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## THE JEWISH SELF-CONCEPTION OF INTELLECTUAL, MORAL, AND SPIRITUAL SUPERIORITY

"Jewish intelligence, integrity and intellect, as a matter of record, predominates in all branches of scientific discoveries, modern advancements and commercial enterprises, in all parts of the world, swaying destinies of various people and conducting the affairs of numerous nations, guiding opinions and sentiments in the press, pulpit, rostrum, cathedra, reducing or increasing the instrumentality of exchanges, bourses, money markets and financial operations ..." --**Nachman Heller, 1928, p. 23**

While Orthodox Jews still bluntly claim God's unabashed favoritism, more secular Jews' self-congratulation repeatedly highlights a disproportionate number of Jewish Nobel prize winners, as well as other ambitious and famous scientists, philosophers, writers, and their attendant legion of achievers, not as an expression of a self-promotive ethic, culturally-cultivated ambition, tradition of scholarship, nepotistic networks, or strong communal and personal economic base in support of self-advancement, but of a smug Jewish intellectual "essence." "Nearly a fourth of the Nobel prizes in physiology and medicine," writes Jewish author Miles Storf, "have been awarded to people of Jewish faith or heritage ... and more than a fifth of the prizes in physics have been awarded to people of Jewish descent." [STORFER, p. 322] "Pointing to the high proportion of Jewish Nobel Laureates," says Joshua Halberstam, "... is a custom practiced around Jewish tables everywhere." [HALBERSTAM, p. 55]

"Now American Jewish culture basically comes down to 'anything produced by a Jew is Jewish,'" complains Leon Wieseltier, "This is an insult to the intelligence. It is also not far from the Nazi idea." [BERSHTEL, p. 118] In Russia, in the late 1970s, a Jew from Odessa told the American Jewish Congress that "it was kind of a hobby [among Jews] to collect the names of famous Jews who hide their identity [in the Soviet Union]." [ROTHCHILD, 1985, p. 38]

Albert Einstein, for instance (whose virtuous image was sourly damaged with the revelation of some particularly degrading and dictatorial letters to his non-Jewish wife) is always trotted out as the quintessential genius Jew. No doubt such people are talented, among a world of talent. Such parading of Jewish brain scions, however, avoids the behind-the-scenes fact that the formal recognition of Nobel, Pulitzer, and other "prized" individuals as the current "best" in any given field inevitably has at least as much to do with competitive networking, connections, hustling, power, self-promotion, visibility, class, status, and/or academic cliques as they do with talent.

The Nobel Prize system -- whatever else it is -- is an elitist enterprise: a network, a self-referential club that favors those with particular socio-economic advantages. It parallels in structure the incestuous

traditional self-promotive Jewish model. In a 1977 study of American Nobel Prize winners (laureates) in science, Harriet Zuckerman determined that:

- 82% of Nobel winners had fathers who were professionals, managers, or proprietors. [p. 65]
- Nobel winners were twice as likely as losers to have come from a "professional" families, and a bit more likely than others to "have fathers in business." [p. 65]
- Only 15% of the winners came from "blue-collar or white collar" families. [p. 65]
- More than half of the 92 Nobel laureates surveyed "had worked as students, post doctorates, or junior collaborators under older laureates. [p. 116]
- There was a "fair amount of intermarriage between laureates and the kin of laureates." [p. 97]
- Six laureates shared the prize with their mentors. [p. 116]
- Laureates tend to come from elite universities. [p. 116]
- "Elite masters [Nobel laureates] can mobilize resources for their apprentices [future laureates]," including fellowships, grants, jobs, and publication possibilities in influential journals. [p. 132]
- The prestige of the Nobel Prize has been used to "confer legitimacy" upon "ideological, political, commercial, and military" ventures. [p. 23]

Zuckerman even devotes sections of her book to "Self-confidence" and "Upward Mobility in Academe" to help explain Nobel victories. For Albert Einstein's part, notes Robert Schulman (Director of the Einstein Papers Project, some 43,000 letters, notes, papers, and other documents the scientist left behind): "In these pages we can closely observe Einstein and his solitary path to the [theory of] general relativity, and which personal relations are sometimes callously sacrificed in the name of scientific ambition." [OVERBYE, p. 11] Einstein also left Germany during World War I "to dodge military service," had an illegitimate daughter, and "considered breaking off his engagement to his cousin Elisa Einstein and marrying her 20-year old daughter, Ilse, instead." Einstein's executor, Otto Nathan, "protective on Einstein's public image," delayed for years the public release of the papers by filing a lawsuit to control their handling. [OVERBYE, p. 11]

An embittered African critic dismisses entirely the Nobel prize system, and its "peace prize," as nothing but a status and political game for the powerful:

"One does not win the Nobel; it is bestowed upon one. All we hear is an announcement that some Scandinavian cabal, in its mysterious wisdom, has decided thus and thus. All that the public is admitted to is the ceremony held for the alleged winners in a contest whose rules and venues and officials are shadowy." [BLACK WORLD, p. 8]

Edward Epstein's 1996 expose of the fraudulent life of Armand Hammer, in an entire chapter notes the Jewish billionaire's heavy lobbying in the last year of his life to win the top Nobel award, finally getting

Israel's prime minister, Menachem Begin, "to be Hammer's sponsor for the peace prize." [EPSTEIN, 1996, p. 332-343] That year's try was unsuccessful, and he died before he could attempt it again.

The traditional Jewish fixation upon intellectual activities as the foremost expression of superiority (as distinct from the "earthy" and "physical") is reflected in this description of East European Jewry by Zborowski and Herzog:

"Because the head is the container of brains, it is treated with tender care ... The symbolism is pervasive. The head of the table, the head of the bed, the head of the fish which the approving husband presents to his wife, each carries its honorific connotations ... One part of the body that comes close to disgust is the feet, especially the toes. They are furthest from the head, lowest, and nearest to the ground."  
[ZBOROWSKI, p. 359]

Traditional Yiddish folklore often reflects on the Jewish self-conception of marked intelligence:

"Jews never have enough of anything except brains." [KUMOVE, S., 1985, p. 140]

"God protect us from Jewish chutspeh [pushiness], Jewish mouths, and Jewish brains." [KUMOVE, S., 1985, p. 44]

"Better the little Jewish brain than the big Goyish head." [KUMOVE, S., 1985, p. 104]

Two Jewish co-authors created a term to describe Jewry through the ages: "intellectual gladiators." "We [Americans]," write Stephen Slavin and Mary Pradt, "define any job demanding considerable intelligence as 'Jewish work.'" [SLAVIN, p. 60] With so many brilliant Jews in Europe before the Holocaust, Joshua Halberstam thinks that "it is likely that were it not for Auschwitz we would now have a cure for cancer." [HALBERSTAM, p. 48] Myths of Jewish superiority are also noted by Susan Schneider from a feminist perspective:

"Jewish women have always assured themselves that they were different; yet even with the tenderness and emotional expression many Jewish men permit themselves there is another kind of male feeling of superiority at work -- this time a superiority based on precisely the spiritual and intellectual capacity that Jewish men declared as their specialty ... Intellectual rather than physical prowess is the determinant value of the Jewish male's value on his place in the pecking order." [SCHNEIDER, p. 294]

In a search for charitable aid from the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies to help Jewish mentally handicapped children at an institution called Willowbrook that was being phased out, two researchers were perturbed by the Jewish organization's formal response. David and Sheila Rothman wrote that

"Troubled by the plight of Willowbrook's Jewish residents, the Federation did appoint a committee to explore why Jews who were generally in the foreground in providing services [were].... in this area .... behind other faiths. (The answer came back that 'the emphasis in Judaism on intellectual achievement tends to set off Jewish retardates more sharply from other Jews.')" [*original author's parenthesis:* ROTHMAN, p. 159]

"It is extraordinarily difficult for American Jews," says American Jewish scholar Charles Silberman, "to expunge [their] sense of superiority ... however much they may try to suppress it." [SILBERMAN, p. 80] "Jews still possess a feeling of superiority," wrote Marshall Sklare, "although more in the moral and intellectual realms now than in the area of spiritual affairs ... Leaving the (Jewish identity) group becomes a psychological threat: such a move is viewed not as an advancement but as cutting oneself off from a claim of superiority." [SILBERMAN, p. 81]

"The Jew who has cut off his traditional religion," wrote J. O. Hertzler, "... and has become an agnostic or atheist, is still considered to be a Jew and probably still, unconsciously, holds to the tribal spirit of superiority even though he no longer observes the ceremonial minutiae." [HERTZLER, p. 68] In a study of native-born Jews in modern Israel, Herbert Russcol and Margarit Banai note traditional Jewish self-identity in the widespread haughty arrogance among those of the Jewish state:

"But there is a deeper reason, perhaps for his chauvinism: the inbred, self-congratulatory Jewish sense of superiority. Real or imagined, this superiority always infuriates the gentile. Denied a homeland, vilified, the Jew turned his vision inward and fed on his spiritual arrogance. He huddled in ghettos and rejoiced in his four thousand years of apartness, of uniqueness." [RUSSCOL/BANAI, 1970, p. 173]

In 1984, Mordechai Nisan, a lecturer at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, published an article in Kivvunim, the journal of the World Zionist Congress. Nisan proclaimed that

"While it is true that the Jews are a particular people, they nonetheless are designated as a 'light unto the nations.' This function is imposed on the Jews who strive to be a living aristocracy among the nations, a nation that has deeper historical roots, greater spiritual obligation, higher moral standards, and more powerful intellectual capacities than others. This vision which diverges from the widely accepted egalitarianism approach, is not at all based on an arbitrary hostility

towards non-Jews, but rather on a fundamental existential understanding of the quality of Jewish peoplehood." [HARKABI, p. 153]

"Thus," says Yehoshafat Harkabi, "the concept of the 'Chosen People' as an aristocracy provides sanction for the unequal and discriminatory treatment of non-Jews." [HARKABI, p. 153]

Alan Dershowitz notes his feelings about his Jewish identity when he was a Yale law student:

"When I went home for the Jewish holidays, I told my parents about the brilliant teachers at Yale: Goldstein, Pollack, Bickel, Skolnick, Schwartz. Then I told them about the most brilliant of my teachers: Calabresi. Without missing a beat, my mother asked, 'Is he an Italian Jew?' Angrily I said, 'Don't be so parochial. He's an Italian Catholic. Not all smart people have to have Jewish blood.' Several months later, I learned that Guido Calabresi was in fact descended from Italian Jews."  
[DERSHOWITZ, p. 50]

Ronald Brauner, also Jewish, notes his feelings after reading a book by Dr. Oliver Sacks: "Truth be told, as I read, my chauvinism also kicked in, as it always does. This guy is terrific! His book is one of the best I have ever read! The insights and sensitivities are remarkable! How could any one person be so brilliant, so on-target, so profound? ... he must be Jewish! (that happens to you, too, sometimes, doesn't it?) ... [But] ultimately, sublime talent, insight and ability notwithstanding, a person doesn't 'have it all together' until his Jewish component is also integrated into his work. Somehow, some way, each of us is bound to reflect our Jewishness in what we do." [BRAUNER, R., p. 35]

Virginia Dominguez, an American visiting professor in Israel, wrote in 1989 that

"Who is Jewish matters. I doubt very much that I am the only non-Jew who discovered only while visiting or living in Israel that many internationally known figures like movie stars, artists, writers, scientists, and athletes whose religious and ethnic identity I had never thought about are Jewish. The Israeli media points to their Jewish identity with few exceptions, in interviews with them or stories about them. This tendency to point out the Jewishness of such figures jars with the sense outside Israel that a similar reference in a non-Jewish newspaper invites the charge of anti-Semitism." [DOMINGUEZ, p. 127]

Norman Cantor, a New York University professor, claims -- with breathtaking arrogance -- on his dedication page for The Jewish Experience (1996) that a "world without Jews is a world devoid of humanity." This insult to anyone not Jewish -- ascribing to all non-Jews a lack of "humanity" -- is reiterated in his later insistence in the same book that Jews are "a uniquely superior group with an

indomitable drive for creativity and accomplishment," (CANTOR, p. 311) and that "the time may be coming when the genetic superiority of Jews can be calmly discussed ... " (p. 312)

In his other recent volume, The Sacred Chain (1994), a history of Jews, Cantor continually reiterates his narcissistic thesis for understanding his own people, and certainly himself: their genetic superiority over others.

"Once the Jews were emancipated, too many younger Jews of superior capability could not find places in society and the economy that were adequate for the exercise of their talents." [p. 277]

"The Jews, once emancipated and given opportunity for mobility, were genetically so superior that market capitalism could not accommodate some of this superior species ... " [p. 277]

"The Jews are a superior people intellectually and as long as Jewish genes exist, the extraordinary impact Jews have had in the twentieth century will continue indefinitely." [p. 423]

"Although millions of Jews had carried their Eastern European impoverishment with them to the West, their literary, native intelligence, religion-controlled moral disciples and super genetic quality made them excellent prospects for upward mobility in Western society." [p. 232]

"The genetic superiority of the Jews will be extended and as long as its carriers are individually free and privileged to pursue their interests in science, philosophy, literature and the arts, highly advantageous consequences for humanity will follow."

These are not the self-obsessed ravings of a lunatic fringe element a hundred years ago, but those of a prominent Jewish professor today who gives current voice to an old strand of Jewish ideology in a book by a major publisher, HarperCollins.

Other old Jewish racist narcissists Cantor drags out in The Jewish Experience include, again, the ancient Talmudic scholar, Maimonides, who says that "God has distinguished us from the rest of mankind" (p. 314), and another, Judah Halevi, who, according to Cantor, "was a kind of Jewish nationalist [who] believed not only in the superiority of Judaism but in the intrinsic superior quality of Jews over other people." (p. 316) (Halevi believed, adds Arnold Eisen, in "a hereditary capacity inhering in the Jewish people which uniquely prepared it for the reception of divine revelation.") [EISEN, p. 18]

Yet Cantor seems ambiguously torn between the polar values of human universalism and Jewish racism. While championing racism himself, elsewhere he seemingly condemns it:

"Racism is itself a central doctrine in traditional Judaism and Jewish cultural history. The Hebrew Bible is blatantly racist, with all the talk about the seed of Abraham, the chosen people, and Israel as the light to other nations. Orthodox Jews in their many prayers still thank God daily that he did not make Jews 'like the other people of the earth.' If this isn't racism, what is?"

Yet Cantor states in the same book what he apparently sees as objective science, and not a manifestation of the very racism he decries:

"Why did Jews as an immigrant group [in America] do better than the Irish or Italians? Perhaps it was innately superior genes, better selective breeding." [CANTOR, p. 389]

The contemporary Jewish scholar, Raphael Patai devotes over fifty pages in his The Jewish Mind to claim evidence for "Jewish pre-eminence" and intellectual superiority over non-Jews. Not surprisingly, when Patai suggests that Jews are genetically superior in intelligence to others, he stoops so low as to quote from whom he inevitably must, the race theory of a German Nazi, Hans Gunther, to embellish a Jewish "survival of the fittest" argument. In this Darwinian and Jewish martyrological view, over the centuries natural selection favored only the smartest Jews in a hostile Gentile environment. [PATAI, p. 304-305]

In one racist "scientific" theory to prove Jewish superiority, Patai lists scholars Norbert Weiner, J.B.S. Haldane, and Lewis S. Feuer as those who suggest that, because the Christian Church offered literate advancement only to those who chose a religious career that included celibacy, the real brains of the Gentile pack died out. As another Jewish author, Nathaniel Weyl, explains this theory:

"The intellectual eminence of the Jews is the result of a two-thousand-year process of selective breeding for intelligence ... If the abolition of priestly celibacy gave Protestant countries a genetic advantage over Catholic ones in respect to brain power, similar institutional factors gave Jews a genetic advantage over Christians." [WEYL, N., 1968, p. 10-12]

The insistent championing of Jewish genetic intellectual superiority over non-Jews surfaces from time to time in Jewish scholarship. Psychologist Benjamin Goodnick, for instance, was even taken aback by a fellow Jew, Peter Gay (one of Sigmund Freud's biographers) and his resistance to Jewish genetic superiority claims. Goodnick says that:

"One tends to wonder why Gay belabors the issue of Jewishness. He seems deeply disturbed that Jews might be different from others and

resists forcefully '... the untenable notion that Jews are by endowment more intelligent than other people.' His view is strange, especially since he recognized that 'history is a Darwinian battle.' A brief survey of Jewish history would have suggested that the persecutions and decimations of the Jewish people over the millennia inevitably led to a survival of the fittest. It would appear that Gay did not take the opportunity to note, for example, the disproportionate number of Jewish Nobel prize winners..." [GOODNICK, p. 108]

This insistent Jewish notion of their superiority over others -- however secularized -- has deep roots in the old Chosen People mythology of the Judaic religion. As Eva (Etzioni) and Zvi Halevy see it:

"This element of Judaism [the Chosen People idea] may be unattractive for those who boast of modern universalistic values; and if viewed from an unfavourable angle, it can be argued that it is quasi-racist dogma. It is probably no longer acceptable in its original version to most non-Orthodox modern Jews. In a modified, less obvious, and less explicit form, however, it probably continues to exert a discernible influence on the Jewish self-image, and the Jews' conception of their place in the modern world." [HALEVY, p. 60-61]

These Jewish authors further argue that modern Jews continue to exhibit a "compulsion" to prove themselves superior to others, fulfilling in at least practical -- if not religious -- daily form the Chosen People dogma. This intrinsic Jewish arrogance as part of their communal identity has often been noted and commented upon by irritated non-Jews across history, and occasionally by Jews themselves. It is sometimes admitted (rarely in public) by Jewish thinkers to be a major factor in a veritable *solicitation* of animosity and hostility from others. There is a marked tendency, writes C. G. Schoenfeld, "of certain Jews to display what might be described as a kind of intellectual conceit or arrogance. As Ernest Jones [another biographer of Freud] has phrased it, 'some Jews exhibit a curious 'superiority complex' in respect to brain power. And so readily does this seeming conceit or arrogance appear to provoke hostile reactions that some psychoanalysts believe such to be its prime [albeit unconscious] purpose -- that, in short, the basic psychic function served by this seeming arrogance is to help fulfill unconscious masochistic needs.'" [SCHOENFELD, p. 28]

Masochism or not, consciously attracting anti-Semitism or not, the animosity engendered towards Jews who think they're better than anyone else has always served the purpose of further alienating Jews throughout history from the mainstream societies in which they lived, which was what Orthodox rabbinical literature has consistently dictated to be desirable.

Even without religious, genetic, or even secularly messianic rationales for Jewish superiority, it endures of its own self-propulsion. The Jewish novelist Philip Roth, says Arnold Eisen, "could have been speaking for many American Jews when he noted in 1963 that, while the Jewish culture transmitted to him by his



parents was at best fragmentary, he had 'received whole a *psychology* which could be expressed in three words: Jews are better.'" [EISEN, p. 135] "I was always aware that I was Jewish," recalls singer Eddie Fisher, "every minute of my life I was aware that I was Jewish ... I felt like I belonged to a very special club and I was proud of that." [FISHER, E., 1999, p. 9]

Jewish author Eric Kahler, with no apparent intent of self-reflective sarcasm, recalls that

"One day when I was discussing the problem of anti-Semitism with Austrian-Jewish poet Richard Beer-Hofmann, he said to me: 'I am not at all astonished at the fact that they hate us and persecute us. But what I cannot understand is why do they not marvel at us more than they do?'" [KAHLER, E., 1967, p. 1]

The notion that Jews are intellectually superior to non-Jews has a long history of racist development in the Jewish community. For hundreds of years, for example, in Eastern Europe Jewish children were socialized to the idea. Jewish scholars Zborowski and Herzog note that

"A series of contrasts is set up in the [Jewish] child, who grew up to regard certain behavior as characteristic of Gentiles. Among Jews he expected to find emphasis on intellect, a sense of moderation, cherishing of spiritual values, cultivation of rational, goal-directed activities, a 'beautiful' family life. Among Gentiles he looks for the opposite of each item: emphasis on the body, excess, blind instinct, sexual license and ruthless force." [ZBOROWSKI, p. 152]

Are these not the quintessential stereotypes of any racist toward out-group Others, rendering them as veritable beasts?

There are of course other angles to Jewish arrogance, one by which Jewish tradition conveniently blames Gentiles even for uncivil excesses in their own (Jewish) psychological selves. Rudolph Lowenstein writes that

"The ostentatious, patronizing, arrogant behavior of some Jews is another source of irritation to Gentiles, since it contains disguised elements of hostility which are recognized as such by both Jews and Gentiles. These successful Jews are trying to compensate for all the humiliations they suffered in the past not because they were poor but because they were Jews. It is in some ways an attempt to rehabilitate the whole Jewish people through their own success." [LOWENSTEIN, p. 130]

A common term for Jewish arrogant "pushiness" comes from their own culture: there is a Yiddish word for it -- *chutzpah*. Alan Dershowitz romanticizes the term:

"To the perpetrator ofchutzpah, it means boldness, assertiveness, a willingness to demand what is due, to defy tradition, to challenge authority, to raise eyebrows. To the victim ofchutzpah, it means unmitigated gall, nerve, uppityness, arrogance, hypocritical demanding. It is truly in the eye of the beholder." [DERSHOWITZ, p. 18]

Jacob Neusner sees the root of the Jewish self-compulsion with the concept of their collective superiority to be rooted in its psychoanalytic opposite:

"Being Jewish is being different. Being Jewish is not as good as being gentile. The father, toward whom guilt is already present, is Jewish and [has a] child. The normal guilt of the earliest school years may thus turn into hatred of the father -- or it may produce hatred of the self as a surrogate for hatred of the father." [NEUSNER, p. 56]

Jewish hatred is more familiarly redirected by Michael Lerner:

"Hostility towards non-Jews has evolved into a distinct culture of anti-goyism.. [and] it may be as prevalent among American Jewish liberals as among Israeli right-wingers ... It's no secret that Jews disparage non-Jews behind their backs. Some Jews brag about tricking them in business, others shun them socially." [LERNER, Goyim, p. 430]

"Chauvinism, or rabid nationalism," wrote Clement Greenberg, in an article entitled Self-Hatred and Jewish Chauvinism, "history tells us, is a means usually of compensating for a sense of collective failure ... It is with its first taste of success that a people musters up the nerve to begin actively compensating for its sense of inferiority -- usually by arrogance and self-praise." [GREENBERG, p. 427-428] "All the big talk current now too of 'Jewish pride' and 'proud Jews,'" argued Israeli scholar Boas Evron in 1995, "... is the pathetic expression of a desperate feeling that there is nothing to be proud of." [EVRON, p. 114]

In addressing Jewish elitism, Kenneth Clark notes in a Jewish periodical that

"Hypersensitivity about Jewishness among Jews may take many forms, including the constant concern with racial and religious problem, a seemingly compulsive need to discuss the problems and hardships of the Jewish people even in situations in which these are not relevant; and the tendency to relate almost any social problem or event to the problems of Jews. Another manifestation of protective hypersensitivity seems to be a tendency among some Jews to perpetuate the assumption of the superiority of the Jewish people and to explain the persecutions

of Jews throughout history as proof of resentment and envy which Gentiles have of Jewish superiority ... " [CLARK, p. 123]

In the 1920s, a Jewish Polish poet, Antoni Slominski, remarked that "I know very few Jews who are not convinced of the superiority of the Jewish race. For that reason this nation ... does not even neglect even the smallest of reproaches ... Those Jews who complain about the lack of tolerance of others are the least tolerant." [PIOTROWSKI, p. 39]

"The rise of Jewish nationalism since the turn of the century," wrote William Zukerman of the Jewish Newsletter in 1960, "[has swung the pendulum] violently from self-criticism to self-pride, self-righteousness, and a feeling of superiority. The Jewish press, pulpit, and Defense agencies are constantly engaged in telling the Jews how clever, talented and generous they are, how many famous doctors, scientists, authors, and musicians they produce, and how many hundreds of millions of dollars they contribute to help their brethren in Israel. This constant emphasis on Jewish accomplishment is reflected in a morbid chauvinism which is as unpleasant to others as it is harmful to Jews." [ZUKERMAN, p. 68]

In 1993, Jewish psychologist and author Judith Sills complained that Jews carry with them psychological "excess baggage," defined as preoccupations with "materialism and superiority." The Jewish Exponent noted that

"Materialism, she says, causes Jewish men to carry a tremendous amount of anger toward each other, and that makes it very hard for the single adults in our community to marry. Superiority, the flip side of inferiority, creates ill will among the Christian majority, Sills said, because it is expressed in an insulting way: 'I am special. I am valuable. I am better than you. I am a Jew and you are a goy. I am the 'Chosen People.' I am in this special tribe. You are a *shiksa*.'" [TEITELBAUM, L, p. 1x]

"The Jewish superiority complex," notes Jewish author James Yaffe, "may have an element of belligerence in it. It isn't enough for the Jew to feel superior to the gentile; he must let the gentile know it ... [YAFFE, J., 1968, p. 67] ... Sooner or later most Jews will confess -- diffidently, apologetically, defensively -- that they *do* think Jews are smarter than other people ... This pride has deep roots in Jewish tradition." [YAFFE, J. 1968, p. 221] Ever strong in 1994, Benjamin Ginsberg notes that "Jews often, secretly or not so secretly, conceive themselves to be morally and intellectually superior to their neighbors ... a Yiddish synonym for dullard or dope is "*goyischer kopf*," that is, someone who thinks like a non-Jew." [GINSBERG, p. 8]

"New York mayor Ed Koch," once remarked Jewish TV talk show host Larry (Zieger) King, "represents a lot of things I don't like about Jews. An incredible ego. Every sentence begins with 'I' ... That brashness." [SIMONS, p. 138] Various Jews in very public lights fit this genre. New York Democratic Congressman, and well-known feminist, Bella Abzug, for example, had a reputation for being "rude and obnoxious."

Barry Gray (born Bernard Yaroslaw) at radio station WMCA in New York City, was "brash, abrasive [and] opinionated. [He] was the talk-show titan listeners love to hate, [and] is still going [in 1973] after more than a quarter of a century at the mike." [BLACKWELL, E., 1973, p. 2, 208]

"A Jew," declares old Yiddish folklore,

"is composed of twenty-eight per cent fear, two per cent sugar, and seventy per cent nerve." [KUMOVE, S., 1985, p. 44]

"Offer a Jew a ride and he throws you out of your own wagon."  
[KUMOVE, S., 1985, p. 45]

"Regardless of what Jews do for a living," says Gerald Krefetz, "and they seem to do everything from running the largest chemical company in the United States to operating three out of four retail establishments in New York City, they seem to think that their activities are prestigious. This pride is perhaps deceptive but it ... serves Jews well. By thinking highly of themselves, they stretch their abilities and embellish their conceits. Humility is not a Jewish trait." [KREFETZ, p. 18]

Jewish scholar Stephen Whitfield uses the following joke from Jewish circles to, as he says, "demonstrate the meaning of Jewish identity in America":

"Three converts to Episcopalianism are drinking together in their ritzy country club, when they begin explaining the reasons for their switch from Judaism.

'I converted out of love,' the first one said. Seeing the dubious looks on his friends' faces, he added, 'Not for Christianity but for a Christian girl. As you know, my wife insisted that I convert.'

'And I converted in order to succeed in law,' the second one said. 'I would never have been appointed a federal judge if I hadn't become an Episcopalian.'

'I converted because I think the teachings of Christianity are superior to those of Judaism,' the third one added.

'Whom are you trying to kid?' the first man answered with considerable heat, 'What do you take us for -- a couple of *goyim*?'"  
[WHITFIELD, American, p. 73]

Ultimately, it is really not difficult to understand where the normative Jewish sense (even secularly) of a collective elite self comes from. As the Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion notes:

"The frequent biblical emphasis on the election of Israel led to the idea, also found in later rabbinical literature, that there was a moral or even racial excellence inherent in the Jewish people as such, and references to the superiority of those what are 'of the seed of Abraham our Father' abound. Inevitably the doctrine of election also led to an ethnocentric view of world history."

[WERBLOWSKY, p. 158]