Chapter 2: The format: The interview formulation, the selection of respondents and the structure of the results.

This chapter is designed to provide an overview of the technical details of the thesis, including an outline of the research method, such as the terms of selection of respondents and thus the process by which the interview group was formulated. This chapter also includes details of the interview procedure and interviewer practice during the interviews, followed by an overview of the format and content of the chapters of results. There is also an introduction to the experience of interviewing such respondents, including observations on their behaviour during the interview. This includes respondent 'coping mechanisms,' and personal introductions, provided by respondents in their interviews, background observations which may be considered pertinent to understanding the temperament of respondents. Later, we also see contains details about the respondents themselves.

Mode of inquiry.

The main source of data, used in this research, comes from empirical in-depth, individual, qualitative interviews, using a standard questionnaire across the countries examined. Expectations were limited by a lack of comparable in-depth qualitative research, which straddled the boundaries between collected oral history accounts and attitude research data on a group of Jews in western countries in the final years of the twentieth century.

Selection criteria for the interview group.

The 'group' of respondents was designed to be unconventional in its defined criteria, if birth backgrounds, main professions and religious affiliations of proposed respondents are to be considered conventional to the selection practice. The aim was, however, not to produce a result, reflective of demographic, cultural, ethnic, religious, political, or professional factors, cogent to the collectivity of Jews in each of these countries, rather the criteria were designed to create an interview group, which reflected a high level of knowledge of the themes examined, to consist of a group of thinking Jews, who thought about the issues which the researcher sought to examine. 'Conventional' criteria were also rejected for more straightforward reasons, outlined in the introductory chapter.

The criteria set out below were used to locate an overall group of potential respondents, consisting of three groups (one each per country) before potential respondents were approached:
Names and co-ordinates of respondents which matched the criteria below were sourced from three nominally independent academic research centres/‘think tanks,’ which address Jewish ‘identity’ and Jewishness today in the countries examined.

Three areas were chosen in each country from which to source respondents, of which a simple majority of suitable respondents was to be chosen from the area with the largest demographic presence of Jews in that country.

To examine respondents’ experiences of the 1939-45 and post-War periods in Europe, it was decided that a majority of respondents would be chosen from each country, who would be between the ages of fifty five and sixty five at the time of their interview, and that interviewees would be no younger than thirty five and no older than seventy five.

It was decided that between twenty and twenty five respondents would be used per country, with a maximum fifteen per cent drop out rate in each country. It was also decided that a minimum twenty per cent of the British respondents would have had parents from mainland Europe. Interviews would be dropped from the research results for the following reasons:

If interviews were incomplete and if a respondent refused to complete questions in correspondence after a face-to-face interview, or if questionable accuracy of the material, provided during the interview, had been discovered by the researcher.

It was determined that:

The male/female split of respondents would be a minimum of thirty per cent of either sex in each country. A proposed fifty/fifty split was considered artificial.

Interview transcripts were to be based upon no less than ninety minutes and no more than two hundred and forty minutes of interviewing time.

Each respondent should have written or spoken publicly on at least one theme, which featured in the questionnaire.
Respondents were not to be shown the questionnaire before the interview, although a standard limited selection of sample questions could be provided, if demanded, by potential respondents.

Respondent self-selection was used for the following criteria:

The respondent had to consider him/herself to be a self-identifying Jew in the country examined, and to have at least one Jewish parent.

The respondent had to believe he/she was well acquainted with the Jewish communal politics in the country examined at the time of the interview and/or since 1945.

The respondent had to consider him/herself knowledgeable of images of Jews in the country examined, as expressed by other Jews in that country, and amongst the mainstream (non-Jewish) public.

The respondent had to consider him/herself knowledgeable of Israeli political structures and political life in Israel at the time of the interview.

The respondent had to believe his/her knowledge of European post-war politics was sufficient to be able to respond to questions concerning political change and political development in western European nation states and supranational change since 1945.

The respondent was required to hold a view as to the impact of the Shoah upon the Jews in the country in which he/she lived (i.e. in Italy, the Netherlands or Britain).

Nationality was not a determinant of whether respondents could be chosen, neither was the national background of their antecedents. Instead, they needed to have resided permanently for at least five years in the country examined.

No prior condition was attached that a respondent would have been directly affected by the Shoah in his/her family. This aspect, like respondents' self-declared religious congregational affiliations and professions, was left to be a consequence of the selection method, not as aspects of the selection criteria of the candidates. (At the end of this chapter, lists of the professions and congregational affiliations of the respondents exists.)
Final procedure in the selection of candidates: The first respondents to be located and interviewed, sourced according to the selection criteria outlined above, were used in the research results. Where necessary, the simple majority quotas were filled towards the end of the candidates' selection. The criteria were also used to form a working definition of 'Jewish thinkers' for the duration of the thesis, unless specified, (such as where respondents' cited their own definitions in the chapters of results).

The interview.

Introductory comments: Respondents were asked every question from the questionnaire, but were given the option of not responding to any questions they chose not to answer. Some respondents suggested referring back to answers they provided earlier in the interview in connection with a subsequent question, and such citations to earlier responses, as they were made, appear throughout the chapters of results. Respondents, were, however, required to answer at least half the questions in the questionnaire. Respondents were also permitted to discuss certain themes of their choosing in the questionnaire in greater depth than other themes, if they desired. They were also permitted to focus their responses on narrating their pasts, or the pasts of others, in connection to the questions asked, in preference to focusing on questions which may have concerned more contemporaneous issues. In any event, relatively few chose to focus on one period over another, and the work itself contained opinions, expressed in the then present from November 1998 until April 2000, and historical differences over this period, evident in the changing references to European unification and Israeli political developments.

Of themes that respondents chose to focus on, the most common theme concerned the claimed effects of the Shoah on respondents lives today, the extent of which had not been anticipated by the researcher. This focus may demonstrate how an earlier period in the life of a respondent can sharply affect their narration of events of, and in the present and the recent past, and where an earlier period can have an overwhelming effect upon the recorded nature of those subsequent periods. This will become evident to the reader whilst reading the chapters of results.

Rejected transcripts: All (three-Italian-) interviews, rejected from the collection of examined transcripts, occurred because of incomplete or evidently impeded answers to questions in the questionnaire. The following example concerns the latter aspect: An interview was conducted with a high-profile elderly Roman Jewish journalist respondent, whose wife remained in the room. The wife 'helped' the respondent to cut short many of his responses, notably during his comments in response to questions on security, markedly whilst the respondent was considering the narration of his purported flight from Italy to Switzerland. After two minutes, his wife interrupted him, saying, 'I think that is quite enough! I don’t think we need to start talking about this, do we? I
am sure this is not relevant for your [the interviewer's] research!' The wife stopped then the discussion - despite the composed manner of her husband as he narrated his experience. It is not clear whether she was seeking to 'protect' him from the potentially invasive impact that recounting this experience might have had on him, or whether she was seeking to avoid discomfort, resulting from the impact of the recollection upon herself, or perhaps discomfort connected to the recollection of a similar trauma in her own life, or that of her family. In any case, the interview was abandoned and the respondent's recollections excluded from the results.

**Interviewer practice during the interview.**

The researcher sought to limit his direction of the interviews to asking the questions and engaging in connected conversations only at the request of the respondents. Respondents could digress from the question they were asked, and were not interrupted from addressing issues not directly addressed in the questionnaire if they felt this was relevant to the subject. Some such matter, which may have seemed peripheral to the interviewer, sometimes emerged as trends; subjects, repeatedly discussed also by other respondents, in connection to those same themes.

No attempt was made by the interviewer to comment upon the accuracy of, or to cast judgement upon the proceedings or implications of narrated events by the respondent during the interview. Comments such as 'That must have been terrible, tell me more,' or 'Can you tell me what effect that had on you?' were also avoided as these were thought excessively emotive. No mention of the interviewer's (third generation Jewish Shoah survivor) background was made either, unless background details were requested by the respondent. In fact, few asked before or during the interview, whilst approximately half asked after the interview. No decision was made to tell the respondent- or to withhold this information: Deliberately informing the respondent of the interviewer's Jewish background might have had a negative effect upon their intended desire to speak openly (Why did he tell me? What does this mean? He is no longer a potentially impartial stranger! He might be inclined to criticise me if he disagrees with my views!) Refusing to tell the respondent whether or not the interviewer was Jewish may also have had unfortunate consequences (Why won't he tell me? What does this mean? I am suspicious! The interviewer is previously unknown to me. He has come from an unknown European university! Perhaps he will publish my views in a hostile manner! What will this do to me? And if he is not a Jew he will not be able to understand the subtlety of my views! Yet he will take offence if I criticise the country in which I live! I fear causing offence, so I will not even mention controversial issues!). Ultimately, it was decided being open and calm with the respondent on these theme was the best course. Comments made by many respondents at the ends of interviews when they reflected upon how much of their 'identity' they had revealed to a person they had not
known perhaps suggests many were as open as could have been expected, and more open than some of the respondents may have wished. Evidence of this is cited in a moment.

A note on the role of respondents' life stories for the presentation of the results: Life stories and personal historical reflections, as they are narrated by the respondents, typically appear quoted to contextualise the views expressed by the respondents in response to an interview question. The accuracy of their purported life histories and connected events is therefore not strictly relevant. This is not to say narrated stories by the interviewees are to be regarded as allegations, merely to outline that the purpose of these narrations is considered limited by the researcher in his preparation of the results, for the researcher's aim is not to provide an overview of orally-narrated life histories of a tightly-knit group of respondents, bound by such conventional 'common' factors as were rejected earlier, his aim is instead to provide the opinions, attitudes, identifications and life philosophies of the group of Jews he has defined, who contextualise their views in reference to their life stories. Now let us look at what those questions are:

The questions in the questionnaire.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the questions, asked in the interview, form the chapters of results. The order of these chapters is reflected in the standard order of the questions in the questionnaire, questions which are divided into four main themes: The first concerns respondents' personal references of Jewishness (and examines their notions of what is a Jewish tradition, a ritual and a Jewish people, and studies their ideas and definitions of a 'Jewish community'). The second examines respondents' images of, and attitudes towards their own defined notion of 'Europe,' and towards supra-national attachments in 'Europe'. The third examines attachments and belonging to the nation state in which they live, whilst the fourth considers their relationship to Israel. The questions respondents are asked appear in the chapters of that subject, and a list of the chapters, based on these questions, was outlined in chapter 1.

The next stage: Presentation of the results’ chapters, and main guidelines for the analyses.

Each of the eighteen chapters of results reflects the responses to the questions, posed by the interviewer, from the questionnaire, above, and in that order. Each chapter is split into responses by country (where the results of the Dutch respondents are first provided, then those of the British, and then the Italians). The primary data printed and referred to in the chapters consists of respondents' comments, verbatim, the presentation of which is designed to offer maximum access to the reader. This approach has been chosen in preference to a more selective and subjective choice in verbatim printed, as may occur in more conventional oral history studies.
After the verbatim, there is an analysis of the results, and at the end of the chapter, an overall conclusion has been written, which compares the responses within and across the three countries. The analysis consists of a commentary on the main trends, as observed by the researcher, based on the verbatim in that chapter. In addition, clear deviations from these trends are also examined. More radical overall perspectives appear in the chapter's conclusion, the aim of which is to reach a more advanced level of general reflection.

A note on the languages spoken by the respondents during the interviews.

Respondents were able to speak in one or more of five languages. All British and Dutch interviews were carried out in English. Italian interviews were split a third in Italian, two thirds in French, or English and French, or English and Italian. Difficult terms, expressed in the Italian language, were checked with an Italian-English interpreter. As respondents were asked for clarification when something they said was unclear to the interviewer, rarely were language difficulties apparent.

Respondents' behaviour; alterations in voice and body language and the manifestation of 'vulnerability' and coping mechanisms at moments during the interview.

Changes in the behaviour of a majority of respondents during the course of the interview were noted, which appeared when discomfiting recollections were made, usually in connection to discussions about Shoah period persecution, more recent experiences of anti-Semitism, and questions on security, Europe and in their introduction (where discussion of family persecutory experiences also tended to appear). Examples of types of difficult moments are outlined below:

One such moment was when respondents spoke of the effects of the racial laws on their levels of confidence in the country in which they lived today, changes in body language (jarring, stressful facial expressions, uncomfortable chair movements, paused breaths and unexpected breaks in conversational fluidity) frequently occurred. In contrast, a small number spoke directly of their accounts, without expressing any change in body language at all. Indeed, horrific narratives could be recounted by these respondents as 'normal' or 'ordinary' events, in a calm almost clinical manner, and without any anticipated emotion. One Italian respondent (Guillaume) spoke of being asked by his school teacher (a teacher purportedly in post since the Racial Laws) what the respondent's father's job was. He answered: 'Oh, [his voice rises] he was killed in Auschwitz.' This was narrated as if it had been an unpleasant, but rather trivial, event from a previous day. Some accounts from this
respondent appeared narrated as if the experiences had happened to a different person. Observations on coping mechanisms are outlined below:

A common factor amongst many of those who demonstrated changes in body language during the narration of their responses was an attempt to re-impose control over the changes in emotional expression which had occurred. This subject was also discussed at the end of separate interviews with a Dutch and an Italian respondent, who, after admitting that this had occurred, spoke to me about their own longer-term experiences.

One frequent feature of respondents’ difficult narrative moments was the emergence of an apparent conflict between their fear and a determination not to permit that fear to affect their conduct. For example, some thought insecurities living in a western European state today was irrational, yet also felt their Shoah and post-Shoah hostile experiences, connected to being a Jew, created rational grounds for suspicion, and even fear. Respondents tried to convince themselves their fears were to be rejected, whatever the grounds, for (as some admitted) to recognise them might cause difficulties in their attempts to pursue a 'normal' daily life, relatively untroubled by such conscious reflections (see Carlova and others). One (Gila) talks of 'a mask that I wear.' Did wearing a 'mask' imply she did not feel comfortable displaying or exposing private expressions of 'identity' to those who demanded it in public spaces? The interview experience was itself mentioned by a small number of respondent in each country as a private space- the discussions concerned two people- but concurrently a public space- as the results were recorded and to be used openly. Gila's uncomfortable body language and comments in a meeting a week after the interview pointed to difficulties dealing with the removal of her mask-, where her own coping mechanism had been revealed, and appeared to render her 'naked' to unknown potential threats, connected to the publication of the research.

Some such respondents claimed they had wished to speak openly about the effects of Shoah persecution upon themselves, caused in the countries in which they had continued to live after the War, but claimed such discourse had not been feasible, as no one had wanted to hear them. Also they claimed, they could not understand how to process the experiences themselves, they were sick or poor and could not deal with added worries. The Italian, Robbio, even claimed Italian Jews had never 'understood' the implications of Fascism; had they understood, they would never have been able to co-exist with many of the Italians that surrounded them after the War. Perhaps the Italian Jews had understood, but felt it impossible, unsafe and not useful to address these matters in their country in the decades following the War. Another Italian, Carlova, put it: 'As for denazification there was no denazification…De-fascisisation was impossible in Pisa, [for] everybody was involved… It was impossible to denazify. Of course, something more could have been done. They [Europe] did nothing at all. But in Italy too. It was impossible to do something better. This is how the world was. What did
you want to do? To go to Israel? If all the Jews of the world had gone to Israel, well…’ The Italian, Guillaume, suggested it was only his gradual exposure to Judaism on American terrain which had permitted him to feel openly Jewish again since his pre-Shoah early childhood, and admitted, his mother, who had survived with him, suggested being Jewish after the Shoah should have become a 'private business' (i.e. something that should not be discussed with others because of the imagined risks attached). First by specialising in American Jewish literature, then by seeing his son take an interest in his family history was he able to feel comfortable about being 'out' as a Jew in Italy. 'It was a gradual process,' he says, and admits he was not able to speak about being Jewish 'for years.'

Many such respondents suggested the interviews had been the first time they had been able to explore themes of safety and persecution, and had felt able to recount connected traumas in detail. This also, it was claimed, made them feel uncomfortable or relieved, and typically exhausted. The Dutch respondent, Fabienne, who claimed not to have talked about her purported deportation train journey to Westerbork, from which she had escaped, said she had not discussed this subject before, not even to most family members. She moved back and forth on her chair and refused to look at the face of the interviewer during this part of her recollection. Having hitherto appeared in control of the narration of her life events, habitual signs of friendly and open emotional expression disappeared, and there were changes in voice intonation, and altered eye, hand and mouth movement. The Westerbork deportation train experience and subsequent hiding stories were recounted with little spoken emotion expression. In this and a number of similar incident, it appeared such respondents' professional (academic historical research) training had taught them to express themselves without feeling the effects of their words on the interviewer, whilst concurrently limiting the damage they would permit such narration to have on themselves. That Fabienne seemed aware of the potential damage this recollection could do to herself made her style distinct, however, to the more 'distant' narrative styles of, for example, Guillaume, above. Fabienne appeared to have decided her Westerbork train and subsequent hiding recollection had to be narrated as part of a past of someone a little distinct from herself, where her otherwise usual technique of simply not talking about these recollections in daily life had become unfeasible in such an interview. Another approach she used during the interview was to harmonise her experiences as part of the experiences of mainstream Dutch (i.e. non-Jews): 'After the War you did not talk about it. I was so happy being at school again- I had lost four years of schooling. I wanted to learn, and to be young and to be like all the other girls! Everybody had his own history, and we, the young ones, never asked people about it. We did not want to talk about it. It was a new life. And it was very difficult. We had nothing. The whole country had nothing. There had been six years of extreme poverty, not hunger, but cold, discomfort. We [i.e. all young Dutch people] rebuilt our lives, new lives. It was very idealistic. We had no problems about whether our shoes were fashionable. It was a very nice time.'
However, towards the end of the interview, Fabienne deviated again from her 'we are all Dutch together' technique and mentioned an attempt to study an aspect of Shoah persecution of Jews at the beginning of her academic career, which had made her very sick and which she had abandoned. She instead then chose to focus on a Jewish theme, unconnected directly to Shoah experiences, which she continued during her career. Her manner during a telephone conversation a week later, where her feelings after the interview were explored, revealed a snappier, more nervous and uncomfortable figure than the one who had exposed herself during much of the interview.

That coping mechanisms could be upset in regular life (i.e. also outside interview conditions) was also mentioned by respondents, such as the Dutch respondent, Awraham says, when speaking of the effects of the Shoah on later life: '…the whole reality was turned upside down. You lost all your anchors, you drift, and those who you love remind you of those you have lost, of the state you are placed in…You need others, but in acknowledging that need, you make yourself more vulnerable, and you cannot live with that vulnerability...in this I include myself, that some remark, one thing, can turn you internally over from one second to the next. The reverberations are still so strong, and so enduring.'

The 'objection': another aspect to the coping mechanism: Another coping technique during the interview was for respondents to indicate when they felt a subject was 'off limits,' as a pre-emptive aspect of this mechanism. At the start of one interview, a British respondent (Mike) indicated how he had arrived in Britain as a child with a fate, distinct to that of his (to-be-exterminated) Hungarian immediate family. He quickly and nervously added this (i.e. the fate of his family and the experience this had had on him) was not relevant to the interviewer's research, and that he was not interested in speaking about it, anyway. At such moment private memories and reflections were left private.

The departure: A factor common to many respondents, highest in Italy and the Netherlands, was the hurried, incomplete and nervous moment of separation from the interviewer, as if they were separating from something which now contained aspects of themselves they no longer wished to think about.

The post-interview experience.

Examples of correspondence from respondents' reflections on their vulnerability is printed below:

'I don't want to face my aunt with my opinion about my youth and our experience of support in the Jewish community in general.'
’…I do not want to have those politicians mentioned by name, they never gave their permission… I do not want to have their names mentioned, may be they do not like it…This whole passage I want to delete with reference to the family of my […] She does not want me to tell about it…'

’…Somewhere in the middle [of checking my transcript] I exploded with anger, you'll see. It is quite irrational and nasty what came out of my system, but I will not erase it. [In her next e-mail:] I am sorry I splashed out at you. I can be quite irrationally nasty when I am frustrated…So forget about my childish anger and make a success of your study.'

'I have to be sure that all I said will not ruin my work here for Israel which I realize is of so much more importance than I realized when we talked…I cannot sleep…Sometimes I panic with what will happen to the interview…I do hope you understand, and I don't know whether you will still use it or not but everything I said and think originates from my tremendous love for Judaism and Israel and from so many questions… I will be nervous about this until after you have published your Ph.D…It is much too emotional. I talk about other people. I harm maybe non-Jews who don't understand what I am saying…I cannot imagine that it was useful to you…It is not good for me, it is not good for you and especially not for Israel and Judaism… I am at such a crossing point in my thinking about Judaism and Israel that I don't do good to anyone to have things out of it published… I am on the verge of a nervous break down after reading this interview. I will be fired immediately when this is published. Besides, I really don't think it says anything. The whole interview can be done in four lines: About me finding a new relationship with Israel and Judaism. Who is interested in that? And then I am not such a big public figure. So, please, shall we forget this?'

'As you may have learned from that interview, I am not very keen to display in public my thoughts about personal life. I do not feel myself of general interest and that others should read my thoughts as if an expert is quoted.'

The respondents' introductions.

The respondent is asked: 'Please introduce yourself. You may return to the subjects you raise here in connection to other themes later.'

During research in the Netherlands, a non-Jewish historian, who wished to share general information on Dutch Jewry, was interviewed. In her introduction, she indicated, personal 'identity' reflections may not be valued by
those residents of the Netherlands whose references of 'identity' have not been undermined or threatened in their life-time, or that of their parents'. She also made a distinction between native (autochtonen) and foreign (allochtonen) residents, under neither of which came Dutch Jews. She said: 'No component of my identity has been threatened. That probably helps. My parents were born here, I have been born here. I am not exceptional. There are many people here who have not been immigrants, although it has become a country of immigrants. I was even born in Amsterdam and never had to move out of the town. I never had to worry, to bother, to think too much about this. I was raised as a Catholic, although I no longer consider myself as one. You do choose your own place in society and your own development. But identity? No interest.'

In contrast, it emerged that most of the mainstream Europe-sourced respondents interviewed, of similar educational levels to the historian above, introduced personal reflections of 'identity' into their first sentences, and connected these to experiences where key references of 'identity' had been undermined or threatened during their lifetime, or that of their parents'. Some of these indicated the impact on their life of these events, demonstrating resulting personal philosophies (main aims or goals in their life or life-style), examples of distinctive types are given below:

Leora says, 'I am the child of a Shoah survivor, one who survived by escaping to the countryside, helped by non-Jews, near to Padoa…My father escaped to Switzerland. Part of his family did not have the money- you had to pay a huge sum to get into Switzerland- so his aunt, uncle and cousins were killed. He felt guilty for not having helped them- even though he could not have afforded to pay. I have inherited from my parents’ generation their strong sense of guilt at being a survivor. I don’t feel guilty as such, but the tragedy of the Shoah was not only the extermination of many millions, but the scarring of a whole generation with this sense of guilt at surviving which maybe even worse…I object to the idea of being a fragment. I consider myself a unity, a part of a disrupted, greater story. My father’s family is Sephardic. My forefathers came from Spain. The ability to study the expulsion of the Marranos five hundred years after it happened is a great victory [for me.]'

Gila notes, 'I was able to save my life [during the Shoah]. There must be a reason why…I don’t see my life, or the life of my family, or the life of my parents as ruins, but still you have to put fragments together to survive. Who does that in my life? Myself! I count on myself. I am not asking for help. There is a very high degree of self-motivation in collecting these fragments together. But I am not tired. I am not depressed, I don’t complain- as I said I don’t see my life as a set of ruins, but still there are fragments to put together, which is a heavy job. Sometimes I would say there is a sort of destiny over which I do have a lot of control.'
Carlova says, 'My father and his forefathers were Italian patriots. Jews have been so more than others. After the French Revolution- which meant freedom and equal rights for them- they were particularly interested in the construction of a modern liberal democratic state. My father was always very interested in politics, and was an active anti-Fascist- he felt Fascism was foreign to the best Italian traditions. His way of being involved in Italian politics was particularly Italian- Jewish. Italian Jews were few in number, and had a great tradition of high education. In my family, the idea prevailed that we had to be highly educated, that science and knowledge were most important. We always had to excel. Amongst Italian Jews, most common was taking a role in, and demonstrating responsibility towards society and politics. They could not be active, collectively, as a national [Jewish] entity. There were too few Jews for this. So to be accepted and integrated Jews had to have a positive role, so that in the end they felt native, particularly during the last century…'

Characteristic of those whose personal philosophy is noticeably less sharp throughout the interview, is where pertinent life history narratives appear in a respondent's introduction, but where the respondent does not demonstrate these have been transformed into their personal philosophy: 'I lived in this same building [in Rome] but in another apartment. We were four people; my father, my mother my sister and I. With the beginning of the laws against the Jews, my mother’s parents came to live with us. It was not very easy. Not only from the perspective of business…but we could live- we could have lived. The question was that my father was a Socialist. It was more the time that he was in jail or that they had beaten him so hard that he couldn’t work than the periods in which he could. There were very often Fascists going in and out of the house, but that was before the specific laws against Jews. When the Fascists came home to get my father, they were always very kind with me because they thought I was just the daughter of a 'bad' man. In 1938 their attitude changed completely. They beat me up and raped me. It was awful...After that…we went on as we could…my father was a ‘go-between’- I know this is not the real expression- among different kinds of Resistance- I call it this even though it was before the War. He looked after a small the anti-Fascist publication, which covered meetings which could not be discussed over the telephone. I helped them a lot- bringing papers...I was eleven or twelve. In the following years we couldn’t live in Rome any more, so we went to live in a small village near Rome called Cave. After the 25th of July, my father already knew something bad was coming because the country was full of Germans. It was not thinkable that Germans would take it [Italy] quietly. So my father started helping people to hide in the countryside and in the mountains. After 8th September, everything became clandestine. My father helped a lot of people to hide and to organise themselves. On 16th October, the Germans took all the Jews [sic], and we went to the house of a lady who invited us to be with her in the countryside, where we stayed at the centre of the local Resistance. So we did what we could; telephone and radio line-cutting and stealing arms from German trucks, and killing less ‘kind’ Germans…the house where we lived was in a kind of small wood. Some Germans came to take the house, and they were very kind- they wanted us to move into town. They thought we were persons...
who lived there. We couldn’t be moved as we didn’t have any documents yet. Happily, they didn’t stay as their
commander had found something better to do, but we understood that it was better to go to Rome and try to find
some documents. When we went to Rome we left very early in the morning. Two hours later, the SS went there
and took all the others. [Pause] Happily, a small boy who had seen it could reach us before we got to Rome,
because the small train from there to Rome was so slow the small boy riding a bicycle arrived before us. He told
us not to go back. The four of us went to Rome. The others had documents- they weren’t Jewish- all the others
were non-Jewish Communists. Friends. Beautiful people. [Pause] We went to convents with friends. My sister
and I lived there from December to the beginning of February. My sister and I lived in one convent, while my
father lived in a house of some friends who were in the Resistance and my mother was in another convent in
Piazza di Spagna. We could join her about the middle of February, I think. We stayed their until, let me
think…it is not very easy for me to remember the periods- I never know in which year things happened- I just
removed everything [from my memory]…Afterwards, we tried to start life again. My father started working
again. The house was occupied, and it was difficult to go back home…We tried to start all over again with great
difficulty.’

This same pattern of narratives being transformed into a personal philosophy appears in the Dutch interviews,
exemplified by the physicist, Carl, who states; ‘When my parents thought it was too risky to remain in Holland
they moved to Indonesia in 1940, then a Dutch colony. Later, War came, and we were put in a concentration
camp. Jews normally had to go to a separate camp and, as we were aware of the Tokyo-Berlin axis, and because
we did not 'look' very Jewish, my parents kept silent about their religion and remained in the general camp. We
lost a little of our Jewish identity whilst in the camp as my father had been rather religious before the War.
Religion was no longer the dominant factor in our daily life.’

The differences and similarities in the focus of respondents' comments amongst the British respondents'
introductions was marked by the origins of the interviewee. Where a respondent had a predominating extra-
British, mainland European personal or parental background (often typified by a Shoah-related background),
more dramatic life history narrations and more dominant life philosophies could be expected, relative to their
non-mainland-Euro-British compatriots. Greater similarities also appeared between the 'Euro-British' respondents and Italian and Dutch respondents (in certain chapters, mainly on Europe, security and the nation state) than between all British respondents. Evidenced in their introductions, Shany, the psychologist, speaks;
'My mother was from Holland and came here just before the War. My father came to England from Russia when
he was very young. They met here and married. I was born in 1940. My father fought for the British Army for
six years- I did not see him until I was six and a half. My mother lost all of her family in Holland; about seventy
members from Amsterdam. My father died eighteen months after he came back to England. These aspects
caused a family upheaval. My surviving grandfather came to live with us together with my mother’s sister. My brother had to be sent to boarding school, and I was taken care of by my grandfather. When I was eight my aunt died. When I was nine or ten my grandfather died- leaving just my mother and me and my brother at boarding school. My mother worked full time. There is another significant person who came to live with us during the war. She was Jewish, from Alsace. All her family had been arrested by the Gestapo. Her husband, an early nuclear scientist, was to be coerced by the Gestapo to work on the atomic bomb. He knew his time was to be limited. Her whole family had arranged to escape, but only she managed. After the War she went back to France. I lived with my mother, until I was eleven, when she got her first cancer, and I was sent to stay with a woman who became my official guardienne, and I continued to live near Paris, even though my mother recovered. My mother came from a very non-religious family, my father, from a very religious one. After my father died there was no religious upbringing for me. Five year later my mother got cancer again. She wanted continuity for me in France. However, my guardienne became mentally ill when I was fifteen. Now I understand she was schizophrnec. I see this as a direct consequence of her wartime experience. She never knew what had happened to her family. At fifteen, I left her and maintained myself by giving English lessons, and continued my studies. I continued to see my mother during the holidays. When I was twenty I graduated and became a teacher, and when I was twenty two I went to America. My mother died a year later. I married and went to South Africa. I lived there for three and a half years. My son was born in South Africa. I came to Britain, where my daughter was born. I have lived here for thirty years. That marriage broke down. I have a second marriage. I became a therapist fifteen years ago.'

Amongst the 'local' British respondents, references of 'identity' appeared less threatened, and life history narration less dramatic, typified by Anthony the rabbi's comments: 'I have a very boring and conventional background. I was born in Ilford, North East London, in 1946. Both my parents were born in England. I went to a local grammar school, and then to Cambridge, where I read law. My parents were non-practising United Synagogue Jews until a Reform Synagogue started in Ilford when I was nine. Its first rabbi...inspired my parents, by providing them with an expression of Judaism which they could relate to, both intellectually and ethically. That was the start of my Jewish journey. I was taught by him in a small group as a teenager, and remember being bowled over by his teaching of prophetic Judaism, by the passion of the challenge to authority, the commitment to the poor and the needy and the widow and the oppressed and the orphan, finding that these values, which people in the early Sixties paid lip-service to, was actually rooted in my tradition.'

Life philosophy can even be completely absent from such 'local' British respondents' narratives, typified by comments in their introduction, as the prominent writer and academic, Clive, says, 'I was born in Ealing, South London, in 1948. A good year, of course. My parents came from the East End. My mother’s father came from a
town called Stashev...My father’s parents came in 1905. My grandfather came to avoid conscription; he had no argument with the Japanese and did not wish to take part in the Russo-Japanese war. He came from the Ukraine. That is really all I know. I come from scholars on neither side, but from tailors and cobblers.'

**The respondents.**

Finally, respondents are described below by profession and congregational 'religious' affiliation (defined as 'associated'), divided into those who indicated they were affiliated to certain communities, versus those who would not declare, or who indicated they were unaffiliated. Many clarify their congregational affiliations and interests in their verbatim, printed in the chapters. Respondents are listed in alphabetical order.

**The Dutch interviewees are:**

The communally-unaffiliated sociologist, **Abram**.

The Orthodox-associated economist, **Arnold**.

The Liberal rabbi, **Awraham**.

The communally-unaffiliated economist, **Bernard**.

The Orthodox-associated psychologist, **Bloeme** (mother of **Raf**).

The Liberal-associated physicist **Carel**.

The communally-undeclared Jewish studies academic, **Cecil**.

The communally-undeclared psychiatrist, **David**.

The communally-unaffiliated biologist **Deborah**.

The communally-unaffiliated historian, **Eva**.

The communally-unaffiliated historian, **Fabienne**.
The communally-undeclared television presenter, **Frits**.

The multi-communally-associated politician, **Harry**.

The communally-unaffiliated retired parliamentarian, **Heddy**.

The communally-unaffiliated historian, **Ido**.

The Liberal-associated Jewish studies professor, **Jessica**

The Orthodox-associated parliamentarian, **Judith**.

The communally-unaffiliated novelist, **Leon**.

The communally-unaffiliated news weekly editor, **Max**.

The Orthodox-associated news weekly editor, **Maxim**.

The Orthodox-associated Jewish communal leader, **Nynke**.

The Orthodox rabbinic leader, **Raf**.

The Liberal-associated writer, **Tamarah**.

The Liberal-associated writer and interpreter, **Tilly**.

The educationalist and (at least formerly Orthodox) communally-undeclared, **Yair**.

**The British interviewees are:**

The communally-undeclared writer, **Ant**.

The Reform rabbinic leader, **Anthony**.
The Liberal rabbinic leader, Charles.

The Liberal-associated novelist, Clive.

The Orthodox-associated Israeli studies academic, Colin.

The communally-undeclared English studies academic and novelist, Dan.

The communally-undeclared Jewish racial charity head, Edie.

The communally-undeclared novelist, Eva.

The Reform-associated physicist, Fred.

The Orthodox-associated Jewish studies historian, Geoff.

The Orthodox-associated psychologist, Gwyneth.

The Orthodox rabbinic leader, Jon.

The Masorti rabbi, Jonathan.

The Liberal rabbi and mainstream health charity foundation chief, Julia.

The communally-unaffiliated playwright, Juliette.

The communally-undeclared writer, Lucinda.

The Orthodox-associated Jewish charity chief, Michael.

The Orthodox-associated political scientist, Mike.

The communally-undeclared senior educationalist, Nicholas.
The Orthodox-associated philosopher and university campus head, Ronnie.

The Reform-associated psychologist, Shany.

The Liberal rabbi and Jewish charity chief, Sidney.

The Reform-associated parliamentarian and former European Commissioner, Stanley.

The communally-unaffiliated historian, Tony.

**The Italian interviewees are:**

The communally-unaffiliated German studies academic, Alessandro.

The communally-undeclared historian, Anina.

The Orthodox communal leader and surgeon, Antonio.

The communally-undeclared mathematician and writer, Armani.

The Orthodox-associated historian, Beniamino.

The communally-unaffiliated historian, Carlova.

The communally-unaffiliated politics faculty professor, Gila.

The communally-unaffiliated English literature professor, Guillaume.

The communally-undeclared writer and broadcaster, Jaqui.

The Orthodox-associated political scientist, Leora.

The Orthodox community leader and art historian, Lucia.
The communally-unaffiliated historian, *Mario*.

The Orthodox-associated historian, *Michaelo*.

The Orthodox-associated archivist, *Milla*.

The communally-unaffiliated writer, *Robbio*.

The communally-unaffiliated writer, *Samuelo*.

The communally-unaffiliated journalist, *Viola*.

**Appendix.**

Respondents' median age, locations, sex split, and grouped profession and self-declared religious affiliation by percentage are displayed below.

**Pre-determined factors:**

Majority of respondents age range at the time of the interview: Fifty five to sixty five.

Respondents' localities: These are chosen from three areas in each country, the largest number chosen from the location with the largest number of Jews in that country (in bold).


**Sex split:**

In the Italian research: 52 per cent men/48 per cent women.
In the Dutch research: 60 per cent men/40 per cent women

In the British research: 69 per cent men/31 per cent women

Factors not pre-determined as a consequence of selection process criteria:

Min/max age range: thirty seven to seventy five.

Religious affiliation:

Of the respondents in the British research, the following was claimed:

17 per cent declared themselves as Reform.

17 per cent declared themselves as Liberal.

4 per cent declared themselves as Masorti.

30 per cent declared themselves as Orthodox.

8 per cent declared themselves unaffiliated.

24 per cent were undeclared.

Of respondents in the Italian research, the following was claimed:

35 per cent declared themselves members of nominally Orthodox congregations, (consisting of 30 per cent 'traditional' Jews and 5 per cent 'non-Orthodox').

6 per cent declared themselves Orthodox.

59 per cent declared themselves unaffiliated to any religious Jewish communal body.
N.B. At the time of the interviews organised non-Orthodox Judaism had no formal presence in Italy.

Of the respondents in the Dutch research, the following was claimed:

20 per cent declared themselves Liberal.

28 per cent declared themselves Orthodox (including a respondent who was a member of Orthodox and Liberal congregations but veered to Orthodoxy.)

36 per cent declared themselves unaffiliated to any religious Jewish communal body.

16 per cent were undeclared.

Main occupation results of respondents:

In the Dutch research:

8 per cent rabbinic heads of religious communities.

8 per cent non-rabbinic heads of Jewish charitable bodies/communities.

24 per cent writers (consisting of fiction and non-fiction writers, including journalists).

12 per cent national politicians.

50 per cent academics (consisting of historians, social and pure scientists).

In the British research:

17 per cent rabbinic heads of religious communities.

12 per cent non-rabbinic heads of Jewish charitable bodies/communities.

8 per cent heads of non-Jewish charitable bodies.
25 per cent writers (consisting of fiction and non-fiction writers, including journalists).

4 per cent national politicians.

34 per cent academics (consisting of historians, social and pure scientists).

In the Italian research

12 per cent non-rabbinic heads of Jewish charitable bodies/communities.

24 per cent writers (consisting of fiction and non-fiction writers, including journalists).

64 per cent academics (consisting of historians, social and pure scientists).

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1 To protect the status of the academics and administrators who helped me to draw up the lists and source the location co-ordinates in Britain and mainland Europe of respondents between 1997 and 1999, the names of such figures and their institutions have been withheld.

2 This was done where potential respondents rejected cold calling and requested that the nature of the interview procedure be revealed to them before they would consider participating in the project.

3 Over half of all respondents, even taking into account the large number of non-Euro-British (see text further on) respondents who did not display such behaviour. The precise number is difficult to calculate, however, as slightly different characteristics emerged from different respondents, corresponding to the types outlined here. A clear picture of the behaviour only emerged towards the end of the interviewing period.

4 Including the British respondents who had (or whose parents had) moved from mainland Europe to Britain.

5 Another Italian respondent (Guillaume), who spoke of his father's murder in Auschwitz, said he did feel like a fragment but that he did not mind.

6 Largely in the Jewish community and Jewish community-Jewish thinkers chapters.

7 Where they do not declare, but are regarded by other respondents to be a member of a congregation, this information is also used to determine the list, below. ‘associated’ implies formal or informal membership.

8 ‘Writer’ includes those whose writings are considered to be fictional or non-fictional, and includes journalists and novelists. However, when a respondent is believed to be essentially a novelist or a journalist etc., rather than a combination it is listed as such.

9 To protect the identity of those who declared themselves anonymous, minimum details only are provided.

10 Where respondents declined to provide their age, this was estimated, based on publications, interview comments and information from their colleagues.

11 In the judgement of the respondents.

12 Some respondents claims to have trained in other professions, also. The following was said to be their main occupations.

13 This included two psychologists who had been engaged in academic research but who were not working for a university at the time of interview.

14 Two non-fiction writers/journalist and one publisher were thrown out due to insufficiently completed interviews. Further details are not provided below as their transcripts do not appear in the research.

15 Communal.