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Introduction

THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF LATIN AMERICA

The history of the Jews in Latin America is marked by contradictions. During the colonial era, the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies prohibited any Jewish presence, but the Jews were able to create modern Jewish communities in the Dutch and British Caribbean. The Inquisition persecuted crypto-Jews, and their descendants were assimilated into the Catholic societies. In recent years, however, we have witnessed the proliferation of groups that consider themselves *Bnei anusim* (descendants of *marranos*), around Recife—which was part of the Dutch colony in Brazil, as well as in Peru, Mexico and Colombia.

The first Jewish immigrants to reach the Latin American republics after independence settled in the Caribbean port cities of Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama. They prospered economically, but tended to intermarry and assimilate. Their traces, however, did not disappear, and, in some cases, they laid the foundations for the future organization of their respective communities.

The forerunners of the Sephardic communities in Brazil were Moroccan Jews from Tétouan and Tangier, who immigrated during the nineteenth century, and penetrated into the Amazon region as a result of the rubber boom. The decline of the rubber industry brought many of them to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In recent years, groups of Amazonians of Moroccan descent have reclaimed their Jewish identity.

During the period of mass migration, the countries of the Southern Cone—Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile—tried to attract European immigrants, especially agricultural workers. Argentina thus became the focus of an organized attempt to solve the problem of Russian Jewry through a massive agricultural project sponsored by Baron Maurice Hirsch. The agricultural colonies became a hotbed nurturing the leadership of Jewish Argentina, and provided the narrative of the local roots of the "Jewish Gauchos," but, from a practical point of view, Jewish agriculture disappeared within two generations.

Nevertheless, the Jewish agricultural settlements, which today house a very small number of Jews, did not escape from a new form of contemporary Jewish identity. Thus, in recent decades, the colonies created by Baron Hirsch have been transformed into memory landmarks of the Argentine Jewish community. We may claim, then, that they operate as the foundational myth of the Argentine Jewish community, competing with other myths of origin and "mother lands," such as *Eretz Israel* or the communities in Europe and the Middle East, from which the first immigrants to Argentina arrived. Jewish schools organize visits to these colonies and small villages, and there are organized tours for members of the Jewish communities and the general Argentine public. These demonstrate the ability of the largest Jewish community of Latin America to recreate its Judaism, incorporating its Jewish past into the history of Argentina as well as to its Jewish present through creative strategies.

With the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Sephardic Jews began to immigrate to Latin America in large numbers. Jews from Syria, Turkey, and the Balkan countries dispersed throughout the continent since the beginning of the twentieth century, establishing communal infrastructures based on sub-ethnic affiliation.

During the 1920s, large numbers of Jews from Poland and other East European countries immigrated to Latin America. From a historical perspective, the United States quota acts led to Latin America becoming a destination for Jewish mass migration. The closing of the gates of America resulted in the growth of the Jewish communities in the Southern Cone, as well as in Mexico and Cuba. During the Holocaust, the countries of Latin America became potential havens for Jewish refugees from countries under Nazi rule, creating a contradiction between law and practice: while all the countries implemented a restrictive legislation that legally closed their gates, they did not necessarily deny unofficial procedures for rescue. In fact, there is no correlation between the capacity for absorption and the number of refugees who entered each country.[1]

Jewish institutional life was established on a voluntary basis, and was influenced by the model of the communities of origin as well as by the different circumstances in the new countries. Larger communities were able to create more elaborate infrastructures, but the patterns of organization were similar. The Ashkenazi Jews created religious institutions, even though most of them

1 Haim Avni, "The Spanish Speaking World and the Jews, the Last Half Century," in *Terms of Survival: The Jewish World since 1945*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 1995), 358–82; "Latin America and the Jewish Refugees: Two Encounters, 1945 and 1938," in *The Jewish Presence in Latin America*, ed. Judith Laikin Elkin and Gilbert W. Merkx (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 58–68.

were secular. They developed educational networks, as well as social and cultural institutions that reflected the political conflicts between Zionists, Bundists, and Communists. The *Landsmanschaftn* (institutions for persons coming from the same town) characterized the first generation, and were substituted gradually by a general Ashkenazi identity, unlike the Sephardic Jews, who tended to preserve sub-ethnic divisions. The Sephardic institutions are based on centralized communities that maintain divisions between Ladino speakers, Aleppans (*Halebis*), Damascenes (*Shamis*), and Moroccans.

The Judaism of the immigrants, which differed significantly from the Judaism recreated by the first and second generations born in Latin America, reveals rich and complex phenomena in the social, political, religious, and cultural development of the Jewish communities from different countries. Social, cultural, and political transitions challenged the institutional infrastructures created by the immigrant generation. Processes of integration and assimilation were influenced by the ethnic composition and attitudes toward religious diversity and multiculturalism that require specific analysis for each individual country. Intergenerational conflicts, mixed marriages, and the growing identification with the non-Jewish environment alienated large segments of the Jewish population from the organized communities, especially in countries with large European populations and with an ideological openness toward pluralism—Brazil being a paradigmatic case. In countries with large indigenous populations, such as Mexico and Peru, where immigrants and their descendants were small minorities, the Jews tended to be auto-segregated in their own communities, and, to this day, are more involved in communal life.

For many years, the Jews of Latin America—particularly the Ashkenazi Jews—tended to be secular. From the 1940s on, Jewish identity was constructed around two axes: Zionism and the Holocaust. In the words of historian Judith Laikin Elkin, the Jews of Latin America were "a secular minority attached to Zionism as a substitute for its ancestral religion."[2] This situation has changed totally in the last fifty years. The Conservative movement became a focus of religious attraction that spread from Argentina throughout the continent, converting the *Seminario Rabínico de Buenos Aires* into an exporter of rabbis to all the Spanish-speaking communities, including those in the United States, as well as to Brazil. More recently, global ultra-Orthodox movements are gaining strength among the Jewish communities, under the impact of *shlichim*

2 Judith Laikin Elkin, *The Jews of the Latin America 3rd Edition* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2014), 293.

of Chabad Lubavitch or Latin American graduates of *yeshivot* in Israel and the United States. While large segments of the Jewish population are totally integrated into the Latin American environment, with a high percentage of intermarriage, the presence of ultra-Orthodox Jews, Ashkenazi and Sephardic, has been very visible in the public sphere from the 1980s on.

The growing role of religion in Jewish life has diminished the importance of Zionism as a manifestation of Jewish life—a phenomenon known as de-Zionization. Following its establishment, the State of Israel contributed to legitimizing local identities, and provided a respected *madre patria* for the rootless Jews. Gradually, however, Israel was transformed from a source of self-confidence to a source of danger, as manifested in the 1990s' bombings of the Israeli Embassy and the AMIA (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina—the Ashkenazi Jewish Community) in Buenos Aires, or in the anti-Semitic treatment of the Jewish community by the Chávez administration in Venezuela.

Political and economic crises in Latin American countries motivated waves of emigration that resulted in the emergence of transnational Jewish Latin American communities in Israel, the United States, and Europe. New problems now confronted the descendants of the immigrants who had found a haven from persecutions and poverty in Latin America. During the period of the military dictatorships, a relatively large number of Jews, particularly in Argentina, but also in Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, were involved in underground activities. While many became *Desaparecidos*, others were able to escape to exile. At the same time that the countries of the Southern Cone experienced a return to democracy, other countries—such as Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela—faced political violence that threatened personal security, which became a major cause for emigration. In addition, the impoverishment of the middle classes under neo-liberal governments shattered the economic situation of the Jewish communities, leading to the departure of many Latin American Jews from Latin America.

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Many of the early studies on Latin American Jewry were monographs prepared by local researchers, some academic, but many conducted by community activists, who wrote testimonies, memoirs, and histories of their own immigration and regions—works that came to light through books, magazines, and the community presses, and, in many cases, which were characterized by their apologetic tone.

One of the early initiatives to professionalize Jewish studies was the creation of the Program for Jewish Studies at the University of São Paulo in the late 1960s.

During the same period, the Institute of Contemporary Jewry of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem introduced the study of Latin American Jewry with the pioneering studies of Haim Avni. The starting point for Avni's approach was the need to understand the current existential problems of the Jews in Latin America through a combined analysis of the economic, social, and political reality in their respective countries, and the Jewish context at both the local and global levels.

Avni's students were among the founders of *Agudat Mitmachei Iahadut Latinoamerica* (AMILAT), an Israeli association of researchers of Latin American Jewry that organizes the Latin American section in the World Congresses of Jewish Studies, which take place every four years in Jerusalem. It also publishes the volumes of *Judaica Latinoamericana*, thus contributing to the inclusion of Latin America in the framework of Jewish studies.

While many of the early studies focused on one country, particularly Argentina, Judith Laikin Elkin was the first to present Latin American Jewry as a complex, pointing out the comparative perspective. Her book, *The Jews in the Latin American Republics* (1980), became the basic textbook for the study of Latin American Jewry in the United States. In 1980, she founded LAJSA—the Latin American Jewish Studies Association, which became an international forum for scholars interested in the field, with biannual conferences.

Latin American Jewish studies expanded gradually, with a growing crop of research, not only in history but also in literature, political science, sociology, anthropology, and art. Many of the researchers, particularly those based in the United States, became interested in the Jewish case from the perspective of general Latin American studies. A revisionist approach emerged, criticizing the "Zionist approach" of Haim Avni and his disciples. Its main representatives are Raanan Rein and Jeffrey Lesser, who argue that most of the old studies focus on the organized communities and ignore the nonaffiliated. They emphasize the local identity, using the term "Argentine Jews" instead of Jewish Argentineans, and stress the similarities between Jews and other minorities.[3]

This revisionist approach was challenged in Avni, Bokser Liwerant, DellaPergola, Bejarano and Senkman, *Pertenencia y alteridad. Judíos en/de América Latina: Cuarenta años de cambios* (*Belonging and Otherness: Jews in/from Latin America: Forty Years of Change*) (2010), which makes a comparative

3 Jeffrey Lesser and Raanan Rein, eds., *Rethinking Jewish-Latin Americans* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008); Ranaan Rein, *Argentine Jews or Jewish Argentines* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

analysis of both the history and the historiography of Latin American Jews between 1967 and 2008.

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The collection of articles in this volume is based on an international conference that took place in São Paulo in September 2012. The conference was organized in Israel by the Dahan Center of the Bar-Ilan University and the Academic College in Ashkelon, and, in Brazil, by The Program for Hebrew Language, Jewish Literature, and Culture, and the Center for Jewish Studies of the University of São Paulo. Half of the articles in the volume deal with Brazil, reflecting the growing importance of studies on Brazil in Latin American Jewish studies, thus contributing to a more proportionate balance between studies on Argentina, as the largest Jewish community, and Brazil, as the second.

In this collection, the reader will find a wide range of subjects reflecting all the historiographical approaches mentioned above, as well as various scholarly perspectives, such as social history, anthropology, sociology, and literary criticism. There are studies using comparison versus monographs; studies based on the inside perspective of the individual communities versus analyses of the Jewish case in the general context; papers focused on the Jewish communities versus those focused on the relationship between these groups—or the diasporas—and the State of Israel. The common denominator of all the works included in the present volume is the aim to understand the singularity of contemporary Judaism and Jewishness in Latin America.

Some of the articles reflect the way in which scholars of Jewish studies in Israel are exposed to subjects such as the emergence of the new orthodoxy, Jewish education in the Diaspora, *aliyah*, and kibbutzim, or to Latin American literature from an Israeli point of view. Indeed, both lay Israelis and the Israeli academic community continue to regard Latin America as an "exotic" and distant space studied almost exclusively by researchers from various academic institutes dedicated to Latin American studies or to Latin American Jewish studies. In their efforts to overcome this tendency, the contribution of Israeli authors to this volume is an important step in demystifying stereotypes that were consolidated in Israeli society over several decades. At the same time, they raise awareness of the importance of Latin America in the global context, and the relevance of the different Jewish communities and their special relations to the State of Israel.

We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to Dr. Shimon Ohayon of the Dahan Center, for his support and encouragement over the years. Our thanks also go to Dr. Gabriel Steinberg, head of the Center for Jewish Studies of the University of São Paulo, for giving us the backing needed for the successful accomplishment of the conference; to our students, Amilkar Henrique Gonçalves de Moura and André Galvão Soares, who worked with enthusiasm and efficiency on the last-minute details; and, finally, to Robert Bánvölgyi, who did the simultaneous translation of conferences presented in Hebrew into Portuguese. Above all, we would like to thank Mrs. Ora Kobelkowsky, who, on an almost daily basis over more than three years, ably and painstakingly oversaw the editing of the articles. She was the connecting link between the contributors to this volume and us, and did it so graciously.

We hope that the contents of this volume will be of interest to both scholars and laypersons who care about Jewish life in Latin America.

Margalit Bejarano, Israel
Yaron Harel, Israel
Marta F. Topel, São Paulo

Part One

Globalization, Transnationalism, and Latin American Judaism and Jewishness

CHAPTER 1

Expansion and Interconnectedness of Jewish Life in Times (and Spaces) of Transnationalism: New Realities, New Analytical Perspectives

JUDIT BOKSER LIWERANT

Latin American Jews live, move, build, and interact in a global world. Resulting from increasing interconnectedness and sustained migration flows, new processes of redefinition and reshaping of Latin American Jewish experiences and identities are taking place in both the known and the

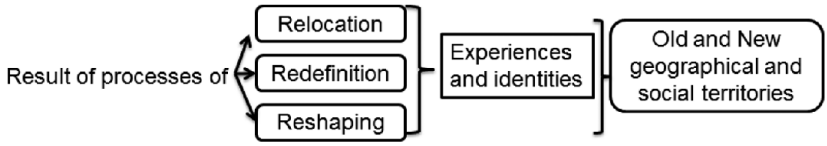
new geographical and social territories. Organizational and ideational patterns develop through a process of reaffirmation, transferral, or re-transferral between home and new settings. Thus, novel realities emerge that require a broad analytical scope that relates to and differentiates between Diaspora and transnationalism both as social processes and conceptual tools.

Singular to Jewish life has been the worldwide dynamics of interaction and closeness. The diasporized patterning across time and space has encompassed dense institutional networks situated within localities, across them, and as part of a Jewish world system. Through a historic process of being attached to different shifting and overlapping external centers–homelands, real and concrete, imaginary and symbolic, Latin American Jews have experienced crossing borders. A path simultaneously evincing strong connections of transnational solidarity, as well as a dependent or peripheral character of communities in the process of becoming an ethno-national Diaspora, affected these relationships. Political concepts, values, aspirations, and organizational entities brought from diverse parts of the world played fundamental roles in the process of cultural and institutional formation of Jewish communities in Latin America.

Latin American Jewish realities point to convergences and divergences between identities within a singular common trait: a close interaction between ethno-cultural identity and the national dimension in the mold of diasporic Jewish nationalism under progressive Zionist hegemony. The permanent struggle between world visions, convictions, strategies, and instrumental needs fostered the Zionist idea and the need for the State of Israel to become a central axis around which identity was built and communal life structured and developed. Thus, the State of Israel and the Jewish/Zionist ethos have played a unique role as hegemony builders and catalysts.

However, today's processes of globalization, the growing scope and intensity of worldwide interaction, and the emigration waves from the continent point to new models of transnational ties, and the emergence of transnational social fields and spaces. We suggest that Diaspora and Transnationalism may be seen as key concepts for approaching the Latin American Jewish contemporary condition. The borders of Latin American and Jewish life have expanded beyond the region, and acquired great significance as factors of social transformation. Processes of migration and relocation to new geographical and social territories reshape experiences and identities (see Figure 1.1).

Transnationalism becomes a stable condition that goes beyond the subjects that move and create expanded social spaces and realities. It therefore challenges the "methodological nationalism" of prevailing social theories that equate society



Changes (migration, relocation, return, dual residency, dispersal, renewal) ⟶ impact domains of community and public life:

- Inclusion and exclusion within broader communal and societal contexts
- Shifting ideological commitments
- Construction, resilience, transformation, contesting and reconstitution of individual and collective Jewish life
- Building, imagining, reformulating and adjusting-redefining individual and collective identities

Figure 1.1 Latin American Jewish Trends.

with the boundaries of a particular nation-state. Social processes, cultural interactions, and identity building operate across borders.[1] From this perspective, we observe traits and trends of the Latin American Jewish ethno-national Diaspora becoming an ethno-transnational one, in which bordered and bounded social and communal units are transnationally constituted spaces interacting with one another while creating new extended spaces (see Figure 1.2).[2]

While singular in certain respects, the Jewish case 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. Comparatively, Jews are understudied in contemporary Diaspora research, where they seem to have lost their historical resonance.[3] 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.

1 Cf. Ulrich Beck, "La condition cosmopolite et le piège du nationalisme méthodologique," in *Les Sciences Sociales en Mutation*, ed. Michel Wieviorka (Auxerre, FR: Cedex, 2007); Nina Glick Schiller et al., "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (1995).

2 Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Latin American Jews. A Transnational Diaspora" in *Transnationalism*, ed. Eliezer Ben-Rafael et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

3 Roger Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005).

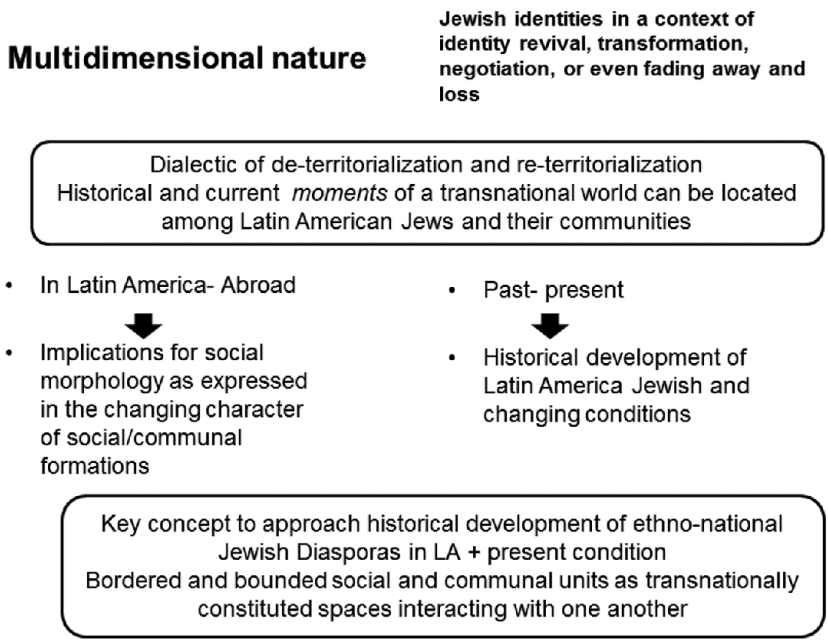


Figure 1.2 Conceptual Renewal of Territory and Community (Material + Symbolic): Transnationalism.

TRANSNATIONALISM AND GLOBAL DIASPORAS: THE CONCEPTUAL AXES

Both concepts refer to similar processes and actors, and sometimes are used interchangeably, reflecting different intellectual genealogies; that is, different ways in which theoretical traditions deal with the place of structures and agency in a world on the move: population movements, migratory processes, and classical or historical dispersions, as well as a new Diaspora.

The changing contours of diasporas and their profusion have led to new formulations that recover and redefine classical dimensions. Indeed, while older notions of Diaspora mainly concern enforced dispersal, today this concept covers diverse groups like migrants, expatriates, refugees and displaced peoples, temporary migrant workers, groups of exiles, or ethnic communities, thus leading to extreme responses such as the questioning of its heuristic value.[4]

4 Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist, eds., *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press—IMISCOE Research, 2010);

The research on Diaspora, despite the potentially indiscriminate use of the term, has highlighted three essential components: a) dispersion of its members, b) orientation toward an ethno-national center, real or imaginary, that is considered to be a homeland, and c) host country maintenance of the group's ethno-cultural borders.[5] It has gradually pointed to the dynamics both of boundary maintenance and boundary erosion, of continuity and change, and widened the concept of return to include old–new dynamics of interaction and interconnectedness. Moreover, in its wide parameters, the national and transnational dimensions interact, shift, and overlap.

Transnationalism, for its part, has focused mainly on more recent migration movements. While it has emphasized hybridity over distinctiveness and border maintenance as its characteristic, it complements and apprehends the current transformation of diasporas, allowing new readings of the past trajectory of the Jewish dispersion. The coexistence of an original home—mythic, symbolic, real—with interconnections between communities of dispersion, plus the fact that migration is no longer a unilateral movement that proceeds from the homeland to a land of destination, exhibits, rather, greater recurrence and circularity in its destinations—and points toward a novel convergence of processes, such as the diasporization of communities of migrants, or the de-diasporization, re-diasporization, and also the conversion of ethno-national diasporas into transnational ones. Multiple spatial, labor, social, and cultural displacements imply a change in analytical approaches, thus providing new perspectives.

Indeed, the potentiality of these conceptual axes points to common grounds and specificities of the Jewish case as well as to other equally relevant processes of today's Jewish life, concerning complex patterns of continuity and change in communal/national/transnational spaces. Basic conceptual and methodological dilemmas stand before us. In Diaspora studies, the Jewish case has been attenuated and has lost centrality,[6] whereas transnational studies tend to lose sight of boundary maintenance and the diasporic density present in

Douglas Nonini, "Diasporas and Globalization," in *Encyclopedia of Diasporas*, ed. Melvin Ember et al. (Boston: Springer Verlag, 2005); Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora."

5 Erik H. Cohen, *Youth Tourism to Israel: Educational Experiences of the Diaspora* (Clevedon, UK: Channel View Publications, 2008); Daniel Peter O'Haire, *Diaspora* (Charleston, SC: Booksurge Publishing, 2008); Frederic Brenner, *Diaspora: Homelands in Exile* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2008); Milton J. Esman, *Diasporas in the Contemporary World* (London: Polity Press, 2009).

6 Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora."

contemporary migratory movements. On the contrary, the latter is subsumed under the critique of the "ethnic lens."[7] Transnational studies have typically focused on individuals, their links and networks of social relations being the principal units of analysis.[8]

The Jewish case, however, is grounded necessarily in the collective dimension, in the institutional underpinnings of globality and its structural effects. The individual and communal levels interact through dense and stable Jewish associational and institutional channels that enhance informal ethnic threads (and also family links and networks). At the collective level, however, associative resources re-elaborate and reorient organized Jewish life.[9] The degree of formalization or institutionalization is characterized as well by a strong collective historical experience that brings together time dimensions as expressed by *longue durée* trends.

On the other hand, significant work in social sciences research of contemporary Jewry tends to leave out the global dimension of Jewish life, focusing on national cases and thus underscoring exceptionalism.[10] Therefore, while the historical Jewish experience does not equate social processes with national or state frontiers, it has contributed to overcoming the limitations of methodological individualism that focuses on the migrants and their networks as the exclusive unit of analysis.[11]

The concepts of Diaspora and transnationalism can now be reexamined, revealing the remarkable partnership of the "awkward partners," as

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7 Glick Schiller et al., "From Immigrant to Transmigrant"; Peggy Levitt and Mary Waters, eds., *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002).

8 Luis Eduardo Guarnizo and Michel Peter Smith, "The Location of Transnationalism," in *Transnationalism from Below*, ed. Michel Peter Smith and Luis Eduardo Guarnizo (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998); Alejandro Portes et al., "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (1999); Ludger Pries, "Transnational Societal Spaces: Which Units of Analysis, Reference and Measurement," in *Rethinking Transnationalism: The Meso-link of Organization*, ed. Ludger Pries (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2008).

9 Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988).

10 Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Jewish Diaspora and Transnationalism: Awkward (Dance) Partners," in *Reconsidering Israel-Diaspora Relations*, ed. Eliezer Ben Rafael et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

11 Portes et al., "The Study of Transnationalism."

Bauböck and Faist defined them.[12] In particular, the dialectics of boundary maintenance/boundary erosion complements the analysis of practices of émigré ethnic communities centered only in processes of cultural hybridization, fluidity, and Creolization, as well as religious syncretism. Rogers Brubaker warns about such ambivalence found in the literature on transnationalism, for which the predominant orientation toward hybridism resists diasporic practices that have highlighted the principle of boundary maintenance. It is worthwhile underlining the fact that a major theorist of Diaspora and immigrant assimilation is aware of the need to maintain the perspective of boundary maintenance as a resource that explains interaction with society as a whole:

> Boundaries can be maintained by deliberate resistance to assimilation through self-enforced endogamy or other forms of self-segregation … [Boundary-maintenance] that enables one to speak of a diaspora as a singular "community," held together by a distinctive, active solidarity, as well as by relatively dense social relationships, that cut across state boundaries and link members of the diaspora in different states into a single "transnational community."[13]

Valuable achievements can be found in current sociological work aiming to develop and benefit from the transnational analytical paradigm.[14] As part of the conceptual shift suggested, an important line of inquiry relates to the interaction between integration, innovation, and continuity.

While deterritorialization and porous borders geographically detach communities and social sectors, transnational networks, spaces and social

12 Bauböck and Faist, *Diaspora and Transnationalism*; Thomas Faist, *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Thomas Faist, "Transnationalization and Development," in *Migration, Development and Transnationalization: A Critical Stance*, ed. Nina Glick Schiller and Thomas Faist (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010); Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Perspective on Society," *International Migration Review* 38, no. 145 (2004).

13 Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," 6.

14 Eliezer Ben Rafael and Yitzhak Sternberg, eds., *Transnationalism: Diasporas and the Advent of a New (Dis)order* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "The New Religious Constellation in the Framework of Contemporary Globalization and Civilizational Transformation," in *World Religions and Multiculturalism*, ed. Eliazar Ben Rafael and Yitzhak Sternberg (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

circles are created and bolstered.[15] In this sense, diasporas and transnational social formations are both cause and effect of global and multicultural macro social contexts. Current experiences imply the revision of the classic assimilation process, including segmented assimilation that often involved a gradual relaxing or reshaping of the social and cultural boundaries of migrants vis-à-vis the absorbing society. It is precisely this trend that acquires a new dynamic in light of boundary reinforcement and even boundary creation vis-à-vis the country of origin and original identities; it necessarily refers to the interplay of multiple identities (Jewish, national/country of origin, new/country/city of relocation/transnational).

The Latin American Jewish case is an apt choice in that regard if we look at Latin American Jewish immigrants in the United States who have invested strongly in establishing the institutional underpinnings for a collective identity. Individuals interact at the communal level in dense and stable associational venues. These resources elaborate and reorient organized Jewish life. Moreover, a 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 to the United States and elsewhere echo practices in the home communities in Latin America, where strong collective historical bonds that transcend national borders and find expression in transnational practices have characterized Jewish communal life.

BEING GLOBAL–GOING GLOBAL: THE REGION AND THE JEWISH WORLD

Latin America may be seen from a historical global perspective; that is, it is transiting from a past global condition to a new insertion into globalization. Latin America's trajectory represents a pathway to globality as a result of the world's expansion and the extension of Europe. The conquest, colonization, and the European encounters with native peoples and civilizations produced societies that differed from the "original model," thus marking the complex and heterogeneous character of a global world in the making. Historically, the region has been constituted and incorporated into the world configuration by the export and extension of the modern European

15 Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt, eds., *The Transnational Studies Reader* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2008); Steven Vertovec, "Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (2009).