JEWS, ISRAELIS AND CITIZENS: NATIONAL IDENTITY AND PATTERNS OF POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT AMONG ISRAELI ADOLESCENTS

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Young Israeli Jews undergo a unique process of political socialization during which they are required to develop two distinct, yet closely related national identities — Israeli identity and Jewish identity. Simultaneously, they also develop various political orientations essential in any democratic society. This survey study focuses on the national identities and the patterns of political socialization and involvement among 456 junior high and high school students in Israel. The study focuses on the interrelations between Israeli, Jewish, and civic political orientations and examines the changes which occur during adolescence as well as the differences among subcultures defined according to various background variables of the respondents.

The results of the study indicate a high level of political involvement among Israeli youth. This involvement is expressed mainly through highly developed affective orientations toward national collectives, the Jewish people and Israeli society, and also strong interest in political issues and functions of political institutions. However, the

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The young people characterized by a high degree of both Jewish and Israeli identity were the highest on almost all the measures of civic orientation. The findings showed that there were not great differences among various subcultures defined according to demographic and socio-economic variables. There were, however, differences in the emphasis on political orientations and norms — the religious youth and the young people whose parents were from Oriental communities were higher on measures of affective identification with the Jewish people and Israeli society while the young people who came from more secular, higher-educated families were higher on measures of cognitive interest in the political domain. The structural analysis indicated that there is a distinction between Jewish and Israeli identities although they are closely related to each other. The structure of political involvement revolved around the orientation toward national collectives and the cognitive attitudes toward the civic system. The orientations toward social conflicts and toward political activity were somewhat distant from this center of political involvement.

Objectives of the Study and Its Theoretical Background

Young Israeli Jews undergo a unique process of political socialization in which they are required to develop a sense of belonging to and identification with two national collectives — the Jewish people and the State of Israel. In other words, in order to fulfill their role as integral members of Israeli society they must develop a national identity comprising two distinct, though hitherto largely overlapping, identities — Jewish and Israeli. Jewish national identity, like any other one, is a compound phenomenon encompassing a complex of cognitive and affective attitudes as well as certain norms of behavior and a sense of solidarity with the other members of the nation. Like all other national sentiments, the Jewish national feeling is founded on common history, culture, and tradition shared with other members of the group. It has, however, two unique features. Firstly, its national and religious elements are intertwined and inseparable. Secondly, the relationship of national identity to territory and to a sovereign state is relatively recent and may, at times,
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prove to be problematical. In contrast, Israeli national identity includes all the components of secular political identification expressed in the sense of belonging to Israeli society and acceptance of the norms of Zionist ideology. However, political socialization of young Israelis also includes the development of civic orientations toward the components of the political system, such as government, armed forces, elections, including interest in social conflicts and political issues. All these constitute the very basis of political life in democratic societies and ensure the involvement of the individual in political life.

Political socialization is defined by Almond and Verba as the process of induction into the political culture.2 The end product of this process is a system of cognitive, affective and instrumental attitudes toward the components of the political system and toward the role of the individual within it. This is a vital process, both on the micro level for the individual and on the macro level for society. The individual must undergo political socialization in order to fully integrate into the political system of his society. Society, for its part, must ensure that the younger generation successfully completes this process in order to guarantee continuity. This is especially true in Western democratic societies in which the right to vote is granted at a relatively young age.3 Young Israelis, like other young people who live in democratic societies, have to go through the processes of political socialization and develop values and norms which form the very basis of these societies, including an interest in political issues and a willingness to take an active part in political life.

It is well-known and documented that Israel is a highly politicized society with a strong emphasis on collective values.4 This situation is a result both of the historical conditions during the emergence of Israeli society and foundation of the State of Israel and its unique sociological character. Israeli society underwent a long period of self-definition, both internally and externally. It is a society characterized by several social cleavages, its various segments constantly struggling in order to ensure their influence in the political domain.5 Furthermore, the problems regarding security and the frequent wars with the Arab nations helped in fostering and enhancing strong collective orientations which only recently have shown some signs of weakening.6
The mutual relationship between the Jewish and Israeli identities is complex and has been problematical from the outset. The creation of the Zionist movement involved an attempt to make a total break with the Jewish traditions of the diaspora and to build a new society founded on secular political values and working the land. Avineri claims that, paradoxically, this movement and the state which it created drew their legitimization from the ancient sources of Jewish national identity and tradition.\textsuperscript{7} The fundamental tension between the demands of modern nationalism and traditional culture is not unique to Israel. Geertz analyzes the basic patterns which have emerged in historical resolutions of the conflict between what he terms "epochalism" and "essentialism."\textsuperscript{8} However, a premise central to our study is that, in light of the richness and historical continuity of Jewish tradition and its paradoxical relationship with modern Zionism, the Israeli pattern contains many unique elements, and that the inherent tension between the two major components of national identity is a decisive factor in the political socialization of young Israelis.

The value system of Israeli youth is quite close to that of their elders. Studies done on this subject show that despite the political controversies, Israeli youth develop strong orientations toward collective values.\textsuperscript{9}

From the study by Katz and Gurevitch we learn that the value system of Israelis encompasses two explicitly distinct, yet interrelated, sets of ideals — Jewish-religious and Israeli-secular values.\textsuperscript{10} Empirical studies conducted in the past among Israeli adults show that these are two distinct identities, although they greatly overlap and even reinforce each other.\textsuperscript{11}

Levy, who studied the changes that Israeli national identity underwent over a period of almost twenty years (1967-1985), found that the major elements that influenced the shaping of Israeli identity and the identification of Israelis with their society and state were the Jewish religion and the history of the Jewish people, together with renewed Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel in the modern period.\textsuperscript{12} Liebman and Don-Yehiya, too, concluded that the overwhelming majority of Jewish Israelis (94 percent) identify with Israel in terms of Jewish nationalism, culture, and history.\textsuperscript{13} In the present study we were interested in the structure of interrelations among these two national
identities and the civic orientations, all of them essential components of the political socialization of young Israeli Jews.

Political Socialization in Adolescent Subcultures

Israeli adolescents are not necessarily a homogeneous group. This large population consists of several subcultures defined according to different background variables such as age, gender, socio-economic factors (i.e., family income, parental education and housing conditions), and socio-cultural characteristics such as ethnicity and degree of religiosity. Our study was based on the assumption that there would be variations in the political socialization of these subcultures. It should be emphasized that in the context of this study, this is not just a routine check of the contribution of background to the major indicators of political identity. With the possible exception of age and gender, all the other variables define the political cleavages of Israeli society. The young people who participated in our study were on the threshold of entrance into the Israeli political scene. Our implicit assumption was that a better understanding of the differences among adolescent subcultures could contribute to the forecast of the political scene in Israel in the near future.

Empirical research, starting with the classic study by Piaget and Weil and comprising recent studies, shows that national values develop earlier than do an interest in political issues and the acquisition of political norms.14 It was therefore hypothesized that national orientations would develop at an earlier age, while orientations toward civic norms would increase toward the middle or end of adolescence.15

During this life-phase the peer group plays an important role in the process of political socialization. A youth movement is, to all effects, a unique organizational framework of the peer group. Youth movements, which are generally organized by adults but run by the youngsters themselves, are often intended to impart political norms and values. Hyman points out that the influence of the peer group increases as one grows older, reaching its peak during adolescence.16 Erikson, too, suggests that one of the psycho-social functions of the peer group is to help the individual in coping with the identity crisis that attends the change
from childhood to adolescence. Eisenstadt notes that most Zionist youth movements were affiliated with the major political parties and movements. He also points out that the Zionist youth movements played a central role in developing the value systems and ideologies of the various sectors in the Jewish society of Palestine before the establishment of the State of Israel. Researchers dealing with Israeli youth have stressed in their studies the central role of the youth movement in the development of young Israelis as full-fledged members in Israeli society. Since the 1960s, however, there has been a continuous erosion in the scope and the political influence of youth movements in Israeli society. Nevertheless, we suggest that even today membership in youth movements stimulates the political socialization of adolescents. We expected, therefore, that young people who are members of youth movements would score somewhat higher on various measures of political socialization in comparison to their peers who do not belong to any such organization.

The differences between boys and girls in the process of political socialization, as reflected in various studies, indicate a trend toward social change. Most of studies published prior to the 1970s noted that girls showed less interest than boys in political affairs. Later research has shown that a change is taking place and that the gap between the sexes in this matter is closing. Some authors believe that this is a result of developments in adult society. There is now a more equal "division of labor" within the family and as a result more and more women have evinced greater political involvement and participation in public life. In 1971, Jennings and Niemi compared the political involvement of two generations — parents and their children — and found that differences between the sexes in the older generation were much greater than those among their children. Girls who identify with these new female models of behavior tend to develop a level of political interest and involvement similar to that shown by boys. However, there were some studies conducted in the 1980s which reported a greater degree of political interest by men than women, even when educational level was kept constant, and even when both groups of respondents had an academic education. Based on these studies, our hypothesis was that the level of political socialization among
boys would be somewhat higher, though there would not be great differences between boys and girls.

As for the influence of socio-economic status, most studies have found a direct correlation between higher status and a higher degree of political socialization. One such study of the socialization of political elites in the U.S.A. and Canada reported that most persons active in political parties came from families with an above-average socio-economic status.44 One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that political involvement is handed down from generation to generation, that a family with high social status generally identifies with the dominant social orientations and imparts this identification to its children. Studies of the patterns of political socialization showed that Blacks, who came from lower socio-economic levels, were less politically involved. They also exhibited a lower level of political efficacy and attributed a lower degree of importance to political activity. However, they did assign more importance to affective political orientations, such as loyalty to one’s country, than did the white respondents.25 Chaffee and his associates claim that there are different patterns of political involvement in families having different patterns of intra-familial communication.26 In other words, the level of political involvement is not necessarily the direct result of economic status but rather of the authoritative structure of the family and the communicative atmosphere within it, which in its turn is usually a function of class status. A study conducted in Israel also points to a positive correlation between political involvement and levels of income and education.27 Wolfsfeld concludes that socio-economic differences afford the higher classes social advantages such as more leisure time and greater fluency in oral and written modes of expression, advantages which form the basis for greater political involvement. Other Israeli researchers, however, have pointed out that collective political orientations are high both among university students and among youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods.28

On the basis of all of these findings, our hypothesis was that Israeli adolescents would exhibit a positive correlation between their degree of political socialization and the socio-economic status of their immediate families in particular in relation to
civic orientations, while there would be no differences in relation to the national orientations.

Studies conducted by Shamir and Arian, as well as by Herzog, show that ethnic origin brings an overwhelming influence to bear on the political culture of Israel. Liebman claims that two sectors of Israeli society, religious and Asian-African Jews, which until 1967 had been on the fringes of the political scene, have since then gradually gravitated closer to the centers of political activity and influence. He points out that since the Six-Day War, religious youth have adopted the most extreme nationalist values and have inseparably connected them to their religious beliefs. These positions had originally been formulated by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook and were later developed by his son, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook. Wolfsfeld notes that the participation of religious youngsters in protest movements is usually related to the territorial integrity of Eretz Israel.

As second-generation Asian-African Jews achieved adulthood, they, too, aspired to reach and influence the centers of political power. They, too, chose nationalist, rather than socialist, values as the focal points of their identity. This, then, was a second case in which nationalist values became more extreme in relation to the center of power at that time, the Mapai political party. On the basis of these tendencies, it was natural to assume that our study would point to a strong identification with nationalist values both among young people from Sephardi families and among religious youth. However, there was no basis to assume that these groups would rank high on other measures of political socialization.

**Research Questions and Hypothesis**

The first research question of the present study relates to the degree of political socialization among Israeli adolescents, as indicated by their orientations toward the two national collectives, Jewish and Israeli, and toward the civic components of the political system. Our first and second hypotheses were that (Hyp. 1) adolescents would reveal a high degree of political socialization both in their national and civic orientations, though national orientations would be stronger; and (Hyp. 2) there
would be variations among various adolescent subcultures as elaborated above.

The second research question relates to the structure of interrelations between the national orientations. The objective was to examine whether there has been any shift in recent years in the relative importance attributed to the two national identities. Two major alternative hypotheses concerning the national identities are: (Hyp. 3) low overlapping between the two identities leading to the shaping of each as a separate identity which would indicate a major social change; or (Hyp. 4) a strong correlation between the indicators of the two identities which would point to a continuity in the overlap between them which previous research had documented.

Our third research question is related to the interrelations between national and civic orientations. It was hypothesized that (Hyp. 5) indices of Israeli identity would be more closely related to the civic orientations than the indices of Jewish identity. Moreover, we hypothesized that (Hyp. 6) the highest degree of civic orientation would characterize those Israeli adolescents who have high levels of both Jewish and Israeli identity. Those who had especially highly developed Israeli identity would be more prone to identify with civic orientations than those who identify only with Jewish values. Finally, adolescents characterized by a low level of both Israeli and Jewish identity would develop the lowest level of political socialization to civic norms.

Methodology

The Sample and the Sampling Procedure

This study is based on a representative sample of 456 Jewish junior high and high school students. The sample included students from grades seven, nine, eleven and twelve in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Beersheba. The schools were of three types: regular secular schools, comprehensive secular schools, and state-religious schools (mamlachti dati). The rationale for including in our sample four major cities and all types of schools
was to achieve a representative sample of Israeli urban youth. The same principle guided us in the selection of schools included in the sample. Each school type was sampled in proportion to its representation in the overall school population in each city. Similarly, the number of classes sampled in each school (each class comprised about 30 students) was in proportion to the overall school population. In other words, we used a stratified, proportional sample.

The sample consisted of 48 percent boys and 52 percent girls. Thirteen-year-old (grade seven) pupils formed 27 percent of the sample; fifteen-year-old (grade nine) pupils — 35 percent; seventeen- and eighteen-year-old (grade eleven and twelve) pupils — 38 percent. Almost all the respondents, 91 percent, were born in Israel.

Only 3 percent of the respondents characterized themselves as being "strictly observant of religious practices," about 24 percent as observing them "to a high degree," and 46 percent as "slightly observant." About one-quarter of the sample (27 percent) claimed to be non-observant.

The parents of the respondents were divided into three categories according to educational level: 1-8 years, 9-12 years, and over 13 years of study. The lowest category, with the least education, included 14 percent of the fathers and 13 percent of the mothers; the intermediate category — 36 percent of the fathers and 41 percent of the mothers, and the highest category — 50 percent of the fathers and 46 percent of the mothers.

The average housing density of the population was 1.1 persons per room. As for ethnic origin, 41 percent of the fathers were Israeli-born, 27 percent were born in Europe, South America and the Anglo-Saxon countries, and the remaining 32 percent in North Africa and Middle Eastern countries. A similar pattern was discernable among the mothers: 45 percent were born in Israel, 25 percent in Europe, South America and Anglo-Saxon countries, and 30 percent in North Africa and Middle Eastern countries.

It is important to emphasize that the above marginal distribution of the present sample is quite similar to that of a representative sample of Israeli youth, presented by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics. Since the percentage of teenagers at-
tending school is quite high, the sample of this study can be considered as a representative sample of Israeli urban youth.32

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire included a set of questions measuring the relative strength of the respondents' orientations toward various components of the political system. As mentioned above, these questions are indices of political socialization and can be defined by their relation to the national collectives, Jewish people and Israeli society, as well as the civic components of the political system. These same indices can be characterized by yet another dimension — the mode in which the individual relates to the various components of the political system. Several of the questions relate to the cognitive mode (such as interest in political issues); others deal with the affective mode (such as the sense of belonging to the Jewish people and to Israeli society); and finally the instrumental (behavioral) mode of orientations (such as participation in demonstrations).33

Another battery of questions dealt with demographic, socio-economic, and socio-cultural variables: age, gender, ethnic origin of each parent, educational level of each parent, housing density of the family home,34 and the degree of religiosity.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of our questionnaire, we conducted, prior to its construction, five sessions with five different focus groups. In each group there were about fifteen participants differing in age, gender, type of school, socio-economic status, religiosity, and city of residence. Although some of the questions were used in earlier research, the present questionnaire was pre-tested in a pilot study conducted in four classes (about 120 students).35 The participants in the focus groups and the pilot study were not subsequently included in the sample.

The data were collected by means of questionnaires which were filled out by the students themselves in the classroom during a one-hour period, in the presence of students of the Institute of Communications of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
Results

The Importance of National and Civic Norms

The first hypothesis (Hyp. 1) which claimed that the degree of political socialization would be high for both national and civic orientations was mostly supported. The findings show that the great majority of the respondents assign great importance to various components of political socialization. The importance of understanding the internal political problems and issues of their country was recognized by almost all of them — 92 percent (see Table 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic Norms</th>
<th>Degree of Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To understand the domestic issues of Israel (N=445)</td>
<td>Very Important 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important* 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To understand how I can participate in the political life of the country (N=444)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important* 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep up with how political institutions and agencies perform their functions (N=442)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important* 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop political opinions (N=443)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important* 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To understand the opinions of others (N=443)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important* 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including "Not at all important" category
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It is noteworthy that the second highest rating of importance was given to understanding the opinions of others. The questions relating to the development of political opinions by the respondents, to keeping up with the activities of political institutions and to developing political opinions were ranked as important by about three-quarters of the respondents (the combined results of those who responded "very important" and "important").

The lowest level of importance was assigned to participation in the political life of the country. True, even in this case 70 percent believed this to be an important component of political involvement, but this result was low in comparison to other variables, and only 24 percent considered it to be very important.

The findings presented in Table 2 show that of those orientations which pertain to the two national collectives — the Jewish people and Israeli society — the highest rate of importance (90 percent of the respondents) was assigned to the desire to live in Israel.

The affective norms toward Jewish and Israeli collectives ("to feel part of...") were considered important by the same percentage of respondents (86 percent) though there was a slight advantage to Jewish identity in the "very important" category.

The cognitive norms relating to these two identities ("to study and understand the history of the Jewish people" and "to study and understand Zionism") also received a high rating of importance by almost the same percentage of respondents: 78 percent and 76 percent respectively.

About one-half of the respondents (57 percent) assigned importance to understanding Jewish religious tradition. One should bear in mind that only 27 percent of the respondents characterized themselves as being strictly or highly observant of Jewish religious practices. In other words, even secular adolescents expressed an interest in gaining some knowledge of traditional Jewish religious practices, though it is obvious that this is an attitude of much greater importance to religious youth (the Pearson coefficient between this attitude and the degree of religiosity is 0.50).

Three social conflicts central to Israeli society were chosen in order to examine the respondents' interest in political conflicts.
Table 2

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE ATTRIBUTED TO NATIONAL NORMS (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Norms</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Not Important*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To learn about Jewish religious tradition (N=408)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study and understand the history of the Jewish people (N=408)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To feel a part of the Jewish people (N=408)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To feel a part of Israeli society (N=408)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study and understand the history of Zionism (N=404)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To live in Israel (N=401)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including "Not at all important" category

The first was the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Arab countries and the second was the distinct yet related conflict between Jews and Arabs in Israel. The third conflict was different in the sense that it is an intra-Jewish conflict — the constant tension between the secular and the religious sectors of Israeli society. Almost all the respondents were interested in the first two conflicts (92 percent and 90 percent respectively). The controversy between religious and secular Israeli citizens was considered interesting only by 63 percent of the respondents.
As for measures of political activity, the findings show that 33 percent of the respondents participate in some political activity, over half of them infrequently. This finding can perhaps be better understood in light of the fact that only 12 percent of these young people have a strong feeling of political efficacy and believe that they can influence the outcome of political issues. About half of them (48 percent) feel that they can exercise rather weak influence while 40 percent maintain that they have no political influence whatever. Nevertheless, the respondents often discussed political and social issues with their friends — only 15 percent admitted that they never did so. About 52 percent held such discussions frequently, while the remaining 33 percent did so only now and then. They held even more intensive discussions with their parents — 72 percent of the respondents reported that they frequently discussed political and social issues with their parents, 22 percent did so from time to time and only 6 percent never held such discussions with their parents.

National Identity and Political Involvement in Adolescent Subcultures

As had been hypothesized, we found that political involvement increases with age. As one grows up, one participates to a greater degree in political activities such as demonstrations, assemblies, and election campaigns (P<0.0007, r=0.16). In fact, the findings show that the importance attached to most measures of political involvement increased with age. As one grows older one attaches more importance to keeping abreast of the activities of political institutions (P.0001, r=0.24), and to the understanding of domestic issues of Israeli society and social conflicts, especially tension between religious and secular segments of the population. True, the correlation with age is not high in these last two cases (r=0.12 and r=0.17 respectively), but is indicative of the same trend. The highest correlation was between age and the desire to shape political opinions (P<0.0001, r=0.26).

As expected, there is a positive correlation between the influence of youth movements and several measures of political
involvement. The results show that members, or former members, of youth movements have a greater tendency to participate in political activity and assign greater importance to the adoption of political convictions and to understanding the opinions of others. They also attribute a greater degree of importance to norms related to Israeli identity — feeling a part of Israeli society, the study and understanding of Zionism, and the will to live in Israel.

The hypothesis that boys would tend to show a higher degree of political involvement than girls was not confirmed by the findings. In fact, in several measures girls assigned greater importance and evinced greater interest than boys. It should be emphasized that the differences between the sexes are not appreciable (there is a difference of 0.3 between the average values), but they are consistent in all but one variable — that which measures the extent to which the respondents discussed political and social issues with their friends. In this case the results show that boys tend to hold such discussions more than girls, but even here the difference (0.7) is not great.

The hypothesis that the higher the socio-economic level of the respondent's family, the higher would be the degree of his or her political involvement, was only partially borne out by the findings. Only a few of the political norms were found to have any correlation at all with these variables, and even these correlations were relatively weak. Paternal education was found to have a positive correlation with the degree of importance assigned to the adoption of an opinion on political issues (P<0.002, r=0.15) and to the understanding of other people's opinions (P<0.002, r=0.12). The correlations between the respondents' socio-economic status and the norms related to national identities were also not high. A negative, though weak, correlation was found between parental (both paternal and maternal) education and the degree of importance assigned to acquiring an acquaintance with traditional religious practices (P<0.001, r=0.16). The only two political norms found to have any correlation with housing density were the importance attached to political tolerance (understanding the opinions of others) and to the knowledge of traditional religious practices. Young people living in crowded homes (defined as one of the denominators of the lower socio-economic status) assigned less importance to
understanding others and more importance to knowledge of religious tradition.

The hypothesis that adolescents originating with the Oriental Jewish communities would show a higher degree of political involvement proved sound only in relation to the affective and instrumental norms of Jewish identity, i.e., the need to learn and study traditional religious practices and the sense of belonging to the Jewish people. This was also true when at least one parent was of Asian-African origin, though the gap between members of different ethnic communities was not great — most of the averages ranked from 1.7 to 1.4, except in the case of the importance attributed to religious tradition where the averages were from 2.5 to 2.1. In conclusion, it is important to stress that young people with different ethnic origins did not differ in their political involvement as measured by civic political norms.

The findings only partially supported the hypothesis that a positive correlation would be found between the degrees of religiosity and of political involvement. The highest correlation was between the level of religiosity and the importance attached to acquiring knowledge of Jewish religious tradition. Other strong correlations are with the affective measure of a sense of belonging to the Jewish people and the cognitive norms of the importance of studying and understanding Jewish history. However, note should also be taken of the positive correlations with the indices of Israeli identity such as the importance of studying and understanding Zionism and of a sense of belonging to Israeli society. Religiosity, however, was not associated with any of the cognitive civic norms except the frequency of discussing politics with one's parents.

In order to examine the relative contribution of each independent variable to the differences between the indices of political involvement we conducted a multi-variable regression on the dependent variables. The level of religiosity contributed substantially to the greatest number of variables, eight in all. Religiosity had the greatest influence upon five norms of political involvement, especially those measuring Israeli and Jewish identity. Age also accounted more than other variables for the differences noted among the dependent variables. There was a substantial contribution of age to the results for seven of these variables, the greatest influence being upon four indices, all of
which relate to cognitive aspects of civic-political involvement (understanding Israeli domestic issues, adoption of political convictions, taking an interest in relations between Jews and Arabs and in those between religious and secular Jews). All of these increase as the ages of the respondents rise. Another conclusion drawn from the regression is that second-generation Israelis tend more than others to believe that they are able to influence political decisions. Membership in a youth movement contributes appreciably to the difference recorded in one central variable, that which measures the frequency of political activity. The importance attached to understanding the opinions of others is affected first and foremost by the sex of the respondent, girls scoring higher than boys on this measure. It is also influenced by other variables: it increases with the level of education of the respondents’ parents and is also higher among those whose parents were born in Western democracies.

In summary, we may conclude that all the respondents in our sample tended to display a high degree of political involvement, in particular concerning measures of the two national identities and those of cognitive interest in political issues. There were no appreciable differences in political involvement among the subgroups of adolescents defined according to various variables regarding their background.

The Structure of Political Involvement — Patterns of Interrelations among Orientations toward National and Civic Political Norms

Hypotheses 3 and 4 of this study concern the structure of the interrelations between the political norms. This was examined by analysis of the coefficients between the various variables (Table 3) and also by a Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) map (Figure 1).

Using the Guttman approach which combines development of the theoretical facets of the research with the planning of its empirical elements, we formulated a mapping sentence which presents the facets that define the major variables of our study.³⁶ This mapping sentence generates hypotheses about the structure of interrelations among variables relating to the structure of
the political involvement of Israeli adolescents. The analysis of this structure was based on the matrix of correlations between the various variables (Table 3) which is graphically represented by the Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) (Figure 1).

MAPPING SENTENCE

Facet A: Mode of Response ——— Facet B: Political System Component

Respondent (x) reporting:
1. cognitive
2. affective
3. instrumental
   orientations toward

    high exhibits degree of political socialization
    low

The major variables of our study can be defined according to two facets in the following constructs:

1. It is important to me to understand Israeli domestic issues — a1b3.
2. It is important to me to understand how I can participate in the political life of the country — a1b3.
3. It is important to me to keep up with how political institutions and agencies perform their functions — a1b3.
4. It is important to me to develop political opinions — a1b3.
5. It is important to me to understand the opinions of others — a1b3.
6. I take an interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict — a1b3.
7. I take an interest in relations between Jews and Arabs — a1b3.
8. I take an interest in relations between religious and secular Jews — a1b3.
9. It is important to me to learn about Jewish religious tradition — a3b1.
10. It is important to me to feel a part of the Jewish people — a2b1.
11. It is important to me to study and understand the history of the Jewish people — a1b1.
12. It is important to me to feel a part of Israeli society — a2b2.
13. It is important to me to study and understand the history of Zionism — a1b2.
14. It is important to me to live in Israel — a3b2.
15. I feel that I will be able to influence solution of political problems — a3b3.
16. I discuss political and social issues with my friends — a3b3.
17. I discuss political and social issues with my parents — a3b3.
18. I participate in various political activities — a3b3.

The hypothesis as to the structure of interrelations (Hyp. 3 and Hyp. 4) was that the map would be (or would not be) divided into main areas according to the mode of the response (Facet A) and the three components of the political orientations (Facet B).

Regarding the two alternative hypotheses, hypothesis 3 was corroborated as the map spatially organized the respondents' orientations into a number of well-discerned areas according to the two facets of our mapping sentence — the mode of response and the component of the political system (the alienation coefficient is 0.13, which is considered satisfactory). The graphic distances between the variables as represented on the map are based on the Pearson correlations presented in Table 3.
Table 3

MATRIX OF PEARSON COEFFICIENTS AMONG THE POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS

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(*) The original coefficients were multiplied by 100 and rounded off into whole numbers.
Figure 1

STRUCTURE OF POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS (SSA)

<table>
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<th>Jewish People</th>
<th>Israeli Society</th>
<th>Civic System</th>
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<td></td>
<td>a1b3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a3b3 18</td>
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</table>

The SSA map is divided into three distinct parts according to the elements of Facet B. On the left hand of the map there is a concentration of orientations related to the Jewish people, the middle section contains all the norms related to Israeli society and on the right hand of the map there is a concentration of all the civic orientations essential to any democratic regime. Two variables measuring interest in the Israeli-Arab conflict and in the relationships between Jews and Arabs in Israel occupy a somewhat isolated place at the far end of this section. Their
location indicates that the respondents considered these to be external conflicts even though the questionnaire clearly distinguishes between the conflict with the Arab states and Jewish-Arab relations, which are also an Israeli domestic issue. In contrast, the interest in the relationship between the religious and the secular sectors of Jewish society is in the middle of other civic norms. Thus, the location of the interest in relations between religious and secular Jews indicates that it is perceived as a domestic Israeli issue.

The most meaningful finding regarding the division of the map according to Facet B is the clear distinction between the two national identities — the Jewish and the Israeli. The orientations connected with them are close on the map but they form distinct areas which do not overlap. However, there is a strong interaction between the two — the average Pearson correlation coefficient among the norms related to the Jewish people is about 0.50, the average between the norms related to Israeli society is 0.42, while the average between the norms relating to both national collectives is 0.45. It is also important that according to the map Israeli identity serves as an interlinking sphere between Jewish identity and civic norms.

The two areas of national norms are in accordance with the mode of response. The cognitive measures (the study of Jewish history and of the history of Zionism) are both in the lower part. The affective measures of Jewish and Israeli identity (the sense of belonging to these collectives) are in the upper part and very close to one another. The instrumental measure of Israeli identity (the will to live in Israel) is in the center of this area and in effect forms a link between the national and civic orientations. The instrumental measure of Jewish identity (the need to become acquainted with Jewish religious tradition) is somewhat isolated. It is close to the importance attached to the study of Jewish history but rather distant from the measures of Israeli identity. It is also worth noting the relatively low correlations between the importance attributed to learning Jewish religious tradition and the will to live in Israel (r=0.29) as well as the sense of belonging to Israeli society (r=0.19).

Orientations toward the civic political system are located at the right end of the map and are clearly subdivided into two sub-areas defined by the mode of response. In the upper area there
is a concentration of all the cognitive orientations. The coefficients between these variables are high and as a result they are heavily concentrated on the map. On the other hand, all the variables which are measures of instrumental orientations toward political norms (participation in political activities, a sense of being able to influence political decisions, discussion of political problems with parents and friends) are distant from all other variables on the map, and also from one another. The correlations between these four instrumental measures are very weak, showing that one expression of political activity is only rarely connected with any other manner of political participation. In other words, these are random acts which do not form a clear pattern of political behavior. The variables are also unconnected to any of the measures of national identity. The only exception to this rule is the strong correlation between discussion of political issues with parents and the measure of identification with the Jewish people. In contrast, there are many positive correlations between participation in various types of political activity (demonstrations, rallies, etc.) and most of the attitudes toward the civic system. True, they are not appreciably strong, but we have evidence here of a clear and consistent tendency.

The map shows that the core political socialization of Israeli adolescents revolves around cognitive orientations toward the civic system and around cognitive and affective orientations toward the two national collectives. A striking result is the severance between the center of political socialization and instrumental civic norms. These are the orientations toward social conflicts — and especially the Jewish-Arab conflict — on the one hand, and those toward political activity, on the other hand.

Typology of National Identities and Their Interrelations with Civic Norms

Another major hypothesis of this study was that adolescents with a highly developed sense of both Israeli and Jewish identity would be found to rate highest on the measures of political involvement. On the other hand, it was assumed that those lowest on both measures of national identity would also rank
Patterns of Political Involvement among Israeli Adolescents

lowest on all measures of political involvement. Moreover, according to this hypothesis, adolescents with a strong Israeli identity but a weak sense of belonging to the Jewish people would score higher on measures of civic orientations than those of the converse type — a strong Jewish identity and a weaker Israeli identity.

In order to test this hypothesis, the respondents were classified into four profile types. The first type includes those with high levels of both Israeli and Jewish identity; the second group includes those with a strong sense of belonging to Israeli society but a weak identity with the Jewish people; the third type are those with precisely the opposite profile — a strong Jewish identity but a weak sense of belonging to Israeli society; the last group includes those who rated low on the measures of both identities. Table 4 represents the average ratings of civic norms in these four profile type groups.

Our hypothesis was borne out in relation to most of the dependent variables: respondents with strong Jewish and Israeli identities (++) are the highest on the measures of political involvement, while those weakest in both national identities (--) are much less involved politically. Respondents with a strong Israeli and a weak Jewish identity (+-) are more politically involved than those with a weak Israeli identity and a strong Jewish identity (++).

There are, however, a few exceptions which do not completely bear out our predictions. Respondents with a strong Israeli identity and a weak Jewish identity (+-) were also found to rate highest on the measure of the importance attributed to developing political opinions while those who identified strongly with both national collectives (++) placed second. Surprisingly, respondents who were weak in both identities (--) rated third for this, while those with a weak Israeli identity but a strong Jewish identity (++) rated lowest. Similarly, respondents with a poor sense of identification with either national collective (--) rated higher on average on the measure of political tolerance than did those with a strong Jewish, but not Israeli identity (+-).
Hanna Adoni and Uri Adoni

Table 4

AVERAGE RATINGS OF POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT BY FOUR TYPES OF NATIONAL IDENTITY (*)

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<td>1.95</td>
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(*) The ratings range from 1, the highest rating, to 4, the lowest rating, respectively, so that the lower the average rating, the higher the level of political involvement.

Legend:

1. Degree of importance attributed to understanding Israeli domestic issues.
2. Degree of importance attributed to understanding how one can participate in political life.
3. Degree of importance attributed to understanding how political institutions and agencies function.
4. Degree of importance attributed to the development of political opinions.
5. Degree of importance attributed to understanding the opinions of others.
6. Degree of interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict.
7. Degree of interest in Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.
8. Degree of interest in relations between religious and secular Jews.
15. Degree of belief in personal influence on political issues.
16. Frequency of discussion of political issues with friends.
17. Frequency of discussion of political issues with parents.
18. Frequency of participation in political activity (demonstrations, rallies, etc.).

Discussion

The structure of the interrelationship between the orientations of young Israelis toward the national collectives, indicates that Jewish and Israeli identities are distinct yet strongly interrelated. This finding suggests that the boundaries between the two identities which have hitherto been flexible and highly overlapping might be changing and we might be witnessing the crystallization of an Israeli identity which is nevertheless strongly anchored in the traditional Jewish identity. In the context of the study of political socialization it is important to note that the norms of Israeli identity serve as a link between Jewish identity and the civic political domain. The cognitive civic norms, related to political interest and knowledge, are also central to the structure of political involvement, while the instrumental norms of political activity are rather peripheral.

Another major finding that emerges from analysis of our data is that Israeli adolescents are characterized by a high level of political socialization. This is expressed first and foremost in the importance they attribute to national political norms — both Jewish and Israeli — followed by eagerness to learn about various aspects of political life as well as interest in the major conflicts of Israeli society.

The interest expressed in politics is only partially converted into political activity. Whereas almost 70 percent of the respondents claim that it is important for them to learn how they can participate in the political life of the country and about 60 percent sense that they can exercise at least some influence in the political domain, only 33 percent actively participate in political activities. However we note that the correlation between the importance attributed to learning how one can participate in political life and actual political activity is positive but low (r=0.24).

Adolescents with a high level of both Jewish and Israeli identities rated highest in political socialization. The great majority of the respondents (58 percent) belonged to this group.
There was a clear and significant difference between them and the group of respondents who ranked low in both their Jewish and Israeli identities, which accounted for about 15 percent of the total sample. Those with only a strong Israeli identity (about 20 percent) were generally more politically involved than those with only a strong Jewish identity, though the differences between these two groups were not appreciable. Our findings point to the probability that a young Israeli who develops a strong sense of at least one of the two national identities will also develop strong civic norms. Adolescents who were low on the measure of both identities showed a greater tendency to understand the opinions of others than did those with a strong Jewish identity and a weak Israeli identity. This may possibly be the result of some indifference toward political issues on the part of those with a weak sense of national identity, but, on the other hand, it is also possible that these adolescents are more open-minded toward opinions outside the national consensus.

Our study shows that, with the exception of differentiation between age groups, there are no appreciable differences between the adolescent subcultures. It was found that even among the youngest respondents (thirteen-year-olds) national norms were already fairly highly developed. Interest in political issues and political activity becomes stronger as the thirteen-year-olds grow into the later stages of adolescence. This finding is compatible with Erikson’s theory and with the results of empirical studies of political socialization.39

The findings relating to differences in political involvement by gender show that in most of the measures of political involvement girls rank higher than boys, the only exception being frequency of discussion of political issues with their peers. This is a rather surprising result which contradicts those of earlier studies. In the introductory section of this article we quoted some studies which indicated that the gap between political involvement of the sexes seems to be narrowing. It may very well be that in Israel, a society characterized by very intensive political involvement, the gap is already closing. We may also be witness to a process of social change and the development of a new norm which mandates that women are expected to be no less politically involved than men. Perhaps precisely because we have a case here of social innovation the girls made more of a
Patterns of Political Involvement among Israeli Adolescents

point than the boys of stressing their interest in the political system and their general political involvement.

The hypothesis that religious adolescents would show a tendency toward a higher degree of political involvement was only partly corroborated, particularly with reference to the affective measures of national identity such as a sense of belonging to the Jewish people and to Israeli society and to much lesser extent with reference to the measures of civic norms.

In light of the social and political situation in Israel it is important to emphasize that socio-economic status and ethnic origin seem to have almost no influence on political involvement. Most of the respondents were born in Israel and the ethnic origin of their parents (Asian and African countries, Europe or Israel) had almost no effect on their levels of political involvement. Whatever differences were found between the three groups were very small. As expected, respondents from the Oriental communities ranked somewhat higher on the norms relating to religious tradition and sense of belonging to the Jewish people. One interesting difference was that respondents whose parents were Israeli-born tended to exhibit a higher level of political efficacy. Another interesting finding was that young people belonging to the lower social classes tended to exhibit less political tolerance and attach less importance to the development of political opinions. In general the results of our study confirm a trend noted by Liebman that Sephardi Jews have been moving from the margins to the very center of Israeli politics.40 They are no less politically involved than the children of European- and Israeli-born parents, though, as we have already seen, second-generation Israelis have more confidence in their ability to influence political decisions.

An explanation for the lack of any appreciable differences between respondents with different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds may lie in the fact that most of them faced the prospect of a lengthy period of military service. Awareness of the fact that they were soon to be drafted and that they would have to serve several years within a military framework while carrying out responsible duties may have stimulated political involvement and tended to eliminate social differences.41 If this explanation is even partly correct, an important question is
whether these adolescents will be characterized by a similar level of political involvement when they achieve adulthood.

In conclusion, Israeli adolescents achieve a highly developed sense of both Jewish and Israeli national norms. Our results convey that there is a process of social change and that the two national identities are becoming distinct yet still interrelated. This complex national identity is combined with a high degree of interest in political issues and a rather mediocre level of political activity and sense of political efficacy. There are no great differences between subcultures of adolescents defined according to socio-economic variables, but there are different emphases on national and civic norms. Adolescents with a religious background and those of Oriental Jewish origin tend to emphasize the affective national norms while those of higher socio-economic status and coming from a more secular background tend to attach more importance to the development of political opinions and to understanding political points of view different from their own. The differences between boys and girls were small and the girls even displayed a somewhat higher level of political socialization.

Finally, one must draw a somewhat discouraging conclusion from the emphasis placed by the respondents upon those elements of political socialization characterized by intellectual interest, as contrasted to the mediocre degree of commitment to actual political activity of any sort. There seems to be a severance between political interest and the two essential preconditions for democracy in action — belief in one’s ability to play a role in the solution of political issues and the transformation of that belief into action, with the express purpose of influencing the political scene.

Notes

3. For the elaboration of this definition, see also the paper by David Easton and Jack Dennis, “A Political Theory of Political Social-


9. For a comprehensive discussion of this subject, see the recently published book by Orit Ichilov, Citizenship Education in Israel: Current and Pre-State Trends of Development (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Poalim, 1993). Note that this book also includes the relevant bibliography in Hebrew and in English. See also the extensive empirical survey done in the 1970s by Shlomit Levy and Louis Guttman, Values and Attitudes of Israeli Youth (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Louis Guttman Israel Institute of Applied Social Research, 1976).


12. Shlomit Levy, Compounds of the Jewish Identity as Motivators for Jewish Identification among Jewish Youth and Adults in Israel in the Period 1967-1982 (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1985). In her Ph.D. dissertation Levy analyzes various components of Jewish identity as well as the changes they underwent over time.


14. See, for example, the seminal paper by Jean Piaget and Anne-Marie Weil, “The Development in Children of the Idea of the Homeland and of Relations with Other Countries,” International Social Science Bulletin, 3 (1951):561-579. For an example of an


28. For example, in studies done by Orit Ichilov and her colleagues and by R. Shapira and her colleagues, as cited in Orit Ichilov, 1993, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 21-22.


33. One battery of questions asked about the relative importance the respondents attach to five civic political norms and six national political norms. The values on the importance scale range from 1 to 4, (1) representing “very important” and (4) representing “not at all important.” Another list of questions measured political interest in social conflicts, the interest scale ranging from (1)
“very interested” to (4) “not at all interested.” Another four questions measured the frequency of political activities, ranging from (1) “very often” to (4) “never.”

34. The housing density index is computed by dividing the number of persons residing in a house by the number of rooms in that house.


36. The mapping sentence is the summary of the theoretical assumptions of each study, the basis for the construction of the questionnaire as well as the basis for testing the study’s empirical hypotheses. For a thorough presentation of this methodology see Louis Guttman and Shmuel Shye, “On the Search for Laws in the Behavioral Sciences,” in Shmuel Shye, ed., Theory Construction and Data Analysis in the Behavioral Sciences (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978), pp. 2-24.

37. SSA (Smallest Space Analysis) allows for a graphic presentation of the relationships among all the variables. Each point on the map represents a variable and the distances between each point and all the others are based on a matrix of intercorrelations. The higher the correlation between any two items, the smaller the distance between the points representing them on the map.

38. Based on the findings about the structural interrelations among the variables by means of Smallest Space Analysis, we developed two indices: one of Jewish national identity and one of Israeli national identity. The Jewish identity index was composed of measures of importance attached to the following: learning about Jewish religious tradition; studying the history of the Jewish people; feeling a part of the Jewish people. The Israeli identity index was composed of measures of importance attached to the following: studying the history of Zionism; feeling a part of Israeli society; living in Israel. The typology presented in Table 4 is based on these indices.

