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RESUMEN / ABSTRACT:

Este capítulo parte del andamiaje conceptual provisto por las categorías de diáspora y transnacionalismo como parámetros para explicar y comprender la nueva dispersión global de los judíos latinoamericanos en Estados Unidos así como las transformaciones que tienen lugar en la vida judía en dicho país y en sus países de origen. Las nuevas corrientes migratorias arrojan luz sobre los ciclos recurrentes de integración y distintividad que acompañan a las nuevas poblaciones que se incorporan a la dinámica global de la transmigración y caracterizan su conversión de diásporas etno-nacionales en transnacionales. El caso analizado, si bien es singular, exhibe características generalizadas que contribuyen a redefinir el carácter y significado de las etnicidades transnacionales en contextos más amplios. Por medio del análisis de la migración y reubicación de la vida colectiva a través de la dinámica incorporación-integración-continuidad, este capítulo busca contribuir a esclarecer ciertos dilemas conceptuales y metodológicos que enfrentan las ciencias sociales. Los avances empíricos y conceptuales aportan a superar la pérdida de relevancia del caso judío en los estudios de diáspora, al tiempo que en los estudios transnacionales, se ha debilitado el análisis del "boundary-maintenance" y de la densidad institucional diaspórica que preserva la identidad grupal.

This article finds in the analytical dimensions implied in the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism meaningful parameters to explain and understand the new global dispersion of Latin American Jews in the United States as well as the transformations that take place in Jewish life in North America and in their countries of origin. The new migratory flows shed light on the recurrent cycles of integration and distinctiveness that accompany new populations that are incorporated into the global dynamics of transmigration and characterize their conversion from ethno-national diasporas into transnational ones. Though the case analyzed is unique, it exhibits general characteristics that contribute to redefine the character and meaning of transnational ethnicities in broader contexts. Through the analysis of migration and relocation of collective life through the dynamics incorporation-integration-continuity, this chapter seeks to help clarify certain conceptual and methodological dilemmas facing the social sciences.
The empirical and conceptual advances presented aim at contributing to overcome the loss of relevance of the Jewish case in Diaspora Studies, while in the field of Transnational Studies, the analysis of "boundary-maintenance" and the diasporic institutional density that preserves the group identity have been minimized.

RESEARCH IN JEWISH DEMOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY

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Transnational Expansions of Latin American Jewish Life in Times of Migration: A Mosaic of Experiences in the United States[1]

Judit Bokser Liwerant

Introduction

"Diaspora" and "transnationalism" are relevant conceptual keys for understanding the patterns of global dispersion and local intersections of Latin American Jews. In this article, I specifically address this topic in relation to Latin American Jews living in the United States. Emigration of Jews from Latin America to the United States is part of a larger, global phenomenon of unexpected scope—world stock migration having grown from 75 million in 1965 to 150 million in 1990, 175 million in 2000 and 232 million in 2013. United Nations identified 37 million of Latin Americans living outside the region in 2013; 11 million more than in 2000.

Mapping this migratory movement will also allow us to register some of the changes occurring in Jewish life in North America today. In that connection, Latin American Jewish migration to the United States sheds light on recurring cycles of integration and distinctiveness, as new populations take part in the wider dynamics of (trans)migration, cultural pluralization, and communal re-formation.

The case at hand, albeit singular in certain respects, exhibits traits that may help us to redefine the character and significance of transnational ethnicities in a broader sense. It enables us to grapple with issues that have developed in scholarly discourse and to fill in some gaps. Jews are comparatively understudied in contemporary diaspora research, where

[1] Initial elaborations of this research were published in 2013 under the title "Latin American Jews in the United States: Community and Belonging in Times of Transnationalism," *Contemporary Jewry, 33 (2013)* (1-2): 121-143. Cfr. Also "Jewish Diaspora and Transnationalism. Awkward (Dance)Partners?, *Reconsidering Israel- Diaspora Relations*, Eliezer Ben Rafael et al (edit.), Brill, 2014: 367-404.

they seem to have lost their historical resonance (Brubaker 2005). This article affords an opportunity to redress that imbalance.

Similarly, there is a relative dearth of discourse about communal institutional underpinnings in the available literature on transnational social relations. Such studies tend to focus primarily on individuals and their globalized networks, without always affording sufficient attention to the group-maintenance structural strategies deployed by these people in their new homes (Schiller et al. 1995; Levitt and Waters 2002; Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt 1999; Pries 2008; Bokser Liwerant-Senkman 2013). I hope, therefore, to reaffirm an affinity and a new balance between ethnicity studies and transnational studies.

The Latin American Jewish case is an apt choice in that regard, for Latin American Jewish immigrants in the United States have invested strongly in establishing the institutional supporting structures for a collective identity. Individuals interact at the communal level in dense and stable associational venues (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988). These resources elaborate and re-orient organized Jewish life. Moreover, as we will see, this relatively high degree of formalization and institutionalization is supra-local; that is, this group's organizations and institutions embrace far more than local communal needs and attachments. The patterns observed among the migrants echo practices in the home communities in Latin America, where Jewish communal life has been characterized by strong collective historical bonds that transcend national borders and find expression in diasporic and transnational practices.

I will, therefore, argue that the case at hand can mediate between discourses of national (nation-state and political) migration studies, on the one hand, and individual or family-based migration and transmigration studies, on the other (Beck 2007; Amelina Nergiz, Faist, and Schiller 2012; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999).

While derived from diverse theoretical traditions, both "diaspora" and "transnationalism" point to processes that reflect a world system that is increasingly interconnected (Faist 2010). Certainly, massive and diversified migration flows, transnational networks, and social, economic, political and cultural interconnectedness signify reordered territorial spaces and redefined ascriptions, belongings, and identities. We observe the partial de-territorialization of mobile social communities and the resulting porousness of cultural and geographical borders. In

the matrices of these transnational networks, we see that new, overlapping social circles (or spaces) are elaborated and bolstered (Khagram and Levitt 2008; Vertovec 1999). Thus, mobile diasporas and their construction of transnational social spaces express (as both cause and effect) the heightening of global and multicultural diversity at macro and micro levels. If current migratory experiences persist, they may require us to revise classic assimilation theories. Such models often posited a gradual relaxing or reshaping of the social and cultural boundaries of migrants vis-à-vis the absorbing society, mostly in the sense of boundary erasure. In our case, group members' responses to the migrant experience illustrate a new dynamic, in which boundary reinforcement or even new boundary creation may take place. Thus, migrant Jews from Latin America are acquiring new perspectives and postures vis-à-vis their new country and vis-à-vis their countries origin and their "primordial" identities. By referring to their simultaneously Jewish and Latin-American affinities, we also take stock of the interplay of multiple identities: Jewish, national (country of origin), new country or city of relocation, and transnational identities.

Historically, Latin American Jewry (aggregating discrete communities in Central and South America) was established by large-scale immigration, mainly from Europe but also from North Africa, especially in later times. Typically, first-generation Jewish immigrants in Latin American countries established highly differentiated patterns of mutual social ties and community organization—the kehillah (Hebrew and Yiddish)—embedded within the larger national society and expressing the unique dynamics of transnational interconnections across the Jewish world. Succeeding generations have replicated much of this pattern, with varying degrees of success.

However, during the last few decades, the net direction of migration tended to be from Latin America outward to other destinations. This pattern closely paralleled Latin American migration flows in general, as noted above. Over the past forty years, between 150,000 and 250,000 Jews from Latin American countries undertook cross-border migrations, both inside the region and outside of it. The great bulk of them have moved mainly to the United States and Israel, and to a lesser extent, to Canada or to countries in Western Europe, such as Spain (DellaPergola 2009; 2011). This has led to a significant drop in the number of Jews living in

Latin America from 514,000 in 1970 to 390,000 in 2010.[2] Estimates updated to 2011-2012 indicate that Jews currently residing either in Latin America or in an array of new destination countries total about 617,000 (defining "Jewish" by a core definition of birth and current identification), or 841,000 (an enlarged population, based on currently Jewish as well as currently non-Jewish members of Jewish households). Given those global figures, it appears that close to 36% or 37%, respectively, now live outside the region (DellaPergola 2011; 2012).

The size, timing, and social profile of migrant communities might be analyzed in terms of "waves" of migration, which in turn may be grouped under the heading of the Latin American region's "migration crises." This refers to emigration, dispersal, and regrouping of migrant communities shaped worldwide by macro-level forces, both political and economic (Van Hear, 1998). Successive migration crises affecting Latin Americans took place during the second half of the twentieth century. The first phase began with the Cuban revolution in 1959 and continued intermittently, chiefly during the 1970s in Chile under Allende's socialist government and later under the authoritarian regime of Pinochet (1973-1990). Emigration also ensued during the era of military dictatorships in Brazil (1964-1985), Argentina (1976-1983), and Uruguay (1973-1985). The later phases of the "migration crisis" (mid-1980s and the 1990s) were provoked by the combined effects of both neo-liberal economic policies and globalization affecting Argentina twice, as well as Uruguay. Colombian Jews emigrated during that period due to a generalized atmosphere of domestic violence. More recently (mainly since 2000), Jews of Venezuela have emigrated under the impact of the populist regime initiated by Hugo Chávez. Emigration from Mexico was rather stable during those decades.

Thus, economic and political change, combined with social instability, led to increasing emigration, reflecting both needs (push factors) and windows of opportunities. We should also understand these developments in the light of the particular socioeconomic stratification of Latin American Jews: they possess a high level of education, a strong presence in trade and commerce, a highly visible presence in manufacturing, and a significant presence in the free professions. These social

[2] Estimates vary between 227,500 based on the core population definition and 303,000 considering the enlarged population definition.

and occupational features were correlated with both advantages and liabilities inherent in a changeable political and economic climate.[3] As a result, over the course of two generations Latin American Jews have gone from being primarily communities of immigrants to being communities of locally-born citizens and, simultaneously, of expatriates and emigrants.

In a world in which residential mobility and expanded trends of trans-migration have attained mass levels, different mobile populations are characterized by multiple places of origin and destination. The United States has been the favorite choice of international migrants from different regions/countries, religious affiliations, and ethnicities. According to the US Census Bureau, nearly 40 million US residents were foreign-born in 2010.[4] Those born in Latin America and the Caribbean, who totaled 21,224,087, represented just over half of that migratory mosaic.[5] Newcomers from the region joined veteran immigrants as well as their offspring, including second and third generations.

Between 1990 and 2007, the number of emigrants from Latin American countries increased by 155% (from 1.9 to 4.9 million). Out of the 4.9 million, 4.2 million, or 84.3% of the total migrants from the

[3] If these crises largely explain the migration of Latin American Jews, serious political turmoil, violence, and economic changes operate selectively. Thus, how migration streams change sheds light on moments of migration transition. Sharp Jewish population decreases since the mid 1980s in Central-American countries are evident cases of relatively significant outflows. However, in the case of Guatemala, more than half of its population decided to stay in their homeland. Neighboring Costa Rica increased its Jewish population by two thirds since 1967 while Panama became a relocation country for small groups of Jews fleeing from other Central American countries. Argentina has experienced some of the sharpest political and economic crises, still hosts the largest Jewish population in the continent. Cf. Liwerant, DellaPergola, and Senkman, 2010.

[4] According to the Pew Forum (2010) there are 42.8 million migrants, including unauthorized immigrants and people born in the US territories. While the United States has taken in more immigrants than any other country, the share of the US population that is foreign-born (13%) is about average for western industrial democracies (Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life 2010).

[5] This figure contrasts with smaller migrant populations:11,283,574 from Asia, 4,817,437 from Europe and 1,606,914 from Africa. Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey.

region migrated to the United States[6] (Lozano and Gandini 2012). The United States, both because of its proximity to Latin America and its opportunities, attracts a significant number of professionally qualified migrants. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, there were 494,000 scientists from Latin American origin working in the United States; this number represents 15% of all foreigners incorporated into science and technology systems in the US (UNESCO 2010).[7] Within a region that ranks as the third-highest source of migrants in the world, we observe a bifurcation of migration: the increased mobility of qualified migrants coexists with large marginal sectors of non-skilled workers and agricultural laborers lacking formal education (so-called "red card" migrants) (Faist 2000; 2010).[8]

Latin American Jews are part of the cohort of qualified migrants who increasingly move to OECD countries.[9] The analysis that follows considers the gamut of experiences of Latin American Jews in North American society in terms of their integration and mobility in their new milieus and in terms of their socio-cultural distinctiveness—both with respect to their culture of origin and their Jewishness. Attention will be paid, as well, to the diverse character of the cities and regions in which they have relocated.

Just as in the cases of other transnational groups, Jews migrating across and out of Latin America are in the process of becoming both dispersed and regrouped simultaneously. In fact, we are witnessing the recovery of a historic trajectory of ethnic and ethno-national migration patterns (the Jewish Diaspora) and the pluralization of migrant

[6] Latin America and the Caribbean showed the highest levels of relative growth of qualified migrants to OECD countries, while the latter's migrant qualified population increased 111%, from 12.3 to 25.9 million.

[7] In 2007, 229 Mexicans, 180 Brazilians, 141 Argentines, and 121 Colombians obtained their PhD in the United States. In 2003, naturalized individuals or non-residents constituted 19% of those who had graduated with a PhD or engineers employed in the US.

[8] These flows are mainly associated to the logic of labor markets and fluid migration chains linking sending and receiving cities/countries amid an asymmetrical regionalization, that connect peripheral regions of the world economy to core regions of capital accumulation and development.

[9] The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), founded 1961, whose member countries include some of the world's leading economies and exhibit relatively high quality-of-life standards.

populations. This conjunction between two interrelated aspects implies both an enhancement of Jewish globalization and the reinforcement of particular, local aspects of the Jewish experience. This requires a dual terminology: Diaspora and transnationalism are related concepts that are applicable to the contemporary itinerary of Jewish dispersion in the "new global ethnic landscape," as Appadurai calls it. Latin American Jews move and stay, interact, and negotiate in a multi-level context of past and present trends in an interconnected Jewish world. Redefining and reconnecting their attachments, these migrants are involved in processes of *Diaspora making* and *Diaspora un-making*. Diverse scenarios are available to them as they experience de-socialization from their country and community of origin, and re-socialization in the country and community of destination (Van Hear 1998).

Mobility and relocation set the stage for the potential reconstitution of an enlarged, redefined ethno-religious and national/transnational Diaspora. Latin Americans Jews do not simply replicate social relations transferred from country of origin to destination society (Levitt 2001; Nonini 2002); rather, their subjective and socially expressed experiences are quite diverse. Boundary maintenance between origin-groups may be complicated (undercut, refracted, blurred) by interactions and by the plausibility of multiple identities: a sense of being Latin American may thus co-exist simultaneously with a sense of being Jewish, Colombian, Mexican, or Venezuelan, Latino/Hispanic, or perhaps a more general awareness of "being immigrant Jews on the way to becoming Americans."[10]

Current literature on transnationalism questions whether the newer transnational Diasporas will have a multi-generational effect. It is argued that the fact that some "classical" Diaspora models did have long-term features—the history of Jewish Diasporas is a case in point—does not necessarily guarantee that this is a constant or necessary attribute of all diasporized groups (Brubaker 2005; Cohen 1997). Therefore, by investigating the case of Latin American Jews in their new emigrant Diaspora, I propose to address, at least initially, case-generated data that may relate to the hypothesis of *longue-durée*. I suggest that further research may reveal various permutations, including reaffirmation,

[10] Interviews with Paul Harriton, October, 2011, Miami, and Fanny Herman, April, 2012, Chicago.

intermingling, and disentanglement, as variegated sub-groups deploy in and around concurrent ethno-cultural-national (country of origin) boundaries in common spaces, inter-generationally, and communally.

Latin American Jews on the Move

The diasporized patterning of Jewish life across time and space has encompassed dense institutional networks situated within localities, across them, and as part of an interconnected Jewish world system. In the Latin American Jewish case, the collective, historical dimension precedes, accompanies, and shapes migratory processes, including and transcending individual links and networks. That is, Latin American Jews frequently arrive in the United States culturally and mentally primed to consider their move as something other than simply a one-time, individual event. Jewish transnationalism overcomes what has been described as the construed notion of a rigid and closed past that contrasts with a fluid present (Brubaker 2005); transnational links consistently shaped aspects of Jewish religious and civic life and institution-maintenance worldwide. That has had specific resonance in Latin America where, historically, Jewish communal life has been closely attached to external Jewish centers (such as European countries of origin or, later, Israel) which were both real/concrete and imaginary/symbolic.

Although we do not have precise figures on Latin American Jews in the United States, estimates range between 100,000 and 133,000 (DellaPergola 2011) to 156,000 (Sheskin and Dashevsky 2011).[11] By way of comparison, current estimates also point to the presence of approximately 250,000 to 300,000 Israelis resident in the U.S. and 350,000 to 700,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union (DellaPergola 1998; Gold and Phillips 1996; Rebhun and Lev Ari 2010; Remennick 2007; Tolts 2011). This wide variation is due to differences in data sources, discrepancies in definitions of Jewishness, and difficulties in assessing the share of Jews among total migrants to the United States. In comparison to other Jewish migrant groups, the various Latin American flows feature steady growth since the 1970s, although differences prevail in each particular national context. Such immigration constitutes a significant

[11] It is estimated that a similar amount migrated to Israel (115,000-150,000 core-enlarged definition) and 12,500-20,000 to other places.

factor of demographic support for American Jewry as well as a challenging element of cultural enrichment and institutional renovation.

As noted, migration from Latin America in the last forty years has varied considerably according to timing, circumstance, and country of origin. It included instances of impelled migration and exiled individuals under high risk; voluntary household mobility motivated by safety, security, and economic considerations; movement of professionals prompted by opportunities and entrepreneurial expansion in the framework of increasingly interconnected markets. Jews constitute, in fact, a high proportion within the sustained movement of professionals in privileged occupations who start or operate businesses abroad or who migrate in search of higher and professional education.

The migration of Latin American Jews may be seen as a small but nonetheless intriguing aspect of the Hispanic/Latino sector of the US population.[12] Hispanic/Latinos have reached about 50.5 million (16.3% of the total U. S. population), hence becoming—as an aggregate—the

[12] The meaning and scope of Hispanic and Latino are contested, although the two categories are used interchangeably. In 1970, to provide a common language by which to "promote uniformity and comparability for data on race and ethnicity" for various population groups, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) created a broad definition of "Hispanic": as "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race." In 1997, the definition was revised to equalize Hispanic with "Latino." The US Census has a broader definition of Hispanic, allowing for self-identification, and thus including persons of Portuguese and/or Brazilian descent. Scholars such as Suárez-Orozco and Mariela Paéz (2009) prefer the "cultural category" of Latino even if it does not signify a precise racial or national origin, and define it broadly as the segment of the US population that traces its descent to the Spanish-speaking Carribean and Latin American worlds. Sources: Office of Management and Budget, "Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity," Washington, DC, The White House, http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg_1997standards/ "Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data: Standardization for Health Care Quality Improvement." Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Home. http://www.ahrq.gov/research/iomracereport/reldata1tab1-1.htm. Office of Management and Budget, "Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity." Washington, DC, The White House, Web. 28 June 2010 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg_1997standards/. "US Census Bureau Search Results: Hispanic." US Census Bureau Search Results: <http://search.census.gov/search?q=hispanic&entqr=0&ud=1&output=xml_no_dtd&oe=UTF-8&ie=UTF-8&client=default_frontend&proxystylesheet=default_frontend&site=census>.

largest single ethno-cultural minority.[13] In the eyes of some observers, Latin American Jewish immigrants have created a niche where native-born North American Jews may encounter Hispanic/Latino culture on their "own turf," as it were, and this may hold further implications for the larger American Jewish community's relations with the Hispanic/Latino sector at large (AJC, 2011, 2012). The advent of new Jewish immigrants from Latin American countries imparts to American Jewish life a degree of heterogeneity that rubs against the grain of mainstream Jewish integration narratives (Sarna 2005: 419).

The Relocation of Latin American Jewish Life in a Mobile American Environment

Latin American Jews in the United States live in a variety of different environments, and their experiences accordingly vary. For our purposes, Miami-Dade County in Southern Florida and San Diego in Southern California will serve as two foci for discussion. They may be said to contrast with settings such as the Northeast and the Midwest.

Latin American Jews typically live in "stacked social spaces" characterized by high proportions of foreign-born population. In Miami-Dade, 51.1% of the population was born outside the United States. Smaller but nonetheless significant percentages of the foreign-born characterize Los Angeles (39.6%), New York City (36.8%), Broward County, FL (30.9%), Boston (27.2%), and San Diego (23.1%).[14] These metropolitan locales, which share certain socio-demographic and ethnic-racial contexts (see Table 1), constitute a figurative set of separate spaces—that is, they are situated and grouped in certain, non-contiguous parts of the United States, which lends significance to locality and concentration (as opposed to models that exemplify a symbolically unitary "conjunction of the social and the spatial" (Pries 2008: 5).

[13] The Hispanic/Latino population has increased 61% since 1990, and it is estimated that they will comprise 25% of the U.S. population by the year 2020. Recent estimates by the Pew Hispanic Center (2009) point that of 48,348,000 Hispanic/Latino, 31,674,000 are of Mexican origin (based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth) http://pewhispanic.org.

[14] In percentage terms, San Diego (32%) has a larger Hispanic/Latino population than Broward, Chicago (28.9%), and New York City (28.6%), while this population is far larger in Los Angeles (48.5%).

Table 1. Spatial Composition in the United States: Southern Florida, Southern California and the Northeast-Midwest

Spatiality	Population (2010)	% Foreign born (2006-2010)	% Latin American population: Hispanic/ Latino	Jewish population: No. of persons	% Diversity: White majority, Black and Asian minorities
a. Southern Florida					
Miami Dade	2,496,435	51.1	65	113,300 (2004)	W: 73.8 B: 18.9 A: 1.5
Broward	1,748,066	30.9	25.1	185,800 (2008)	W: 63.1 B: 26.7 A: 3.2
b. Southern California					
San Diego	3,095,313	23.1	32	89,000 (2003)	W: 64.0 B: 5.1 A: 10.9
Los Angeles (city)	3,792,621	39.6	48.5	519,200 (1997)	W: 49.8 B: 9.6 A: 11.3
c. Northeast-Midwest Triangle					
Chicago (city)	2,695,598	21.1	28.9	291.800 (2010)[a]	W: 45.0 B: 32.9 A: 5.5
New York City (city)	8,175,133	36.8	28.6	Over 1.4 million (2002)[b]	W: 44.0 B: 25.5 A: 12.7
Boston (city)	617,594	27.2	17.5	208,500 (2005)	W: 53.9 B: 24.4 A: 8.9
Washington, DC (District of Columbia)	601,723	13	9.1	215,600 (2003)	W: 38.5 B: 50.7 A: 3.5

(Source: On the foreign born, Hispanic population and Majority/Minorities cf. U.S. Census Bureau 2010, American Community Survey and State and County QuickFacts. http://quickfacts.census.gov/. Jewish demographics are found in community studies at North American Jewish Data Bank. www.jewishdatabank.org.)

[a] Data on Metropolitan Chicago.

[b] Metropolitan New York includes five boroughs of New York City and three contiguous New York State suburban counties: Nassau, Westchester, and Suffolk.

Convergent settlement patterns shape encounters between Latino and North American Jews. Indeed, great numbers of Latin American Jews have relocated to areas with significant Jewish populations such as the Northeast, Midwest, Southern California, and South Florida. The Hispanic/Latino population of Broward Co., FL is smaller, for example, than in Miami-Dade (25.1%), but the Jewish population of Broward is larger, thus reflecting the movement by Latin American Jews northward to Broward County and Palm Beach, outside the borders of Dade County (Bejarano 1997). In addition to the socio-economic stratification that influences the city section of metropolitan areas vis-à-vis suburban patterns of residence, relative size plays a role in determining the visibility of the new immigrants' communities and shapes the nature of the encounters between their members and veteran American Jews in their environment. Thus, one might expect a lower visibility in a place like New York, where the number of Jewish residents is almost 1.5 million.

Moreover, the migrants themselves are apt to perceive distinctions among various locations and communities. There are cities in the United States where the size of Jewish population may closely approximate the scale that new immigrants experienced in their countries of origin. The Jewish communities in Washington, DC, Boston, and Chicago (200-300,000), for example, loosely resemble the approximate size of Argentine Jewry (182,300 in 2011: DellaPergola 2011), 85% of whom live in Buenos Aires. San Diego's Jewish population of 89,000 is larger than the Mexican Jewish community (estimated at 40,000) but here again the perceived similarity of scale may be an important factor in community life.

The Jewish community in Miami-Dade County, combined with the neighboring Ft. Lauderdale and Palm Beach areas (Southeast Florida), represents the third-most-populous Jewish concentration in the country (following New York City and Los Angeles).[15] The number of Latin American Jewish immigrants is estimated at 16,000 individuals in Miami-Dade (Sheskin 2004). Private and ad hoc institutions' estimates point to 40,000 Latin American Jews in the state of Florida.[16]

Encounters between Latin American Jews and other Jewish migrant groups exemplify a Jewish world on the move. In Miami, it is estimated

[15] Considered individually, the numbers in Miami (113,300) and Broward (185,800) are smaller than those of other cities in the country.

[16] Interview with Juan Dircey, Miami, 2012

that 30.8% of adults in Jewish households are foreign-born. In addition to the 7.3% who were born in South America, 4.6% were born in Central America (generally including Mexico, other countries of Central America and the Caribbean), 4.5% in the Middle East, and 4.5% in Eastern Europe (excepting the Former Soviet Union [FSU]). A similar percentage (4.3%) was born in the FSU while 3% originate from Western Europe. Another 2.6% was born in other foreign countries (Sheskin 2004).[17]

When evaluating mobile populations, we need to consider temporary residents. Mexican Jews living in San Diego travel regularly to Tijuana/Mexico City. Venezuelans and Mexicans travel from Miami to Caracas and Mexico City. The well-established business connections of Venezuelan and Mexican Jews living in Florida highlight the way current economic conditions afford opportunities for a transitory migration. As will be seen, this does not exclude residential permanence and incorporation into American Jewish communities and American society. In Miami, 7% of Jewish households live in the area for 3-7 months of the year (considered to be part-year households); 2%, for 8-9 months; 4%, for 10-11 months of the year; and 87%, for 12 months (year-round households) (Sheskin 2004).

San Diego has become an important destination and second home abroad for Mexican Jews. The first Mexican Jewish arrivals in San Diego settled in during the 1970s-1980s[18] and established their neighborhoods (Chulavista and Bonita) near the border with Tijuana; later they began to move to other residential areas (La Jolla and, more recently, Del Mar). Some 600-700 Mexican Jewish immigrant families or 2,400 individuals are currently living in San Diego (private estimates).[19]

[17] The majority of Hispanic Jews born in South American countries, including Colombia, Venezuela, and Argentina live in North Dade (10%), in contrast to Hispanic Jews born in Cuba who are more concentrated in the beaches (7.1% compared to 3.9% in South Dade and 1.5% in North Dade). In North Dade, other countries of origin include: Poland, Germany, Romania, Canada, Israel, and Russia.

[18] In the second half of the twentieth century, some individuals and their families moved to the Northern border city of Tijuana where a new Jewish community consolidated.

[19] According to data provided by the Pew Hispanic Center (2009), 48,348,000 Hispanics live in the United States. Of this total, 31,674,000 are Mexican (based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth). From the approximately 11.5 million undocumented migrants in the United States, 6.5 million are Mexican, representing 57% of the total (Durand 2010; Lowell, Perdezini, and Passel 2008).

It is a border city and, partially as a consequence, overlapping migratory and social networks (family, ethnic, and increasingly professional, business, and generationally younger) have developed. The total San Diego population born in Mexico stands at over 40%. In turn, San Diego is part of a larger American reality in which Mexico stands out as having exceptionally high migration fluxes: close to 30 million Hispanics are of Mexican origin (Schiller et al. 1995; Kearny 1995).

We know that migratory chains and networks work in specific contexts and that in particular places migrants may become socially aggregated in distinct ways. Thus, Pilsen in Chicago is an entry point for Mexicans and Aventura/Hollywood in North Miami-Dade/Broward counties functions that way for many Latin American Jews. When they settle in these places, Latino/Hispanic populations constitute sociocultural (and political) subgroups ("containers") that may represent their "being" but not necessarily their "belonging" (Levitt and Schiller 2004). That is to say, being labelled "Hispanic/Latino" may be seen as an externally imposed generalization that indicates group visibility in the legal, social, educational, and political realms. By the same token, however, this labelling may also inform and motivate self-ascription. To a large extent, the North American definition of "Hispanic/Latino" has historically disregarded Jews or avoided Jewish singularity. In some of the relevant literature, the category of "Hispanic" Jews appears alongside "Sephardic Jews," implying an alleged historical continuity with Spanish-Portuguese-descended Jewish migrants of an earlier age. Most often, however, social scientific research on Hispanics/Latinos in the United States ignores the Jewish case.

New Cultural Encounters: Similarities and Dissimilarities

An examination of American Jewry and Latin American Jewish communities reveals contrasting models of Jewish collective life. The Jewish congregational model developed in the United States on the basis of denominational pluralism and as part of a society in which religion was constitutionally separated from the state. Jewish organizational life outside the synagogue is based largely on local, regional, and national membership associations and social-welfare federations, interwoven with the Jews' other associational habits and social connections in a

pluralistic and individualized manner (Phillips 2005; Waxman 1983). The United States was, for quite a while (especially since the mid-twentieth century), described as a country with "three religions": Protestants, Catholics, and Jews (Herberg 1955; 1983). Until fairly recently, religion was assumed to be the primary axis of distinction among Americans; yet the singular dynamics between religion and ethnicity frequently led to the acceptance of the former as a way of expressing the latter. Individualized Jewish religiosity developed around the synagogue-congregation, and was gradually embedded in a public Jewish "civil religion," understood either as a set of civic tenets or as a Jewish ethno-national solidarity that, in the view of some observers, attained quasi-sacralized status (Fischer and Last Stone 2012; Woocher 1986; 2005).

For their part, and in some contrast to the American Jewish pattern, Latin American Jews have often sought to recreate an all-embracing kehillah structure, born in pre-migration Jewish social centers in the Old World, transplanted to the Latin American environment, and recovered with changing sociological meanings in the new countries of their Diaspora. Suggestive of a corporate experience, the trend in Latin American Jewish life led to an ethno-religious-national, secularized, institutionalized, and cohesive Jewish community. Latin American Jewish life was historically based on a twofold pattern of strong transnational intra-Jewish solidarity and a peripheral character with respect to the center(s) of world Jewish life leading to unequal terms of exchange.[20]

The crystallization of a shared and distinctive Latin American culture, interacting with established regional, Christian, and national contexts, lent the patterns of collective Jewish life a measure of uniqueness, strongly affecting the social integration of Latin American Jews within territorially distinct social systems in more than twenty countries.[21]

[20] The place of Mexican Jewish newcomers as bearers of this peripheral identity vis-a-vis the mainstream Jewish world, mainly the Anglo-Saxon, was phrased as follows by one of our interview subjects: "I oscillate in my identification with Mexican Jews as if they were part of my own world, on the one hand and my gardener's world, on the other." Other interviews point to similar feelings of peripheral status that may mirror conceptions of the Other by mainstream American Jewry.

[21] In multi-ethnic societies such as Argentina and Uruguay where immigration changed the profile of the population, minorities faced a *de facto* tolerance that

These developments occurred within strongly hierarchical worldviews that underlined national membership criteria in the region, in which ethnicity and social stratification interacted and intersected.[22] Religion was so deeply embedded in the Latin American region's social constructs, that the internalization of Catholicism also implied its conversion into a civic culture. That set certain limitations on the possible scope of secularization processes. The central place and role of the Catholic Church as well as European corporate traditions led to difficulties in dealing with religious and ethnic diversity. Yet there were degrees of variation across the continent: in Argentina, for example, liberal secularism—not the civil religion model—constituted a neutral sphere that allowed Jews to become full citizens, while in Mexico a strong ethnic component of national belonging prevailed.

In view of these background characteristics, it is important to note several indicators that point to differences as well as commonalities that shaped the migrants' individual, family, and group paths of incorporation into American Jewish communities. Overall, the rates of Jewish affiliation with ethno-communal institutions in Latin America are higher than in the United States. While the gap between Mexico City and San Diego is striking (85% and 30%, respectively), Jews in cities in Brazil and Argentina typically have far lower affiliation rates (45%-50%), closer to the US national Jewish average for synagogue affiliations. Intermarriage rates rose among American Jews during the second half of the twentieth century, eventually reaching about 50% (DellaPergola 2011; Katz 2010). Whereas this rate (strikingly higher in the western states) contrasts with much lower rates in Mexico and Venezuela (less than or just above 10%), it is similar to those prevailing in Argentina and Brazil (surpassing 45%).

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counterbalanced the primordial, territorial, and religiously homogeneous profile that the State aspired to achieve. In countries such as Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia, where immigration did not change the original ethnic profile, the weight of ethnic differences radicalized the aspirations and national narratives of a unified nation (Avni, 1998; Eisenstadt, 1998).

[22] Latin American citizens were the first ones in the modern West to have failed in their attempt to reconcile social equality with cultural differences, thereby contributing to the socio-ethnically fissured nature of public life in the continent (Forment 2005). In turn, many values and institutional arrangements were cultural hybrids.

Both North and Latin American Jewish communities have been transformed by general social patterns with distinct implications for continued collective communal life: transitions from individualization to collective affirmation, and their subsequent reversal; from congregational to communal models, albeit simultaneously witnessing a growing role for synagogues; from secularization to rising expressions of some forms of religiosity, even as secularism continues to gain ground; from privatization to communal revival. These trends are not linear but rather reflect changing moments, fluctuations, and interacting paths.

Resulting from the dynamics between the organized American Jewish communal spaces, migrants' associational initiatives within their quotidian life spheres as well as prevailing patterns of ongoing home—abroad attachments, the social capital of American/Latin American Jewry is being restructured in a context that displays aspects of both mobility and permanence (Bourdieu 1986; Sassen 1998).

For their part, American Jews face a certain degree of dissonance between their subjective sense of being "insiders" and those aspects of the Jewish experience that reflect their difference as "outsiders" (Biale et al. 1998). Along a chain of "otherness" in American Jewish social spaces, recent immigrants may serve as reminders that American Jewry is to some extent being steadily reconstituted, and thus has not completed its processes of integration. Latin American Jews in particular may be seen as bearers of peripheral identities vis-à-vis the Anglo-Protestant core culture. The interplay between "otherness," distinctiveness, and integration partly reflects previous experiences, and partly marks new challenges.

Integration, Distinctiveness, and Continuity

Multiple ways of belonging to American Jewish institutions and organizations allow continuity—as Jews, as Latin American Jews, as Latin Americans—while the effects of mutual influence and the transfer of previous models into more or less newly constituted social spaces support an array of fresh adaptations. Expressions of both continuity and adaptability characterize the display of being Latin American through one's Jewishness and one's Jewishness via Latin American-style communal patterns. Among other fields, education and communal life exemplify the range of experiences reported by Latin American Jews in the United States.

Education played a central role in shaping Latin American Jewish life. Indeed, the schooling of children and young adults in comprehensive Jewish educational institutions took priority over other collective needs of the community. Although Jewish education initially reflected the gamut of secularized political and ideological currents that shaped the Latin American Jewish communities in the early to mid-twentieth century, in more recent decades, following global Jewish trends, religious belonging has become more influential. The highest growth rates have been observed for Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) schools.[23]

In the United States, education in private communal institutions has until recent decades been the exception, rather than the rule, as most Jewish families sent their children to public schools. Today, the somewhat heightened levels of Jewish education have to be understood in light of changing trends in the Jewish world, including the demographic growth of the Orthodox sector, which tends to favor comprehensive private day school education. Less than 15% of the schools are non-Orthodox, 20% are Modern Orthodox, and 60% are Haredi.[24]

[23] In Mexico, the Haredi schools, serving 26% of the student population, show the highest population growth: 55% in the last eight years. The Ashkenazi schools show the greatest decrease (28%) and the Maguen David schools (Aleppo community schools) the highest growth rate, with 46% of the total student population. Of this group, 40% attend Haredi schools. Also in Argentina, the highest population growth is registered amidst the religious schools and in Sao Paulo, five religious schools were founded in the last decade, while there is a growing incorporation of Orthodox teachers into secular schools (Topel 2005; Vaad Hajinuj 2011).

[24] It is estimated that there were 60,000 students in Jewish day schools in 1962, while by 1982-1983 the student population increased to 104,000 (10% of the Jewish school-age population), and in 2000, it reached approximately 200,000; that is, nearly one-quarter of all Jewish schooled-age children attended day school. Recent studies show that today's total enrollment nationwide is 242,000. In 1998, the numbers were 20% non-Orthodox, 26% Modern Orthodox and 47% Haredi. The growth in ultra-Orthodox or Haredi school enrollment, including both Hasidic and non-Hasidic schools, reflects high birthrates and contrasts with Modern Orthodox schools, which are essentially holding their own. At the same time, there has been a severe drop (35%) in Solomon Schechter (Conservative movement) school enrollment. In 1998, the first year AVI CHAI foundation examined student enrollments, the Schechter attendance totaled 17,563 students in 63 schools nationwide. This year, their school enrollment is just 11,338 students in 43 schools (cf. AVI CHAI *Report on Education*, 2012).

Patterns of continuity and persistence in educational practices among the Latin American immigrants reflect this dynamic background, as well as an array of intervening factors. The relative density of Latin American Jewish populations, socio-economic stratification, and the general availability of high-quality public education are among the factors that influence enrollment. Both in Miami and San Diego, a growing number of Latin American Jews of non-Orthodox background have been admitted into Orthodox schools (such as Hillel, Soille San Diego Jewish Day School, Chabad) through strategies of adopting selective religious practices (e.g., modest dress codes, kashrut, and candle-lighting on Shabbat). Stable Jewish settings and warm, caring, and cohesive social environments attract Latin American Jewish parents to schools espousing greater levels of religiosity than those they attended in their home countries.

In Jewish day schools, integration and mutual influence are related to the ratio of immigrants. At both Hillel and Sinai schools in Miami, a relatively high proportion of students is of Latin American origin. In the first case, according to one interviewee, the increase of Latin Americans in the student body has led to the loosening of the school's religious environment. In the second case, Spanish was incorporated into the curriculum.[25] In San Diego, a bilingual setting characterizes the Jewish Academy where more than a third of the population is Mexican. From a wider perspective, English language proficiency has been signaled as a key factor of incorporation into American institutions. Command of English is also important for citizenship, and the combination of both of these generally enhances the likelihood of integrating into the labor market and society at large (Chiswick and Miller 1998; Remennick 2007). Underlying this school's practices (e.g., relevant conversations conducted in English on national and global issues, while Spanish is spoken in the school on a regular basis) are singular American democratic values (such as tolerance).[26]

Language as a tool to achieve a sense of self-worth among Hispanics has become the central focus of a vast cultural production, well attested

[25] Interview with Nurit Sheinberg. Member of the Board, Sinai school. Mexico City, November, 2012.

[26] Interview with Roberto Jinich; Interview with Jaime Breziner. September, 2012, Mexico City.

in such texts as Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/la frontera*. As expressed by the *New Mestiza* (1987: 59): "Until I take pride in my language I cannot take pride in myself." Spanish is regarded as particularly important for building and maintaining identity; 74.5% of Hispanics speak Spanish well and 12% do so fairly well. However, in American society, 63.7% of Latinos and only 18.9% of Jews "strongly support" bilingual education. It is certainly important to underscore that these percentages mainly reflect preferences among the first generation (Smith 2007).

For Latin American Jews, language is part of their two worlds, a bilingual cultural code that finds its roots in public prestige or status, and underscores the ambivalence of many immigrants torn between expected norms of assimilation and language loyalty to their mother tongue. High prestige value and pride attached to Spanish and Spanish-language culture is prevalent among Latin American Jews who are situated in academia, where they find recognition and appreciation of Latin American (Spanish) literature and are witnessing the successful entry of Latin American Jewish Studies via university Spanish Departments. Ambivalence, in contrast, may be found among some first-generation migrants, mindful of how they once viewed the marginality of their parents, who were foreign-born immigrants on the margins of Latin American culture. This dilemma is now mirrored in their children's view of their own foreign accent.[27]

Social boundaries are maintained, though bifurcation and overlapping occurs—as expressed through distinctive and active solidarity, as well as by relatively dense social relationships. Being Jewish in a school or extracurricular program in the new environment may promote a revised articulation of social and cultural markers, as in the case of family unity, ideational connectedness with the State of Israel and memorialization of the Shoah. These values—once perceived as flowing from the Latin American Jewish experience—may now come to be regarded as more universally Jewish. Integration via American Jewish schools proceeds even as cross-border connections are maintained. This may be exemplified by the Montessori school in San Diego, founded and headed by a Mexican-born educator in the 1980s. Intersections between being American and Latin American occur in the immediate, quotidian sphere of social inter-

[27] Interview with Aaron Kopikis, Former rabbi of the Conservative community in Mexico City, and current rabbi in San Diego. July 2000, San Diego.

action.[28] At the same time, incorporation into specifically Jewish spaces allows for the maintenance of a generalized Latin American or a particularized Mexican (or Colombian/Venezuelan/Cuban) communal tie.

Moreover, integration often entails making cultural trade-offs between what may be seen as similar and dissimilar. One may observe contrasts between dominant or widely shared Mexican and American values and dispositions, such as a perceived sense of Mexican affective and humane attitudes vs. American reserve, or Latin American collective solidarity vs. American individualism and competitiveness. One concrete incident, indicative of the dissonance that can result from bicultural encounters, involved a household that informed the entire local Jewish school community about a death that had occurred in the family. This was seen by some (mainly Mexicans) as an expression of communal solidarity, while others (mainly Americans) regarded it as an alien practice that was invasive of their private sphere. The fact that over time, the supportive network implied by this custom "surpassed the limits of being Latin American" and became a common school practice points to the possible reconstitution of some parts of "being American."[29]

Particular interactions sometimes occur involving new relations in educational and communal spaces. The case of Charter schools in New York and Miami illustrates the split from the mainstream Jewish education system by a small number of families for socio-economic (middle-class Jews looking for more affordable options) and cultural reasons (a secular-cultural Jewish/Israeli environment). Charter schools have become particularly attractive to Israelis and Argentines in Miami who regard it as an "alternative" model to the synagogue-congregational one, as it is a secular and cost-free institution that is "non elitist" and "open."[30]

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[28] Such practices are paradigmatically expressed in food: Mexican candy and spices in Jewish festivities have become part of the local gastronomy in many of these schools.

[29] Interview with Roberto Jinich; interview with Leslie Fastlich, July 2012, San Diego.

[30] Ben Gamla's Hollywood school, which opened in 2007, was the first Hebrew-English Charter school in the United States. More recently, schools with a "bilingual, bi-literate and bi-cultural curriculum" have opened in Plantation, Boynton Beach, and Kendall. A fifth school was scheduled to open in St. Petersburg, FL in August 2012. These public schools that are state-funded but privately operated. Source: http://www.bengamla-charter.com/2009/index.php.

In some instances, they become spaces for Israeli influence, illustrated by the teaching of Hebrew and Israel's culture.

As for community groups, both associational and organized communal settings constitute porous containers of primordial and elective belonging. Such bordered spaces provide alternative/complementary routes into maintaining distinctiveness. Both the Ken (i.e., "nest" [Hebrew] to name the local branch of Jewish/Zionist youth movements) in San Diego and the Hebraica/Jewish Community Center (JCC) in Miami may be conceived as ethno-national/transnational autonomous magnets. They provide contexts where immigrants can reproduce Latin American Jewish social practices—language, food, and Zionist attachments included.

Both the Ken and Hebraica-JCC mirror transformations that run along the generational axis, socio-economic scales, settlement patterns, and the particular milieus in which Latin American Jews insert themselves. By attracting visiting Jewish families who live in Latin America, spend time in the US, and send their children to summer camp there, they further enhance transnational links and interactions. These two organizations also reflect differences of places and actors: the Ken was created by Mexican Jews who first moved to the border city of Tijuana and later to San Diego and Hebraica-JCC was founded by Cuban Jews, but today both include progressively multinational/Latin American migration waves.[31]

These communal spaces have evolved over time, becoming larger and more stable while still maintaining original codes and simultaneously adapting to American society. These recreate experiences meant to resemble a pan-Latin American space. At the Ken, which developed an institutional connection with the local Jewish day school (Jewish Academy), nearly all of the youngsters who participate weekly (close to 300 children) are from Mexican families. Yet within the macro (Jewish-Mexican) setting, diverse sub-groupings may also be observed. Likewise, the Hebraica-JCC in Miami has become a vibrant micro social domain for Jewish encounters, aiming at symbols of Jewish continuity rather

[31] Hebraica-JCC was initially conceived as a social club that included sports, recreation, and cultural activities, but failed in the early 1980s because of demographic changes, multiple destinations that characterized the incoming fluxes of Latin American migrants, the large and appealing offer of Jewish and non-Jewish recreational organizations, and the desire of the younger generation to enter new spaces (Bejarano 1997).

than "cultural transplantation." The annual Macabi games held there represent a Jewish-Israeli arena of both interaction and differentiation between Latin American Jews hailing from Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, and Cuba, among others. Flags and identities are visually represented in a sports activity that brings together Latin American Jews from different parts of Southern Florida. It is relevant to underscore that the Latin American Hebraica model has expanded its presence to Central and Western Europe, mainly through the Joint Distribution Committee and mobile individuals who hold key community roles.[32]

Diaspora, transnationalism, and multiculturalism have shaped the lives of the newcomers and the receiving communities in complex ways. Cuban immigration to Miami was initially characterized by organizational autarchy as the only way to recreate older Cuban-oriented Jewish lifestyles, but gradually the community moved toward integration. Members adapted to the religiously centered American model, apparently without significant ruptures.[33] Entrée into the American Jewish community was sought through Zionist activities in the Latin Division at the Miami Jewish Federation.

The Cuban (1960s) and Argentine (2002-2004) migrant experiences show particular interactions between Jewish institutional density, local (American) organizations—their visions, interests, and preferences—and the migrants' timing and networks. In both instances, the migrant's destination—Israel or the US—expressed ideational motives as well as pragmatic considerations.[34] It may be said that the Cuban Jewish experience in Miami typically included a greater share of tensions and

[32] Interview with Alberto Senderey, Director for Europe and Latin America, JDC, November 2012.

[33] Cuban Jews founded the Ashkenazi Cuban Hebrew Congregation and the Sephardic Congregation of Florida.

[34] A parallel process took place in both Cuba and Argentina where international Jewish organizations established offices and/or programs based on local collaboration. In the case of Argentina, transnational solidarity was expressed through a three-pronged strategy that included social welfare programs, job training-reinsertion-loans for entrepreneurship, and reorganization of local institutions to support continuity of Jewish life in the community (JDC 2011). In spite of the institutional divergent views, coordination between the JDC's office in Argentina, the Jewish Agency and Chabad Lubavitch acquired unprecedented levels, specifically to promote aliyah to Israel as an alternative to social assistance (JAFI 2008).

dis-encounters with the local American Jewish community, in a societal context where Cuban Jews had a twofold peripheral status and enjoyed only limited or fragmentary Jewish organizational support (via either local or world Jewish institutions).[35] This may be contrasted with the strongly coordinated communal support (legal, social, and educational assistance) rendered by international-American Jewish institutions and consolidated migrant networks (which provided economic aid) that allowed Argentines to incorporate into the Jewish American community.[36]

Both in Miami and San Diego there are constant flows of young families and professionals that at times challenge, and sometimes reinforce, the underlying assumptions of second-generation theories.[37] For an engaged and active young leadership, the Latin American Jewish model means endogamy and continuity through Jewish education. That may be seen as challenging or even threatening currently prevailing norms in the Jewish American context, particularly though not exclusively in California. As one informant put it: "I need my family to maintain Jewish Latin American values the way I know them... While you cannot stop the trends of the majority [low affiliation rates or high rates of exogamy], it is best to put our own ingredients into the melting pot. Here is where I found the importance of education. I integrated into the school board to give an example to my children."[38] Young professionals from Mexico and Venezuela express similar preferences and expectations with regard to

[35] The urban setting was not predominantly Hispanic/Latino (they represented a small minority: 5.3%) (Bejarano 1997; 2012).

[36] A chain of organized responses and the joint venture of Jewish Federation and Community Services of South Florida led to the creation of the Latin American Migration Program (LAMP) of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, funded by Latin American veteran residents. According to an official report, LAMP assisted more than 2,500 immigrants, of which 80% came from Argentina. Through LAMP, and contrary to the experience of Cuban immigrants (who were admitted to Jewish institutions when payment was granted), Jewish day schools gave the needy parents a special reduction on tuition.

[37] An exemplary case is the collaborative effort of the young Mexican leadership to transcend formal borders between the Jewish Academy and the Ken. This initiative focuses on modernizing, expanding, professionalizing, and institutionalizing collective Jewish spaces through new cultural and social programs, as well as more efficient financial arrangements. At Hebraica/JCC, there is a newly combined American-Latin American leadership.

[38] Interview with Roberto Jinich, July 2012, San Diego, California.

the central role of Jewishness in redefining and reinforcing their identity matrix and its borders: "We want our children to be as Mexican or American as they want but [either way, we want them] to be Jewish."[39] The profound dilemmas that relocation implies for this cohort of young professionals find expression in their twofold search for ways to make Jewish education significant and Judaism relevant to their children through educational avenues: "I was born Jewish. My children will be Jewish by choice." Thus, one needs to make such a choice "appealing."

It is indicative of these dilemmas—and an expression of contemporary transnationalism—that some teachers, administrators, university professors, and school board officers and members, who have become intimately engaged in their new communities, simultaneously maintain their connectedness with their counterparts in their countries of origin. An emergent pattern may be seen in the circulation of knowledge through these key agents. At a tertiary level, both the migrants and the Latin Americans are involved with Israeli agencies that facilitate Latin American Jewish education. The continuing work of educational *shlichim* (communal service appointees sent from Israel) in Latin American countries of origin as well as among the immigrant communities in the United States illustrates past and present transnational trends and exemplifies the bonds wrought by a strong Zionist legacy. Nevertheless, the cultural-ideational relationship with Israel is also defined in new terms and spaces; it implies the re-signification of attachments and the coexistence of multiple centers.

Finally, among the patterns of integration-distinctiveness of Latin American Jews, it is worth mentioning their participation, leadership, and activism in American Jewish organizations as well as in national institutions and the media. In Miami, Latin American Jews are represented in local councils and university boards, in the Jewish Federation, and in Hillel/Jewish Campus Life. Latin American Jews also exercise political activism in the non-partisan Florida Congressional Committee (FCC), which financially supports pro-Israel US Senators and Congressmen. In Miami and San Diego, there is an increased participation of this group in the local Federations, including the Women's Division.[40] In the Federation of Miami, the Latin American leadership explicitly seeks to

[39] Interview with Leonardo Simpser, July 2012, San Diego.

[40] Interview with Roberto Jinich, July 2012, San Diego; interview with Leslie Fastlich. Wizo in San Diego is headed by a Mexican woman.

guarantee simultaneous commitments to their being both Jewish and Latin American, bridged through the American institutional structure.[41] An informed participant recorded a perceived relatively high activism in associations such as Friends of Tel Aviv University or the Hebrew University among Latin American Jews.[42]

Israel has a peculiar salience as a target of economic support and political advocacy. We need further study in order to determine the significance of social practices such as donations to Israel. In Miami and San Diego old (pre-migration) and new patterns coexist. Direct individual and family donations and financial support are channeled through American Jewish organizations with a strong pro-Israel agenda (e.g., the Jewish National Fund, Friends of Israel Defense Forces, the United Jewish Federation, NACPAC—Pro Israel National Action Committee—and SunPac—Florida Hispanic Outreach). However, migrants also sustain regular links with their original communities, partly through the maintenance of affiliation to Jewish institutions (mainly among Mexican and Venezuelan families); therefore, resources intended for Israel-related and other overseas assistance continue to be transferred through Latin American institutional channels.[43]

Political advocacy for Israel is conducted mainly in the framework of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), illustrated by the leading roles played by Latin American Jews in this organization (presidency of San Diego Section, secretariat of Miami branch) and their representation in its annual events. Similarly, the creation of local groups has expanded through the Latino and Latin American Jewish Institute of the American Jewish Committee (Siegel 2011). It has sought to play a mediating role between Latinos, Jewish communities in the US, and Jewish communities in the Latin American region. This has led to the mobilization of additional social capital for American Jewry, and to the organization's increased presence in Latin America.[44]

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[41] In Miami, a Peruvian Jew was president of the federation and former community leaders of Venezuela are today active members of it. Interviews with Sabi Behar, David Bassan and Paul Harriton, October, 2011, Miami.

[42] Interview with Janche Galicot, August 2012, San Diego.

[43] Interview with Miriam Norten, Director of Women Division of the Jewish Federation of San Diego, July 2012, San Diego.

[44] Organized trips of Latino entrepreneurs to Mexico and the AJC presence in Argentina's critical judiciary process regarding AMIA are outstanding examples.

These observations may need to be tested in light of the hypothesis of American Jewish self-distancing from Israel, which has elicited much recent debate (Cohen and Kelman 2009; Sasson, Kadushin, and Saxe 2010). Data on Jews living in Mexico and Argentina show that both age (generation) and country of origin influence the place of Israel in people's lives and their attachment to it.[45] Mexico has exceptionally high rates of visits to Israel, while lower rates characterize Jews in Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela.

Sustained tendencies in the US show that just over one-third of all American Jewish adults have been to Israel. Their ties to Israel also vary by affiliation and age. Jews who are formally affiliated with Jewish organizations and institutions are uniformly more apt to feel connected to Israel than the unaffiliated while, according to a recent study, a growing, younger American Jewish cohort distances itself from Israel (Cohen and Kelman 2009). The Pew Survey (2013) points to a clear-cut generational divide in the importance attached to caring about Israel. Among Jews 65 and older, about half (53%) say caring about Israel is essential to what being Jewish means to them. Among Jews under age 30, by contrast, 32% express this view.

For their part, Latin American youngsters in the US increasingly participate in Birthright (*Taglit*), which has become an alternative to the study trips and intensive youth programs (*hakhsharot*) common in their countries of origin. It is important to bear in mind in this context that a range of Israel-oriented educational practices exists across the map of Latin American Jewish communities. While Mexican Jewish young people have tended to conduct short visits to Israel in the framework of their school programs, they also participate actively in long-term Israel programs; consequently, their participation in short-term visits as young adults via Taglit is minimal (Bokser Liwerant 2013). In contrast, we witness the success of recruitment for the Taglit program in both Argentina and Brazil, which are larger Jewish communities with lower levels of Jewish education and significant rates of intermarriage. In spite of lower formal affiliation rates, Argentine and Brazilian Jewry

[45] While among members of the Mexican Jewish community above 70 years, 97% declared that Israel is of utmost importance, among those between 18 and 29 years, only 77% felt this way. Furthermore, figures are much higher in Mexico than in Argentina (Jmelnizky and Erdei, 2005).

display an enduring cultural identity component, due largely to the effects of Jewish schooling. Families of participants indicate that they are engaged and related to the Jewish community. While in Argentina 86% feel very connected to Israel, in Brazil this percentage reaches 20% (Shain, Hecht, and Saxe 2012; Cohen 2008; 2014).

To some degree, Latin American Jewish migration to the United States implies an altered posture vis-à-vis the connection to Israel. A geographically diverse transnationalism replaces older binary connections between Latin American Jews and Israel. That does not necessarily imply the weakening of attachments, but rather their re-signification. Israel was historically perceived by Latin American Jews as a vital space for those in need, in addition to its role as a sovereign political center and a focal point of cultural creativity. In the United States, this amalgam may be readjusted as the "need" element makes way for other expressions of attachment and identification. There is some departure from the previous dominant pattern of almost exclusive interaction with Israel or Israel-Zionist based organizations, as North American Jewish institutions become an important source of direct political support and a model for collective organization. Paradigmatic of this trend has been the support and advocacy Argentine Jews received not only from Israel or Israel-based organizations such as the Jewish Agency (JAFI) but from numerous North-American Federations, the Joint Distribution Committee and the American Jewish Committee when facing recurrent economic crises and the attack on the Jewish community—AMIA (1994) and its aftermath; or the vulnerability of Venezuela's Jewish community and its interests under the Chavez and the Maduro regimes.

Jewish Transnationalism in the Twenty-first Century

Transnational studies have typically focused on individuals, their links and networks of social relations as the principal units of analysis (Guarnizo and Smith 1998; Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt 1999; Pries 2008). According to these studies, only a small percentage of individual migrants (about 10%) are transnational, maintaining frequent and sustained links and contacts with their countries of origin.

Our focus, instead, is on the collective, not the individual, and our emphasis is on the institutional underpinnings of transnationalism and its

structural effects. The individual and communal levels interact through dense and stable Jewish associational and institutional channels that enhance informal ethnic and family links and networks. Networks are the key to current transnational migration flows because they connect the migrants and prepare a solid basis for social organization (Massey et al. 1987; Shoham and Kaufman Strauss 2008).

At the collective level, however, associative resources that were created to handle needs in the immediate short term tend thereafter to re-elaborate and re-orient organized Jewish life (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988; Bokser Liwerant 2009). Whereas social networks of individuals engaged in migration and settlement represent one central dimension of their social relations and social capital, the degree of formalization or institutionalization varies from context to context. Both San Diego and Miami-Dade and Broward Counties are perceived as ethnic enclaves, although each is characterized by inner diversity. However, in the north-eastern corridor, links among co-nationals and migrants of Jewish Latin American origin may take place in more individualized venues and to varying degrees of attachment. Individual biographies point to numerous professionals in Jewish American organizations, university and college professors, scientists, media analysts, dentists, and physicians. They do not constitute an enclave, if we define that concept spatially; but their presence is nonetheless palpable, and numerous instances exist of young professionals who have created wide virtual networks, emanating from a Latin American Jewish epicenter in the east.

Paradigmatic situations of certain Latin American Jewish migrants and their families underscore their capacity for multi-level, transnational practices. Consider, for example, a person who lives in San Diego, is Honorary Consul of Israel in Tijuana, and maintains intense links with Mexico; a diplomat who represents Ecuador in Europe, whose family lives in Israel and England, and whose economic and professional activities are transnational; and a family from El Salvador that participates actively in the American Jewish orbit in Miami, has been educated in Israeli universities, and actively supports the local community institutions in its country of origin. The steady and significant connections with their former home—through media, sports, and social networks—become the basis for routine and intense transnational practices aimed at guaranteeing continuity while at the same time offering a bridge with new communities in the United States. Such dynamics allow for multiple attachments.

Still another important example is embodied in the cultural exchange fostered under the aegis of the Conservative Jewish synagogue movement in both North and South America, in a feedback loop that ends up in the north. In the 1960s, the Conservative movement spread from North to South America, providing the first congregational model that was imported from the United States (instead of Europe), thereby establishing what may be considered a new phase of "old transnationalism." In a regional context of scarce religious functionaries, the Seminario Rabínico Latinoamericano in Argentina assumed a pivotal role in the Conservative religious leadership. The Conservative movement adapted to local conditions (communal over congregational model) that dated back to the earliest days when a low synagogue profile prevailed in mainly secular communities. This movement brought the synagogue to the forefront of communal and societal life in Latin American Jewry by mobilizing thousands of otherwise non-affiliated Jews (Elazar 1989).

In Argentina, the movement trained the rabbinical personnel that presently serve throughout Latin America and in the United States. In the United States, nearly two dozen rabbis arrived due to the new possibilities associated with regional migration. An exemplary case of the presence and wide influence of the Argentine model that integrates Conservative Judaism and social issues-human rights is temple B'nai-Jeshurun in Manhattan, which became a vibrant religious and social space for nearly 2,000 households under the leadership of Rabbi Marshall Meyer.[46] Latin American-trained Conservative rabbis currently serve in various locations such as New York (including Forest Hills and Jamaica Estates, apart from the Manhattan congregation mentioned); Hartford, CT; River Forest and Deerfield, IL; Vineland, NJ; La Jolla and San Diego, CA; Boca Raton, North Miami Beach, and Plantation, FL; Pittsburgh and Narberth, PA; Omaha, NE; Fort Worth, TX; Atlanta, GA; and Roanoke, VA.

Latin American rabbis and their participation in new settings in the United States enhance the community model (developed in Latin America for decades) over the congregational one and, simultaneously, they maintain transnational practices by traveling back and forth to

[46] In 2001, Rabbi Felicia Sol (first woman rabbi) joined the congregation. See: http://www.seminariorabinico.org.ar/nuevoSite/website/contenido.asp?sys=1&id=50 (last updated November 2010).

their communities of origin to lead services. As mobile agents of change across national borders, they recreate a congregational-communitarian matrix. In both Miami and San Diego, Latin American Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis do not necessarily address Latin American audiences: many of them are not "Latin rabbis" but "rabbis of the community."[47] Latin American and North American rabbis collaborate in religious settings, thus symbolizing the bringing together of Latin and English-speaking American Jewish publics.[48]

A new interplay between religious, sub-ethnic, and national belonging develops in synagogue congregations. In San Diego, among migrants of the same national origin, inner sectorial differences that historically marked the community in Mexico tended to blur.[49] Seemingly primordial differences among Jews, derived from their being of Ashkenazi, Sephardic or Mizrahi descent, were subsumed under a national Mexican/Jewish identity. This was apparently related to the limited size of the community, which acted as a constraint to inner differentiation. More recently, however, and given the sustained expansion of the migration flows, a separate Orthodox Sephardic community of about eighty families—Beth Torah Bet Eliahu—was founded and is headed by an Argentine rabbi, providing an alternative to the otherwise prevailing

[47] Such rabbis include: Conservative rabbis Mario Rojzman (Beth Torah), Marcelo Bater (Temple Beth Israel) and Hector Epelbaum (Beth David); Orthodox rabbis Shea Rubinstein (The Shul at Barl Harbour) (Chabad), Shloime Halsband (California Club Chabad), Yossi Srugo (Aventura Chabad); Reform rabbi Arturo Kalfus (Beth Am). Sources: Interview with Juan Dierce, October 2011, Miami, FL; and "Find a Rabbi," Greater Miami Jewish Federation, http://jewishmiami.org/resources/find_rabbi/.

[48] During the late 1970s, the emigration to San Diego of Rabbi Aharon Kopikis (born in Argentina and trained in the Conservative movement) had meaningful consequences because he was a respected representative of the Bet El community in Mexico City who supported and legitimized the "migration era." His presence became a sign of permanence in a new place where a few Mexican families shared the synagogue services with South Africans and some Americans.

[49] In Mexico, ethnic origins conditioned the evolutionary process of communal organizations. Its inner composition also shows radical changes. Sepharadic communities—which include Sephardic and Syrian Jews from Aleppo (Halab) and Damascus (Shamis)—reach 73% of the total Jewish population today, while the Ashkenazi community constitute only 27%, compared to 65% during the 1960s.

Conservative hegemony. In spite of these differences, the communal frameworks that have developed combine religious and sub-ethnic streams (Bokser Liwerant 2008).

Orthodox groups have gained new impetus in founding new religious congregations and supplying communities with rabbinical leadership. The spread of Chabad and the establishment of their centers in large and small cities in the United States is striking, as is the fact that thousands of Chabad representatives (known as "*shluchim*") are currently working around the world. Close to eighty Chabad centers have developed in Latin America alone.[50] The increased presence and influence of transnational Chabad is evident in both California and Florida, where it reaches members by creating educational networks, social welfare services, intricate religious campaigns, legal assistance, and support for finding jobs (Topel 2005).[51] Although extreme religious and self-segregation strategies are still marginal to Jewish life in Latin America, their growing presence corresponds to ongoing world Jewish patterns. In fact, there has been a redefinition of identification components such as place of origin, the dilution of political ideologies—formerly the source of "hard-core" values—and the consequent emergence of spiritual calls. In recent years, both in the United States and in Latin America, new forms of religious sociability, less institutional and more individualized have emerged. In certain ways, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, and Miami display similarities along the transnationally constituted religious sphere.

Latin American Jewish life relocated in the US develops in a religious-secularization dynamic that may lead to diverse potential scenarios. According to the study by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2012), Jews are the most mobile if compared to other religious

[50] While in Mexico the presence of Chabad is marginal at best, there are more than fifty synagogues, study houses, *kollelim* and *yeshivot,* more than thirty of which were established in the last twenty-five years. Fourteen of the twenty-four existing *kollelim* belong to the Syrian *halabi* community. In Brazil—where liberal Judaism, secularity, and the syncretism of the society had a strong influence—fifteen orthodox synagogues, three *yeshivot,* two *kollelim,* and five religious schools were established in the last fifteen years (Topel 2005).

[51] In the case of Israelis, joining Chabad in Miami, New York, and Los Angeles may be a way of belonging to a more familiar home setting, in part because Conservative or Reform Judaism are still small movements in Israel (Gold and Phillips 1996). In Miami, Chabad also has a Venezuelan "nucleus."

minorities. Despite the limitations of religious allegiance as an exclusive indicator, it is worth considering that one-quarter of Jews alive today have left the country in which they were born and live somewhere else. By contrast, just 5% of Christians, 4% of Muslims. and 3% of the global average have migrated.

From a perspective that sees transnationalism as a connecting process that implies social transformation both in the receiving and the sending societies, one may observe the influence of American life on Jews in Latin America. Thus, Hillel, The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, previously unknown as an organization in Latin America, has been established in Argentina and Uruguay. Enthusiasm for Hillel was aided by its success in North America. In its new milieu it has developed a more religious tone, due mainly to the individuals supporting the Foundation, who were simultaneously connected to Taglit-Birthright Israel.[52]

Concluding Remarks

The relevance of the concept of transnationalism is enhanced by our perception of the Jewish world and its bordered and bounded communal units as transnationally constituted spaces interacting with one another (Vertovec 2009). Moreover, the scope and intensity of the contemporary relocation processes in new geographic and transnational social spaces adds to these historically recognized dimensions. Indeed, the intense migratory movements of Latin American Jews—individuals and communities—bring an updated reality to an ethno-religious-national Diaspora in the process of becoming transnational. In a highly mobile and changing context, challenges of group-boundary maintenance emerge (Cohen 1997; Brubaker 2005) and may promote various ways of regrouping in communal settings and other efforts to seek continuity.

We have pointed to various different scenarios related to Diaspora making and Diaspora un-making—provoked by de-socialization from the Latin American countries and communities of origin, and re-socialization in the United States—mainly in Florida and California. Greater Miami mirrors the cycles of migration crises in the region; it became a host location (particularly South Miami Beach) to the first Jewish Cuban

[52] In Argentina, the main sponsor of these initiatives is also a well-known supporter of Chabad.

collective migratory/exiled wave that included the majority of Cuban Jews and their leadership. Successive migration crises in the region led to the thinning-out of an ethno-national diaspora under stress (e.g., Venezuela) and the expansion of a transnational community in new frontier areas such as Caribbean Florida or the American Southwest. Multiple ways of retaining connections with their communities of origin and with their countries of origin have developed. These ties are exemplified, for instance, by translocal entrepreneurs from Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico. We observed complex dynamics grounded in patterns that are particular to each national group but are also generalized across a large population. These, in turn, depend upon the particular intensity and time-span of each group's out-migration and the weight that group members attach to their previous identity markers. All this influences the diverse modes by which Latin American Jews integrate into American Jewish settings while maintaining their distinctiveness and continuity.

In San Diego, an ethno-national enclave with a transnational character took shape among Mexican Jews, leading to what may be termed a secondary diaspora. In contrast, the Latin American Jewish community of Miami has a multi-national composition.[53] In this case, a shared sense of living in community with other Latin Americans, the existence of communal organized spaces that represent group continuity and the presence of a critical mass enhance new social regrouping by allowing migrants to establish and bolster formal and informal networks based on their common origins.

From a comparative perspective, one cannot ignore Latin American experiences and encounters with American Jewry in Los Angeles. It is unique and, in particular, differs from the experience in San Diego because of the more diversified national origin of the migrants, the arrival of family clusters and professionals, its "cosmopolitanism," and the metropolitan ethno-religious community's image as "Jewish" rather than "Latin American." Of particular interest is the comparison that

[53] Of the Jewish adults who consider themselves Hispanic, the majority (29%) come from Cuba; 18%, from Argentina; 16%, from Colombia; and 15%, from Venezuela. Other countries from Latin America and the Caribbean with smaller percentages include Mexico (4%), Uruguay (2.2%), Peru (1.4%), Brazil (1.3%), Dominican Republic (0.7%), Guatemala: (0.7%), Chile (0.5%), Ecuador (0.3%), Jamaica (0.3%), Nicaragua (0.3%), Panama (0.3%) and Bolivia (0.2%) (Sheskin 2004).

can be made between the migrant experience in the Northeast-Midwest triangle and its counterpart in Texas, because they represent individual-professional (e.g., medical students, interns, and doctors) cases, rather than collective migration patterns. Age, gender, and household composition—selectively younger and nuclear—provide interesting doors of entry and mapping routes into associational connections. Thus we may further question and analyze a scenario of de-diasporization that could lead either to individual integration or new prevailing criteria and axes of regrouping.

Migration movements and Diasporas and their transnational links involve maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home, and building new ones. Diasporas may be conceived simultaneously in terms of "mobility and fixity, closeness and distance"; they connect the Jewish world and exist "only through circulation" (Clifford 1994: 388). Thus, building Jewish life consists not only of rootedness but also of exchanges of dynamic cultural practices. At present, while committed to relocating and redefining their sense of being, Latin American ethno-religious (national-transnational) Jewish communities follow multiple pathways of belonging, thereby moving and fixing old-new definitions and membership criteria for themselves, as well as for the American Jewish community and the larger society.

Jewish collective life is built in multiple institutional arenas—territorial, communal, religious, national, cultural—and political-ecological settings—local, regional, national—within a global world in which identities intersect and overlap, and their components become re-linked (Eisenstadt 1995). Through migration waves and beyond, by crossing material and symbolic borders, Latin American Jewish life transcends the region's frames of reference, encounters the culture(s) of the United States, and, through diversified interactions and exchanges, widens the experience of being Jewish in the twenty-first century. The prevalence of manifold scenarios and their differential impact explain the increasing diversity and complexity of experiences; but they also point to broadly shared trends that bring together different worlds.

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