *origin* of the configuration. Examining proximity and distance between different variables on such mapping allows for analytically understanding the degree of similarity or dissimilarity that exists between relevant concepts through the empirical study of an actual population. It becomes thus possible to validate pre-existing hypotheses or to formulate new ones with regard to the optimal partition of a set of variables into major types. The nature and relative position of these analytical divisions provides important insights into the topic investigated.

practices and symbols, Jewish calendar observance, study of sacred texts, and Jewish family customs.

A further cluster in Figure 3 can be defined in relation to helping the needy, contributing to Jewish charity (*Tzedakah*), and volunteering for the community. Interestingly, the Hebrew wording in the questionnaire renders the first a more secular, and the second a more traditional expression of a similar Jewish concern for mutual responsibility. Plotting of the respective variables is consistent with this distinction. Further clusters concern different aspects of social harmony (between religious and secular, between different *edoth* or Jewish ethnocultural communities); individualistic gratification; civic values; personal achievement; and peace.

Looking again at the central portion of the configuration, the basic value of Israeliness is closest to serving in the Israeli Army and to using Hebrew language and appreciating the Hebrew culture. These values form a cluster at the center of the configuration and thus appear to represent the closest approximation to a general consensus among the more religious and the more secular Jewish and Israeli value options.

A second key to reading the map is the distance from the center of the various identificational options considered. Greater centrality of a value means it is more accepted by a larger variety of people; the more peripheral means it is highly valued by a certain sector of the public but also most distant and antagonistic in the eyes of another sector. This is most evident when looking at the extremes on the vertical axis: at the top hand stands the importance to belong to an *edah*—an expression of sociocultural separatism; at the bottom hand stands the importance of peace between *edoth*—an expression of sociocultural integration. Examining what stands closer to the center, clearly bland expressions of traditionalism such as celebrating Jewish Holidays in any way, or forming a family are more widely accepted than more demanding norms such as having a religious burial or study Talmud. Comparatively central in the value system of young Israelis are also the importance to live in Israel or to "love your neighbor", take care of the environment, and succeed in your studies.

The same data also aptly catch the recent polarization in Israeli public discourse between standing for the current peace process versus developing a traditionally coherent approach to Jewish identity and experience. While there is no easy compromise between these two ideal aspirations, the same map provides an interesting indication of how a greater mutual understanding between the opposed camps might be worked out by building on the common ground of widely shared national and cultural Israeli values.

Hence, a third reading key emerges. Looking again at the whole map of values, it appears it can be partitioned into three main components:

1. values and patterns *exclusive* and *particularistic* of the Jewish people and its historical and cultural experience, with a shared element of religious traditionalism;
2. values reflecting Jewish and Israeli *national* and *community* oriented concerns, to some extent derived from the previous ones

(love your neighbor, Hebrew language, live on the land of Israel) but also independently framed in a modern secular context;

3. values of a *personal* and at the same time *universalistic* character, i.e. not specifically rooted in the Jewish tradition or the Israeli experience, though highly relevant to both.

The relationship between Jewish traditionalism and secularism is further clarified by this simplified classification of the map of values, as perceived by young Israeli adults. A traditional Jewish identification emphasizes concern with the Jewish collective and especially with a universe of timeless Jewish values. A secular attitude, consonant with being far removed from religious observance, is more strongly correlated with a concern with self-fulfillment, personal achievement, and general civic values, including support for the peace process.

Reading this map in historical perspective, its three sections can be construed to illustrate a time-oriented process. Identificational change involves a transition from primarily adhering to a complex of original, particularistic, exclusive, Jewish values, through emphasizing the national, social and cultural uniqueness of the Jewish collective as a community and a sovereign country, to adopting self- and collective-oriented values that, while not incompatible with Judaism and Jewishness, appear to be the commonly shared ideals in most modern secular societies. The same reasoning seems to confirm the already noted notion of assimilation as the substitution of a new set of values, attitudes and behaviors instead of an earlier one. The transformation of Jewish identity in Israel may therefore have important commonalities with the process of assimilation among Diaspora Jews, in spite of the fundamental differences in social organization, Jewish density and political options that characterize the two fundamental segments of the Jewish people.

Conclusions

It is quite obvious that taxonomic exercises like those presented here cannot pretend at any degree of precision and only can be suggestive of very broad trends. We have emphasized, and we reiterate here, that from the point of view of identificational patterns Jewish society cannot be separated into discrete categories but rather constitutes a highly dynamic and fluid continuum. Passages from any to any another status and category are easy and frequent, occur in any direction, and in fact may be repeatedly experienced by the same individual over lifetime, or even under the impact of circumstances occurring at any given moment.

Different ways of handling the concepts and data we tried to muster may conceivably produce somewhat different results.³² More importantly, while the identificational patterns and categories discussed in this paper refer to very broad concepts, only some tentative exploration was attempted of the ideal and symbolic cultural contents of Jewish identity.

³² See, e.g., S.M.Cohen, *Contents and Continuity? Alternative Bases for Commitment; The 1989 National Survey of American Jews*, New York, The American Jewish Committee, 1991.

These too, it should be stressed, are subject to change over time, among other things because of the strengthening or weakening of the various identificational types discussed above.

One final point to be noted is the ongoing demographic changes reflecting Israel's Jewish increase through immigration and natural increase, versus decline in the Diaspora through a combination of infrequent Jewish marriage, increasing intermarriage, low fertility, and population aging. Israel weight among the total of world Jewry is thus increasing and might conceivably approach a majority of all Jews in the course of the 21st century.³³

Beyond these imponderables, clearly the diversity of existing patterns of Jewish identification is a central feature of the contemporary Jewish reality. Such diversity is the current result of prolonged trends that in many ways and following different conceptual paths (some of which have been outlined here) can be broadly projected toward the future. Jewish identificational diversity must also be recognized and appreciated from the perspective of the practical work of Jewish organizations, especially those that try to educate and mobilize large sections of the Jewish public, and seek for relevant commonalities within it. Identificational diversity will heavily influence the character of the transition of contemporary Jews to a next generation, the chances of Jewish continuity in longer-term perspective, and the likelihood of a (minimum) cultural consensus being maintained among and between Jews in Israel and in Jewish communities throughout the world.

Regarding the inherent values, the data and interpretation presented above suggest how Jewish identification should not be perceived as an amorphous block but rather as a multifaceted complex of complementary if sometimes contradictory options. Some of these options significantly overlap within the Jewish population, while some constitute powerful determinants of internal conflict. The ability to locate the existing factors of consensus and to bridge over the conflicts which clearly exist within Jewish society by developing consensus may have crucial consequences in the effort aimed at enhancing Jewish identification and continuity.

³³ S. DellaPergola, U. Rebhun, M. Tolts, "Prospecting the Jewish Future: Population Projections 2000-2080", *American Jewish Year Book*, 100, 2000, pp. 103-146.

TABLE 1. MAIN MODES OF JEWISH IDENTIFICATION, BY MAIN COUNTRIES, ROUGH ESTIMATES, EARLY 1990s

Country ^a	Total thousands	Total %	Normative/traditional	Ethnicity/community	Cultural residue	Dual Jewish/non-Jewish
World total, thous.	13,000		2,000	6,000	4,000	1,000
World total, %		100	15	46	31	8
Israel	4,400	100	23	63	12	2
United States	5,620	100	10	35	45	10
France	530	100	15	25	55	5
Russia	415	100	1	36	50	13
Canada	356	100	20	50	20	10
United Kingdom	298	100	27	44	27	2
Ukraine	276	100	3	52	35	10
Argentina	211	100	10	57	28	5
Brazil	100	100	15	60	20	5
South Africa	100	100	15	65	20	-
Australia	90	100	15	60	25	-
Hungary	56	100	12	33	45	10
Germany	50	100	10	40	30	20
Belarus	47	100	5	40	45	10
Uzbekistan	45	100	33	33	33	1
Mexico	40	100	38	50	12	-
Rest of Diaspora	366	100	16	30	39	15

a. Jewish populations in the Diaspora ranked by size. Jewish populations as in Schmelz and DellaPergola, "World Jewish Population", cit., 1994.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF MAIN MODES OF JEWISH IDENTIFICATION, ISRAEL AND DIASPORA JEWRY, ROUGH ESTIMATES, EARLY 1990s

Type	World Total	Israel	Diaspora	% in Israel
Total	13,000,000	4,500,000	8,500,000	34.6
Normative/traditional	2,000,000	1,100,000	900,000	55.0
Ethnicity/community	6,000,000	2,800,000	3,200,000	46.7
Cultural residue	4,000,000	500,000	3,500,000	12.5
Dual Jewish/non-Jewish	1,000,000	100,000	900,000	10.0

FIGURE 1. DEFINITIONS IN JEWISH IDENTITY/IDENTIFICATION RESEARCH

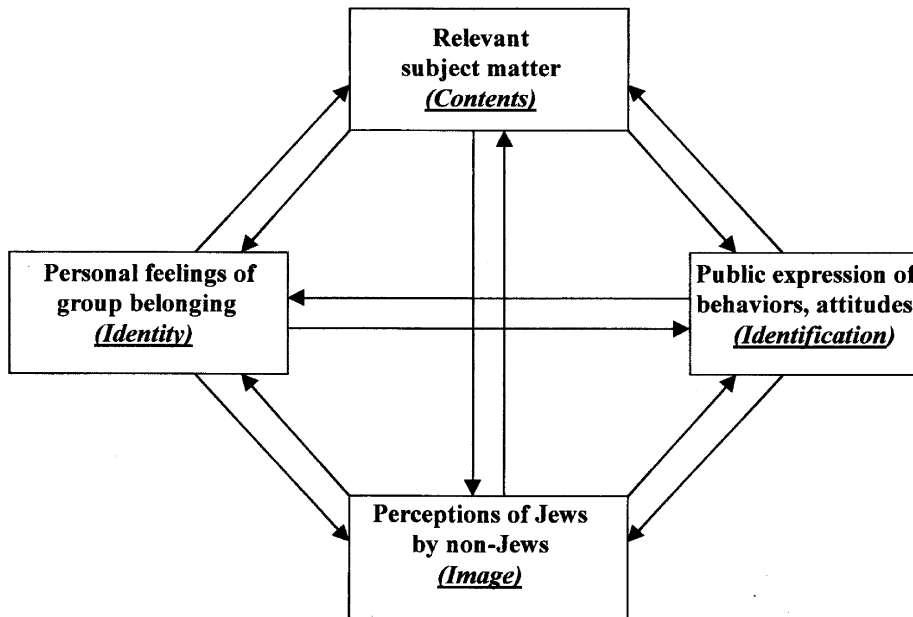


FIGURE 2. EXAMPLES OF OVERLAP BETWEEN MAJOR IDENTIFICATIONAL OPTIONS

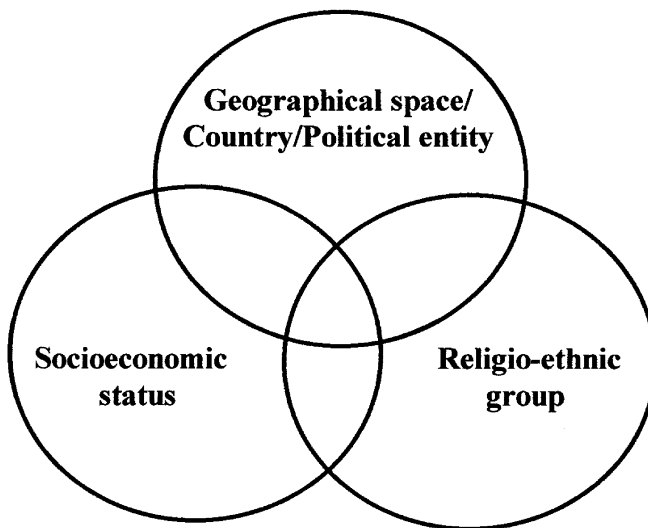
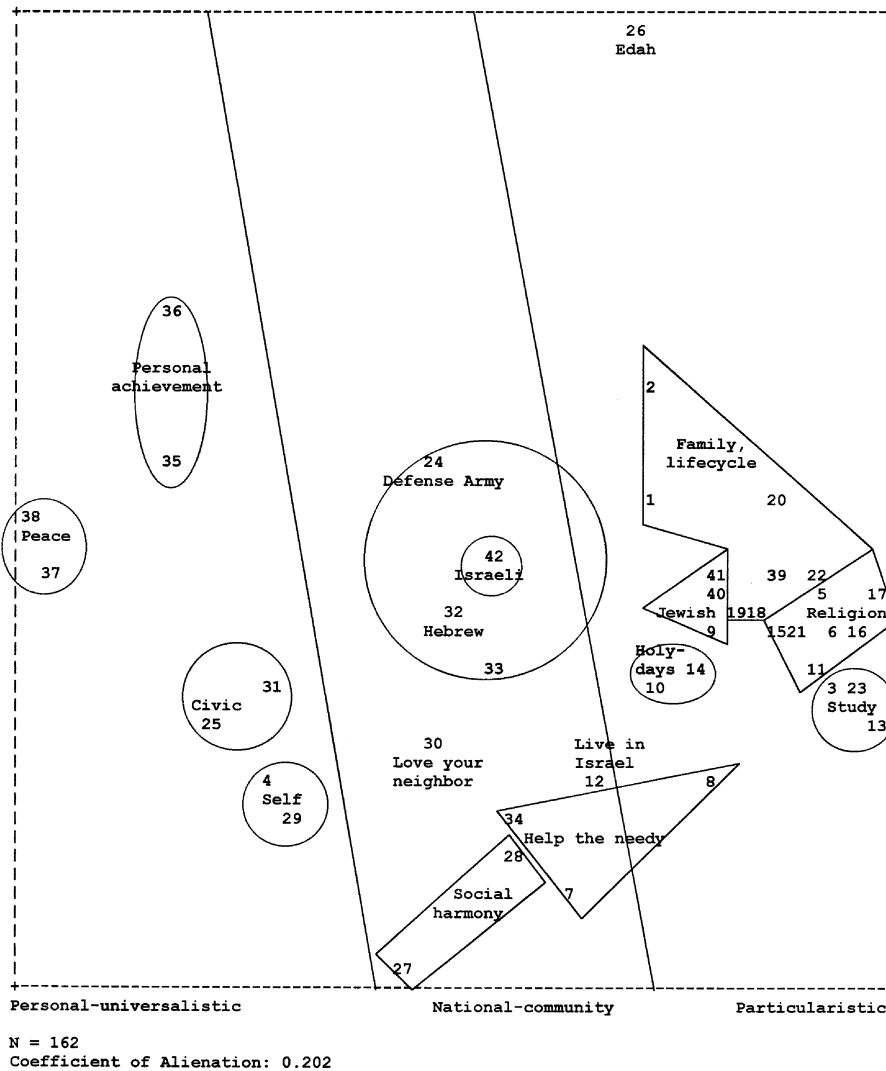


FIGURE 3. SMALLEST SPACE ANALYSIS OF IMPORTANCE OF JEWISH AND ISRAELI VALUES AMONG HEBREW UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, 1996-2000



List of Variables in Figure 3

1. Form a family	22. Have a religious burial
2. Honor parents	23. Study Torah
3. Study Tanach	24. Serve in the Israel Defense Forces
4. Be at peace with oneself	25. Pay income tax as due
5. Believe in God	26. Belong to an Edah (Jewish origin group)
6. Be a religious person	27. Peace among Edoth in Israel
7. Help the needy	28. Peace among religious/secular in Israel
8. Give to Tzedaka	29. Be a decent person
9. Feel part of the Jewish people	30. Love your neighbor
10. Celebrate Jewish holidays in any way	31. Take care of your environment
11. Celebrate Jewish holidays traditionally	32. Speak Hebrew
12. Live in Israel	33. Strengthen Hebrew culture
13. Study Talmud	34. Volunteer for the community
14. Participate in the Seder of Pesach	35. Succeed in your studies
15. Fast on Yom Kippur	36. Succeed economically
16. Observe the Shabbat	37. Peace between Israel and its neighbors
17. Observe Kashrut at home	38. Peace between Jews and Arabs
18. Circumcise male children	39. The Patriarchs Tombs be in Israel's hands
19. Have Bar-Mitzvah	40. The Wailing Wall be in Israel's hands
20. Have Bat-Mitzvah	41. Be a Jew
21. Not to marry with non-Jews	42. Be an Israeli