Multiple Religious and Secular Definitions of Secular Adolescents in Israel

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Abstract

This study explores the validity of a novel theoretical model for assessing secularity and religiosity that proposes two dimensions — conceptual and inherited — in an effort to further refine the religious/secular dichotomy applied in research to date. These new dimensions describe the manner in which people structure their world, religious or secular world as the case may be, and the significance they ascribe to it. The study, conducted among grade 12 students (N=100) in state (secular) schools in Israel, revealed that only five of the eight types in the theoretical model are manifested empirically: three secular (conceptual, inherited and integrative) and two religious (conceptual and inherited). It posits that the concepts "religious" and "secular" are comprehensive and cannot fully describe the complexity of an individual's self- and public definition in a modern, pluralistic world.

1. Introduction

The Israeli state educational system has two subsystems: religious and secular. This division assumes a binary perception of religiosity and secularity. The a priori assumption is that secular students study in state secular schools and religious students study in state religious schools. However, there is a disparity between the binary picture of the institutional structure and the complex reality that exists in practice. The aim of this research is to explore how students in secular state schools in Israel define their religiosity or secularity.

Secularization theory assumed that religion would vanish with the advance of modernity, since modernity was associated with secularism. In fact the opposite has happened. Events such as the fall of the Soviet Union, the strengthening of fundamentalist regimes in Iran and 9/11 all show that religion is still a

major actor. We have seen a growing trend of terrorism in the name of God, which utilizes modern technology to promote anti-modern agendas.

Eisenstadt (2000, p. 5) was the first sociologist to argue that modernity is not a simple, coherent force but has many facets. "Modernity liberates individuals from the constraining bonds of tradition, generating a multiplicity of options that give rise to choice and pluralism." This multiplicity accords with Bauman's (2000) notion of fluid modernity, which implies that our life is characterized by constant change and endemic uncertainty in which we have to be flexible. Modern life is fluid as opposed to the stable, solid life of the past. The main characteristic of fluid modernity is individuation, which means that each individual constructs, confirms and maintains her identity according to her choice, desires and tendencies.

Hence a possible explanation of the gap between the formal definition of schools as either religious or secular and students' definitions stems from the gap between a given and a constructed religious or secular identity. Sagi (2002) distinguishes between essentialist and constructivist definitions of identity. The essentialist definition assumes that the "self" has political/religious/cultural characteristics which are independent of the historical, cultural and social contexts in which it is situated. The constructivist approach assumes that personal identity is constructed and produced within historical, cultural and social contexts. Whereas an essentialist approach emphasizes the holistic, harmonious, static aspect of identity, the constructivist approach highlights its fragmentary, dialectic and constructive nature.

What are the basic constituents of individuals' religiosity and secularity? This question is important, as schools need to recognize the basic constituents from which students construct their religious or secular identities to enhance the transmission of educational and cultural contents.

2. Studies of Religiosity

Israel is a faith-based society. Jewish society underwent rapid secularization in Europe. The state of Israel was established by secular pioneers, who perceived it as a modern national process like other modern national movements in Europe. Since its inception the state of Israel has grappled with its identity: is it a civic Israeli state or a Jewish state? Kimmerling (2004) argues that over the years Israel has become more and more influenced by the religious faction and is losing its modern civic characteristics. There is no separation between state and religion in Israel, and this has a profound impact on every aspect of life. Hence Israel provides a case study of how a faith-based society copes with its religio-secular definition in a modern pluralistic world.

Studies of the religiosity and secularity of the Jewish population in Israel (Ben Meir & Kedem 1979; Levy, Levinsohn & Katz 2004) focus primarily on the religious behavioural component by placing subjects on a religious-secular scale. For the most part they examine behavioural ritual elements and accordingly attach social labels to individuals who customarily manifest a particular overt public behaviour (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle 1997), even though such behaviour often does not reflect their subjective, self-defined inner feelings regarding their religiosity or secularity. Religious and secular definitions were thus dichotomous and diffuse and did not define the complex realities of life. There was a disparity between the public and subjective definitions of the individual.

Many researchers have investigated religious orientation, dimensions and motivation. Glock and Stark (1965) identified five dimensions of religiosity: experiential, ritualistic, ideological, intellectual, and consequential. Following that typology, Lenski (1961) identified four different ways in which religiosity might be expressed: associational, communal, doctrinal and devotional. Cornwall et al. (1986) identify six dimensions of religiosity based on the premise that religious behaviour has at least three components: knowing (mental cognition), feeling (spiritual affect) and doing (bodily behaviour). Other researchers investigated the motivational aspect of individuals' religiosity. Adorno et al. (1950) distinguished between external and internal religiosity. Wilson (1960) developed a questionnaire to measure the extrinsic mode of religiosity and Feagin (1964) constructed an intrinsic scale of religiosity. The Religious Orientation scale was constructed by Allport and Ross (1967). They distinguish between the intrinsic religious person who lives his religiosity and the extrinsic individual who uses it. Wulff (1997) claims that in a secularized socio-cultural context religion can be positioned in two dimensional space: the vertical axis indicates the degree to which objects of religious interest are seen as participating in a transcendent reality and the horizontal axis specifies whether religion is interpreted literally or symbolically. Wulff argues that these two dimensions define four quadrants: literal affirmation, literal disaffirmation, reductive interpretation and restorative interpretation (1997, pp. 634-635). All these measurements seek to explore religiosity beyond church attendance. Whereas the phenomenological aspect is covered by these early scales, religious people's state of mind — that is, how they construct their identity – is overlooked. The methodology lags far behind the reality, which is much more complex and diverse. The instruments are one dimensional and simplistic and do not describe the complex, holistic reality.

In recent years new measurements have been constructed that incorporate cognitive, behavioural and social dimensions (Chumbler 1996; Ellison, Gay & Glass 1989; Ellison 1991). However, following the *Zeitgeist* of multiple and fluid

modernity, privatization and individuation, there is still a need for a more mul-
tidimensional measurement (Tirri & Quinn 2010) that includes subjective and
individual dimensions to allow for the complex situation of human beings in
the modern era and thus expand the study of religiosity and secularity. It seems
to me that the main deficiency of this research was disregard, not of the nature
of religiosity or how religious a person is, but rather of how a person's religios-
ity is constructed. Religiosity is constructed from multiple constituents; identi-
fying these can help to define both religiosity and secularism. This research
suggests a theoretical typology that explains how people construct their religi-
osity and examines it empirically.

3. A Typological Model for Defining Religiosity and Secularity

This study proposes a typological model for assessing secularity and religiosity
that differentiates two dimensions — conceptual and inherited — of the reli-
gious/secular definition applied in research to date. These new dimensions
describe the manner in which people structure their world, whether religious
or secular, and the significance they ascribe to it. The eight permutations of
religious-secular and conceptual-inherited yield eight basic theoretical defini-
tion types shown in Figure 1: four religious types — inherited, conceptual,
integrative (combining both) and unfocused (neither conceptual nor inher-
ited) — and four corresponding secular ones.

The proposed model includes an operative conceptual system according to
which people may be classified and identified in terms of these two types. At
the same time it affords deeper insight into the essence and complexity of the
conceptual and inherited dimensions. Conceptual and inherited types are evi-
dent in both the religious and the secular sphere. Table 1 shows the parameters
of the two groups.

Figure 1: A religious-secular typological model
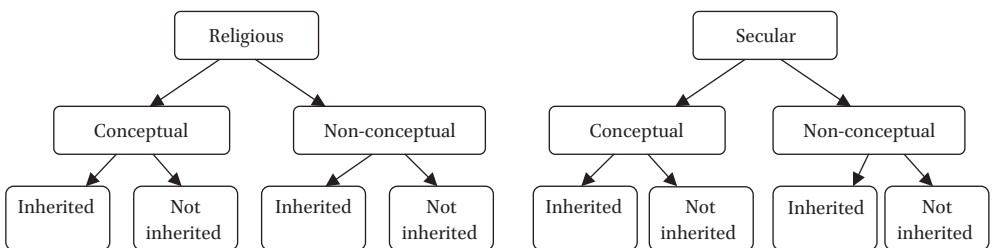
Table 1: Comparison of conceptual and inherited parameters in the religious-secular context

Conceptual		Inherited	
Religious	**Secular**	**Religious**	**Secular**
1. Theocentric	1. Anthropocentric	1. Circumstance	1. Circumstance
2. Rational	2. Rational	2. Routine	2. Routine
3. Literacy	3. Literacy	3. Inertia	3. Inertia
4. Exploratory	4. Exploratory	4. Vitality	4. Vitality
5. Ritual	5. Autonomy	5. Ritual	5. Voluntarism
	6. Autarchic legitimacy	6. Selectivity	
		7. Voluntarism	
		8. History	
		9. Emotional transcendence	

Conceptual religiosity: Theocentric (the divine entity is the source of authority for all human activity), rational (basing the religious outlook on cognitive foundations), literacy (the need for study and the role of a knowledge foundation in human identity), exploratory (the human need for exploration, inquiry and search in one's actual and spiritual environments) and ritual (conducting religious ceremonies and rites).

Inherited religiosity: Circumstance (being born into a religious family), routine (activities that people perform regularly till they become an integral part of their behaviour), inertia (religiosity not originating in renewal), vitality (activities performed to fulfil a vital need as part of the human will to live), ritual, selective (applying the principle of selectiveness regarding commandments), voluntary (choosing to act in concurrence with tradition), history (religious behaviour linking the believer with previous generations) and emotional transcendence (the key motivating factor in religious behaviour — a deep-rooted emotion triggering transcendental spiritual exaltation).

Conceptual secularity: Anthropocentric (each human being is the source of authority for his or her own behaviour), rational (basing one's outlook on reason and logic), literacy (the need for study as the foundation of one's secular outlook), exploratory, autonomy (control of self) and autarchic legitimacy (validating secularity based on a subjective, personal conception not biased by any external criteria).

Inherited secularity: Circumstance (being born into a secular family), routine, inertia, vitality, voluntary.

The conceptual and inherited dimensions and their parameters help us to examine how individuals structure their religious or secular perspectives. The rationale underlying this approach is that modernity is characterized by differentiation and individualization. Most research to date has focused on what Wulff (1997, p. 255) calls "the exclusion of subjectivity" (p. 255). The measures employed aimed mainly at the "objective" aspect of religiosity; namely, the relationship between humans and God expressed through specific actions like church attendance and other religious behaviours, or the lack of them. However, in the modern era, which is characterized by the necessity to choose (Ziebertz 2001a, p. 8), there is a need for "the inclusion of subjectivity" (Wulff 1997, p. 256) in the study of religiosity. In this era individuals want to construct their own form of religiosity, which encompasses more holistic patterns of religious behaviour. The conceptual and inherited parameters enable us to probe people's inner subjective world where they can choose the parameters defining their inner religious or secular being. The conceptual dimension refers to religiosity or secularity that is the consequence of an overall outlook comprising opinions, views and approaches regarding all aspects of human life, while the inherited dimension refers to religiosity or secularity that originates in direct interaction between individuals and behaviour in the family environment that shapes their initial personality, behavioural patterns, emotions and experiences. Such religiosity/secularity is culturally inherited in a process of primary socialization that becomes an integral part of the individual's being.

4. The Study

The principal purpose of this study is to assess the validity of the Religious and Secular Typological Model (RSTM) and determine its efficacy in differential identification of individuals and their classification into the various theoretical types. If empirical data indeed conform to the model and its various parameters, it may then serve as an analytical tool for evaluating the way individuals construct their religiosity or secularity.

4.1   *Research Questions*

In the absence of existing literature to permit formulation of specific hypotheses this study focuses on the following questions:

1. What types of secularity and religiosity prevail among students in secular high schools in Israel?
2. Is there any correlation between these types and their various parameters?

3. Is there any correlation between these types and respondents' empathy with and acceptance of types similar to and different from their own?
4. Is there any correlation between respondents' self-definition as secular and their self-ascription to the various types?

4.2   *Research Population*

The research population consisted of 100 grade twelve students (50 boys and 50 girls — academic programme students only) attending six secular high schools in Israel. For sampling purposes we chose two schools in central areas (Haifa and Tel Aviv), two on the periphery (Sderot, Ramla) and two on kibbutzim (one affiliated with the United Kibbutz Movement and the other with the Kibbutz Artzi).

4.3   *Measures and Tools*

The following measuring instruments and tools were used:

1. *Biographical questionnaire*: General information about respondents, such as family background and school.
2. *Religiosity questionnaire*: Respondents' definitions of their own religiosity and that of their families are assessed in two ways: self-ranking on a six-point scale ranging from very religious to anti-religious and categorization of themselves and their families on a scale with only three values (religious, traditional, secular). In general those who defined themselves as "traditional" on the trivalent scale defined themselves as "rather religious" or "not very religious" on the hexavalent one. Those who called themselves "secular" on the former scale defined themselves as "not religious" or, less frequently, "anti-religious" on the latter one. No estimates were obtained for "very religious" and "religious" on the hexavalent scale or for "religious" on the trivalent one. As compatibility between the two scales was very high, we generally used only the trivalent scale.
3. *Typological questionnaire*: In this study I employed the vignette method (Rossi & Nock 1982), a technique used to investigate attitudes in social settings in an attempt to understand the complexity of the human situation investigated in its context and locate it in relation to the main research variables. The vignette method has been used in social behavioural research (Byers & Zeller 1995; Gowers et al. 1996) and also to investigate certain religious aspects (Brodie & Fowler 1985; Lupfer et al. 1994).

   The typological questionnaire consists of several vignettes, each describing a situation reflecting specific theoretical components and descriptive

features of the RSTM types proposed above, enabling respondents to label themselves in terms of a variety of religious and secular definitions and identify with them accordingly. The vignettes (short stories that incorporate the parameters of conceptual and inherited religiosity or secularity) were constructed from an aggregate of sentences describing each of the eight permutations of religious/secular and conceptual/inherited. Respondents were asked to select the most apposite among a variety of familiar religious or secular definitions, and apply them to sharpen and clarify their self-definition (religious or secular). After reading each vignette, each subject was asked to indicate on a five-point Likert scale whether s/he likes or dislikes this type. Next, subjects were asked whether they would take this type with them to Israel if they lived abroad before the establishment of the state of Israel. There were four options: "I would take her with me on my boat"; "I would send him in another boat"; "I would suggest that she postpone the trip until we are ready to accept her in our country"; "I would reject him and not enable him to come at all." Finally, after reading the vignettes and reacting to them, the subjects were asked to choose one vignette that resembles their religious or secular definition and explain their choice. Subjects' answers to this question were analysed according to the 16 inherited and conceptual parameters.

4. *Semi-structured interview*: In semi-structured interviews respondents were asked four open questions concerning the quality and nature of their personal religious or secular definition in two respects: how they define themselves and how they believe others perceive them. Content analysis was conducted regarding inherited and conceptual parameters of the responses. Two referees reviewed the responses, ascertained whether the parameters were present and categorized respondents according to the eight types of religiosity/secularity (Figure 1).

5. Results

5.1 *Descriptive*

5.1.1 *Self-definition*

The Religiosity Questionnaire asked respondents how they define themselves — religious, traditional or secular — and how they define their families in this respect. These definitions, commonly used in Israeli research on religiosity, are based on behavioural-religious aspects. People who define themselves as religious observe numerous religious precepts and traditional people observe fewer, albeit more than secular people, who observe virtually none. The distribution of research respondents according to this definition is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution according to religious/secular definition of self and family (N=100)

Self		Family	
Religious	0	Religious	1
Traditional	33	Traditional	35
Secular	67	Secular	64

5.1.2 *Typological Self-definition (Religious or Secular)*

The responses from the open interviews were analysed according to key research variables: conceptual and inherited religiosity/secularity. The interview contents were scored independently by two referees, who determined which of the 16 parameters recorded (seven conceptual and nine inherited) were present. The referees agreed in case of 85% of responses. Subsequently, the referees in a joint effort categorized the remaining responses in a joint.

Table 3 shows the types obtained and their respective self-definition criteria. Criteria indicated by over 50% of respondents classified as fitting the typology are marked with a plus sign, those indicated by 30-50% of them with an asterisk and those not indicated at all are unmarked.

As noted already respondents defined themselves using five of the eight types, namely religious (conceptual, inherited), and secular (conceptual, inherited and integrative). Contrary to our original observation as reflected in the RSTM, according to which secularity is a separate category, the qualitative findings show that the religious and secular variables are interrelated and that many respondents expressed their secularity in terms of non-religiosity. In other words, most respondents who define themselves as secular say "I'm not religious" rather than "I'm secular". The expression "I'm not religious" means that one is placing oneself diametrically opposite the religious pole. Many of the examples cited by these respondents to corroborate their claim to a secular self-definition consist of negative definitions, primarily emphasizing non-practice of religious behaviour: "I'm not religious: I do not pray, I do not eat kosher food...", etc. Interviews revealed that these respondents do not perceive their secular definition as an independent category in terms of the binary model presented above.

Respondents who identified with religious types defined themselves as traditional, using expressions such as "rather religious," "slightly religious" and the like. Accordingly we classified them in the religious category. Note that such classification is relative, reflecting the respondent's location on the religious-secular axis.

Table 3 shows that respondents' self-definitions generally included components that conformed to the parameters anticipated theoretically as reflected

Table 3: RSTM parameters for respondents' self-definition of religiosity and secularity

Parameters	Types				
	Conceptual Religiosity	Inherited Religiosity	Conceptual Secularity	Inherited Secularity	Integrative Secularity
Religiosity-Secularity					
Not religious			+	+	+
Religious	+	+			
Conceptual Features					
Source of authority:					
Anthropocentric			+		+
Theocentric	+				
Autonomy	*		+		+
Rational	+		+		+
Exploratory	+		+		+
Literacy	*		*		*
Autarchic legitimacy			+		+
Ritual	+	+		+	
Inherited Features					
Circumstance		+		+	++
Vitality		+		+	*
Routine		+		+	*
Inertia		+		+	*
Ritual	+	+		+	*
Selectivity	+	+		+	
Voluntarism		++		++	
History		+		+	
Emotional transcendence		+		+	

in Table 2 above. In the case of some respondents several somewhat surprising parameters were discovered in the content analysis, to be described below.

For respondents classified as integratively secular the circumstance criterion dominated all the other inherited parameters (vitality, inertia and routine). Those in conceptual categories (religious and secular alike) barely mentioned the literacy parameter.

Respondents assigned to religious categories resembled one another not only in respect of ritualism but also regarding selectivity, although interviews did indicate some differences in the reasoning that motivated their choice. Respondents who belong to the inherited religious category maintained that they observe precepts selectively because they desire to do so and believe that such behaviour meets religious needs. By contrast, the conceptually religious stated that they observe precepts selectively because they chose to do so after thought and personal interpretation of God's will and his requirements for human beings.

Among the conceptually religious we found a (admittedly weak) correlation with autonomy, a parameter theoretically ascribed to the conceptually secular type. Furthermore, among inherited secular individuals we found the parameters of ritual, selectivity, history and emotional transcendence, which were expected to feature among those who inherited religiosity. Further examination revealed a fundamental difference between the inherited types insofar as source of authority is concerned: while religious persons practice rituals out of commitment to a theocentric source of authority, secular ones do so out of anthropocentric cultural attachment.

Among the two inherited groups voluntarism was very prominent in the ritual context. Apparently both groups feel a need to emphasize that their activity was performed out of choice rather than because of coercion. However, while the religious stress their choice to obey God's will, reflected by the voluntarism criterion, the secular emphasize fulfilment of personal desires.

5.1.3 *Identifying Respondents According to the Vignettes*
Respondents were presented with vignettes describing the eight types and asked to select the one that most closely resembles their self-definition. Distribution of respondents (by percentage) among the types according to their choice is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 shows that most respondents (70%) defined themselves according to secular categories. Respondents identified themselves in terms of seven of

Table 4: Distribution of types according to choice of vignette (N=100)

	Religious		Secular	
	Not Inherited	Inherited	Not Inherited	Inherited
Conceptual	16	1	5	30
Not conceptual	0	13	2	33

* As there are 100 subjects, the number of subjects equals their percentage of the total.

the eight types; no respondents fitted the religious "not conceptual and not inherited" (unfocused) category.

5.2 *Correlation Between Respondents' Self-definition and Their Empathy with Vignette Types*

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the vignette types resembles them most closely. To determine whether there is any correlation between respondents' self-definition and their identification and empathy with these types, we calculated the average empathy displayed by each type of respondent, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 indicates that there is a strong correlation between respondents' self-ascribed types and their empathy with that same type. In each group empathy with the corresponding group was highest.

**Figure 2: Respondents' empathy with vignette types (N=100)**
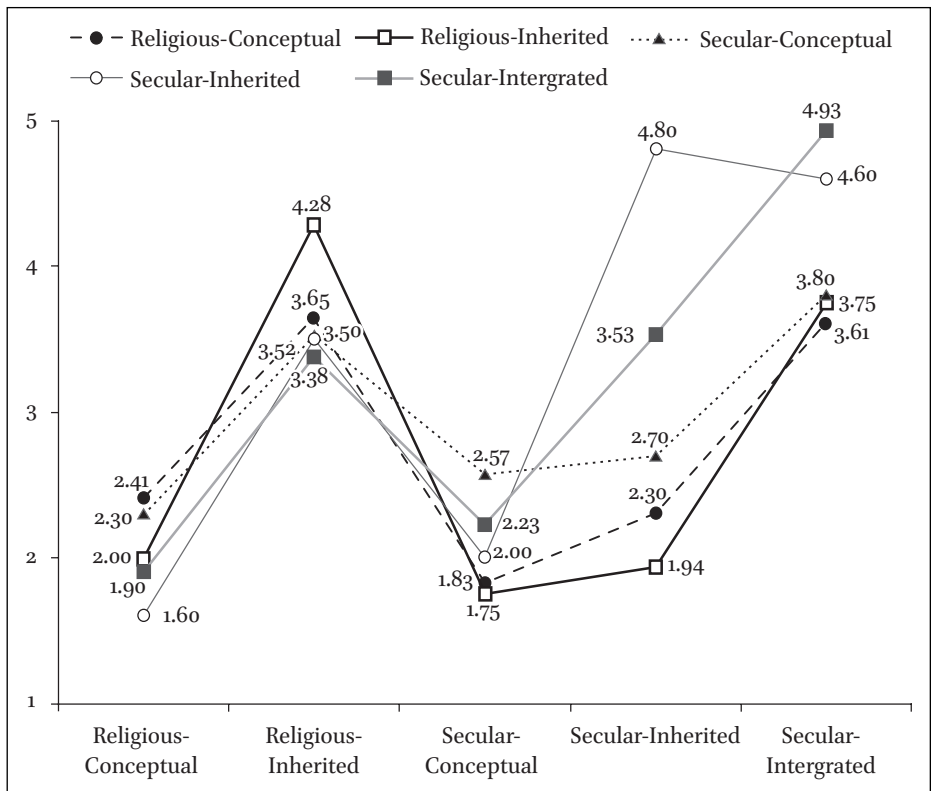
A one-way MANOVA revealed significant differences among the five types in assessment of empathy ($p < .001$; $F_{(32,312)} = 4.05$). Separate ANOVAs conducted for each RSTM type show that differences are also significant for each group:

- Religious — conceptual $\qquad$ $p < .05$; $F_{(4,91)} = 2.98$
- Religious — inherited $\qquad$ $p < .05$; $F_{(4,91)} = 3.17$
- Secular — conceptual $\qquad$ $p < .001$; $F_{(4,91)} = 10.23$
- Secular — inherited $\qquad$ $p < .05$; $F_{(4,91)} = 3.24$
- Secular — integrative $\qquad$ $p < .001$; $F_{(4,91)} = 8.99$

A Scheffe pair-wise comparison revealed that for each of the eight vignette types significant differences result from the relatively greater empathy expressed for the given type by the corresponding group of respondents.

Figure 3: Respondents' acceptance of vignette types (N=100)
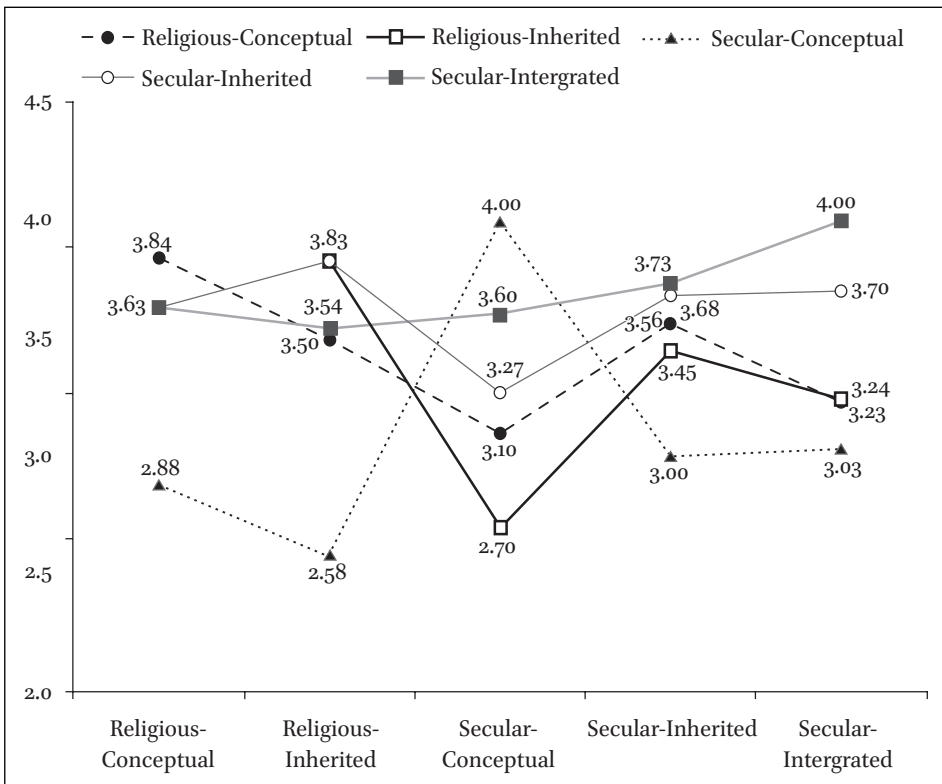
We also conducted a Level of Acceptance (LOA) analysis of the various types. Figure 3 shows the results.

Figure 3 shows that acceptance resembles empathy: respondents belonging to the five types tend to exhibit greater acceptance of types that display features similar to their own. A one-way MANOVA revealed a significant difference among the five types ($p < .05$; $F_{(32,312)} = 1.63$) and separate ANOVAs for each type yielded significant differences between religious — conceptual ($p < .05$; $F_{(4,91)} = 2.87$) and religious — inherited ($p < .05$; $F_{(4,91)} = 2.82$) and the other types.

To sum up, the questionnaire evaluated two aspects of respondents' attitudes towards religious and secular types: emotional (empathy) and behavioural (acceptance). As anticipated, respondents who defined themselves as secular/religious exhibit more empathy and acceptance for the corresponding types.

The findings also show a high correlation between respondents' self-defined types and the empathy they exhibit for the respective corresponding types. In other words, respondents display greater empathy for types that resemble themselves than for the other types in the model. This observation confirms that respondents' selection of types is not random but reflects considerable thought.

5.3   *Inherited and Conceptual Parameters*

As indicated above, in individual interviews respondents were asked to define themselves as religious, traditional or secular and to indicate the reasons for their definition. Interview content was then analysed according to the nine inherited and seven conceptual parameters. As the standard deviation of the research group varies widely, we conducted a nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis rank sum test to assess differences in these parameters among respondents defining themselves as respectively religious and secular (see Table 5).

Analysis of the inherited parameters revealed significant differences among the various types for all nine parameters ($p < .001$; $df = 4$; $\chi^2 = 14.48$ to 77.64). The average rank sums of these parameters in respondents belonging to the five types are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 indicates that the greatest differences are between the two inherited types and the conceptually secular type. On the other hand, for all inherited parameters respondents associated with inherited types scored higher than conceptually secular ones. The figure also shows that the integrative secular type resembles the conceptual types in all parameters except one (circumstance), in which it is closer to the inherited types.

Table 5: Kruskal-Wallis rank sum test of (nine) inherited parameters according to respondents' (five) religious/secular types (n=100)

Parameter	Conceptual Religiosity	Inherited Religiosity	Conceptual Secularity	Inherited Secularity	Integrative Secularity	Kruskal-Wallis*
1. Vitality	11.81	71.69	11.00	70.00	42.23	70.98
2. Inertia	27.00	78.38	27.00	70.48	28.03	75.68
3. Circumstance	11.00	57.96	11.00	58.15	61.65	54.15
4. Routine	26.66	78.46	21.50	72.39	27.00	77.64
5. Ritual	66.31	72.62	19.50	62.59	19.50	71.34
6. Selectivity	57.19	72.65	20.00	66.47	20.00	68.14
7. Voluntarism	31.25	70.35	29.00	70.41	29.00	63.94
8. History	39.63	47.12	34.50	69.67	34.50	44.34
9. Emotional transcendence	77.44	47.50	23.50	62.85	23.50	60.16

* $p < .001$

Figure 4: Average rank sums of (nine) heritability parameters according to respondents' (five) religious/secular types (N=100)
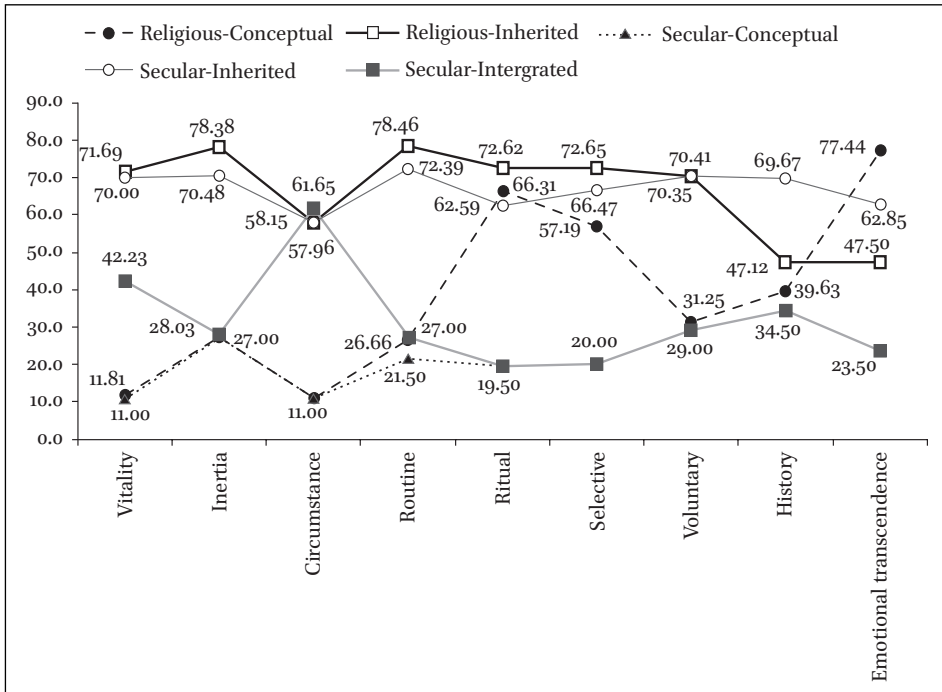
Table 6: Kruskal-Wallis rank sum test of (seven) conceptual parameters according to respondents' (five) religious/secular types (n=100)

Parameter	Conceptual Religiosity	Inherited Religiosity	Conceptual Secularity	Inherited Secularity	Integrative Secularity	Kruskal-Wallis
Source of authority	84.08	81.91	53.30	19.50	47.98	84.83*
Autonomy	40.15	30.50	85.00	30.50	77.05	81.03*
Rational	51.08	33.00	86.70	30.00	75.58	74.59*
Exploratory	81.56	34.69	71.50	24.00	61.58	69.33*
Literacy	53.59	47.50	47.50	47.50	49.10	6.35
Autarchic legitimacy	41.94	38.50	87.80	38.50	62.40	46.01*
Ritual	66.31	72.62	19.50	62.59	19.50	71.34*

* $p < .001$

A different profile emerges for conceptually religious respondents, who resemble the conceptually secular regarding most parameters (vitality, inertia, routine, circumstance, history and voluntarism), although they more closely resemble the inherited religious category in respect of three of them (ritual, selective and emotional transcendence).

As indicated, there were also three conceptual parameters for which similar analyses were conducted. Table 6 shows the average scores for the five types.

Kruskal-Wallis tests conducted to determine whether there are differences among the five types reveal significant differences for all conceptual parameters except literacy, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5 shows interesting results regarding the prominence of the various parameters among types of respondents. Those who belong to the two inherited types (religious or secular) differ from the conceptually and integratively secular. As anticipated, inherited types score lower on conceptual parameters than the conceptually and integratively secular.

As in the case of the previous findings, respondents who identified themselves as conceptually religious differ from the other types. On the one hand they more closely resemble conceptual types regarding source of authority and exploration, on the other they are similar to inherited types when it comes to autonomy, rationalism and autarchic legitimacy.

To sum up, our findings show a high correlation between results anticipated theoretically and empirical reality. Generally speaking, those who define themselves as either inherited or conceptual types also score higher on the relevant RSTM parameters.

Figure 5: Average rank sums of (seven) conceptuality parameters according to respondents' (five) religious/secular types (n=100)
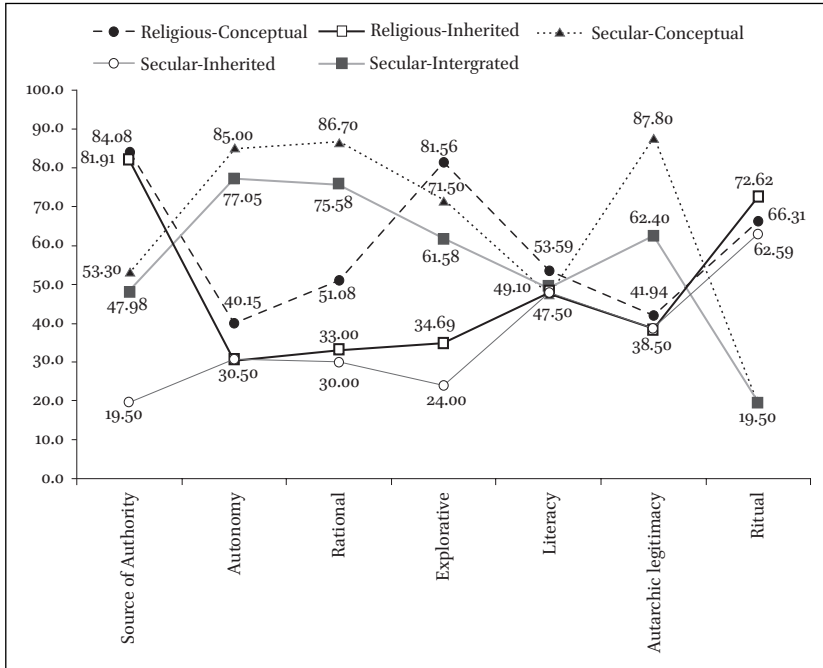
6. Discussion

This study assesses the validity of a novel theoretical model for differential self-definition of religiosity and secularity. It posits that the concepts "religious" and "secular" are comprehensive and cannot fully describe the complexity of an individual's self- and public definition in a modern, pluralistic world. Its principal contribution to this field is its presentation of an innovative paradigmatic model for defining religiosity and secularity by applying more differentiated concepts in research and in socio-educational activity. The chief additional variables in this model — conceptual and inherited — permit description of the complex inner world of human beings beyond the manifest behavioural dimension.

The study, conducted among a group of grade twelve students in state (secular) schools in Israel, revealed that only five of the eight types in the theoretical model are manifested empirically: three secular (conceptual, inherited and integrative) and two religious (conceptual and inherited). These findings

concur with the results of the questionnaire, in which respondents were asked to indicate which among the types presented best describes them, as well as with a qualitative analysis of respondents' self-definitions in open interviews.

As anticipated, most respondents (70%) labelled themselves according to secular types. However, the findings show that even this overtly secular population possesses some religious components, indicating that the concepts "religious" and "secular" are not mutually exclusive. Following Eisenstadt's (2000) multiple modernities hypothesis, it seems that modernity has different manifestation and religiosity is not necessarily equivalent to less modern. On the other hand, secularism in the modern world can include religious constructs. The fluid nature of modernity (Bauman, 2000) allows for more openness and flexibility extending beyond the rigid borders of religiosity or secularism.

According to the dichotomous definition of religious and secular Jews prevailing in Israel, it is common to lump all students in secular schools into one comprehensive category — secular. The findings of this study show a varied typological dispersal of respondents into five different types, casting doubt on the legitimacy of this dichotomous division and underscoring the need for a more differentiated definition of the terms "religious" and "secular." On the other hand, persons defining themselves as religious are likely to include various elements of secularity in their definition. The converse applies to secular persons regarding ostensibly religious parameters.

From the inherited and conceptual dimensions and their unique parameters one may conclude that in practice there are no "pure" religious or secular types; the definitive factor beyond the religious-behavioural variable is the dominance of the parameters that characterize the two types. For example, ritual, selectivity, history and emotional transcendence, characteristic of the inherited religious category alone according to the theoretical typological model, were also present among inherited secular types. However, from participants' explanations in interviews we inferred that religious rituals have a heteronymous orientation, while secular ones are autonomous.

Because of the multidimensionality of religion this study employed a variety of constructs. This is a new approach, as earlier research on religiosity mainly examined religious practices (e.g. church attendance, strength of affiliation with a religious community, etc.). Wulff (1997) argues that religion can be located in two dimensional space: the vertical axis indicates the degree to which the objects of religious interest are part of a transcendental reality (i.e. he concentrates on the relationship between humans and God). The horizontal axis indicates whether religion is interpreted literally or symbolically. In our case the conceptual and inherited dimensions are on the horizontal axis. Whereas the literal and symbolic modes focus on content and are specific, the

scope of conceptual and inherited religiosity/secularity is broad and incorporates a range of parameters that enables each individual to construct his or her unique religious or secular profile. While the inherited dimension of religiosity or secularity relates to the interpretation of religion learnt mainly through primary socialization, the conceptual dimension deals predominantly with the symbolic aspect of the interpretation, deriving from critical exploration. The conceptual and inherited dimensions enable us to construct the horizontal axis, giving us a more sophisticated, complex and differentiated religious or secular outlook. This approach is more responsive to human subjectivity and provides a more individualized religious definition. It reflects the process of privatization and personalization in the investigation of religiosity (Ziebertz 2003). It allows us to penetrate the complex personal world of religious experience with due regard to the underlying religious subjectivity. Whereas the vertical axis provides only a one dimensional image of religiosity, the horizontal axis with its rich parameters offers a wide range of subjective responses to religion and religiosity.

The innovation and contribution of this research lie in its empirical verification of the theoretical parameters, thus enabling us to investigate how individuals construct their secularity or religiosity. These parameters are the grains of religiosity and secularity that extend beyond the conventional, orthodox definition and discourse of religiosity and secularism with their behavioural approach. The terminology may help to break down the solid borders dividing the two categories, thus allowing more flexible, fruitful and multidimensional definitions. This conception, developed from a study of respondents attending secular schools in Israel, indicates that although the various environments and schools were not religious, some respondents do manifest components of a religious character, either because they were so educated at home (inherited) or as a result of independent thinking (conceptual). Indeed, our findings showed that respondents who identified themselves as religious types defined themselves as "slightly religious" or "rather religious" but not as either religious or not religious. This observation reinforces our emphasis on the substantive difference between the label "religious" used in this context and the term's conventional Orthodox Jewish meaning. The differentiated picture presented in this study of religious and secular conceptions suggests that dichotomous categorical terms in individual (religious or secular) self-definition should be abandoned in favour of a more refined, continuous terminology. Moreover, classification into groups need not be rigid, leaving room for mobility on the continuum.

Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle (1997) note that in studies conducted to date analyses of secularization used methodological tools based on religiosity. A low

level of religiosity translated into secularity. They believe that such studies and the use of these tools permit adequate comprehension of the changes that have affected definitions of religiosity in the modern world. However, in our view tools intended to describe religiosity are incapable of capturing all manifestations of secularity, whose complex nature demands special instruments to discern depth and scope. The innovative tools developed in this study probe secularity as an autonomous phenomenon corresponding to religiosity, rejecting its common perception as non-practice of religious behaviour.

This theoretically and methodologically innovative approach suits contemporary needs at the end of the millennium and should be tested on other populations as well. A key feature of the present era is accelerated privatization, a phenomenon affecting all spheres of human existence (Ziebertz 2001b). Opportunities for privatized definitions as proposed in this study, which allow for mobility on a definitional continuum and selection of components, will yield a variety of more authentic definitions, preventing or reducing cognitive dissonance and unstable or incoherent identities, and permitting the adaptation of these definitions to the personalities and life circumstances of each individual.

The study was limited to one specific cultural setting (Jews in Israel). Future research will have to determine whether our findings can be generalized to other countries and other religions. The results of this study also have educational implications. In secular educational frameworks this mapping will give teachers a clearer picture of each student's unique cultural and spiritual definitions and tendencies, and thus enable them to construct curricula that can be adopted and adapted by diverse religious or secular interpretations. Hitherto secular schools have offered only one option of Jewish secular education. The findings, which suggest five different definitions of secularism, call for pedagogical attention so as to cater for diverse educational needs.

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