REMAKING OF JEWISH SOCIALITY IN CONTEMPORARY POLAND:

HAUNTING LEGACIES, GLOBAL CONNECTIONS.

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
in the Faculty of Humanities.

2013

JAN LORENZ

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

List of contents

Word count: 87 797

Abstract

The University of Manchester
Jan Lorenz
PhD in Social Anthropology with Visual Media
"Remaking Jewish sociality in contemporary Poland: haunting legacies, global connections."
2013

The Holocaust and post-war anti-Semitism-propelled migration changed the face of Poland, a country that for centuries has been the heartland of the Jewish diaspora. Remnants of the Polish Jewry that did not emigrate, regardless of whether they considered themselves Poles, Poles of Jewish descent or Polish Jews, often felt fearful about speaking of their ancestry, let alone acting upon it. Jewish organizations and social life did not disappear, but religious congregations in particular gradually diminished in number and activity. Post-socialist Poland has become an arena of profound transformation of Jewish communal life, fostered by stakeholders with distinct agendas and resources: empowered and politically emancipated Jewish Religious Communities, now-marginalized secular organizations of the communist era, a nascent generation of Polish Jewish activists and volunteers, and transnational Jewish non-governmental organizations.

My thesis explores Polish Jewish communal life and experiences of being and becoming Jewish. It is a study after the 'revival', but revealing its looming presence in unsolved predicaments over a Jewish future, global structural dependencies, and temporal dynamics of programs of socialization. I argue that the post-socialist reality not only witnessed the coming of a new Polish Jewish generation, but also the emergence of a new sociality, shaped in two decades of continuous friction between ontologies, agendas and hopes originating in different locations within, and on different scales of, the Polish Jewish contemporaneity. This new Polish Jewish reality invites us to rethink the impact of globalization on the Jewish diaspora in Eastern Europe, and also offers a new perspective on the role of global NGOs in the contemporary world.

Declaration

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Copyright Statement

i.
The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the "Copyright") and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii.
Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made **only** in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii.
The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trade marks and other intellectual property (the "Intellectual Property") and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables ("Reproductions"), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv.
Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=487), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library's regulations (see http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library/aboutus/regulations) and in The University's policy on Presentation of Theses

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the affiliates of the Wrocław branch of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland and the Wrocław Jewish Club *Sof haDerech*, as well as numerous people involved in Polish Jewish social life who allowed me to become part of their lives for more than a year, shared with me their stories and provided me with research materials, advice and generous support. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to the late chairman of the Wrocław Jewish congregation, Mr Józef Kożuch, as well as other leaders of Jewish organizations in Poland and abroad, including Baruch and Dorota Ciesielsy of the Ronald Lauder Foundation in Poland, Michael Freund of the Shavei Israel and Kamila Sokołowska of the Polish division of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. I am most grateful to Rabbi Yitzchak Rapoport, who at the time of my research was the Rabbi of Wrocław and Silesia, and to Rabbi Boas Pash who during my fieldwork was the Rabbi of Kraków. I am equally grateful to the Shavei Israel and its chairman, Michael Freund, for generously allowing me to participate in the summer seminar in Israel for the purpose of my study.

This thesis would have never been possible without the support of my academic supervisors, Prof. Sharon Macdonald and Dr Angela Torresan and I owe them an immense debt of gratitude. I wish to thank the lecturers and fellow students I met during five years at the Social Anthropology department of the University of Manchester and the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology – some of whom are no longer here. Intellectual life at the department and the conversations I had shaped not only my research, but also me as a person and a scholar.

My thanks go in particular to Prof. Jeanette Edwards, Prof. Nina Glick Schiller, Prof. Paul Henley, Prof. Richard Werbner, Dr Jonathan Mair and Dr Madeleine Reeves for their support and advice. Very special words of gratitude go to Dr Ian Fairweather and Dr Petra Tjitske Kalshoven with whom I worked as a teaching assistant for several years and to my undergraduate students for making my time at the university so personally and professionally rewarding. I also wish to thank Dr Ewa Ochman from the department of Russian and Eastern European Studies at the University of Manchester for her advice and encouragement in critical reflection on the entanglements of Polish Jewish history. Dr Itsushi Kawase from the

Chapter 1

Introduction

That is why we send our students home each Friday with freshly baked challahs. With the blessings our teachers have taught them, they cross the vast gray cities of Warsaw and Minsk, the cobbled alleys of Prague and Vienna, the great boulevards of Budapest and Bucharest. In hundreds of homes that have not heard such prayers for generations, Judaism is returning over a loaf of bread, a pair of candles, a child's voice.

A fragment of Ronald S. Lauder Foundation mission statement (2013)

A meeting

On a cold November morning in 2009 we gathered in front of a glass and plastic Helios multiplex cinema in the centre of still sleepy Wrocław, a large city in South-West Poland. The spot was not far from the White Stork Synagogue and a compound building surrounding it, where the Jewish Club *Sof haDerech* used to hold its meetings and the local Jewish congregation had its offices and rabbi's quarters. As I clumsily clambered out of a taxi, and waved my hand, I could not help but notice a few faces, immediately apparent in a collectivity where everyone knows or at least recognizes each other. In a few hours we were going to arrive at the 'Hotel Boss', 'a large conference-training centre' located on the outskirts of Warsaw, Poland's capital.

There we would take part in a massive educational conference *Limud Keszet 2009*, a local franchise of a cyclical UK Jewish event that had gone international. The hired coach finally arrived and looked as if it could easily fit a group twice the size of our frozen lot. The Wrocław delegates were to be dwarfed by the crowds coming from Kraków and Warsaw.

I was looking at a fraction of *społeczność żydowska* – 'Jewish community'. Unless specified, the term in the Wrocław Jewish vernacular could denote a few different collectivities. On most occasions Wrocław's *społeczność żydowska* referred to members and informal affiliates of the local Jewish organizations or those Wrocławians who self-identified and were recognized as Jewish, regardless of their institutional status. That 'community' was in turn a part of *dolnośląska społeczność żydowska* that is the 'Lower Silesian Jewish community', encompassing the whole region. In the same manner, one could also speak of 'communities' in other cities or regions of Poland or, indeed, the world over. The notion of *społeczność żydowska* is frequently used and refers to the Polish Jewish community as a whole. This popular eponym and a quotidian category symbolically bracketed Polish Jews as a bounded entity - a way for people to think of themselves as constituting a distinct ethno-religious group. In that nation-scale sense, the notion of *społeczność żydowska* relates to *mniejszość żydowska* 'Jewish minority', a legal term used by the Polish state to politically delineate the Jewish citizens of Poland. In practice, that body politic stubbornly escapes any grounding and bounding.

Nobody knows how many Jews live in Poland or, rather, that number depends on who is counting and for what purpose (cf. Datner and Melchior, 1997), whether it is GUS statisticians, right-wing nationalists or ethno religious entrepreneurs. Statistically, in the last decade, the number of 'Jews' in Poland 'rose' from roughly 1000 to 8000 people, based on comparison between 2001 and 2011 censuses (G.U.S, 2002; G.U.S., 2013). In itself, this could be simply a consequence of a changed methodology, acknowledging that most Jewish people in Poland also identify as Polish. The 2011 census, for the first time, allowed respondents to claim belonging to more than one *narodowość*, which in Polish stands for both nationality and ethnicity. The disparate result may also indicate a larger number of respondents willing to admit Jewish belonging in 2011. Notably, in the last censuses, two thousand people declared 'Jewish' to be their only 'national' self-identification, which further supports the latter interpretation without disproving the former. The

number of Poles of Jewish descent, affiliation aside, is equally debatable. The relatively high estimate of Vera Muller-Paisner (2002), of roughly 40 000, seems plausible considering my own observations in micro-scale, as long as we count in everyone with Jewish parents or grandparents, therefore eligible for membership of Poland's Jewish religious congregations.[1] Finally, according to the obsessive fantasies of Polish radical nationalists, Poland has several million Jews, posing as Poles.[2] All this already provokes questions about the meaning of Jewishness in contemporary Poland and a methodology for its anthropological research.

As much as the notion of Wrocław's *społecznść żydowska* denoted an abstract collectivity, not necessarily engaged in local Jewish social and religious life, the majority of people at the bus stop were formally or informally affiliated with the former *Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska we Wrocławiu* (GWŻ)*,* 'The Jewish Religious Community in Wrocław' . This institution was dismantled as an independent political body in 2006 and formally turned into the Wrocław branch of *Związek Gmin Wyznaniowych Żydowskich w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (ZGWŻ)*,* 'The Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland'. Local Jews still refer to the place as simply *gmina*, which in that context can be translated as either a 'community' or a 'congregation'. *Gmina* is the exact term that I am going to use to address the main site of my fieldwork to avoid terminological confusion or worse the reduction of this lived space to its changing legal status. First, *gmina* is a reference to a no longer extant (at least for the time being) legal body of the abovementioned GWŻ. Second, in quotidian communication *gmina* denotes the community of formal members of the Wrocław branch of ZGWŻ. Third, *gmina* refers to a distinct location, carved out of

---

[1] To give an example – for every person who decides to engage in Jewish life there are usually several family members, colleagues, acquaintances of Jewish descent, who never appear in any statistics and hardly make their ancestry socially meaningful, whether or not it is personally relevant. Even in my fieldwork, focused on institutionalized forms of social participation, I accidentally came across a good number of Polish individuals in the most bizarre of settings – including the academic - who revealed their family connection to Jewish people only after learning about my research and, at times, my own incredibly mixed ancestry. Many of these individuals would be able to make a claim to Jewish ethnicity and on that basis become members of Poland's Jewish organizations, In Wrocław, and undoubtedly in other agglomerations, one can find Jewish families neither convert nor neophyte, completely off from the institutional grid, let alone statistical research or estimates. I elaborate more on the subject in chapter 4.

[2] See e.g. the archive of the infamous polonica.net website (Polonica.net, 1996) or poll on the Polish Nationalist Party website, where most visitors opted for a 12 million estimate (Polskapartianarodowa.org, 2013). These are marginal and extreme examples of such 'counts', but they illustrate how ridiculous the proportion of such mythical presence can become. The list of 'Jews' among Polish politicians and celebrities has been circulating around the Polish internet for quite some time and with surprising persistence. See e.g. Tokarska-Bakir (2008) for more on the issue.

the urban landscape by its significance to the people who visit it because they identify as Jewish or feel some sort of affinity to the Jewish people. The *gmina* was embedded in the materiality of its physical location: the synagogue, the courtyard and the surrounding complex of buildings. It is a place in the traditional sense of being endowed with social meaning (Carter et al., 1993), affect (Tuan, 1977) and a place understood as 'a bundle of trajectories' (Massey, 2005): a site of intensification of human encounters and relations. Undeniably, it is a social space of interactions and practices predicated by a shared sense of belonging, where the main fieldwork was based.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

The roughly two dozen people waiting with me for the bus to the Jewish 'conference' represented three generations of people of Jewish affiliation, some calling themselves Polish Jews, and others simply acknowledging in name or acts the significance of that affinity. I was particularly happy to see the elderly Abram daring enough to take the strain of the journey and intense sociality at its destination. Already over ninety, he unquestionably represented the dwindling group of Polish Jews born before the war. His trademark smile and charming elegance, of a pre-war Cracovian gentleman, masked the unspeakable suffering and hardship that had marked his life, while hinting at inner strength and empathy. He helped me understand the stark contrasts, the vibrancy and precariousness of pre-war life that was embedded in the memories of so many of his peers. Nonetheless, unintentionally, he also conditioned me to be wary about contemporary categorizations, discourses of Jewishness and clichés of popular mythologies of pre-war Jewish life in Poland. Another elderly gentleman, Wiktor, mostly bedridden, brought to my attention the salience of boundaries and connectedness which used to define a part of the Jewish experience in Poland. He had barely known any other language than his *mamaloshen*, Yiddish mother tongue, when he fled his *shtetl* to almost miraculously save himself from the advancing German armies. [3] Abram and Wiktor, together with many others, helped to make more tangible my literature-

---

[3] Shtetl (in Yiddish) was a small town with predominantly Jewish population (see e.g. Polonsky, 2004).

derived understanding of the predicaments and fears of the post-war period. For them, I was never just an anthropologist and I do not suppose they cared at all about that academic babble I was so concerned with. For them, I was not 'of them' and yet I was marked too, in part an offspring of somebody they all knew and respected; as for me, they were a part of some forgotten family history, an embodied reminder of a Jewish grandfather I had never really fully got to know as a child. The living 'grandpas' *dziadki*, in the vernacular of the young, were mostly over ninety years old. Those few were the last to have prayed in the pre-war synagogues and to have experienced the actuality of the mythologized *Yiddishkeit*. They were the vestiges of the original dwellers of that cultural and social landscape, that now mostly existed, like the images of a shadow play, in the repertoire of global imaginaries, nostalgias and what Marianne Hirsh calls the culturally mediated post-memories of succeeding Jewish generations (2012). Abram, Wiktor, and other Methuselahs of the congregation were deemed 'the first generation', those who embodied the integrity and indisputable 'authenticity' of the old world and survived its end.

The 'generation' is a category of practice in the Polish Jewish vernacular, but boundaries of subsequent 'generations' and the criteria of ascription are anything but defined and unquestioned. In quotidian conversations generations are rarely invoked and when they are, it is primarily in reference to the Holocaust, not unlike in the discourse throughout the Jewish diaspora and in Israel. The 'first generation', who rarely addressed itself as such, are those who lived through and survived the Holocaust; the second, their children; and the third, their grandchildren. The researchers who studied contemporary Polish Jewry adopted the notion of generations and turned them into clear-cut typologies. In these scholarly renderings, the first generation is generally defined by the Holocaust (whether or not they experienced it directly), the second generation by the anti-Jewish purge of 1968 and the 'third', the 'young', the '1989' generation, are defined by Poland's new sociopolitical circumstances that followed the 1989 shift and the loosely defined 'revival' (e.g. Irwin-Zarecka, 1989; Rosenson, 1996; Datner and Melchior, 1997; Gudonis, 2001a; Gudonis, 2001b; Reszke, 2007; Cukras-Stelągowska, 2008). To a considerable degree such categorizations became perpetuated as a consequence of the fact that subsequent works borrowed the notion of 'generational subgroups' (1996, p.67) to quote Claire Rosenson, from their predecessors. In none of those studies was the notion of 'generation' given proper theoretical grounding. Implicitly,

however, they conform with the classic analytical perspective of Karl Mannheim (1952), who argued that sociological understanding of generations should venture beyond chronological brackets established by age or frameworks of individual life experiences. Instead, he advocated shifting scholarly attention to the socially shared and formative experiences of people growing up in given political and social context (see also Pilcher, 1994). Having said that, my analysis will inevitably illustrate that such neat categorizations, while epistemologically attractive, have to be approached with caution. A clear-cut typology of generations in the Polish Jewish case is flawed in several respects. Firstly, it misses out on the intra-generational variability of Polish Jewry. Another problem is an underestimation of inter-generational correspondences and continuities due to conceptualization of historical experiences as exclusive and uniformly defining for specific age-cohorts.

Admittedly, I distinguish between the 'first', the 'second' and the 'third' generation, fully aware of the tentative character of such censures. I will speak of generations in a descriptive more than an analytical sense, following closely the ambiguous categories of practice in the Wrocław Jewish community. The 'third generation' is discerned here analytically, not so much in terms of age, but by their full-fledged experience of Jewish sociality emergent in the 'revival' at every stage of their engagements with Jewish institutions and communal programmes.

Descendants

I excused my way out of the pre-departure chit-chat to shake Tadeusz's hand. He was born just before the war, but not nearly early enough to belong to the *time before*. Yet, he was, or always claimed to be, somebody who, 'unlike so many others' was never afraid to admit that he was Jewish. When faced with anti-Semitism, he always fought back. He never allowed anyone to disrespect or humiliate him; his persona of a 'strong Jew' with bravado and courage was more than an impression he was willing to give off, but a character trait confirmed by others I spoke to. In the harsh post-war years survival with such a headstrong attitude must have borne on Tadeusz's decision to join the local boxing club, *Gwardia*, and it certainly helped him defend himself on several occasions. Publicly acknowledging one's Jewish descent, whether or not identification ensured the feeling of belonging, could elicit an experience of a stark ethnic boundary and result in veiled mistreatment or unabashed

12

persecution - in school, factory or office, among colleagues and neighbours. It was a recurring theme in the many accounts I heard. His narrative was largely accentuated by posture and a scarred boxer's nose, although I have never brought myself to ask him about this physical mark. Others, however, could not or would not live in such constant confrontation, let alone endless sense of precariousness.

For those that did not emigrate, either in search of a better life or being pressurized or simply forced to leave, staying in Poland often meant under-communicating Jewish ancestry, 'blending in', or constructing the unambiguous 'identity' of a Pole without adjectives. For many, the contingency of Jewish ancestry did not elicit a need or desire to identify as Jewish. The Polish scholar Małgorzata Melchior, in her study of people born in the decade after the war, mentions people who 'would not deny their Jewish roots', yet for whom this identity does not elicit solidarities or influence life-choices, an 'empty' (Datner and Melchior, 1997, p. 78) or 'barren' identification (Melchior, 1990, pp. 170-3).'Barren' or 'empty' suggest their opposites, presumable fullness or appropriateness of identification – an opposition that I find more normative than analytical and which overlooks a range of subtle affinities which are neither verbalized nor possible to reduce to apparent life-choices or solidarities. Indeed, Melchior's own work clearly shows how dynamics and ambiguity of identifications do not contradict an ingrained sense of commonality and connectedness, often despite one's own desire (2004).

Two days later, as the coach was rattling back to Wrocław, Maria, a middle-aged teacher, told me a story about her childhood. Her mother used to light Sabbath candles every Friday evening, silently and consistently over the years, accentuating her belonging. All of this happened despite the fact that the stigmatized word 'Jew' was never uttered in her family home, at least at that time. It was the most subtle of performances of being and belonging. When Maria's mother eventually began speaking about the forbidden topic, her face always flushed – I was left to wonder whether that was from excitement, anxiety or, more likely, a combination of both. This example alone invites us to be wary about notions of assimilation. On that gloomy autumn day, Maria's reminiscences made me think of the disparity between the articulation of belonging and the depth of connectedness, and ponder on the subtle persistence of embodied sentiments and equally subtle practices, almost intangible tokens of recognition among those who fell 'silent'.

***

As we continued waiting for the bus, most of my attention focused on a small group of individuals, mostly in their twenties. It is primarily them who drew me to the trip, not only for the unquestioned enjoyment of their company. It was particularly through their lives and experiences that I hoped to see and understand contemporary Jewish communal life, not because they were 'new Jews' essentially distinct from their parents and grandparents, as is often misunderstood, but because their socialization into Jewishness happened entirely in the nascent world of the 'revival'. They have become part of *społeczność żydowska* and the *gmina* in the post-socialist period, after the institutional re-emergence of Jewish religious, student and youth organizations. They have experienced the proliferation of translocal Jewish 'identity-building' summer camps, tours, leadership training programmes and religious seminars in Poland and abroad. The Wrocław congregation of their experience was defined by contentious ontologies of Jewish relatedness and heritage brought in by foreign rabbis and organizations, which confronted local precepts and sentiments. Some of my core group of research participants I would see regularly, dropping in for lunch at the kosher canteen, visiting the Jewish Club or coming to the Shabbat service. Others I would meet only during major celebrations of Jewish holidays, or in fact I would meet and get to know better in the course of my research project, rather than from the fact of engaging the same space or practices. Many, like Marzena, came and went away, falling stars blazing quickly in the experience of Jewish sociality, only to return to their everyday lives, outside the milieu of Jewish institutions. Sometimes in the process, they made their parents show up and rekindle, if just for a moment, their presence and connection. That morning I met them all together, and for the weekend I would take part with them in a communal life of different scale, intensity, and, as I would find out, different form and substance.

The remaking of sociality

The preceding ethnographic vignette introduced different generations of people involved with the Wrocław *gmina* and the context of Jewish experiences, affects and self-understandings in Poland – historical and contemporary. That

particular dimension of Polish Jewish lived realities is not specific to the post-socialist period. The specificity of the last two decades lies elsewhere: first, in the surge of grassroots activism of 'revival', which changed Jewish congregations and made them more accessible to converts and people from intermarried families; second, due to the impact of global non-governmental organizations and their programmes of support and transformation of Jewish diasporic communities in Eastern Europe. The synergy of these three factors, one historically sedimented and two nascent in the post-socialist period, in the remaking of Poland's Jewish sociality is going to be the main focus of my thesis. My main objective will be to explore realities of being and becoming Jewish in contemporary Poland and the forms of Jewish social life emergent in the globalized transformation of the last two decades. I am not going to argue that Polish Jews remain in the state of 'revival'. Then again, the vestiges of that transformation - its projects and visions - remain and the predicaments that had driven them are far from gone. Furthermore, as I am going to demonstrate, the 'revival' has, to a certain extent, become an integral element of sociality at the Wrocław Jewish congregation. Until now, academic research on post-socialist Polish Jewry has been concerned almost exclusively with questions of identity explored through narrative interviews (e.g. Rosenson, 1996; Cukras-Stelągowska, 2003; Gudonis, 2003; Reszke, 2007). I am going to engage with the claims that this scholarship has made, but my work is distinguished by the fact that it is the first to introduce an anthropological perspective to the topic and to look at Polish Jewish social life. Equally importantly, in setting the ground for the analysis of globalized Polish Jewish contemporaneity, my work will forge a long due connection between the haunting imaginaries of Jewish otherness in Poland and Polish Jewish subjectivities and strategies of identification. By acknowledging the global connections and projects which have shaped the remaking of Jewish sociality in Poland, my work opens up a completely new perspective on the 'Jewish revival' in Poland and contributes to the very modest reflection on that topic in contemporary research on Eastern Europe. My thesis will not only reveal a completely unacknowledged dimension of post-socialist transformation in the region, but also invite the reader to considerably rethink the role of global NGOs in the Jewish diaspora and in the contemporary landscape of globalization.

The choice of sociality as the main idiom of my analytical engagement with contemporary Jewish life in Poland is predicated by several factors: some of a

general theoretical nature, others driven by the specific object of my inquiry. Sociality has been invoked across a range of disciplines, from primatology (e.g. Freeland, 1976; McComb and Semple, 2005; Sussman et al., 2005), through psychology (e.g. Fiske, 1992) to sociology (e.g. Maffesoli, 1989; Lyon, 1997; Witz, 2000; Ray, 2007). In anthropological reflection the notion has been explored as the universal capacity of human beings to engage in social interactions and create social bonds (e.g. Ingold, 1991; Henrich et al., 2004; Enfield and Levinson, 2006), and also in the plural sense: as different 'socialities' or specific manifestations of sociality in various life-worlds and personal circumstances (e.g. Turner, 1995; Overing and Passes, 2002; Chau, 2005; Gammeltoft, 2007; Santos-Granero, 2007; Hess, 2009; Ochs and Solomon, 2010).

In a recent and persuasive attempt to grasp these different strains of thought and reformulate them into a theoretical proposition, Henrietta Moore and Nicolas Long define sociality as a 'dynamic and interactive relational matrix through which human beings come to know the world they live in and find their purpose and meaning in it'(2013, p.2). Within that matrix, they further argue 'subjects are constantly interacting in a ways that are co-productive, and continually plastic and malleable' (ibid., p.4). Framing social relations and interaction as process rather than product is undoubtedly the prime benefit of adopting the notion of sociality to speak of a Polish Jewish contemporaneity. The above ethnographic vignette was meant not only to introduce some of the protagonists of my thesis, but also to render the problems inherent in speaking of my research participants in terms of a bounded and defined group. The challenge lies in finding analytical terms which encompass the collectivity of people with Jewish affiliation who cross the perimeter of the Wrocław *gmina* and translocal spaces like camps and seminars, without losing sight of the context of the families in which they have been raised, those of their friends and acquaintances who are always-potentially Jewish, and the converts suspended on the borderlands of affiliation. The main problem encountered by earlier attempts to engage with Polish Jewish 'revival' was in part generated by their own good-spirited efforts to mould the encountered lived realities to static and bounded conceptual frameworks which were then meticulously fragmented in futile attempts to encompass even some aspects of the diversity of lived realities, affinities and experiences – not to mention the temporal and situational dynamics of Jewish affiliation.

My analysis of the bewildering manifestations of globalized remaking of Jewish sociality in Poland encompasses not only the more apparent subthemes of 'the social', such as the negotiation of belonging and cultural practices at the *gmina*. Such a narrow account would neither explicate forms of contemporary Polish Jewish sociality, nor allow the reader to understand its foundations, intensities and implications for experiences of being and becoming Jewish. Here my point resonates with Larry Ray's understanding of sociality as 'the tacit and explicit knowledge and meanings that underpin social life and provide a scaffold for apparently self-determining processes of money, the market and other systemic media' (2007, p. 202). In my understanding, the sociality as particular modalities of interaction and relationality cannot be dissociated from understandings (and affects) which inform what is deemed possible, desirable or inappropriate in the practice of everyday life. I will therefore incorporate in my reflection questions of affect and cultural imagination as well as reflection on spaces and temporalities of Polish Jewish social experiences. While sociality is always dynamic, it does not invalidate speaking of socialization as a particular process of acquiring knowledge, recognition, and linguistic skills, which allows human beings to engage in sociality, to become recognized as members of a given collectivity, potentially or actually. Here I will speak of Jewish socialization as the enabling element of Jewish sociality fostering self-identification as Jewish and providing knowledge and social skills to interact with others on the basis of that identification.

My concern here is less with the conceptual limits of sociality as with its remaking. Sociality, then, is used here as a heuristic device to frame an insight into shifting topology - a configuration and interrelation of different conditions and processes which create in turn potentialities of collective Jewish experiences – a topology of being and becoming Jewish in an institutionally created social environment. I follow here Larry Ray's (2007) argument that the multiplicity of global processes, which taken together constitute the phenomenon of globalization, produce noteworthy new forms of sociality. In the Polish Jewish case this emergent sociality is not so much global, as produced at the point of tangency between the global and the local. In any case, however, the contemporary lived realties of being and becoming Jewish in Poland were enabled and shaped by the transformation embedded in the global context.

***

In recent years, the contemporary Polish Jewish phenomenon drawing most scholarly attention has been the 'Jewish cultural renaissance' or 'revival': a surge of popular interest in Poland's Jewish cultural heritage, of which the most apparent example are Jewish culture festivals and concerts in large Polish cities, klezmer musicians, Jewish handicraft and a thriving tourist industry (e.g. Cała et al., 2006; Dodziuk, 2010; Gruber, 2002; Lehrer, 2003; Lehrer, 2007; Ray, 2010; Saxonberg and Waligórska, 2006; Waligórska, 2005). Studies on the topic did not discuss Poland's Jewish minority organizations like Jewish Religious Communities or TSKŻ and their members either in post-war or contemporary Poland. Consequently, this body of scholarship does not address most of the topics described and analysed in my thesis. This is understandable, as the appropriation and (re)production of Jewish music and craft by non-Jewish Poles is a mostly separate phenomenon from the globalized transformation of Jewish sociality, religiosity, and communal institutions after the political and economic shift of 1989, which I am concerned with here.

As has been argued, the Jewish culture festivals are primarily a space where non-Jewish Polish musicians and audiences, as well as foreign tourists, engage with Poland's Jewish cultural heritage (Gruber, 2002; Waligórska, 2005). Implications of these cultural encounters have mostly been explored with the focus on the people professionally involved in the 'cultural renaissance', such as musicians, tour guides and shopkeepers (Waligórska, 2005; Lehrer, 2007). As Erica Lehrer observes, some Poles engaged in the Jewish tourism and cultural industry and immersed in Jewish heritage become 'Jewish-identified', that is, they identify with Jews rather than as Jews, although, as she convincingly argues, the boundary between these forms of self-identification can become ambiguous (Lehrer, 2007). As will become apparent in the following chapters of my thesis, the background and forms of Jewish affiliation among the majority of my research participants are different. Their Jewish becomings are based on ethnic ancestry, often partial, or on religious conversion. For the 'third generation', the engagement with the *gmina* and translocal collectivity of people coming to Jewish summer camps, seminars and conferences is usually initiated by transnational educational programs or organized heritage tours to Israel, which I will analyse in detail. As a rule, the 'cultural renaissance' did not play a significant role in drawing new members to the *gmina*.

The methodology of my research, as I will explain in the next chapter, involved following my research participants in their social activities related to Jewish affiliation. For the same reason I was interested in their potential participation in music concerts, educational courses and similar endeavours that would not be organized exclusively or specifically for *gmina* affiliates. Whenever possible, I attended the same cultural events as my research participants did, as well as those that they mentioned to have experienced in the past. Moreover, the thesis, which is the result of my fieldwork in Poland and abroad, out of constraints of space is a selection of the most important and interrelated aspects of Jewish sociality in Wrocław between August 2009 and September 2010. The questions and topics I pursued in my research encompassed more than could be incorporated here. Consequently, I chose those aspects of Jewish life in Wrocław which from the perspective of my participant observation and based on the interviews I conducted were the most significant to represent the sociality at the *gmina*, experiences of being and becoming Jewish and the complex transformation the *gmina* has undergone since the political shift of 1989. The decision not to include a separate chapter dedicated to 'cultural renaissance' was difficult, but several factors justified it. The topic in itself has been extensively addressed in anthropological studies of Jewish cultural heritage in Poland – unlike the Jewish social and religious life after the war and in contemporary Poland, of which this is the first ethnography ever written. Other reasons are directly related to my research findings.

Wrocław has a small-scale Jewish 'cultural renaissance' of its own, with monthly Havdalah concerts, the Simcha Festival of Jewish Culture, and smaller cultural events organized irregularly throughout the year.[4] At the time of my fieldwork, these events were mostly under the auspices of the Pro Arte Foundation and the Bente Kahan Foundation, independent institutions cooperating with the Wrocław branch of the ZGWŻ. Some of my research participants attended festivals and concerts of Jewish music, others organized their community-oriented activities on the margins of festivals, and a few were professionally involved alongside mostly non-Jewish Poles in the production and popularization of Jewish music, languages, craft or literature. Few among the members of the Wrocław *gmina* were actively involved in such pursuits; an example might be Karolina Szykierska, one of the

---

[4] Havdalah (Heb. separation): ritual ending of Shabbat.

creators and a long-time director of the Simcha festival and Jerzy Kichler, who started working as a tour guide in the community in recent years, after a long political career in ZGWŻ.[5] The *gmina* as an institution ran a 'Jewish Information Centre', which sold books on Jewish topics and offered tours of the White Stork synagogue. In the course of my research, however, I realized that there were few points of suture between the lived realities of being Jewish in Wrocław and the klezmer music scene, shops selling Jewish memorabilia and souvenirs, and guided tours of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues.

Participating in the public events of 'cultural renaissance' was neither a common nor an expected form of cultural practice among those involved with the *gmina*. The Jewish 'culture' that was significant and formative were cultural activities at dedicated Jewish transnational events, practices of Judaism, film-making in the Jewish Club or going together to a cinema, for example to see *Serious Man,* a bitter comedy by Ethan and Joel Coen, whose intricate Jewish symbolism was laughed about and discussed for days after the screening. Individually, someone may like klezmer music or the Jewish American hip-hop singer Matisyahu, but such preferences were by no means common or significant in the gradual involvement in local and translocal Jewish sociality at the time of my fieldwork. Most of my research participants never or seldom participated in the events of Jewish 'cultural renaissance', let alone bought wooden figurines of 'Jews' peddled in the Kraków district of Kazimierz, which I will, as a matter of fact, consider in my discussion of the circumstances of growing up Jewish in Poland.

Arguably, a similar ethnography done, for example, on the Jewish Religious Community in Kraków or the progressive congregation, Beit Kraków, could possibly render a different outcome, in which the 'cultural renaissance' would impact Jewish communal life to a greater extent.[6] It is equally possible that the situation in Wrocław will change to the extent that non-Jewish Poles, driven by the interest in 'Jewish

---

[5] Karolina Szykierska told me that she had organized the festival also in the hope that it would attract new members to the gmina. However, with a single exception, it was not the festival that brought my research participants to the institution or initiated their contact with Jewish social life, as I will explain later on.

[6] I should note that approximately one third of my young research participants had come to Wrocław from other Polish cities, including Kraków or Warsaw, or moved to these locations before, during or after my fieldwork. Often they had been or have become active in Jewish communal life away from Wrocław. Consequently, the applicability of my observations concerning the impact of the 'cultural renaissance' may also be wider than I can assume here.

culture' and unaffiliated with Jewish organizations or informal social circles, will begin to attend Jewish communal events at the *gmina* in notable numbers. It is also possible that the performances, exhibitions and cultural endeavours aimed at the wide public will have more relevance for the members of the *gmina*.

The relationship between resilient anti-Semitism, lived experiences of Polish Jews and the spaces, in a social and physical sense, of fascination with Jewish cultural heritage is still to be explored, and I admit my inability to address it to the full extent here; furthermore, for the reasons stated above, it is not my primary intention. At the same time, much of my discussion of the 'haunting' presence of Jewishness in Poland may significantly contribute to the understanding of why prejudice against Jews can coexist with fascination with their cultural heritage. Among the research on the 'cultural renaissance', Erica Lehrer's work touches on issues of self-identity and I will refer to it in my discussion of non-Jewish newcomers to the *gmina* and their motivations in the chapters that follow.

Below, I will discuss relevant literature and elaborate on my arguments and general theoretical directions. First, I am going to introduce the historical background of the 'revival' that produced the institutional framework for Jewish communal sociality. Second, I will discuss research on the global dimension of the post-socialist transformation of Jewish life in Poland. Third, I am going to address the wider context of the contemporary Jewish diaspora and Israel and illustrate how the transnational projects realized in Eastern Europe and contemporary Polish Jewish sociality are embedded in global anxieties about Jewish survival as a distinct collectivity. Finally, after introducing the reader to the area of my study, I am going to briefly situate my work within the wider discussion on globalization. In the last part of this chapter, I will present a brief outline of my thesis.

'The revival' and Poland's Jewish institutions

Arguably, the first harbinger of a new momentum in Poland's Jewish communal life was the 1979 emergence of 'The Jewish Flying University' (*Żydowski Uniwersytet Latający*), a Warsaw-based group of second generation Polish intelligentsia from Jewish families, keen on learning more about what they felt was their heritage, in informal meetings. Back then, the group felt unwelcome and out-of-

place in the Yiddish-speaking environment of the Warsaw Nożyk Synagogue (Gebert, 2008). The political transformation saw the rise of a new cohort of Jewish political leaders, activists and spokespeople. Many of these second generation leaders were active in the 'Solidarity' movement and political opposition to the communist state. Jerzy Kichler, in his reminiscences of that era,[7] stressed the political aspect of the new movement within Poland's Jewish minority. Their efforts were set against a form of Jewish sociality that had been predominant during the communist era, symbolized by the organization known as *Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce* (TSKŻ), the 'Socio-cultural Association of Jews in Poland', established in 1950. Kichler and the second generation reformists perceived the Wrocław TSKŻ at that time to be secular, communist, ambivalent towards Zionism and unwilling to accept people from mixed marriages (cf. Gebert, 1994; Grabski August, 1997; Grabski and Berendt, 2003; Gebert, 2008; Krajewski, 2010).

In 1997, and subsequently in 2005, new legislation redefined formal relations between the 'Jewish national minority' and the state. Drawing on, although not explicitly, the pre-war concept of *Kehilla* – a Jewish communal body with autonomy in religious and welfare matters (Heller, 1994: pp. 160 - 8; Grabski August, 1997), the former religious congregations were re-established as Jewish Religious Communities. The umbrella organization of the ZGWŻ was appointed as the political representative of 'the Jewish minority' and a legal heir to the pre-war Jewish communities and their communal property (Grabski August, 1997). In terms of size and content, a largely abstract community of Polish Jews was legally re-compartmentalized within the new political reality, although the laws in question did not alleviate ambiguity of the community's status. In earlier legislation it was defined as 'religious' (Ustawa 1997), while in subsequent acts the 'Jewish minority' was referred to as 'national' (Ustawa 2005).

The nineteen-nineties were a time when the Wrocław GWŻ was politically reconstituted and reimagined as distinct from both the existing TSKŻ and, to some extent, the marginalized Congregation of Mosaic Faith from the previous political era; it was the latter that the GWŻ was meant to supersede. To some degree, the political profile of this process mirrored the paradigm shift in Poland's political transformation (cf. Rosenson, 2003). Political power shifted from the secular Jewish

---

[7] Personal communication.

organization - TSKŻ, formally supportive of the communist government, to another, formally religious, and dominated by prominent figures involved in the previous era's anti-communist political opposition. While Jewish congregations had existed in the post-war period, in 1997 the ZGWŻ became virtually the only legal collective representative of Polish Jews in the eyes of the state. It was also, as Jerzy Kichler, a former chairman of the ZGWŻ and the Wrocław GWŻ, recalled in our conversation, a period for the newly reformed Jewish organizations to seek political legitimacy and recognition on the global scene (cf. Rosenson, 2003; Krajewski, 2000). [8] In Claire Rosenson's (2003) rendering of Polish Jewish institutions, constructed on the basis of interviews with the elites of the ZGWŻ, the TSKŻ emerges almost as a communist-ridden living fossil, an aged antithesis of the 'Jewish revival'. To some extent, at least, this is a misunderstanding – not only because the relations between the formal political allegiance of TSKŻ and the actual political sympathies of its individual members are stereotyped and assumed rather than analytically verified. Between 1989 and 1992, even before the renewed congregation started to attract newcomers, it was a meeting place for a number of young adults in their twenties. Some of them later engaged in new programmes and social life at the Wrocław GWŻ and many have since emigrated to Israel.[9] Admittedly, however, apart from this episode, the TSKŻ did not attract individuals of the third generation, but in the last two decades continued to cater for its aging first and second generation members, organizing closed social and cultural events. During the time of my fieldwork, the TSKŻ was marginal to the social experiences of most of my younger research participants.

Gradually, the Wrocław *gmina* became not only a local centre of religious activities and welfare, but a focal point for a collective of people who identified as Jewish, wanted to engage in Jewish social life, or become Jewish by conversion. In Wrocław, the 'revival' has been more than a wish; it has rather been a tangible process of growing membership, proliferation of educational courses in Judaism and

---

[8] An example of that was the question of the reclamation of property seized by the communist government. The World Jewish Reclamation Organization, established ad hoc in 1989 by various global Jewish NGOs, at first did not consider Jews in Poland as party to the restitution negotiations the WJRO started with the Polish government. Eventually, such claim was recognized and a jointly managed organization Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage was established in 2000 to reclaim properties which were not under the territorial jurisdiction of local congregations of the ZGWŻ. (Krajewski, 2000)

[9] Personal conversations with their colleagues and acquaintances from that period. See also (Strom, 1990).

Hebrew, the establishment of the Jewish Sunday School for children and eventually Lauder Etz-Chaim School, whose graduates have not yet filled the ranks of the Jewish Club or the *gmina*, but whose presence nonetheless allows children – Jewish and, in the majority, non-Jewish, to get acquainted with Jewish cultural traditions and learn the basics of Hebrew. This surge in Jewish communal life, in and around the *gmina* was most apparent in the early nineties. For example, between 1993 and 1997, the *gmina*'s membership rose from 43 to 180 people. These early years already exemplify the synergy in the transformation of Polish Jewish institutions: early educational programmes were sponsored by the Lauder Foundation, condoning the agenda of religion-based 'revival' and the efforts of the above-mentioned Jerzy Kichler, and his local supporters and followers. The growing group of second generation individuals who flocked to the GWŻ soon took over its political leadership. Kichler was himself educated into Jewishness at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, thanks to the support of the Ronald Lauder Foundation.

One of distinguishing features of the re-constituted congregation was a slow influx of people in their teens and twenties, starting in the late eighties and surging at particular moments such as the establishment of the Jewish student house in 1999. Considering the small scale of the congregation, the presence of its new members gradually became more visible and significant, although the absolute majority of people from consecutive cohorts of newcomers vanished from the communal life a few years after joining in – a fact of far-reaching significance.

Global Jewish organizations

One of the most significant aspects of the last years of socialism and the early post-socialist period was the establishment of activities of global NGOs set out to support the rebuilding and transformation of Jewish organizations as well as social and religious life through political support, welfare but, most of all, the funding of institutions and programmes aimed at Jewish socialization, education and social integration. These global projects of support encompassed Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (e.g. Golbert, 2001; Hofman, 2006; Berman, 2009). Among the main organizations active in Poland, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) has the longest history of involvement. Before and after World War Two, JDC was extensively engaged in helping Holocaust survivors to kick-start

their new lives and communal organizations in Poland. The organization was expelled in 1949, then allowed to return in 1958, only to be expelled again in 1967 (Grabski 1997). During its second stay in Poland, the JDC funded and, in cooperation with TSKŻ, organized Jewish summer camps, which became crucial formative experiences for many of the second generation (Grabski, 1997; Wiszniewska, 2003). The organization arrived back in Poland in 1981, but it was not until the 1990s that it was able to establish full-fledged operations. At the Wrocław *gmina,* the impact of the JDC has been most visible in the establishment of the kosher canteen, extensive welfare support for the elderly as well as continuous funding and supervision of the *gmina* based Jewish Club (formerly the 'Youth Club') and the Jewish Sunday School in Wrocław. The summer and family camps organized or funded by the JDC in Poland and abroad have been important formative experiences for some of my participants, as was the voluntarism in JDC educational initiatives.

Another organization which had a crucial impact on the Jewish 'revival' in Poland and the region has been the Ronald Lauder Foundation. The foundation was established in 1987 by an American philanthropist Ronald J. Lauder, for the specific purpose of supporting the 'revival' of Jewish communal organizations, sociality and in particular, religious life in Central Eastern Europe (The Ronald Lauder Foundation, 2013). The Ronald Lauder Foundation has had a dramatic impact on the early trajectories of Jewish education and religiosity in Poland, supporting educational projects with a significant emphasis on Orthodox Judaism in every major congregation in Poland. The organization sponsored early religious camps from before its official establishment in 1993 and virtually introduced (or depending on one's viewpoint re-introduced) that particular modality of being Jewish. Andrzej Grabski's mostly historical account of the early Jewish religious practices in the post-war period and the early 1990s is the only publication that seriously addresses the existence of the foundation in Poland (1997). Grabski's account is invaluable in reconstructing the early years of the 'revival' and while he did not draw far-reaching conclusions as to the impact of global NGOs, I will incorporate his findings in my later discussion. Grabski wrote of the Lauder Foundation's support for sponsoring and organizing ritual circumcisions, coming of age rituals like *b'nai mitzvah* (singular: *bar mitzvah*) and *b'not mitzvah* (singular: *bat mitzvah*) as well as enabling the possibility of religious conversions (Grabski August, 1997). The foundation

sponsored the first rabbis (and through the 1990s the only Polish rabbis) who started to supervise Jewish religious practice, which up until that time had been organized by the elderly congregants themselves in the still functioning Jewish synagogues.

While the Ronald Lauder Foundation has recently brought most of its activities in Poland to a close (Bella Szwarcman-Czarnota et al., 2010; Long and Moore, 2013), its legacy still has considerable impact; and the Lauder camps at Wisła, near Kraków, continue to be frequented by visitors from Wrocław. At the same time, new organizations have appeared in the Polish Jewish social milieu. The year 2006 saw the arrival of Shavei Israel (Hebrew: 'Israel Returns'), an organization which was to leave a particular mark on the Wrocław *gmina* before and during my research. Shavei Israel began to send its rabbi-emissaries to Poland and organize religiously oriented seminars in Poland and in Israel. Finally, there is the Jewish Agency – Sochnut, an Israeli government organization responsible for organizing emigration to Israel and the main co-organizer of Taglit-Birthright trips to Israel for Polish participants. The Agency also funded and sent volunteer-emissaries to Wrocław a few years before my fieldwork. These few examples, which exclude the more generic impact of cross-border mobility, and private visits to Israel, as well as the visits of foreign Jews to Poland, and a number of other transnational[10] projects, will be discussed in the following pages to illustrate the 'global connection' that shapes contemporary Jewish sociality in Poland in all its aspects. The only other notable reference to these NGOs, apart from the above-mentioned Grabski, has come from Claire Rosenson (2003), who briefly mentions the ambivalent reception of the Lauder Foundation amongst members of the Warsaw Jewish congregation and Joanna Cukras-Stelągowska's research on education in schools established by the Foundation (Cukras-Stelągowska, 2012). As I will demonstrate, in the assemblage of

---

[10] My use of 'transnational' is reserved only to those organizations which primarily operate across the boundary of one nation state and another, rather than establish, like most Jewish organizations active in Poland an extensive network of institutions, funding sources, activities across the global of which Poland is just an element. In reality almost every global NGO has a more or less definite founding location and power base, so I do not think of this distinction in a strictly analytical sense – the organizations that I address here as transnational are explicitly bound to a nation-state even if operating globally, like the Jewish Agency Sochnut, an Israeli government organization per se. The Lauder Foundation or the JDC can be considered American based transnational NGOs as much as global organizations witha multinational base of resources and staff and a truly global reach. At the same time, many projects of such NGOs are described as transnational, because they bridge either the United States or Israel- based programmes and activists with Jewish institutions and individuals in Poland.

the global projects of 'revival', post-socialist Poland has been envisioned as both a place of decline and a place of opportunity, a place where global philanthropy could provide guidance in a way that would ensure its survival and continuity. At the same time, as earlier studies have already noted (e.g. Mach, 2007), the political shift in Poland created completely new circumstances for ethnic and religious minorities. In consequence, local and global visions of the 'revival' converged. In that sense, the 'revival', as I will argue, has been not only an actual transformation, enabled by the efforts of local and global institutions and activists; it has also been a vision of (re)creating more 'authentic' Jewishness, shared by the second generation Jewish activists and transnational organizations, that, in time, went on to shape mainstream Jewish sociality. This new situation, as I will demonstrate, does not only throw into question local and global understandings of what constitutes being and becoming Jewish but also, on the ground level of social interaction, changes the participants of that process, regardless of where they come from and what authority and resources they possess. It is crucial to stress here that the imaginative and visionary dimension of perhaps every effort at 'revitalization' (c.f. Maryon et al., 1986; Macdonald, 1997), does not diminish the actuality of the dispossession, the collapse of religious activities, the gradual disappearance of Jewish education and welfare programmes, and the lack of intergenerational continuity that many Polish Jewish people found understandably disturbing in the wake of socialist era.

Diasporic anxieties and post-socialist revivals

My initial argument, and one that structures my inquiry right from the start, is that contemporary Jewish life in Poland cannot be abstracted from the larger backdrop of global processes concerning the diaspora and Israel, and from 'revival' efforts in former socialist countries in Eastern Europe. For that reason, in the following pages, I will shortly discuss the global concerns over the 'disappearance' of Jews due to 'assimilation' and intermarriage, as well as concerns over the supposedly diminishing importance of Israel for contemporary diasporic Jews. I will then consider the inferences that can be drawn from the modest research already undertaken on the impact of Jewish global NGOs in the former Soviet bloc and in contemporary Croatia.

Simon Rawidowicz, an eminent Jewish historian and philosopher, remarked that every generation of Jewish diasporic scholars, ingenious interpreters of holy texts and intellectual figureheads of their time, has been inclined to think of itself as the 'last Jews' and of Jewish knowledge and way of life as facing imminent ruin. The narrative of an 'ever-dying people' was understandably fuelled by precarious status and historical catastrophes experienced by Jews; however, it was also persistent when the Jewish diaspora was thriving and secure (Rawidowicz, 1998). Keith Kanh-Harris and Ben Gidley refer to Rawidowicz in the introduction to their essay on concern among British Jewish communal leaders about intermarriage, declining communalism and anti-Semitism paired with a growing sense of insecurity. In answer to the perceived crisis, in the words of Britain's former Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, Jews should 'work together to plan and create a decade of renewal of Jewish leadership, of Jewish education, of Jewish spirituality' (Kahn-Harris and Gidley, 2012). This perspective situates the 'renaissance' happening in Poland within a wider framework of revival agendas circulating in the Jewish diaspora. In the United Kingdom and the United States, where the largest Jewish populations outside Israel live, intermarriage is perceived to be one of the main challenges to the continuity of Jewish existence as a distinct collectivity: this is phrased as the 'threat' of dissolution and disappearance by 'assimilation' . (Kanh-Harris and Gidley, 2012; Kugelmass, 2012). From the time of the founding of Israel as an independent state, in 1948, such diasporic anxieties over cultural continuity were often paired with debates over the significance of Israel for diaspora Jews and the 'on one hand, the growing integration of the Jews in the societies where they live and, on the other hand, the growing 'Israelization' of the Jews in their national state' (Gorny, 2009, p.248; see also: Sheffer, 2005). Among the majority of the American Jewry, emotional connection with Israel and support for its existence coincide with a disposition to live in the United States (Cohen, 1990; Shain and Bristman, 2002; Sheffer, 2005). Anthropological research on Austrian Jews by Mati Bunzl (2004) and Andrew Bruckser's work on a Jewish community in Denmark (2002) indicate that support for the Israeli state, and ties established through having family in Israel and travelling there, as well as its symbolic status as the 'Jewish State' and a place of refuge for Jews, is considerably strong. Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin have argued for visions of Jewish peoplehood dissociated from Israel as a political point of reference, but their rendering of Israel-diaspora relations is more a political statement than an account of

the contemporary global situation (Boyarin and Boyarin, 1993; cf. Hirsch, 2012; Kelner, 2010). Caryn Aviv and David Shneer (2005) put forward an argument that diasporic Jews around the world are increasingly imaging themselves and their Jewish lives independently of the Israeli state. What Aviv and Shneer further suggest is that the contemporary 'global Jewish community' does not have to be perceived solely through the dichotomous relationship of Israel versus the diasporic communities, but can, and indeed already does, involve a much greater role for relationships between different parts of the Jewish diaspora (ibid.). I will return to that argument later.

For decades, concern over the Jewish 'disappearance' through assimilation drove the agenda behind summer camps and tours aimed at the socialization and education of Jewish youth. Taglit-Birthright organized tours to Israel, of young Jews from around the world, were a transnational enterprise borne out of the combined concerns among American Jewish leaders and philanthropists over 'assimilation' and waning relationship between Israel and the Jewish diaspora (Sheffer, 2005; Kelner, 2010). As Shaul Kelner puts it, the projects were essentially created to foster an 'Israel-centered diasporic identity'. The long-term effects of the programme, which started in 1999, are debatable. Kelner, who completed an extensive qualitative study of Taglit-Birthright, argues that the experiences of organized trips to Israel are mostly absorbed according to the participants' idiosyncratic decisions and life circumstances (Kelner, 2010). This does not undermine the results of longitudinal research, which suggests that the tours considerably raise the probability of a positive personal identification with Israel, followed by migration to Israel or paired with subsequent involvement in American Jewish organizations (Saxe et al., 2009). Scholars consider Taglit-Birthright as the most recent instance of similar tours aimed at informal education, or, as Lilach Lev Ari and David Mittelberg argue, the 're-ethnification' of diaspora Jewish youth (2008, see also: Mittelberg and Ari, 1995; Sales and Saxe, 2004; Kelner, 2010). As I will argue, however, in the Polish Jewish milieu, Taglit-Birthright is just one of many instances composing a massive global assemblage[11] of

---

[11] Following Aihwa Ong and Simon Collier, throughout the thesis I employ *global assemblage* as a "concept that identifies contingent entanglements of global and situated elements, that is, particular assemblages of interrelationships that articulate older and increasingly obsolete domains called "culture", "economy" and "society"' (Ong, 2008, p.120). My argument is the notion of assemblage retains its usefulness outside the realm of biopolitics and neoliberal technologies and that indeed it captures significant developments going on at the crossroads of grassroots revival movements and transnational ethnopolitics. Global assemblage invokes heterogeneous agendas, institutions and actors

institutions, projects and entrepreneurs which became not a supplementary but a dominant form of Jewish socialization.

The presence of 'emissaries': rabbis and educators sent by global Jewish NGOs is one of the most characteristic features of the Polish Jewish sociality. While little scholarly attention has been paid to the proliferation of transnational religious entrepreneurs in post-socialist countries, and their impact on local life, such activity is not entirely without precedent – albeit at the margins rather than in the mainstream of Jewish religious life. Perhaps the most extensively acknowledged Jewish religious organization operating on a global scale is the Chabad Lubavitch. This Hasidic and messianic movement sends emissaries, *shluchim*, with missions to prompt Jews to religious observance and respect for the Halacha, the Judaic religious law. The practice of sending emissaries was established in the 1950s by the Chabad Lubavitch's late leader, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. (e.g. Buckser, 2005; Berman, 2009; Maoz and Bekerman, 2009). Recent anthropological research on European Jewry, such as Marci Brink-Danan's work on Jewish life in Istanbul and Andrew Buckser's study of the Jewish community in Copenhagen, demonstrates how Chabad emissaries act as authoritative carriers of 'authentic' Judaism (Brink-Danan, 2011) and how their organizational houses or private homes can become social spaces alternative to that of the local community (Buckser, 2002; Rosengard, 2009). Chabad has two outposts in Poland, one in Warsaw and the other in Kraków, but it does not have any notable presence in Wrocław, as emissaries only occasionally and briefly visit the *gmina*. Chabad can be seen, nonetheless, as a harbinger of the emissary based, intra-group religious activism that I am going to discuss, and of global proliferation of Jewish ontologies not through mass media, but deliberate efforts of transnational actors at the ground level of the contemporary Jewish diaspora.

<center>***</center>

Jews living in the former Soviet bloc: that is Central Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union have become involved in mass-scale transnational programmes of socialization, education and support dedicated specifically to

---

that constitute the contemporary Polish Jewish lived reality (Sassen, 2008, Ong and Collier, 2005).

counteract what was seen and in many ways was, arguably, a decline of Jewish religious and social life during the socialist period, due to the often state-backed anti-Semitism, restrictive policies on ethno-religious minorities, and political attitudes hostile towards religion as such.

Anita Weiner's (2009) detailed study of the first decade of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) activities in the former Soviet Union from 1988 to 1999, demonstrates the all-encompassing involvement of the organization in the creation and sustenance of a range of cultural, educational and welfare activities. Weiner stresses the way in which the JDC's approach adapted to the changing needs of Soviet Jews. The initial focus on the establishment of Jewish libraries, aimed at attracting Soviet Jews to study Jewish history and cultural heritage, later shifted towards welfare and funding endeavours such as food distribution and day-care centres for the elderly. Weiner's study does not analytically explore the wider social and cultural implications of the JDC activities, but she does indicate that the JDC was keen on adapting its efforts to local needs, shifting responsibilities onto volunteers and trained local activists, and promoting the basic religious observance of Jewish holidays and Shabbat customs without fostering any particular denomination of Judaism (ibid.). As I will illustrate, a similar modus operandi, on a much smaller scale, was successfully implemented by the JDC in Poland, with distinct consequences.

Among scholars working on contemporary Jews living in Central Eastern Europe, Nila Ginger Hofman's *Renewed Survival: Jewish Community Life in Croatia*, is notable for explicitly acknowledging the role of 'transnational Jewish organizations' (2006, p.115). Her brief observations on the subject resonate with the reflections of Andrzej Grabski concerning the aftermath of socialism in Poland, and they will also be reflected on and elaborated in my own analysis. Hofman notes how the JDC implemented educational and welfare programmes according to the pattern delineated above. She also notes the JDC's involvement, along with that of the World Jewish Congress, in support of restitution claims made by Croatian Jewish organizations and endorsement for the Croatian state to re-establish its diplomatic relations with Israel (ibid.).

Hofman is somewhat ambiguous regarding the exact identity of the other, more religiously-oriented, organizations active in Zagreb, referring to them as 'ultra-Orthodox' and 'American Orthodox constituencies', but she is clear in stating that

these groups became the sole sponsors of religious education and engaged in 'financing full-time rabbis, rebuilding several synagogues […] and stressing Jewish religious education.' She notes how the efforts of the chief rabbi of Croatia, backed by the aforementioned transnational organizations, 'revolutionized the social organization of Jewish communities in Croatia, by the 'koshering of community centers' (2006, p.117), endorsing conversions to counteract soaring rates of exogamy, and providing Orthodox religious teaching. The activity of the rabbis enabled the performance of most Jewish religious rites of passage. At the same time, as Hofman argues, the chief rabbi effectively circumvented the options available to the Zagreb Jewish Community as to ways of practising Judaism and being Jewish in a social sense, for example by making *bat mitzvah*, a girl's, rather than a boy's, coming of age ritual, or non-Orthodox burials, unwelcome in the Zagreb Community. What Hofman calls the 'lack of common cultural base' (ibid.) between Zagreb Jews and the chief rabbi, was often a cause of conflict, despite widespread endorsement of his presence in Zagreb.

A notable contribution to the topic of transnational experiences and attachments came from Rebecca Golbert, who studied contemporary Ukrainian Jewish youth (2001). Golbert discusses the outcomes of extensive migration to Israel and returns, and argues how this has contributed to the emergence of a 'transnational youth culture', not only through direct experience of life in Israel, but also through storytelling and the involvement of returnees in Israeli Jewish organizations in Ukraine (ibid.). Although Golbert does not tease out that link, the context of her study is related to the mass emigration of Jews from the FSU to Israel and it implicitly illustrates the extent to which the reality of interconnectedness needs to be understood as conditioned by local political, sociocultural and economic circumstances. Golbert did not situate her research within the context of Ukrainian Jewish life, namely, Jewish congregations, non-Israeli Jewish organizations active in Ukraine and older generations of Ukrainian Jews. The question therefore remains whether the new self-understanding of the young generation relates to the Ukrainian Jewish minority as a whole and whether it has changed the actuality of communal institutions. In Golbert's rendering, the localized global NGOs emerge more as a mediating ground for the returnees to disseminate the impressions of their Israeli experiences than as influential actors in their own right.

As Mitchell Orenstein, Stephen Bloom and Nicole Lindstrom argue, contemporary Eastern Europe cannot be properly understood without acknowledging the role of transnational actors in the political transition to complex global interdependence (Orenstein et al., 2008). The influence of transnational actors is usually pinpointed pertaining to their influence on legislation and policy in post-transformation Central and Eastern European states. The 'opening up' of post-socialist Poland has been a part of complex processes in which economic and political transformation was paired with the re-definition of national identity (Offe, 1997). Formerly socialist Eastern European states aspiring to European Union membership became embedded, as Will Kymlicka argues, in a new set of normative expectations which made the recognition of minority rights inextricable from 'democratization' and 'Europeanization' (2005). Yet, the case of 'Jewish revival' in Poland provides an example of the prevalence and impact of transnational processes that circumvent nation state policies and directly engage institutions and people of a 'national minority' and that go beyond the impact of tourism, EU integration and the global economy (cf. Cahalen Schneider, 2006). The remaking of Polish Jewish institutions would not have been possible without the Polish state's approval. As I will argue, Israel, through its legislation, religious institutions, governmental organizations and as a place in a symbolic and physical sense, bears upon Poland's Jewish social life. Yossi Yonah (2007) made a compelling case that Israel can exert considerable power by its migration policies alone. That said, the main institutional stakeholders of 'revival' in Poland have been local Jewish organizations and NGOs operating on a global scale. Urlich Beck (2006) argues that in the contemporary global situation that he calls *second modernity*, the role, authority and power of the nation state has been shifting towards supranational organizations. I will argue that such supranational organizations not only have the ability to foster, endorse and legitimize ethnic and religious affiliation, but are intricately embedded in global assemblages which incorporate, rather than superimpose upon, nation-states.

A globalized transformation

As Larry Ray argues, 'globalization is primarily an outcome of a set of processes that are themselves only loosely connected, although the relationship is dialectical in that once global consequences and forms of sociation take shape, they

in turn act back on the actions and structures from which they emerged' (2007, p.205). If we were to distil one common denominator of anthropological reflection on globalization, undoubtedly it would be the advocacy of grounding transnational flows, of using the discipline's potential to localize the macroscale of global process in lived experiences of concrete individuals and groups (Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003, p. 51). My approach to globalization is thoroughly ethnographic, focused precisely on one such process: the emergence of a new form of sociality that is enabled by actors from diverse geographies of Jewish life.

Global interconnectedness in a cultural, economic and political sense is certainly not a new phenomenon (e.g. Wolf, 1982; Abu-Lughod, 1989; Trouillot, 2003), even if connections and disconnections are related to imbalances of power and historical contingencies (Trouillot, 2001; Cooper, 2005; Ferguson, 2006). What is distinct about globalization in the contemporary world is, arguably, the unprecedented speeding up of economic and social processes (Harvey, 1989) and time-space compression through the intensification and speed of human mobility and radical change brought about by the development of information and communication technologies (Giddens, 1990). These not only allow for immediate contact across the globe, but such phenomena as the emergence of global virtual worlds (e.g. Boellstorff, 2008; Nardi, 2010). Among the most significant processes producing transformations in the wake of the above-mentioned interconnectedness are those that can be defined as deterritorialization and reterritorialization. These concepts, originally conceived by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987), have been widely adopted in anthropological reflection. Arjun Appadurai understood deterritorialization as 'the central force of the modern world' (1996, p.37) characterized by the displacement and continuous relocation of 'money, commodities, and persons' on the global scale (ibid., p.38). In my understanding then, deterrioralization is a process of transformation where meanings, practices, institutions and individual actors become disjointed from their previous spatial context, only to be reterritorialized: assembled in new configurations in another context. I will argue that the remaking of Jewish sociality in Poland is produced by the convergence of reterritorialized transnational projects of socialization and education, the efforts of emissaries of Jewish NGOs and Polish Jewish activists, which confront institutional shortcomings and distinct lived realities of being Jewish in Poland. Global diasporic NGOs are playing a far more important role than either

Israel or Poland in providing support and guidance for programmes of socialization, education and religious life, not to mention the creation of Jewish social space. Coming back to Ulf Hannerz's notion of cultural flows, my work will exemplify his observation that global 'flows' are neither unconstrained nor 'free' but often subject to, as he puts it, 'new and alien modes of expertise' (Hannerz, 1992, p.124). At the same time I will demonstrate how difficult it is to tell what is 'traditional' and what 'alien', where to find 'authenticity' and where the boundary lies between domination and solidarity in the context of a diasporic revival under the aegis of global peoplehood.

Robin Cohen in his seminal book on historical and contemporary diasporas suggests that globalization is accompanied by counter-tendencies, different forms of social exclusivism. Drawing on Stuart Hall, he argues that the proliferation of localism is a reaction to the 'fragmentation and multiplication of identities' (1997, p.147), and is an attempt to find suitable grounding in the precariousness of postmodernity. Such a theoretical perspective virtually equates globalization with the dissemination and domination of 'Western' uniform 'culture' paired with political and economic hegemony (e.g. Tomlinson, 1991) that inevitably leads to global cultural homogenization, and where ethnic and religious particularisms are merely an reaction to that leveling process and the uncertainty it elicits (Bauman, 2000; Barber, 1996).[12] For Cohen (1997), particularism is an unwilling reaction to globalization, an unwelcome waste product in the process of the permeability of national borders and social categories. Yet, the confluence of global and local may, in fact, exemplify a strikingly different process. I am going to argue that globalization in the form of transnational flows and realities should be not positioned at a negative pole of cultural and ethnic particularization. Global projects of solidarity and revival can nurture notions of difference or introduce ethnic categorizations that challenge local criteria of affiliation, and aim to crystallize ethnic and religious boundaries.

---

[12] Alternative analyses and renderings questioned both the unilateral character of globalization, arguing that the world is witnessing multiple 'globalizations' ,and that localization or reterritorialization brings about cultural fusions which challenge the very distinction between local and global. Consequently multilateral cultural globalization and particularly migrations contribute to considerable heterogeneity in reconfigured localities, rather than obliterate cultural diversity (e.g. Appadurai, 1996; Inda and Rosaldo, 2008; see also: Ginsburg et al., 2002).

Thesis structure

The thesis is composed of two parts. The first part consists of this introduction and two subsequent chapters on methodology and the role of visual methods in my research, respectively. In chapter two I will elaborate on my multi-sited fieldwork, explain my choice of research methods and describe ethical issues I had to resolve. In chapter three, I will discuss my ethnographic film, experiences in collaborative filmmaking and the implications of the combined role of an anthropologist and a filmmaker.

The longer second part is structured to gradually unfold before the reader aspects of Polish Jewish life which exemplify new forms, spaces and temporalities of sociality. I begin with an exploration of *haunting*, an elusive, yet powerful affect fostered by a synergy of cultural imaginaries, memories and intergenerational experiences, which touches on the lives of those that engage in institutional sociality and others that exist on its margins. The haunting discussed in chapter four informs every single aspect of the remaking of the Polish Jewish sociality I am going to discuss in the chapters that follow.

In the fifth chapter of my dissertation, I will elaborate on the indicia, criteria and negotiation of belonging in the Wrocław *gmina*. I will illustrate how the everyday remaking of the communal boundaries is informed by friction between ontologies of belonging and becoming Jewish, tensions between recognition based on familiarity and the inalienability of the 'Jewish fate', and the ambivalences and technologies of becoming introduced by the 'revival'.

The sixth chapter explores one of the most crucial aspects of social life of the *gmina*, namely cultural practices. I will illustrate the challenges of reimagining what constitutes viable religious 'tradition' in a situation of dispersed and dynamically shifting authority and discuss how the *gmina* became a place constructed and continuously redefined by transnational and local actors.

The next chapter discusses the new form of Polish Jewish sociality in the context of space and temporality. I will argue that the global transformation of Polish Jewish life produced the *interzone*, a liminal space of being and becoming Jewish, stemming from 20th century projects of Jewish youth socialization but in the Polish context becoming a parallel social reality, which is both a simulacrum of 'authentic' Jewish life and a very tangible terrain of face-to-face interactions.

In the last chapter my discussion of the emergent assemblage of dispersed and transient places-events of learning and sociality returns to the shape-shifting actuality of communal life in Wrocław. I will discuss how the framework and organizational routines of 'revival', with the disparity between translocal sociality and the structural deficiency of the *gmina,* converge to produce a distinct dynamics and an intensity of communal involvement. The paradox of *becoming* closes my thesis with a reflection on one of the vital outcomes of the remaking of Jewish sociality in Poland.

My thesis concludes with a short summary of my findings, an assessment of the limitations of my work, and a reflection on the prospects for future research projects that would further enhance an understanding of the subject matter.

Chapter 2

Framing the research: methodology and visual media

Suddenly, one of the guests at Mario's home, sitting across, asked me: 'So, how are the Jews in Poland doing?' As I began to struggle with an answer, a girl next to him added: 'In here, we are all Jews.' Bitter laughter filled the garden patio surrounded by thick foliage.

A note from a research trip, Jan Lorenz, Port-au-Prince, Haiti,

February 2003

Fieldwork at 'home'

My doctoral fieldwork began in August 2009 and ended in September 2010. However, my research on post-socialist resurgence and the transformation of Jewish sociality in Poland started inconspicuously and much earlier. In 2004, roughly half a year after graduating with a master's degree in anthropology, I returned to my home city, Wrocław, and secured a job at the office of the local Jewish Religious Community (*Gmina Wyznaniowa Żydowska*). My grandfather on my mother's side

was Jewish, but he died when I was eleven years old, and while I visited my Jewish family abroad, I was never involved with any Jewish organizations. Fragmentary as it was, this unlikely part of my family heritage held for me personal significance, in a way that I could not fully explain. I cannot really tell if I was told that it was best not to broadcast having Jewish ancestry or whether I picked it up half-intuitively from keen observations of how Jewishness resonated in my family. It was always something very private, at times ominous, an intimacy shared solely with a few close friends, despite the fact that we kept up a close relationship with the part of my family that had emigrated to Israel in 1950s.

In equal measure perhaps, it would not have been likely that my anthropological interests would have proceeded in that direction, had it not been for an unexpected experience. In 2006 I was offered a position as a teaching assistant at a local private college which eventually led me to resign from my job at the congregation. I was keen on taking the opportunity to re-embrace anthropological research and found immense satisfaction in tutoring students. Finally, I started considering a doctoral project and Polish Jewish life seemed to be an obvious choice. It was not a terra incognita as scholars from other disciplines, Polish and foreign, wrote about it, mostly in terms of identity. I realized, however, that an in-depth anthropological inquiry could substantially contribute to understanding being and becoming Jewish in Poland. It would offer a chance to go beyond identity narratives and established interpretations perpetuating the discourse of 'return' of seemingly vanished Jews, or, worse still, falling into conventional explanations, which helped little to interpret the complexity at hand.

The notion of 'anthropology at home' may be the most fitting way to describe how my presence in Wrocław and participation in translocal events was predicated, conditioned and undoubtedly informed by my personal history. Prior acquaintances and experiences both facilitated my work and made it more challenging. To some extent I was operating in a familiar social space, mobilizing contacts I had already acquired. Yet, I had never been a Jewish social activist or an educator, and for the most part I was situated precisely on the margins of communal sociality, never fully shedding the role of a curious observer. Marilyn Strathern argues that the predicaments of auto-anthropology or anthropology at home are ultimately dispelled by the sole fact of positioning oneself within a distinct disciplinary discourse and towards the academic audience (Strathern, 1987; see also Peirano, 1998). Others

argue that the polarization of identities of native and non-native anthropologist is debatable and that the anthropological project should be more concerned about exploring diverse hermeneutics rather than privileging one particular discourse (Narayan, 1993; Haakanson, 2001). These dilemmas cannot be resolved decisively, but instead tackled individually without a golden rule applicable across ethical and methodological contingencies. Presumed characteristics of 'anthropology at home': embedding in social networks, the ambiguity of reworking long-standing relationships, and in-depth understanding of a local context are neither specific to being 'native' nor warranted by prior familiarity. I was certainly at an advantage with my command of Polish, awareness of the wider context of Polish Jewish experiences and prior research contacts. Occasionally, the same familiarity made my interlocutors assume I already knew topics of our conversations. Thus, I had to be careful not to let such presumed shared knowledge end up being taken for granted and unspecified. I was keen on re-inventing myself as a social anthropologist and heralding this new role among research participants with whom I had been formerly acquainted, aiming to make our interactions informed more by present circumstances than past experiences. On the one hand, this was not entirely possible, as I was still likely to benefit from my familial background and prior relationships. On the other hand, I was surprised to discover that some considered me first and foremost an anthropologist and, in fact, closer personal ties with many of my research participants developed only as a consequence my fieldwork. Having said that, I am inclined to accept Strathern's argument about the distinctiveness of academic discourse and audience which does not, of course validate any claims to epistemological supremacy.[13] All in all, my own approach was that of observant participation, an engagement with different rules, a different dedication, attention and intensity. I 'went native armed' with the tools and questions of my discipline (Wacquant, 2009, p.88).

---

[13] Discourse on Polish Jews is infused with 'native' testimonies of sociocultural elite insiders, journalistic reports, academic narratives of political science and cultural studies. Polish Jews did not need a spokesman in the form of an anthropologist (native or not).

Establishing the 'field'

Establishing the exact boundaries of my field of study was the primary methodological challenge. From the very outset of my research, discerning who was a Jew or Jewish, both in general terms and specifically in Poland, proved problematic. Rather than assume the existence of pre-defined group of people who corresponded to an ethno-religious category, I shifted my attention to the Wrocław *gmina* and local Jewish Club – both in the spatial and communal sense, as nodes of social interactions of people who potentially shared a sense of Jewish belonging. I assumed, correctly, that some of my research participants did not necessarily squeeze themselves into a category of a 'Jewish minority'. [14] Identifications spoke little of how people felt about themselves and acted upon their sense of belonging. I had to be careful to neither impose a priori external categorization nor impose ambivalence where my research revealed stark social boundaries and criteria of affiliation.

I predominantly focused on young adults with a sense of Jewish affinity, as they seemed to exemplify the changes brought about by the 'revival', but my work encompassed all age-groups of the Wrocław *gmina*. I worked among individuals who identified as Jewish, even temporarily, or expressed affinity with Jewish people and cultural heritage and acted upon that affinity by getting involved in Jewish sociality in a non-domestic setting. These boundaries were not clear-cut. At first, it seemed that I had to sacrifice methodological clarity for the sake of intellectual honesty, but in the long run the strategy of avoiding definite categorization proved fruitful both methodologically and analytically. No sooner had I arrived in Poland, than I realized that the sense of Jewish affinity or even participation in communal activities was not always accompanied by clear-cut self-identification as a *Żyd* (Jew or Jewish), and very often how people identified themselves was subject to dynamics of time, place and social context. Jewish ancestry or conversion played crucial roles in fuelling a sense of affinity, but sometimes Jewish affiliation was claimed solely on

---

[14] In Polish language there is no equivalent to the use of 'Jewish' as in English phrase 'I am Jewish'. One can speak of a Jewish Pole or a Polish Jew, but the adjective *żydowski* 'Jewish' has to be followed by a noun. One of the paradoxes of my research from the linguistic side was the feeling of inadequacy, insufficiency that some people mentioned regarding possibilities of expressing their affiliation. Some of my research participants pointed out to the lack, in Polish, of a less 'defining' or 'constraining' term other than 'a Jew'.

the basis of feelings, unexplainable premonitions, or the accretion of a critical mass of small 'evidence' like family stories or fragmented and unequivocal archival records. Regarding the methodological boundary of the target group, I chose to be inclusive – especially since this had been my guiding premise from the beginning. I decided that the ambiguity and subversiveness of belonging and self-identification were to be anthropologically studied rather than shunned for the purpose of strict categorization. A snowballing sampling method would have been effective in seeking interviewees, but it would completely miss out the dynamics of community life, as well as leave out of the analytical loop those marginal to established social networks, yet seeking acceptance and camaraderie by participating in cultural events and religious practices. Consequently, I used snowballing as a supplementary method of seeking research participants who steered away from the Wrocław *gmina* as an institution, yet still remained in its social network.

My main field site was the city of Wrocław in south-western Poland, and specifically the area around Włodkowica Street, which for centuries has been a hub of local Jewish sociality. At the time, the central point of my research was the u-shaped compound of buildings belonging in the most part to the ZGWŻ, surrounding a courtyard which on the north side was enclosed by the nineteenth-century White Stork Synagogue. Equally important, however, was the translocal space of Jewish life, comprising events that for a few days or weeks established more or less 'self-contained' Polish Jewish microcosms at various locations across Poland, Europe and Israel. The fieldwork I carried out was a form of a multi-sited ethnography fitting George Marcus's arguments for combining diverse approaches and methods of ethnographic fieldwork and representing multiple scales and interconnections of contemporary lives (1995). In my work such a perspective converged with Michael Burawoy's reformulation of the 'extended case method with a sensitivity to questions of power and reflexivity' (2000, p.27) where an inquiry attentive to macro and microscale of social processes includes taking a diachronic perspective which situates the ethnographic present in a historical framework. Accordingly, I aimed precisely at connecting 'space-time rhythms of the site to the geographical and historical context of the field' (ibid.). For the sake of methodological clarity and the feasibility of longitudinal fieldwork, I situated my research in a local Jewish institution, but I used it as a form of methodological anchorage in the risky process

of probing the actual perimeter of my research field. My approach was above all pragmatic, and a matter of adapting to the methodological requirements of the phenomenon under study. While dynamics of sociality called for a rhizomatic inquiry tracing different scales and temporalities of Polish Jewish life, the feasibility of investigation called for curbing the boundaries of my main field site, and my fieldwork required balancing these two approaches.[15] I was following my research participants, spatially, across the globalized landscape of Polish Jewish sociality, and temporally, in an attempt to understand the chronological dynamics of their belonging and communal involvement. Accordingly, I decided to frame the ethnographic actuality into a microhistorical reconstruction of a decade preceding my ethnographic fieldwork (1999 - 2009). Therefore, I included testimonies of some people of the 'third generation' who entered Jewish communal life within this timeframe. While I was not able to interview everyone, mostly for practical reasons, I succeeded in reaching a group representative for such a small community. Most of those involved with the *gmina* before 2005 no longer partook in its activities, having shifter away from institutional Jewish sociality for reasons that will explain in the last chapter of my thesis. Without understanding their current standing in respect to Jewish practices and self-identifications I would not have fully understood the temporal dynamics of Polish Jewish sociality and the trajectories of the 'revival'.

Wrocław had a considerable Jewish presence after World War Two as I illustrated in the previous chapter. More recently, thriving communal life in Warsaw, and – arguably – in Kraków, situated Wrocław somewhere between the centre and the periphery of the Polish Jewish institutional framework. With respect to research, this positioning was ideal, as I was able to see both forms of sociality reportedly characteristic for more prominent Jewish congregations and learn of problems facing more peripheral ones. Most of my encounters with Jews living elsewhere were not deep enough to probe into the intricacies of their biographies and local sociality to warrant a comparative analysis. At the same time, most of my research participants were not born in Wrocław, but had settled there as adults. Some were able to tell me

---

[15] See the discussion in *Multi-sited ethnography : theory, praxis and locality in contemporary research* (Falzon, 2009) for a constructive and balanced discussion of the localized fieldsite as a vantage point and the differences between ontological awareness and methodological strategies in adapting multi-sitedness in anthropological research, particularly chapter one by Matteo Candea and chapter two by Joanna Cook, James Laidlaw and Jonathan Mair.

about experiences of growing up Jewish in small Silesian towns, while others informed me of Jewish communal life in large urban agglomerations like Warsaw or Katowice.

Participant observation

Soon after arriving in Poland, I got the impression that the *gmina* was in relative stagnation, compared to when I left Wrocław in 2008. Communal activities on weekdays were bound to the opening hours of the local kosher canteen, at times spilling over to the congregation's 'Centre of Jewish Culture' – in practice a small bookshop organizing guided tours of the White Stork Synagogue. On Thursday and Sunday evenings around five to ten young people met at the Jewish Club *Sof haDerech*, while on Friday evenings and Saturdays the small synagogue and the kosher canteen became meeting places for more religiously inclined community members, or simply those keen on socializing in the Jewish environment. The Jewish Club was frequented by people in their twenties and thirties, with the exception of an occasional visit by the rabbi or a special guest, like the elderly Franciszek coming to tell his personal history. Other meeting places like the canteen or the synagogue gathered people of all ages. On top of that the congregation's rabbi, Yitzchak Rapoport gave lectures on Judaism at his home next to community offices and ran an Orthodox religious conversion course. I took part in all of these activities on a regular basis. I had expected the Club to be a hub of local youth sociality, but compared to 2008, when I left Wrocław, its activities had somewhat dwindled and a few regular visitors had drifted away. I remembered it as a more lively place from my preparatory research, but then again, the more I was in Wrocław, the more I understood that I was merely looking at a particular point on the trajectory of dynamic change. During my time in Wrocław new people started coming and became incorporated into the pool of my research participants. The number of people of all ages coming to the synagogue varied – sometimes there were as many as fifteen to twenty people present, but on other occasions, especially on Friday evenings, the number of worshippers plummeted to just a few people. Major Jewish holidays associated with communal celebrations, like Pesach, Chanukah or Purim gathered at least fifty guests, and sometimes nearly twice as many.

The Club has also become a place where one can rest or meet during the day, read a book or connect to the internet, while at the same time the 'club meetings' were occasionally organized outside the premises of the room at *gmina* designated for that purpose: in public places or private homes. Some young adults participated in more than one form of communal life, but the 'synagogue', 'club' or 'canteen' groups did not fully overlap. My research was therefore focused in institutional space, but also in locations, which became situationally embedded in Jewish social space – like private homes or public venues. Observations from daily gatherings in the kosher canteen, Shabbats (Friday evening, Saturday morning to midday), the club meetings and a number of extraordinary events provided me with core material for further analysis, despite the fact that Jewish social activities organized around the *gmina* took place only at specific times of day, limiting the possibility of continuous all-day participant observation. I paid particular attention to situations when I could participate in the interactions between the people of the third and second generations and elderly Jews who still attended the synagogue and the kosher canteen, or used to hang around the synagogue courtyard and its surroundings. Following the interests and activities of my research participants, I read press articles and books they mentioned, followed threads on Polish Jewish web forums, looked up websites, and watched films. I tried to be attentive to themes that made the fabric of the *gmina*'s quotidian conversations or came up in interviews, and subsequently trace their provenance in the mediasphere. Following my informants or the experiences they told me about, I travelled to Jewish conferences, seminars and religious celebrations in different cities. As I expected, seminars, weekend getaways, and seasonal camps organized across Poland proved to be crucial for understanding practices of being and becoming Jewish and the scope of contemporary Polish Jewish sociality. In the last stage of my fieldwork, I went for a month and a half to Israel, where I participated in a two-week seminar organized by Shavei Israel, an Israeli NGO active in Poland. On that particular occasion no one else from Wrocław participated in the seminar (a couple of my research participants had dropped out at the last moment), but most people active in the Jewish Club had participated in these seminars at least once before. Since the Shavei Israel seminar was a terra incognita from an academic research perspective and in the light of the organization's major impact on Wrocław's Jewish congregation, I decided to negotiate my access and include this experience in my research itinerary. I spent the rest of my time in Israel interviewing third

generation Polish Jewish migrants formerly affiliated with the Wrocław *gmina* and I also went to interview Michael Freund, the chairman of Shavei Israel. Moreover, I visited several locations on the itinerary of Taglit-Birthright tours to Israel, to contextualize experiences I had discussed with my research participants, but I was not able to participate in the trip itself.

Interviews

I tried to establish a network of contacts by participating in congregation activities and then expand it by the 'snowballing' method, reaching people who were not active in the social hubs of the canteen, the Jewish Club or the synagogue. Despite being arranged beforehand and a methodologically distinct form of acquiring data, I considered interviews an integral part of my participant observation, rather than a wholly separate research method. All interviews were informal and I tried to keep the conversational form as much as reasonably possible. I often kept coming back to particular issues in subsequent meetings and in everyday discussions. It was the same with focus groups – these were organized spontaneously by a set of questions during Club meetings. My research strategy regarding people only incidentally visiting the *gmina* was to have extensive one-off interviews, while still keeping them very informal. These interviews usually began with an autobiographical narrative, focused around personal and family history, childhood experiences, and involvement in social life – in connection to Jewish belonging. Afterwards, using my own prepared aide-de-memoire and issues brought up by my respondent during the first part of an interview, I explored particular topics in-depth, focusing mostly on social experiences within the Polish Jewish communal space and in transnational programmes of education and socialization. Photographs, elements of surrounding, recent activities in the congregation, topics and events publicized in mass–media as references, were used for elicitation. Most of the interviews were recorded on a voice recorder, although sometimes I intentionally switched it off before the end of conversation and continued taking notes to encourage interlocutors to speak more at ease about sensitive matters. On several occasions I switched off the voice recorder for parts of the conversation at the interviewee's request or made the entire interview without the device, whether for interviewee's mental comfort or due to technical difficulties like background noise. Of course, I also had myriad informal

conversations during my participant observation, impossible to discern as separate interviews. The reflections from these discussions, however, were incorporated in my field notes and I never used the voice recorder in such situations.

There were fifty-five 'interviewees' with whom I had separately arranged one-on-one prolonged conversations, not counting group discussions, documentary film interviews and interviews with occasional visitors to the Wrocław congregation and people met at translocal events – which ranged from short discussions to meetings lasting hours. The majority of countable interviewees were between eighteen and thirty-five years old but the actual age range was between eighteen and ninety five. Despite my focus on the young adults, I intended to grasp a comprehensive idea of the whole Wrocław *gmina*, to properly contextualize the experiences of the post-socialist newcomers. It would be unfeasible to crudely discern 'elite' interviews from the general body of conversations I had, as many of my research participants either in the past or at the time held some more or less formal functions and responsibilities at Jewish institutions, for example as educators, volunteers or even political leaders. Nonetheless, among the countable interlocutors mentioned above, nine people were interviewed only or predominantly in the light of their official institutional role. Most tangible realizations of the 'interview' form of interaction were carried out in Wrocław. Four interviews were conducted in Kraków and Warsaw, eleven in Israel (Jerusalem, Ra'anana, Tel-Aviv, and Haifa) and three in the UK (two interviews in London, one through Skype). These individual oral testimonies and long recorded discussions took, on average, between one to two hours, not counting preparation and breaks. The longest one-off interview took just over four hours, and another was carried out over a period of three consecutive evenings totalling perhaps over ten hours of an intense conversation. It needs to be noted that some individuals were interviewed once, while others, particularly my core group of research participants most active in either the congregation or Jewish Club at the time, were interviewed two or three times – but again, due to intense forms of interaction during my participant observation, the boundaries between these different forms of conversation were not always easy to discern. Film interviews were recorded separately and exclusively for my documentary film, but their content was informed by regular interactions and in turn, informed topics raised in interviews which were not video-recorded.

The question of anonymity

My thesis does not include much personal information on individual research participants. As much as I would like to render full-blooded ethnographic protagonists, such a highly anonymized form of narration is a deliberate choice, informed by the arrangements I had made with my research participants. My own awareness of the size of the collectivity of people associated with the Wrocław *gmina* and the *Sof haDerech* also played part in my decision to be somewhat obscure about personal details. Because in a group so small and intimate full in-group anonymity is nearly impossible to achieve (and my research participants were aware of that), I took additional precautions to dissociate particularly sensitive or controversial statements from any real people hidden under aliases – therefore the reader should not be surprised to find, on rare occasions, names mentioned only once and solely for the sake of narration.

The core group of my research participants were people particularly active in the Jewish Club and *gmina* at the time of my fieldwork. Some of these individuals are profiled in my thesis to a relatively larger extent, as are those representative of the third generation who were involved with the *gmina* in the decade preceding my fieldwork. Those active in the Jewish Club during my stay in Wrocław were mostly in their twenties and many were students at the time. The first generation and second generation research participants who are most visible in my thesis are those most involved in the social and religious life at the *gmina*. I should add that one of the many reasons I wanted to make an ethnographic documentary, was to be able to create an anthropological representation of non-anonymized protagonists with real names, faces and bodies. My intention was to materialize the characters in my narrative as living and breathing individuals the reader/viewer could more easily empathize with. Not everyone among my research participants was ready to speak before the camera, but among those who agreed I chose three individuals who exemplify the diverse community of Wrocław.

Ethnography in a mediascape

In the next chapter I will address the outcome of my filmmaking efforts, while here I am going to discuss the wider implications of entering the field as a

filmmaker and the resonance between participant observation and cinematography. I should start by clarifying why I employed visual or, more precisely, audio-visual media. First, I aimed to gauge the effectiveness of film as a research method and medium of representation in comparison with ethnographic fieldwork and writing. Second, I set out to investigate the impact of filmmaking on fieldwork and expediency of audio-visual recording as a form of data collection. Third, and most importantly, I set out to experiment with the film as a parallel, but independent anthropological inquiry and representation. I considered any collaborative film-projects as optional and subject to the potential requests of my research participants.

Participant observation and filmmaking elicit diverse forms of interaction with people and places. Filming, regardless of whether it takes minutes or hours, is usually a continuous process demanding uttermost attention that virtually excludes the possibility of parallel participant observation. I found it difficult to switch back and forth between these methods and consequently I dedicated specific days or time periods to cinematography. Negotiation of film consent and filming elicited reactions illuminating the socio-spatial dynamics of (under)communicating Jewishness. Documentary film does not leave much room for anonymity (MacDougall, 2006, p.55). Consequently, the decisions of film protagonists about the degree of their involvement exacerbated distinctions between private and public levels of identification and enunciation of sameness and difference. This in turn galvanized my attention to circumstances of speaking openly about one's Jewish identity. The film camera facilitated the discerning of taboos and issues that caused anxiety in the communication of Jewish belonging at work, to non-Jewish friends or even within families. In my interactions with institutional elites in Wrocław and beyond, audio-visual recording helped to gauge what could and could not be said when a camera was around as well as what was meant to be recorded for the imagined 'wider public'. Undoubtedly then, as Angela Torresan argues, 'cameras are catalysts for performances, and performances work as a genre of self-representation and self-theorization' (Torresan, 2011, p.126). The propensity to galvanize, impede and transform self-representation, particularly along the lines of intimacy offers much to complement anthropological observations, while it puts on an ethnographer-filmmaker the moral obligation of fine tuning anonymity, operating on two levels of consent (anonymous - public) and foreseeing the potential impact of accessible and widely disseminated representations on the lives of research participants. As

ethnographic material, my footage ended up being 'imprints' of my embodied experience in the field, of my interactions (MacDougall, 2006: see also: Perez, 1998; Wahlberg, 2008), in a way similar to my field-notes – less reflective, but at the same time more prone to reinterpretation, more ambiguous, sensorial rather than textual, and immensely rich in details captured in each frame. Anything outside the camera lens vanished, but the immensity caught in its lens virtually bombarded me with details, each time I reviewed the footage, over and over again, in film production and during writing up. [16] At the same time, I was inclined to reflect on what was left out of the frame and yet captured in my field-notes and began to wonder how the invisible may be represented through the medium of film.

Initially, I had not planned a collaborative film-project, but I had decided to remain responsive to any requests that might arise. In the end, I collaborated on three short films conceived by the Jewish Club members. These efforts substantially helped to establish rapport with my core research participants and introduce the medium of film as an element of my research practice. Eventually, this working relationship became a form of my contribution to the cultural production of the Jewish Club, and, on a wider scale, to the Poland's *społeczność żydowska*, 'the Jewish community', at large – our work was screened at two consecutive Polish *Limud Keszet* conferences for hundreds of participants. Such initiatives could never repay the trust, hospitality and help I received from dozens of people while carrying out my project, but I cherished being given such an opportunity.

The first was a film about Shabbat rules made for the *Limud Keszet* 2009 conference in Warsaw, stylized as a parody of a TV-marketing advertisement. Another was a filmic version of *Purimszpil*, a traditional play for Purim (Hebrew: lots), a holiday commemorating the deliverance from the massacre instigated by Haman, Grand Vizier at the court of the Persian King Ahasuerus, thanks to the ingenuity of the beautiful Jewess, Esther, and God's providence. It is celebrated in a carnivalesque form, with cross-dressing and partying.

In two preceding years the Wrocław Jewish Club had prepared two Purim performances by staging the traditional narrative in a different historical and

---

[16] The choice of where to turn my attention and what to frame concerned primiarily images, as one of camera's microphones was often deliberately set on high sensitivity and captured more than I could hear and process in a given moment.

geographical context. In 2007 it had been a parody of the communist factory, while the 2008 play had appropriated a Polish medieval legend about the evil King Popiel whose reign ended when he was devoured by mice. In 2009 a new idea came up during a brainstorming-session at the Jewish Club: to make a short Purim film in *film noir* style, instead of a play, and screen it on Purim Eve for the congregation members and other visitors. The making of the film *Purim Story* was great fun for everyone involved, but implicitly the scenario re-imagined and turned the story in a profound and subversive manner. In the film, the narrator, lumpy detective Marlowe, searches the city for suddenly disappeared Jews. He visits shady characters (played by club members) supposed to know their whereabouts. Finally, he finds the missing Jews at the *gmina's* Purim party, at the epicentre of the most liminal of Jewish holidays, an almost paradigmatic Bakhtinian carnivalesque disruption of hierarchies, the inversion of the world and social order, when even a religious Jewish man is expected to dress up as a woman, and woman is expected attach a fake beard and put on 'manly' clothes (Bakhtin, 1968; Rubenstein, 1992). The ending of the film is paradoxical. As we look at cross-fading photographs taken at Purim parties in Wrocław, the narrator says that he has forgotten about Purim and realizes that the "missing Jews" are celebrating the holiday at the *gmina*. Photographs show people dressed up as space aliens, pop-cultural imaginary heroes or hard-core fans of 'disco-polo', a kitschy home-grown variety of dance music, that took over the Polish provinces in the 90s. It is in the liminal space where everyone is cross-dressed, everybody is pretending to be someone else, that one finds all the disappeared Jews, and not in the ordered, life-world of the everyday, the gloomy streets of a city. The idea of incorporating the photos and crossing the boundary between the fiction and materialized imprints of the lived reality (Perez, 1998; Wahlberg, 2008) was taken by the Jewish Club members themselves and it prompted me to reflect on Jewish communal spaces in Poland beyond their prescribed roles.

The third film was made in September 2010, after my return from Israel. This time I was asked to help *Sof haDerech* to make a contribution to another *Limud Keszet* conference. Olek and Magda had an idea to use the style of a Spaghetti Western to tell, without words, a short story about the 'confrontation' of Jews representing different religious and political options, which ends, not in a shoot-out, but with reconciliation for shared learning. I helped to translate the script and Olek's vision into a filmic form, using field sizes (i.e. framing) and montage to recreate the

51

genre as much as we could in a few hours of shooting and a couple of days of editing.

Filmmaking skills paired with professional equipment give the anthropologist an opportunity to contribute to the community he is working in. It can be a token of appreciation or a way of establishing and kindling relationships, but, as I found out, such expertise can also create obligations and requests which are difficult to fulfil or carry long-term implications. While I was at a seminar in Kraków, Boas Pash, the Rabbi of Kraków and a Shavei Israel emissary told me of a predicament he had run into. He had arranged a visit of an Israeli television team that was supposed to film reportage of an event. The TV crew could not make it on time and the rabbi asked me if I could shoot a few minutes of footage and give him the tape, which he would send to the television station. I felt obliged by his permission to conduct research and film at the event, so I could not really say no. Paradoxically however, I ended up indirectly and in a small part contributing to the media discourse of 'revival' that I myself critically investigated in my film and writing. Of course, such exchanges and obligations are not reserved to visual anthropology, but I found the use of visual medium particularly evocative in this regard.

Working with visual methods in a fieldwork situation made me more acutely aware of the prevalence of visual imagery and visual representations. The camera not only became a tool for registering the iconosphere (from symbolic forms embedded in materiality, ritual objects, postcards, to photographs and TV clips) but also raised my awareness of the sensorial environments of my research, and facilitated the gathering of visual material for future analysis. The engagement with visual media did not end with the films I produced. I made photos, photocopies, scans of books, journals, leaflets and personal photographs for subsequent analysis and potential inclusion in my film. In interviews I employed photo-elicitation based on, roughly, three types of pictures – old family photographs, photographs documenting past experiences in the lives of my interlocutors, and relatively recent photographs taken during my fieldwork.

Some of my research engagements made me reflect on my own positioning as an anthropologist and ethnographic filmmaker in the age of mass-production and the dissemination of audiovisual content. My endeavours were often visually documented by my project participants and non-participants alike. For example, while on a fieldwork trip to Kraków, I was filming while being filmed by an

Israeli/Australian couple who decided to make a documentary of the event they organized: a donation of books by American Jews to the Wrocław Jewish Club. At one of the *Limud Keszet* events I attended, I ran into another couple of filmmakers working on a documentary. In Kraków I was most likely caught on the tape of yet another film, about the festival of Jewish culture. As a participant in a Shavei Israel seminar, together with other participants in a group photo, I ended up in an Israeli online news page about Polish Jews 'rediscovering their heritage'. To be sure, I was not the only person with a camera, and certainly not the one to create a dominant visual narrative – rather, simply someone entangled in the webs of representations and competing media narratives.

Chapter 3
Film and ethnography

No absolute value in an image. Images and sounds will owe their value and their power solely to the use to which you destine them.

Robert Bresson, Notes on cinematography (1977)

In the previous chapter, I introduced the wider circumstances and methodological implications of using visual media. In this chapter, I will present a theoretical framework behind my understanding of film as an ethnographic narrative. First, however, I will clarify the relationship between my documentary and the written part of my thesis, and suggest in what order the reader/viewer should engage with these two representations.

My documentary film, *The Passage*, is an integral part of my thesis inasmuch as its creation was an inquiry parallel to participant observation and interviewing. Throughout my fieldwork, the processes of filmmaking and participant observation informed each other; insights from both were shaping the topics I pursued and dynamically changing my understanding of Polish Jewish contemporaneity. The editing of my film was informed by the analysis of fieldwork data and by writing up

my research. My writing, in turn, was influenced by hundreds of hours spent on reviewing the film material and returning to particular moments of my ethnographic encounter captured on tape, from physical reactions during interviews to the location and behaviour of people in the synagogue during communal prayers.

The film and the written thesis share the same narrative structure of transformation. However, while my writing explores transformation in the wider context of Jewish sociality and its globalized remaking, my documentary gives insight into three distinct personal transformations. While parts of oral testimonies given in the film inevitably invoke experiences similar to those I quoted in writing, *The Passage* depicts different ethnographic vignettes. One example is the syncretic funerary ritual where the Polish tradition of commemorating the dead is intermixed with Jewish customs. Another example is the process of learning how to wear phylacteries – *tefillin* – on one's body.

Nonetheless, the relationship between my film and writing runs much deeper. Film is not merely a representation of ethnographic knowledge, a film about my ethnography or a visual explication of my research, to paraphrase David MacDougall and Jay Ruby, but an alternative way of doing anthropology (MacDougall, 1998, p. 76; Ruby, 1975, p. 109). *The Passage* is a parallel research inquiry, based on a different method and consequently producing a substantially different outcome. This is partially a result of my creative choices as a filmmaker and partially derives from the inherent qualities of the medium. David MacDougall in *Transcultural Cinema* points to film's potential to draw attention to the psychological, performative and embodied dimensions of our existence: the multidimensionality of our being (1998). Consequently, film can be 'transcultural' by evoking both the particularity of individual experience and, at the same time, its universality, which subverts the notion of inseparable cultural boundaries. Filmmaking from that perspective would enable 'a shift from general ethnographies, or studies of emblematic cultural events such as rituals, to studies of the experience of individual social actors in situations of wide cross-cultural relevance' (MacDougall, 1998, p. 272).

That argument relates to the first aspect of the relationship between the text and the film in my work. From my perspective, ethnographic film, focused on individual actors, has the potential to counter generalizations not just of 'culture', but also 'society', 'community' or any other collective which becomes an analytical category. Arguably, social analysis requires such abstractions to speak of shared

characteristics, processes and experiences of multiple individuals. In my thesis, I bring together events I participated in and testimonies of people I encountered precisely to render shared experiences and conditions, even if I take care to indicate variability among the affiliates of the *gmina*. Anonymized characters, however, even contextualized by fragments of their biographies, are not the real people I encountered. While no medium is able to convey the idiosyncrasies and complex personalities of my research participants, the film allowed me to make my ethnographic research more encompassing. The viewers are able to appreciate the three main protagonists as embodied, concrete individuals, who apart from being representative of the 'third generation', carry personal memories and affinities, as well as act upon their sense of Jewish belonging in unique ways.

Secondly, the film supplements my writing by conveying the actual encounter between my research subjects and me as an anthropologist. It allows the reader/viewer to become immersed in the environment in which I worked and in the spaces I traversed, like the bustling, noisy Mleczarnia café or the Jewish Club, where I conducted many of my interviews. The film conveys the physical sense of my fieldwork encounters and sociality in Wrocław, like the spatial contrast between the enormous White Stork synagogue and the small number of congregants. It provides a sense of the atmosphere of our collaborative work on the short film for the Jewish holidays of Purim, the rapport I had with my research participants, and the excitement of screening collaborative film projects at communal events. *The Passage* is, at the same time, evocative of the distance and anxiety I sometimes felt when filming and exploring intimate dimensions of Wrocław Jewish life. The film shows when I take a few steps back and create a distance in order not to intrude too much at the funeral of my friend's grandfather. In that, the film is also a subtle, performative reflection on the dynamics and ambivalence of my place among my research participants as a 'native anthropologist'.

The third way in which my film and thesis are related has more to do with the methodology of my longitudinal research, of which my doctoral work has been the central element, but neither the beginning nor the end. The film, being an incomparably more accessible medium, will enable an ongoing dialogue with the people involved with the Wrocław *gmina* and other Jewish organizations, who will see my documentary and be able to comment on it. In that sense the film acts as an extension of the written word, not only epistemological, as above, but also

methodological, which turns my project into a continuous process based on feedback I will be able to receive from screenings and private viewings.

Even though the written text and the film, the two different approaches to the subject of Jewish sociality and experiences, can be appreciated independently of each other, whenever possible they should be engaged with together. Ideally, the reader/viewer would see the film twice, once before reading my thesis and once after. This creates an opportunity to experience the film from two different perspectives. At first, the viewer would see it unencumbered by the analysis and the in-depth knowledge of contemporary Jewish life. He or she would focus on what film conveys most proficiently: my research participants as distinct personalities with unique grimaces, ways of speaking and a sense of humour. The viewer's attention would be drawn more towards circumstances, which are neither unique nor exclusive to Polish Jewish belonging: of trauma, the ambivalence of belonging and a personal transformation in a cultural encounter. In this initial engagement the film will also convey the ways in which Anna, Jan and Michał, the film subjects, locate themselves in the community not only in the social, but also the physical and psychological sense. One example are the scenes during the Purim celebrations in which Anna dancingly walks in and boldly announces the film screening and Janek watches the earlier music performance with a shy smile, glancing from behind a wall protrusion.

Viewing the film again, after reading my thesis, should enable the viewer/reader to engage with images at a deeper level, notice its symbolic elements, and more confidently to draw and interpret associations between individual scenes, as well as between the text and the film. The second viewing will produce a complementary account of the thesis subject, from the global-scale political and social processes, through the analysis of community life and personal narratives, to faces, gestures, timbre of voices and the sensory environments of the synagogues, the new Jewish cemetery and the kosher canteen.

***

Anthropology's engagement with visuality, as Marcus Banks notes, can be broadly divided into studies of visual culture and materiality, and the employment of visual methods in anthropological research and representation (Banks, 1997). As Anna Grimshaw argues, the former has secured its position as a legitimate and

largely undisputed field of anthropological inquiry, while the latter is still subject to reactions that exemplify what Lucian Tylor appropriately called 'iconophobia' (Taylor, 1996; Grimshaw and Ravetz, 2005; Grimshaw, 2011). From a certain perspective, the anxieties of 'iconophobes' appear understandable. Indeed, visual anthropology cannot be tamed and safely relegated to the role of a supplementary exercise judged by neo-positivist criteria. Provided that the sub-discipline can break from its submissive position of methodology assessed against the backdrop of classic ethnography, it has the potential to 'leave a trail of death' (Aarhus Universitet, 2012) in its wake, to borrow a phrase from Rane Willerslev's call for innovative research in times of calculated predictability and micromanagement. Visual anthropology calls for academic logocentrism and pretensions to be redefined, transformed into a unified epistemology of anthropological research. At the same time, as Lucian Taylor is right to point out, the criteria of film's accountability and transparency formulated by theorists like Karl Heider or Jay Ruby are hardly fulfilled by textual ethnographies (Taylor, 1996).

I am not here alluding to the contentious presence of the visual within anthropology to entrench myself in its defence or to argue for the viability of visual methods, especially since such defence is less and less called for. Anthropologists' aversion towards ethnographic filmmaking is becoming a thing of the past, as Paul Henley suggests (Henley, 2004a). At the heart of these late anxieties over non-textual representation lies, however, a continuously salient issue, not of whether, but *how* visual media should and can be combined with anthropology.

Until now, audio-visual methods have been incorporated into social anthropology, and used to produce diverse non-textual representations, from photography (e.g. Collier and Collier, 1986; Pink, 1997) and aural soundscapes (e.g. Feld, 1991; Feld and Brenneis, 2004) to multimedia installations (e.g. Burrows, 2005). Understandably, my concern here will be with ethnographic film as the form of research practice and representation chosen for my doctoral project. The production of my documentary existed in a feedback circuit with my writing and its outcome, and is accordingly a concretization of an on-going creative process. I am going to situate my own work within the context of ethnographic filmmaking and discuss the film's role in relation to the written part of my thesis, to facilitate analytical reverse engineering of the creative process that led to my documentary film.

The observational paradigm

Even if anthropologists have long used photography and film in their work, it was not until the 1970s that visual anthropology emerged as a distinct subdiscipline. That moment was symbolically marked by the publication of *Principles of Visual Anthropology,* which became one of its theoretical foundations (Hockings, 1975). Filmmakers among visual anthropologists drew from a diverse legacy: from pioneer Robert Flaherty and Dziga Vertov's *Kino Pravda* forged in the 1920s to Jean Rouch's *cinéma vérité* and American *direct cinema,* which emerged in the 1960s. The already existing creative output of talented anthropologists-filmmakers such as John Marshall, Robert Gardner and David MacDougall provided another significant point of reference for the newly formulated discipline. The method of filmmaking that emerged as paradigmatic, to the extent of becoming almost synonymous with visual anthropology, was *observational cinema*. David MacDougall expresses the fairly consistent premises of the 'observational' method in the following way:

> In place of a camera that resembled an omniscient, floating eye which could at any moment be anywhere in a room (with a close-up, an over-the-shoulder shot, a reverse angle), there was to be a camera clearly tied to the person of an individual filmmaker. Instead of an editing style that re-created spaces out of fragments, collapsed time, and simulated the points of view of the subjects, there was to be an editing style favoring sequence-shots and camera movements representing the eye behind the viewfinder. (1998, p.86)

As Paul Henley (2004b, p.105) argues, the 'observational method seeks to effect this engagement between subject and audience through a cinematography based on an 'unprivileged' single camera that offers the viewpoint, in a very literal sense, of a normal human participant in the events portrayed'. According to such a perspective, when filmmakers engage in aesthetic or technical creative efforts, the 'characteristic social and cultural aesthetics of their subjects' world' are being 'smothered' (ibid., p.106).

Right from the beginning, as Anna Grimshaw points out, structuralism, the semiotic turn in film theory, and the interpretative turn in anthropology effectively impeded 'critical discourse through which observational work could be described, even less evaluated' (2011, p.256; see also Grimshaw and Ravetz, 2005), or rather,

as I would add, it compelled anthropological filmmakers to confront standards dramatically at odds with the inherent qualities of film as a sensorial medium. The phenomenological and material turns in anthropology of the last two decades reevaluated concern with the material 'surface' of life-worlds, and raised questions about film's potential to mediate sensorial environments. The new theoretical climate substantiated observational cinema's preoccupation with the filmmaker's physical presence and the embodied perspective of the person behind the camera (Grimshaw, 2005; MacDougall, 2006).

Remnants and metaphors – the documentary film

In line with the film theorist Gilberto Perez, David MacDougall points to film's materiality through its emergence in a physical photo-chemical process (Perez, 1998; MacDougall, 2006). This insistence on film as a remnant of experience underscores its substantial difference from writing. The film author is bound to materialized imprints of images and sounds that he literally 'cuts' and 'juxtaposes' rather than a system of signs that can be arbitrarily used to translate his experiences and thoughts. Contrary to my extensively anonymised written account, the film narrative is driven by the embodied testimonies of its three main protagonists. The video recordings of our meetings resonate with words *actually* spoken, the mannerisms of voice and emotional timbre, grimaces of anxiety, surprise and amusement, forming an immensely rich tapestry of sensual impressions. While the process of deciding what was to be heard and seen in the documentary was informed by my encounter with the Polish Jewish life-world, the final choice of how that encounter would be represented was mine alone, if informed by my consultations with the film's protagonists. These individuals were chosen because their stories reverberated with an understanding I had gained from my inquiry into the diversity of experiences of being Jewish in Poland. At the same time, the silent, unseen collectivity of friends, families and the dead was inscribed deep within the stories I heard, the photographs I was shown and, possibly, invoked in between frames of the perceptible. I was more drawn towards 'contemplative cinema' than classic narrative, but the main body of cinematographic *fabric* I used derives from non-staged filmic

encounters and an in-depth relationship with film subjects.[17] What I tried to prepare during my time in Poland was the source material for the eventual mélange of intimate testimonies of being Jewish in Poland and scenes of a congregation's social life. Concerns mentioned in the previous chapter forced me to reconsider the poetics of image and the epistemologies of filmic representation I could employ. Propelled by the actuality of lives, my ethnography and film-work started to evolve, encompassing the wider condition of the 'Jewish revival'. Consequently, I had to plan ahead how I would translate the images into a documentary and began searching for ways to explore new possibilities of expression. Acknowledgment that images are material traces, remnants within and beyond their indexical and iconic character, does not mean that sensorially evocative observational cinema is the only route to take when it comes to ethnographic filmmaking. An ethnographic documentary is an arbitrary assemblage of these traces, a narrative (or more accurately a poem) with its own image-based language, and a truly multisensory total work of art, a *gesamtkunstwerk*[18] (e.g. Smith, 2007). Consequently, it is a representation radically different from writing, yet equally subjective, arbitrary and authorial –if driven by the anthropological desire for tediously worked out glimpses of understanding of other human beings. Neither text nor film warrants the veracity of eventual representation.

Another approach would be to consider that, as Wilma Kiener, argues: 'Over recent decades the language of ethnographic filmmaking has evolved into an elaborate fetishizing of the camera, if only for the sake of creating a natural feeling of unity within a finite time and space' (2008, p.296). The observational preoccupation with the ethnographic authorial presence, the embodied perspective whose presence validates and valorises the veracity of filmic representation, inadvertently invokes Clifford Geertz's (1988) thoughts on the projection of authority through ethnographic 'I-witnessing', more than the salience of one's claims. The point is hardly to reject the applicability of observational style, let alone

---

[17] The term 'contemplative cinema' is usually associated with 'slow cinema', of 'long takes, quiet observation, an attention to detail, to inner stirrings rather than to outward restlessness, highlighting the deliberate or hesitant gesture, rather than the protagonist's drive or determination' (Røssaak, 2011, p.117). Here the term is used in a wider sense, to denote films that prompt the viewer to finding his or her own interpretation through an active intellectual engagement rather than more directly leading spectators towards a single conclusion.

[18] A work of art that is a synthesis of multiple forms of expression.

the significance of direct, improvised and personalized filmmaking established in visual anthropology of today. Rather, it is to challenge the idea that visual methods and representation must follow their presumed model in traditional ethnographic methodology, especially the notion that there is a distinctive form of filmmaking inherent and 'natural' to anthropology that creates a unilineal trajectory for the future of visual anthropology. The approach that drives my own audio-visual exploits does not situate ethnographic film in an either/or dichotomy, strapped between the constructivism of editing and phenomenologically informed cinematography and sound recording. It is crucial to find a rationale for the subdiscipline's existence by pushing its conceptual boundaries and practical explorations. Visual anthropology needs to announce its specificity (or rather specificities), but not by conforming to transplanted prerogatives or criteria. A set form of expression for visual anthropology, including filmmaking, would be as destructive as a similar imposition in anthropological writing.

It is precisely with this mind-set that I created *The Passage*, and it was the lived reality of the ethnographic encounter that eventually informed my choice of speaking in a particular film language – or more precisely, balancing in my creative work different forms of representation established within filmmaking – some paradigmatic for visual anthropology and others going beyond its established confines. My own filmwork, which I am going to discuss in the following pages, is an endeavour deeply informed by longitudinal fieldwork, collaborative film projects I have been involved in, and an intimate relationship with the research topic and film protagonists which continues as an on-going dialogue about my representation and its perception among the people I worked with. Although informed by observational cinema, my film does not pretend to be an unhindered transmission of the lived experiences of either my protagonists or myself, nor does it try to establish its veracity or compliance with anthropology by means of cinematographic style. *The Passage* is an elaborate construction initiated in the field and finalized a few years later in editing.

Montage and the poetics of film

The term montage is either a synonym for editing or it denotes a particular form of creative editing.[19] I use this term here in the latter meaning. Although montage is primarily identified with post-production, when footage is cut and assembled into a narrative, the process of montage is virtually present at every stage of filmmaking. Cinematography itself involves cutting consecutive takes, and shifting from one image to another by camera-movement and the adjustment of focus with the future composition in mind (e.g. Mitry, 1997). Likewise, the process of collecting or (re)recording found footage can be seen as the initial phase of montage. To give an example, I had to think of the editing process a year or two in advance, recording footage from a television programme in the way that I chose protagonists for my film and made sure I was present with my camera at chosen social events. Nor does montage end here. Our eyes cut images as we shift our attention from one object to another and change the depth of field by contracting or expanding our pupils - our eyes' apertures. Film viewing involves constantly shifting attention, even though deliberate framing, depth of field and a scene's length can be effectively used to compel us to either focus on a significant element of a scene or make our eyes wander.[20] Scenes are connected and juxtaposed in our minds, forming the totality of cinematic form, rather than just a collection of images.

It might be said that anthropology has predominantly been concerned with the production instead of the post-production of films. In other words, more attention has been paid to cinematography and sound recording than editing, let alone creative montage, which is supposedly disruptive of the presumed synchronicity with temporality of filmed situations (for criticism of such perspective see: Vaughan, 1992, Kiener, 2008). All in all, montage as creative editing, standing in opposition to the early paradigm of observational cinema, with its long takes and unbroken chronological continuities, has received little attention. It is equally fair to say that in most ethnographic films, editing does not venture beyond creating an illusion of a

---

[19] In Polish for example, there is no separate term that would allow the distinction to be made. *Montaż* is one word used for both 'editing' and 'montage'.

[20] Even for someone completely unaware of the technicalities of the filmmaking process, such internal montage becomes most apparent in films done in a single sequence shot, such as Aleksandr Sokurov's *Russian Ark* (2002) or in a very limited number of takes like Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope* (1948).

linear, seamless and chronological procession of events, even if classics of ethnographic filmmaking, like John Marshalls' *N!ai, the Story of a K!ung Woman* (1980), Jean Rouch's *Chronique d'un été* (1961), or particularly, Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss* (1986), exemplify exceptions to this tendency.

Jean Rouch's *Les maîtres fous* (1955) is arguably one of the most evocative examples of how montage can impact on the reading of the whole film; it juxtaposes practitioners of the West African Hauka religious movement, possessed by formidable spirits, with shots of colonial ceremonies and authorities whose power was absorbed through performative mimesis. This dialectical montage in Rouch's endeavour was no less evocative than the ritual itself and continues to generate multiple interpretations of the relationship between colonial domination and Hauka beliefs (Stoller, 1992; Ferguson, 2002; Henley, 2006). In Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Ilisa Barbash's *Sweetgrass* (2009), a recent epitome of observational cinema, it is possible to see a careful construction of narrative out of years of fieldwork combined with a sound design of considerable complexity (for an ethnographic documentary) as, precisely, a creative form of editing which constructs the aesthetics that instil in viewers the sense of immersion in the life-world of sheep and ranchers of Montana (Castaing-Taylor and Barbash, 2009; Grimshaw, 2011). While it may seem paradoxical, this unapologetic sensorial ethnography through questioning the boundary between anthropology and art ipso facto is situated alongside contemplative filmmaking departing from the observational paradigm, heralded by Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss* (1986). As Michael Oppitz has observed, Gardner made a par-excellence 'montage film', where the arrangement of shots was fundamental to creating a tapestry of images that would evoke contemplation over life and death in Benares (Oppitz cited in: Ostor, 1989). Nonetheless, these and other films only heighten the impression that the practice of creative editing in ethnographic filmmaking has been incomparably more elaborate than theoretical reflection on the potential of montage.

Ironically, the most recognizable anthropological treatise on montage is George Marcus' (1995b) hypothesis that this cinematic technique can be productively adopted in ethnographic writing. It is another idea from the same author (1995a), that of multi-sited ethnography in the globalized world that invited Wilma Kiener to critically consider both the paradigm of observational cinema and the possibility of montage based filmic representation as a means of conveying

dislocation between culturally and spatially distant locations. By juxtaposing two different life-worlds – that of Guatemala and Germany in her documentary *Ixok-Woman* (1990), Kiener aimed to invoke the transnational lived realities of her film protagonists. Kiener, in her own take on Eisenstein's parallel editing, does not lose sight of the wider potential of montage, and argues that juxtapositions of images and scenes can help anthropologists represent far more than the disparity of spatial locations:

> When the image is not the only thing that matters, as in Observational Cinema, the cut itself actually becomes the thing that matters. For example, the image of that which is absent may relate to the future (a wish, a threat) or lie in the past (a memory, the background); it can be a conscious representation of a situation elsewhere (political protest) or, on the other hand, images might pop up in a random way like a roaming mind. In order to react and interpret the manifold relationships between presences and absences in contemporary cultural production, the editing style or montage in ethnographic filmmaking must be eclectic, embracing the virtually unlimited range of cuts in film language (2008, p.396).

Critical of observational cinema, Kiener refers to it as 'a kind of an audiovisual vacuum cleaner, voraciously sucking in time and space', where the 'camera is the object-fetish' (2008, p.405). Instead, she proposes shifting anthropological attention to the screen and the entirety of the creative process, the central element of which is cinematic montage. Neither theory, nor methods of anthropology, have remained unchanged: the assumption of bounded and self-contained communities or localities where an anthropologist observes and engages with her or his research subjects is an illusion, or rather, as in my own study, a heuristic device that anchors the analysis rather than circumscribes its scope. The coeval existence in globally dislocated life-worlds, however, is just one of the creative possibilities of montage, as it addresses only one dimension of the manner in which anthropological research has been redefined. Following Lila Abu-Lughod's arguments for rethinking the boundaries and dogmas of anthropological practice, visual anthropology needs to address the actuality in which local lived realities are embedded in 'worlds of mass media, consumption, and dispersed communities of the imagination' (1997, p.128).

65

According to Christian Suhr and Rane Willerslev (2012), montage can show the 'invisible': 'an excess of visibility or an infinite totality of vision that cannot itself be accessed from any actual human perspective, but whose presence is the precondition for our possibility of perceiving anything' (2012, p.286). Unfortunately, their exploration of possibilities offered by montage gets lost in meanders of philosophical deliberations on the 'antihumanist premise of vision' (sic), which the authors infer from Emmanuel Levinas' notion of the fundamental difference of the Other. Intellectual engagement with Merleau-Ponty, in turn, apparently leads the authors to consider montage as a device to attain the 'view from everywhere' – 'a view that cannot be an object of our own perspectival seeing except 'negatively', that is, by its *absence*' (ibid.). Thus, the authors argue that 'montage offers the possibility of breaking the boundaries of the ethnographically 'thin' 2-D by delivering views of a multidimensional 'thick' and, if you like, super-real quality' (ibid., p.288). Dreams of the multiplicity of viewpoints attained by montage invoke the ominous spectre of Margaret Mead's wish for a 360 degree camera observation (Mead, 1975), not in the sense of a panoptical totality of vision, but in the illusion of productive de-humanization or de-centralization of the filmmaking process. Nonetheless, Suhr and Willerslev make the perfectly salient claim that anthropological filmmaking should 'strike the right balance between realism and constructivism, simplicity and complexity' (2012, p.294). In the following pages I am going to discuss my own understanding of montage and its significance for my documentary. My arguments will be on the one hand grounded in my own filmmaking and on the other hand in wider film theory.

The Passage

My use of montage oscillates between a practice close to what Sergiei Eisenstein envisioned as *intellectual montage*, a juxtaposition of dialectical images to create a new holistic meaning and to invoke referents beyond the immediately visible (Eisenstein, 1977), and what Jacques Rancière calls *symbolic montage*. While intellectual montage (or what Rancière calls *dialectical montage*)[21] seeks to reveal

---

[21] Jacques Rancière uses the term dialectical montage as a wider category of editing practices which would nonetheless conform with Soviet Montage Theory.

the unseen, symbolic montage conjures up a 'more fundamental relationship of co-belonging', where 'heterogeneous elements are […] always open to being assembled in accordance with the fraternity of a new metaphor.' Symbolic montage, therefore, poses a question and leaves it hanging in the air instead of seeking a definitive answer. 'If the dialectical way aims, through the clash of different elements, at the secret of a heterogeneous order, the symbolist way assembles elements in the form of mystery' (Rancière, 2009, 56-7). This collage is intended to provoke the viewer to reflect on the limits of representation and the discrepancy between memories, fantasies and lives. Film is a form of expression particularly eligible, though most certainly not exclusively, to be considered as, what Umberto Eco termed, 'open work'; that is, it not only allows but elicits and encourages multiple interpretations (Eco, 1989). With montage techniques, I tried to create a multi-faceted and multi-layered representation that reflects both the ambiguity and complexity of the ways in which my main three film protagonists experienced being Jewish in Poland.

Thinking in terms of montage is an analytical process, but not like inductive reasoning, which offers definite conclusions. Rather, it is thinking through potentialities and possible interpretations, where the main narrative of the passage, of personal experience and transformation provides a point of departure for the viewer's own explorations. The process of recording materials for that bricolage - scenes from communal life, interviews, photographs, found footage - and its subsequent editing allowed me to better perceive the trajectories of *becoming* my protagonists were experiencing and prompted me to consider the ambivalences and the ambiguities of Polish Jewish social life. In that sense my film borrows from the tradition of essay film: a bricolage becoming an intellectual reflection on the topic and a meta-reflection on itself as a representation (Lopate, 1992; Rascaroli, 2008; Corrigan, 2011). These visual representations and self-representations are present in *The Passage* on several levels: Anna's photographs as material traces of the past; the film-within-a film screened at the Purim party and 'real' photographs incorporated within that projected image. At another level is my own cinematography, and last but not least, my film incorporates 'found footage' recorded from live television and sampled from the mediascape of the internet.

For example *The Passage* confronts a CNN report about an artist looking for Poland's 'lost' Jews of the past with a scene from the community life of Polish Jews who are very much part of the Polish present, even if they do not necessarily fit into

the nostalgic imaginaries about the pre-war Polish Jewish minority. This juxaposition prompts the viewer to consider the extent to which even laudable forms of reevaluation of Polish Jewish cultural heritage, shared history, refer to the realms of imagination and nostalgia, where Jews are no longer one tenth of Polish society, but are safely relegated to the sphere of exoticism, fantasy and distant past. Montage is used to evoke in viewers a sense of discrepancy between the 'disappeared' Jews and the lived realities of Jewish life constantly informed by imaginaries and affects ingrained in the Polish visual media.

My film brings together and juxtaposes different stages of engagement with Jewish life which are analysed separately in the written text – it materializes the notion of *becoming* by connecting its different stages and dimensions in the immediacy of personal intimate experiences, thus fusing different dimensions of my analytical work into three tangible trajectories of Polish Jewish lives. This is augmented by the structure of the film itself, which starts with a representation of death, of passing away, but ends with Anna, who, having gone through her own passage of socialization and learning, an intense experience of Jewish sociality at transnational events and programmes, becomes a teacher, someone teaching presumably the next generation of Polish Jews. Presumably, because the viewers, like the protagonists, are left with a sense of ambivalence, between precariousness and hope, that defined *gmina*'s ambience during my fieldwork.

The use of intellectual montage in the film is extensive. Here I will provide a single example, merely sketched to indicate the creative process at work. In one of the scenes in *The Passage,* Anna tells of her reluctance to reveal that she is Jewish, and the anxieties of her coming of age. An earlier scene shows Anna with her husband, Adam, and indicates that they are both comfortable about being Jewish to the extent of self-irony, an explicit effort to strip their 'Jewish home' of potential exoticism that they implicitly (and correctly) assume might be typical to the nostalgic representations of the Polish Jewry and the 'revival' . When Anna's story moves on to her mother, we see a photograph of her mother on the beach with a strapping blonde man, while Anna in the background tells of how the young man left her mother when he found out that she was Jewish. Anna and her mother in her youth look strikingly alike, and the photograph juxtaposed with Anna's face deliberately stresses that resemblance – the montage of these two scenes evokes a sense of continuity of intergenerational experiences, of living with what Anna calls 'her

Jewish looks', but also of a being able to find a partner (as her mother eventually did) who would not find their Jewishness stigmatizing – or as in Anna's case, who would himself be Jewish.

In the practice of editing, Rancière's symbolic montage and Eisenstein's intellectual montage often coexist: juxtapositions invoke new meanings and provoke questions, inviting the spectator to consider the ambivalence between the two different scenes, which do not follow each other, but are still sufficiently proximate temporally to generate in the viewer a sense of dissonance. For example, the film shows two strikingly different portraits of religious life at the Wrocław congregation and provokes the viewer to consider how communal religiosity at Wrocław is composed of joyous and crowded holiday celebrations and the slowly diminishing everyday religious practice. That in turn allows us to understand Jan's dilemmas when from the process of conversion and learning he has to shift towards ordinary daily or weekly religiosity. Again, the combination of scenes is meant to produce a sense of ambivalent future of the congregation – which is suspended between hope and uncertainty. Rather that supplying the 'answer', the juxtaposition of two instances of synagogue life invites the viewer to struggle with the apparent contradictions inscribed in sociality at the Wrocław *gmina*.

Film language(s)

The perspective I adopted resonates with observational filmmaking. I situate the viewer in the midst of cultural practices and in front of individuals in natural settings, using a hand-held camera reflecting my bodily movements, following the protagonists and focusing on subjectivities rather than abstract totalities. Building blocks of digital sequences, sculpted by light and vibrations of air, in intervals and frames I chose, if not fully controlled, ended up being inspired by *kino-pravda* and *cinema vérité* and their progeny of ethnographic filmmakers committed to unscripted filmmaking while aware of its inherently constructed quality. Parts of my film are careful observations of community life, the synagogue, canteen, Jewish Club, the Jewish cemetery, although I rarely tend to employ the long takes, characteristic of observational filmmaking – unless these are used to precisely induce moments of reflection or to slow down the pace of the narrative. My work cannot be traced to any given method or genre, but with regard to the dimension in which I step out of the

observational paradigm, I cannot deny drawing inspiration from the film essays like Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1983), Jean Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinema* (1988-1998) and, in particular, the militant filmic collages of a German artist and filmmaker Harun Farocki, most notably *Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges* (1989, see also Wahlberg 2004). Documentary essay as a form of expression cannot be encapsulated by a definition, yet scholars agree that it shares several characteristic elements (e.g. Lopate, 1992; Rascaroli, 2008; Corrigan, 2011). Two of these can certainly be found in my work, although they emerged from the working process rather than as a preconceived set of guidelines. The first is the presence, embedded in the film narrative, of an inquiry and meta-reflection of the filmmaker. The second, bricolage: an assemblage of different kinds of film material, including pre-existing footage. The most characteristic element of the film essay, the authorial voice, is here given a particular treatment – my film does not contain a voiceover that would drive the narrative or direct the interpretation, instead, the authority is somewhat dispersed, contentious, as the film's three protagonists offer diverse narratives to contextualize it. Despite the fact that I consulted my protagonists at the latter stages of the editing process, the ultimate authority over the assemblage is mine, and it would be naïve to claim otherwise. Nonetheless, informed by my ethnographic fieldwork and analysis, I suggest, rather than provide, the pathways of interpretation. The authorial voice reveals itself in choosing means and materials for spectator's reflection, but not in spoon-feeding a predetermined meaning. As Georges Didi-Huberman, following Walter Benjamin, argues in *Images in Spite of All*, the image creates a 'spark' and not 'substance', a spark that can bring about what Susan Sontag described as 'negative epiphany', an overbearing impact and stark revelation, a spark which in turn reverberates with Benjamin's 'spark' invoking the 'profane illumination', 'a materialist, anthropological inspiration' for discovery and transformative understanding (Sontag, 1977; Benjamin, 1996, p.209; see also: Cohen, 1993).[22] Iwona Kruz, an anthropologist of visual culture, argues that Didi-Huberman and Farocki, a radical philosopher and an uncompromising filmmaker, share the belief that film can be a medium of knowledge (Kurz, 2012), but practically this can only be the result of critical workmanship and reflection, on both sides – that of the

---

[22] The quality of photographic image as a something evoking reflective commitment while being able to directly affect the viewer bringing in emotional reaction or revelation by power of the depicted reverberates with Roland Barthes' notions of *studium* and *punctum* (1981).

creator and of the spectator.[23] The extent to which film evokes that profane illumination and sometimes allows for a personally transformative understanding extending beyond what I am able to express in words, is an open question, renewed with each screening of my film and the conversations that follow.

The film and thesis form an alchemical union of anthropological representations which communicate back to each other – one on the level of intimacy, sensoriality and poetics of montage and the other as an analytical generalization informed by ethnographic in-depth vignettes, discussions and texts. Consciously picked elements of observational style, and an in-depth collaborative relationship with film subjects are combined with the careful use of montage to extend the scope and depth of my reflection. Clear awareness of the ultimate constructedness of any filmic representation coexists in my project with recognition of the inescapable semiotic and phenomenological duality of the film medium. A filmmaker is never fully in control of the multiple bodies and objects 'co-present' in a single frame, MacDougall further argues, let alone the thousands of frames that make up a documentary (2006). 'New works', insists MacDougall, 'attempt to construct sets of relationships that resemble those of poetry in the verbal domain, since such cultural complexities must be grasped as totalities rather than piecemeal' (2006, p.222).[24] The ambiguity of film may hinder deliverance of definitive analytical statements, but its poetics may be embraced to construct rich representation that is both communicative and open-ended. My film is meant to communicate back my thoughts while retaining a multiple-layered structure open to recurrent explorations and resisting a definite 'reading'.

'All film aspires towards the poetic in that it has neither a wholly predetermined syntax nor a precise, delimited symbolic vocabulary', as Dai Vaughan (1992, p.113) once argued. The question is whether we embrace visual poetics as an important form of knowledge production or attempt to push the boundaries of observational cinema to produce immersive filmic experiences. That choice should

---

[23] I have tried to make my film accessible to a wide range of audiences, both specialists and non-academics. That said, anthropological film is not destined to be less demanding on the viewer than a sophisticated anthropological text is on the reader. This statement may seem banal, but I am under the impression that it is far too often overlooked.

[24] Lucien Taylor (1996, p.88) suggests that visual poetry is a counter-proposal to ethnographic prose, and it is precisely that which makes it intimidating. Kathleen Stewart's (2007) literary work is perhaps the best example that written ethnographies can have their own poetics and employ it in an astounding manner, but this seems to be an exception to the rule.

perhaps be informed less by a theoretical standpoint and more by the diverse research projects in which anthropologists engage.

Chapter 4
The haunting

Several members kept participation in group meetings a secret from their spouses.[…] A woman whose mother's family were religious Catholic Poles had not told them that while sitting at her father's hospital deathbed ten years prior that on the day of his death he started singing in Yiddish and asking for his prayer shawl while in a delirium before he had lapsed into a coma.

Vera Muller-Paisner, Poland: Crises in Christian-Jewish Identity (2002)

J-word

Magda and Karol. Two people representing the successive cohorts of 'Jewish youth' (*żydowska młodzież*) who joined the *gmina* over the last decade, became its members and leading activists. During my fieldwork in Wrocław, Magda, whom I have already introduced, was the head of the Jewish Club *Sof haDerech* and an active member of the congregation. Karol, like so many others, had by that time drifted off to lead his own, separate, life, away from the transnational space of the 'revival' and its social network. The friendships he made, strong connections forged in the firelight glow of youth camps, at wild parties and in Jewish activism, have polarized

into either a few very close relationships or fading, distant acquaintances. A few years ago Karol moved to the United Kingdom and took up a technical job in one of the myriad satellite towns edging the London sprawl. I met him for a short while during one of the last brief off-shoots of my main body of fieldwork, when I was filling in the blanks of my ethnography.

Their experiences of the reality of the 'revival' were not only set in different temporalities of the post-socialist period, but also in different temporalities of the Wrocław Jewish community. They hardly knew each other as their engagements with the *gmina* did not overlap - Magda started to attend when Karol had already moved away from the *gmina* and migrated. Yet, their paths in the Polish Jewish social network intersected; it was a matrix made up of a trickling ebb and flow of young people, mostly steady, but which sometimes accelerated in surges of activity, such as after the establishment of the, short-lived, Jewish student house in 1999 or the coming of a new rabbi in 2006.

The TSKŻ Educational-Recreational Resort in Śródborów was one of the things they had in common and recalled with a mixture of amusement and nostalgia. Throughout the whole of the post-war period, the place had served as a retreat for members of the TSKŻ and their families. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) organized *żydowskie kolonie,* Jewish summer camps for TSKŻ children and teenagers, until 1967, when the government forced the JDC to suspend its activities in Poland and the purge the following year led to massive emigration. The ban was lifted in 1981 and the organization started to re-establish its social and educational programmes in Poland, including winter and summer camps for a nascent generation of Polish Jewish youth. Magda and Karol were among those new participants.

By the time I spoke with Magda and Karol, the resort had become a shadow of its former, glorious, self, though it still housed social get-togethers of mostly first- and second-generation members of the TSKŻ. The place, endowed with affective and symbolic significance, kept resurfacing in the memories of some of my research participants - those who, from childhood, had been embedded in the social networks of Polish Jewry and whose parents or grandparents had sent them to *kolonie*.

When we spoke about Magda's impressions of the summer camp, the most striking feature she recalled was the exuberant cries of *Ty Żydzie!* ('You Jew!') or *Ty Żydówo!* (fem. 'You kike!') - the children's new way of naming each other within the camp's space. In Poland's landscape, almost devoid of Jewish people, the phantasmal 'Jews' are recurrently invoked in anti-Semitic discourse, admittedly marginal in the public sphere, yet surprisingly persistent in everyday remarks, insults, and proverbs. For some, the mythical Jewish ever-presence is still a way to explain Polish politics, the economy and personal misfortunes. As Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, a Polish anthropologist, has observed, the word 'Jew' may be used to put down an ill-favoured neighbour, a politician, or a media figure. 'Jew' can be an accusation of stinginess, treachery, awkwardness or simply, otherness – not fitting in (Tokarska-Bakir, 2008, p.43-44).[25] Sometimes it is used by children to insult a classmate who does not take Holy Communion or go to Catholic religious instruction at school. It can be an expression of dislike and hatred, but above all, it signifies otherness. This does not mean that this specific labelling has no impact on Poland's remaining Polish Jews, or that it does not translate into actual implicit or explicit persecution when someone's Jewishness is known or suspected. Presumably most non-Jewish Poles using such vocabulary have never seen an actual Jew, or are not aware that they have met one. This does not make the odium of such stigmatization of Jews – mythical and real - less ominous.

Yet, in Magda's story the children were not insulting each other. These boys and girls, the grandchildren of those who had lived through or escaped the Holocaust and remained in Poland, found themselves in a space where such categorizations neither had a negative ring to them nor led to social ostracism. At this strange gathering, everyone was evidently marked with the same unsettling identity. The Śródborów resort, or rather the social time-space it fleetingly created, was a catalyst.

---

[25] There are words in Polish vernacular which are more vulgar (the above mentioned feminine form *żydówa*) and more demeaning and patronizing (masculine *żydek* literally : a little Jew) derogatory terms for a Jewish person. However, in everyday vernacular the very same word 'Jew' is both a common slur and an positive ethnonym. In that respect the duality characteristic of other European languages, for example: yid and Jew in English, *zid*or *ievriej* in Russian, or *feuj* and *juif* in French does not exist in Polish. It is worth noting that it is precisely because the word 'Jew' has been appropriated by the anti-Semitic discourse of the genocide that some Germans tend to avoid it altogether, as Ruth Mandel points out in her study of belonging and otherness in contemporary Germany (2008).

The word 'Jew' was subject to subversive semantic and affective re-appropriation. Unchained from its typical resonance, 'Jew' was spontaneously turned into a positive identification, something one could fling out and take back, unpunished, a code word for connectedness. The children and teenagers entered this liminal space of Jewish communal life and engaged in a subversive discharging of Jewishness.

Many years later, Magda remarked in our conversation that the experience of 'at last' being able to utter the word Jew was 'absolutely cleansing'. The summer camp was for her a sanctuary from the ever-present, as she put it, *posągi żydowskie*, 'Jewish statues'. She was referring to the popular handicraft wooden figurines and paintings of a money-counting Jew that some Poles still consider a good-luck charm. In that sense, the camp was a retreat from the imagery of exoticized otherness, and effectively a place to separate her sense of self from the folklore 'Jew'.[26] Karol, older than Magda, noted the same readiness with which they called each other 'Jews'. He mentioned that since he started socializing at these temporary retreats, for him the word had lost its negative overtones. At the same time, Karol began to notice that his Jewish friends and colleagues back in Wrocław had, as he put it, 'a problem with the word Jew'.

Magda, Karol and other children at Śródborów were effectively extricating themselves, appropriating the 'invective' and turning it into a positive indexical term, taking its typically disquieting offensiveness and discharging it in frolic play. With the same enthusiasm, they talked about their, and their parents', experiences of anti-Semitism: having their windows broken; a Star of David on a gallows painted on the wall of their house; or other equally resonant signs of their neighbours' affection. Magda recalled, with a smile, that she felt almost guilty for not being able to recount one of these 'veteran' stories, that, somehow, her experience of Jewishness was strangely lacking that common component of tangible anti-Semitism present in the everyday experiences of her new Jewish friends.

---

[26] The social significance and popularity of these figurines seems unchanging, as Polish eBay, and its larger equivalent, allegro.pl, are brimming with 'Jews counting money' images. For a controversial perspective on the potentially dark underside of the phenomenon see an article by Joanna.Tokarska-Bakir (2012) For a more benevolent perspective on Jewish memorabilia, see Erica Lehrer's discussion (2003).

***

This chapter opens my discussion of the social world that emerged in the aftermath of Poland's 'Jewish revival' and the experiences of being and becoming Jewish within that transnational framework. My reflections will become, accordingly, a reference for discussion in the following chapters, which addresses why and how people negotiate Jewish belonging; why the transient *communitas* created in institutional space is of crucial importance; why a journey through the distinct transnational world of becoming and sociality profoundly affects Polish Jewish sociality and subjectivities. I am thus going to connect being and becoming Jewish in contemporary Poland to the wider context of imaginaries of Jewish otherness. That connection has as yet received little scholarly attention: accordingly, it constitutes one of my original contributions to academic scholarship.

The first part of this chapter, which discusses the historical emergence and persistence of the spectral presence of the mythical 'Jew' in Poland's cultural imaginary, places my field of study within a historical context stretching far beyond that of the Wrocław *gmina*. I explore the main tropes of Poland's cultural imaginary about Jews. The scope of otherness attributed to Jews extends far beyond what it is possible to address in my thesis, therefore I confine myself to contextualizing the being and becoming Jewish in history and ideology that lingers on in contemporary Poland. Next, by introducing the notion of *haunting,* I demonstrate how the imaginaries and affects of otherness form the backdrop for contemporary Polish Jewish sociality and the projects of 'Jewish revival'.

The Nation and its Other

As Joanna Michlic, Maria Janion, Brian Porter and Genviève Zubrzycki argue from different disciplinary vantage points, for roughly two centuries the imaginary 'Jew' has been an indispensable figure in the ethno-nationalist strain of Polish political discourse and national mythology. Notions of Jewish otherness are, however, fundamentally grounded in the Christian religious imaginary. In *The Spectral Jew,* Stephen Kruger argues that the Middle Ages witnessed the emergence and reification of 'a sense of Christian identity […] dependent upon a relationship, both of derivation and of opposition, to Jewishness; Jewish converts to Christianity

77

both confirm and destabilize a sense of firm Christian identity; Christian polemics insists on the stubborn difference of Jewish bodies even as it tries to make them disappear' (2006, p.206-7).[27] As Kruger convincingly illustrates, the notion of radical Jewish alterity, not only in ethnic and religious but also in (quasi) racial terms, was established long before the onset of modernity. The Jewish presence, discursively relegated to the Christian narrative of the biblical past, nonetheless, 'haunted' as he says, the Christian present (2006, p.11). In his historical study *Jewish Dogs: an image and its interpreters: continuity in the Catholic-Jewish encounter,* Kenneth Stow (2006) discusses the origin of blood libel accusations, which were deployed to dehumanize Jews and justify acts of violence against them. This evocative and tragic mythogen - accusations that Jews kill Christian children and squeeze their blood out to make matzo bread – has, across Europe, for centuries, been instrumentalized in, and recursively fuelled, countless pogroms of Jews. Stow argues that these charges emerged as a consequence of the theological notion of Jews threatening the purity of Christians, who saw themselves as the 'new Israel' and believed themselves to supersede the people of Old Covenant.[28]

The Christian origins of anti-Jewish fantasies in the Polish context are the subject of Joanna Tokarska-Bakir's (2008) research in the rural areas of south-eastern Poland, where she observed the persistence of blood libel beliefs and anti-Jewish stereotypes. As she says, 'in Poland of 2005, not only was it possible to believe in such things, but even be convinced that one had, by a hair's breadth, avoided an attempt [of ritual murder]' (ibid., p.47). She likewise noted a widespread belief in 'Jewish impurity' and strangeness, which led to the stigmatization of Jewish ancestry and turned the word 'Jew' into an insult. According to Tokarska-Barkir, these and other anti-Jewish stereotypes are structures of *longue durée* of medieval provenance.**[29]** They have become ingrained in the Polish collective imagination that

---

[27] A striking example of that is the classification of intermarriage 'as a sexual crime equivalent to adultery and hence subject to capital punishment, and sex that transgressed the lines of religious distinction was directly associated with both 'bestiality' and 'sodomy' (Kruger, 2006, p.90).

[28] The doctrine of supercession.

[29] The term she appropriated from the French Annals school of history along with the more recent concept of *long moyenâge (the long Middle Ages),* coined by Jacque Le Goff, one of most prominent representatives of that intellectual circle. The concept, in short, encapsulates the idea that in a conceptual and cultural sense the Middle Ages did not end in the 15th century, but lingered on into early modernity (Le Goff, 2004) Tokarska-Bakir's interesting, if debatable, argument, is that in Eastern Europe, the long Middle Ages had a much longer half-life, overlapping with 'modernity'. (Tokarska-Bakir, 2008)

in turn transformed them into the modern phantasms of Jewish otherness; ultimately, they were mobilized to justify violence against Jews.[30]

Pre-modern and modern forms of anti-Semitism have more similarities than differences – or rather, modern anti-Semitism did not challenge or significantly transform medieval, theologically inspired phantasms but rather appropriated their framework and narratives.[31] Polish ethno-nationalist discourse of the nineteenth-century retained these earlier, residual forms, accruing and gradually developing them, merging them with new political discourse to give increased momentum to shaping Polish-Jewish relations. As Brian Porter argues in his study of the turning point in Polish national thought, despite differences in religious and secular narratives about Jews, 'it is impossible to completely separate Catholic anti-Semitism from racial anti-Semitism, because religious hatred and secular hatred coexisted in mutually formative ways' (2011, p.272). Of course, in the case of the medieval imaginaries, 'the idea that the Jews were engaged in a plot to destroy Christian civilization' was not distinctively Polish, but, rather, a local symptom of wider European religious and political imaginings and ideology (ibid.).

Porter also suggests that change in attitudes towards Jews, and the rise of anti-Semitism, both among Polish thinkers and the Catholic clergy, was a gradual process, initiated by the disillusionment that set in after the unsuccessful 1863 uprising.[32] Western ideologies of nationalism also played a part. He is right in stressing that the late-nineteenth century witnessed growing ethno-nationalist, exclusivist tendencies, which eventually led to racial anti-Semitism hostile to both Jewish 'assimilation' and Polish – Jewish coexistence. However, Porter (2011) is not entirely right in suggesting the benevolence of Polish Catholic discourse before the

---

[30] The blood libel was was used to justify the persecution of Jews from the Middle Ages through to the infamous post-war pogroms in Kraków in 1945 and in Kielce in 1946.

[31] Some scholars argue that anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism should be analytically dissociated. In that sense, as Krzysztof Lewalski argues, we could speak of: 'anti-Judaic' beliefs (the theological teachings that distinguish Christianity from Judaism), 'anti-Jewish' attitudes (the day-to-day hostilities that came from social and economic conflicts between Jewish and Christian communities), and anti-semitism sensu stricto (the distinctly modern ideology of racialized hatred). (Lewalski, 2002 quoted in Porter 2000, p. 272). With a different analytical rationale, Joanna Tokarska-Bakir (2008) makes a rather tentative distinction between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, considering, first, that anti-Judaism is not a sufficient condition for anti-Semitism and second, that there is a possibility of non-anti-Semitic anti-Judaism. Both approaches are considerably problematic, on both ethical and analytical grounds, therefore I choose to avoid the term anti-Judaism altogether.

[32] Known as the January Uprising, (pol. *Powstanie styczniowe*) this was an unsuccessful armed insurrection in the Russian Partition of the former territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

second half of the nineteenth-century – examples of vile quasi-racial anti-Semitic tirades and publications, influenced by the Catholic clergy, can be found much earlier, as Joanna Michlic (2006) and Maria Janion (2009) have convincingly illustrated. As Michlic argues (2006, p.39), 'there is striking similarity between the eighteenth-century anti-Jewish polemicists' strategy of making the Jewish community a scapegoat for all the misfortunes of the Polish Christian population and state and the late nineteenth- and early twentieth century integral nationalists' strategy of making the Jewish community a scapegoat for all national disasters and problems'.

Maria Janion, a seminal scholar on the history of Polish literature and cultural heritage, roughly identifies two topoi of Polish romanticism and national thought that emerged in the nineteenth-century and informed representation of Jews in regard to Polish nationhood. One, which identified with the immensely influential writings of the Polish 'national poet' Adam Mickiewicz, explicitly and implicitly acknowledged a historical continuity and positive relationship between the 'nation of Poles' and 'nation of Israel', the latter which would be integrated into the Polish nation, and contribute to the rebirth of the then non-existent Polish state. The other cultural imaginary, which Janion exemplifies using another seminal work of Polish romantic literature, Zbigniew Krasiński's *Nieboska Komedia – The Un-divine Comedy -* [33] presented Jews as an unassimilable and harmful foreign body, who stood for everything opposed to Polish nationhood: atheism, materialism, the Enlightenment, the ideals of French Revolution, and almost racial pollution. Krasiński, witness to nineteenth-century Jewish emancipation, like preceding and subsequent nationalist thinkers, saw the greatest danger to lie in the dissolution of categorical boundaries between Poles and Jews, that is, in the assimilated Jew, a fifth-columnist who was supposed to be 'hiding', and scheming against the 'Polish Nation'. As Janion argues, the 'phantasm' of Jewish converts, of 'false Christians', originating in anxieties raised by the eighteenth-century mass conversion of followers of Jakub Frank's syncretic religious movement and evoked in nineteenth-century, conservative-Polish-

---

[33] Both Mickiewicz's works and Krasiński's 'Undivine Comedy', are set texts in Polish secondary schools. Janion's choice of these exemplary texts, around which she builds her analysis of 19th century Romantic thought, stems not only from the profound influence of both works, but also from the prominent status of both writers. While Mickiewicz is hailed to this day as wieszcz narodowy (the national bard or prophet), Krasiński's book enjoyed a long life as a paradigmatic text of ethno-nationalist literature.

thinker circles, of whom Krasiński was an exemplary, gradually evolved into the phantasm of *judeopolonia* – 'Jew-Polishness', that, to this day, recursively resurfaces in Polish public discourse (Janion, 2009).[34] Janion attributes the emergence of the notion of the phantasm, or fantasy (*fantazmat*) to European Romanticism, later to be adopted by Sigmund Freud as denoting a psychological vehicle for expressing repressed urges and desires. Janion employs the concept in her analysis of literary narratives and discourse, arguing for its applicability in studies of collective imaginaries and delusions. Seemingly at odds with reality, fantasies reveal their own logic, contained in the 'real' of collective imaginary. She argues that fantasies (or phantasms) become 'real', nonetheless, through their affective power, their consequences for social reality. In that sense, and as exemplified in her own, aforementioned, writings, the 'Jew' became one of the most powerful phantasms in the Polish cultural imagination and national discourse (Janion, 1991).

Antoni Polonsky suggests that the distinguishing feature of modern anti-Semitism, as opposed to what he refers to as 'Christian anti-Judaism', was 'hostility to Jewish integration and to acculturated and integrated Jews'. Even if, in its entirety, this statement is debatable, in the light of what I illustrated earlier in this chapter, Polonsky is essentially correct in his argument (Polonsky, 2005, p.189). Indeed, modern anti-Semitism exacerbated to an unprecedented extent an anxiety about Jews that crossed both the imagined and actual boundaries separating Jews from gentiles. In the wake of Polish ethno-nationalism, as has been mentioned above, the greatest terror was not triggered by traditional Jews, distinguishable by their Yiddish language, clothes, customs and beliefs, maintaining, at least theoretically, varying degrees of religiously-prescribed distance from, and interaction, with non-Jews.[35] It

---

[34] Janion relates the fear of boundary-crossing 'crypto-Jews to a wider context of European Christian thought. Rightfully so, but its roots seem to go much farther into the past, at least to the 'pure blood laws' of 15th century Spain and the legal measures brought against the 'New Christians', that is, Jewish converts to Christianity.

[35] I am making here a rough approximation. While religion was definitely a defining factor contributing to the strengthening and maintenance of the social boundary in mostly Orthodox shtetl communities, the language allowed far-reaching transgressions. Not only did many 'traditional' Jews speak Polish, but, also, a considerable number of their non-Jewish neighbours spoke Yiddish, sometimes fluently. By and large, the retention of cultural distinctiveness and the enforcement of religious separation did not entail social isolation. 'The Jews and non-Jews saw their countrymen and women as people who differed in faith, language, and custom, but not in their loyalty, connection, and belonging to the community. In the shtetls a Polish Jew was not primarily a Jew: he or she was primarily someone *tutejszy*, 'from here' (Orla-Bukowska, 2004, p.191). Even in shtetl communities, that form of coexistence began to break down in the 1930s.

is the 'assimilated' urban Jew, a Jew who is not longer distinguishable, who lives and looks like 'true Pole', who figures as the most, harrowing anxiety in the writings of Dmowski, the main ideologue of pre-war right-wing nationalism, even though the nationalists ('endeks') considered the Jew to be essentially un-assailable, forever tainted by his essentialized Jewishness (Michlic, 2006).[36] Attributing Jewishness to non-Jews who, due to their alleged 'flaws' or behaviour, did not fit the normative precepts of the imagined Pole-Catholic fantasy, did not emerge in the post-war period, after most Polish Jews had been killed in the Holocaust.[37] Instead, the notion of 'artificial Jews' first emerged in the interwar period. The term was used to denounce Polish, non-Jewish, thinkers and writers who were opposed to provincialism and ethno-nationalism, and who, in the eyes of the Catholic right, were attacking reputedly Polish virtues, values and morality. The prime example of a non-Jewish Pole labelled as an 'artificial Jew' was the seminal writer and publicist of the era, Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy (Polonsky, 2005).[38]

Far-right nationalist rhetoric, the increasingly racist teachings of the Catholic clergy, economic difficulties and, undoubtedly, the 1930s allure of fascism spreading like a cancer over Europe, turned inter-war Poland into a place that offered little hope for Jewish existence, let alone social inclusion. The Holocaust reified and exacerbated anti-Jewish hatred, putting Jews outside the law, and thus, in consequence, bestowing upon them, externally, the dehumanized and absolutely objectified status of *homo sacer* (Agamben, 1998). The Holocaust, as Gross and Grabowski argue, opened up a re-categorization of the value of Jewish life in the eyes of some of their non-Jewish Polish neighbours. (Gross, 2001; Gross, 2006;

---

[36] At the same time, as Kamil Kijek argues, the rise of Jewish nationalism, and concerns about 'assimilation', that is, of religious and cultural acculturation, positioned Polish Jews, particularly Jewish youth, between the opposing ethno-nationalist discourses and political projects. Jewish organizations and political parties of interbellum Poland were actively engaged in developing educational projects and policies that would allow the preservation of religious and cultural autonomy within the Polish state, or prepare for emigration to Palestine (Kijek, 2010). Paradoxically, even the political declarations of the most avid Jewish nationalists were deeply infused with cultural narratives, values, and symbols rooted in Polish Romanticism and history (Kijek, 2009). Nonetheless, the increasing integration of Polish Jewry into the economic and socio-cultural life of the Polish state and the incorporation of Jewish youth into its educational system did not the stem the rising social exclusion of Jewish citizens (Kijek, 2010).

[37] As Tokarska-Bakir seems to imply (2008, p.630).

[38] See also Janion's account of Krasiński's reflections on Mickiewicz: the latter being accused by the former of becoming infected with Jewishness by the blood of his Jewish wife. Obviously, the notion of 'artificial Jew' under different guises goes back much farther than 20th century. (Janion, 2009)

Grabowski, 2011). Some resisted the dehumanizing policies against Jews, some embraced them and most stood by, out of fear, indifference or preoccupation with their own survival. Many wholeheartedly took over communal and private property left after the genocide, as did the communist state. In that sense, the indifference of most and the moral failure of the many threw the valiant heroism of others into the limelight. As Jan Grabowski (2011) argues, the greatest threat to Poles who hid Jews came not from the Germans, but from anti-Semitic Polish neighbours; doing so was the most dangerous underground activity one could engage in. The notion that Jews can be persecuted and killed, instigated by the German occupation, overlapped with the residual, old-new dark mythologies of Catholic clergy teachings, pre-war ethno-nationalist propaganda, and unabashed greed. (e.g. Gross, 2006; Engelking, 2011). [39]

Poland lost roughly six million of its citizens, in World War Two. Half of these were Polish Jews, meaning that only eleven percent of pre-war Jewry survived the genocide. There is no doubt at all that Poland's Jewish citizens were, as Israel Gutman and Shmuel Krakowski (1986) argue, 'unequal victims', condemned to death for the fact of their very existence. Yet, a terrible loss of life among non-Jewish Poles, conflated with the long cherished notion of Poland's historical martyrdom and a prevalent sense of Poland's betrayal by the Allies, produced a very strong cultural memory of Polish victimhood. This, paradoxically, generated an unsettling contest over the valorization of memories, in which Jews were, and are still seen, as challenging a rightful recognition of Polish martyrdom and self-sacrifice (Zubrzycki, 2006). The sense of the primacy of Polish suffering during World War Two was exacerbated during the communist period, especially in education. The emergence of a Polish historical discourse about the Holocaust in the post-socialist era marked the beginning of the difficult process of Poland's collective critical retrospection (Steinlauf, 1997).

The Holocaust and post-war anti-Semitism brought about a significant change in Polish demographics. Actual, living and breathing Jews have, by and large, perished or emigrated. What remained was the mythical Jew, the significant Other of

---

[39] A striking example from post-war period is the infamous 'Treblinka Goldmine' – the massive excavation of the grounds of the Treblinka Death Camp, for valuables buried by the murdered Jews, organized by the local peasants and temporary migrants driven to this gruesome gold rush by the harsh post-war reality. The digging up of Jewish remains went on for many years, despite the efforts of communist authorities to curtail it. (Gross and Grudzińska-Gross, 2011; Rusiniak, 2008)

the ethno-nationalist imaginary, as strong and populous as ever. As Slavoj Žižek writes in the discussion of collective fantasies and ideology: [40]

> In other words, what appears as the hindrance to society's full identity with itself is actually its positive condition: by transposing onto the Jew the role of the foreign body which introduces in the social organism disintegration and antagonism, the fantasy-image of society *qua* consistent, harmonious whole is rendered possible. (Žižek, 2001, p.90)

Elsewhere Žižek claims that 'the anti-Semitic idea of Jew has nothing to do with Jews; the ideological figure of a Jew is a way to stitch up the inconsistency of our own ideological system' (Žižek, 2008, p.48). In that sense, actual Jews are no longer required for the 'mythical Jew' to persist in the ethnically and religiously homogenous post-war Polish state; but for those who did remain, the historically sedimented and politically evoked phantasms made their lives difficult.

Arguably, the most prominent phantasm of Jews, and the dominant anti-Semitic stereotype, in contemporary Poland, at least on the fringes of political and public discourse, is the so-called *żydokomuna* – judeocommunism. As Joanna Michlic argues, the ethno-nationalists of the illegal political opposition 'interpreted the participation of Poles of Jewish ancestry in the Communist government as the destruction of the Poles that had been predicted in the myth of 'Judeo-Polonia' (Michlic, 2006, p. 200). In her reflection on *żydokomuna*, the Polish scholar Anna Zawadzka, adopts Sander Gilman's argument that the process of stereotyping involves not only attributing negative features to the imaginary Other, as opposed to the 'normal', 'human' features of the group doing the stereotyping, but it also projects upon the Other those qualities and behaviours seen as negative or

---

[40] As Žižek (2001, p.89) explains his understanding of 'identity': 'Therein consists the crucial shift that has to be made with reference to the 'deconstructionist' commonplaces about identity: indeed, identity is impossible, inherently hindered, its constitutive gap is always already sutured by some supplementary feature - yet one should add that identity 'itself' is ultimately nothing but a name for such a supplementary feature which sticks out' and suspends the essential quality of the domain whose identity it constitutes.' Žižek's reflection evidently informs the construction of Polish ethno-nationalist cultural imaginaries. In a tour de force manner he illustrates how in anti-Semitic compensation the 'gap' in 'identity' or more encompassingly the big Other, the craved for impossible harmonious symbolic and social order, is conceptually filled in with the figure of the Jew.

threatening to its imagined collective self-image or 'identity' (Gilman, 1985; Zawadzka, 2009). Likewise, ethno-nationalist Polish historical politics, as Zawadzka argues, and which Michlic's detailed historical study largely supports, projected communism onto the Jewish Other. The notion that the demonized communist ideology could only be wilfully embraced and promulgated by an alien non-Pole, extends beyond ethno-nationalist historical discourse into collective imaginaries (Michlic, 2006). In the post-war reality, a number of Jewish communists held prominent positions in the new political regime. Nevertheless, actual Jewish support for communism in Poland, relatively rare considering the mainstream political sympathies of the majority of pre- and post-war Polish Jewry, did not matter. The topos of *żydokomuna* permitted exorcising the 'guilt' for embracing communism from the idealized Polish-Catholic nation.[41] Vladimir Tismaneanu observes that the very same process of projecting guilt for a communist past and disillusionment with neo-liberal capitalism onto a mythological figure of a 'Jew' has been a process common to post-socialist countries including Poland (Tismaneanu, 1998, pp.88-111).

Acknowledged or not, contemporary Jewishness in Poland, being and becoming Jewish is an existence in a mythicized landscape. An interesting reflection on Polish national-religious mythology and its phantasmal figures has been made by the sociologist Genviève Zubrzycki. Within the context of my discussion in this chapter, and beyond the topics already addressed, her most important contribution is, perhaps, the notion of a 'national sensorium'. She notes the importance of visual representations of national (or as I suggest, ethno-national) mythology, arguing that the notion of national 'community' is shaped by, and internalized, not solely through linguistic and performative means, but equally, by visual, and *multi-sensory experiences* – sounds, images, smells, symbolically and affectively associated with national ideas, and evoking national sentiments. 'symbols and material objects', became 'trans-temporal nodes – compressing history and condensing layers of historical narratives and myths into a single image and object, providing specific

---

[41] The process itself, ironically, strikingly resembles the projection of moneylending onto Jews in the wake of Christian mercantilism. As Lester Little argues: "It was both inaccurate and unfair to regard commercial activity, especially moneylending, as the exclusive preserve of the Jews, for the Jews always formed a tiny minority of people so engaged. And yet the main function of the Jews in the Commercial Revolution was to bear the burden of Christian guilt for participation in activities not yet deemed morally worthy of Christians. Christians attacked in the Jews those things about themselves that they found inadmissible and that they therefore projected on to the Jews. (Little, 1978, p.56 quoted in: Kruger 2006, p.142)

interpretive frames to understand the present' (Zubrzycki, 2011, p. 24). Zubrzycki's claim relates to my argument about the emergence of Jewish otherness in the Polish cultural imagination. Most importantly, she draws attention away from the narrative construction of Jewish otherness and towards its visual manifestations, exemplified by the good-luck, money-counting Jew figurines mentioned earlier, or the stereotypes of a distinctively 'Jewish' physiognomy (Zubrzycki, 2006; Zubrzycki, 2011). The figure of the Jew seems to be a crucial element in the landscape of imaginaries that Zubrzycki so aptly identified – filled with conspiracy theories, martyrdom, the messianism of Poland – 'Christ among nations'. The extent to which these imaginaries can sweepingly be attributed to the all-encompassing homogenous Polish 'national identity' or the 'national mythology' as Zubrzycki suggests, is debatable, but the resonance of these imaginaries in Polish Jewish lives is certainly not.[42]

Unsettling affinities

Konstanty Gebert, a journalist and one of the leading second-generation figures of Polish Jewry, recalls the Warsaw-based Jewish Flying University (JFU) as the catalyst in his personal search for the meaning of Jewish heritage. Established in 1979, the JFU was an informal meeting group that discussed Jewish identity, ancestry, a sense of belonging – 'shipwrecked Jews', as Gebert called himself and his friends at that time (Gebert, 2008), who could not find a place for themselves in existing Jewish institutions. The JFU was an off-shoot of workshops organized by the famous American psychologist Carl Rogers, formed when some participants suggested organizing a therapeutic group for people of Jewish ancestry. This gave rise to an opportunity to collectively engage with the 'guilty knowledge', as Gebert calls it, of their Jewishness (2008, p.28). The newly formed group proved surprisingly popular and the workshop collective soon turned into a social network that allowed the JFU to be established: names and phone numbers were circulated and exchanged among the participants and ended up disseminated among strangers

---

[42] Zubrzycki is aware of the stark divisions within Polish society and its political world, concerning Polish nationhood, so it is more a question of her analytical framework and phrasing. What she sees as a generational opposition to a national mythology seems something that traverses generational lines - an alternative strain of collective self-understanding that has at least as many adversaries as proponents in contemporary Poland.[42](e.g. Blobaum, 2005; Zubrzycki, 2006; Zubrzycki, 2011)

as well (2008, pp.28-32) People began calling, looking for answers on how to deal with their unsettling Jewish ancestry, the 'cost' of revealing their Jewish origin, the possibility of making Jewish tradition meaningful in their lives (ibid.). The Jewish Forum Foundation in Poland, a grassroots organization established in 1994 (and since closed down), set up a help-line for Poles struggling with their Jewish origin. The 'Jewish Telephone Helpline', *Żydowski Telefon Zaufania*, was organized in the same way as those for people struggling with addiction or domestic violence (Berger et al., 2004, p.190). It was anonymous and aimed at providing support and advice on how to deal with the unsettling discovery of Jewish ancestry and the unresolved anxieties that such origins evoked (e.g. Jarco, 1998).

In a similar vein, in the 1990s, the American psychologist Vera Muller-Paisner initiated a project called 'Broken Chain', intentionally targeting Jewish Poles. It was meant to provide psychological support for second generation, middle-aged adults who had discovered their Jewish ancestry. The idea was to organize professional support groups to replace earlier spontaneously organized self-help meetings. Muller-Paisner encountered traumatic histories of family secrets, fear and uncertainty. In some cases 'it was new to them to be able to utter the word Jew and hear it coming from their lips, in front of others' (2002, p.19). The group gradually helped them to come to terms with the harrowing, stigmatized identity that suddenly concerned their own selves. The project was organized as a joint effort by Polish and American therapists, and funded by the Ronald Lauder foundation; in that sense, it represented one of early transnational projects of the post-socialist 'revival'.

Muller-Paisner's observations, as well as Małgorzata Melchior's work on first and second generation Polish Jews/Jewish Poles, suggest that for this group, the discovery of Jewishness, of Jewish ancestry at a later stage in life or the experience of living in post-war Poland with a consciousness of that 'hidden identity', produced more dissonance, in terms of affective reactions and identification, than that experienced by the post-socialist 'third' generation (cf. Melchior, 1990; Melchior, 2004). It is impossible to portray Polish Jewish contemporaneity without critically interrogating these claims.

The affective context of Jewish self-understandings and embodiments of otherness have not vanished from the lives and subjectivities of the 'third generation'. In individual cases, this context may feed into the habituated, embodied anxiety about revealing one's identity or even a shadow of an ancestral connection.

For many of my research participants, self-identification as Jewish was a strategy of selective enunciation in different social contexts. To a certain extent, this resembles the dilemmas of identification faced by contemporary Turkish Jews researched by Marcy Brink-Danan (2011). However, while in Turkey the negotiation of difference is divided mostly by a public/Jewish (familial and communal) boundary, in Poland at times, as I came to realize, it even runs across mixed Polish-Jewish families, according to the individual sense of how safe it is to articulate Jewish belonging among different relatives. These extreme strategies of enunciation seemed most likely to occur in families where Jewish origin was a discovered secret or confirmed premonition, the knowledge of which was then selectively revealed – as in Szymon's case which I will elaborate on in the following chapter. Another scenario was that of Janina's, where a non-Jewish Pole converts to Judaism, but comes from a family in which some members harbour anti-Jewish prejudices.

Experiencing otherness

The residue of Polish Jewry, those who did not emigrate in the post-war period, regardless of whether they considered themselves as Poles, Poles of Jewish descent or Polish Jews, felt it threatening to speak about their Jewish belonging. Most of them chose to under-communicate their Jewish ancestry. Why and how they passed this anxiety onto their children, and why their children grew up in a society where so many keep silent about being Jewish cannot be answered without looking into what I call *haunting*. The most challenging predicament for social research is to grasp that which is both elusive and ephemeral yet radically shaping of peoples' lives across generations.

I use the notion of *haunting* as a heuristic device to help me connect wider historically sedimented conditions with the contemporary experiences of Polish Jews. My research called for an analytical framework that would allow me to concretize an almost intangible, but immensely powerful, *presence* in the lives of my research participants, their acquaintances, and families. I had to forge a concept that would allow me to express the affective synergy of a historically grounded cultural

imagination, collective memories and traumatic personal experiences.[43] The subject matter of haunting is intangible, transient yet, ominously relevant for understanding the outcomes of a globalized remaking of contemporary Polish Jewish sociality.

Avery Gordon uses the term haunting to describe 'a shared structure of feeling, a shared possession, a specific type of sociality', claiming that [44]

> haunting is the most general instance of the clamoring return of the reduced to a delicate social experience struggling, even unaware, with its shadowy but exigent presence. Haunting is the sociality of living with ghosts, a sociality both tangible and tactile as well as ephemeral and imaginary (Gordon, 2008, p.201).

Gordon grounds her analytical standpoint in Raymond Williams' notion of 'structures of feeling' – 'characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships'(Williams, 1977, p.132).[45] For Gordon, this offers a vantage point from which to reflect on the effervescent and the unspoken that entangle and drive human longings, anxieties and desires. The presence of Jewishness in Poland reverberates with this sociologically elusive, yet experientially substantive, notion. In many of the Polish Jewish lives I encountered, the ubiquitous presence of *the* haunting is both harrowing and, to make it less ominous, ridiculed. Thus, the haunting underlying Polish Jewish awakenings of affinity, surges of fascination and anxiety, and the transformative process that follows exemplify Poland's own actuality of 'living with ghosts' (Gordon, 2008, p.201). In my ethnography, the haunting cannot be reduced to a single category of

---

[43] That is, historically re-produced, culturally grounded, disseminated and interpersonally shared imaginings about 'Jews' – some of which change rapidly, while others, apparently, remain fairly consistent over centuries.

[44] For analytical purposes, the use of haunting inevitably invokes Jacques Derrida's notion of *hauntology*. Apart from appreciation of the fact that the intangible, or spectral, past can linger on and inform the present, Derrida's metaphor, and concern, is with the political – rather than the cultural and affective. Having in mind space constraints, I have decided not to discuss these few similarities and considerable differences in detail. For similar reasons, I do not dwell on anthropological and folklore studies of actual ghostly apparitions.

[45] Williams says that pertaining to structures of feeling, 'It is that we are concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations. We are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and inter-relating continuity.' (177, p.132)

phenomena: cultural, social or psychological.[46] It is embodied in, and simultaneously shapes, people's subjectivities, yet at the same time it is socially persistent and widely circulating; it is both inside and outside at one and the same time. The haunting reverberates with Poland's cultural imagination, the residue of historically sedimented notions of otherness, ethno-nationalism, the pre-war troubled multi-ethnic state, the history of coexistence and the Holocaust. In this sense, it is connected with the allosemitism mentioned above, where the abject coincides with fascination, alterity with uncanny closeness. It stems from a cultural imagination that instils itself in Polish Jewish lives whether it is crystallized into tangible everyday experiences or discernible only by how it affectively charges Polish Jewish subjectivities. It is the ominous link between the collective imaginaries and life. Gordon's notion of haunting implicitly resonates with scholarly reflection on affect and this is precisely where, conceptually, I intend to take it, in the hope of construing a heuristic device best suited for my purpose. Before I do so, however, I will draw on several examples from my ethnographic fieldwork.

<div align="center">***</div>

Łukasz, a Jewish man in his thirties, living in a small Lower Silesian town, never used to wear a *kipa* (skullcap) in public, outside Jewish spaces institutionally or performatively carved out from the Polish landscape, such as the Wrocław synagogue or education-integration camps. One day in June 2007, Łukasz was visited by his non-Jewish brother-in-law, Franciszek, accompanied by his family. In the evening, when the shops had closed, the men went to buy some alcohol at a petrol station. Franciszek playfully donned Łukasz's *kipa*, as a prank, just to try it out, with no particular purpose. A moment later, Lukasz found himself in a pool of blood, while his brother-in-law was still trying to fight off the young attackers, who were swearing at 'Jews' and 'gays'.[47] Łukasz, fearful about his vulnerability and lacking confidence in the Polish legal system decided not to take the matter to court,

---

[46] The haunting collapses the boundary between the cultural and psychological, as much as it problematizes the Carthesian distinction between mind and body.

[47] They were attacked, as Łukasz describes, by '*kibole*', a slang term for violent football hooligans, a number of whom are either sympathizers or active members of political organizations like *Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski* (National Revival of Poland) *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny* (National Radical Camp) combining nationalist ideology with homophobia, racism and, unsurprisingly, vicious anti-Semitism.

anxious about potential retribution. This might be an extreme case, one that in either Polish or Polish-Jewish official discourse could well be dismissed as accidental and provincial contingency. Another example is Romek, who 'looks Jewish' - amazingly and absolutely fits the stereotypical racial profiling of the 'Jew'. He happened to identify himself as such, but he did not wear *kipa* or anything that might suggest a different ethno-religious affiliation. On a bus in Warsaw one winter, he was 'identified' as a 'Jew' and spat at by a group of passengers. Ewa, who had emigrated with her parents to Israel back in the nineties, and then come back to Poland to study, reluctantly recalled the unbridled mockery and abuse she had suffered from her schoolmates, for the sole fact of being Jewish. Upon her return to Poland, to avoid provoking unwanted reactions, she rarely admitted being Jewish, even at the Wrocław university she attended,. Another of my interlocutors, Sebastian, at some point in his life, felt a sense of Jewish belonging, and started to practice Judaism. He told me no harrowing stories, but he, too, had learned to be selective about the people he informed about his affinity to Jewishness and his 'non-normative' self-identification. At the time we spoke about it, he said he was working to support his family and consequently preferred to be cautious about whom he told of his Jewish affiliation.

In Polish public discourse the persistence of beliefs such as those detailed in the cases given above, the notions of *judeopolonia* and *żydokomuna*, the paradigmatic alterity of Jews in the self-understanding of many Poles is usually shoved behind proclamations about rising tolerance in the post-socialist Polish state: recurrent evocations of prejudice or hatred towards Jews are safely ridiculed and rhetorically positioned on the margins of Polish society. My relatively younger interlocutors had rarely experienced direct, full-blown stigmatization or violence. Yet, even in these cases, the haunting had influenced their families – parents and grandparents, and, in that sense, had moulded contemporary Polish Jewish self-understanding and sociality, the groundwork for changes brought about with the crumbling of the political status quo.

The haunting is the outcome, the go-between between imaginaries, memories and traces of the Jewish past, and the lived experience of the Polish Jewish present. When it comes to fantasies, I do not think that anti-Semitism is a sufficiently encompassing framework within which to understand the cultural background of contemporary Jewish experiences. Anti-Semitism is merely an instance of a much

wider tendency, which reflects the ambivalence and complexity of the historical coexistence of Jews and Poles, and everyone between these categorical poles of identification. The Polish-Jewish intellectual, literary critic and publicist, Artur Sandauer, coined the term of allosemitism, to capture the persistent ambivalence of otherness attributed to Jews in Poland; Zygmunt Bauman has elaborated the concept, noting that it is applicable beyond Poland, and brought it to wider scholarly attention. Allosemitism is the perpetual imaginary and attitude towards Jews that combines fascination and fear, love and hate, craving and repulsion. It is the anti-Semitism and philo-Semitism – the love of Jews – brought together in imagining Jews as the ultimate Other, as the anti-thesis of the normative order. Post-Lacanian scholars like Slavoj Žižek and Julia Kristeva invite us to consider such conundrums, where radical alterity produces both fear and enjoyment or fascination, as not at all unusual (Kristeva, 1982; Žižek, 2008). If we then consider allosemitism a more appropriate term than anti-Semitism, for the ambiguous status of Jews in the Polish imagination, then this synthesis of ambiguous love/hate attitude may be seen to have affected every single generation of post-war Polish Jews, including the 'grandchildren' (Bauman, 1998). Natalia, a lively young woman studying at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, no longer a frequent visitor to Wrocław, was among the interlocutors who expressed the greatest irritation at what she considered the 'kitschy' appropriation of 'Jewish culture'. She perceived the sudden surge in identification with Jews, and claims to Jewish identity among non-Jewish Poles, as often driven by fashion and exoticism. This, she told me, she sometimes found even more unnerving than anti-Semitism.[48] Most of my research participants had a much more benevolent attitude towards philo-Semitism, and the elderly in particular saw it as a strange but ultimately positive development.

Again, I return to what I stated in the introduction: the haunting may disturb Jewish people more than other Poles, but it is not restricted to ethnic boundaries, it is built as much by alterity as by centuries of coexistence and the unacknowledged infusion of Polish culture, space, memory with the Jewish presence – from seized Jewish homes to looming Nazi German concentration camps, from patterns of folk art to the highest echelons of Polish literature, from incomparable if coeval suffering and traumas to cultural memories of ambivalent coexistence. Once again, we return

---

[48] Although after my return to Manchester, she had a very unpleasant experience of that type.

to the spoken and unspoken, but as a <u>result</u> and expression and not cause, in all its subtlety. Szymon, to whom I will dedicate considerable attention in the following chapter, rarely speaks about being Jewish. Yet upon coming to Wrocław, he became so involved in the Jewish sociality around the *gmina* that his closest non-Jewish friends couldn't help but notice. As Szymon expressed it, if they realized he was Jewish, it must have happened 'accidentally' (*wiedzą przypadkowo*). He told me of a trip to the countryside they had together:

> I visited my acquaintances, here, close to Wrocław. We're eating cake, or something; having a drink. She says: there was something on at yours (pl. *u Was*), a concert. I say: there are concerts all the time [in Wrocław]. Yet, she mentioned some theme, said something about it being in the synagogue. I did not know why she asked me, as if she had guessed that it was at yours - at the Jewish Community (*w gminie żydowskiej)*. The concert was not at yours - in Wrocław, but at yours - in the synagogue.

That day, as in every other of their friendly conversations, the words Jew or Jewish were never uttered. If Szymon's non-Jewish fellow students and acquaintances knew the truth, the 'Jewishness' of Szymon was left in the ambiguity of understatement.

These few examples from biographies were representative for at least a part of the 'third generation' affiliated with Wrocław and reverberating with experiences of their parents and relatives. If it was not about an actual harrowing experience, it was about the anxiety that it might happen. All of my research participants were unabashedly expressive about their Jewish roots in the familiar communal setting, yet they constantly employed different strategies of communicating Jewishness in the different social worlds they inhabited, visited and worked in. Some people talked about the anxiety, others about painful memories. Most of those who did not hide or remain in a 'closet' of under-communication after a traumatic experience, knew colleagues or family members that did. In horizontal – generational – and vertical – intergenerational – dimensions the mythical and affective charge of Jewishness forms a part of the habitus,[49] a lasting disposition, of contemporary Polish

---

[49] '[A] set of historical relations 'deposited' within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation and action' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.16) .

Jewishness[50] - certainly, not its only element, but a crucial one nonetheless. Sometimes the anxiety about Jewishness was part of inherited, intergenerational affect. Among the youngest of my research participants some did not experience abuse from non-Jewish Poles, yet the silence about Jewishness was a dominant modus operandi within their families.

Plain and crude discrimination, stigmatization, violence or its threat, on account of being Jewish, manifested itself in the lives of over half of my interviewees and was mentioned in a number of everyday conversations. Whether or not such experiences are labelled 'anti-Semitism', people learn to deal with them or accommodate them in one way or another. Embracing the absurd, ridiculing the oppressor or a threat seemed a persistent potential reaction strategy. Fryderyk, a man in his sixties, closely affiliated with the Jewish Community, told a hilarious story, with a dark underside. When someone painted a word *Rzyd* (Gew) next to his front door, with his usual dryness, he simply corrected the spelling mistake to *Żyd* (Jew).[51] Distancing oneself from the ominous actuality or potentiality of anti-Jewish prejudice was more difficult for others. In the summer of 2008, in the early stage of my research project, I had a long discussion with elderly Jakub, raised in the traditional Yiddish-speaking environment of a Jewish shtetl. He was almost brought to tears by a reflection on his powerlessness in trying to fight anti-Jewish stereotypes his whole life. At home he collected newspaper cuttings of articles about the huge number of Jewish soldiers who served in the Polish Armed forces during World War Two, which he bid me to photocopy and broadcast.[52] His collection of yellowing paper scraps was a determined attempt to credit Polish Jewish patriotism that had faded in Polish historical consciousness, one old gentlemen's desperate personal struggle with Poland's ethno-nationalist fantasy (e.g. Aberbach, 2009).

---

[50] Some men were obviously less eager to present themselves as having suffered some form of persecution at some point or another. Marianna once said that she felt that because of the actual or imagined, but still present, Polish paradigm of special courtesy afforded to women, she was less likely to encounter psychological or physical abuse because of her Jewish identity, unlike the men she knew. A statement of that sort brings to mind one of the main slogans of the ONR and Endecja street brawlers in interwar Poland: *Precz z Żydami, a Żydówki z nami,* "Down with the Jews, while the Jewesses are ours". The slogan is a well known one, yet in my fieldwork I had an opportunity to hear it from Abram in the context of his experiences in pre-war Kraków.

[51] In Polish *rz* and *ż* are pronounced the same way.

[52] See previous chapter for a note on Jews in the Polish armed services.

Even the wildest fantasies, like blood libel, can slip into the fabric of mundane encounters and conversations. Joanna Tokarska-Bakir's study of blood libel invites us to consider if that myth extends beyond rural South-Eastern Poland (2008).[53] My research indicates that it certainly does. One of the most tragicomic stories to emerge during my fieldwork among the young members of the Jewish Club was about an actual experience of blood libel accusation. Magda and her husband bought a flat in an old tenement house, slightly derelict, but still alluring with its traces of pre-war beauty. It turned out that Magda and Olek's neighbour were a family notorious for their alcohol abuse, with the lady of the house casting insults at the young couple every once in a while, easily heard through the thin partition wall between the two apartments. To cut a long story short, at some point the neighbours found out that Magda and Olek were Jewish. One night, Magda while cooking could not but help hear another conversation through a thin almost makeshift wall separating the two flats. This time, however, it was not a deluge of insults, but a loud conversation between two women - the mother of the abusive lady was warning her unruly daughter that she should control her temper from now on - otherwise 'the Jews' would be sure take revenge and either use their 'influences' to have them thrown out of the apartment or they would kidnap Piotruś, her grandson - undoubtedly for some nefarious purpose. The sudden appearance of a ridiculous anti-

---

[53] The outbursts of anti-Jewish sentiments and the blood libel accusations followed by violent riots, relatively rare compared to Western Europe, do not represent the entirety of the Jewish collective experience in the pre-modern period. The stereotype of Poland as the *paradis judeorum*, Jewish safe haven, is largely reflected in historical accounts, and, what is more important, narratives written by the Jews themselves. Polish Jews (up to the Nazi occupation) were never forced to live in ghettos or bear distinguishing marks, had largely respected guarantees of safety, the right to bear arms and unique legal, social and cultural autonomy - all in combination with a relatively high social status. In that sense, they were more of a class in Polish medieval and pre-modern society (e.g. Weinryb, 1976). The counter reformation in the 16th century and the Catholic Church offensive, particularly that of the Jesuits, against Jews and Christian reformed churches, gradually changed that status, but not dramatically (Teter, 2006; Obirek, 2008). Clearly, historical literature considerably problematizes arguments about the relationship between myths disseminated by the Church and everyday social relations - or rather contextualizes Tokarska-Bakir's and Alina Cała's work on folk mythologies in distinct historical and political circumstances of ethno-nationalism and political propaganda of 19th and 20th centuries, introducing questions about the actual impact of political discourse and power-relations to which both studies are largely oblivious. Anna-Maria Orla-Bukowska argues that it was the sweeping impact of the ideologies of anti-Semitism and ethnic nationhood on small rural communities composed of Poles and Jews, living in relatively peaceful coexistence, that changed the actuality of these symbiotic loci (Orla-Bukowska, 2004). The question as to what extent anti-Semitism is a structure of 'long duration' mentioned earlier and to what degree a phenomenon exacerbated by the ethno-nationalist ideologies in modern Poland is likely to remain a subject of debate.

Jewish myth in the middle of a posh Polish city was so absurd, that rather than evoke anxiety it instantly became a frequently recounted communal story, used to raise a laugh on various occasions. To some extent this communal performative 'defusing' of the harrowing phantasm resembles the subversive re-appropriation of the word 'Jew', where it is stripped of its derogatory propensity and turned into an exclamation of connectedness by the children at the Jewish camp I described at the beginning of this chapter. Of course, this does not mean that no-one in the Jewish Club was aware that the same accusation, little more than sixty years earlier, in the Kielce pogrom, had led to the killing of over forty people - men, women and children. Nonetheless, the myth of 'demonic Jews', that, as a grotesque *deus ex machina*, provisionally pacified the abusive neighbour, was too out of place in the modern cityscape of Wrocław to arouse fear. It was certainly less tangible and distressing than less flamboyant forms of prejudice.

Experiencing Poland's phantasms can also involve a personal search for the meaning of being Jewish, a willingness to come to terms with it, to realign being Polish and a sense of being 'endowed with a difference', becoming somehow socially stigmatized by Jewishness. An example of that would be the story of Piotr. He learned that his maternal grandmother was Jewish when he was sixteen years old. His grandma, on her deathbed, had surreptitiously revealed the secret of her ancestry to Piotr's mother. As he told me, at first it had not meant much to him, especially given Piotr's diverse ethnic background, shared by many Poles with roots in Poland's former province of Galicia, today's Western Ukraine. A critical moment came in his early twenties. On one occasion, Piotr mentioned his partial Jewish ancestry at a student party and learned first-hand the haunting gravity of Jewishness and the responses it could provoke. As he said to me, it made him 'think what it means to be a Jew and what it means to be Jewish in Poland'. Apart from the unpleasantries he heard at the party, in the aftermath of his revelation, some former colleagues, people whom he considered close, immediately distanced themselves, cut him or stopped greeting him in public. This experience both overlapped with, and stimulated, his growing interest in his family's entangled history.

Individual and tangible encounters with stereotypes or persecution often came up as formative experiences for many of my interlocutors, as exemplified by the above mentioned case. Veena Das argues that the ghostly metaphors, as productive as they are, are prone to draw our attention away from the present processes –

whether these be violence, the presence of the state, or, as in the case just mentioned, that of stigmatized otherness (Das, 2007). Haunting, as I understand it, invites us, precisely, to think of the present. As much as haunting is intangible and ubiquitous it eventually materializes in concrete interpersonal encounters, like Piotr's, or embodied traumas and silence as in the case of Magda, described earlier.

When asked why he considered Jewish ancestry important in his self-identification, Jan, one of the protagonists of my ethnographic documentary, did not come up with the ethnic discourse of blood links or the rulings of *Halacha* – the Jewish religious law. Instead he told me that it was a matter of specific family experiences, the legacy of 'silence, of a changed name, of 1968 [anti-Jewish purge], of my grandfather, of my father, of my aunt'. In that sense, while he accepted the fact that one can become Jewish by conversion, without any prior ancestral anchorage, his understanding of Jewish people-hood, of connectedness, was grounded in the post-war strategies of identification with, and silencing of, Jewishness, deployed by members of his family. Haunting, then, may be grounded in transgenerational and cultural memory, as the ghostly presence of emigration and expulsion of family members, persecution, passing, changing names to make them sound less Jewish. Paradoxically, it is also evoked by memories of silence, of what has been omitted or hushed up in everyday life and communication. As Janet Carsten suggests, kinship and memory are closely connected, and indeed, the affective charge of Jewish ancestry often endows it with a particular place in Polish Jewish communal personal hierarchies of relatedness (cf. Carsten, 2000). The social memory of the Wrocław *gmina* reached back only as far as the 1930s, due to a rapidly shrinking group of the community's older members - some already in their nineties. Still, the vibrancy of pre-war Jewish life and the rising wave of anti-Semitism in 1930s were, to an extent, part of the shared social memory - not tied to the *gmina* as a place, but shared among people who came to Wrocław after the war. Among the third generation, there was a keen interest in the history of *dziadki* (granddads), the first generation and indeed, these recollections were an important point of suture between generations, establishing a sense of continuity.

These memories, and the collective experiences to which they refer, did not appear out of nowhere – but from the Holocaust, to the post-war pogroms, to 1968, they were either fuelled, or they thrived on, the strikingly similar set of fantasies that I described in the first part of this chapter, and stigmatized alterity bestowed on

Jewish people, or people externally labelled as 'Jews'. In the same way, even the most bizarre imaginaries, such as blood libel, can be situationally evoked and appear – indeed - as a long forgotten ghost, even if in a modern Polish city such imaginaries may, perhaps, mistakenly, seem only like the pathetic and comical Canterville Ghost, rather than a harrowing spectre of actual mass murder. Cultural imaginaries, then, create a context for everyday experiences, and impinge on individual self-understanding. The fantasy positions Jews outside the Polish body politic - symbolically and in Jewish memories of actual historical experiences.[54]

Affect and alterity

One reason for using the term haunting as a concept is that it bridges the interrelated domains of experience, imaginary and affect. Another reason is that it offers the possibility of avoiding narrow frameworks built on psychological trauma theory, which thinks of haunting more as a direct experience of a disturbing event, or its indirect cultural remembrance. [55]

Haunting is a culmination of interlinked personal experiences, cultural imaginaries, memories.[56] The cultural imaginaries and troubled memories, however, are merely the underside of haunting finding its outcome in a powerful affect of Jewish alterity. Deborah Gould, following Brian Massumi, defines affect as 'nonconscious and unnamed, nevertheless registered, experiences of bodily energy and intensity that arise in response to stimuli impinging on the body' (2009, p.20). She contrasts affect with emotion as the latter is 'structured by social convention'

---

[54] Some collective experiences like the Holocaust or the 1968 purge affected almost everyone and became formative experiences for both the first and the second generation. The fear instilled by the 1946 pogrom in Kielce and the accompanying wave of murders, compelled some to leave, others to form self-defence committees and arm themselves, while people caught up in the 1968 'anti-Zionist' campaign, of either generation, were more or less directly coerced to emigrate with no right to return.

[55] Such a pathway has a genuine rationale and leads to salient outcomes, which is clearly indicated by Marianne Hirsh's work on post-memory, where connection to the past is 'mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation' (1996: 662).

[56] For example, an anti-Semitic incident on the street and a disturbing personal experience can be fostered by imaginaries of exclusion and hate. On the other hand, meeting someone who *actually* believes in blood libels or legends about strange Jewish physiognomy invokes such harmful mythogemes as more than ridiculous stories from the distant past.

(ibid.).[57] A key characteristic of affect, that links theorizations spanning from Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, through to Brian Massumi and Nigel Thrift, is that affects are 'not reducible to the affections or perceptions of an individual subject' (Thrift, 2008, p.116). As Teresa Brennan argues, 'the transmission of affect means, that we are not self-contained in terms of our energies' (2004, p.6). This theoretical thread is picked up by Yael Navaro-Yashin in her evocative ethnography of the 'affective spaces' of contemporary Cyprus (2012). Navaro-Yashin analyzes an 'affect-subjectivity continuum in a post-war environment', illustrating how affect can be generated and circulated in a synergy of the spatial environment of war-scarred Cyprus and the human subjectivities of its inhabitants (ibid, p.27). Her insistence that affect cannot be 'reduced to human interiority' chimes with my own reflections on the specificity of the Polish Jewish environment – imagined, bodily and material.

Central to Navaro-Yashin's approach is her departure from the intellectual tradition of cultural psychology and cultural studies that situate emotion in language and culture, and her distance from human-centred studies of the effects of state and political violence. Drawing inspiration from Bruno Latour, she makes the convincing point, that affect should not be understood only in its intersubjective dimension and that the power it exerts can reside in institutions and material remnants. My own understanding of affect is in essence no different; and it is equally located between 'the external' and human subjectivities. Navaro-Yashin's perspective is inspiring, particularly in the way it goes beyond post-structuralist trauma studies which have focused on the domains of language and memory. The ethnography of haunting, however, leads me to think of affect – here of alterity and spectral presence – as not belonging exclusively to the domain of either 'culture', the psyche or the material and spatial environment. In fact, in relation to affect, it is precisely the boundary between these domains that is debatable. These seemingly separate forms mutate and transform each other, are *both* produced by human subjectivities and reside in the non-human (in the sense of non-organically human), a distinction that is, in itself, highly problematic. Take, for instance, the example of a formerly Jewish home, which is both a material ghost, dissociated from any lived presence of its dead

---

[57] 'To get a better idea of affect, consider how we often experience our feelings as opaque to ourselves, as something that we do not quite have language for, something that we cannot fully grasp, something that escapes us but is nevertheless in play, generated through interaction with the world, and affecting our embodied beings and subsequent actions. I call that bodily, sensory, inarticulate, nonconscious experience affect.' (Gould 2009, p.20)

owners, and at the same time, a lived space constantly reproduced and remoulded by its inhabitants and environment, and inseparably connected to their subjectivities.[58] The deployment of the notion of haunting is an attempt to show how these combined domains – 'symbolic', 'material', 'experiential' merge and discharge in the lives of my research participants. Haunting, as a constellation of affects of alterity and presence, is firmly residual in language, collective imaginary and memories – individual and cultural, but also materialized in Poland's sensorial environment, like the carvings or paintings of Jews with sacks of gold discussed earlier or graffiti of the Star of David hanging on gallows.

Teresa Brennan (2004, p.6) does not insist on the distinction between emotions and affect. She considers the former as 'moods and sentiments' that 'are subsets referring to longer-lasting affective constellations'. What, according to Brennan, is significant about affects is that they can exacerbate or diminish our capacity to act. Leaving aside the predicament of whether affect is precognitive or subconscious, the unstructured and intangible character of affect exacerbates its capacity to circulate between bodies. Affect is the intensity that generates diverse emotions and thus becomes a social force that can be detected, and reverse engineered, by its materialized traces, rather than analytically discerned in itself (ibid.). This understanding seems to merit consideration within the context of my work; it strikes me as particularly salient, this idea of affect not having to be to channelled into feelings, but inconspicuously bringing about identification, silence or a sense of moral obligations. All these observations allow us to understand haunting as a *particular* constellation of affects connecting people, imaginaries and memories. Jewish 'coming out' in post-socialist Poland is often done with the looming presence of silence and anxieties among family members, friends and colleagues, who would not dare to even mention the fact of Jewish ancestry. The haunting, however, does not necessarily find its expression in emotions such as anxiety or fear. For Magda, whom I mentioned at the start of this chapter, the haunting materialized in bodily states. She was unable to utter the word Jew until she was sixteen, without breaking out in a cold sweat. In her case, the visit to a Jewish summer camp was a watershed in communicating a sense of belonging outside the normative model of Pole-Catholic. For another of my research participants, Artur, the haunting materialized in

---

[58] See my discussion of the former Stutthof Concentration Camp (Lorenz, 2011).

an exuberant over-communication of his Jewish ancestry, at times invoked precisely to confront and provoke people whom he knew to hold anti-Semitic views, even if that meant getting into fights.[59]

I began with an ethnographic vignette on language, but the notion of Jewish alterity is, of course, not only a matter of words. The affective, disturbing charge associated with the word 'Jew' is only one example of the phantasmal Otherness that being Jewish in Poland can be endowed with. The vernacular is just one instance of Poland's imaginary Jew, the phantom of a vanished community, meeting the actuality of Polish Jewish lives. The haunting affects the subjectivities of Polish Jews and Jewish Poles, and the dynamics of the 'post-revival' community. It cannot, however, be neatly distributed along preconceived ethno-religious boundaries, as I realized when I interviewed non-Jewish Poles intent on becoming Jewish. Haunting is not an exclusively Jewish 'structure of feeling', but one characteristic of contemporary Poland, even if actual Jews or Poles with a sense of Jewish affinity are most affected by this spectral and affective presence. The following fragment of the interview with Paweł is a perfect example of the haunting in an actual encounter:

> There, close by our hotel, we met a pair of people from Łódź, by the way, most sympathetic. Newly married and on their honeymoon trip. So, we partied day and night. We were all always in a good mood. At one of those parties, on one occasion, more people sat with us, I do not remember it clearly, but at one point anti....like, 'Jewish jokes' started flowing. Jewish not in the positive way, but a lot of mean ones, that you always get to hear. I should make it clear, I am not some freak and when I hear a good 'anti-Semitic' joke, I laugh, that is what my sense of humour is like. Yet, when such jokes are boorish and vulgar, I don't laugh, for the same reason I wouldn't laugh at such jokes aimed at anyone else. So I listen to these jokes, I laugh at some and not at others, depending on what I hear.
>
> Then, my girlfriend, who was already quite tanked up, for some unknown reason says to me, aloud: Paweł, I hope you do not hold a grudge against us? [Paweł, in his narration stresses the word *nas* "us"]. I look at her and say: What should I hold a grudge for? - You know, these jokes, this and that. So I answer her: no way do I hold a grudge, there is nothing to talk about. And the discussion goes on: jokes, some rude comments. Again, she says: Paweł, are you sure you don't hold a grudge towards anyone here? I say: Gosia, I have told you I don't hold a grudge, why labour the point?

---

[59] Of course, understanding the emotional charge of the haunting helps us to better understand why in the 1990s, professional psychological support groups were organized for middle-aged people who suddenly found out that they were Jewish.

At that moment, I think the newlywed wife asked me: Paweł, why do you dislike jokes about Jews. I thought... I will tell them, whatever, it'll be fun. We'll see how people react in such an embarrassing situation. Evidently I wanted to land a blow, to see how it would turn out. I said: No, you know what, it is not a big issue, but maybe Gosia is anxious, because I am a Jew, and she wonders how I feel about it all.

I wish you could see what happened at that table right after. Two people walked away immediately. That girl was almost drowning in shame, almost jumped under the table; that was her reaction. She was so dumbfounded. As for her husband, he was a decent fellow, all and all, but he acted hilariously. He cracked me up, when he approached me and standing above took me by the hand and said: Paweł, for me you are and will always be a Pole - or something of that sort. [Paweł laughed when talking about it]. I was amused by the whole situation, for I aimed to set a cat among the pigeons.

[Paweł's voice becomes less cheerful] However, then my girlfriend stood up and addressed everyone; she must have realized that our party was going to pieces, and she was gregarious. Her life's motto was: partying goes first, people ought to have fun. And now her idiot boyfriend has apparently spoiled everything and people are about to leave.

And then she said - maybe she wanted it to be just a joke: Listen, it is not so bad with him - I think she put it that way, I was in so much shock that it may not be an exact quote - anyway, it is not so bad with him, he only has a Jewish father, but his mum's fully Polish. Upon hearing this, I thought, damn, something in this whole affair is wrong. [...]

I felt as if I'd been slapped in the face. Not only did I feel like someone worse in their company, but I felt that the person I had been hooked up with for a year, went on holidays with and had plans for the future with, suddenly saw me as someone who is 'only' half-limp [*w połowie kulawy*], 'only' partially suffering from an evident defect. Generally, someone to be ashamed of, but 'no one can help it, it is just one those things'.

What happened during this summer holiday encounter was a breach of the boundary between the fantasy and the actuality. The anti-Jewish jokes can be interpreted as a form of bonding, of drawing a perimeter of connectedness around 'Poles' on vacations abroad. The Jew in this configuration can only exist as a mythical creature, a unicorn or a mermaid - the 'non-Pole' invoked in jokes and stories. Upon revealing that he *is* Jewish, Paweł introduced the Other into the centre of the comforting status quo, evoking a range of reactions from his fellow Poles. Some left immediately on learning that they were sitting with a Jew, or possibly out of embarrassment. Paweł's interlocutor was ashamed and completely puzzled, while her husband rushed to reassure Paweł that *despite* being Jewish, he was a 'true' Pole. Paweł found the whole situation hilarious, until his girlfriend's comment. That was

the watershed that ultimately changed the course of his personal life. The racialization of Jewish origin in the Polish social milieu was evoked with full force: Paweł was categorized as a Polish *mischling*, of mixed-blood, inadvertently 'blemished' by having a Jewish father, but still socially acceptable. Paweł's girlfriend may have acted in good faith, without fully realizing the harrowing resonance of her 'defence' of Paweł's inclusion into Polish nationhood. No one in that scene is placed outside the haunting, although the experience is obviously different for Paweł. It is crucial to note that Paweł situationally 'essentializes' himself as Jewish.[60] Outside the performative terrain of Jewish life, when he was similarly essentialized in a confirmation of belonging, Paweł considered himself a Pole of Jewish descent, with a strong sense of affinity to Jewish people and culture – but not necessarily evoking such straightforward, unambiguous identification. That evening he was inadvertently 'reminded' of his otherness.

While the symbolic framework of cultural imaginaries about 'Jews' can be traced back hundreds of years, it was the lived experience of my research participants that seemed most to exacerbate the anxieties over Jewish identification and origin. At times there were tangible experiences – encounters with prejudice and hatred at school or at a party, ever-present anti-Semitic graffiti, language, public discourse, occasional acts of vandalism, where Jewishness was 'at best' marked as alterity, at worst denigrated and demonized. Most of the time, however, it is not a question of anti-Semitism, but allosemitism, of a radical alterity and a radical counterpoint against which Polishness is defined (Michlic, 2006; Bauman, 1998). At the same time, allosemitism denies the difference that would be complementary to Polish belonging and it also relegates Jewishness to the realm of an exotic 'lost' Other.

Boundaries of haunting

Another 'ghostly' issue of Polish historical discourse and memory is the closeness and ambiguity of Polish Jewish relations. Paradoxically, the collateral damage that has resulted from a much needed reflection on Polish complicity in the Holocaust,

---

[60] While the notion of strategic essentialism that emerged from Gayartri Spivak's work speaks of the essentialization of identity in the political interest of collectivities, Paweł's is a moral act of appropriating an unambiguous subaltern identity that he nonetheless recognizes as partly his own, more in the line of Hannah Arendt's famous statement that 'If one is attacked as a Jew, one must defend oneself as a Jew' (Arendt and Kohn, 1994, p.12).

along with the persistence of anti-Semitism in Polish social life, is -- or could be -- regarded as a further reification of the binary opposition between 'Poles' and 'Jews'. While in the pre-war period it was difficult for Jews to become 'ethnic' Poles, even after conversion to Catholicism, they were Polish citizens, and hundreds of thousands effectively became 'Polish' culturally, linguistically, socially, even if such self-identification was increasingly denied them as Poland moved towards the catastrophe (Aberbach, 2009; Schatz, 1991; Opalski and Bartal, 1992; Jagodzińska, 2008).

Conceptualizing the haunting as an affect of alterity helps us understand the ambivalence of its boundaries. The unaccommodated memory of the Holocaust, according to Michael Steinlauf (1997), continues to haunt Polish collective memory. Whom exactly, when, and to what extent, is perhaps debatable, but venturing into such discussion is not my aim here. The haunting invites us, however, to think of the ambiguity of what is remembered and what forgotten. Contemporary Poland certainly resonates, if not with the Holocaust itself, then symbolically, affectively and semantically with vanished Polish Jewry. There is no denying that Poland is riddled with sites of Jewish martyrdom (and, for that matter, wartime martyrdom as such). However, the material remains of a former Jewish presence and vanished life are even more prevalent, even if less popular as tourist destinations, as a Jewish existence has been intricately interwoven with the cultural, social and physical landscape of Poland for more than eight hundred years. Hundreds of, mostly devastated cemeteries, remain like scars on Polish cities and towns, while others are buried under buildings and pavements. All over Poland it is possible to identify tombstones now serving as building material, embedded in houses, churches, roads, faded Hebrew letters hinting at their original purpose. Hundreds of synagogues and communal buildings have been turned into warehouses, storage rooms and restaurants.[61] Others, reclaimed by Jewish congregations, or located on tourist routes, have been renovated, and either returned to their original purpose or turned into museums. This is just a brief account given to exemplify the scope of the Jewish presence, not as a distant memory or historical narrative, but tangible trace.[62] Poland

---

[61] The Poznań synagogue was transformed into a swimming pool by German wartime occupiers and it continued to be used for that purpose until recently. Many other Jewish communal buildings were taken over by Polish local authorities and new owners after the war.

[62] In the light of a lack of serious scholarly reflection on the persistence of 'mundane' Jewish material heritage in the Polish landscape, Wojciech Wilczak's art project 'An innocent eye does not exist' becomes even more notable. The artist photographed roughly 5800 former Jewish communal

is full of evocative 'sites of memory', but even more filled with places of non-memory, a palimpsest hiding, or merely hinting at, what has been, but recognizable under the thin layer of Poland's collective forgetting (cf. Nora, 1989). These locations could be considered Poland's 'difficult heritage', that Sharon Macdonald defines as a 'past that is recognized as meaningful in the present but that is also contested and awkward for public reconciliation with a positive, self-affirming contemporary identity' (2008, p.1). At present, however, with their overwhelming prevalence, these mundane Jewish traces end up disguised, made to pretend to be something else, becoming instead a constellation of repressed local memories of Jewish neighbours. To sum up: on cognitive, material and perhaps affective levels, the destruction of Polish Jewry has as much ghostly presence as centuries of Polish Jewish existence – in fact these two dimensions, both remembrance and forgetting are not necessarily dissociated.

The fascinating and unsettling aura of Jewish alterity appears to inform non-Jewish people's growing interest in the Polish Jewish cultural legacy. Closer investigation reveals that while newly found affinities may encompass both exoticism and nostalgia, they sometimes run deeper and carry a much stronger affective charge. Sebastian, in his thirties, was among the few who ventured into the communal world of the *gmina* without Jewish ancestry, and engaged in the gradual process of learning and socializing to undergo conversion. His story will appear at different points of my narrative. Here, it exemplifies how the haunting operates beyond the ethnic confines of Jewish state-defined 'national minority'. When Sebastian told his grandmother, who was scarred by her wartime experiences, that he was becoming Jewish, she became, as he put it, 'scared'. She used to recount her wartime experiences only when Patrycja, Sebastian's Jewish wife was around.

> Grandma […] She has the dark-carnation looks of a Jewess. She never was one, but she knows that one has to hide oneself. [She has] the fear of the *kippah* [the Jewish skullcap].

Sebastian's grandmother was immersed in the habitus of Jewish otherness. The affect of alterity, regardless of her being Jewish, like a scar tissue of submerged

---

buildings, mostly synagogues, adapted for a different purpose. The project provokes the viewer to think of what I consider haunting, but in respect to materiality. (Atlas Sztuki, 2009)

memories, enveloped her life and reaction towards Sebastian's choice. Witnessing the Holocaust in the Polish wartime reality seemed to leave a mark on her being in contemporary Polish life. The haunting, in this paradoxical way, seemed to be located at the core of how Sebastian negotiated his sense of belonging.

The haunting is not only a question of Jewish presence as a harmful mythogen, or of Jewish disappearance in the Holocaust. It is also makes its appearance as hundreds of years of Jewish presence in difficult, yet intimate, coexistence. This becomes most tangible in conversations with people who do not enter Jewish institutional space on the premise of recognized Jewish ancestry, or even those who are relatively sure of not having any Jewish ancestry at all – like Dorota or Sebastian. This group still comprises a minority among contemporary Polish Jewry. The motivations of those I came across formed a constellation of contingencies and diverse individual factors, but the presence of unexplainable affinity, fascination, ease of absorbing Jewish cultural knowledge, repeatedly surfaced in the narratives I encountered. It was the sense of closeness that made these individuals suspect, or search for, Jewish relatives, rather than the other way around. Erica Lehrer, in her work on the renewed interest in Jewish cultural heritage in Poland, suggests that radical conversions to Judaism and claims to Jewish identity are forms of 'escape' from 'Polish shame' over the Holocaust (Lehrer, 2007, p.102). Quite understandably, neither my Jewish interlocutors, nor those without Jewish ancestry adopted any particular, historically grounded moral subject-position: their motivations were deeply personal. If anything, they hinted at the depth to which a troubled Polish Jewish coexistence was engraved on everything that Poland has been; and about the ambiguity of supposedly dichotomous Polish and Jewish memories, of which Sebastian's grandmother is a striking exemplification. People like Sebastian or Łukasz, who identified as Jewish on account of an unexplained affinity and ambiguous traces of a Jewish family past, respectively, confirm another, and more salient, of Erica Lehrer's observations: that 'Jewish identification in Poland is a risk for all who engage in it' (Lehrer, 2007, p. 103). However, claims to Jewish identity from people without Jewish ancestry, that Lehrer suggests some foreign Jewish tourists find disturbing, because of the supposed inalienability of inter-ethnic boundaries in the past, resonate with the reservations of some Polish Jews *in Poland*. I will return to this issue in the following chapter.

Alive at the graveyard

This chapter has introduced the reader to a persistent condition of Jewish being and becoming in Poland, which has shaped the experiences of two generations of Polish Jewry. As such, it contributes to explaining formative experiences preceding involvement in institutional Jewish sociality if not necessarily ending at that point. Haunting, as a complex assemblage of imaginaries, memories and experiences, culminating in transgenerational affect, is a heuristic device vital for the fuller understanding of fundamentals of processes that led to the post-socialist era 'Jewish revival'. It fostered the post-war migration of Polish Jews, and the silence of those that remained. In that sense, the haunting affects perhaps every single Polish Jewish individual I have come across – directly or indirectly. Consideration of the tangible materializations of this spectral presence at the coming of age and in the adult lives of a good number of people I spoke with, drives me to another conclusion. The haunting is a point of departure for most encounters with Polish Jewish communal life and the personal transformations that follow.

The point where one thinks of the *haunting* in the general scheme of things – that is, in relation to the 'Jewish revival' in Poland and the contemporary Wrocław *gmina*, leads to yet another 'haunting', that of a global kind. *Haunting* hereby denotes a distinct condition of being and becoming Jewish in Poland. As such, it is informed, in part, by memories and imaginations of Polish Jewish life before the World War Two and the Holocaust – and by both Jewish and non-Jewish Poles.

Nonetheless, the interbellum Jewish diaspora and the genocide of Polish Jewry are also points of reference in the 'global memoryscape', a concept that Kendall Phillips and Mitchell Reyes use to think of the 'intersection between memory practices and global forces' (2011). Interwar Poland is often conceptualized as the idealized cultural essence of Eastern European Jewish life, within a distinct and bounded microcosm of the *Yiddishkeit*. A common epitome of this narrative is the shtetl, a small town in narratives of memory and imagination, portrayed as hosting an isolated, traditional and religious Jewish community (Wells, 1995; Zipperstein, 1999; Pinchuk, 2001).[63] As Ben Cion Pinchuk claims, 'It would hardly

---

[63]Zipperstein's (1999) reflections on how Russian Jewry was subject to the same work of imagination is referenced here, as Zipperstein refers to Russia as a geographical region – therefore ipso facto most

be an exaggeration to claim that the shtetl, as a reality and metaphor was relevant to the lives of a most significant part of the Jewish people' (2001, pp.170-1). The reality of the shtetl was transformed into, on the one hand, a nostalgic counterpoint in the lives of Jewish émigrés and their descendants and into a weak and benevolent counterpoint of the 'new' Israeli Jew, on the other (ibid.). The other powerful reference of memory and historical consciousness is the Holocaust, the annihilation of the people and the *Yiddishkeit*. In the late 1960s, the Holocaust, embedded in traumatic memories of survivors, started to become a cultural memory and a fundamental counterpoint of American Jewish and Israeli identities (Kugelmass, 1996; Novick, 1999; Shandler, 2001; Feldman, 2002; Feldman, 2008; Macdonald, 2013). Poland became both a site of memory and a place of commemoration, where, as Jack Kugelmass argues, Jewish travellers to Poland 'participate in a secular ritual, one that confirms who they are as Jews, or perhaps even more so as North American or Israeli Jews' (1996, p.201). Being Jewish in Poland entails, therefore, living both within and against a powerful 'regime of memory', to use an apt term devised by Susannah Radstone and Katharine Hodgkin (2002). In narratives of the past, and hence practices of the future employed by the global NGOs involved in Polish Jewish revival, those two temporal realities and cultural memories seem to merge. Contrastively, the post-war communist period is, by and large, a muted time of assimilation and decline – almost non-existent, otherwise, than as a narrative counterpoint for the revival. For American Jewish organizations, a tale of indestructible and eternal Jewish spirit, a body politic reborn like phoenix from the ashes fuelled the aid they held out to the Polish Jewish community in the post-socialist period. At the same time, the global NGOs which have engaged, and re-engaged, for the last two decades in Polish Jewish communal life, have been implicitly, and explicitly, countering the narratives that Jewish life in Poland has irrevocably ended, that there are no Jews left in Poland, and that Polish Jewish survivors and their offspring must *ipso facto*, be 'fake'.

In the post-socialist social milieu, *haunting* distinctively grounded in the Polish context, was confronted with Jewish memories and Israeli ethno-politics, including the actual ritual practices of commemoration that Kugelmass (1995; 1996)

---

of the Jews he talks about in the 19th century could easily, if not more appropriately, be categorized as Polish. Moreover, his observations are salient in reference to Eastern European Jewry in general.

and Feldman (2002; 2008) have so acutely delineated. Jewish life in Poland is inevitably positioned at the symbolic and affective centre of the globalized practices of Holocaust commemoration and Israeli politics of identity (Macdonald, 2013). Contemporary Polish Jewry is wedged between these incongruent traumas and collective memories, while having a set of its own.[64]

A starting point

As I have illustrated, the fabric of the haunting is woven with threads of imaginary, material remains, memories and experiences, to form persistent affects. It helps us understand claims to Jewish belonging based on having a single Jewish grandparent or even an inkling of having Jewish ancestry as well as undercommunication of Jewish affiliation in Polish families. The haunting has to be understood in all its ambiguity; it contributes as much to the gravity of Jewish belonging as it does to inhibit enunciations of such belonging among many Poles. The next chapter will bring these issues to the fore, and introduce other factors bearing upon such self-understanding and recognition of Jewish belonging in the globalized communal world after the 'revival'.

To people like Piotr, Paweł or Szymon, Jewishness came as a revelation. A more or less sudden discovery that they were, or could be, of Jewish ancestry created a dissonance with the normative model of 'Pole-Catholic'. To Magda, Olek and Daniel, in turn, being Jewish was more of a gradual process of exploration and self-reflection. With a couple of exceptions, they all were raised in families in which Jewishness was either completely silenced or considerably under-communicated. Even though they heard that they had Jewish ancestry, or were Jewish, which would usually be accompanied with a warning about admitting it in public, the enunciation was not usually followed by the passing on of Jewish cultural traditions. Others, like

---

[64] The presence of Jewish tourists, predominantly from the US, and Israeli tourists, tour guides, entrepreneurs organizing global events like the March of the Living, and Israeli trips – these commemorative practices re-present Poland as the land of the dead. All the same, this perspective is increasingly being challenged. In April 2010, I participated in a meeting with an American group that came for the March of the Living, yet challenged the narrow view of Poland by meeting with young Polish Jews and donating books to the Wrocław Jewish Club library. The whole initiative, in turn, was organized by Kate and Gal, a young Australian-Israeli couple., The work of organizations such as San Francisco-based Taube Foundation, too, and individual Israeli guides, tries to give more credit to the hundreds of years when Poland was home to the majority of Jews in Europe, and to acknowledge the existence of the small, but very-much-alive, collectivity of Jews in contemporary Poland.

Sebastian, or Janina a decade before him, were drawn by a puzzling fascination, dreams, personal relationships, family traumas that undermined notions of a fixed boundary between 'Poles' and 'Jews'.

Each of these people's encounters with haunting were different. I am not implying that the third generation indiscriminately experienced anti-Semitism at their coming of age. What I encountered was the heterogeneity of how the phantasms of Jewish Otherness affected people's lives and decisions; and here I, again, invoke the ambiguity of allosemitism. Some did not have harrowing personal experiences to recount – or at least – any experiences that left a memorable mark on their individual pathways to Jewish belonging. However, in all cases, the affective charge, the imagining of Jews in Poland, shaped the lives of their families, friends and colleagues. Ultimately, haunting as a part of the Polish life-world affects both Jewish and non-Jewish Poles, even if not necessarily in the same way. This, in turn, helps us to understand why revelations of Jewish ancestry, that is, when a person suddenly finds herself or himself a stigmatized object of allosemitic imaginaries, can create the psychological shock described by Muller-Paisner, or an urge to completely change one's life.

Chapter 5
Belonging

Szymon

Straight after lunch in the kosher canteen, I had a long overdue conversation with Szymon, a man in his thirties. It was different from the usual chats we had at the synagogue, the Jewish Club or the communal eatery. I wanted to learn more about those parts of his individual history that he had rarely mentioned in our everyday interactions. I could not have noticed that his belonging to the Wrocław JRC oscillated between acceptance and rebuff. It got caught up in the skirmishes between some of the old-time congregation members and the rabbi Rapoport. It was a conflict tentatively hidden between layers of everyday pleasantries and genuine mutual respect.

That day we found a quiet spot in the empty 'Seniors' Club' with its red leather couches, a collage of contrastingly styled furniture, board-games and a TV-set - all crammed into a space of less than a dozen square meters. The room was a remnant of an ambitious project from a few years back, which had been established with a donation from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), and, in the institutional chaos, left to itself, it was spontaneously appropriated and adopted for other purposes. Apart from being a makeshift storage-space for the bric-a-brac of Community life, the Seniors' Club served as an occasional meeting room. The elderly hardly ever played board-games or watched television reclining on leather

settees. Nonetheless, the room became a place where the local women's circle (*Koło Kobiet*), made up of ladies mostly in their fifties and above, held their regular meetings. Day-to-day it was also a place to sit down and talk in a more pleasant setting than the canteen behind the side wall.

When we began talking about his family past, Szymon interrupted our conversation and tapped his smart-phone. I heard an elderly voice singing an old traditional song, *Oy Khanike*, in Yiddish.[65] The hoarse quality of the recording did not prevent me from hearing the accurate wording, pronunciation and accent which could easily have been taken as belonging to one of the elderly ladies in the canteen hall behind the wall. The voice was that of Szymon's mother. As a small child, during World War Two, she had been found by a Polish railway worker at the train station in Skierniewice, a town in central Poland, and later taken in by his family. After the war, when the German occupation had come to an end, she was sent to a Jewish orphanage for a few years, but was eventually adopted by the railway-man's family and raised a Catholic. All that Szymon's mother could remember from her time at the orphanage was that one song and the Jewish names of the other children. She also recalled that her step-mother would call her a 'kike' (*żydówa*) when angry. For years they did not have any documents that might have confirmed Szymon's mother's Jewish ancestry; and the Jewish part of Szymon's family story was a tapestry of ripped fabric, loose threads, fading colours and patterns. Three years before our conversation, Szymon's brother had discovered records in Warsaw's Jewish Historical Institute that corroborated their mother's memories. While the recovered papers were not the ironclad 'proof' of her Jewish origin, they tipped the scales of self-recognition, and Szymon finally felt assured of what he had already suspected; he started to identify himself as Jewish. His affinity with Jews, however, had predated that discovery. He told me that his brother, since adolescence, had been fascinated with Jewish history, culture, Judaism and Israel and that he, Szymon, had also started, since he had come of age, to share that fascination. He could never fully explain why they were so strongly attracted to all things Jewish, even when their mother's vague recollections were taken into consideration. These scraps of inherited memory initiated a slow and gradual process of Jewish becoming, of shifting

---

[65] Chanukah (Yiddish: *Khanike;* Polish: *Chanuka*), also called The Feast of Lights is an eight-day Jewish holiday held in commemoration of the victory of the Maccabee Revolt in the 2nd c. BCE and the miraculous rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem. (see e.g. Solis-Cohen Jr., 2001)

gradients of self-understanding, daily practices and life choices. Szymon's eventual embracing of Jewishness was kept secret from many of his non-Jewish family members, particularly his mother's neighbours and the local parish in the Silesian city where his mother was living, from fear of social ostracism. Outside the social circle of Jewish organizations, only Szymon's mother and brother knew that that he was 'more fond of that sort of life' – that is Jewish sociality and religiosity around the Wrocław JRC. The rest of his Catholic family, living all over Poland, were kept ignorant of Szymon's affiliation and his mother's ancestry. Telling them, as Szymon put it, would be like 'stepping out of line' or 'putting a spanner in the works' – in short, a potential transgression of the normative order, one sustained by his keeping separate his Polish and Jewish social worlds.

On numerous occasions I saw sparks flying in the synagogue when the rabbi counted the men present, to see if they amounted to a *minian*, the quorum of ten male Jews required for public worship. Fryderyk and Zygmunt, born and raised shortly after the war, did not hesitate to signal their displeasure at the rabbi's acceptance of people like Szymon as Jewish. These two indignant men were completely secular, oblivious to Jewish religious practice, and their presence at the synagogue was more of a social call. However, they backed up their displeasure by invoking Jewish religious law, Halacha, and arguing that the young man was not producing sufficiently convincing proof of his Jewish origin. Rabbi Rapoport explained to me that he had no moral right to question Szymon or people like him, a stance that mirrored the outlook of the rabbi's sending organization - Shavei Israel, which was keen on finding and helping Poland's 'hidden Jews', those in a similar situation to that of Szymon. [66] The rabbi regarded his story as sufficiently authenticated by both Szymon's own claim to Jewish identity and scraps of documents found in the Institute. A similar stance was taken by most other 'members' of the Jewish Club. [67] They were conscious of the ambiguities, but this didn't affect the way they related to Szymon. On the JRC scale, however, social recognition of Szymon as Jewish fell

---

[66] Piotr, introduced in the previous chapter, was in a similar situation, as all he had at his disposal to justify his claim to Jewish affiliation was his grandmother's deathbed confession.

[67] The term *członkowie klubu*, "the club members" was commonly used among the people themselves, but its meaning was symbolic, if anything. The Jewish Club did not have formal membership. The members were simply those who came to its meetings on regular basis. In fact, the idiom of "members" was sometimes extended to encompass young Jewish Wrocławians who only occasionally participated in the Club's activities.

somewhere between local notions of relatedness based on kinship and familiarity, and visions of being and becoming Jewish authorized by global NGOs and activists. This was not simply a matter of established categories, but, rather, of different ontologies of Jewishness – different understandings of what constitutes being Jewish and how one becomes Jewish that informed dynamic and often implicit categorizations on a day-to-day basis.

Belonging and Jewish ontologies

In the following paragraphs I will continue the discussion initiated in the previous chapter. As I demonstrated, the *haunting* shapes circumstances of being and becoming Jewish in Poland, as well as the context of sociality that emerged after 1989. It is the most encompassing, historically sedimented element of the Polish Jewish contemporaneity in itself independent of the global transformation of the post-socialist 'revival'. The haunting concerns everyone, including the majority of people of Jewish ancestry who never even cross the threshold of Poland's Jewish institutions. As for the question of belonging, discussion will now focus more closely on the Wrocław *gmina* and transnational Jewish programmes. I will explore the main conditions of people's lasting engagement with emergent Jewish sociality: whether and to what extent, and on what grounds, they are made welcome and are accepted, and how such criteria of inclusion have been shaped by the globalized 'revival'.

Belonging, by definition, suggests a mutual acceptance, a connection with other people and things, and possibly a desire and a struggle to affiliate. According to Anne-Marie Fortier, belonging is evocative, in equal measure, of movement and attachment, and in that sense I find it helpful to speak of a longing and a desire to belong, of anxieties about not fitting in, that characterize the sociality I observed (Fortier, 2000). As Elspeth Probyn suggests, belonging 'captures more accurately the desire for some sort of attachment, be it to other people, places, or modes of being, and the ways in which individuals and groups are caught within wanting to belong, wanting to become, a process that is fuelled by yearning rather than positing of identity as a stable state' (Probyn, 1996, p.19). Such a perspective chimes with my ethnographic inquiry, which traces the embedding and disruption of belonging, intensities of attachment and disillusionments over its structural constraints. My

reflection on belonging explores the convergence of continuity and contingency, often lost, as Roger Brubaker acutely observed, in the notion of identity, where it is either politically reified or rhetorically muddled to a point where it loses its explanatory potential in relation to actual people and their experiences (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). [68] Belonging compels the researcher to look beyond narratives of self-understanding, as it explicitly invokes the question of changing social relations.

The decision to engage in Polish Jewish institutional sociality does not necessarily follow an urge to Jewish affiliation. Quite the contrary, such interest can be kindled by encounters enabled by 'post-revival' organizations and transnational programmes – or simply by a burning desire to learn more about one's silenced family heritage. Exceptions notwithstanding, even at the most basic level, Jewish education and cultural practices, from holiday gatherings to Shabbat celebrations, were almost completely removed from the family environment – unless someone's home became incorporated in the communal space, as had been the case with Magda and Olek's apartment. The *gmina* and transnational space were terrains of being Jewish in the social sense. As regards belonging, this situation had two crucial consequences. First, in Wrocław, being made welcome at Jewish institutions like the GWŻ, the *Sof haDerech* Club, the local TSKŻ, or the residential camps and seminars that I will discuss further on, was, for most people, the only way to collectively pray or even socialize with Jews outside their family circle, if, that is, anyone else identified as Jewish in their families in the first place. Second, when a single Jewish congregation provides services and a meeting space for the whole city and region, as is the case with Wrocław, then ideological and organizational shifts in the *gmina* impinge on every Jewish person interested in communal sociality or religious practice. At the time of my fieldwork Wrocław did not have alternative Jewish organizations that would organize religious practices or welcome people of the third generation. As has already been explained, most third generation individuals entered the Jewish institutional space either in their late teens or early adulthood and began to intensely learn about 'being Jewish' – in both secular and religious senses, beyond bits and pieces of knowledge they may have brought from home or learned

---

[68] I should note that my concern about identity as an analytical concept constitutes far from a rejection of its potential usefulness. In the Polish Jewish context, the issue with 'identity', however, is that it extensively used as a category of practice in Polish and Israeli political discourses as well as in the Polish Jewish communal vernacular and individual narratives of belonging. Hereby 'identity' is an idiom waiting to be analysed, rather than accommodated as a heuristic device.

by themselves. This makes belonging the prerogative, the counterpart and the outcome of becoming – in the quite literal sense of psychological, cultural and social transformation.

Marcy Brink Dayan argues that 'the issue of categorization' is 'a fundamentally ontological problem' and further wonders 'what are the ontologies – the categories of being – that drive Jewish belonging in a such a dynamic way?' (Brink-Danan, 2012, p.83). I share Brink-Danan's view that questions of belonging are fundamentally ontological and indeed the Polish Jewish case in recent years has witnessed dynamism of Jewish belonging on a scale that provokes that question even more. In my discussion of belonging, its claims and categorizations, I will look at the assemblages of ideas and beliefs charged with affect and bestowed with a significant degree of factuality of what constitutes being Jewish. This chapter is a search for Jewish ontologies, as Brink-Danan calls them, that drive categorizations of being Jewish and consequently define boundaries of Jewish belonging and possibilities of becoming Jewish. The notions of 'ethnic' or 'religious' identity prove insufficient and inadequate to understand the complexity of Jewish affiliation in the Wrocław *gmina*, although ideas of shared ancestry, cultural commonality and religious theology are invoked to bestow or deny belonging to the Polish Jewish collectivity. As I shall demonstrate, the current state of affairs, or at least that which I encountered during my fieldwork, cannot be explicated without an understanding of the global ideoscapes reterritorialized in Wrocław, the legacy of post-war Jewish existence, and above all, the everyday interactions that occur within the Wrocław *gmina*.

Following Brink-Danan, I employ the notion of ontology to refer, not to a subdiscipline of metaphysics, a philosophical reflection on being, but to a particular historically contingent authoritative understanding of being and becoming, endowed with factuality by those who disseminate it. Ontologies inform the most fundamental aspects of self-understanding, moral values, social categorization – and political affect. Such an approach resonates with Ann Stoller's elucidation of 'ontology as that which is about the ascribed being or essence of things, the categories of things that are thought to exist or can exist in any specific domain, and the specific attributes assigned to them' (2009, p.4).

Ontology may be linked to Foucault's concept of discursive formation, that is, a particular 'system of statements produced by force of a single discursive practice

(the underpinning system of rules of a particular society at a certain moment in its history)'(Buchanan, 2010). In Foucault's *ouvre,* the notion is given a wide, all-encompassing breadth, aimed at showing the consistency of forms of thinking that gradually emerged during particular historical epochs. The notion of ontology, as elucidated above, allows us to think in terms of a multiplicity of historically coeval configurations of authoritative knowledge, which can be both convergent and conflicting. This particular analytical term is, like many others in my study, driven by ethnographic fieldwork and the laborious process of finding analytical approximation for observable phenomena. It is meant to enable explication without misrepresentation or reduction.

My argument in this chapter is that in the post-revival Polish Jewish communal world, claims to belonging, and the recognition and authorization of such claims, not only became embedded in the global context of institutions, ideas and agendas, but were forged in an encounter between the reterritorialized Jewish ontologies brought by the 'revival' and those grounded in the local context of Polish Jewish experiences.

It should be noted that my conceptualization of ontologies of belonging is indebted to Fredrik Barth's reflections on relatively stable 'universes of discourse' and 'strains of tradition', and to Richard Jenkins's thoughts on 'domains of identification'. These concepts refer to combinations of categories through which people can establish relatedness to others, such as gender, occupation or ethnicity (Jenkins, 2008; Barth, 1983; see Jenkins, 1996 for a typology). Here I am specifically speaking of complex emic theories of being and becoming Jewish, informed by religious theologies, political ideologies and collective experiences and affects. Such intrinsic ontologies, global and local, can be analytically discerned only as resonant assemblages, approximations and potentialities and not static and bounded constructs, but this does not make them any less effective in informing the lives of individuals and communities.

In the following paragraphs I will introduce the reader to the wider historical and geopolitical context of Jewish categorizations of belonging. Next, I will illustrate how negotiation of Jewish affiliation in the post-revival community has been and continues to be driven by the friction of ontologies coming from different geographies of Jewish life. Then I will explain how the 'revival' confronted a historically sedimented sense of the inalienability of being Jewish with the new

institutional framework of becoming: Jewishness as a technology of self, where being Jewish, at least in the intensity of Jewish institutional space, is related to practices of learning, conversion and socialization.

Halacha, state legislation and the ZGWŻ Internal Law.

Understandings and categorizations of belonging in the Wrocław *gmina* did not appear out of thin air. Forged in the nascent legislation of ZGWŻ and hammered out in everyday decisions, they nonetheless stemmed from the normative legacy at the core of Judaism and from secular ideas concerning modern Jewish nationhood.

Among the Jewish people, ancestry has long held a prominent place in determining interpersonal and intergenerational ties. It featured in the biblical patrilineality of priesthood lineage and the matrilineal inheritance of Jewish belonging explicated in the Talmud. For at least two millennia, however, it was also possible to become Jewish through ritual conversion. Such an act cannot be seen simply as the transformation of a non-Jew into a Jew. In the social dimension, this is exactly what happens – a *ger*, a convert, is given a new status and expected to follow all religious and communal obligations stemming from that fact. From the perspective of Jewish theology, the novelty of such status is more complicated. The Babylonian Talmud in tractate Shavuot 39A states that the soul of every Jew - past, present or future - was present at Mount Sinai when God gave the 613 commandments to his people. Accordingly, all Jewish converts are already, in a sense, Jews – they are believed to have Jewish souls which were present at the epiphany millennia ago. Consequently, the process of conversion is, ipso facto, a return and merely a realization of their inherent potentiality. (Segal and Dunne, 2009, p.269).

Biblical stories speak of the incorporation of rival groups and individuals, such as Moabite Ruth, mother of King David, whilst the Greco-Roman period abounds in accounts of gentiles who become Jews without a formalized procedure (Cohen, 1999). As Shayne Cohen argues, it was not until the Hasmonean Revolt in the 2nd century BCE, against the 'threat' of Hellenism, that matrilineal descent was instituted; it was in response to growing anxiety about the possibility of maintaining group boundaries that the criterion of belonging to the Jewish people was instituted, and along with this formalized conversion made the only means of becoming Jewish

(ibid.). [69] Ritual precepts of matrilineality formulated in two passages of the Talmud would eventually materialize in the body of Halacha, the Jewish religious law. As Samuel Cooper argues, Halacha, at least in principle, is 'a living system which grows and develops with time, geography, and changing conditions of Jewish life' (Cooper, 1987, p.57). Its leading interpretations were nonetheless codified in such works as Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* (12th c.), Joseph Karo's *Shulchan Aruch* (16th c.) and Moses Isserles' *HaMapah* (16th c.) as well as a number of other commentaries and treatises. In Orthodox and Conservative congregations, every *beit din*, rabbinical court, still follows strict halachic requirements: the passing of judgement is based on examination, a screening of the candidate's dedication and knowledge, preceded by a ritual circumcision[70] by a *mohel*, a trained circumciser, and followed by *tevillah*, a ritual immersion in a *mikveh*, a bath used for purifying immersions. (e.g. Rosenbloom, 1978). The approach of Progressive Judaism[71] varies between rabbis, congregations and countries, but in normal circumstances converts are expected, or at least encouraged, to undergo both circumcision and immersion (Washofsky, 2010, p.211-5).

The formation of the state of Israel in 1948 created the problem of deciding who was going to be entitled to its citizenship. In 1950, two years after the proclamation of Israel's independence, the Law of Return was passed. This defined eligibility for immigration and Israeli citizenship on grounds that mirror the Halacha: matrilineal ancestry or religious conversion. In 1970, the Law was revised to include non-Jewish spouses of Jews, their children, grandchildren and their co-migrating wives and husbands. In practice, therefore, someone with at least one Jewish grandparent or spouse could claim Israeli citizenship, though still not be recognized as Jewish by the Israeli Rabbinate, forbidden to marry a Jew or have a Jewish burial

---

[69] According to Cohen this was also a period of shift from a collective identity based primarily on territory and descent to a sense of belonging based on a combination of ethnicity and religion (Cohen, 1999).

[70] The circumcision is performed either by the removal of the foreskin or by a symbolic shedding of a drop of blood, if the candidate is already circumcised.

[71] The term Progressive Judaism is used here to describe the 'Liberal', 'Reform' and 'Progressive' movements affiliated in the World Union of Progressive Judaism, whose antecedent was the Reform Judaism that first emerged in 19th century Germany on the wave of the Haskalah, 'The Jewish Enlightenment', which was a movement advocating emancipation of Jews and their integration in societies they lived in (e.g. Feiner, 2004).

without religious conversion.[72] To this day these two normative systems, one espoused by the Israeli Orthodox Rabbinate and the other stemming from the Law of Return, do not overlap (England, 1987, pp.193-5). The intention behind the widening of the Law of Return's eligibility categories was to offer Israeli citizenship to people who would have been persecuted under the Nuremberg Laws in Nazi Germany, even if such justification was not explicitly spelled out by the legislators (Levy and Weiss, 2002, p.97). In practice, the Law of Return offers citizenship to non-Jewish spouses while excluding individuals who willingly converted to Christianity, therefore people who would have been nonetheless classified as Jews by the Nazis (for a general discussion see Pransky, 2012). Non-Orthodox Judaism that grew in prominence in the 20th century questioned the literal reading of the strict halachic interpretation of the Talmud, which privileged matrilineal descent in determining Jewish ethnicity. Today, the question of intermarriage generates heated debates in the diaspora, giving rise to concern over the precariousness of ethnic and cultural continuity, and calls for an inclusive model of Jewish peoplehood (Kanh-Harris and Gidley, 2012; Buckser, 2002). These historically sedimented rules of Jewish relatedness, materialized in religious scriptures, commentaries and Israeli legislation were the most basic cultural references in conceptualizations of belonging among Wrocław Jews. Still, their cultural fabric was interwoven with idiosyncratic and locally conditioned rationale of deciding who was Jewish and if becoming Jewish other than being born into it was possible at all.

It is crucial to note that the Polish state did not become a stakeholder in the recognition of individual claims to Jewish identity – predictably, as it did, and does, not have any political or economic interest in doing so. [73] Communal property restitution claims were not dependent on the size of the formal 'Jewish national minority' and the ZGWŻ did not raise any significant demands dependent on the number of its members. In any case, such clear-cut categorization would have been difficult, given the double, ethno-religious criteria of Jewish belonging, which permits becoming Jewish through religious process, as explained above. The formal

---

[72] There are no civic weddings in Israel. Israelis who for one reason or another are keen on having a non-religious wedding need to travel abroad. Cyprus is a popular wedding destination for those whose choice of spouse does not conform to official regulations (Stricker, 2009, Zarchin, 2012).

[73] Even if such interest had existed, it is difficult to imagine that the Polish authorities would have been interested in such 'classification' considering the historical baggage of Polish – Jewish relations.

categories of inclusion and exclusion in the Wrocław *gmina* follow the Internal Law of the ZGWŻ. According to these regulations, potential members of congregations associated in ZGWŻ have to be Polish citizens, either of 'Jewish origin' or following a 'religious conversion' to Judaism. Moreover, candidates must not profess a 'religion other than Judaism' (ZGWŻ w RP, 2006). The credentials demanded by the Wrocław *gmina* for the purposes of acceptance are meant to confirm the applicant's Jewish ancestry or conversion. In respect to ancestry, an eligible document would certify that the applicant's parent or grandparent is or was a member of a Jewish organization, was buried in a Jewish cemetery, had a Jewish wedding or was otherwise recognized as Jewish by a communal body. If the applicant's family member is involved in a Polish Jewish community, the process becomes more of a formality. Otherwise, claims to Jewish affiliation have to be authenticated with archival documents. The criteria of belonging espoused by the ZGWŻ at the time of my writing are the result of post-1989 legislative and social transformations. In the early 1990s, the Wrocław GWŻ was indicative of innovations that would eventually shape the normative status quo of the whole Union. Back then, the Wrocław *gmina* was the only one in Poland which allowed people of patrilineal Jewish descent to become its members (Nowakowska and Szwarcman-Czarnota, 1997). Eventually, in May 11 1997, the General Assembly of the ZGWŻ passed a ground-breaking law allowing 'non-halachic' Jews to join its associated congregations. [74] The vote was spearheaded by second generation activists, such as Jerzy Kichler from Wrocław, who went on to become the new chairman of the ŻGWŻ, until he was voted out in 2002. The new legislation was illustrative of a commonly seen paradox of the new order. It allowed generational change in the aging congregations, but at the same time, inadvertently unveiled the stark reality behind the 'revival': the passing away of elderly *Żydzi halachiczni* 'halachic Jews' and the fact that their second and third generation descendants usually came from intermarried families (Grabski August, 1997, pp.159-60). [75]

In practice, 'Jewish origin' means having at least one Jewish grandparent, and its formal 'proof', judging from the experiences of newcomers applying for such

---

[74] The same assembly gave women the right to stand for election to the ZGWŻ legislature.

[75] That is Jews according to halachic precepts of matrilineality.In the case of the overwhelming majority of the first generation both parents would be Jewish.

status, was open to wide interpretation by secular leaders and the religious authorities of the Wrocław *gmina* and the ZGWŻ. The prohibition of practicing another faith is, in fact, a dead letter, as no measures were, or could have been, effectively taken to verify such matters.[76] On top of that, the application requires the confirmatory signatures of the two congregation members sponsoring the candidate. Therefore, at least theoretically, formal membership of the congregation is also subject to a minimum degree of recognition and support in the local community. Formal recognition of who belongs to the 'Jewish minority' is also subject to authorization by organizations and individuals beyond the ZGWŻ: the Israeli state, which grants the right of permanent migration; international rabbinical authorities who decide on the viability of conversions; transnational rabbis ordaining religious practice at Polish JRCs; and global Jewish NGOs controlling access to their programmes and resources.

Conversion (Hebr. *giur*) in the Wrocław *gmina* was embedded in the same global assemblage of actors and legislation, as the following example illustrates. Daniel, in his early twenties at the time of my research, is a grandson of Jakub, who was a well-established member of the congregation and a participant in weekly prayers, up until his death a couple of years before the start of my fieldwork. Daniel's growing sense of Jewish belonging, fuelled by having a Jewish grandfather, eventually made him want to become unambiguously Jewish, in the legal sense, through the process of religious conversion. This was not a matter that could be resolved on a local or national scale. The conversion was given by an Orthodox *beit din* composed of three rabbis. It was led by an Haredi rabbi, Benzion Wosner, from Monsey in the state of New York, supported by the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, originally from the United States, a former Ronald Lauder Foundation employee involved in the 'revival' since the 1980s, and Rabbi Boas Pash, an Israeli emissary of the Shavei Israel and the Chief Rabbi of Kraków.[77] Conversion aside, its social consequences – that is, the actual recognition of Daniel's new status, was

---

[76] In any case, personal belief, by its very nature, is beyond institutional control, as are the private activities of congregation's members, including religious practice, in a large-scale urban environment.

[77] Haredi (pl. Haredim) are very observant Jews, who adhere to stringent theological interpretation and religious practice and live in communities seeking social and cultural isolation from the larger non-Haredi populations, whether in the Diaspora or Israel. They are often distinguished by their specific garments, headwear and side-locks. There is a considerable variation between groups of Haredim originating from different geographical locations (Deutsch, 2009; Finkelman, 2002; Shilhav, 1984).

conditioned by power struggles for influence over the conversion processes on a worldwide scale. In recent years, the decisions of the Israeli rabbinate inform not only lives and legislation in Israel, but tangibly resonate in the Jewish diaspora (e.g. Buckser, 2002, p. 164; Shepherd and Butt, 2009; Symons, 2010). [78] Daniel was aware that his conversion, despite being Orthodox and sanctioned by a Haredi rabbi, would not necessarily be considered valid in the eyes of Israeli state officials, even though it was recognized in all, or most, Jewish congregations around the world. In respect to Jewish affiliation in a more general sense, the Israeli state exercises power of ascription and legitimization through its internationally recognized institutions. [79] It is indirectly present through its ideologies and actors in a heterogeneous assemblage of global NGOs and as a stakeholder in quasi-governmental organizations, such as the Jewish Agency, Sochnut.

First encounters

Katarzyna Reszke argues that representatives of the 'third generation' come from family environments notable for the absence of a Jewish context that would influence their socialization and that 'only those people who already decided to 'do something about their Jewish roots', have had the opportunity to interact with other Jews' (2007, p.121). Reszke's observation is not without merit, but little in the Wrocław *gmina* warrants such a sweeping generalization. A number of my research participants came from families where being Jewish, while undercommunicated was not a secret – they were sent to summer camps, like Magda, taken along to Wrocław TSKŻ events, like Marcin, and simply interacted with their Jewish family members and their acquaintances. It is important to note that a number of my research participants had grandparents who had either been active in Jewish organizations or embedded in Jewish social networks – a fact not without consequences, as I will illustrate later. Moreover, Reszke does not fully acknowledge the fact that the Polish social context informs understandings of, and emotions towards, Jews, regardless of

---

[78] For example, in the Jewish Community of Copenhagen, studied by Andrew Buckser, the conflict over conversion was much more localized, but still "Israeli religiosity" was "an important weapon in the orthodox arsenal". Consequently, for local Orthodox religious figures, the approval or dissent of the Israeli rabbinate was not to be trifled with (Buckser, 2002, p.164).

[79] Leaving aside another dilemma – whether the Israeli rabbinate is the subject of the state or rather a parallel source of authority exercising its political power to change the state.

whether an individual is aware of Jewish ancestry or not, and that a significant proportion of socialization and interaction happens outside the family environment. As mentioned in the previous chapter, a majority of post-1989 newcomers to the Wrocław JRC have grown up in a distinct constellation of imaginaries, memories and affects concerning Jews and 'Jewishness', *żydowskość*. Most of their childhood experiences were informed by coming of age in a Polish social milieu, but some were distinctively related to being born in mixed Polish Jewish families.

As I will illustrate in the following pages, the family environment, both in Poland and abroad, can be of considerable importance in fostering ideas about being Jewish, introducing a sense of Jewish belonging and enabling involvement in Jewish organizations, such as the *gmina*. The generalizing claim formulated by Marius Gudonis, in his rather cryptic 'Jewish consciousness' acquired through 'a process of social interaction with parents and significant others, particularly during early childhood' is also debatable, precisely because it ignores those people who came to Jewish organizations from non-Jewish backgrounds or indeed learned about Jewish belonging through a sudden disclosure of Jewish descent, usually by a family member. Still, his argument makes sense if reduced to an acknowledgement that socialization in institutions is already grounded in earlier experiences. For many, *żydowskość*, Jewishness was present through the haunting described in the previous chapter, as an internalized sense of otherness informed by awareness of Jewish ancestry and undercommunicated family histories and affiliation. In some families, Jewish ancestry was never a secret, even if children were still warned not to be to too outspoken about it. Some, like Paweł, learned about it in early childhood, others, like Daniel, when they were in their teens. The sudden 'discovery' of one's unknown Jewish descent in adolescence, or a complete lack of any interaction with Jews prior to institutional engagement, that Katarzyna Reszke (2007, p.120) sees as paradigmatic , turned out to be merely two of many possibilities in Polish Jewish biographies.

Scholars who have tackled the question of 'Jewish identities' in the post-1989 period have by and large ignored what I stressed in the introduction – that people involved temporarily or consistently in institutional Jewish sociality are merely a fraction of a much larger collectivity. Some within that larger group, while mostly aware of Jewish ancestry, do not consider themselves Jewish. Others self-identify as Jewish, but do not find that existing forms of Jewish sociality answer their

expectations, and others are simply afraid of joining Jewish organizations or engaging in Jewish social life. I came across such 'Poles with a Jewish connection', both within and outside the framework of my doctoral research project. All these people, who rarely, if ever, entered the premises of the Wrocław *gmina*, were nonetheless present in my research indirectly, through my everyday conversations with research participants and in oral testimonies I heard. On rare occasions they did visit the *gmina*, to take part in major Jewish holidays or cultural events, often encouraged by their own children's involvement in communal life. These were, first of all, family members of people representing different generations: parents, grandparents, siblings and children. Next were friends, acquaintances or even people whom the Jewish Club members had met accidentally, at a party, in a lecture hall or a Jewish cultural event. Each person I encountered at the *gmina* or *Sof haDerech*, had at least several such people in her or his orbit: disinterested or silenced by the haunting.[80] Ultimately, as the previous chapter suggests, who decides to cross the boundary of the *gmina* and transnational programmes and why they do so, is as much a result of personal contingencies, opportunity, turns of fate as it is conditioned by interpersonal factors. One of my aims is to reflect on particular conditions and circumstances which make such engagements with 'revived' Jewishness more likely for some than others in the social reality that emerged.

In the previous chapter, I suggested the importance of Jewish family background in the formation of young people's self-understanding and emotions concerning being Jewish, but also the persistence of haunting as a phenomenon extending beyond the ethno-religious boundaries, the anxiety and exoticism surrounding 'Jewishness'. This helps us to understand why some individuals of the third generation feel compelled to claim Jewish belonging even though theirs is second-degree, partial Jewish ancestry, like having one Jewish grandparent. Equally important, however, is that Jewish family ties enable access to the nascent terrain of socialization into being Jewish which in Poland has largely shifted to institutional spaces - nodes of authority and expertise. This shift, as I will repeatedly illustrate, not only runs counter to Herbert Gans's theory of 'symbolic ethnicity', which assumes that participation in cultural practices and ethnic organizations is no longer 'essential

---

[80] Another group were relatives and friends that migrated to Israel, Scandinavia and the United States.

to feeling and being ethnic', but also indicates that such participation can be still be fundamental in producing and sustaining a sense of ethnic and religious belonging (1979, p.14). Firstly, membership in the Wrocław *gmina* and admission to most transnational programmes is either facilitated or outright determined by a candidate's 'origin' or, at least theoretically, recognized conversion. Even when such ethno-religious criteria were not spelled out, or even intended, they effectively conditioned the informal boundaries of group membership, as at the Wrocław Jewish Club which had an open door policy, but people of Jewish ancestry were both the majority of affiliates and the target of collective efforts to advertise the club's activities and bring in new members. As Daniel once tried to explain to me: 'It is a Jewish Club, and not just *any* club'. In other words, the boundaries of inclusion, however open to negotiation, nonetheless defined the purpose of its existence as a distinct organization.

Secondly, many of my research participants learned about opportunities of Taglit-Birthright, residential camps, and seminars, not from the Internet, but by word of mouth, from their immediate relatives or Jewish friends. The importance of having such information, access, and encouragement to participate cannot be overestimated in the Polish Jewish context. Jewish affiliation and self-understanding does not begin with institutional involvement, as I illustrated in the previous chapter. Nonetheless, the articulation of such belonging, positive Jewish self-identification, a keen sense of affinity with the Jewish people, a kindling of intragroup relationships, and involvement in cultural practices begin precisely through institutional affiliation in adolescence or early adulthood. An urge to literally 'build Jewish identity', *budować żydowską tożsamość*, that is, a clear-cut resolution of personal transformation was rarely the reason for participation in Jewish youth camps or *Sof haDerech* activities. At first, such ventures were usually undertaken out of curiosity, a desire for camaraderie, merrymaking, and uncommitted preoccupation with one's place in the world. Such was the motivation, for example, of Paweł and Karol introduced in the previous chapter. Paweł did not speak of himself as a 'Jew' but someone of 'Jewish ancestry' - ancestry he came to   accept and value as a part of his family heritage. He would probably fall through the wide meshes of research projects that pay too much attention to the elusive self-identification of people engaged in emergent Jewish sociality. He was, nonetheless, one of the most active members of the Wrocław Jewish Club and a formal member of the *gmina*. His sense of Jewish belonging came

about gradually. He grew up both interested in his father's family heritage and mindful of the bullying he experienced at school for exactly that reason. When he was sixteen, before becoming a student per se, he found out about a summer camp run by the Polish Union of Jewish Students (*Polska Unia Studentów Żydowskich*, PUSZ), an organization that emerged in the 'revival' and that has since been replaced by the similar All-Poland Jewish Youth Organization (*Żydowska Ogólnopolska Organizacja Młodzieżowa*, ZOOM). This trip, both motivated and enabled by his Jewish ancestry, was a watershed, providing Paweł with a positive sense of his Jewish parentage. Back then, Paweł did not identify as Jewish, but nonetheless the camp made him feel that he belonged.

People like Paweł were attracted to communality before being drawn to Jewish institutional sociality. The translocal collectivity they found was made up of people like them, Jewish in myriad ways, suddenly being able to speak up, be comfortable about who they were and willing to learn what that 'Jewishness' was all about. They found friends and soulmates in a makeshift teenage commune, enabled by their parents and grandparents' shared affiliation. As most of them stressed in our discussions, they sought company and new friends of the same age and, at times, they were driven by a youthful fascination with cultural practices and knowledge both exotic and offered as heritage of their own. True interest in Jewish sociality or Judaism, not to say a different self-understanding, usually came later and gradually. To restate my argument: getting into and being made welcome in the institutional space that emerged in the 'revival' was of great significance – this is where a new sense of belonging was kindled.

Being of Jewish ancestry was also crucial in bringing about the translocal encounters that fuelled subsequent involvement in Jewish sociality. In the non-institutional context, Jewish kinship enabled visits to Jewish families abroad, serving consequently as a counterpoint to the realities and potentialities of Jewish existence in Poland. Sylwia and Helena were two halachically Jewish girls who had moved to Wrocław, just before and during my research, respectively. Sylwia, from another Lower Silesian city, became a regular attendee of the Jewish Club, and was getting increasingly involved in the Jewish activities in Wrocław and beyond. Helena, in her late twenties, was already a veteran of Jewish training camps and sociality in Warsaw and Gdańsk. In their biographies, the crucial encounter with Jewish sociality resulted from a visit to their Jewish families abroad. Time spend in the United States

brought about experiences of family-centred Jewish practices and sociality, virtually non-existent in Poland. While in the United States, Sylwia had attended high school and a local synagogue. She met Jewish teenagers and found their openness about being Jewish both striking and, in the long run, encouraging.

Individuals with more modest means or without known relatives living abroad were more likely to experience alternative Jewish life-worlds through participating in events and projects based in Israel or Hungary, the latter being the node and organizational centre of such transnational endeavours in Central Eastern Europe, such as the International Jewish Youth Camp in Szarvas in Hungary. Jewish ancestry is virtually always the formal requirement of participation, and candidates have to produce appropriate documents, such as certificates from Jewish institutions, to prove it. An example of one such event is a Taglit (Hebr. discovery) also known as Birthright.[81] This is a trip to Israel offered to young Jews aged between 18 and 25, who have not been on an organized trip to Israel before. Its purpose is to encourage emigration to Israel and to kindle relationships between diaspora Jews and Israel. Since the programme's inception, the majority of its over 300,000 participants - in what is heralded as 'the Jewish experience' - have come from North America (e.g. Saxe et al., 2009; Kelner, 2010). Nonetheless, a considerable number of applicants come from other parts of the world. In Poland, Taglit trips are organized bi-annually, in summer and in winter, and each time fifteen people get to travel around Israel for ten days with a guide, security personnel and young Israeli soldiers delegated to socialize with the Jewish visitors. The planning and organization of the trips, conceived in 1998 and launched in 1999, have been the conjoined effort of a transnational assemblage of both institutional and individual actors in the Jewish diaspora and Israel. The latter is involved both directly and through its auxiliary organizations like the Jewish Agency, whose Warsaw office acts as a local Polish recruiter and organizer. (Ciszewska, 2010). Polish Taglit trips began in 2001, and, as I learned in my fieldwork, they were central formative experiences for many of my youngest research participants, kindling their interest in Jewish family heritage and reflection on their own sense of belonging. In Poland, one of the distinct characteristics of Taglit is its localized criteria of participation. While in the US potential participants are required to have at least one Jewish parent, in Poland, one

---

[81] Hereby consistently referred to as Taglit-Birthright

Jewish grandparent is enough to be accepted, in a manner resembling the criteria of the Israeli Law of Return. [82] In every case, however, applicants for Taglit, like the prospective members of the Wrocław *gmina*, have to prove their Jewish ancestry. [83]

A notable exception to the above institutional criteria of acceptance are 'Jewish schools' or more precisely schools with a Polish state school curriculum augmented by Hebrew language and Jewish culture classes and which also celebrate Jewish holidays. These institutions have been established in Warsaw and in Wrocław with the help of the Lauder Foundation. Admission is not conditional upon Jewish ancestry and the majority of children come from non-Jewish families. [84] I dedicate little attention to the Lauder Etz Chaim School in my thesis, because even though it was established in 1998, not a single former pupil numbered among the young people involved in the community life at the time of my research. Consequently, the impact of the school on Wrocław *gmina* demographics and social life has so far been minimal. In 2012, the Lauder Etz Chaim school split into two competing institutions, both independent of the Ronald Lauder Foundation. Whether their existence will impact on the *gmina* is the question for the future. Another kind of Jewish venue recently established and keeping an open door policy can be seen in the Jewish Community Centers in Warsaw and Kraków. Their influence on Wrocław communal life, however, is curbed by physical distance, with the exception of translocal Jewish events I will discuss in the seventh chapter.

Family ties and familiarity

Zygmunt, a completely secular man of the second generation and a gatekeeper of the community, prompted to reflect on the third generation, said to me that Magda, because of her matrilineal ancestry, was the 'only real young Jew among

---

[82] According to the Taglit-Birthright website, converts to Judaism are also eligible. So far I have not heard about or come across anyone in Poland, to my knowledge, who claimed eligibility solely on the basis of conversion. I do know, however, of a single case when involvement in a Jewish community, even without proper documents, was enough to be accepted. (Birthrightisrael.com, 2013)

[83] I came across instances where these criteria were individually suspended for people unable to come up with such documents, but nonetheless involved in Jewish communal life. They were allowed to join a Taglit tour group. Such rare exceptions, however, only confirmed the rule.

[84] No records are taken - the above estimate is based on my personal conversations with teachers and administrative staff of the Lauder Etz Chaim School at the time of my research. It was generally believed that from 10 to 30 per cent of children at the school had some Jewish ancestry, but very few parents were ready to declare that outright.

the young'. Zygmunt did not know, or chose not to acknowledge, that among the young people frequenting the Jewish Club there were in fact several others who met the same Orthodox religious criteria of belonging. Nonetheless, Magda was distinct because her family was recognized among generations of Jewish Wrocławians. Nearly everyone knew her mother. That is why Zygmunt had absolutely no qualms about Magda's matrilineal ancestry and was visibly fond of her, in contrast to his grumpy demeanour towards other young adults. A history of interpersonal relations overlapped here with recognized ethnic ancestry in a way impossible to disentangle. Zygmunt, of the second 'assimilated' generation, framed his own sense of Jewishness by referring to struggle and experience, with a mixture of nostalgia over his friends, many of whom had left in 1968, and of camaraderie at Jewish sport camps that he vividly recalled. With pride he told me about standing tall when attacked as a 'Jew'. The hardship of being Jewish, the 'inevitable' experience of holding onto Jewishness was given almost an aura of heroism.

One day, when I was sitting in the kosher canteen with Tadeusz and Abram, the former explained to me that he could understand people who had some kind of 'Jewish ancestry', *żydowskie pochodzenie*, though not necessarily matrilineal, being drawn by the *gmina* and Judaism. For years, he said, being Jewish was a stigma, and not something attractive. Consequently, Tadeusz considered even partial Jewish descent a justifiable reason for involvement in Jewish communal life and religious practice at a synagogue. Motivations that did not arise from kinship he regarded with a mixture of suspicion and amazement. Tadeusz had expected his sons from his later marriages to be interested in Jewish culture and become involved with young people at the Jewish Club. I noticed a glint of disappointment as he described how one of them did not 'catch on' after a one-off visit to Sukkot holiday celebrations.

Documents alone were insufficient for recognition in and membership of the *gmina*. Within its communal space, ethnicity became a form of social capital[85] only by 'being recognized' or 'known to elders', as my interlocutors phrased it. While even partial Jewish origin often marked newcomers as fitting the common-sense ontology of belonging among the first and second generation, chances of inclusion

---

[85] After Bourdieu, I understand social capital here as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.51).

were greatly augmented by personal connection with the Jews of post-war Lower Silesia, and a sense of solidarity kindled over the years.

Claire Rosenson (1996) placed the division lines of connectedness and conceptualizations of identity among Polish Jews along generational lines and noted the diversifying effect of collective experiences characteristic for each generation. In Wrocław, however, the 'persecution' and 'survival' underscored by Rosenson, were just two references in collective self-understanding, neither of which was generationally specific. If there was a generational division based on collective experience, it was mostly related to coming of age and living in the different political and sociocultural circumstances of the pre- and post-war Polish states, rather than the Holocaust alone.

More importantly, I realized that collective similarities and differences in understanding Jewish affiliation were not so much generational, but represented a particular ontology shared among people of all generations, and deeply rooted in the ongoing conditions of Polish Jewish existence: namely the haunting, but also solidarity, friendships, memories of shared experiences. I did not expect to find unspoken, not yet crystalized, looming structures of feeling still influencing people entering adulthood, in their early twenties, who were growing up in a post-socialist, presumably 'different' epoch, but I did. Understanding Jewish belonging as conditioned by relationships with living Jewish relatives and, in a symbolic if not necessarily less affective sense, with those already departed, was the predominant predicate of social categorization and self-understanding among the Polish Jews I met. It was reminiscent of the real and imagined inalienability of Jewish status in pre-war Poland, the same that, as Erica Lehrer (2007) noted, makes it difficult for some Jewish Americans of Eastern European origin to come to terms with what they see as the cultural appropriation of Jewish tradition in contemporary Poland. Aleksander Hertz (1988), the author of a seminal sociological historical study of the pre-war Jewry noted that the majority of Polish Jews formed a separate 'caste' of Polish society or were bestowed with the status of inalienable outsiders. My preceding ideas about the haunting, and my conclusions concerning categorizations and the affects of Jewish affiliation in Wrocław echo Hertz's observations. It would be audacious to claim that contemporary Polish Jews or Jewish Poles form a separate caste, in the sense of an endogamous, symbolically and socially bounded group in a stratified society, and even Hertz's original claim is debatable given the complexity

of pre-war Polish Jewish lives and their transgression of social boundaries. All the same, while the 'caste' status may have disappeared, it still resonates with the categorization of belonging in the Wrocław *gmina* as a boundary fossilized rather than weakened by the post-war Jewish experience in Poland that I referred to earlier.

All the same, in social interactions within the social space of the *gmina* - in synagogues, the canteen and the Jewish Club - strict categories of relatedness were rarely invoked explicitly and publically. The practice of framing Poland's 'Jewish community' with some flexibility accorded with another legacy of the post-war period: ambiguities stemming from intermarriage, mass emigration, burned archives and vague memories. When matrilineal descent was situationally invoked, such as in the case of Szymon's equivocal identity, it was mostly mobilized by people of the second generation. Born after the war, their own sense of belonging was predicated on ethnicity and familiarity, as they no longer possessed a cultural competence comparable to that of the vanishing Holocaust survivors. In the quotidian sociality of *gmina*, the first generation whose own Jewish identification was grounded in religious and cultural traditions – people like Wiktor and Abram -- were willing to accept the youngest incomers, and never denied them the right to participate in prayers, even if they understood Jewish affiliation primarily as bestowed by matrilineal descent, They were far less concerned about the boundaries, much more accepting of the inevitable hybridity of a newcomer's parentage and the complexity of their identifications, while at the same time clearly appreciative of the efforts the young adults made to learn about Jewish customs and practices that they themselves already possessed, even if that knowledge had been transmitted in the globalized institutional framework of 'revival' education.

Even those of the second generation apparently disquieted by newcomers without halachic ancestry were ready to instrumentalize 'authenticity' of affiliation in local politics. People like Zygmunt or Fryderyk put the dampeners on such reservations when it came to a political leader they supported and considered fully legitimate, despite his non-halachic origin. Political sympathies and antipathies were often expressed precisely through the idiom of relatedness and legitimacy of someone's Jewish belonging. Even in this case, however, the fact that the leader in question and his Jewish family were for decades embedded in the local network of

familiarity and sociality further seemed to validate such recognition, and shows that what I said applies likewise to the acceptance of people of the second generation.[86]

The manner in which people in their forties, thirties and twenties understood relatedness was not substantially different from that of the supposed radicals of the *gmina*. Daniel told me that he had trouble understanding those who wanted to become Jewish without Jewish ancestry. Yet, when asked what was "different' about those without Jewish ancestry he mentioned both kinship and his own and his family's experience in a sense that completely interwove both notions. He told me how important it was for him to be able to have a sense of being related to people who lived in the pre-war reality, to being part of the genealogical tree of Jews, of 'continuity'. He stressed the experiences of silence in his family, of fear, anxiety, of the social, familiar memory he could not shake off. He had no trouble accepting those who either already had a family connection to Jews and or were willing to convert for the sake of their Jewish partner, for social rather than religious reasons alone.

Mariusz, a man in his twenties, told me that he does not spend Pesach with his family, but with his 'Jewish friends', exactly like the absolute majority of my research participants. 'Our Jewish family is the circle of acquaintances and friends' said Mariusz, and added that the latter 'formed [his] identity' and were '[his] primary social cell'. Even more so, for Mariusz, at least in the sense of familiarity, his Jewish friends were like 'cousins' (*kuzyni*). 'You may not know them well, but you are less reluctant to trust them. You forgive them more, despite the mistakes they make.' I think that Mariusz's words are quintessential to understanding not only the sense of community formed through interaction in the transnational space of camps, trips, training seminars and Shabbatons, where we had this conversation, but also telling of the locality of Wrocław.

Abram, introduced in the first chapter, seventy years older than Mariusz, unintentionally helped me to understand the persistence of communal ties by telling me about the first time he met my grandfather. He told me of the word *amhu* (Hebrew: 'the folk' or literally 'His People') that many Polish Jews used after the

---

[86] The malleability of communal boundaries in immediate political interest resonates here with Fredrik Barth's classical argument that ethnic boundaries can be understood as a forms of social organization, although it would be difficult to think of boundaries in the Wrocław Community as ethnic, let alone reduce the entirety of ontologies and affects informing the negotiation of belonging in *gmina* to relational processes between dichotomous groups of "Poles" and "Jews" (Barth, 1998)

war to identify other Jews in a considerably hostile or, at best, precarious reality. He likened it to a 'password', *hasło*. As I later found out, immediately after the war, the word was used as a greeting among Polish Jews, and also a code-word used by the survivors to inconspicuously recognize each other as Jewish – in Poland and in post-war displaced persons camps in Germany alike (Gay, 2009, p.9). Abram's story captures the essence of narratives of the elderly that I heard before, during, and after my fieldwork and the themes of solidarity with those to whom one felt bound by shared belonging and sometimes, even more so, by shared fate. Narratives of the young and old alike, provoke a reflection on intergenerational similarities as much as they do on the overemphasized or presumed categorical differences between 'generations'.

The friction of ontologies

In the above paragraphs I have delineated the complex ways in which relatedness, familiarity and ethnicity inform the way in which people establish connectedness within and draw boundaries around the Wrocław *gmina* – both as an organization and a community. I will now move on to discuss how these local ontologies confronted the nascent reality of the 'revival'. I begin by discussing the religious conversions that occurred during my fieldwork in Wrocław and, retrospectively in a microhistorical reflection, the most recent decade of the Wrocław *gmina*. As a crossing point of the ethno-religious boundary between Jews and non-Jews, conversion is invaluable as a means of explicating how transnational actors enabled becoming Jewish or legitimizing one's Jewish affiliation in the post-1989 era.

Daniel was one of three people who converted in 2010, but these were far from the only conversions of Wrocławians to take place in recent years.[87] Between 2001 and 2010 the *gmina* had two official rabbis, sent by two different transnational NGOs. In 2001, the Community Board, through *Masorti Olami*, The World Council of Conservative Synagogues, hired an American rabbi, Ivan Caine, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Caine, previously based at Society Hill

---

[87] The other two were an elderly couple without Jewish ancestry who had been coming to the *gmina* for three decades.

Synagogue in Philadelphia, arrived in place of Rabbi Ron Hoffberg, who had moved to lead a Jewish congregation in Prague (Kichler, 2009). [88] In the same year, the *gmina* established a Jewish student hall of residence in one of the reclaimed communal buildings. The hall of residence attracted young adults who came to Wrocław from all around Lower Silesia to study. The increasingly outgoing *gmina* also drew in a number of young Poles of Jewish descent living in Wrocław and non-Jewish Poles wanting to convert. Some of these newcomers already knew each other from Jewish seminars and youth camps organized in the Polish resorts of Rychwałd and Śródborów. In the autumn of 2002, Rabbi Caine established a one-year conversion course in the spirit of the Conservative Judaism he represented. The course raised concerns among older *gmina* members, as did Caine's policy of allowing women to read the Torah from the synagogue stand, *bimah,* and put on *tałesy*, Jewish prayer shawls. [89] Accusations that the rabbi was 'turning non-Jews into Jews' stoked the already heated atmosphere. Retrospectively, it is possible to see that participants at these events varied in their interpretations of them: some remarked to me that the imported values and practices had been hardly compatible with the established normative order in Wrocław. Others thought the upheaval had more to do with the political animosities at the time and opposition to the chairman, Jerzy Kichler, who sympathized with Conservative Judaism. Perhaps the two factors were not mutually exclusive, and the genuine resentment of some had been mobilized in political struggle by others. I was told that the most vocal opposition to Rabbi Caine's innovations had come not from first, but second generation Jews, those who were completely secular and ignorant of Judaism. This perhaps indicates that the conflicts back in 2002 and 2003 mirrored the friction of ontologies I encountered, when again, the inclusion of 'non-Jews' was most unsettling for those whose own sense of belonging was predominantly based on ethnicity and interpersonal relationships developed in the post-war era. Rabbi Caine's contract was not renewed and his departure coincided with a political crisis in the *gmina*; this was soon followed by the permanent closure of the student hall of residence. A number of people who supported Caine, from the second and third generations, like Patrycja,

---

[88] The historical data here are based on conversations with Jerzy Kichler as well as other community members present at that time. The information I received was corroborated with published accounts and articles.

[89] *Tałesy* is Polish plural of *tałes*, from Ashkhenazi Hebrew and Yiddish *tallis*.

remained at the congregation and continued to engage in its social and political life, while many others either moved away from the community or migrated to Israel and the United Kingdom, like Karol I mentioned in the previous chapter. The support for Caine given by some members of the second generation again illustrates that we cannot assume equivalence between generational divisions and ontologies of Jewish affiliation and that Jewish ontologies imported by foreign rabbis could, at times, create stark intra-generational divisions. If the latter were only less striking during the Rabbi Rapoport's reign it was because those uncomfortable with his interpretation of Orthodox Judaism kept away from the *gmina*, save for major religious festivals.

At the time of my fieldwork, the opinions expressed by *gmina* affiliates about becoming Jewish drew on the very same criteria of <u>being</u> Jewish I discussed above. Conversion undertaken by people without Jewish ethnic ties and the influx of claimants to Jewish identity from outside the perimeter of local social recognition clearly threw into relief the division line between the pre-revival and successive post-revival Jewish ontologies.

Andrew Buckser's research into the Jewish Community in Copenhagen led him to conclude that religious conversion was in fact a 'social conversion', a means of being accepted into the Jewish Community of Copenhagen and allowed to marry a Jew or a Jewess (Buckser, 2003). As such, it was primarily a way to accommodate the considerably high number of intermarriages. Buckser found that social conversions to Judaism in Copenhagen were marked by a lack of 'changes in belief and experience of the world' (Buckser, 2003). To convert meant that belonging was established primarily in a social sense, and such rationale was considered legitimate. In a similar fashion, Katarzyna Reszke argues that for young Polish Jews 'conversion presents itself as a strategy of changing one's status within the community' (Reszke, 2007, pp.108-9). Reszke did not, however, analyze conversion in the actual social life of a Polish Jewish *gmina* – and in that respect Bruckner's anthropological study is a more appropriate point of reference. In the Wrocław context, conversion to Judaism was more likely to be accepted by *gmina* members when it 'legitimized' those who were perceived as already connected with the local community through the fact of Jewish ancestry. The actual cases I became familiar with, and the views presented by some of my interlocutors, lead me to conclude that 'practical' reasons, like having a Jewish partner and wanting to establish a family, were more likely to be

136

considered a justifiable reason, in a way that resembles the intrinsic understandings of Danish Jews from Bruckner's study. As far as acceptance was concerned, the Wrocław situation was similar to that of Copenhagen: people who were seeking spiritual transformation, in an individualistic sense, were generally frowned upon, although in Wrocław actual social engagement, contribution to the community, or personal merits could turn the tide in individual cases (cf. Buckser, 2003). [90] I conditionally agree with Katarzyna Reszke that people who already feel accepted within a Polish Jewish milieu because of their ancestry tend to see conversion primarily, if not exclusively, in pragmatic terms. Nonetheless, conversion is not only a form of legitimization. The actual conversion process, which can last up to several years[91] – the learning and gradual socialization - is far more important than its outcome for self-understanding, self-assurance and also for gaining trust, becoming more familiar to the first and second generation congregants.

The normative model of being and becoming Jewish, that I mentioned in the beginning, was merely one of a number present in Polish Jewish communal life; it was an intrinsic 'folk' ontology of familiarity and experience that contrasted with multiple ontologies of becoming, reterritorialized in Poland with the coming of transnational authorities and projects.

During my fieldwork, Rabbi Yitzchak Rapoport of Shavei Israel held a monopoly of religious authority within the Wrocław *gmina* and was one of the seven Orthodox members of the Polish rabbinate which held sway over ZGWŻ-based religious life. [92] In contrast, Rabbi Caine's presence in Wrocław, and in Poland more generally, gave rise to a notable clash between different religious ontologies competing in the arena of the 'revival'. Caine's relatively more liberal approach to religious practice and conversion evoked firm opposition from the already established Orthodox rabbis who had been sent to Poland by the Ronald Lauder

---

[90] My conversations with a Czech doctoral student, Anna Pokorna, researching Czech participants of Taglit, lead me to assume that conversion among the young people in Prague is also primarily considered a form of social legitimization.

[91] There is, however, a well- known case of someone in Wrocław, whose social integration in Wrocław was so gradual, that it took more than three decades, and even then did not end, at the time of my research, with a unanimous acceptance.

[92] A rabbinate is a collective body of rabbis who decide upon religious matters within a given territorial and organizational jurisdiction.

Foundation: Michael Schudrich and Sasha Pecaric. [93] According to the reminiscences of the participants and witnesses I interviewed, the former of the two men turned down Caine's request to use the ZGWŻ *mikveh* in Warsaw, and the latter stormed out of a private hotel in Kraków, where the conservative conversion was finalized, and vehemently protested against its proceedings. The events immediately reverberated in the Polish and international press (Jaworska and Wysocki, 2004).

Rabbi Caine had left Wrocław years before I began my fieldwork, but his presence still lingered on – and not only because some of his older converts remained in contact with 'their' American rabbi. The outcome of Caine's residence and efforts was still a point of contention. Rabbi Rapoport looked down on conversions supervised by his predecessor, even though he himself considered that even a tentative ethnic link with Jewishness held the potential of becoming, in line with the Shavei Israel theology that I will discuss further on. My conversations with Rabbi Rapoport lead me to consider that his reservations were borne out of what Caine symbolized, subjectively of course: the allegedly less observant strain of Judaism that Rapoport resented and was highly critical of, despite having learned to live with the compromises that Polish Jewish life necessitated. It was as much a question of ontology, as of global strife and divisions over religious authority projected upon the new Polish Jewish reality.

The 'conversion of non-Jews' emerged as an accusation against Rabbi Caine in 2002 and 2003, then, inadvertently, against Rabbi Rapoport in 2009 and 2010, and eventually was vocalized by Rapoport himself in a protest against a   potential visit by a Progressive rabbi from Warsaw. [94] This concerned the matter of Rabbi Rapoport's claim to authority over the congregation as well as anxiety over a more global balance of power between Orthodox and Progressive Judaism. The community-based protests, regardless of the extent to which they were informed by current politics and personal animosities, spoke of a deeper rift. If anything, these anxieties over crossing community boundaries indicate that either the reality of intermarriage, or non-Jewish Poles' interest in becoming Jews, had not been resolved

---

[93] Michael Schudrich is presently the Chief Rabbi of Poland. As I was told by several of my interlocutors, whilst he finished a Conservative rabbinical seminary, as did Caine, Schudrich subsequently shifted towards the Modern Orthodox denomination.

[94] According to what I was told by the Jewish Club members during a debate on how to deal with the Rabbi's protest. In the end, most present decided to respect Rapoport's authority and feelings, even if many were keen to meet a representative of Progressive Judaism.

and collectively accommodated, and still raised concerns over the cohesion of the community – a cohesion that may be imagined, but is socially real enough to give rise to concerns in the light of its potential demise.

These discrepancies towards what was regarded as the legitimacy of someone's claim to belonging, both to the Jewish people and to the Wrocław community, were seldom aired in public. The dynamics of rejection and inclusion which were evident in gossip and personal conversations were even more apparent in those instances of communal life that brought together different stakeholders in the local politics of recognition, and where someone's Jewishness carried social and ritual significance. Counting to *minan*, the quorum of ten male Jews necessary for the holding of a proper religious service, was such instance. Having *minian* on a weekly basis was uncommon and always a matter of chance. The rabbi used to phone the elderly to encourage them to come, but their attendance depended on their, gradually declining, state of health, and on how they felt, physically, on a given day. Most of the remaining, regular synagogue guests who were still mobile did not seem to need any encouragement, but the rabbi was trying to convince the less religious, and they were equally relevant in raising the status of the religious gathering. Including Piotr or Szymon in the *minian* rarely tipped the scales. This practice seemed to be a performative statement of the transnational rabbi's authority over the question of belonging and the decision he had taken to accept both men. At the same time, it was a sign of the rabbi's genuine trust in the sincerity of their claims and life stories.

My encounters with the elderly revealed Rabbi Rapoport's influence on local, historically sedimented categorizations of inclusion and exclusion. While some second generation congregants voiced their discontent, the synagogue old-timers, the majority, had the full respect for the rabbi and in the context of religious service accepted, at least provisionally, anyone that he accepted. Whoever the rabbi included in the *minian*, they accepted – even though the Rabbi was young enough to be their grandson. He was the rabbi, a figure of authority to their way of understanding, and they were, apparently, willing to go to great lengths to respect his wishes and suppress their doubts, as the most learned and religiously competent elders like Jonathan did, when it was the Rabbi Ivan Caine who claimed authority over *gmina*. I will return to this issue in the next chapter.

Through his conversion course, which began in November 2007, Rabbi Rapoport introduced a Jewish sub-space into the *gmina*, one which had its own criteria of inclusion, a terrain of becoming with a double role. The course offered a chance for religious socialization and legitimization of status for people of Jewish ancestry, like Daniel; at the same time as it attracted people who usually found themselves on the margins of *gmina* sociality (at least, at the time of my fieldwork), that is to say, potential Jewish converts without any familial ties to Wrocław Jews, who came from well beyond the boundaries of local Jewish social circle.

Just as the Wrocławians who engaged in Polish Jewish life held beliefs grounded in personal and collective experiences, so, too, the rabbi was not just a cog in the ideological machine of reterritorialized identity politics, but, rather, someone who had come to Wrocław with his own set of experiences. In the course of numerous conversations and daily interactions, I came to understand the personal aspect of his insistence on halachic ancestry, on the primacy of matrilineal belonging. This could be traced back to his own history of being a *baal teshuva*, someone from a non-Orthodox Polish – Russian family of Jewish migrants to Sweden, who had 'returned' to a strict religious observance. What set him at odds with the previous cohort of young Jewish people, his blatant distrust of the previous rabbi's conservative converts, seemed to be linked to his own experiences as a rabbi in Norway and his disillusionment with a policy towards conversion that he saw as too lenient and disrespectful of the Orthodox interpretation of Halacha, that had become the framework of his life and rabbinical studies in Israel. At the same time, Rapoport's support for the conversion of people of partial Jewish ancestry was easier to understand; it connected with the concept of *zera Yisrael* (seed of Israel) that he sometimes invoked. [95] *Zera Yisrael*, invoked recently by the Israeli rabbi Chaim Amsalem, and espoused by Shavei Israel, introduces another category in between the strict duality of the Jew-Gentile distinction; it posits that people of non-matrilineal ancestry are endowed with a closer connection to the Jewish people and that their inclusion (through conversion) should be facilitated and encouraged

---

[95] The notion itself bears a striking resemblance to the concept of *zera kodesh* ("the holy seed") from the biblical Book of Ezra. There, however, 'the holy seed' that is 'the seed' of the Jewish people, is presented as threatened by impurity introduced by sexual and marital relations with non-Jews (Biale, 2007, pp.30-1).

(Amsalem; Levine, 2013).[96] Elements such as Orthodox Judaism, the theology of Chaim Ansalem and the religious Zionism of the rabbi and Shavei Israel formed an idiosyncratic assemblage – an ontology of belonging and becoming implemented at the ground level of Wrocław's Jewish sociality.

In August 2010 I took part in a two-week seminar organized by Shavei Israel. In their own words, the organization 'reaches out and assists Lost Tribes and 'hidden Jews' seeking to return to the Jewish people'(Shavei Israel, 2013a). In practice, the organization provides support to groups like *Bnei Menashe* of India, whose members have long claimed to be Jews while not necessarily being recognized as such by the Israeli state and rabbinate (Egorova, 2013), or the Spanish *Bnei Anousim*, that is, the descendants of Jews who were forcefully converted to Christianity (*marranos*), who are now willing to 'return' to Judaism. In Poland, Shavei Israel seeks to help Jewish people who, according to the organization, had to 'hide their identities' (Shavei Israel, 2013a).

At the seminar, which was popular with my research participants active in the *gmina* during the 2006-2010 period, different Jewish ontologies operated side by side, or as might be argued, Shavei Israel fostered its own ontology, one which informed its agenda and international activism. In accord with the organization's mission, many of the eighteen participants were potential converts, individuals who had already converted or who were preparing for conversion. Some had Jewish ancestry, others did not. There was also a sizable group of Polish Jews already involved in Jewish communal organizations. Most participants were of the third generation, but two women and one man were in their forties and fifties.

I will discuss the seminar extensively in chapter seven, but here I will specifically address the question of belonging. The seminar's religious and normative environment was Orthodox, as much as that was possible for a group of largely non-Orthodox participants: as regards religious service and rituals, there was a separation of men and women during prayers and in accommodation. Then again, the ontology expressed in the narratives of the lectures and in everyday interactions while

---

[96] Apart from being occasionally referred to, it was a topic of a lecture by Shavei's Chief Rabbi Birnbaum at a Szabaton in Kraków I went to, and implicitly, in one of Rabbi Boas Pash's lectures that I attended at a Shavei Israel seminar in Israel. Since the conclusion of my fieldwork, Shavei Israel have placed a direct reference to Ansalem's theology of *zera Yisrael* on their webpage (Shavei Israel, 2013b).

Orthodox in principle, had its idiosyncratic specificity, primarily in ascertaining the viability of the potential 'returnees' and converts' wishes to become Jewish. One of the teachers was the already- mentioned Rabbi Boas Pash, then Rabbi of Kraków and another emissary of Shavei Israel. His lecture, which touched on the subject of belonging, was informed by his experiences of leading a community of Portuguese 'Hidden Jews', descendants of *marranos*, who, in recent years, and with extensive help given by Shavei Israel, were seeking 'Jewish identity' and 'reconnection with Israel'. The rabbi expressed a welcoming attitude towards converts, praising the return to one's 'roots' taking place among those of non-halachic ancestry, and, in a more encompassing sense, starkly contrasting 'returnees' or neophytes, their knowledge and 'love for Judaism', with Israelis who did not heed the strictures of the Torah. The rabbi also referred to the Talmudic passage that I mentioned at the start of this chapter, by saying that the 'souls that have not yet been born, also accepted Torah under the Mount Sinai', and so did the 'souls' of converts. This perspective seemed to reflect the ontology Rabbi Rapoport brought to Wrocław, Orthodox but particularly approving of, or even encouraging, conversion. In that perspective being a Jew was still predicated by birth or ritual transformation/return, but being *Jewish* in the sense of attachment and affinity was more of a gradual quality, rather than a precise, clear cut status. Such an ontology was fundamentally not unlike that espoused by many Jewish Wrocławians – even if the criteria for belonging and becoming were strikingly different – one was based on familiarity and intergenerational ties, the other on the conjured up space of becoming, on ritual transformation, personal dedication, religious observance and choice.

Other encounters in the transnational social space tended to redraw the boundaries of belonging in yet different ways. During the above-mentioned Taglit-Birthright trips for Polish participants, at JDC camps and leadership training seminars, the model of belonging was inclusive of those of non-matrilineal ancestry, that is, the majority of people on tours setting off from Poland and having an equivocal, if any, sense of Jewish affiliation. All of a sudden they were subject to a completely new ontology of belonging, one that bestowed upon them relatedness not only with Israel, but with the Jewish people. Taglit is itself a practical exercise in the larger social and political process of bridging different geographies and polities of Jewish life, incisively illustrated by Yossi Shain and Barry Bristman when they note the 'semantic change emerging in Jewish discourse, with terms such as the negative

galut ('exile') and later the neutral *tfutzot* ('diaspora') being replaced by references to partnership with *ha'am hayehudi* ('the Jewish people'), regardless of their geographical location inside or outside the ancient homeland' (2002, p.83). As Rebecca Golbert (2001) argues, encounters with Jewish transnational NGOs, as well as travel and migration to Israel, have fostered a sense of belonging among young Ukrainian Jews that takes in not only the local Jewish community but also extrapolates it onto what she calls 'transnational Jewish culture' and Israel. I have here tried to illustrate, however, that the emergence of the transnational space of Jewish being and becoming not only fosters transnational affinities, but also directly confronts actors bearing contrasting understandings and feelings about what constitutes being and becoming Jewish. In the Polish context such process also extended to actual physical, political and social boundaries of space, where belonging is categorized and mobilized to grant access to ethno-religious social networks and institutions.

'Authenticity'

In her study of the identity narratives of young Polish Jews, Katarzyna Reszke noted that her interlocutors employed essentialist idioms, like 'blood' when trying to explicate Jewish affiliation. Reszke explains away these enunciations as 'primordialist rhetoric' (2007, p.10), 'applied in response to threats to identity' coming from the 'existing sociocultural representations and powerful discourses' (2007, p.150) together with non-Jewish Polish and foreign Jewish outsiders who dispute the 'authenticity' of young Polish Jewish adults.[97] In the light of what has been said about the local ontology of belonging, Reszke misses out on two crucial aspects in such seemingly essentialist invocations. First, she does not analytically engage with the everyday boundaries and affinities between Polish Jews. Second, she does not consider the reasons behind the persistence and transgression of such categorizations in actual communal life.

At this point, however, I would like to pick up the analytical thread of transnational encounters and the legitimization of one's belonging that I briefly referred to in my earlier discussion of first encounters with Polish Jewish social life.

---

[97] Reszke notes the existence of such "discourses", but does not venture to explore them analytically.

Almost every scholar of the subject has noted that foreign Jewish visitors tend to deny contemporary Polish Jews 'authenticity'. Gudonis (2001a; 2001b), Reszke (2007) and Rosenson (1996) all noted the recurrence of such experiences in the self-narratives they heard. Erica Lehrer, Kostanty Gebert and Jack Kugelmass contributed to our understanding of how such reluctance and denial is grounded in collective memories of the Holocaust and imaginaries of pre-war Jewish life in Poland, the presumed historical inalienability of ethnic boundaries between Poles and Jews, and, in particular, the incomparable significance of contemporary Poland for personal and collective identities and practices of commemoration (Kugelmass, 1995; Kugelmass, 1996; Gebert, 2008; Lehrer, 2003). Certainly, questions of transnational encounters and 'authenticity' cannot be dissociated from discussion of Jewish affiliation. Reszke, Rosenson and Gudonis are correct in saying that interactions with Jewish foreigners can make the 'third generation' feel rejected as 'inauthentic' or insincere. Olek told me about an encounter with one of the American Jewish sponsors of the 'revival', when, after saying that it was his father and not his mother who was Jewish, he felt (as he put it) 'as if I was a faun, a hybrid, a creature half-human and half-animal'. His recollection closely mirrors a self-definition given by one of Reszke's interviewees, that is, of a hybrid 'birdfish' (Reszke, 2007, p.148). Artur, few years older, and resident in Israel at the time of my research, recalled how as the only young adult of halachic descent active in Wrocław ten years earlier, he was given the role of a tried-and-tested young Jew to introduce to foreign delegations – which may say as much about the expectations of these foreign Jewish visitors as it does of the complexes of the Wrocław congregation elites at that time. In the transnational institutional space of contemporary Polish Jewish life, one's 'authenticity' could indeed be questioned, both in interpersonal encounters and systemic policies, for example, those concerning immigration to Israel. On the individual level, those of my research participants who were of halachic ancestry, and therefore, beyond doubt, at least formally, as regards their Jewish affiliation, even among the most stringent of Orthodox movements, were clearly less likely to face rebuttal when confronted with Israeli institutions or some American Jewish tourists. Underlying these poignant personal experiences was distrust towards the resurgence of Jewish sociality in Poland, or marginalization of its significance. Awareness of such bias, of a particular discourse of denial, the difficulty for many people to accept the possibility that there were Jews in the 'Jewish graveyard' was

something many of my interlocutors were aware of, whether or not that translated into a questioning of their own belonging.

Such instances of denial were rare however, compared to the perpetual affirmation, reaffirmation or in some instances the policy of fostering a sense of Jewish affiliation and solidarity by the Jewish outsiders. Reszke, Rosenson and Gudonis largely overlook that vast terrain in which the ambivalent sense of connection turned into a sense of affinity. As I earlier illustrated, most early transnational experiences of my research participants stirred up rather than questioned their sense of Jewish affiliation. Polish Taglit-Birthright trips are not particularly effective at creating affinity where there is none, and most young adults associated with the *gmina* had some sense of Jewish belonging before they went on Taglit-Birthright. Similar experiences, like the children's camps in Hungary or Shavei Israel seminars in Israel have in common a great potential to nurture Jewish self-identification, as I was able to observe myself and was informed by my interlocutors. In any case, global encounters cannot be seen as subverting one's sense of affinity with the Jewish people, past and present.

Moreover, the majority of foreign Jews encountered by Polish Jews on a day-to-day basis are authority figures: transnational entrepreneurs and rabbis whose *raison d'etre* has been to support nascent Polish Jewish sociality; and it is they who are the most vocal heralds of its continued existence in global media discourse (e.g. Gruber, 2011; Jay, 2013). Encounters with transnational rabbis or educators can in fact counter understandings of being and becoming grounded in post-war Polish Jewish experiences, stretching the brackets of inclusion beyond what is locally acceptable. That was the case with Rabbi Rapoport and Shavei Israel, and a decade earlier with Rabbi Ivan Caine and Masorti Judaism. Additionally, the 'revival' created new social spaces, in which one could become Jewish (or 'more Jewish') in novel ways – through conversion or acquiring cultural competence by learning about Jewish customs and religious practice, which had virtually ceased to be a mark of Jewish affiliation in the post-war period.

As with the local ontology of belonging, attitudes towards the new order cut across generational boundaries. Some of my younger interlocutors were among the most anxious about the Shavei Israeli agenda of searching for the 'hidden Jews' of Poland. One of them described the organization's activities as a 'missionary' endeavour to 'turn people into Jews'. It was not that he did not accept religious

conversion. He felt, however, that becoming Jewish in Poland had to be a gradual process that involved learning and experiencing what it means, of gaining recognition among local Jews – and he was not making that a requirement solely for Poles without Jewish ancestry but for all newcomers. This could not be done, in his opinion, merely by a religious act alone or driven solely by individual choice and neophyte zeal. One had to grow into it.

Ways of becoming

As I argued at the beginning of this chapter, in the emergent Polish Jewish communal world, among the 'third generation', belonging runs in tandem with becoming. Ontology of becoming introduces a way of being Jewish which could be called, borrowing from Michael Foucault, a 'technology of self', not a trifle whim of self-fashioning, but a conscious constitution of selfhood through intentional actions – in here of learning, conversion, and kindling of social relationships (Foucault et al., 1988).[98] Conversion is merely one such technology of self, and simply the most obvious – and it is crucial for those who cannot claim Jewish identity on the basis of ethnic descent; furthermore, it is evocative of the friction that occurs within the reterritorialized Polish Jewish social space. Most of my research participants did not undergo conversion, even if they took part in conversion courses and, in the case of the men, underwent circumcision which, in their own eyes, augmented their status as Jews. Circumcision, as Piotr expressed it, made a 'statement' about one's affinity and dedication.

Intense social engagement in Jewish institutional life in early adulthood – primarily in transnational programmes and subsequently in the Wrocław community created another fundament of social recognition and self-identification. Such distant encounters fostered socialization which enabled belonging of a type that fell outside the framework of ethnic ties and religious conversion. Cultural competences like knowing (consciously or inadvertently) how to act in a given situation, recognition of cultural codes specific for the shared experiences of translocal education, being

---

[98] In this late fruit of his intellectual work, Foucault discusses classical, Gnostic and Christian philosophies of self-formation. The notion of "technologies of self" was presented at a seminar at the University of Vermont in 1982. Foucault's plans to publish a book on the topic were cut short by his death in 1984.

familiar with other Polish Jews, their personal histories and relationships - these were crucial for everyday interaction at the *gmina* and forms of knowledge or skilled practice that could not be attained by formalized education and generalized textbook learning. What was said at the seminars, training camps and conversion courses is important, but for the most part, social recognition and competences were acquired in interactions that took place at the supposed informal margins of these events – and that was, as I learned, as much true of the 1990s as in the opening decade of the new millenium.

Locally, a sense of community and shared belonging was dependent on the gradual acquisition of a specific 'cultural intimacy', what Michael Herzfeld defines as 'the sharing of known and recognizable traits that not only define insiderhood but are also ... disapproved by powerful outsiders' (Herzfeld 1997, p.94). The consolidation of the club commune involved both knowledge and emotions. It was a matter of affect, of a sense of closeness, of trust, of comfort in the presence of others; phenomena hardly tangible, but evident in ethnographic and personal encounters. On one instance, I was invited to bring along my then new partner, Matylda, to one of club meetings at Magda's house; she, Matylda, had no prior experience of Jewish social life, nor any sort of Jewish familial connection. I accepted the offer, spontaneously, with no particular analytical purpose in mind. Matylda was happy to meet the people I was working with, some of whom had become good colleagues; Magda and her husband were similarly eager to get to know my significant other. That gathering made me (and Matylda, as I later found out) realize the full extent of how infused the meetings were with cultural codes, memories, gossip and jokes which related to translocal Jewish events and programmes, and small performances of insider knowledge and familiarity. Daniel and Magda, with whom I had a closer relationship, apparently felt compelled to explain those small details, cultural references, and sayings to ensure that Matylda felt welcome and to include her in the usual Jewish Club discussion. Sometimes the meetings were less infused with these performances of shared knowledge, but what I also noticed was that to a certain degree these became slightly exacerbated in the presence of outsiders – including jokes of self-ridicule, like Magda's jokes about her looks fitting the stereotypical Jewish physiognomy. Coming back to cultural intimacy, these specific cultural traits, be this reference to shared experiences of Jewish becoming or to religious rituals,

were not necessarily dependent on the fact of their disapproval of others, but rather played with, and were performed to signify, collective belonging and distinctiveness.

Meetings and the sociality of the Jewish Club were riddled with knowledge and humor informed by both shared experiences of translocal education and social life at the Wrocław congregation. One of Tadeusz's sons, Hubert, in his forties, spoke of specific patterns of behavior of the elderly and second generation, of know-how, familiarity and humour as well as certain embodied dispositions, ways of acting, as something that complete outsiders among the younger newcomers, could not relate to or at least were unable to absorb and become competent in, overnight. This and similar opinions confirmed my own sense about how important it was to be able to decipher distinct cultural codes and respond to them appropriately. Paradoxically, however, and contrary to Hubert's somewhat pessimistic view, these forms of cultural intimacy, in the sense delineated above, were just as important in the interactions of the young as they were in those of the elderly. Among the young, however, translocal place-events and experiences created by the global remaking of Polish Jewish sociality became new and significant points of reference.

Becoming through the attainment of cultural competence indicates that the realities of translocal seminars, conferences and summer camps and of the Wrocław *gmina* were not dichotomous. For example, religious knowledge acquired in global projects of education or from a transnational rabbi was informed by the same religious narratives and precepts as those recognized and valued among elderly members of the *gmina*.

One could, for example, learn movements and gestures associated with 'saying' or performing the prayer of the *Amidah*, the essential element of Jewish religious practice and a distinctively evocative part of public prayers, recited when standing. The worshipper faces the former location of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, bows at the beginning and the end of the prayer and finally bows again and 'takes leave of the divine presence with backward steps' (Ehrlich, 2007, p.72), moving as if in a symbolic space of the ritual. In Wrocław, the *Amidah,* in the Orthodox manner, was first performed individually and silently, according to a closely prescribed synchronized order of utterances and movements and repeated aloud by the rabbi with the congregants joining in to conclude the prayer. In practice, even on major holidays, only the remaining few among the elderly congregants, converts and a few more religiously inclined young adults like Daniel and Szymon

recited the *Amidah* individually. [99] Being able to properly recite the *Amidah* was a clear sign of competence, but among the young, also an implicit declaration of a more religious attitude towards one's becoming and being. However, religious acts were also subject to a particular moral and temporal economy of becoming – being too ostentatious could be met with sarcasm, especially when such a performative overload was exhibited by a complete newcomer, who having learned was, so it was thought, all too eager to 'show off'. What is even more important, I learned that the elderly of the first generation, like Abram or Joachim, competent in religious tradition, appreciated such enactments of religious dedication, as long as they accepted the person and trusted the sincerity of her or his efforts.

<div align="center">***</div>

The issues discussed above have several implications for our understanding of the globalized remaking of Jewish sociality in Poland. The primary implication of analytical engagement with Polish Jewish becoming is precisely as Roger Brubaker has argued: 'ethnicity is fundamentally not a thing *in* the world, but a perspective *on* the world' (2004, p.65). The experiences of people with a sense of Jewish belonging who temporarily, or more permanently, become a part of an institutionalized 'minority' within the confines of the ZGWŻ do not only confirm that 'lines between kinship and other forms of relationality are fluid' (2000, p.13) as Janet Carsten argues. Such conclusions arise directly from a retrospective reflection on the millennia-long conflation of religious and ethnic relationality in Jewish religious thought, legislation and social practice (Webber, 1997). An analysis of the Polish Jewish 'revived' sociality, however, reveals that actual delineations of divisions, as well as the connectedness of the Wrocław *gmina*, go beyond the ethno-religious dualism, and incorporate affect, knowledge and collective experience as indicia and criteria of belonging. Even more important for my argument about the global transformation of Polish Jewish sociality, is the observation that my research participants' sense of belonging is informed by the friction that takes place when distinctively Polish Jewish understandings and affects come up against ontologies

---

[99] I recited the Amidah myself as well on most occasions, in line with my dedication to fully participate in every aspect of community life I was able to – but also to better tune in with collective experiences of ritual practice, the rhythm and physicality of religious acts.

espoused by various global stakeholders that have supported and shaped Poland's 'Jewish revival'. Seemingly formalized criteria of belonging, such as Jewish origin and conversion, as well as the potentiality of becoming Jewish by learning and socialization, are subject to dynamics of authority and power in both the Wrocław *gmina* and on the global level as well. It may seem that the understanding of Jewish belonging as a particular historically sedimented Jewish ontology, shared by the first and the second generations, is being replaced by criteria of Jewish being and becoming that are authorized and disseminated by the transnational rabbis and NGOs. The Jewish affiliation of the post-1989 newcomers was either formed, or radically transformed, in the emergent sociality of the 'revival', and their understanding of Jewishness is informed by a melange of different Jewish ontologies of affiliation. Many however, especially those for whom Jewishness was not a sudden 'discovery', still think and feel about being Jewish in terms espoused by the veterans of the Wrocław *gmina* and the local TSKŻ.

The boundaries I have described above, the disparate and often conflicting ontologies of what constitutes Jewish affiliation, were very much present, at times sizzling, under the surface of *gmina* life. At the same time, they were off-set by the pragmatics of life in a small, and indeed at least seemingly, shrinking congregation: one would see obituaries far more often than new faces on Włodkowica Street. There was a sense of precariousness, of necessary compromise and, among the older congregants, of resignation to the changing realities of the *gmina*. Barbara Myerhoff (1994), in her study of retirement homes for elderly Jewish Americans in California, noted how the social dramas over politics, tradition and personal animosities among the protagonists of her ethnography were often the very fabric that held this precarious and marginalized group of people together; discord between them was often played down to allow the community to exist. In the strife over belonging in Wrocław, and the silent consensus over contentious ontologies, I often saw a similar coexistent conflict and connectedness.

Chapter 6
Gmina

Shabbat guests

An early autumn night had fallen before I reached the square on Włodkowica Street, on the edge of the 'Old Town' district of Wrocław. It was quite dark, save for the windowpanes of surrounding buildings forming bright, hazed rectangles of light. The square was deserted; beer gardens and bustling crowds were just a memory of summer long passed. Yet, I could hear dampened voices, laughter and music coming from the nearby cafe Mleczarnia, a trendy meeting place in the fin-de-siècle style. The square was enclosed on three sides by a u-shaped century-old tenement house with a massive wrought iron gate on the south side like the entrance to a grey stone fortress. It dated back to the pre-war Jewish community; at present a mixture of council housing and reclaimed Jewish communal property. The northern edge of the plaza was bordered by the neoclassicist facade of the White Stork Synagogue, built in 1829. I recalled then, as I do now, fleeting images of the time before its renovation, but not much beyond. It was a vague memory of a grey, quite desolate neighbourhood and the ruined structure. These memories from my early adolescence merged with historical accounts of the socialist period, mixed up, in turn, with stories

I heard from older Wrocławians. The most vivid were the narratives of people directly involved in post-war Jewish sociality. Zygmunt, for example, vividly recalled, and epitomised in comparison with the present, his childhood memories of the synagogue square brimming with Jews, thousands of survivors squeezed together to celebrate Yom Kippur. [100]

Stairs in the north-east corner of the square led to a small prayer house located in a large room. In the community vernacular, this usual place for prayer services was referred to by the Yiddish term *shul*, with the Polish word *synagoga* usually being reserved for the massive 'White Stork' that towered over the square in its freshly restored splendour.

Earlier that day, Szymon had assured me that the meeting would take place in the canteen found in the same building, which on this occasion would also serve as a house of prayer before the communal dinner (*kidusz*).[101] Rabbi Rapoport was now in Israel: he shuttled fortnightly between the family home in a Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem and his congregation in this bustling Lower-Silesian city. Shortly before the beginning of my fieldwork, his family moved back to Israel and he renegotiated his contract to divide his time between Jerusalem in Israel and Wrocław, spending two weeks in a given place at a time. As usual on Rabbi's absence, the chairman of the *gmina* refused to give the keys to *shul* to the Friday evening congregants, which by some was interpreted as a sign of distrust and, inevitably, disrespect for the small group of participants among whom there were not any elders. Elders seemed to bestow political legitimacy and provide rationale for the existence of the administrative body behind this congregation of people. That night, instead of challah, the staple of Shabbat diet, congregants found matzo, left over from the Pesach holidays, and, out of the blue, managed to come up with a bottle of kosher wine for the blessing.[102] When I met him the following day, the usually silent and reserved Szymon could hardly hide his displeasure. He, and some others I spoke with, took the lack of the institution's support as a sign of blatant disregard towards

---

[100] The Day of Atonement, the holiest of all Jewish holidays, and the most widely observed, even among many secular Jews.

[101] The Hebrew term *Kiddush* (sanctification) refers to the blessing over wine or grape juice sanctifying the communal dinner, and in reference to the communal feast as a whole. In the same double sense it is used in the vernacular of the Wrocław congregation.

[102] Matzo is an unleavened bread eaten specifically on Pesach holidays and challah is a festive braided bread eaten on Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

the Shabbat evening organized by the young and converts. That reflection did not seem groundless, but there had been occasions when the same lapses in provisions had happened on Shabbats legitimized by the presence of the elderly. In any case, the more religiously inclined of my interlocutors shared the view that the organization of religious life was one of the few core responsibilities of the *gmina*.

At the time of my fieldwork, retrospectively a period of relative stagnation and crisis, the austerity of those small ceremonies starkly contrasted with the lavishness of occasional public events, organized usually by the conglomerate effort of the local branch of the ZGWŻ, Jewish culture entrepreneurs who had the backing of Wrocław City Council, Polish and international sponsors and numerous 'heritage' and 'culture' foundations, as much as its hybrid actuality contrasted with the attractiveness and 'purity' of the Jewishness performed in aestheticized multi-cultural events. These endeavours catered predominantly to the needs and expectations of a non-Jewish audience. At the same time, open cultural events, in which anyone could anonymously participate, without any declarations of connectedess, offered a chance of communal involvement for those betwixt and between a complete denial of any Jewish belonging and a formal affiliation to any Jewish organization. [103] Karolina Szykierska, a *gmina* member and a Jewish activist, one of the initiators, and a long-time artistic director, of 'Simcha', the annual Festival of Jewish Culture in Wrocław, told me that attracting such unaffiliated Jewish Wrocławians was indeed one of her motives behind kick-starting local Jewish cultural events. [104]

<p style="text-align:center">∗∗∗</p>

I headed straight to the canteen, through the backdoor, which served that evening as the main entrance, and managed to find the door before my eyes could accustom themselves to the darkness of the entryway. A well-lit hall brought to

---

[103] Research on this specific aspect of Poland's Jewish 'cultural renaissance' has not been done yet. I came across several people of Jewish ancestry, unaffiliated with Jewish organizations who nonetheless wished to anonymously participate in Jewish cultural events. A quantitative study of participants in such cultural events in Wrocław could perhaps answer the question whether it is a common motivation of at least some individuals attending Jewish performances and concerts.

[104] Other events of that kind organized in Wrocław include 'The Day of Judaism in the Catholic Church' or regular theatre performances and music concerts organized by the Bente Kahan Foundation. Some Wrocławians Jewish and otherwise also participate in massive events in other cities like the Jewish Culture Festival in Kraków or 'Singer's Warsaw' Jewish Festival.

mind, as usual, canteens and bars of the socialist era, images that floated up from the tatters of my childhood memory and cinematic visualizations of a by-gone era. The illusion was somewhat disturbed by the technological marvel of cheap plastic cutlery, soon to soften and lose its shape in the heat of chicken soup. Plastic flowers adorned the old-fashioned oilcloth that had been covered for Shabbat with a disposable white paper tablecloth. This provisionality combined with the timeless persistence of that interior design, often triggered ironic remarks from younger visitors, but it gave the place its unmistakable character. A large wall clock, with a background image of a garish bouquet, had stopped working a week or two after the congregation porter-cum-security chief installed it. It still hung on the wall above the hotplates. Likewise the old piano in the corner was a silent marker of half-forgotten cultural soirées of some past era and an apt metaphor for the institutional stasis mentioned by young and old alike. Yet, this putatively time-frozen decorum was hiding the intense social dynamics of the *gmina,* the ebb and flow of people and ideas.

At that point, only seven people were gathered at the table, including myself - slightly below the average number of Friday congregants. In the beginning, Ula, a complete newcomer, in her early twenties, who wanted to convert to Judaism, and middle-aged Janina, who had converted ten years earlier, lit the Sabbath candles. Three months before, and on a Sabbath evening without the rabbi, Janina and Magda were teaching Ula a simple ritual - a blessing said with one's eyes covered.[105] Magda's own belonging and engagement with Jewishness were poles apart from both women. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Magda's mother was Jewish, while her father was not. Some members of her Jewish family had survived the Holocaust, stayed in Poland and lived long enough for Magda to get to know them, to hear some Yiddish, to listen to sometimes comic, sometimes tragic, family histories, get a taste of what she called, with a reflective smile, 'all that is Jewish'.[106] Since late adolescence, even before she had begun to slowly overcome her anxiety about communicating Jewish belonging, Magda had started to engage in 'revival' Jewish communal projects, 'identity-building' camps, meetings in a vast stretch of translocal and transnational space, eventually becoming an educator and a 'young leader'

---

[105] Talmud, Shabbat 31b, http://www.come-and-hear.com/shabbath/shabbath_32.html#32a_1

[106] Personal conversation

herself. The three women were worlds apart. Yet, here they were, engaged in teaching and learning, and reciting in unison the Hebrew blessing: *Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, asher kidishanu b'mitz'votav v'tzivanu l'had'lik ner shel Shabbat; Amein.*[107] Afterwards, we began the evening service of *Kabbalat Shabbat*, the 'Reception of the Sabbath'.[108] In everyday interactions among young people and converts seemingly vast differences of cultural competence and personal background were rarely voiced and one could see willingness to share their knowledge, to disseminate it in a similar way to that in which they themselves had learned in the 'revival' world.

In August 2010, when the rabbi began his cyclical shuttling between Jerusalem and Wrocław, the more religiously observant participants subtly proposed to continue with the division between men and women during prayers, that Rabbi Rapoport had introduced upon his coming to Wrocław in 2006. No one opposed this, or at least, nobody did so explicitly, and the collective decision to divide the worshippers during religious service was quickly reached. Each time the coming of Shabbat was celebrated in the canteen, chairs were rearranged into two rows – one at the back and another at the front of the Shabbat table, both facing east, that in a synagogue would have been the place of the Torah Ark (Hebr. *Aron HaKodesh,* 'Holy Ark'), symbolically, if not precisely, towards Jerusalem. When praying in the canteen, everyone stood facing the window with a view of the synagogue square.

On that November evening something different happened. It was my second Sabbath in the company of Basia, at that time still a new face. She had come from Israel a few weeks before, eager to study computer science in Poland, which, aged nine, she had left with her parents and sister for Israel. After her return she soon became a regular Shabbat visitor in the *gmina*. Another guest that night was Józef, who came from Łódź, a large city about one hundred and twenty miles north-east of Wrocław. He was staying on the nearby premises of the Jewish Club, which on such occasions turned from a meeting place into a shelter for young travellers connected

---

[107] 'Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who has made us holy through mitzvot and commanded us to light Shabbat candles.' (English translation after: Isaacs, 2008, p.113)

[108] This ritual which precedes the evening prayer *maariv*, follows a mystical tradition believed to have been established by the sixteenth century cabbalists of Safed of welcoming the Shabbat as divine presence, Shekhinah. This act of welcoming and representing Shabbat as a bride who is welcomed by her rejoiced groom, falls back on much older religious practices and ideas (Cohn-Sherbok, 2003, p.495-96).

with the Club either with ties of Jewish affiliation or just comradeship. He was a cheerful fellow, newly returned, it was rumoured, from one-year at an Orthodox *yeshiva*, a religious college, in Israel. The presence of two more people than usual, Józef and Basia, made this miniscule gathering feel far less desolate, but no less riddled with jokes and teasing, a communal feeling that had to make up for the hardly appetizing culinary experience of Friday lunch leftovers.[109]

The change of spatial setting from that of the *shul* called for a make-shift rearrangement of the room, a moving of chairs and the turning of the canteen into a provisional prayer house. Basia said that she wanted to stay in the front row, with the men. She explained that when she had attended Shabbats at her sister's Modern Orthodox home in Jerusalem, led by her Sephardic brother-in-law, everyone would pray together.[110] In consequence, that night in Wrocław, in the wake of the short discussion that had sparked off the separation introduced by the Shavei Israel emissary, Rabbi Yitzhak Rapoport, was upset. Seats were not rearranged to create a division and we all prayed together, even if some men moved closer to the front or set themselves slightly apart, while Janina and Ula shifted more towards the back. Perhaps Basia's recalling of a homely Shabbat was indeed appropriate for that miniscule gathering. Few of those present that evening were able to spend Shabbats with their families, who were either secular or distanced themselves from anything Jewish. The small group with all its discrepancies and distances, in the absence of the normative authority of the emissary Rabbi, took part in an intimate, homely, and heterogeneous celebration.

Dissonance

I could hear something dissonant the way the hymns were sung. Józef pronounced every Hebrew word in a strong Ashkenazi manner that stemmed from

---

[109] Keeping Shabbat is subject to thirty nine prohibitions (melakhot) according to Jewish religious law (halacha). Two of these are prohibitions of kindling (*Ma'avir*) and extinguishing (*Mechabeh*) fire, which includes, in Orthodox interpretation, using electrical equipment, turning on ovens, stoves etc. Therefore the food has to be kept warm on a hot plate or a metal foil or plate (*Blech*) placed over a flame or stove, etc. which have been turned on, or ignited before Shabbat, and will not be turned off until the end of it. (For a detailed account see Ribiat, 1999)

[110] A 'Modern Orthodox' like all labels is an approximation. Months later I had the opportunity to visit Lea, Basia's sister and have a first-hand encounter with the complicatedness of Israeli observant middle class socioreligious identifications.

the times when Hebrew was mostly a liturgical language for Polish Jews, rather than employing the Modern Hebrew pronunciation used by the absent rabbi and the young Wrocław congregants.[111] I heard this way of saying prayers or reading the Torah from the few remaining elderly Wrocławian Jews. In the mouth of a young man, barely in his twenties, it seemed strange, almost uncanny, even if the dissonance was caused merely by what has become the normalized consensus of the 'revival'. Daniel, one of my main research participants, gave me a knowing smile during our collective singing. It was not until much later, however, that I learned that he and some of the congregants, including the religiously observant, viewed the flamboyant traditionalism of the Łódź congregation with a complex mixture of amusement, sympathy and distance.

After the prayers, Józef, as a guest, was asked to perform *Kiddush*, a blessing over wine recited prior to eating. And so he did, after we had ritually cleansed our hands. Following the blessing and the usual wine toast *le'chaim* ('to life', from Hebrew but also in Yiddish), we sang *Shalom Aleichem* and distributed the food left on the hotplates.[112] Our communal meal was a time for singing, jokes and discussions. One of them turned out to be a dispute over the proper melody of songs. Janina, the oldest and the only member of the second generation present, argued for her own interpretation of melodies, which she had been learning for a decade, since her conversion by Rabbi Caine.[113] It was a bit of an idiosyncratic amalgam of her personal preferences, interest in Jewish religious music and knowledge learned from strikingly different people whom she must have encountered along the way of her Jewish becoming. She seemed a bit intimidated by the presence of the unusual guests, from distant places and with varying backgrounds. Romek, the youngest of those present, on the contrary, stressed that he always sang 'in the way he was taught by Rabbi Rapoport'. He had come to the *gmina* a few years earlier, driven by a premonition of having Jewish ancestors. Basia said that she was used to the Sephardic melody of psalms, upon which Daniel asked her to give an example of her singing, 'so everyone might learn something new'. She obviously felt shy at the idea

---

[111] Modern Hebrew pronunciation is also suggested in two most popular prayer books (*sidur* pl. *sidurim*) published in Poland.

[112] Shalom Aleichem is a hymn performed before the beginning of every Friday Shabbat dinner.

[113] As I indicated earlier Janina was one of Polish converts without any Jewish ancestry, and strikingly different in her religious observance and attitude towards people like herself from that of local Jews 'generationally' of the same age.

of performing, and politely declined. Józef suggested that in Łódź, as he put it, 'the Hasidic tradition' was being cultivated, and that he was used to its melodies.

***

In a sense Józef was not only coming from a different Polish congregation, but also representing a distinct notion of tradition in the actuality of the post-socialist revival. He used Ashkenazi Hebrew pronunciation and in prayers claimed to follow the 'Hasidic' tradition embraced, as he said, by his congregation in Łódź (Langer, 2007). The Wrocław style of liturgy, as that of most Polish-Jewish translocal events with a religious component, implicitly followed *nusach Ashkhenazi* (Ashkenazi liturgy). The Wrocław rabbi, converts and young congregants employed Israeli Modern Hebrew pronunciation, while the elderly of the Wrocław *shul* held to liturgical Ashkenazi Hebrew. The local Jews of the second generation rarely came to prayers, but when they were present, they mostly read transliterated Modern Hebrew prayer text or, in individual cases, mixed the two forms of pronunciation – the one they still brought from home, along with some Yiddish, and the other that they had encountered in the institutional space of the 'revival'. [114] Modern Hebrew was not only the language of the rabbi, the transnational events people went to, and transliterations in prayer books. It was also taught at the Centre for the Culture and Languages of the Jews at University of Wrocław, where a few of my research participants had enrolled to learn about subjects like Jewish languages, literature, political thought and history.[115]

That evening, the on-going discussion touched on the order of prayers, the inclusion or omission of particular fragments and melodies, and the issue of standing or sitting during specific parts of service. Implicitly, the interlocutors juxtaposed and compared different acknowledged *minhagim,* 'customs' or 'traditions', that coexisted in Judaism. Seen from another angle, it was also a discussion over proper religious practice people could collectively embrace within the confines of an institutionalized

---

[114] The reader can hear exactly how that sounds in the funeral scene from my documentary *The Passage*, when the second man says a prayer in Hebrew.

[115] As many of my interlocutors, however, underscored, the impact of the studies on their cultural competences outside the language was minimal. Besides, Rabbi Yitzchak Rapoport was also teaching about Judaism at the university – therefore all of his teachings were usually considered to be 'from the rabbi' regardless whether they were acquired in a more formal or informal setting.

terrain of commonality and connectedness. Specifically, the dispute was on *nusachot*, the styles of liturgy, and in a wider sense, on *minhagim*, local customs or established traditions (see e.g. Tarsi, 2002; Chill, 1979). Yet, it as much concerned personal attachment to particular forms of diverse Jewish cultural repository, as the sense of what, in fact, constitutes local practice and localness. What might be seen as assertions of individual preference, were at the same time enunciations of affinity, consideration of the appropriateness of what stands for intangible cultural heritage and what 'tradition' one should follow. At the same time, such discussions pointed to the diversity and multiplicity of Jewish forms of religious practice existing simultaneously in the Wrocław *gmina*. The evident coexistence of both an affective reference to the past and a recreated, often re-imagined, 'tradition' in the wake of the 'revival' added complexity to the issue and made evident the gap opening up between vanishing and emerging generations of Polish Jews. Jewish religious law accentuates the need to follow the *minhag* of one's parents and community (Chill, 1979).[116] However, looking at the Shabbat guests that night, it was easy to understand one of the predicaments generated by the globalized remaking of Polish Jewish reality. For those gathered at the table, it was difficult to trace the 'roots' to follow. Basia came from a secular Polish Jewish family, but she had acquired her competence in matters of Judaism in Israel. Her own approach articulated both the diversity of Jewishness in Israel and the complex affinities of her Israeli family. Szymon's opportunity to identify with his own family traditions and customs had been lost back when his mother's family perished in the Holocaust; there was little left of the faded memories she had as a baby placed in a Jewish orphanage. Daniel's late grandfather, like all elderly Wrocław Jews, had an Ashkenazi background. Daniel himself, despite having a strong sense of local Jewish belonging, claimed an ancestral connection with his grandfather, but he had learned about Judaism primarily on an intensive conversion course organized by the rabbi. Janina, old enough to be a parent of most present, as a *ger,* a convert without Jewish family ties, should have had the possibility of choosing her own *minhag* of worship or of following that of the congregation she had joined ten years earlier. Yet, the *gmina* as the institutional body, and the commune of congregants she now felt a part of, had

---

[116] While visiting another community, one should keeping to one's family or community *minhag*, as long they do not disturb the service at the synagogue one is praying at (Chill, 1979; Jachter, 2002).

been subject to constant shifts since 1989. It had undergone a relentless process of re-imagining itself in the friction of embattled local affinities and globally disseminated models of Jewishness. Ten years previously, she had converted with the conservative Rabbi Ivan Caine. A few years later, the congregation's rabbi was Orthodox, bringing with him not only a different personality, but a different understanding of Judaism. Most young people in the previous cohort of 'Jewish youth' that Janina had prayed with at Friday evening Shabbats had left – lured away from the *gmina* for the reasons I outlined in the previous chapter. New people had come, together with new international NGOs, entrepreneurs and new Polish Jewish political leaders. And on top of all that, there were the elderly Wrocławians, raised in their pre-Holocaust habitus of the *Yiddishkeit,* who kept to the forms of religious practice they remembered and had enacted for decades before the recent 'Jewish revival' began.

In Wrocław, authority in such disputes could be derived from a combination of knowledge and praxis received during a rabbi's lectures, in educational projects organized outside Wrocław, and in communal interactions with the local representatives of the vanishing first generation. [117] For many, authority also came from the elusive personal quality of probation, the length of one's engagement in established forms of collective social life, transnational programmes, educational camps, seminars in Israel, or, as in the case of the unusual visitor from Łódź, it could come, or be augmented, by long-term religious education abroad or, in some cases, by attending university courses. Being well-versed in Jewishness, with knowledge, led to a degree of confidence which radiated onto the social interactions in the *gmina*. Among the young people of the third generation, I observed and heard on numerous occasions, an assurance and confidence in the expression of opinion, which had been conditioned by the depth of their involvement in the social networks of Jewish organizations and being recognized in the Polish Jewish *społeczność*, 'community', on local and national levels. This recognition in turn, as I argued earlier, was informed, among other things, by a given level of cultural competence and familiarity.

When the rabbi was present, his voice dominated and led the prayers, but when he was away, the prime authority lay with the informal religious authorities:

---

[117] Used here in the classic sense, as application or exercise of theoretical knowledge in real-life situations.

old men of the first generation, well into their 80s and 90s. On Fridays, when it was down to the young adults and converts to decide, debate usually sparked up between the most religiously observant, like Szymon, Janina and Daniel, and the guests, if they cared to voice their own thoughts and feelings. A custom established in the 'revival' era was that of regarding Friday prayers as meant for the young adults and teenagers. The reasons I was given were many. Few of the elderly could make it to the synagogue twice, nor did they want to make their way back home at night from the Friday Shabbat meetings. The young, for whom Shabbat was more of a socio-cultural than strictly religious experience, preferred the much shorter Friday service, which occasionally ended in lively discussions and a drink in the club or at the rabbi's home. [118] In the autumn of 2010, the Friday Shabbats, either held entirely in the kosher canteen or split between the canteen and the small *shul*, drew a diverse crowd. Under the new rabbi, these events still retained their main purpose of gathering together the young people they had reportedly had before – even if, by and large, a completely different set of 'young' people from those who had attended ten years earlier. The regular participants, despite low attendance figures, reflected, somewhat, the heterogeneity of the *gmina*, its diversity, in terms of practice, and people, and its internal contradictions.

The meeting that evening was no different. The rabbi was absent, as it was one of his 'Israel' phases. Of course, in some sense, his cyclical presence and absence concurrently redefined the Wrocław *gmina* by the power of his authority, strong normative judgments and religious practice he condoned. The rabbi's physical absence was sometimes augmented, accentuated and subverted by his virtual presence, mediated through text messages, online lectures on Jewish topics, e-mails, and even a failed video transmission during the end of year celebration for pupils at the Lauder Etz Chaim School, the school with a Jewish educational profile, that I introduced earlier.

The alternating absence and presence of Rabbi Rapoport gave rise to interesting dynamic changes in the form and feel of religious meetings. During the first Saturday Shabbat without the rabbi, in August, the prayer was led, in turn, by two of the oldest members of the *gmina*, Mojżesz and Jeremiasz. The latter was a

---

[118] In 2009-2010, based on my observations and in comparison with testimonies of young individuals previously involved with the Community, the religious motivation became relatively more prevalent than it was before.

former unofficial cantor and long-time spiritual leader of the religious community. It was he, who more than ten years before, had taken under his wing a group of young newcomers to the *gmina*, individuals with Jewish ancestry, or those wanting to convert to Judaism. Karolina and Paweł, along with other young people at centre stage at the time, vividly recalled that this had taken place even before the arrival of the conservative Rabbi Caine, in 2002. The elderly leading the prayers at that time generated the ambience of a different world, the way they read Torah so different from the sound of the Modern Hebrew used by the young rabbi.

When it was time to read *parsza (parsha* or *parasha),* a weekly portion of Torah, Jeremiasz said that he was not going to read it in Hebrew at all, for, as he said, hardly anybody would understand or, therefore, needed it. This was again, strikingly different from the recently-established modus operandi of the Saturday Shabbats, when every portion of the Torah was in turn read in Hebrew by the rabbi and then in Polish. Whether the rabbi was around or not, the Polish translation was read in turn by congregants of all ages and affiliations.

It is important to note here that the presence of foreign rabbis or emissaries had not always generated conflict or tension over authority. Between 2004 and 2005 a pair of *shlichim* (emissaries) from Israel, Yael and Yinon, a married couple, had arrived at the congregation. They had been sent by Sochnut, the Jewish Agency of Israel. [119] As my interlocutors from the 'student house' period recalled, they were both knowledgeable and flexible, being able to accommodate themselves to, rather than impose their sense of Jewishness on, both the young and old, rejecting no one and, rather seamlessly, adapting to the local hierarchies and authority, ambivalences and ambiguities. Yinon, in leading the rituals, shared his duties and authority with elderly Jeremiasz I mentioned above. Arguably their status was completely different from that of either a rabbi – they came as helpers not as religious leaders - and reportedly drew on the contradictions, ambivalence and heterogeneity of the Israeli

---

[119] Sochnut or the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) is a large non-profit quasi-governmental organization, responsible among other issues for coordinating immigration to Israel, strengthening the connection between Jewish diaspora and Israel, and coordinating the Taglit-Birthright programme with the Birthright Israel orgranization. I should note that the scholarly resources on the contemporary activities of Sochnut are scarce and concern mainly specific aspects of its activities. My own information comes mainly from discussions with people involved in Sohnut activities in Poland and its Polish representatives as well as newspaper articles, blogs and Sochnut's own webpage.

life they knew and understood, rather an espoused ideal.[120] Their presence, linguistically and culturally, also contributed to the transnational heterogeneity of the new 'revival' *gmina*, but it was an impact of a substantially different, less contentious kind.

On common ground

Back in 1997, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1997, p.10) observed that the emergence of a 'transnational public sphere has certainly rendered any strictly bounded sense of community or locality obsolete' and questioned the conceptualization of people or cultures as bounded wholes, prone to be fixed to a geographical spot. Notwithstanding, they argue 'that as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient' (ibid.). In a similar vein, albeit from a different standpoint, Doreen Massey argues against the adequacy of thinking of communities as emplaced and of places as defined by essentialized, static and internal characteristics. In her view, 'what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus.' (1994, p.154). In the social actuality of the *gmina*, the specificity and the local context, crude materiality and contested history were far from irrelevant, regardless of the global context the *gmina* was embedded in. Paradoxically, that was nowhere as evident as in the moment of encounter and continuous friction between diverse (relatively) local and transnational actors, a friction that Anna Tsing calls 'the awkward, unequal, unstable and creative qualities of interconnection across difference' (2005, p.3).

From among the range of analytical categories used within globalization studies, Appadurai's translocality has the advantage of allowing for the theorization of disjunctions of belonging, affinity and territory, without skyrocketing the everyday local habitus into the space of abstraction; this is mainly thanks to his stress on 'actually existing social forms in which locality, as a dimension or value, is

---

[120] I met Yinon and Yael myself while I was working at the community, at least a couple of years before I started to think about my doctoral work. That made me, however, even more eager to investigate the recollections of their presence among my interlocutors.

variably realized' (1995, p.204). Locality, on the other hand, is for him 'primarily relational and contextual rather than […] scalar or spatial'. 'I see it,' he writes, 'as a complex phenomenological quality constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity and the relativity of contexts.' (ibid.). Following on from that, translocality is a quality or condition of a place in a situation where the production of locality, and in turn its realization in actual social form (dubbed 'neighbourhood' by Appadurai) is predicated on factors which cannot be confined to a local or even national context (Appadurai, 1995; Appadurai, 2003). Translocalities allow for, and are defined by, mobilities and flows, cross-cultural encounters and interactions. Classic examples are, of course, migrations and tourism, the intermingling of people with diverse values, beliefs and affects, but in a fusion, or in friction, with directed global strategies and local tactics, of power of categorizing and of individual desires for lasting attachments. By discussing the example of the *gmina,* I am arguing that the global connection, in the sense of translocality, can be produced without a necessary displacement of people, but by a de-territorialisation and constant re-territorialisation of the place itself - which, apart from the influx of transnational actors, and the importance of information technologies, comes about as the result of complex geopolitical connections which inform ground-level quotidian social praxis.

For most people traversing its premises, the *gmina* did not become transnational by their own physical displacement, but by the influx of transnational entrepreneurs and the forces that shaped its actuality – the outright funding of its activities, the renovation of communal buildings, social help and educational programmes, all informed by the agendas and dreams with which post-transformation Jewishness was infused, and became a part of.

The translocality of the Sabbath in the *gmina*, its infusion with languages, 'traditions' and imagined geographies, was visible on many subsequent Sabbaths with a different intensity. Sometimes the rabbi's presence tamed discrepancies in the strains and interpretations of the appropriateness of ritual form and liturgical order. At other times, he invoked the global flows from the places he had been to, and in which he lived his parallel life: Israeli disputes over settlements mixed with stories of being Jewish in his native Sweden, and disillusionments with the congregation politics in Norway, where he had worked before. Moreover, travellers, newcomers, guests from other cities, countries and generations appeared at the Sabbath table

bringing their own stories, languages, and customs. Translocality there, following Appadurai, was both a place of sociality relatively fixed in the territory of the Polish nation-state and a Lower Silesian city, and a place of encounters and dependencies which transgressed local networks, actors and relations. This 'emergent form of human organization' (Appadurai, 2003, p.339) was more than the general condition of globality that Appadurai correctly attributes to a number of cities or terrains - borderlands, tourist zones, multinational economic centres, but a translocality made distinct by the specificity of its connections, controlled access and social if not physical boundaries I discussed in the previous chapter.

Embedding the *gmina* into the transnational space of the Polish 'Jewish revival' and grounding it in the local historical and contemporary conditions produces a distinct locality in the sense delineated above. There was huge imbalance of financial resources, knowledge and authority available, respectively, to the feeble resurging Polish congregations on the one hand and the massive global organizations engaged in 'revival', especially in the early nineties, on the other. Still, affinities, understandings and practices in the *gmina* cannot be reduced either to the hegemonic imposition of beliefs and cultural practices, nor subsumed as revival from the ashes of previous forms, from the supposedly idiosyncratic 'Polish Jewish' heritage, a living fossil of an essentialized past, preserved in waiting. Rather, as in the discussion around the Shabbat table, the *gmina* is a site of recurring negotiation and contestation of 'identity' in both the sense of collective self-understanding and of visions of what the Wrocław Jewish community could be and should be like. The dispute at the Shabbat table was as much a collective enunciation and confrontation of visions of the *gmina's* future, as a touchstone of its present condition.

As the above vignette suggests, the surge in cross-border mobility of Polish citizens, foreign specialists, and financial resources enabled by the democratization, has been crucial in shaping Wrocław's main space of being and becoming Jewish for the third generation. The post-socialist transformation of the Polish state introduced far greater permeability of state borders and changed the country's economic standing, while globalisation and technological change enabled easier and faster travel and communication than previously possible. For example, Poland became an attractive place for an Israeli student, Basia, to continue her university education. Bartosz, a man in his late 20s, was able to study abroad and encounter different forms of diasporic Jewish sociality in the United Kingdom. The new

circumstances allowed the rabbi to lead a dual existence, in two countries at once, keeping up relationships with family and friends by means of new communication technologies like e-mails, mobile phones and voice-over-IP services like *Skype*.

Another process was more specific, and characteristic of the new 'topography of power' as Gupta and Ferguson refer to the global interconnectedness of 'culture, power and space' (1997, p.35). That distinct development was defined by global Jewish NGOs' involvement and investment -– human and financial -   in the process of 'Jewish revival' in Poland. That in itself already hints at the wider consequences of the global dissemination of religious ideas and entrepreneurs that Marcy Brink-Danan and Andrew Buckser mention in relation to the Chabad movement in their ethnographies of Istanbul and Copenhagen, respectively (Brink-Danan, 2011; Buckser, 2002). The Polish Jewish case is particularly illustrative of the potential outcomes of such global process, because of the structural dependence of local institutions on foreign expertise and the, ever-diminishing, financial support of foreign institutions and sponsors. In this new reality, the Wrocław rabbi holds several passports, and is a transnational religious emissary of an Israeli NGO, co-financed from local and foreign sources.[121] Even if some young adults were learning about the Jewish religion, Jewish languages, literature and history in the academic institutional setting of Wrocław University, for most, the knowledge mobilized in disputes such as the one I referred to, comes from education in at transnational seminars and camps or came from the teachings of Rabbi Rapoport, Rabbi Caine or other educators and activists who visited Wrocław.

In the previous chapter I explained how in Poland's post-socialist period the criteria of Jewish affiliation have been profoundly shaped by the dominance of Orthodox Judaism, backed by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation. As the chairman of the ZGWŻ, Piotr Kadlčik, argues, in that early period, it was only the Orthodox movement that was interested in helping the fledgling Jewish congregations re-establish religious activities and education (Bella Szwarcman-Czarnota et al., 2010). This same dominance of the assemblage of Modern Orthodox Judaism, Zionism, or strong pro-Israeli political stance, and Modern Hebrew as the liturgical language,

---

[121] This of course was a complicated process, as the rabbi explained to me in detail - which involved both the organization he is an emissary of, Shavei Israel, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich (himself an expat originally from the United States), and the secular leaders of Union of Religious Jewish Communities in Poland, who reside in Warsaw.

continued when the Foundation, as supporter and co-sponsor of religious life, was largely replaced by Shavei Israel, particularly in Wrocław. As I was concluding my fieldwork, the ZGWŻ hired its first Progressive rabbi, Stas Wojciechowicz, from Russia, and, as I was told, the need for external financial support in such matters was gradually decreasing. The structural framework and hierarchy created in first twenty years of the 'revival' was, however, still very much in place, even if in Wrocław this dominance overlapped with the afterlife of the *gmina*'s notable affair with Conservative Judaism, which had occurred between 2001 and 2003.

A contact zone

The *gmina* was a locus of clashes between different visions and understandings of Jewishness, but at the same time it was also a transcultural meeting ground - a *contact zone*, which could be conceptually situated somewhere in between the original definition, given by Mary Louise Pratt, and its magisterial reconsideration by James Clifford, while, it simultaneously transcends their theoretical boundaries. For Pratt, contact zones are 'social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today' (2003, p.7). Yet, Pratt herself challenged those contextual confines, even before the publication of *Imperial Eyes*, by attempting to transpose the notion of contact zone into a classroom environment filled with competing discourses, attempts at the homogenization of knowledge and its resistance by subversive irony (1991). Clifford made a crucial point in stressing that the contact zone can juxtapose or confront people set apart by social distance - and that it is not an issue of *coming* from distant places as much as from different social and cultural backgrounds (1997). Implicit in his discussion of the present-day predicaments faced by curators of museum exhibitions is the disruption of the fixed dichotomy of periphery and centre, which does not alleviate the inequality of resources and power among those interacting. I am appropriating the term contact zone, already re-imagined by Clifford, back from the context of museums and cultural performances *per se*. In the condition of translocality, in a space which circumvents the problematic dualism of global and local, the definition of a contact zone 'characterized by [the] spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously

167

separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect' (Pratt, 2003, p.7) quite aptly fits the *gmina*.

The *gmina* as a place, a concrete physicality on Włodkowica Street in Wrocław, an object of accrued collective memories and historical narratives, and the social space of interactions and cultural practices which re-establish it as a 'Jewish neighbourhood' (or as Jewish Club-goers sometimes half- jokingly call it *żydowska dzielnica* the 'Jewish quarter') is a contact zone in the sense that it brings people face to face with others who engage in social practices and interactions bearing upon a shared sense of Jewish belonging (or willingness to engage in such belonging), who, nonetheless, represent diverse visions and understandings of being Jewish and often come from different geographies of Jewish life. The *gmina* is part and parcel of, but also the most immediate and relatively fixed location within, the contact zone of 'revival' - one in which both encounters and confrontations are more an issue of quotidian repetition than of recurring translocal experiences, and in that sense different from the liminal space I will theorize in the next chapter. The fact that the *gmina* is a constitutive part of the globalized Polish Jewish institutional structure, which both re-defines its status as a 'national minority' and as an element in the Jewish diaspora, only exacerbates the confrontations and conflicts that occasionally arise, of which the disputes over 'traditions' are an example.

To return to Pratt's theorization, the original colonial background of the concept, in which questions of hegemony and authority resonanted does not lose its salience in the Polish Jewish context. In the light of my work and conversations, this ambivalence of the contact zone, with its underside of a power imbalance was constantly present. Several of my interlocutors were sensitive to the potentially 'colonial' relation imposed by some of those who came from afar and saw themselves in the role of experts. Artur, who was one of them, told me:

> An outsider imposes criteria, which he or she would not dare to impose on other Jewish communities. An outsider would not have [otherwise] had the audacity to ask such questions directly, tell what is Jewish and what is not Jewish, interfere so directly.

Artur did not mean the global NGOs and emissaries in general – after all he himself was one of the most important educators. He did mean those religious and ethnic entrepreneurs that, as he saw it, came to Poland to impose their own values

and understandings, rather than to accept those already in place. Artur contrasted this attitude with that of Jewish Agency 'emissaries', *shlichim* like Yinon and Yael, who came with no claims to authority, or with the agenda and practice of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which mobilized grassroots leaders and activists and condoned non-denominational approaches. From another perspective, the issue of power, authority and the boundary between support and imposition was perhaps a constantly looming possibility regardless of organizational affiliation. The fact that some of my interlocutors were themselves aware of that fact, indicates that the encounter with the world of 'revival' enables rather than hinders critical reflection about the inequalities of power vis-a-vis authority and representation and the predicaments they might generate. I will return to this thought in the final part of my thesis.

Nonetheless, the *gmina* is also a site of alliance, contestation and reciprocity, in which everyone involved comes out transformed, even those transnational figures with cultural competence, political power and religious authority, who have been sent to the *gmina* to change others or to help them to change. As I said in the previous chapter, my numerous conversations with the rabbi made me realize that in time he, too, had come to understand the idiosyncratic predicaments of being Jewish in Poland, with all its incongruences and difficulties. Knowing the predicaments of keeping up with religious observance in a congregation without regular *minian,* and facilities like *mikveh*, he still supported Orthodox conversions, in a leap of faith that the situation might improve. He had apparently come to accept, or at least understand, that by and large, the *gmina* was neither religiously observant, nor keen to 'revive' itself through an *en masse* 'return' to Orthodox Judaism. I was able to observe this gradual metamorphosis during my one year of fieldwork in Poland, but it became even more apparent from the perspective of my repeated encounters with the Wrocław *gmina* during several years of my inquiry and life.

The dynamics of the contact zone that I described above introduce one aspect in which the emergent sociality is suspended in a perpetual state of becoming, a thought that I will return to in the last chapter of my thesis. The *gmina*'s contact zone has been the site of a constant process of negotiation of the 'path' the 'reviving' congregation of worshippers and the Jewish third generation should take. Its 'end' is unknown and contentious and the 'beginning' of this winding trail is no longer visible. Both are continuously reimagined in a heterogeneous ensemble of visions,

hopes, individuals, ideologies, affects and agendas. All human life-worlds are in a constant process of remaking, but here that transformation has been a distinctly rapid process, shaped by rupture of the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge and practices, and the subsequent globalized institutional remaking of what constitutes being Jewish.

***

The particular re-imagining of the Wrocław *gmina* initiated two decades ago, opened up its institutional space for a new collectivity of people: those coming from intermarried families, individuals suddenly discovering their Jewish origin, and non-Jewish converts, had a crucial significance for the emergence of the new kind of post-1989 sociality. In the previous chapter, I discussed the consequences of such juxtaposition in the light of local and global ideoscapes of Jewish belonging and becoming. In respect to the *gmina* as a site of cultural practices like those mentioned above, the 'revival' transformed that locality into the said contact zone, a site where people confront each other and try to make sense of the multiple ways of understanding a 'Jewish tradition', of what one is supposed to do as 'a Jew'.

Why does this transformation of the *gmina* bear so much on Jewish sociality in contemporary Poland? To answer that question I need to invoke my earlier statement about the legacy of the socialist era: the almost complete disappearance of family-based Jewish sociality and cultural practices and their relegation to pockets of Jewish life such as the Wrocław TSKŻ and the local *gmina* – only the latter of which has been the social space for the third generation. This makes it easier to understand why, while Daniel's grandfather continued to regularly participate in the *gmina's* social life and collective religious practices, Daniel could grow up without the slightest sense of what his grandfather was doing, or why another of my research participants would be told as a child that on Saturdays 'grandpa was going to the Frenchmen [*do Francuzów*]'. As much as this juxtaposition of stigmatized otherness with acceptable otherness may sound ridiculous to the reader, I refer to it here to draw attention to the fact that the importance of Jewish institutions as loci of Jewish sociality was bequeathed, so to speak, from the previous era, but at the same time it nonetheless dominated contemporary Jewish sociality. It is a model that has only recently been challenged with the gradual emergence of the   multi-generational

170

Jewish families not only in the sense of inherited affects of haunting and Jewish familiarity, but also in terms of family-based introduction into Jewish cultural narratives and practices - like the family of Sebastian and Patrycja mentioned in the previous chapter.

So far in my discussion of Polish Jewish sociality I have explained that the *gmina*, in the wide sense of encompassing its affiliated institutions such as the Jewish Club, is merely one part of the terrain of being and becoming Jewish, a focal point and a node of interactions on a local scale. My following discussion will shift to the hinterlands of the emergent Polish Jewish sociality: the *interzone*, a liminal, deterritorialized space of training, education and, in many ways, a Polish Jewish life-world in its own right.

Chapter 7
Interzone

Here fact merges into dream, and dreams erupt into the real world.
William Burroughs, *International zone* (2009)

Thence, we are connecting in one family, while we come from whole Poland, from different cities and towns, children, youth and seniors, having different level of Jewish knowledge. One special thing that we share is happiness of being Jewish together, in group, enjoyment of singing and dancing at the Shabbat table and after Havdalah. We feel that the differences between us are vanishing. We are like one nation singing together Shema Israel
Polish Lauder Camp website (Ciesielski and Ciesielska, 2013)

The bus, filled with *gmina* members of every stripe and age and unaffiliated young adults of Jewish ancestry, was cruising towards its destination. Time on the bus allowed everyone to catch up with friends from the Wrocław *gmina* and to meet travellers who lived in other parts of Poland, like young Jurek from Poznań and a middle-aged couple from the nearby town of Legnica.[122] Among us were also those

---

[122] Before the Wrocław Community itself became a branch of the ZGWŻ in the political crisis of 2006, Legnica was home to one of four *gmina* branches (oddziały) in Lower Silesia. The others were located in Żary, Dzierżoniów and Wałbrzych.

who visited the *gmina* solely on the main Jewish holidays, like Maria, a teacher at the Lauder Etz Chaim School. A group of young people I had never seen before immediately caught my attention. It turned out they had gone on a Taglit-Birthright trip a few months earlier, and afterwards contacted the Wrocław Jewish Club, where they learned about the *Limud Keszet 2009* conference. Magda had done her best to reserve a few places at the conference for the newcomers she hoped to encourage to get more involved with the Club and the *gmina*. The name *Limud Keszet* combines the Hebrew words meaning 'knowledge' and 'rainbow'. Knowledge production and dissemination are central to the translocal[123] projects this chapter will discuss. The relative multiplicity of perspectives on Jewishness, symbolized by the 'rainbow' was, however, *Limud Keszet*'s unique feature.

We set out early, but it was not until late afternoon that the bus driver finally found the hotel on the outskirts of Warsaw, where *Limud Keszet* was to take place. I had already heard rumours that the 'conference' was 'superb' - larger and more inclusive in its thematic diversity than any other Polish Jewish residential event. At the entrance, behind the double glass doors, I met Natalia, born in Wałbrzych, a city in Lower Silesia. For years she had been involved, although not on regular basis, in the Wrocław *gmina*'s social life, before deciding to do an undergraduate degree in Kraków. It was good to see her after a year's break. In the main lobby, several pairs of young Polish Jewish volunteers in blue *Limud Keszet* t-shirts, mostly from Warsaw and Kraków, were registering arriving conference guests. The moment we entered, the people I was travelling with, chiefly the young, started to greet and chat with everyone they knew among the crowd of organizers and participants mingling in the foyer. As Iwona, one of organizers, aptly observed '*Limud* was an occasion for matchmaking, getting to know other Jews, and kindling relationships'.

The 'Hotel Boss' was a low modern structure with a car-park and the predictable elegant decor of generic conference centres. The venue was located close to Józefów, a town on the outskirts of the Polish capital which fell within the boundaries of the metropolitan area. It was a model example of what Marc Augé (1995) calls a ''non-place'' of mass accommodation, a locus people passed through,

---

[123] I use the term translocal to denote those events or gatherings which take place outside Wrocław, most of which are also transnational in the sense of bringing together participants and educators from different countries.

a facility providing lodging, catering and a large number of conference rooms. The hotel must usually have catered to a wide range of visitors coming for business training workshops and corporate team-building away-days: the hotel staff handled what must have struck them as a rather eccentric event with dispassionate professionalism. The kosherity of the hotel kitchen was assured by the Warsaw Community *mashgiach*, a supervisor of Jewish dietary laws, *kashrut*, named Pinchas. He was notable not only for his unabashed embracing of the Haredi life style, demeanour and dress, but even more so for the fact that he had discovered his halachic Jewish ancestry whilst a skinhead and a hooligan fan of the one of the Warsaw football clubs noted for its less than benevolent inclinations towards 'Jews'.[124] I did not know him personally, but I recalled meeting him at the 2008 Ronald Lauder Foundation Jewish camp in Wisła, a mountain ski resort in southern Poland, close to the Czech border.

Two large conference rooms in the hotel were provisionally remodelled as prayer houses, one Reformed and the other Orthodox, the latter divided by *mechitza,*[125] a screen separating men and women. The adjacent hall was turned into a nursery, where parents could leave their children under the supervision of volunteers with childcare and teaching experience at Jewish camps and day schools. The canteen hall, large enough to fit around five hundred, was where communal breakfasts, lunches and dinners were held; it also served as a space for social interaction, speeches by the organizers and guests, as well as customary blessings before and after eating. The entrance-hall and wide, ground-level, bleak autumnal coloured corridors were at all times, save for the dead of night, crowded with people milling around, standing in pairs or in groups or sitting down on the couches lining the walls. People discussed the attractions of the *Limud Keszet* and everything beyond it, catching up with gossip and updating each other on what had happened 'in the meantime' whether that was a week or a year. For the casual visitor this mise-en-scène might have been taken for a large Jewish Studies conference, until this illusion was shattered by the sight and sound of children or religious celebrations.

---

[124] Football hooligan groups have been considerably infiltrated by extreme right wing ideology, racism and anti-Semitism. The situation is symptomatic of Europe in general and Central Eastern Europe in particular (see eg. Mudde, 2005; Smolik 2004; Mikulska, 2010).

[125] Mechitza is a general term for such separation – whether in a form of screen or a wall dividing male and female worshippers.

Running alongside the lectures, workshops and social events put on for adults, the *Limud Keszet* offered the *Mini Limud*, a series of activities for children supervised by young *madrichim*. Effectively a daycare centre, *Mini Limud* offered dance and art sessions, informal education through storytelling and games, as well as, on Saturday afternoon, *przygotowanie do hawdali*, 'preparation for Havdalah', that is, an introduction to the elaborate ritual that brought every Shabbat to an end. When I visited *Limud Keszet* a year later, in October 2010, the event's format had not significantly changed: the major difference was that the event had grown even bigger, filling up all the available accommodation space.

The original Limmud, an English transliteration of the Hebrew word, was established in the UK in 1980 as a conference at which invited Jewish scholars and non-professional educators presented lectures and ran workshops for Jewish participants (Limmud, 2012). The project grew from a small gathering of 80 guests to a massive five-day event with 3300 participants at the main 'Limmudfest 08' and a number of smaller regional conferences in British cities. The idea has been to 'build bridges between the professional and nonprofessional educators and between those of differing religious commitments', as expressed by one of the founding organizers, Alistair Falk (Limmud International, 2008, p.1). It was not until 1995, however, that the agenda of crossing denominational boundaries was crystalized in the form of Limmud's formal 'Mission Statement'. Over the years a franchise under the separate aegis of 'Limmud International' went global (Limmud International, 2008).[126] The event was first organized in Poland in 2008 with 300 participants. In 2009, the Polish *Limud Keszet* attracted five hundred participants, as I learned from the organizers, and over sixty speakers and workshop organizers (Limud Keszet Polska, 2009). *Limud Keszet* is one of the recent Polish Jewish translocal communal gatherings, but it follows a long line of similar projects aimed at creating space for socialization, education and interaction, bringing together Jewish people from different regions of Poland. In this chapter I am going to discuss the significance of these events for the remaking of the Jewish sociality in Poland.

My argument in this chapter is that one of the outcomes of the global transformation of Polish Jewish life has been the emergence of a translocal - and

---

[126] Apart from available web resources, my knowledge of the history and agenda of Limmud stems from conversations with organizers and volunteers.

often transnational - social space and temporality of becoming and being Jewish. Camps, seminars in Poland and abroad, as well as tours to Israel are all part of the same 'Jewish world' that exists outside Wrocław. This is a terrain of Jewish *becoming*, of habituation and education, of 'identity-building' and the establishment of social networks and a sense of affinity. At the same time, it is where being openly Jewish, in a socially active sense, is both possible and endorsed. The existence of these places, often ephemeral, where for a moment one finds oneself in the midst of the all-encompassing Jewish cultural environment has weighty consequences for Polish Jewish sociality as such. I propose that the term *interzone*[127] be used to refer to this assemblage of terrains and temporalities of contemporary Polish Jewish communal life.

The notion of the interzone is a heuristic device meant to help me engage with the potentially most distinctive development in the globalization of Polish Jewish communal life: the emergence of a distinct transnational social space contributing extensively to the emergence of the new Polish Jewish sociality. It would have been impossible to address the issues discussed in previous chapters without hinting at these terrains of being and becoming, which impinge on the locality of Wrocław *gmina*, and also extend far beyond its physical boundaries. The complexity of the concept is necessitated by the analytical task that it is given. The interzone allows us to understand the emergent instances of translocal Jewish sociality in all their diversity as one distinct phenomenon, a particular form of globalized space of becoming and being.

The following chapter will explicate the interzone by addressing, in turn, its main characteristics, exemplified by ethnographic vignettes, testimonies I heard, and written sources: publications and websites of organizations active in the Polish Jewish contemporaneity. On the one hand I will illustrate how the modern translocal space of becoming and sociality are related to a century-old tradition of Jewish summer camps, and on the other hand I will argue that both the specificity of the Polish context and globalization have endowed this new organized space of education and recreation with unique features.

---

[127] The term is borrowed it from a novel by William Boroughs, a leading figure of the Beat Generation. It comes from the "International Zone', a term he used in reference to a half-imaginary place of cultural and social melange, partly referring to the actual 'international zone' of Tangier, Morocco in the forties and fifties, and partly to a psychedelic place of his dreams and narcotic visions, where the real and the imaginary interact and coexist (Burroughs, 2001).

I will first ground the contemporary translocal events and experiences in their historical context. In doing so I will illustrate that we are not looking at a watershed transformation of Jewish communal life, but that the recent changes, however profound, are grounded in forms of socialization and sociality that go back decades. Then I will proceed to establish more precisely what I mean by the interzone. Consequently I am going to focus my attention on two of the most important characteristics of the interzone in Polish Jewish life –its significance as a place of personal transformation and as a terrain of sociality. I will show not only how these two dimensions of translocal Jewish events became transformed in the globalization of Eastern European 'Jewish revival', but how these globalized translocal events found new, profound meaning in the Polish Jewish reality.

Antidotes to 'assimilation'

In viewing contemporary translocal forms of Polish Jewish sociality, recreation, and education through the lens of an ethnographic study, it is easy to overlook the historical significance of the Jewish residential summer camps, that is, as a critical element of Jewish diasporic experience since the end of the 19th century. The birth of Jewish summer camps in the United States of America was a sign of the times; it chimed with the widespread contemporary belief in physical and spiritual rejuvenation in nature's bosom, and – in case of children - a physical and moral growth away from the auspices of parental care (Zola, 2006). Soon enough the camps started to diversify according to denominational and ideological boundaries and were modelled to cater to the common need for residential Jewish education and disparate expectations as to what exactly should be taught. Accordingly, some early camps put a stress on religious education and prayers, others on the dissemination of socialist ideals. Yiddish was the language at some of these events, while others, in the Zionist spirit, provided Hebrew lessons and promoted, quite successfully according to Nancy Mykoff, eventual emigration to Israel (Joselit et al., 1993; Mykoff, 2013).

The idea of recreational Jewish camps for adults goes back to endeavours such as Camp Lehman established by the New York Jewish Working Girls' Vacation Society in 1893 (Sarna, 2006). The educational camps were, however, aimed mainly at children, teenagers and students, even when, from 1940s onwards, Jewish camps started to be considered as countermeasures against what was perceived to be the

growing assimilation and individualization of Jews enjoying the prosperity and conformity of post-war America (Zola, 2006). According to Jonathan D. Sarna 'the slew of remarkable and influential camps that were founded between 1941 and 1952 changed the face of Jewish camping and transformed camps into important components of Jewish educational and religious life' (2006, p.37). As Sarna further argues, Jewish educators were aware that their collective efforts led to such outcomes.

Furthermore, from that time on, the camps became intensely Jewish cultural and linguistic environments. At some camps, for example, youngsters were obliged to speak either Hebrew or Yiddish, depending on the camp's agenda (Ackerman, 1993). In this respect the residential camps complemented everyday formal and informal Jewish education. Furthermore, they also increasingly contrasted with the suburban realities of the Jewish American middle-class. As Gary P. Zola argues, 'the all-encompassing atmosphere of Jewish neighbourhoods and Jewish homes gave way to the allures of society at large. Jewish camping programmes offered young people a chance to experience an immersion in Jewish environment' (2006, p.17). Taglit-Birthright tours together with the numerous Jewish organized camps that have emerged during the last three decades are either a direct implementation of the century-old ideas about Jewish summer camps, or, implicitly, built on the similar blueprint of creating environments aimed at intensive youth socialization and education (Sales and Saxe, 2004). Amy Sales and Leonard Saxe argue that Taglit-Birthright tours, like Jewish summer camps, 'create an extraordinary sense of community and group identification' (2004, p.11).

Zola speaks of 'organized camping' as 'a uniquely American cultural phenomenon' (Zola, 2006, p.1). Such a statement is debatable if we consider that American Jewish summer camps have since become a model for many similar programmes across the world. Zola's claim is equally questionable from a historical perspective, if we consider Poland both before and after the Holocaust. Before World War Two, Poland was home to strikingly similar institutional undertakings, meant to provide care, education, and recreation for Jewish children and adolescents. These camps were established by Jewish children's organizations like the Bund's[128]

---

[128] General Jewish Labour Bund in Poland (Yiddish: Algemeyner yidisher arbeter bund in poyln, Polish: Ogólny Żydowski Związek Robotniczy). The major Jewish political party and movement in interwar Poland, promoting socialist values, Jewish national and cultural autonomy and, in opposition

SKIF[129] (Jacobs, 2009) and a myriad of Jewish youth movements that emerged in the interwar period, representing the whole range of political attitudes and ideals – from 'assimilationism' to Zionism. The almost complete destruction of the Polish Jewish world put a temporary stop to such endeavours. The 1980s saw the return of the JDC to Poland and the coming of the Ronald Lauder Foundation – not only to Poland, but the whole of post-socialist Eastern Europe (Hofman, 2006). Taglit-Birthright tours to Israel were introduced in Poland in 2001 and coordinated by the local office of the Jewish Agency, Sochnut, which was also already playing a part in Jewish translocal events in Poland. The previous decade had seen the arrival of new organizations like Shavei Israel and new projects which, for a few days or weeks, created Jewish spaces of education, socialization and recreation.

Among the most prominent of such programmes were the Jewish residential camps for children and teenagers, like those organized by the JDC at various locations in Poland and the 'International Jewish Youth Camps' in Hungarian Szarvas, jointly sponsored by the JDC and the Ronald Lauder Foundation. Individuals of every age and whole families are welcome at the 'Ronald Lauder Foundation Educational-Recreational Camps' at Wisła and the TSKŻ holiday camps in Śródborów[130]. In April 2010, Shave Israel organized 'Shabbaton', a weekend gathering in Kraków, another in a series of similar events close to Orthodox Judaism that they had organized in other Polish cities in previous years. During my fieldwork, the JDC had run its own *Szabaton* in Jachranka, near Warsaw, more focused on families with children, and not necessarily the religiously observant. Yearly *Limud Keszet* conferences are also organized at weekends. The fourth group are endeavours based in Israel. At one end of the scale there are courses held at schools or *yeshivas* such as the summer educational programmes in Judaism organized by the Yakar Center for Tradition and Creativity. At the other end of the spectrum there is Taglit-Birthright, which also goes by the name of 'The Jewish Experience', namely, the intensive 10-day tours around Israel described in chapter five. Shavei Israel seminars, to which I will give more attention later in this chapter, combined an in-situ learning

to Zionism, championing the ideal of *doikeyt* (Yiddish: hereness) and envisioning a Jewish future in Poland. (see e.g. Schatz, 1991; Jacobs, 2009)

[129] Sotsyalistishe Kinder Farband - Socialist Children's Union

[130] The Ronald Lauder Foundation Educational-Recreational Camp is often and less-formally referred to as the 'Lauder's camp', *obóz Laudera*.

programme with day-trips that mirrored the Taglit-Birthright model, namely, visits by bus to places of historical significance, that illuminated the national identity narratives of Israel and to locations where participants could either relax or admire Israel's natural landscape, flora and fauna.

An intensely Jewish space

The interzone is both a spatial and a temporal phenomenon. Its spatial character is predominant, both in the sense of physical locations of interactions and practices and collective production of social space. However, the interzone becomes territorialized in distinct time-frames, only to become deterritorialized and relegated to the realm of potentiality a while after.

On the meta-analytical level, Doreen Massey invites us to think of space as essentially four-dimensional, while Nigel Thrift and Jon May attempt to break down the spatial-temporal dichotomy with the concept of TimeSpace, or more precisely the multiple time-spaces in which we exist (May and Thrift, 2001; Massey, 2005). The notion of space as a node of intersecting trajectories socially produced and emerging in temporal rhythms helps us to understand the spatio-temporal convergence of the interzone, and a common denominator of these distinct terrains of Polish Jewish sociality and becoming (Massey, 2005). With gatherings lasting a few days or even weeks, momentarily established by human interactions, performances, as well as specific rules and organizational routines and then fading away only to be resuscitated in all their intensity next month, next season or next year, the link between social space and time is revealed in the most tangible form. Notwithstanding, these endeavours cannot be conceptualized solely as events, as they are materialized in concrete places and sensorial environments. On some occasions these are generic resorts or hotels, as is the case with the JDC Polish summer camps, *Limud Keszet* or Shavei Israel seminars in Jerusalem, places nonetheless adapted and transformed to serve the purpose of Jewish education and socialization. Over the years, however, Szarvas camp has evolved into a large, campus-like, fenced-in area with a dedicated complex of buildings including a synagogue, dining hall, medical facilities, sports ground and housing for over a thousand young visitors. Shavei Israel Shabbaton in Kraków, in turn, was organized in the lecture rooms and halls of the Jewish Community Centre, and was therefore a Jewish cultural institution on an

everyday basis. The organization's seminar in Israel, on the other hand, is located in a common-place hotel on the outskirts of Jerusalem, but one, nonetheless, immersed in a linguistic, cultural and sensorial environment very different from that found in Poland.

Jewish summer camps, with their intensity, the contrasting experience to daily life, their openly transformative agenda of turning young Jewish Americans into dedicated members of Jewish peoplehood, spiritually and socially transformed, has prompted Riv-Ellen Prell to see them as a model example of liminal space (2002, 2006, 2011). As she argues:

> The remoteness of Jewish summer camps from cities and their isolation allowed them to create a new world and landscape. They provided an alternative environment to home, school, and synagogue for the transmission of Judaism. The authority figures, teachers, counselors, and rabbis at the camps interacted more personally with campers through communal living, sports teaching, and conversations more than they could in the school and synagogue setting. They emphasized a Judaism that was often more rigorous than campers found at home, across the denominations, but also one that was, by campers' accounts, more joyful and pleasurable. The Jewish calendar structured each day and each week of the camp session. The Sabbath, however it was observed, was a focal point. Judaism and Jewishness were the norm of the camp experience (2011, p.38).

Here I will follow Prell's conceptual framing of Jewish camps as instances of liminality, arguing that the symbolic, experiential and normative detachment of the interzone from the realities of the *gmina* and everyday life is central to its role and impact both as a space of transformative becoming(s) and parallel environment of intense Jewish sociality. The concept of liminality stems from Victor Turner's extensive body of work, itself an elaboration on Arnold Van Gennep's patterns of ritual transformation through separation, being at threshold (Latin: *limes*) and eventually aggregation (Van Gennep, 1960). Turner concentrated on the marginal stage of that process and the social transformation itself, arguing that individuals and social groups enter *communitas*, 'a modality of social relationship' (1969, p. 96). In his theory, 'society as a structured, differentiated and often hierarchical system of politico-legal-economic positions' was contrasted with an undifferentiated and egalitarian state of collective being – most often temporal, and at times permanent (ibid.). What for Arnold Van Gennep was a fascinating cross-culturally occurring

pattern of ritual transformations, thanks to Turner became a framework of understanding transformative events as well as places, individuals and groups suspended 'betwixt and between' quotidian lived realities.

Michael J. Salnow and John Eade (1991) argue that apparently liminal events can be individually experienced in a myriad of ways and do not need to bring about status levelling or cohesive and amiable relationship between individuals in order to justify speaking of *communitas*. Shaul Kelner (2010) draws a similar conclusion in his ethnography of what he calls the Jewish 'pilgrimage', that is to say, of the Taglit-Birthright experience. Kelner argues that while *communitas*, in the sense of all-encompasing solidarity, connectedness and levelling of status between participants may not always be the outcome, the tours still become 'liminal group environments that are saturated with authoritative knowledge, overwhelmingly intense sensory experiences, and for ten days exist in an emotionally charged environment' (2010, p.199). Kelner makes the crucial observation that while the eventual outcomes of the trip, in the sense of people's self-understanding as Jewish, are considerably individualized, they all experience personal transformation to some, albeit different, degree (ibid.).

Engagement with liminality in discussion about Jewish summer camps and Taglit-Birthright tends to focus on the propensity of liminal spaces, detached from everyday life, to enable 'rites of passage', not only in the sense of modifying social status, but transforming one's sense of self and affinity with others. The interzone, as I will subsequently argue, is envisioned and realized as a terrain of becoming, of education and socialization; both engaging in these transformative experiences and enabling others to undergo them have become important elements of contemporary Polish Jewish sociality.

One of the most significant contributions to Turner's work has come from Barbara Myerhoff's ethnography of social life among elderly residents of the Israel Levin Senior Adult Center in California (1994). Myerhoff argued that the community of elderly Jewish émigrés from Eastern Europe constituted a permanent *communitas*, a persistently liminal collectivity hovering in the social environment of Venice Beach, betwixt and between their memories and a culture of Eastern Europe re-imagined in the new context, marked by a sense of loneliness within and erasure and alienation from the rapidly changing surrounding neighbourhood. Myerhoff made a number of analytically salient observations, two of which are particularly relevant

182

here. Picking up the thread of ideas introduced, if not fully elaborated in Turner's own work, she noted that liminality can be a continuous, socially reproduced condition not only in an individual but also a collective sense (1969). Another of her observations was that *communitas* does not necessarily involve a benevolent coexistence devoid of conflict and struggle; the utopia envisioned in Turner's instances of hippies and Franciscans (1969). Rather, she argued, a sense of commonality and connectedness was fostered in spite of conflict and rupture; that egalitarianism, if one uses that term, was evident more in the sense of an equally shared condition of otherness and rejection than in a temporary levelling of social or economic status (Myerhoff, 1994). The relatively bounded and confined lived reality of the home for the elderly explored by Myerhoff bears more resemblance to the residential summer camps and 'seminars' than the Wrocław *gmina*, even if a sense of the permanent marginality and otherness of the Polish Jewish condition informs local sociality, as I illustrated in the fifth chapter.

Here, I wish to argue that the interzone is not only a liminal space of Jewish becoming, but also a distinct temporality and spatiality of being socially Jewish. This will illustrate how the space of Polish Jewish contemporaneity is created by the convergence of affective, cultural and institutional legacies from the post-war era, with contemporary globalized projects of socialization and education.

Transformations

The train from Tel-Aviv to Haifa arrived at midday. I arranged to meet Artur and Iwona at their home in the afternoon as they were both busy until late. Artur was still at the university and Iwona had a shift at the Jewish-Arab cultural centre. I did not mind playing the part of flaneur, giving in to my weakness for an unbridled exploration of the city that I knew to be notable for its ambiance, its particular ethnic, religious and cultural mélange. Half-conscious from the scorching heat, I bumped into Iwona[131] accidentally as I made my way to the centre at which she worked. Soon after, we were joined by Artur. It was one of those meetings that momentarily create the elusive sense of a city being much smaller and familiar than it really is. Then they

---

[131] Iwona was a member of the Wrocław *gmina*. She was included in my project because of her prominent role as an educator, activist and worker of the JDC at the translocal level.

went back to their duties and I returned to my explorations, taking some time off to sit in a café and rethink the issues and dilemmas I was hoping they would help me to unravel – or at least add their small bit, being people who have gone through a long-term engagement with Polish Jewish communal life. Iwona was from Warsaw and her connection with Wrocław was due to her role as a volunteer and later an employee of the JDC, and a supervisor of a number of nation-wide children's educational programmes. Up until about five years earlier, Artur had been one of the leading figures in Jewish youth circles in Wrocław. Despite the fact that Artur shifted to a more long-distance relationship with the Wrocław *gmina* and that Iwona never lived there, they were known to the people I worked among on an everyday basis. For some they had been Jewish friends, for others educators who had taken them under their wings, for others still names and faces at the translocal Jewish events: here today, gone tomorrow. Both of them were soon to come back to Poland, even if Artur already had the Israeli citizenship that Iwona would soon after receive. Later in the evening we sat down in a miniscule garden outside their flat, where, thanks to their hospitality, I was staying. We began talking, and our conversation carried on well into the night.

One of the most telling and moving moments of our nightly conversations in Haifa was when we logged on and Artur searched the Youtube database for old footage from the Szarvas camp, some of it composed of a series of still photographs with a lively musical background. I saw Artur, a bit younger, reclining in front of a group of children, all posing for a commemorative photograph. These were his *chanichim*: campers from Poland he was taking care of as a *madrich*. It was not difficult to see the sparks of joy and affection in Artur and Iwona''s eyes as they looked at those photos, telling me story after story of the 'kids', how their lives had turned out, whether they were still in the orbit of Polish Jewish sociality or had just passed through it like meteors.

Almost exactly two years earlier, in 2008, I had spoken with Iwona and other *madrichim* at the JDC children summer camp in Zalesie. She told me that most of the one hundred children at the camp had hardly any familiarity with Jewish cultural practices or the precepts of Judaism. Even more striking – back then - was finding out that some had no knowledge of their Jewish ancestry and that the camp was, in fact, Jewish. The youngsters posed questions such as: 'Why am I here?', 'What is

this whole Jewish thing all about?'. This hardly surprised anyone. Some children had no idea that they were 'Jewish' in any sense or form. Iwona and other *madrichim* I spoke with at the camp interpreted this as a result of the silence surrounding Jewishness in the children's families, to the extent that they had not even been told about having Jewish ancestry. Iwona wondered if their parents and grandparents simply wanted to pass responsibility for the familial revelation onto *madrichim*. This indeed seemed to be the intention and, I was assured, this is exactly what happened at that camp and others. At the camp, these children had an opportunity to interact not only with Jewish educators, but also with children raised with a sense of Jewish belonging, born to families already involved in Jewish organizations.

While children without any awareness of their family's Jewish origin were always in the minority, the above-mentioned situation indicates the unique role played by Jewish educational-recreational camps in Poland, and a significant feature of the interzone as such, informed not by the global connection, but the haunting I described in chapter four. Referring back to Magda's reminiscences: the interzone is where/when Jewish belonging not only can be enunciated, but also socially performed, consequently producing a sense of social affinity. This sense of solidarity fosters a sense of belonging to an imagined if not imaginary 'community' of 'Jewish people' *ha'am hayehudi*, and also to a collectivity beyond the immediacy of the Wrocław *gmina* – to *społeczność żydowska*, the 'Jewish community' on a nation-wide scale experienced as a tangible assemblage of embodied and mutually recognized individuals, rather than just an abstraction.

Paradoxically, the fact that camps enable a more or less exuberant confronting of the haunting was not a nascent development – logically so, given that the haunting is hardly a new phenomenon itself. In an outstanding, if undeservedly forgotten study of second generation Jewish residents of Warsaw, Joanna Wiszniewicz, a scholar at Warsaw's Jewish Historical Institute, makes an observation that strikingly resonates with Magda and Karol's experiences at the Jewish summer camps and performative transgressions of the haunting I discussed in chapter four. Wiszniewicz's research helps us to understand that the youth camps re-established by the JDC in the post-socialist period developed in forms that strikingly resembled the JDC sponsored TSKŻ camps of the 1960s. Wiszniewicz illustrates how the TSKŻ camps at Śródborów or Poronin brought about a sense of empowerment, exuberant group

performances of Jewishness, like the spontaneously danced Horah[132] in the street of a small Polish town - unthinkable on one's own. An 'important experience', Wiszniewicz argues, was 'feeling secure in a group against antisemitic reactions' (Wiszniewicz, 2004). The participants of the 1960s summer camps, like Magda and some of her peers in the 1990s, were 'releasing stress and tension' brought from their everyday lives, in abreaction of anti-Semitic slurs by their mocking re-appropriation as ethnonyms, by loud singing of Jewish songs when in the presence of local Poles, and by sharing traumatic stories. Camps were 'cathartic and augmenting self-respect' (ibid.), and in the newly found group of Jewish peers, the participants found a home and a sense of protection, as Wiszniewska further contends (ibid.). In that respect, the liminality of the camps was not so much created through religious acts or particular organizational models, but enabled by the very existence of the camp in contrast to quotidian Polish lived realities. In the 1990s, the cathartic role of the camp was not as pronounced – it existed more as a potentiality realized in experiences of some of my research participants. When it did come about, as chapter four clearly indicates the performances and experiences of 'catharsis' from the haunting in the two seemingly different historical periods were analogous.

Socialization and education

The primary purpose of Jewish summer camps has been to socialize children, adolescents and young adults into Jewishness via the transmission of knowledge and values, the fostering of personal relationships and group solidarity, and the encouraging of active communal involvement; next to the nurturing of participants' emotional ties with Israel, these have been the main motives behind the Taglit-Birthright tours, too (Kelner, 2010, Sales and Saxe, 2004, Zola, 2006).

In that sense, the Taglit-Birthright, with its explicit agenda of counteracting 'assimilation', invokes parallels with the expectations of Jewish summer camps in the USA for more than half a century. From the perspective of Jewish diasporic organizations and leaders, the tours to Israel can be interpreted as efforts to generate 'Jewish revivals' across the Jewish diaspora; such revivals, Keith Kahn-Harris and Ben Gidley argue, symptomatize a recursively surfacing anxiety about the

---

[132] A popular Israeli circle dance of Romanian origin (see Boehm, 2007).

disappearance of the Jewish people due to intermarriage and the loss of collective identity (2012). Longitudinal sociological research on the impact of Jewish summer camps and Taglit-Birthright trips on young Jewish Americans indicates that these have profound and long-term effects on Jewish self-identification, communal involvement, religiosity and marriage choices: the Taglit-Birthright has become 'a normative part of socialization for North American Jews' (Saxe et al., 2009, p.3).

As I explained in chapter five, unlike most of their American and Western European counterparts, Polish Jewish children, teenagers and adults do not enter the interzone with a familial or local communal Jewish cultural background. Most young Jewish individuals I met in the course of my research engaged with the Wrocław *gmina* only after going to translocal camps, seminars or Taglit-Birthright trips. For many, nonetheless, these first encounters were enabled by their, or their family's, insertion within Jewish social networks. Rafał, whom I introduced earlier, was among a group of people who got intensively involved in the interzone projects and sociality at the Wrocław *gmina* after his Taglit-Birthright experience in 2004. Up until that time he did not identify as Jewish, although he was aware that his grandfather was Jewish and a member of the *gmina*. Referring to the trip to Israel he told me: 'they started to address me as Jewish, either in jokes or seriously. So you thereby become that Jew - a bit.' In reality this pivotal experience did not immediately change his self-identification, but nonetheless it initiated a chain reaction of gradual involvement in local and translocal Jewish communal activities.

The education and socialization projects of the interzone are informed by reterritorialized political ideologies and religious theologies, modelling criteria of inclusion and agendas of knowledge production and dissemination; in other words decisions on who gets to participate and what participants are supposed to learn and experience. Shavei Israel seminars and the Ronald Lauder Foundation camps stress Orthodox religious teaching and strong support for the Israeli state. JDC programmes, in turn, convey the narrative of a historically continuous Jewish peoplehood, which incorporates Israel as the affective, cultural and political referent of collective identification. They also endorse a non-denominational, inclusive model of Jewish religious practice and belief. Both modalities of the interzone education share the implicit or explicit affirmation of the viability of Jewish life in the diaspora.

Such models of informal educational practice are exemplified in teaching materials for educators such as a 'madrich-booklet' I received from Magda, which had been published for the Szarvas camp in 2006; this featured live-action games involving Jewish holidays, biblical stories, the characteristics of historical figures from Jewish theology and the philosophy of different strains of Judaism. A similar guidebook outlining games and discussion topics that the *madrichim* can use in their work, was published in Polish in 1995; this put considerable stress on activities that allow children to integrate with each other. Some of the proposed topics for role-playing and discussions encourage the children to discuss choices of characters like the biblical Jonah, swallowed by a whale, or the moral choices made by King David's mother, Ruth. Another role-playing game suggested that the young participant be placed in the role of British Jewish soldiers in Palestine facing the dilemma of continuing armed struggle against Nazi Germany or joining the resistance against the British Empire in the hope of establishing the Jewish state. Elsewhere, the educators are advised how to recreate the moral and existential dilemmas of Jews on the verge of revolt against Roman domination in 65 CE. Most camps, 'seminars' and 'conferences' are organized around a main narrative or a guiding theme. Iwona, in a a draft of her personal report from Szarvas written in 2006, mentioned several such themes: 'Jewish Identity, the Jewish Calendar - Jewish Holidays, Jewish Life Cycle, the Wonderful World of the Bible, Jewish Heroes and Heroism, Jerusalem 3000, Jewish Heritage, and The Jewish World'. It is difficult to show the whole range of possible themes; suffice it to say that they refer to subjects from Jewish history, Judaism, secular philosophy, political thought, cultural practices, visions of Jewish history and imaginaries of the future, and cultural heritage in the widest possible sense – from Jewish folk customs to biographies of esteemed Jewish writers.

Due to time-limits, educational projects within the interzone cannot provide a comprehensive education. What my research participants, both *chanichim* (campers) or *madrichim* (instructors), learned from the camps was primarily basic Jewish know-how: an awareness of the rudimentary precepts and values of Judaism; figures and events from Jewish history; diverse and contentious Jewish political movements and religious denominations; simple facts about Israel and the contemporary Jewish diaspora. Far more important perhaps, as illustrated in the previous chapter, was a competence in the Polish Jewish vernacular – fluency in cultural codes related to a

shared framework of experience, where symbolically complex notions were often intermixed with the seeming 'banalities' of summer camp and seminar interactions, such as knowing the responsibilities of a *madrich;* familiarity with popular Jewish traditions and terms in Hebrew; being able to make a symbolic association between the popular children's song, of Hasidic provenance, *Gersher car meod* (Hebrew: A very narrow bridge) and the communal Shabbats at Lauder and JDC camps. These cultural references could then be mobilized as markers of shared affinity and communal boundaries in the Wrocław *gmina* or at the club, as illustrated in chapter five.

Education instituted by the globalized 'revival' projects, both in the interzone and locally, on the premises of the *gmina*, whether systematic or not, establishes the perimeter of what constitutes the knowledge that needs to be absorbed to 'build one's Jewish identity' or 'reconnect with one's Jewish roots'. This presence and absence ends up as doxa, self-evident and taken for granted as a matter of social convention (Bourdieu, 1979), yet it is nonetheless normalized by global ideoscapes and their localized authorities. A perfect example is Yiddish, the vernacular and native language of many of the first generation, which was virtually absent in both *gmina* and interzone based educational programmes. Instead, Modern Hebrew had been naturalized as the 'Jewish language' one potentially learns in the process of becoming Jewish or 'returning' to Jewishness. The pragmatism of knowing the language of liturgy and the Jewish state aside,[133] this situation speaks of the central place of Israel and Israel-oriented NGOs in contemporary Polish Jewish life. The replacement of Yiddish by Modern Hebrew points to a Zionist project of national resurgence in Palestine and a rejection of diasporic legacy. Notably, more recently, Yiddish has become a popular marker of Jewish identification in the American Jewish diaspora and has been revalorized in Israel (see e.g. Fishman and Fishman, 1974; Shandler, 2006). At the same time, its role and presence among Wrocław's 'new Jews' is marginal.[134]

---

[133] While Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew are not the same, knowledge of the latter allows one to read the former.

[134] The University of Wrocław's Jewish Studies programme offers pathways focused on either Modern Hebrew or Yiddish, and both are popular among Polish students. Notably, those among my research participants who enrolled in the course all unanimously chose the Hebrew pathway. In September 2013 the Bente Kahan Foundation organized a yearlong Yiddish language course combined with cultural events, open to everyone. It remains to be seen whether such initiatives will change the situation described above.

In the interzone of Polish Jewish contemporaneity, it is difficult to disassociate informal education from controlled socialization, that is, supervised and predesigned programmes meant to induce the process of adapting to communal norms, values, beliefs, and language(s) which shape one's self-understanding. This is particularly apparent at Jewish summer camps for children where many forms of teaching are seamlessly interwoven with performances, games and sporting activities. For example, when children at a camp are taught Shabbat songs and blessings during the actual Shabbat celebration they are implicitly learning some of the basic precepts of the Jewish faith. Adults are offered more distinctively formalized lectures and workshops but again, learning is often meant to inform one's self understanding as Jewish and enable active participation in Jewish social and religious activities.

In 2008, when doing preliminary research for my project, I saw children at the Zalesie summer camp playing an outdoor live role-playing game that culminated in a flamboyant and fantastic theatrical performance with Jewish topics interwoven into a superhero struggle of cosmic proportions. *Madrichim* were dressed and painted to resemble surreal demonic adversaries in one of the performances by older children, with Jurek playing a master of 'Jew-Jitsu' dressed in a traditional black Hasidic garment. The performance and the role play were just one of the events on offer at the summer camp. Activities aimed at social integration and enjoyment ran alongside more classroom-based educational courses and workshops; these were led by young people in their twenties and thirties, themselves of Jewish ancestry, who understood their connection to Jewish people and Jewishness in numerous ways.[135]

During my fieldwork at the Shavei Israel seminar in Jerusalem, I was invited to take part in a city game together with twenty other participants, mostly young, others old enough to have adult children of their own. Divided into teams and carrying maps and instructions in hand we were to traverse the urban environment of Jerusalem's Old City in search of historical locations and to solve puzzles. At each location the teams were supposed to perform a task or answer a question about the place; these often invoked significant events in the city's history. At one site we had to find and identify the archaeological site of a priestly home burnt during the city''s

---

[135] However, among them was, for example, Liliana, who was not Jewish, but a Polish gentile enthusiast and a teacher of Israeli dances.

destruction by the Romans in 70 CE; at another we had to discover the history of the Hurva Synagogue, burnt down by the Muslim inhabitants of Jerusalem in 1721, rebuilt and eventually blown up by the Arab Legion in 1948. The former site evoked the connections between the present city and its ancient history. It brought to mind the destruction of the Second Temple which symbolically, if not entirely factually, marks the beginning of the two millennia of Jewish dispersal across the world.[136] The latter site both underscores the continuous Jewish presence in the city and at the same time ominously hints at the purportedly persistent Arab threat. The game culminated symbolically and spatially at the Kotel, the holiest place of Judaism, and the only surviving fragment of the architectural structure of the Temple. It is here that Jews coming from the world over, pray and place their handwritten wishes in the gaps between stones. We finally assembled under the large Israeli flag hanging from a post in the middle of the square. Obviously, those taking part in the Shavei Israel urban game were not children, but provisionally we were offered a learning experience, developed specifically in the context of Jewish informal education for children, characteristic for the summer camps. It combined play and integrative interaction with a more or less subtle historical – political narrative interwoven in between. We were supposed to play, learn and socialize, all at the same time, engage in a particular form of becoming where Nikodem, a twenty year old convert, excessively ostentatious about his new sense of identity and fifty-year old Teresa, active for decades in Kraków Jewish organizations were levelled to the status of initiates, undergoing a complex assemblage of teachings and performances intended to allow us, the 'lost brethren', to 'reconnect with our Jewish roots', to quote Shavei Israel's chairman, Michael Freund (2008).

In my conversations with people who had been *madrichim*, particular techniques appropriated and tweaked in the educational camps and programmes emerged as belonging within a single pervasive framework. Grażyna, who was one of guides/supervisors at the Shavei Israel seminar, a true veteran of the transnational projects and Jewish activism, told me that certain forms of practical knowledge of social management ('icebreakers'. team-building games) are transferable, and that techniques used in summer camps can be deployed at residential 'seminars' and vice

---

[136] Jewish disaporic communities existed well before the 70 CE, although the defeat of the uprising and the destruction of the temple imposed the condition of dispersal upon the majority of Jews (e.g. Barclay, 1996; Cohen, 1997; Safran, 2005).

versa. How these techniques are employed and what understanding of, and sentiments attached to, being Jewish they are trying to instil does not fall under the same denominator; these depend on the ideological background of the supervising organization as well as idiosyncratic contributions and adaptations from the side of actual workers and volunteers, those who realize institutional guidelines in a dynamic actuality of camp or seminar life.

While, by and large, the experiences in the interzone seem to entail a sense of connection with Israel and its people, they do not automatically instil uncritical support for state policies or entail immigration. In any case, Israel becomes a place to relate to, which is no longer an abstraction, but a real place inhabited by actual people they have met. Likewise, the Shavei seminar remaps social relationships – not necessarily by fostering long lasting affinities between people, even if these are in fact not so uncommon. When I came to the *Limud Keszet* in 2010, I was already acquainted with my fellow participants of the Shavei Israel summer seminar who also came to the Warsaw event from across Poland. For example, I met Bartłomiej, a man in his late forties, at three different translocal programmes within the space of a year. Affinities and relationships established in such intermittent intense periods of sociality are subject to a number of factors like personal character and age, but they often cut across political or religious differences. Even those people who did not really fraternize or find common ground, at least start to recognize each other as belonging to the same tangible collectivity.

Becoming **madrichim**

Participating in translocal programmes is one thing, facilitating them is another. Roughly half the Wrocław Jewish people I talked with who have come of age and engaged in Jewish life in the post-socialist period have at some point been involved in Jewish activism. Involvement in social and educational efforts associated with both resurgence and its sustenance, kick-starting intergenerational reproduction of the community, primarily through the education and socialization of children, is an important social practice associated with becoming Jewish. One of my interlocutors, Marianna, actually called it an 'initiation' in trying to explain to me why she was keen on 'experiencing' being an educator, a *madrich*. Olek, in turn, remarked that prior to the intergrative *Limud Keszet*, he and his peers could be split into ''those

interested in religion" who went to camps like the one at Wisła and those who wanted to become *madrichim* and associated more with the JDC. Olek's typology certainly does not encompass everyone, but nevertheless both he and Marianna made salient observations. Being *madrichim* was a formative experience for those like Magda, Olek, Natalia or Artur, who remained involved in Jewish institutional sociality over the years, as well among the majority, like Marcin or Rafał or Sylwia, whose involvement in organized Jewish sociality declined in intensity and frequency, to be replaced by informal social ties, a sense of affinity and occasional participation in large social and religious events.

Rafał's engagement in Jewish education followed a trajectory typical for almost half of my young research participants, that of first experiencing the camps, seminars and tours as a participant; and then gradually becoming on educator – first through training and then by yearly practice at Jewish camps. Rafał together with his friend Marcin went to the first seminar for *madrichim* in Syrocko in September 2005, a year after they had both participated in a Taglit-Birthright trip. At Syrocko they both met Olek who then became a good friend of theirs a few years before he moved to Wrocław. Eventually, after another JDC training for *madrichim* in Śródborów in December 2005 and work as an educator at a Polish JDC summer camp in 2006, Rafał attended group leader/educator training for the International Jewish Youth Camp in Szarvas,. He vividly recalled what was literally called, in English, 'enrichments' of the future *madrichim*:

> detailed lectures meant to give you knowledge on a topic, for example about the Hasidic movement. Yet, most lectures aimed to teach you how to deal with children in a given situation, how to *convey* that knowledge. For example, we had quasi-theatre workshops [on topics] like history or the creation of the world. We had workshops with an American, Marc Lazar, the name stuck in my mind, who was also an educator and he taught us how to present various stories. He was a jolly fellow who showed us that you can make things fun. First of all he showed us what kind of educator one should be. They show you how to organize the initial group integration, plays, that's what it is. From dawn till dusk you have classes; there was hardly any free time left.

According to his own autobiographical statement (LinkedIn, 2013), Marc Lazar, recalled by Rafał, is an American Jewish educator who moved to Israel and became a staff member and eventually a director of Machon, the Institute for Youth Leaders

from Abroad, a branch of the Jewish Agency instituted 'with the aim of nurturing young leaders drawn from a full spectrum of Zionist movements from all over the world' (The Jewish Agency for Israel., n.d.). For years he was involved in JDC programmes, including the training of young Jewish leaders. Over the years, prior to the Szarvas camp in 2007 and since that encounter with Rafał, Lazar was involved with dozens of Jewish organizations in nineteen countries on three continents. The meeting of Rafał and a global professional educator like Lazar exemplifies the vast professional global network of educational entrepreneurs and institutions which formulates agendas as well as realizes them on ground level with the help of Eastern European Jewish activists.

Crucial here, however, is the particular form of training Rafał experienced before each of his assignments as a *madrich*. One fundamental element of the Jewish summer camps transplanted into the Eastern European and Polish Jewish setting is what is called *hadrachah* (Hebrew: guidance). Within the context of informal Jewish education the term refers to both leadership skills and training, that is, both the ability to convey knowledge, integrate children, resolve conflicts and gain the respect of the young people under the care of *madrichim* – educators, who are also counsellors and caretakers (e.g. Bratislava report, 2004; JDC Hungary, 2005; Magen, 2010). Every person I spoke with who became a *madrich* and a number of other Jewish activists among my research participants had attended such training sessions numerous times; these preceded each summer camp and sometimes were organized independently as 'leadership training seminars'. At Rafał's first training seminar, in 2005, Karina Sokołowska from the Warsaw JDC invited him and his friend to become the leaders of the Wrocław Jewish Club. Their sociable and outgoing personalities were recognized and then enhanced by training in the interzone; they were, accordingly, effectively mobilized to support Jewish sociality at the local level of the Wrocław *gmina*.

The ambiguity of the boundaries between teachers and pupils, guides and the guided is hinted at in the relationships between successive cohorts of *chanichim* and *madrichim*. The model of tutelage deployed is based almost entirely on youth activism and intra-communal reciprocity; *chanichim* are tutored and 'guided' as Jews by their elderly colleagues only to, in turn, become tutors in Jewishness of those only marginally younger than themselves. The educator him- or herself is often a learner. *Limud Keszet* effectively followed a similar formula – while many lecturers were

194

established scholars, a number of papers and workshops were organized by community members, students, activists and educators.

The practice of being Jewish by at first learning and socializing and then helping others to socialize and learn emerged as part of the repeated encounters with the interzone. In this way voluntary engagement in transforming oneself and others, became a form of establishing meaningful social relations in the organized communal setting. The fantasy embedded in the interzone, performance, role-playing and games are its core elements and a way to interweave knowledge dissemination with social integration. In respect to both, temporal engagements in the interzone constitute intense experiences where the new participants, young or old alike, form a *communitas* of learners and those who have undergone that process before. The initiated into 'Jewishness', in turn become the educators, responsible for creating an environment in which others will learn about being Jewish and become, ideally, bonded to each other and the Jewish people.

Jewish microcosms

In the preceding paragraphs I discussed the transformative aspects of the assemblage of the interzone – how it enables children to confront the haunting and how it becomes a space of socialization. In the last part of my reflection I will discuss how these ephemeral time-spaces of Polish Jewish sociality are constructed as all-encompassing sensory and cultural environments and how these environments not only facilitate Jewish becoming, but create a parallel reality of communal Jewish being.

The concept of microcosm, a 'little world', recurs as a schema in philosophical and metaphysical thought, denoting an analogous relation of a part to the whole, usually in the form of the dyad of the human body and the universe. It has had a prominent place in Christian and Muslim religious thought and a vital place in the Jewish Kabbalah (e.g. Conger, 1922; Ẓaddik and Haberman, 2003; Fine, 2011). Here I use the notion of microcosm descriptively, to address the remaking of non-places where residential Jewish events are held, to turn them into small-scale, Jewish, relatively self-contained, normative, cultural and sensorial environments of organized collective life, at times aiming to selectively reproduce the lived realities of 'macrocosms' like contemporary Israel.

The creation of Jewish microcosms at summer camps and seminars for Polish Jews involves establishing them as normative environments. Generic rules of conduct meant to assure the safety and comfort of participants, especially children, are considered fundamental and constitute an important part of *mardrichim* 'pre-camp' instruction - i.e. training that precedes each JDC summer camp. Specifically Jewish rules of conduct are probably most visible in the rhythms of Judaic religious practice. All residential gatherings in the interzone follow strict kosher norms, either because of the camp's or seminar's Orthodox religious profile (for example the Lauder camp in Wisła or the Shavei Israel programmes) or, in case of non-denominational JDC camps, to enable adults and children from religiously observant families to participate.[137]

Compared to the more multi-denominational, all-encompassing character of *Limud Keszet,* the Lauder camps in Wisła and the Shavei Israel Shabbatons (*Szabatony)* had strict codes of conduct and religious observance. Every instance of the interzone I encountered, however, had its own subversive spaces and participants who did not conform to what may be termed the 'proper' normative model. For example, the Lauder camp I visited in 2008 had a large cohort of dissenters, who used it as an opportunity to socialize on their own terms: a group of the 'Children of the Holocaust', among whom I met no-one religiously observant, let alone Orthodox. Shavei Israel seminars are also interesting in the sense that they combine sightseeing with lectures based at various heritage sites across Israel with a stay at the Judea Guest House, a fairly large hotel on the outskirts of Jerusalem. There participants shared two- or three-bedded rooms (men and women separately housed), ate, prayed and participated in educational and social activities. Just as at Limud, for instance, the hotel was turned from a non-place into a Jewish microcosm.[138] At the same time the 'seminar' differed radically, as it shared many features with those of the Taglit-Birthright tours, for example, a small number of participants and pre-scheduled activities in which everyone was expected to participate. While most participants, especially the converts, were eager to attend daily prayers, the rest were morally

---

[137] Unless noted otherwise, I refer here to personal conversations with *madrichim* involved in Szarvas, Polish JDC and Shavei Israel camps and seminars as well as well as the Limud conference.

[138] The venue, with a kosher kitchen and a synagogue, was already adapted to cater to the needs of religious Jews, like most hotels in Israel, and in that sense it differed considerably from most Polish hotels.

pressured into compliance. Those of halachic descent were asked by Uri, the leader of the seminar, to participate in the religious service to help to establish *minian* for the whole group. Uri also argued that since no one had had to pay to attend the seminar save for a symbolic fee, we should follow its rules, and take full advantage of the opportunity we were given. Of course, some participants did not always follow the envisioned rules – some 'disappeared' for an evening or even a few days, to party in Jerusalem or to visit friends in a different city. Another couple of participants, Przemek and Iza, were unable to get up in the morning due to hangovers from the previous night. In general, however, everyone felt obliged to take part in prescribed activities. Willingness to take advantage of what was offered – like the Hebrew lessons - very much came from the expectations of the participants themselves. Social activities, partying, staying up late, with drinks and discussions, or an occasional dive into the hotel swimming pool, closed for the night, were a significant part of the seminar, of the social activities taking place in this small space, and it was these that fostered a much stronger social affinity than the educational workshops themselves.

The second, and arguably most important aspect of the interzone as a space of being, is that it allows for face-to-face interactions between Jewish participants coming from different parts of Poland and visitors from abroad. For those who do not live near the few cities with significant Jewish social organizations, the interzone enables Jewish sociality that would be difficult to experience in their everyday lives. *Limud Keszet*, for example, created a specific zone of interaction, on both cognitive and emotive levels, that remapped the boundaries of the community. It brought together people of different denominations, political sympathies and age groups – from infants to the elderly. In 2010 the conference numbered around 800 participants, that is, it attracted more than ten percent of people who were likely to identify as Jewish in the national census a year later and around ten times the number of people who participated in the Wrocław *gmina's* celebrations of main Jewish holidays, like Yom Kippur or Pesach. Relative to the number of people who are active in Jewish organizations and who visit synagogues, *Limud Keszet* has become a gathering on a national scale that gives Jews an opportunity to encounter others who they would not otherwise meet. More importantly, it brings together people who

already know each other from these and similar transnational events and gatherings, as well as from visits to other congregations.

More than a year before visiting *Limud Keszet* for the first time, in the summer of 2008, I took part in the 'educational-recreational camp' organized by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation in Poland in the mountain resort town of Wisła. It was only gradually that I came to understand what I had observed; and I only fully comprehended it in the course of my subsequent doctoral fieldwork. At some point during the camp I noticed Pinchas, in his Haredi garment, playing football with young boys just outside the hotel building. Like the collective singing of over a hundred participants at every meal, and the everyday interactions of Jewish people who had come from dozens of places from all over Poland, that mundane scene of a game of football epitomised the camp's role as a translocal Jewish social space. The very possibility of such a kickabout rested on the existence of a global Jewish organization that had envisioned, sponsored and staffed the event, and the individual actors who had turned this design, this vision, into a lived reality, albeit just for ten days. The Wisła Lauder camp, like Shavei Israel seminars, attracted a greater number of the more pious and observant Orthodox Jews, however, it created for everyone, particularly those coming from provincial towns, an intergenerational, sensorial and social bubble of Jewish communal life. This lived reality contrasted with Wrocław where there was no daily religious service and even on Shabbats *minian* was always an issue, it often rested waveringly on the ailing health of the elderly or the chance presence of a guest from abroad. As mentioned earlier, the institutional dominance of Orthodoxy in the ZGWŻ and the Polish Rabbinate had little to do with the actuality of Jewish congregations: the Orthodox Jews comprised a miniscule group among the mostly secular or religiously more liberal. For the actually Orthodox, this part of the interzone had the potential to create a thriving religiously observant *communitas*, where the pious were the majority and having *minian* was never a problem – and seeing a room brimming with worshippers at the Lauder camp or the *Limud Keszet* was indeed a striking experience after the weekly synagogue service in Wrocław.

Janina, an adult convert to Judaism, mentioned that she preferred to attend winter rather than summer Lauder camps until they were discontinued for the lack of funds. She explained that while neither camp catered for the educational needs of someone as well-versed in matters of Judaism as she considered herself to be, it was

not really knowledge she was looking for but 'atmosphere'. This is what had led her to choose the winter camp: it was a retreat from the ambience of Christmas-time celebrated by her Catholic family, 'a chance to spend the festive season without hearing Chirstmas carols', a place where she could celebrate Chanukah in a Jewish environment, not only socio-culturally, but also sensorially, especially for someone like her, for whom the 'Jewish family' were the people she met in Jewish institutional spaces.

***

The spaces of the interzone are both ephemeral and intense. Ephemeral in the sense that they are created in transient locations across Poland, Hungary and Israel, non-places momentarily endowed, drawn into a recurrent and interlinked network of educational, social and political endeavours. Intense, due to creating not only an intensity of learning, of talking, praying and partying with other Jews, but also an intensity of sensory and affective interaction, the human *gwar*, a buzz; a multiplicity of bodies: hundreds of people congregating to extinguish the Shabbat candle at the end of Havdalah in the corridor of the 'Hotel Boss', dancing and rejoicing, and the cacophony of voices: from the elderly engaged in raucous dispute with a long unseen friend to the gurgling of infants in the background of discussions in the foyer. This effervescence is fostered not only by collective rituals and performances – ranging from the religious to the screening of community-made films, to which I have put my hand, but also by the sensory environment of the place, so strikingly different from the Wrocław congregation at the time of my fieldwork. The sensoriality of the interzone as the constellation of Jewish microcosms cannot be dissociated from sociality – the interzone is as much an accumulation of performances and narratives as it is an accumulation of bodies, sounds, smells and distinct images.

In many instances the sensorial microcosm of intense Jewish sociality emerges solely from the fact that for one weekend, or several weeks, an ephemeral commune of Jewish people has been created; people who live, learn and interact in countless possible ways in a very densely populated space – strongly contrasting with the lived realities of contemporary Poland where Jews are few and far between, live miles apart from each other, and where there are no densely populated Jewish districts, suburbs, let alone cities with a Jewish population of a significant size. These

ephemeral, alternate realities, which stand in stark contrast to the quotidian social environments of the Polish Jewish participants can also be created purposefully. This is exemplified in an excerpt from the 'Educational Programme': a set of guidelines for *madrichim* and young leaders employed to set up and run the Szarvas camp in 2005, where the main theme was 'ISRAEL…Heart, Mind and Soul':

> Transformation of Szarvas into Israel: The camp locations will be renamed with places in Israel. Some examples are: a kibbutz area for younger (maybe regular gardening activity), mikfkad[139] area as Disengof Square, add streets signs with Ben Yehuda, Jaffa, etc., art room as Bezalel Art School, football field as Teddy Stadium, the pool as Kinneret or Brecha Sultan/Sultan's Pool, the Kupola as Mount Hermon with a 'skier' doll on side outside the entrance door. Israeli radio when loudspeaker in use (including 'news beeps' when announcements are made); use Hebrew and other languages…even with weather/sports updates. (Lazar and Konovic, 2005)

What we see here is the creation of a cultural, material and sensually perceptible environment, a microcosm of Israel's lifeworld, assembled out of consciously chosen elements: city streets, sport and cultural facilities, natural landmarks (Lake Kinneret, Mount Hermon), characteristic urban locations (Disengof Square is a popular meeting spot in central Tel Aviv), and places of symbolic and historical significance (kibbutzes), where the reterritorialization of Israel is further augmented by the recreated audiosphere of the Hebrew language and the presumed quotidian sound environment of an Israeli city.

The interzone organizers' attempts at creating the totality of sensorial, cultural and social experience of 'Jewish worlds' is partially dictated by the very rationale of temporarily establishing a place which meets the minimum requirements of observant Jewish life – sources, storage and serving of food that meet kosher standards, establishing a synagogue, and organizing religious service. With tours and seminars taking place in Israel, a Jewish environment is given, all-encompassing although still malleable, by careful planning of visited places, invited guests, and Israeli public discourses and narratives that are legitimized and others which end up under-communicated.

---

[139] *Mifkad* (in the quoted document misspelled as *mikfkad*), (Hebrew half-circle), is a morning assembly of camp participants which can combine collective singing, motivational exercises, prayers and reaffirmation of the camp's guiding principles and values. While unique in form, in principle it resembles a roll-call characteristic for organized camps.

A mirror

With the normative, interactional and sensorial dimensions of small translocal environments in mind, those microcosms of Jewish sociality, whose significance goes well beyond the becoming and 'revival' initially envisioned, I wish to return to Riv-Ellen Prell's argument about the liminality of Jewish summer camps. What I have tried to illustrate above are similar processes in which participants are taken out of their everyday lived realities and brought into a temporality constituted space where they can be initiated into Jewishness and obtain knowledge, confidence and experience that will allow them to remake their lives and local Jewish communities. The interzone is more than that, however. It is also a space and temporality where one can experience and live a more intense, condensed, satisfying Jewish social life, feel immersed in a different sensorial environment. One can live what was - in Polish reality and the precarious actuality of the Wrocław *gmina* at the time of my fieldwork – a dream. An event like *Limud Keszet* contrasted sharply with the conflicts over ontologies of Jewish belonging that ruptured the congregation and the precariousness and stagnation experienced by many of my research participants in the *gmina* of 2009-2010. The interzone envisioned what the *gmina* could or should be, at the same time as revealing what it was not. This was probably best expressed by Paweł, when we were sitting after dinner in the massive canteen of the 'Hotel Boss'. The discussion at the table circled around those who had travelled from all over Poland to attend *Limud Keszet*. At some point Paweł sized up the crowd and said with bitter irony, 'it is strange to see that the whole [Polish Jewish] community fits in one large hall'. We both knew that he was exaggerating, as many more people from Wrocław than were able would have liked to have come; and for others it was simply not their thing. Yet, his words pointed to a sense of uncertainty about Jewish life beyond the 'revival'. For the time being, it seemed that the efforts to kick-start Jewish life had become in themselves an important form of Jewish sociality. Given the political instability of the *gmina*, its shifting figures of authority and models of Jewish life and contested communal boundaries – the camps, gatherings and programmes are in fact much more stable and predictable terrains of being and becoming Jewish. The dynamism of change in the interzone is overwhelming and new initiatives like the post-Taglit international programme Minyanim, conceived in 2010, are springing up on regular basis – but the framework of diverse camps and

seminars does not change, and caters to the Jewish children, adolescents and adults of complex affiliations whom I discussed in chapter four.

The question that remains is whether it is analytically justified and beneficial to conceptualize the translocal time-spaces of Polish Jewish sociality and becoming as an assemblage of phenomena that share a sufficient number of features to allow their merger within one conceptual framework. My discussion above was an attempt to argue that such a heuristic device is indeed viable and even necessary in order not to miss the growth of a particular socio-spatial reality of post-socialist 'Jewish renewals' in Poland and possibly the whole region, where Jewish minority politics and activism have been politically frozen for decades. The metaphor of an extraterritorial polity becoming an alternative cultural and psychological reality is appropriate as a means to conceptually frame a phenomenon which shares many characteristics already described by researchers (e.g. liminality), but which, in its prevalence, impact and form constitutes a significantly new development. As much as this choice in itself may be arbitrary, without the acknowledgment of the spaces and the temporalities that the interzone designates, any rendering of contemporary Polish Jewish sociality would be incomplete.

Chapter 8
Becoming

A short walk away from the synagogue square and parallel to Włodkowica Street is an old moat marking the medieval boundaries of the city and lined with a promenade. After a *Sof haDerech* Club meeting in early summer, I ended up with Magda, Olek, Daniel on one of benches facing the water, enjoying a conversation disturbed only by occasional passers-by, glistening car lights and honks coming from the other side of the moat. At some point our discussion steered towards Magda's plans to establish a new Jewish Youth Club and redefine *Sof haDerech* as the 'Jewish Club', since most of its former 'youth' could hardly any longer be said to fit that label and some members, way past adolescence, had never done so.[140] Magda, who had passed through every stage of institutionalized Jewishness, eventually becoming a professional teacher and communal educator, put forth her own theory of why her friends, acquaintances and former pupils disconnected from Jewish communal life. There is a certain set of experiences, she observed, a space where young people can get socially involved, make friends, feel they belong to a community. Neither Olek

---

[140] The word '*młodzieżowy*' is roughly equivalent of English 'youth'. Therefore, it designates teenagers rather than young adults. As I mentioned in the introduction, the youngest club attendee during my stay was nineteen. The rest were in their twenties or early thirties.

nor Daniel denied that once you had passed through these stages, you eventually just 'run out of options', and so drift away from the *gmina* and the club. Magda encouraged Ludwik, whom she, in her own words, had 'brought up', *wychowała,* at consecutive JDC summer camps, to start up a separate club, but the idea never really got off the ground, for lack of prospective teenage members. This short vignette indicates just how much institution-based Jewish sociality became entrenched in cyclical 'identity-building' and integrative programmes. The third generation's fleeting involvement in Polish Jewish institutional life reflected a profound disparity between the intensity of becoming and time-out-of-time social experiences, and the quotidian reality of being Jewish – at Wrocław *gmina* and in everyday life. Our outdoor discussion by the moat resonated with my earlier reflections on what I had seen and heard during my fieldwork in Poland, by that time slowly coming to an end.

In this chapter I will discuss the temporal dynamics of Jewish sociality in the Wrocław *gmina*, and specifically the fact that every few years nearly the majority of its third generation affiliates is replaced by another cohort of young people, keen on learning about Jews and 'Jewish culture'. My concern is not with the notion of time itself, but with the dynamics of social processes and personal experiences. My inquiry does not investigate temporality on a more encompassing scale, such as neoliberalism-engineered shifts in our perception and experience of time, which Jane Guyer stipulates as a pertinent subject of anthropological inquiry (Guyer, 2007). Rather, I discuss temporal patterns and cycles than distinguish social life emergent in the globalized Polish Jewish 'revival'. It is not my intention to argue that my research participants experience time in any peculiar and distinct manner, let alone that their lives are suspended in historically removed time, and therefore perpetuate the illusion in ethnographic accounts that Johannes Fabian rightfully criticized (Fabian, 1983). I will nonetheless discuss a distinct temporality of contemporary Polish Jewish social life – and by temporality I mean a condition of being subject to temporal rhythms, sequences, repetitions and intensities.

As I argued earlier, a sense of Jewish affiliation among the third generation rarely begins with these intense periods of communal involvement and often it does not end with their conclusion. Nonetheless, these formative engagements with the Wrocław *gmina*, the club and the interzone, usually lasting several years, are one of the most significant characteristics of contemporary Jewish sociality in Poland. I am

going to reflect on the causes and implications of these brief encounters in the light of what I call Jewish *becoming*. The becoming that I ethnographically frame is first and foremost a process of social transformation. It may be spurred by a sudden discovery of Jewish ancestry, or an awareness one grows up with, or a sense of affinity which at some point leads to one seeking an institutional grounding for one's sense of Jewish affiliation or looking out for Jewish people on the basis of having something in common. What it certainly brings about is an embedding in a network of social recognition, familiarity, and intimacy, both locally and translocally. 'Becoming Jewish', both descriptively and analytically, suggests a process of someone non-Jewish turning into a Jew. While this is sometimes the case, for the majority of people their personal transformations cannot be understood as linear transitions between dichotomous states. For example, it would be hard to argue that Magda, born and raised in a largely Jewish familial environment, and aware of her Jewish ancestry from childhood, suddenly 'became Jewish'. Yet, she experienced her Jewish becoming as a profound personal transformation primarily within the transnational space of summer camps. In the second part of the chapter I am going to reflect on the implications of becoming not only for Polish Jewish subjectivities, but also for the *gmina*, where the presence of the third generation is defined by a constant cycle of becomings of successive cohorts of young people.

The process of becoming reveals itself as stages of socialization and learning that (may) follow initial encounters with Jewish programmes and people in the institutional setting. Becoming appeared recurrently in previous chapters, where it described a range of processes. I spoke about how haunting is being confronted in spaces where being Jewish is de-stigmatized, valorised and becomes normative. Becoming was invoked in the context of religious conversion, learning and socialization. So far I have used becoming descriptively: to refer to a change of social status or self-understanding. To help the reader consider the prevalence and significance of *becoming* in experiences of the third generation, an analytical engagement with the notion has to follow rather than precede my discussion of its specific manifestations in Polish Jewish lives. Here I will pull these conceptual threads together, interweave them and juxtapose them with a reflection on long-term trajectories of institutional affiliation and sociality. First I am going to illustrate the transient character of the communal engagements of the third generation and reflect on the aetiology of such dynamics. Then I am going to discuss the implications of

sociality-as-becoming for the *gmina*. Finally I am going to shift my attention to the outcomes of becoming as personal transformation.

Jewish passages

The temporality of the third generation's engagements with organized Jewish social life can be analytically divided in three stages. First comes the period of *until*, during which Jewish belonging is often under-communicated in family history or a heritage mentioned in passing, but rarely acted upon in the family setting or wider social environment. Then comes the period of *initiation*, learning and socializing in the local congregation and in the interzone; this is followed by *return,* when translocal experiences wane and the intensity of social involvement in local communal life gives way to more mundane and immediate concerns, like making ends meet in the Polish economic reality, or migration, which again repositions the experience of being Polish and Jewish in new ways. This structure of transitions resonates with the order of rites of passage – of course, we are not dealing here with rituals per se, but nonetheless transformative experiences, which as I will later argue, bond and change the participants. The academic discussion generated by Victor Turner's work was addressed in the previous chapter. Here I only want to invite the reader to consider the parallel between the interzone and the temporality of becoming in an even more encompassing sense.

For some of my research participants, involvement in Jewish social activities began with either Jewish youth camps or a Taglit-Birthright tour. For others, the starting point was a visit to the Wrocław congregation, a Jewish Club or, in rare instances, a local branch of the TSKŻ. These initial experiences were often paired in different configurations: either Taglit-Birthright lead to involvement with the *gmina;* or participation in the 'Jewish Experience' tour or residential seminars followed affiliation with the *gmina* and learning about such opportunities by word of mouth. Later came a period of intense socialization, often paired with participation in educational and training initiatives – for some, these began in early childhood, but for the majority, in late adolescence or late adulthood. For those who sought conversion to legitimize their belonging, to integrate socially or to facilitate their full participation in Jewish religious practices, it was also a time of becoming through

conversion courses, circumcision, and practice-based learning – such as how to behave and act in a synagogue. After a few years, nearly all of these steps of becoming, opportunities of social involvement come to an end. Since many transnational programmes are specifically geared towards kick-starting Jewish life and at relatively young people, those who do not become professionals working for Jewish organizations inevitably find themselves with few options and little scope for operating within the narrow reality of 'revival'; there is simply not the sociality at local level commensurate to the complexity of their lives and needs, as I will demonstrate in the following paragraphs.

One of my core research participants, Marianna, expressed in one of our early conversations a certain 'burnout' of the Jewish Club's formula: how she had become 'blasé' once she had experienced a few years of exciting involvement in its activities. 'Jewish blasé', *żydowska blaza*, was in fact a term in the vernacular of the third generation. It was used as a self-ironic expression of the ambivalence and distance - a reserved attitude towards ideas and events that would have excited a neophyte to emergent Polish Jewish sociality. The notion of 'Jewish blasé' did not signify a deadened sensibility or a lack of concern, as it was often used by people most personally involved in the Jewish voluntary organisations, who were often deeply concerned about Jewish existence in Poland. On a deeper level, however, it revealed the predicament of the 'revival' of Jewishness, experienced as discovery and learning, where each transnational event brings new excitement, relationships, and fascinating snippets of knowledge. It invoked a certain weariness with the intensity of becoming and an exhaustion of its possibilities.

Departures

The transient character of communal involvement among the third generation cannot be dissociated from the life stage at which these intense engagements with Jewish organizations and programmes take place: what Jeffrey Arnett (2000) coined as *emerging adulthood*, suggesting a distinct developmental phase, stretching from late teens to mid-twenties emergent in post-industrial societies. According to Arnett, this period of transition, change and personal exploration of worldviews and identifications is prevalent in societies in which entry into adult roles, responsibilities, marriage and childbearing is postponed. Such psychological

periodization is certainly worth considering, but I am inclined not to take it at face value. Piotr moved to Wrocław and first came to the *gmina* after finishing university, while Szymon, who did not go into higher education, moved to Wrocław after being offered a job in retail. Both were in their late twenties when it happened, and still had their own periods of intense learning and socialization which waned only after I had finished my fieldwork. The situation was even more complicated with converts without known Jewish ancestry, like Janina, who entered Jewish social life when she was in her forties. The *becoming* that I speak of here thus appears to be more than simply a stage in psychological development.

Nonetheless, for many who have gone through the intense socialization in the interzone, camps, becoming *madrichim* and conversion, coming of age creates a different set of predicaments and responsibilities, not unlike those outlined in Arnett's theory. Circumstances of a general nature, particularly internal and transnational migration as well as the social mobility of young Poles, certainly shape the temporal dynamics of engagements with Jewish life. Furthermore, my daily observations and conversations revealed that longitudinal connection to Jewish social life was influenced by having a partner who was willing to share, or at least tolerate, one's self-identification as Jewish, involvement in a Jewish congregation, or the prospect of raising children as Jewish.

Marcin, who used to be the leader of the Wrocław Jewish youth club before Magda, only to shift away from the *gmina* a few years later, exemplified such an encounter with the above predicaments.

> I finished my studies, […] I live on my own, that is, with my girlfriend, so my priorities are different. I need to earn money and think about the future. I do not have time to come here, because I keep working a lot. Of course, I drop by from time to time, but these are not regular visits. I am afraid that it may be like that in the future, if not worse, as with time I will have a family and children of my own. I would certainly like to take my children here, show them what everything looks like, that we have some roots, that they have some Jewish ancestry, a tiny little bit. Yet, I do not know how it will be.

I heard similar explanations from a number of Marcin's contemporaries. Still, his ties with Wrocław Jews did not begin with the becoming, and they did not end with a new stage of his life. As a child he used to come with his mother to TSKŻ, and after she drifted away almost completely from any form of local communal life,

he still used to walk his late grandfather to the synagogue on Yom Kippur. By the time I returned from my fieldwork, that familial link to the Jewish life had gone; it was likely that Marcin, like others I described here, would choose a life without the *gmina* and translocal Jewish spaces.

Individual existence in Orthodox Judaism is strongly based on a local community – in both social and ritual terms. This applies to a range of predicaments: from the requirement of having a *mikveh* (ritual bath), *minian* (quorum of ten Jews in synagogue), and access to affordable and at least fairly diverse kosher food. All of the following requirements are either impossible or challenging to fulfil on the local Wrocław level. Therefore, as I was often told, pursuing an uncompromising Orthodox path in Judaism entails migration – either to a different Polish city or abroad. Indeed, that was exactly what happened with a few of the young adults who went through the *gmina* intent on leading pious and halachically observant lives years before my research. In actuality, it was the 1990s *gmina* that was most affected by migration to Israel, for a number of, often combined, reasons: economic opportunities, anti-Semitism, Zionist ideals and, in a few cases, religious needs. In the last decade a quite notable impact came from Poland's accession to the European Union, in 2004, which affected a whole generation of young Poles (see e.g. Burrell, 2009), although some of my research participants still migrated to Israel – but contrary to their peers from the early 1990s, mostly only temporarily. Religious rationale behind migration was considerably rare – mainly because only the minority among the third generation became religiously zealous and fewer still actually strived for the Orthodoxy transnationally spearheaded, for the last two decades, as the model for 'revival'. Even those for whom Judaism was a significant feature of their self-identification as Jews, in the long run turned out to be willing to compromise on religious rules and obligations difficult to fulfil in Wrocław. Some, like Daniel, still moved to Israel, but usually for a variety of reasons – save for economic, which are no longer that compelling since Poland joined the EU. Sometimes this temporary migration was, in a sense, an extension of becoming – through university studies in Israel or participation in six- or twelve-month programmes like MASA, meant to encourage *Aliyah*, 'the ascension', that is ,permanent migration, offering diaspora Jews a chance to study in Israel.

The third factor which contributed to the transience of young people's communal engagements is related to the temporal instability of the *gmina* itself. The

time of my main fieldwork coincided with just one of the subsequent political-religious configurations and visions of how the *gmina* should 'revive'. The religious life can be seen as a touchstone of these shifts. As I have illustrated in preceding chapters, the arrival and departures of particular transnational figures of authority had a considerable impact on both local religious practices and the politics of belonging. Young adults and newcomers, the post-socialist generation, were the most susceptible to the impact of these changes. In the early 1990s, Jerzy Kichler was the first to organize Lauder Foundation backed educational courses about Jewish traditions and Judaism in the post-transformation *gmina*. He wanted the organization to create an environment that would be more inclusive and religiously oriented, as he explained to me himself, and draw in young people already frequenting the local TSKŻ club.[141] Rabbi Ivan Cane's arrival in 2002 resulted in a relatively liberal pathway to Judaism that answered the needs of many young adults, but the rabbi's attempts at incorporating innovations more characteristic of American Progressive Judaism than Conservative Judaism provoked the resistance of older congregants and eventually led to his dismissal. In the same way, the coming of Rabbi Yitzchak Rapoport in 2006 led to educational and conversion courses as well as a new paradigm of belonging, while it alienated a large group of congregants who shunned his views and what they perceived to be the divisive character of the young rabbi.[142] Each of these periods had its supporters and dissenters. The rapid structural changes of the Wrocław *gmina*, like the ebb and flow of transnational entrepreneurs, as well as the existence of institutions like the Jewish Student House (2000- 2004) and the Jewish Club (2004-present), influenced the dynamics of local life, particularly in respect to people in their twenties and thirties, attracting them and creating a space for interactions. For some, as I mentioned in chapter four, whose becoming was enabled by one rabbi, and then looked down upon by the next, were caught in the very dynamics of *gmina* – by the time they finished their own becoming, the particular normative local environment had already started to crumble.

---

[141] He became subject to the rapidly shifting ground of the world to which he dedicated a good part of his life. This former leader of both the ZGWŻ and the Wrocław *gmina* was now working as a tour guide for tourist groups and pupils visiting the White Stork Synagogue.

[142] Between Rabbi Caine's and Rabbi Rapoport's term of office in Wrocław there was a period of virtual interregnum, with Joachim and Jeremiasz, burdened with age, yet putting all their remaining stamina into leading the prayers in their distinct Ashkenazi Hebrew. In between 2004 and 2005, they were helped by a couple of young Israeli Jewish Agency *shlichim* (Hebrew: emissaries), Yael and her husband Yinon Aharoni, whom I mentioned earlier.

Neither of abovementioned factors can be singled out as conditioning, let alone determining, the temporal dynamics of communal involvement. Considered together, however, these processes and conditions help us to understand why the ebb and flow of young people at the Wrocław *gmina* is more the rule than the exception. Having said that, facing the closure of becoming does not entail breaking off from Jewish sociality, but it does render the intense 'revival' sociality, based predominantly on voluntarism, conversion or 'youth' centred activities, increasingly less responsive to the needs of people who are no longer in need of becoming, but rather, confronted by a new sense of Jewish belonging with everyday life. My interlocutors who have already gone through becoming indicated myriad choices concerning how being Jewish featured in their lives. Some have emigrated to Israel, some have chosen to observe kosherity and come to every Shabbat – like Szymon, others consider religious celebrations merely a form of intermittent social integration. Few stayed within the orbit of the *gmina*, some moved to other cities, many either completely disengaged from any formal Jewish sociality or only occasionally showed up, on major Jewish holidays. The choices are many, but trajectories and strategies of Jewish *belonging beyond becoming* lead to the re-negotiation and personalization of one's relationship to being Jewish in Polish lived realties. Less frequently, that adaptation is combined with migration, sometimes to places where the forms of Jewishness advocated by and temporarily experienced through transnational programmes of identity building and education seem possible. A few years after my fieldwork had come to an end, some of my core participants were still in Wrocław. The strongest and lasting attachment to the *gmina* is fostered by either becoming professionally involved in Jewish politics, activism or educational projects, or finding personal fulfilment in the present religious framework of the *gmina* and occasional social activism.

Cycles and continuities

Whether people lose, retain or refigure their place in Jewish institutions, social networks and communal practices, they are soon replaced by another generation of youth activists. The cycle of becoming is repeated, never identical, yet always strikingly similar. The ebb and flow of young individuals was most tangible

from the micro-historical perspective I adopted, which allowed me to trace the life trajectories of at least some of those who had been engaged with the *gmina* since, roughly, 1999. The dynamics of these comings and goings was, however, quite tangible even during the thirteen months of my fieldwork. Paweł and Daniel were already moving away from the *gmina* – the first following his professional career, the second looking for a place to continue his studies and look for a Jewish community that was not in the state of 'decline' that he then considered the Wrocław *gmina* to be. This was also a year when new people, like Paulina, showed up at *Sof haDerech*; after two years of being on the community mailing list she had finally mustered the courage to drop by at the club. By the end of my fieldwork another newcomer, Monika, had joined in as a post-Taglit newcomer, only later to become one of the most prominent Jewish activists in the Polish milieu, an avid participant in the new Jewish transnational project *Minyanim*, and the Polish representative of Sochnut.

The temporality of Jewish communal life in Wrocław was composed of a sequence of repeating cycles defined, on one hand, by rapidly changing relations of symbolic and political power, and, on the other, by incongruence between the social world defined through 'becoming' and the realities of being Jewish in Poland. This particular rhythm of congregation life dovetailed, however, with a distinct form of continuity, namely, that which was reproduced within the framework enabled by the global programmes of socialization and education: this effectively turned *becoming* in a way of *being* Jewish. As I have discussed this dimension of becoming in the previous chapter, here I will only restate the main points related to what was said above. The JDC model of informal education, based on youth activism, where teachers are former pupils and pupils become future educators creates a very distinct form of continuity and connection. Subsequent cohorts of young people who would have 'missed' each other at the Wrocław *gmina* become acquainted through the programmes of education and socialization. The becoming in the interzone allows the kindling of friendships or intimate relationships on a nation-wide scale, of *społeczność żydowska* - 'Jewish community', relationships which are subsequently transposed to the local level – that was the case with many of the dramatis personae of my thesis: Karol and Artur, Rafał and Marcin, Magda and Olek. The notion of community which rests on a symbolic or cultural frame of reference, place-bound affinities or pre-supposed bounded ethnic groups, cannot serve as a heuristic device by means of which to understand the complexity and dynamics of the Wrocław

Jewish congregation. The process at work here exemplifies the arguments of Vered Amit, that 'collective experiences' in institutional communities can 'transform into personal intimacies' (Amit, 2002, p.64). It is precisely becoming that creates such a community of 'collective experiences', parallel to the local notions of belonging and connectedness I discussed in chapter five.

The family camps and *Limud Keszet* events organized by the JDC, and the religious camps at Wisła, served a dual purpose and were important initiatives as Jewish microcosms parallel to and contrasting with the lived realities of the *gmina* at the time of my research; and paradoxically, they threw into relief what Wrocław Jewish life was not. As much as 2009-2010 was a time of stagnation in any other programmes, save for conversion courses organized by Rabbi Rapoport, and the sense of a certain closure, a crisis was strongly present in many of my conversations and encounters. Recent years had brought about new initiatives at the *gmina*, such as the Hebrew course or 'special' celebrations of Shabbat organized in the White Stork Synagogue, in an inclusive, welcoming framework. In August 2012, I went to one of these events and I met there Ester, a young descendant of Polish Jewish émigrés to Sweden, who assured me that a few years earlier the *gmina* had hardly offered anything to either her or her liberal Jewish family. Yet there she was, with more than fifty other people. Efforts like these are implicitly attempts to remake the *gmina* as less transient, at least for the third generation, but the joyful crowd that evening was as inter-generational and inclusive as it could have been.

Beyond the haunting and the 'revival'

The process of *becoming*, of personal and social transformation is central to the experiences of the post-socialist generation and contemporary Polish Jewish sociality. Yet what does the period of intensive learning and activism bring about, beyond the question of socialization and new cultural competences, and abating communal involvement?

In his classic essay *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, Stuart Hall argues that our 'identity', how we think of ourselves and how we are thought of by others, is always positioned between being and becoming: 'Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. However, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised

213

past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power' (2003, p.225). As Richard Jenkins adds, 'not even death freezes the picture: identity or reputation can be reassessed, and some identities – sainthood or martyrdom, for example – can only be achieved beyond the grave' (2008, p.5). Our identities or identifications, our multiple attachments, commitments, self-understandings, are subject to change, to a constant transformation, both throughout our lives, in the historical processes preceding our lives, and, as long we are remembered, in the narratives of those that come after we shed this mortal coil. It is not my intention to ascertain 'that anthropologists', to borrow a splendid phrase from Clifford Geertz, 'are, like theologians, firmly dedicated to proving the indubitable' (2000, p.88). Indeed, as Henri Bergson argued, the human condition and freedom rests on the fact that 'the self and its motives, like real living beings, are in a constant state of becoming' (1995, p.183). The understanding of human subjectivities as becoming rather than being was central to the thought of Gilles Deleuze, whose philosophical inspirations stemmed from Baruch Spinoza, David Hume and precisely Bergson, in his attention to becoming and multiplicity, rather than being and a unified subject. João Biehl and Peter Locke, who recently strived to illustrate Deleuze's potential for anthropology, argue for research that does not merely note that assemblages exist, but which investigates these 'new configurations of global, political, technical, biological and other segments' and 'the ways these configurations are constantly constructed, undone and redone by the desires and becomings of actual people' (2010, pp.336-7). I invoke these words in the context of becoming in respect to two of its outcomes which concern both Polish Jewish subjectivities and contemporary sociality: the haunting and belonging.

The unsettling affects of the haunting form the background of 'discoveries' *odkrycia*, 'coming out of the closet' *wychodzenie z szafy* and adolescent dashes into the intensity of novel, fascinating and exclusive sociality. The *haunting*, as I explained, shaped the very framework of explorations of Jewishness, whether driven by unexplainable affinity or a familial connection. Its mythical resonance in Poland's public and political discourse, cultural imagination and everyday life does not show signs of waning. At a London café in October 2010, I spoke to Izabela. Her Jewish father was a 'Child of the Holocaust'[143] and she also spent a few years in the

---

[143] See introduction

intensity of Jewish sociality. She told me that she never identified as a 'Jewess' (*Żydówka*) at the Jewish summer camps and events, despite, as she said, the fact that the atmosphere of these spaces evoked such clear-cut declarations among the participants. This lack of such articulated identification did not, however, make her less prone to the affects of the *haunting* nor less sensitive to what Marianne Hirsh calls the post-memory of the Holocaust.[144] Thinking of her experiences in retrospective, Izabela told me that when she started 'going to summer camps', she slowly 'adjusted'. 'There, gradually, I became less fearful' as she put it. Such direct overcoming of the *haunting* was not experienced by everyone, but I was still surprised by both its explicit and implicit recurrence in the testimonies of my interlocutors. Halachically Jewish Magda who grew up in a 'Jewish home' and Daniel, who underwent Orthodox conversion to make his social ascription catch up with his already strong sense of affinity, together with many others, had similar experiences – of overcoming silence, and in some instances anxiety or fear. That shift was not always absolute and sometimes old fears could be reawakened by experiencing anti-Semitism, and the everyday lives in Poland of Magda, Olek and many others are still subject to careful strategies of (under)communication. Yet, transformations did take place and for many, Polish Jewish subjectivities were forged anew. Examples of overcoming the affective resonance of haunting, or at least its taming, allow shifts in 'inner life processes and affective states' (Biehl et al., 2007, p.6), which happened independently of how a given individual narratively situates herself or himself in the melange of Polish-Jewish affinities. For lucky others, the silence was associated with familial background – the point of departure rather than their own personal experiences. Consequently, overcoming the haunting, as a persistent fusion of affective resonance and cultural imagination, can be seen as collective, generational becoming, and not strictly in the sense of conquering personal anxieties or traumas.[145] Becoming, at the very least helps the haunting be

---

[144] Izabela's case was distinctive in the fact that in her home, the subject of the Holocaust was, as she said, 'constantly present' and articulated, rather than silenced, due to her father's involvement in the 'Children of the Holocaust' organization. She had attended two meetings of the Children of the Holocaust in Kraków. It should be noted that Izabela's father had long been *w szafie* 'in the closet' to use her words, and many of his friends remained silent about their experiences and Jewish ancestry. In that sense, Izabela's story and experiences add yet another layer to what I argued in my discussion of the haunting.

[145] Gilles Deleuze, in 'The Thousand Plateaus', speaks of becoming-minoritarian, a deviation from the 'deterritorialized variable of the majority', like the hero of Arthur Miller's novel *Focus*, that Deleuze

confronted, even if it does not absolutely banish its demons from everyday experiences and memories.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

At times, encounters with projects of the interzone gradually generated a confidence in my research participants, leading them to consider whether a transnational rabbi, a foreign donor or an overconfident visitor from the 'non-virtual' Jewish world were eligible to inherent authority over what constitutes Jewishness and how Polish Jewish life is supposed to be 'revived'. Perhaps most telling was the story of a couple of young professionals engaged for years in Jewish life. Jacek, of Jewish, but not halachic descent, was at that time religiously observant and determined to undergo Orthodox conversion, while his fiancée Tamara was born of a Jewish mother.[146] Tamara accompanied Jacek when he went to Warsaw to stand before the rabbinical court set up to oversee and eventually determine his conversion. One of the moral criteria of successful conversion stated by the transnational assembly of rabbis was that Jacek and Tamara should lead observant and pious lives in accordance with a strict interpretation of Halacha. They were supposed to live separately until their wedding and Tamara was expected to declare before the Beit Din that as a married woman she would wear a wig and dress 'modestly'. After the meeting one of presiding rabbis subtly suggested that it was mostly a matter of declaration, to enable Jacek to pass through. Tamara told me, however, that she did not want to lie about fulfilling these obligations and clothing herself according to the Orthodox dress code, which, as a matter of fact, was not observed by her Jewish mother and grandmother. Neither was she ready to accept such restrictions for the

---

aptly uses as an exemplification, whose "Jewish-looking" glasses suddenly put him under suspicion of being Jewish. He experiences otherness and anxiety, but also, if we follow the novel to the end, solidarity with stigmatized others (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p.291; see also Miller, 2002). Following that logic, and considering the haunting, I would risk the argument that many of my interlocutors had become-minoritatian (or had become-Jewish, not in literal sense, a- but as envisaged by Deleuze) before they actually 'became-minority' in the gaze of the Polish state and Jewish sovereignties of belonging, both nascent and migrant. Equally, it may be argued that such confrontation follows 'coming out Jewish' in Poland, becoming socially visible and identifiable. In any case, the emergent terrains of Jewish life are witness to another kind of becoming. It is important not to confuse becoming 'minoritarian' with being a 'minority' in the sense of a priori being ascribed to a given collectivity.

[146] For the sake of further anonymization these pseudonyms are used specifically for this passage.

rest of her life only to enable Jacek to attain *giur*. She was secular and considered Judaism a part of her cultural heritage and a social obligation.

Tamara and Jacek described the situation as leading to a personal 'crisis', that made them assess the extent to which they were willing to go to meet the criteria of the institutionally reigning ontology of Jewish life in ZGWŻ, which, nonetheless, they felt a legitimate part of. At the same time, they were both respectful of Orthodox Judaism and accepted the idea that it was indispensable to Polish Jewish communal existence. This crisis has also made them consider the extent to which following the Orthodox pathway would have been in accordance with the future they foresaw for themselves. The trip, as they said 'opened their eyes' to the fact that they 'were not ready to take that path, to live observant lives' in the Polish reality. At the same time, they did not want to live 'lies', that is, to pretend before the rabbis and fellow Polish Jews. In time, Jacek's religious zeal waned, as he said, due to self-reflection, but the extent to which that self-reflection was indirectly informed by that experience remains an open question. Jacek and Tamara got married in a civil ceremony rather than a Jewish wedding, but continued to be as Jewish as any couple I have come across in Poland or abroad: active in the local community, celebrating Jewish holidays, and willing to pass on that sense of belonging onto their children.[147]

In chapter six I discussed the trope of imposed, outside authority, incongruent with the social reality of Polish Jewish lives present in the testimonies of several of my research participants, but most strikingly expressed by Artur, as 'a kind of colonialism'. The knowledge, experience and self-assurance he gradually attained gave him confidence to question the very same narratives of essentialist belonging, and stark ethno-religious boundaries that the global discourse of renewal is often riddled with and which, in many ways, enabled his own *becoming*:

> I felt pressure from the both sides. It seemed for a moment that it [identity or belonging]
> was binary, that you need to conform to that to be accepted. I learned that it is not so.
> […] Marek Edelman[148] said, when they asked him if he was Polish, he answered, that…

---

[147] For the sake of additional anonymity, the pseudonyms used in this passage are employed on a one-off basis.

[148] The only leader of the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB) and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising who survived WW2. Edelman stayed in Poland, worked as a cardiologist and passed away in 2010. About two thousand people followed his funeral procession through the streets of Warsaw.

or maybe it was Simcha Rotem[149] who said it, one of them: my Polishness is of a slightly different kind. Clearly, the Jewishness of everyone from Poland is of a slightly different kind because of our unique fortunes. Yet, the Jewishness of someone from France is of a slightly different kind, someone from Germany is of slightly different kind, and so is Jewishness of someone from Israel. And all this…each one is unique. Simply speaking, one cannot allow to be stigmatized, that as someone from Poland you are very strange, when someone from Slovakia or Russia would not be.

What Artur said, signalled another consequence of his own becoming, that is both coming to terms with the coexistence of his Jewish and Polish sense of belonging, and the external imperative of choosing between the two. In that sense, his Jewish becoming entailed reimagining Polishness. Todd May in the careful exploration of Deleuzian becoming explains that minorites 'are not specific groups of people. Rather, they are fluid movements of creativity that subvert the dominant, i.e., majoritarian, identities our current arrangements bestow upon us' (2003, p.149). Artur's subjectivity does not fall into Deleuzian philosophical assumption of the 'fundamental non-ground of specific identities' (ibid.), as Artur's 'identities' were well grounded, conditioned if not determined, in the contingencies of the place and family he was born in. Yet, his becoming meant overcoming the binarism he encountered on 'both sides'. His becoming, as those of his colleagues, happened in the midst of the 'revival' endorsement of ethno-religious particularism on the one hand, and the spectres of exclusivist ethno-nationalist imaginaries all too present in Poland on the other. Neither 'identity' has become less real. Jewish affiliation is grounded in his mother's ancestry, cultural awareness and social bindings and affects fostered in the years of becoming in the social sense, particularly being a *madrich*, his Jewish socialization: 'rooting in the Jewish world, rebuilding relationship with family [in Israel], learning Hebrew, work at all of these Jewish camps' as he put it. Polish belonging is set in his native language, another set of cultural tropes and histories, experiences and another part of his family background – socialization in Poland, affinity with other Poles.

Artur explained that in time he came to fully acknowledge his mother's choice to marry a non-Jewish Pole. His becoming was no longer in need of essentialist denial, to escape the equally essentialist spectre of incommensurability

---

[149] Head courier of the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB) and fighter in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Rotem emigrated to Israel and lives in Jerusalem.

embedded in Poland's Jewish haunting. Almost a year earlier, at a *Limud Keszet*, much younger Mariusz told me that his entrance into the Polish Jewish social world brought about the under-communication of the fact of being raised in Catholicism and that such behaviour was common among many of his Jewish peers in their early twenties. That referred to either actual adherence to the Catholic faith or in pretending to be a 'good Catholic', acting as one, for 'peace of mind' *dla świętego spokoju,* to avoid stigmatization. [150] Mariusz remarked that Catholicism was a 'taboo subject', despite being a fairly common feature of people's lives before their involvement in Jewish sociality, religious practices and education. Becoming 'defined', *dookreślony*, enabled him to talk about it. This notion of 'defining' oneself evokes the issue of authentication, noted by Katarzyna Reszke (2007), and discussed in chapter six of my thesis. Nonetheless, the process of becoming positions 'authenticity' as something that is both achieved and overcome. Becoming, therefore, can alleviate anxiety about acknowledging the ruptures and ambiguities of belonging. The following quote from my conversation with Artur exemplifies that process:

> When traveling to Poland from Israel, I want to spend time mainly with my totally Polish-Christian colleagues and I do not in the least have the need to function as someone different, […] because I want to live normally, not to be someone special, because I did not grow up as someone special. I was always a boy from the hood, like my mates and that is how I intend to function; of course not hiding [being Jewish] at all. I was happy that all of my friends from Dzierżoniów came to Israel. They spend three weeks at our place and that automatically created an opportunity to show [them] this other side of me and my life. And suddenly, wow, because in Poland they were not aware of that, because it does not function on everyday basis.

Such ambiguities, which fall outside of any typologies, while at the same running deeper than nominal identifications and ascriptions, came to characterize the lives of the absolute majority of my research participants. What they had and have in common was that the passage of the 'revival' changed each of them in both a social and a deeply personal sense.

Becoming more self-assured in one's Jewish belonging, more knowledgeable, more perceptive of ambivalences and ambiguities, can also help in the confronting of

---

[150] As one of my Polish Jewish interlocutors, familiar with Bourdieu, unceremoniously nailed it, it is a form of symbolic violence that he felt first hand deciding whether his child would be the only one in class not to go to a Catholic "religion" (religious instruction) class in a state school.

imaginaries concerning Polish Jews, sometimes paired with 'erasure' of Polish Jewish post-war existence if it does not fit a political narrative or if it disrupts nostalgia. On one occasion, I was discussing with Daniel how the people of the 'first generation', *dziadki* (grandpas), were passing away and the synagogue was emptying. He joked that maybe for the benefit of tourists and foreign entrepreneurs we should install wooden figures of black clad clockwork Hassids[151] bowing mechanically. I realized, thanks to the time I had spent in his company, that he was not ridiculing the past he was so sensitive about, let alone *Hassidim*, but employing irony to express both his rising anxiety about the fate of the community and the orientalising gaze of many outsiders he has come across – tourists, researchers and entrepreneurs. By accentuating the present as opposed to stereotypical imaginaries of the past, he was reaffirming the validity and importance of his own belonging. This ironic distancing was symptomatic of his becoming more familiar with the vicissitudes of contemporary Jewish existence in Poland.

As I illustrated in chapter five, kinship, ancestral ties and 'shared fate' are the primary idioms through which Jewish belonging is rendered and justified in the Wrocław *gmina*, even if it is challenged by the new religious ontologies and ambiguities created by the third generation newcomers from intermarried families and converts. Becoming does not invalidate the veracity of such criteria of affiliation, but in the long run it disturbs boundaries present in Polish national mythologies (Zubrzycki, 2006; Zubrzycki, 2011), collective memories and imaginaries of the Polish-Jewish past in the Jewish diaspora (Lehrer, 2007; Kugelmass, 1996), and Israeli narratives of national identity (Feldman, 2008), and also, to a certain extent, the ethno-religious particularism embedded in some global agendas of 'revival' that I explored earlier. The outcomes of *becoming*, and 'revival' in the wider sense, do not correspond with visions of Polish Jewry, where it is either relegated to a safely discernible and exotic cultural Other or dispelled as a spectre of the haunted past. Whether on the local level this exemplifies the cosmopolitanization of Polish 'national identity', as Marius Gudonis argues, is debatable. While cosmopolitan tendencies emerge in large Polish cities (Kubicki, 2011), these processes are far from

---

[151] Ultra-Orthodox followers of a spiritual strain of Judaism originated in the 18th century in the Eastern reaches of the Kingdom of Poland, present day Ukraine (see e.g. Dynner, 2006). In the contemporary cultural imagination, both in Poland and abroad, Hassids became a popular idiom of Eastern European pre-war Jewishness and 'traditional' black-clad 'Jews', with sidelocks and beards are endlessly reproduced in Polish folk and tourist craft. See chapter four.

encompassing and persistent on a grand scale. What recent years exemplify is, rather, a considerable rise of ethno-nationalism and a polarization of Polish society, paired with fierce debate over Poland's history, future and nationhood, where a primordialist and exclusivist model is still a significant stakeholder (McManus et al., 2003; Zubrzycki, 2006). Rather than being solely the consequence of a radical change in the Polish sociocultural environment (particularly in respect to Jewishness), the transnational experience of becoming in itself necessitates a reframing of being Polish and Jewish. This reframing counters persistent exclusivist ontologies in order to accommodate the lived reality of the everyday and the complexity of choices faced by the third generation's parents and grandparents. In some instances, this may bring about a radical shift towards an exclusive self-identification, but in most cases, *becoming* elicits an acceptance of the ambivalent coexistence of these affinities.

In line with Biehl and Locke's arguments, becoming does not necessarily bring about a lasting change in self-identification, guarantee long-term communal involvement, or produce an unequivocal shift from one sense of affinity to another. It does, however, change the way people relate to their Jewish families and to themselves as being of mixed Jewish and non-Jewish ancestry; it influences how they accommodate Poland's *haunting* and their own place in contemporary Poland and the diaspora. In many ways, becoming fosters the emergence of new Polish Jewish subjectivities, regardless of whether the eventual outcome will be a Haredi living in the Mea Shearim district of Jerusalem or a Pole with a positive sense of Jewish belonging.

Chapter 9
Conclusions

Poland's political shift from socialism, symbolically demarcated by the year 1989, enabled political recognition of ethnic and religious minorities, and opened up public discourse and space to expressions of religious and cultural difference. The convergence of activities taken up by local Jewish organizations and global NGOs shaped the mainstream of Polish Jewish social life. Orthodox religiosity became the official face of Polish Jewry, while the ZGWŻ became its political representation and the legal heir to pre-war Jewish Communities. Criteria of belonging at ZGWŻ congregations, redefined in 1990s, allowed for the inclusion of people from intermarried families, those who considered Judaism as fundamental to being Jewish, and individuals wanting to become Jewish through conversion. It was primarily through the prism of experiences of people with ties to the Wrocław Jewish congregation that I conducted my research. I learned about their lives in the context of communal life in the *gmina*, the Wrocław Jewish Club and Jewish camps, seminars and conferences in Poland and abroad. My objective was to analyse sociality of being and becoming Jewish in contemporary Poland in the context of the post-1989 globalization of Polish Jewish institutions. I will now summarize the main findings of my research, its shortcomings and prospects for potential follow-up studies.

My initial argument was that contemporary Jewish sociality in Poland, in all dimensions of being Jewish in a socially meaningful sense is wrought in dynamic friction between different geographies of Jewish life. I assumed that the encounter of Jewish organizations and activists seeking to transform Jewish social and religious life, and global NGOs willing to support that venture in accordance with their own agendas, would have significant consequences for claims of Jewish belonging, communal participation and self-perception. I discovered that this is indeed the case, which would suggest regularity in regard to long-term effects of transnational 'revival' programmes in Central Eastern Europe, as noted by other scholars. The focus of my study allowed me to explore the localization of these efforts in much more detail than has been done until now. My analysis demonstrated that in every aspect these changes were informed by and confronted with historical and lived realities of being Jewish in Poland. Central to these realities is the experience of *haunting*: affects produced by ubiquitous cultural imaginaries of Jewish otherness, traumatic memories and everyday experiences of my research participants and their families outside the comfort zone of Jewish institutional space, which in turn inform strategies of identification and communal involvement. The point of departure of my analysis was to deconstruct a persistent illusion that experiences of the Jewish third generation and the post-1989 Jewish sociality have been dissociated from the prejudices against Jews and their exoticization in Poland.

Israeli and American Jewish NGOs, sponsors and activists operating on a global scale became active and influential stakeholders in the 'revival' by creating possibilities of Jewish socialization, funding particular strains of Judaism, introducing normative models of what constitutes 'proper' Jewish life, and sending emissaries who claimed local authority. That said, I found out that the NGOs active in Poland differed in their practical approach to supporting local Jewish efforts. Some have been working mostly through trained grassroots activists, while supplying blueprints and expertise. Organizations with a more chiselled denominational affiliation sent their emissaries and effectively positioned Orthodox Judaism as a monolithic and dominant model for Polish Jewish religiosity. The case of Wrocław illustrates the profound effect of transnational programmes of support, not in the sense of determining trajectories of individual lives, but by generating potentialities of being and becoming Jewish and introducing a new template of communal involvement and religious practice. In most cases, these new ideas mostly do not

replace sociality and Polish Jewish self-understanding informed by distinctively local affects, memories and experiences, but reterritorialize them in a heterogeneous assemblage. At the same time, the 'revival' normalized Modern Hebrew and religiosity as associated with Jewish future and cultural survival, and relegated Yiddish and left-wing secularism to the Polish Jewish past, to the extent that these futurities became taken for granted as inevitable and self-explanatory. The new ontologies of being and becoming Jewish, like religious conversion enabled by Lauder Foundation rabbis, categories of institutional membership mirroring the Israeli Law of Return, or Shavei Israel's notion of 'hidden Jews' and *zera Yisrael* created a more inclusive, if contentious model of Jewish belonging. In Wrocław, criteria espoused by Rabbi Rapoport sometimes went beyond the regulations introduced by the ZGWŻ in 1997, legitimizing the belonging of those whose claims to Jewish belonging were justified by traces of affinity rather than formalized 'proofs'. This indicates that the divisions and alliances in negotiation of Polish Jewish affiliation are often more complex than being simply reducible to the dichotomy of global and local. During my fieldwork, these new ontologies and modalities of Jewish sociality confronted historically generated perceptions, and to an equal degree the vestiges of earlier transnational projects and emissaries. The on-going friction these disparities generated between the congregants was a significant element of the *gmina*'s everyday sociality.

From my analysis it became apparent that *becoming*, that is personal transformations in institutional Jewish spaces, is fundamental to experiences of the post-socialist generation. Most young people first engage in organized Jewish life in their late teens or early adulthood. For the majority, this is the first opportunity for learning and kindling relationships with people of Jewish affiliation outside their immediate circle of family, or at all. *Gmina*, summer camps or Taglit-Birthright tours are the terrains of initiation into Judaism, cultural narratives and values normalized according to the religious and political affiliation of the organizing body. Consequently, the congregation and the *interzone* described in chapter seven are terrains of intense becoming through learning and socializing. This is reinforced by the fact that in the Polish Jewish case, institutions are virtually the sole depositories and disseminators of cultural knowledge, and also the dominant and often only sites of Jewish sociality for all but a fraction of Polish Jewish families.

Such ephemeral spaces and temporalities of Jewish socialization learning have been organized across the diaspora throughout the previous century. In Poland, however, the relatively narrow repertoire of cultural and educational activities at the *gmina* and the often stigmatizing status of Jewish origin turn camps, seminars and tours to an even greater extent into liminal spaces of Jewish sociality and initiation and, for some, cathartic experiences. These programmes of 'revitalization' are firmly grounded in the wider context of the contemporary Jewish diaspora, collective Jewish anxieties and hopes – but localized in Poland they attain particular gravity. Becoming is a cyclical collective experience, a template of initiation into Jewish sociality which has emerged as a form of Jewish sociality in itself. For a few, these intense passages turn into professional involvement in Jewish political activism or 'community-building' projects, while for many, a couple of years of intense becoming are followed by a redefining of their personal relationship to Jewishness and a diminishing involvement in formal organizations like the *gmina* or the Jewish Club. In any case, familiarity and intimacy established through these periods of intense sociality, along with the kindled sense of shared Jewish affinity often produce lasting interpersonal bonds hardly contained by a spatial location or institutional affiliation.

<p align="center">***</p>

The Polish Jewish context invites us to rethink processes associated with globalization: deterritorialization and reterritorialization. The globalization of Polish Jewish institutional spaces and communal life was anything but nomadic or unhampered. The proliferation of globally disseminated ontologies of belonging and modalities of religious practice was not so much a question of flows, as of *pipelines* that parcel, direct and control the traffic not only of people and funds, but also normative guidelines of being and becoming Jewish. The planned character of these transnational projects did not diminish their contestation, negotiation and adaptation in the process of reterriorialization. That conclusion not only confirms that flows, as Ulf Hannerz (1992) argues, are not free flowing and subject to economic and political inequalities, but it also indicates that such global dissemination of norms, values and cultural practices can be a deliberately engineered and controlled process informed by notions of ethnic and religious solidarity.

Furthermore, my research questions the notion of globalization as a dichotomy of homogenizing flows; it also interrogates 'cultural closure' and ethno-religious particularism as the reaction to such impact. The emergence of the global assemblage of revivalism and its localization in Poland illustrates how identity politics, cultural particularism and ethno-religious differentiation can be integral parts of transnational projects rather than local reactions to presumed global homogenization or tourism in search of 'authenticity'. American and Israeli projects of support and 'revitalization' combined with local Jewish social activism can be seen as a model example illustrating how global transformations can render the distinctions between 'homeland' and 'diaspora' increasingly problematic. My hypothesis that Polish Jewish 'revival' and contemporary sociality need to be situated in the global assemblage of transnational solidarities and efforts to counteract 'assimilation' proved correct. My research indicates that such projects cannot be attributed solely to the nation-state(s) and local Jewish communities. At least in Poland, and most likely post-socialist Europe, some of the main stakeholders in the 'Jewish revival' are global Jewish organizations, which are partners with, rather than subsidiaries of, the Israeli State. That would indicate, as I suggested in the introduction, that the global interconnectedness within the Jewish diaspora is becoming increasingly important for diasporic communities which, like the Polish one, are dependent on external support. Another crucial conclusion of my research is that such transnational connections, between the American Jewish diaspora, Israel and Polish Jewish organizations, mediated and enabled by global NGOs, are not an abstract network of dependencies, reserved to financial and political support. The reterritorialization of Polish Jewish sociality has been happening at the level of everyday life, through inter-personal interactions, and in conjured up transnational social spaces/temporalities of socialization and education. Another crucial consequence of the reterritorialization of the Jewish sociality into the interzone, additionally augmented by a coming of age mobility, was the emergence of a small translocal community, where people only know each other face-to-face. At the *Sof haDerech* Club it was as easy to hear recent gossip about Jewish individuals in Warsaw or Kraków as about Jewish Wrocławians – and the presence of social media further helps to sustain such long-distance relationships in between intermittent translocal gatherings. In fact, among many of the third generation, such translocal ties fostered in the interzone had preceded association with the Wrocław *gmina.*

226

Contemporary Poland is a touchstone of the growing interconnectedness of Jewish diasporas and Israel, but it also exemplifies the proliferation of Jewish intra-faith proselytism and the emergence of a class of transnational rabbis affiliated with economically and politically affluent NGOs. My research indicates that global intra-faith proselytism of Jewish religious 'renewal' in Eastern Europe is not confined to a distinct Hasidic movement of Chabad Lubavitch, but has been incorporated into the mainstream of Jewish life. One consequence of such a development in the context of striking disparity of power and religious authority is a challenge to the common understanding of Judaism where there are no transnational hierarchical structures and where rabbis draw their authority from the communities they work in. In connection with claims to supreme authority from the Israeli Chief Rabbinate that I discussed in chapter four, this phenomenon may have far reaching implications. Having said that, the global support and religious emissaries were, if not unanimously, then widely, welcomed in Poland as teachers and guides on the path of being Jewish focused on cultural traditions, religious observance and communal activism. Together with local actors, they were expected to strengthen the collective sense of commonality and connectedness. Therefore, disentangling the boundary between local and global entrepreneurs and activists may sometimes be difficult, especially because in many instances programmes of conversion and knowledge dissemination were adapted to personal and communal needs rather than simply adopted.

The creation of a new religious infrastructure and normative environment with foreign religious emissaries sponsored by affluent global organizations, finds its parallels in the contemporary global proselytism of revivalist Christian denominations (e.g. Coleman, 2000; Robbins, 2004), as well as tendencies observable in a world-wide proliferation of global Islamic movements (e.g. Badru, 2006; Meijer, 2009). The focus of my research does not allow me to draw far reaching comparisons between these epiphenomena. The Polish Jewish context should not, however, be seen as an isolated case, detached from globalized religious movements in the contemporary world.

Admittedly, my inquiry does not investigate the transnational lives of Polish Jewish third-generation migrants in Israel and in the United Kingdom. The primary reason is the lack of space; the secondary, the fact that the number of third generation migrants from Wrocław living in Israel and fitting my research criteria turned out to be considerably small. Any analytical generalizations about their social experiences

would require either changing my research criteria and the scope of the project or taking the considerable risk that new reflections would have be incorporated at the expense of topics crucial for understanding the wider context of Polish Jewish sociality. I do understand the shortcomings of the thesis in that respect, and, accordingly, have tried to incorporate some of the specificity of migrants' experiences into my general reflection. Another area which I could not extensively address was the cultural production that used to be largely autonomous from the *gmina*'s social life, at least during my fieldwork and in recent years. The third phenomenon which deserves further study is the relation between Jewish sociality and the appearance of Progressive Jewish Movement congregations in Kraków and Warsaw, marginalized politically, but creating new pathways of Jewish being and becoming. An investigation of the social resonance of the Chabad Lubavitch emissaries in these two cities would bring new insights into the global dimension of contemporary Polish Jewish religiosity.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In time, every ethnography turns into history. It falls out of sync with the lives of its protagonists the moment we return from the field, even if, from anthropologist's perspective, the personal experiences we write about come to exemplify recurrent patterns or longitudinal processes concerning a wider collectivity. In my film and thesis I have tried to capture the dynamism and ambivalence of Polish Jewish experiences. These dynamics have not changed. In many ways, however, my research participants' lives followed trajectories apparent at the time of my fieldwork, even if never in the exact way they had imagined.

Daniel moved to Israel to continue his studies, suddenly decided to 'come out' as gay, and shifted towards a more personal and non-denominational Jewish religiosity. Magda became one of the leading figures in the Wrocław Jewish Community and an important Jewish educator. Sebastian finished his conversion before a Reformed Beit Din in Berlin and moved, with Paulina and their daughter, to Warsaw. Szymon, as I saw a few months ago, managed to cross the shadow-line of trust and familiarity, becoming tangibly more accepted by the second generation members and apparently more and more drawn into his work career. Rabbi Rapoport returned to Israel. He was succeeded by another Israeli rabbi, Shmuel Rosenberg,

who brought another personality and stance to his role in the congregation. Rosenberg, in turn, was replaced by another expat rabbi, Tyson Herberger, in 2013. In 2012 the *gmina* witnessed the passing away of its leader, Józef Kożuch. Aleksander Gleichgewicht, the current chairman, seems keen on supporting the efforts of local activists and, as he told me, wishes to give the *gmina* back its political independence. The circle of 'grandpas' grows smaller as local legends of the community are passing away, while the breakup of the Lauder Etz Chaim in 2012 into two competitive schools resulted in a surge of Jewish children in the Sunday school under Magda's supervision. In the summer of 2012, the *gmina*, at the initiative of Magda and new young volunteers, began to organize huge Shabbats in the grand synagogue once a month, turning them almost into holidays, and gathering crowds which previously were only seen on special occasions like Purim or Chanukah. I was told of a new 'atmosphere' and 'possibility' for change. The predicaments, hopes, stark realities of the *gmina* and the *interzone* with its new projects and time-spaces are tangibly present – even since my main fieldwork, many of the Jewish Club members have been replaced by new people entering into adulthood and intense Jewish sociality and becoming.

Bibliography

Aarhus Universitet (2012) *Professor Rane Willerslev: "Interdisciplinarity is crucial for the development of excellence"*. Available at: http://vimeo.com/40721619 (Accessed 26 May 2013).

Aberbach, D. (2009) 'Patriotism and Antisemitism: The Crisis of Polish Jewish Identity between the Wars' in Teller, A., Teter, M. & Polonsky, A. (eds.) *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 22, Social and Cultural Boundaries in Pre-Modern Poland.* Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, pp. 368-388.

Abu-Lughod, J. L. (1989) *Before European hegemony: the world system A. D. 1250-1350.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Abu-Lughod, L. (1997) The Interpretation of Culture(s) after Television, *Representations*, 59, Summer 1997, pp. 109-134.

Ackerman, W. (1993) 'A World Apart. Hebrew Teachers Colleges and Hebrew Speaking Camps' in Mintz, A. L. (ed.) *Hebrew in America : perspectives and prospects.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, pp. 105-128.

Agamben, G. (1998) *Homo sacer : sovereign power and bare life.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Amit, V. (2002) 'An anthropology without community?' in Amit, V. & Rapport, N. (ed.) *The trouble with community : anthropological reflections on movement, identity and collectivity.* London: Pluto, pp. 13-66.

Amsalem, C. (n.d.) *Zera Yisrael. Introduction.* Available at: http://www.bmj.org.il/free_page_en/1/36 (Accessed 23 January 2013).

Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined communities : reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* London: Verso.

Antoniades, A. (2005) *Domestic structures and everyday life in the communication of hegemonic discourses: the case of globalisation in Greece and Ireland.* London: University of London.

Appadurai, A. (1995) 'The production of locality' in Fardon, R. (ed.) *Counterworks: managing the diversity of knowledge.* London: Routledge, pp. 204-225.

Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Appadurai, A. (2003) 'Sovereignty without Territoriality: Notes for a Postnational Geography' in Low, S. M. & Lawrence-Zuniga, D. (eds.) *The anthropology of space and place : locating culture.* Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 337-350.

Arendt, H. & Kohn, J. (1994) *Essays in understanding, 1930-1954.* New York, Harcourt: Brace & Co.

Arnett, J. J. (2000) 'Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties', *American Psychologist,* 55(5)**,** pp. 469-480.

Auge, M. (1995) *Non-places : introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity.* London: Verso.

Aviv, C. & Shneer, D. (2005) *New Jews: the end of the Jewish diaspora.* New York: New York University Press.

Atlas Sztuki (2009) *Exhibition Catalogue no 37*. Łódź: Atlas Sztuki.

Badru, P. (2006) *The spread of Islam in West Africa : colonization, globalization, and the emergence of fundamentalism.* Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1968) *Rabelais and his world,* Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press.

Banks, M. (1997) 'Introduction' in Banks, M. & Morphy, H. (eds.) *Rethinking visual anthropology.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Barber, B. R. (1996) *Jihad vs. McWorld.* New York: Ballantine Books.

Barclay, J. M. G. (1996) *Jews in the Mediterranean diaspora: from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE - 117 CE).* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Barth, F. (1983) *Sohar : culture and society in an Omani town.* Baltimore, MD; London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Barth, F. (1998) *Ethnic groups and boundaries : the social organization of culture difference.* Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Barthes, R. (1981) *Camera lucida : reflections on photography.* New York: Hill and Wang.

Bauman, Z. (1998) ‚Allosemitsm. Premodern, Modern, Postmodern' in Cheyette, B. & Marcus, L. (eds.) *Modernity, culture and 'the Jew'.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. (2000) *Liquid modernity.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beck, U. (2006) *The cosmopolitan vision.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bella Szwarcman-Czarnota, Piotr Kadlcik & Paziński, P. (2010) '20 lat Fundacji Ronalda S. Laudera i dwie dekady żydowskiej odnowy w Polsce', *Midrasz,* 3, pp. 9-15.

Belliappa, J. (2009) *Relational Identities: Middle Class Indian Women Negotiate the Consequences of Globalization and Late Modernity*. York: University of York.

Benjamin, W. (1996) *Selected writings, vol.2.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

Berger, A. L.,Cargas, H. J. & Nowak, S. E. (eds.) (2004) *The continuing agony : from the Carmelite convent to the crosses at Auschwitz.* Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Bergson, H. (1995) *Time and free will : an essay on the immediate data of consciousness.* Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing

Berman, E. (2009) 'Voices of Outreach: The Construction of Identity and Maintenance of Social Ties Among Chabad-Lubavitch Emissaries', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion,* 48**,** 69-85.

Biale, D. (2007) *Blood and belief : the circulation of a symbol between Jews and Christians.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Biehl, J. & Locke, P. (2010) 'Deleuze and the Anthropology of Becoming', *Current Anthropology,* 51, pp. 317-351.

Biehl, J. O., Good, B. & Kleinman, A. (eds.) (2007) *Subjectivity : ethnographic investigations.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Bilder der Welt und Inschrift des Krieges (1989) Film. Directed by Harun Farocki. Berlin: Harun Farocki Filmproduktion.

Birthrightisrael.com (2013) *Taglit - Birthright Israel – Eligibility*. Available at: http://www.birthrightisrael.com/VisitingIsrael/Pages /Eligibility.aspx (Accessed 4 Aug 2013).

Blobaum, R. (2005) *Antisemitism and its opponents in modern Poland.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; Bristol: University Presses Marketing.

Boehm, Y. (2007) ‚Horah' in Skolnik, F. & Berenbaum, M. (eds.) *Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol. 9.* 2nd ed. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House.

Boellstorff, T. (2008) *Coming of age in second life: an anthropologist explores the virtually human.* Princeton, NJ; Woodstock: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1979) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) The forms of capital. *In:* Richardson, J. G. (ed.) *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, L. (1992) *An invitation to reflexive sociology.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Boyarin, D. & Boyarin, J. (1993) 'Diaspora: generation and the ground of Jewish identity'*, Critical Inquiry,*19(4) , pp. 693-725.

Bratislava Report (2004) *Short report from the Local Leadership seminar in Bratislava (Polish group).* American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Brennan, T. (2004) *The transmission of affect.* Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press.

Bresson, R. (1977) *Notes on cinematography.* New York:Urizen Books; London: Pluto Press.

Brilling, B. (2007) 'Breslau' in Skolnik, F. & Berenbaum, M. (eds.) *Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol. 4.* 2nd ed. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House.

Brink-Danan, M. (2011) *Jewish life in 21st-century Turkey : the other side of tolerance.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Brink-Danan, M. (2012) 'Rethinking Categories and Challenging Futures' in Goldberg, H. E., Cohen, S. M. & Kopelowitz, E. (eds.) *Dynamic belonging : contemporary Jewish collective identities.* New York: Berghahn Books.

Bronsztejn, S. (1993) *Z dziejów ludności żydowskiej na Dolnym Śląsku po II wojnie światowej.* Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.

Brubaker, R. (2004) *Ethnicity without groups.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brubaker, R. & Cooper, F. (2000) 'Beyond 'identity'', *Theory and Society*, 29**,** pp. 1-47.

Buchanan, I. (2010) *A dictionary of critical theory.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buckser, A. (2002) *After the rescue : Jewish identity and community in contemporary Denmark.* New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Buckser, A. (2003) 'Social Conversion and Group Definition in Jewish Copenhagen' in Buckser, A. & Glazier, S. D. (eds.) *The anthropology of religious conversion.* Lanham, MD; Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.

Buckser, A. (2005) 'Chabad in Copenhagen: Fundamentalism and Modernity in Jewish Denmark', *Ethnology,* 44, pp. 125-145.

Bunzl, M. (2004) *Symptoms of modernity: Jews and queers in late-twentieth-century Vienna.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Burawoy, M. (2000) *Global ethnography: forces, connections, and imaginations in a postmodern world.* Berkeley,CA: University of California Press.

Burrell, K. (ed.) (2009) *Polish migration to the UK in the 'new' European Union : after 2004.* Farnham: Ashgate.

Burroughs, W. S. (2001) *Naked lunch.* London: Flamingo.

Burroughs, W. S. (2009) *Interzone.* London: Penguin Classics.

Burrows, I. (2005) 'The Experience and the Object: Making a Documentary Video Installation' in Grimshaw, A. & Ravetz, A. (eds.) *Visualizing anthropology.* Bristol: Intellect.

Cahalen Schneider, D. (2006) *Being goral : identity politics and globalization in postsocialist Poland.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Cała, A. & Datner-Śpiewak, H. (1997) *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce, 1944-1968: teksty źródłowe.* Warszawa: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny.

Cała, A., Koźmińska-Frejlak, E., Paziński, P., Pragier, R. And Szwarcman-Czarnota, B. (2006) 'Koza ze styropianu, pejsy z pakuł', *Midrasz*, 3, pp. 9-12.

Carsten, J. (2000) 'Introduction: cultures of relatedness' in Carsten, J. (ed.) *Cultures of relatedness : new approaches to the study of kinship.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Carter, E., Donald, J. & Squires, J. (1993) *Space and place : theories of identity and location.* London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Chau, A. Y. (2005) *Miraculous response: Doing popular religion in contemporary China.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Chill, A. (1979) *The minhagim : the customs and ceremonies of Judaism, their origins and rationale.* New York: Sepher-Hermon Press.

Ciesielski, B. & Ciesielska, D. (2013) *Żydowskie edukacyjno-wypoczynkowe obozy Fundacji Laudera.* Available at: http://obozylaudera.lauder.lodz.pl/ (Accessed 16 May 2013).

Ciszewska, A. (2010) *Polscy uczestnicy w programie Taglit Birthright Israel. Założenia, realizacja, funkcje.* MA thesis, Warsaw: University of Warsaw.

Chronique d'un été. (1961) Film. Directed by Jean Rouch. Paris: Argos Films.

Clifford, J. (1997) 'Museums as Contact Zones' in Clifford, J. (ed.) *Routes : travel and translation in the late twentieth century.* Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, E. (2008) *Youth tourism to Israel : educational experiences of the diaspora.* Clevedon: Channel View.

Cohen, M. (1993) *Profane illumination: Walter Benjamin and the Paris of surrealist revolution.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Cohen, R. (1997) *Global diasporas : an introduction.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Cohen, S. J. (1999) *The beginnings of Jewishness : boundaries, varieties, uncertainties.* Berkeley,CA; London: University of California Press.

Cohen, S. M. (1990) *Israel-Diaspora Relations: A Survey of American Jewish Leaders.* Available: http://www.bjpa.org/ Publications/ details.cfm?Publication ID=348 (Accessed 5 March 2013).

Cohn-Sherbok, D. (2003) *Judaism : history, belief, and practice.* London: Routledge.

Coleman, S. (2000) *The globalisation of charismatic Christianity : spreading the gospel of prosperity.* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Collier, J. & Collier, M. (1986) *Visual anthropology : photography as a research method.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Conger, G. P. (1922) *Theories of Macrocosms and Microcosms in the History of Philosophy.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Cooper, F. (2005) *Colonialism in question: theory, knowledge, history*. Berkeley,CA: University of California Press.

Cooper, S. (1987) 'The Laws of Mixture. The Anthropological Study in Halakhah' in Goldberg, H. E. (ed.) *Judaism viewed from within and from without : anthropologica studies.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Corrigan, T. (2011) *The essay film : from Montaigne, after Marker*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cukras-Stelągowska, J. (2003) 'Młodzi Żydzi w Polsce. Socjologiczna analiza tożsamości społeczno-kulturowej', *Etnografia Polska*, 47(1-2), pp. 247-266.

Cukras-Stelągowska, J. (2008) 'Żydzi - tożsamość wobec zmiany' in Żyndul, J. (ed.) *Różni razem. Młodzi polscy naukowcy o Żydach.* Warszawa: WUW.

Cukras-Stelągowska, J. (2012) *Tożsamość w dialogu. Polacy i Żydzi w szkołach Fundacji Ronalda Laudera.* Toruń: Wyd. Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika.

Das, V. (2007) *Life and words : violence and the descent into the ordinary.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Datner, H. & Melchior, M. (1997) 'Żydzi we współczesnej Polsce' in Krucz, Z. (ed.) *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce.* Wrocław: Uniwersytet Wrocławski.

Deutsch, N. (2009) 'The Forbidden Fork, the Cell Phone Holocaust, and Other Haredi Encounters with Technology', *Contemporary Jewry,* 29, pp. 3-19.

Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. L. (1987) *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Dodziuk, A. (2010) *Druga dusza: o dwudziestu Festiwalach Kultury Żydowskiej w Krakowie.* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Czarna Owca.

Dynner, G. 2006. *Men of silk : the Hasidic conquest of Polish Jewish Society.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eco, U. (1989) *The open work.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Egorova, Y. (2013) *The Jews of Andhra Pradesh : contesting caste and religion in South India.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ehrlich, U. (2007) ,Amidah' in Fred Skolnik, M. B. (ed.) *Encyclopaedia Judaica.* 2nd ed. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd. .

Eisler, J. (2006) *Polski rok 1968.* Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej - Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu.

Enfield, N. J. & Levinson, S. C. (2006) *Roots of human sociality: Culture, cognition and interaction.* Oxford: Berg.

Engel, D. (1998) 'Patterns of Anti-Jewish Violence in Poland, 1944-1946', *Yad Vashem Studies,* 26, pp. 43-85.

Engelking, B. (2011) *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień ... Losy Żydów szukających ratunku na wsi polskiej 1942-1945.* Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów.

Englard, I. (1987) 'Law and Religion in Israel', *The American Journal of Comparative Law,* 35, pp. 185-208.

Fabian, J. (1983) *Time and the other: how anthropology makes its object.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Falzon, M. A. (2009) *Multi-sited ethnography: theory, praxis and locality in contemporary research.* Farnham: Ashgate.

Feiner, S. (2004) *The Jewish enlightenment.* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Feld, S. 1991. *Voices of the Rainforest: A Day In The Life Of The Kaluli People.* Salem, MA: Rykodisc CD 10173.

Feld, S. & Brenneis, D. (2004) 'Doing anthropology in sound', *American Ethnologist,* 31, pp. 461-474.

Feldman, J. (2002) 'Marking the Boundaries of the Enclave: Defining the Israeli Collective Through the Poland 'Experience', *Israel Studies,* 7, pp. 84-114.

Feldman, J. (2008) *Above the death pits, beneath the flag : youth voyages to Poland and the performance of the Israeli National identity.* New York: Berghahn Books.

Ferguson, H. (2004) *Protecting children in time : child abuse, child protection, and the consequences of modernity.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ferguson, J. (2002) 'Of Mimicry and Membership: Africans and the "New World Society"', *Cultural Anthropology,* 17, pp. 551-569.

Ferguson, J. (2006) *Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fine, L. (2011) 'New Approaches to the Study of Kabbalistic Life in 16th-Century Safed' in Greenspahn, F. E. (ed.) *Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah : new insights and scholarship.* New York: New York University Press.

Finkelman, Y. (2002) 'Haredi Isolation in Changing Environments: A Case Study in Yeshiva Immigration', *Modern Judaism,* 22, pp. 61-82.

Fishman J. & Fishman D. (1974) 'Yiddish In Israel: A Case-Study Of Efforts To Revise A Monocentric Language Policy', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 1, pp. 125–46

Fiske, A. P. (1992) 'The four elementary forms of sociality: framework for a unified theory of social relations' *Psychological review,* 99, pp. 689-723.

Forest of Bliss. 1986. Film. Directed by Robert Gardner. Watertown,MA: Documentary Educational Resources.

Fortier, A.-M. (2000) *Migrant belongings : memory, space and identity.* Oxford: Berg.

Foucault, M.,Martin, L. H.,Gutman, H. & Hutton, P. H. (eds.) (1988) *Technologies of the self : a seminar with Michel Foucault,* London: Tavistock.

Freeland, W. (1976) 'Pathogens and the evolution of primate sociality', *Biotropica,* 8, pp. 12-24.

Freund, M. (2008) 'Chairman's Message', *Roots - Shavei Israel Newsletter,* Fall 2008, p. 5.

Gammeltoft, T. (2007) 'Sonography and sociality: Obstetrical ultrasound imaging in urban Vietnam', *Medical Anthropology Quarterly,* 21, pp. 133-153.

Gans, H. (1979) 'Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2(1), pp. 1-20.Gebert, K. (1994) 'Jewish Identities in Poland, New, Old and Imaginary' in Webber, J. (ed.) *Jewish identities in the new Europe.* London: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization.

Gebert, K. (2008) *Living in the land of ashes.* Kraków; Budapest: Austeria Publishing House.

Geertz, C. (1988) *Works and lives : the anthropologist as author.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Geertz, C. (2000) 'Religion as a cultural system' in Geertz, C. (ed.) *The interpretation of cultures : selected essays.* New York: Basic Books.

Giddens, A. (1990) *The consequences of modernity.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and self-identity : self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. & Pierson, C. (1998) *Conversations with Anthony Giddens: making sense of modernity.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Gilman, S. L. (1985) *Difference and pathology : stereotypes of sexuality, race, and madness.* Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press.

Ginsburg, F. D., Abu-Lughod, L. & Larkin, B. (eds.) (2002) *Media worlds: anthropology on new terrain.* Berkeley,CA; London: University of California Press.

Glick-Schiller, N. & Fouron, G. E. (1999) 'Terrains of blood and nation: Haitian transnational social fields', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 22, pp. 340-366.

Golbert, R. (2001) 'Transnational orientations from home: Constructions of Israel and transnational space among Ukrainian Jewish youth', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 27, pp. 713-731.

Gordon, A. (2008) *Ghostly matters : haunting and the sociological imagination.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Gorny, Y. (2009) 'Is the Jewish transnational diaspora still unique?' in Ben Rafael, E. & Sternberg, Y. (eds.) *Transnationalism : diasporas and the advent of a new (dis)order.* Boston: Brill.

Gould, D. B. (2009) *Moving politics : emotion and act up's fight against AIDS.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Grabowski, J. (2011) *Judenjagd : polowanie na Żydów 1942-1945: studium dziejów pewnego powiatu.* Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów.

Grabski A. (1997) 'Współczesne życie religijne Żydów w Polsce' in August Grabski A. , Pisarski M. & Stankowski A. (eds.) *Studia z dziejów i kultury Żydów w Polsce po 1945 r.* Warsaw: Trio.

Grabski, A. & Berendt, G. (2003) *Między emigracja a trwaniem: syjonisci i komuniści żydowscy w Polsce po Holocauscie.* Warszawa: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny.

Grimshaw, A. (2005) 'Eyeing the Field: New Horizons for Visual Anthropology' in Grimshaw, A. & Ravetz, A. (eds.) *Visualizing anthropology.* Bristol, UK: Intellect.

Grimshaw, A. (2011) 'THE BELLWETHER EWE: Recent Developments in Ethnographic Filmmaking and the Aesthetics of Anthropological Inquiry', *Cultural Anthropology,* 26, pp. 247-262.

Grimshaw, A. & Ravetz, A. (2005) *Visualizing anthropology.* Bristol, UK: Intellect.

Gross, J. T. (2001) *Neighbors : the destruction of the Jewish community in Jedwabne.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gross, J. T. (2006) *Fear: anti-semitism in Poland after Auschwitz : an essay in historical interpretation.* New York: Random House.

Gross, J. T. & Grudzińska-Gross, I. (2011) *Złote żniwa : rzecz o tym, co się działo na obrzeżach zagłady Żydów.* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak.

Gruber, R. E. (2002) *Virtually Jewish : reinventing Jewish culture in Europe.* Berkeley,CA; London: University of California Press.

Gruber, R. (2011) *Never Better' in Kraków?* Available at: http://www.jta.org/2011 /06/15/life-religion/never-better-in-Kraków (Accessed 17 Jul 2013).

Gudonis, M. (2001a) 'Constructing Jewish identity in post-communist Poland. Part 1: 'deassimilation without depolonization'', *East European Jewish Affairs,* 31(1), pp. 1-14.

Gudonis, M. (2001b) 'Constructing Jewish identity in post-communist Poland. Part 2: Symbolic Jewishness or cosmopolitan Polishness?', *East European Jewish Affairs,* 31(2), pp. 42-54.

Gudonis, M. (2003) 'Particularizing the Universal: New Polish Jewish Identities and a New Framework of Analysis' in Gitelman, Z. Y., Kosmin, B. A. & Kovács, A. (eds.) *New Jewish identities : contemporary Europe and beyond.* Budapest; New York: Central European University Press.

Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (1997) 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference' in Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (eds.) *Culture, power, place: explorations in critical anthropology.* Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press.

G.U.S. (2002) *Wyniki Narodowego Spisu Powszechnego Ludności i Mieszkań 2002 w zakresie deklarowanej narodowości oraz języka używanego w domu.* Available at: http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/raport_z_wynik ow_nsp_ludnosci_i_mieszkan_2002.pdf (Accessed 19 April 2013).

G.U.S. (2013) *Przynależność narodowo-etniczna ludności – wyniki spisu ludności i mieszkań 2011.* Available at:http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus /Przynaleznosc_narodowo-etniczna_w_2011_NSP.pdf (Accessed 19 April 2013).

Gutman, I. & Krakówski, S. (1986) *Unequal victims : Poles and Jews during World War Two.* New York: Holocaust Library.

Guyer, J. I. (2007) 'Prophecy and the near future: Thoughts on macroeconomic, evangelical, and punctuated time', *American Ethnologist,* 34, pp. 409-421.

Haakanson, S., Jr. (2001) 'Can there be such a thing as a native anthropologist?' in Crowell, A., Steffian, A. & Pullar, G. (eds.) *Looking both ways.* Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.

Habib, J. 2004. *Israel, diaspora, and the routes of national belonging,* Toronto; Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press.

Hall, S. (2003) 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' in Braziel, J. E. & Mannur, A. (eds.) *Theorizing diaspora.* Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell.

Hannerz, U. (1992) *Cultural complexity : studies in the social organization of meaning.* New York; Oxford: Columbia University Press.

Hannerz, U. (1996) *Transnational connections : culture, people, places.* London; New York: Routledge

Harvey, D. (1989) *The condition of postmodernity : an enquiry into the origins of cultural change.* Cambridge, MA; Oxford: Blackwell.

Heller, C. S. (1994) *On the edge of destruction : Jews of Poland between the two World Wars.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Henrich, J., Boyd, R., Bowles, S., Camerer, C., Fehr, E. & Gintis, H. (eds.) (2004) *Foundations of human sociality: Economic experiments and ethnographic evidence from fifteen small-scale societies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Henley, P. (2004a) 'Observational cinema as practical ethnography' in Pink, S., KüRti, L. S. & Afonso, A. I. (eds.) *Working images : visual research and representation in ethnography.* London: Routledge.

Henley, P. (2004b) 'Putting film to work. Observational cinema as practical ethnography' in Pink, S., Kürti, L. & Afonso, A. I. (eds.) *Working images : visual research and representation in ethnography.* London: Routledge.

Henley, P. (2006) 'Spirit possession, power, and the absent presence of Islam: reviewing Les maîtres fous', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 12, pp. 731-761.

Hertz, A. (1988) *The Jews in Polish culture.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.Hess, S. (2009) *Person and Place: Ideas, Ideals and Practice of Sociality on Vanua Lava, Vanuatu.* Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Hirsch, M. (2012) *The generation of postmemory : writing and visual culture after the Holocaust.* New York; Chichester: Columbia University Press.

Histoire(s) du cinéma. 1988-1998. Film. Directed by Jean-Luc Godard. Paris: Gaumont.

Hockings, P. (ed.) (1975) *Principles of visual anthropology.* The Hague: Mouton.

Hodgkin, K. & Radstone, S. (2002) *Regimes of memory.* London: Routledge.

Hofman, N. G. (2006) *Renewed survival: Jewish community life in Croatia.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Inda, J. X. & Rosaldo, R. (2008) *The anthropology of globalization: a reader.* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Ingold, T. (1991) 'Becoming persons: Consciousness and sociality in human evolution', *Cultural dynamics,* 4, pp. 355-378.

Irwin-Zarecka, I. (1989) *Neutralizing memory : the Jew in contemporary Poland.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Isaacs, R. H. (2008) *Siddur Kabbalat Shabbat.* Jersey City, NJ: Ktav Pub Inc.

Ixok-Woman. 1990. Film. Directed by Wilma Kiener & Dieter Matzka. Matzka-Kiener Filmproduktion.

Jachter, H. (2002) *Limitations on Honoring Parents and Honoring Minhagim - Kol Torah.* Available at: http://koltorah.org/ravj/Limitations%20on%20Hono ring%20Parents%20and%20Honoring%20Minhagim.htm (Accessed 16 September 2011).

Jacobs, J. L. (2009) *Bundist counterculture in interwar Poland.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Jacoby, W. (2008) 'Minority traditions and postcommunist politics' in Orenstein, M. A., Bloom, S. R. & Lindstrom, N. (eds.) *Transnational actors in Central and East European transitions.* Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Jagodzińska, A. (2008) *Pomiędzy : akulturacja Żydów Warszawy w drugiej połowie XIX wieku.* Wrocław: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.

Janion, M. (1991) *Projekt krytyki fantazmatycznej : szkice o egzystencjach ludzi i duchów.* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PEN.

Janion, M. (2009) *Bohater, spisek, śmierć : wykłady żydowskie.* Warszawa: Wydawn. W.A.B.

Jarco, M. (1998) 'Telefon zaufania', *Wprost,* 50(837) [Online]. Available at: http://www.wprost.pl/ar/6925/Telefon-zaufania/?I=837 (Accessed 13 Jan 2013).

Jaworska, B. & Wysocki, T. (2004) 'Rabin zanadto reformowany', *Polityka,* 2470/18 September, pp. 94-97

Jay, P. 2013. *Rabbi Michael Schudrich on the opportunity for renewed Jewish life in Poland.* Available at: http://www.jewishtimesasia.org/one-to-one-topmenu-45/rabbi-michael-issue-december (Accessed 17 Jul 2013).

JDC Hungary (2005) *7th International Youth Education Seminar, 2005, Szarvas, Hungary. International Madrich Training - info pack: "The World Stands on Three Things: Hadracha, Knowledge and You!".* Hungary: Lauder – Joint International Jewish Youth Summer Camp in Szarvas.

Jenkins, R. (1996) *Social identity.* London: Routledge.

Jenkins, R. (2008) *Rethinking ethnicity.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Joselit, J. W., Mittelman, K. S. (eds.) (1993) *A Worthy use of summer: Jewish summer camping in America.* Philadelphia: National Museum of American Jewish History.

Kanh-Harris, K. & Gidley, B. (2012) 'From Security to Insecurity. British Jewish Communal Leadership in the Context of Multiculturalism' in Goldberg, H. E., Cohen, S. M. & Kopelowitz, E. (eds.) *Dynamic belonging : contemporary Jewish collective identities.* New York: Berghahn Books.

Kelner, S. (2010) *Tours that bind : diaspora, pilgrimage, and Israeli birthright tourism.* New York: New York University Press.

Kichler, J. (2009) 'Gmina Żydowska we Wrocławiu i jej rabini'in Woźniakowski, T. (ed.) *Oblicza Wrocławia. Historia, kultura, rozwój.* Wrocław: NOVA.

Kiener, W. (2008) 'The Absent and the Cut', *Visual Anthropology,* 21, pp. 393-409.Kijek, K. (2009) 'Polska akulturacja, żydowski nacjonalizm? Paradygmat akulturacji bez asymilacji a świadomość polityczna międzywojennej młodzieży żydowskiej na podstawie autobiografii YIVO' in Zieliński, K. (ed.) *Wokół asymilacji i akulturacji Żydów na Ziemiach Polskich.* Lublin:UMCS

Kijek, K. (2010) 'Między integracją, a wykluczeniem. Doświadczenie szkolne jako czynnik socjalizacji politycznej młodzieży żydowskiej w Polsce okresu międzywojennego'in Lompart, A. (ed.) *Jednostka zakorzeniona, wykorzeniona? Metafora w socjologii.* Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.

Konwicki, T. (1992) *Bohin Manor,* London: Faber.

Kovács, A. (2003) 'Jewish Groups and Identity Strategies in Post-Communist Hungary' in Gitelman, Z. Y., Kosmin, B. A. & Kovács, A. (eds.) *New Jewish identities : contemporary Europe and beyond.* Budapest; New York: Central European University Press.

Krajewski, S. (2000) Nareszcie. *Midrasz,* 7/8 [Online]. Available at: http://www.midrasz.home.pl/2000/lip/lip00_10.html (Accessed 17 March 2013).

Krajewski, S. (2010) *Nasza żydowskość.* Kraków: Wydawn. Austeria.

Kristeva, J. (1982) *Powers of horror: an essay on abjection.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Kruger, S. F. (2006) *The spectral Jew : conversion and embodiment in medieval Europe*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Kubicki, P. (2011) *Nowi mieszczanie w nowej Polsce.* Warszawa: Instytut Obywatelski.

Kugelmass, J. (1995) 'Bloody Memories: Encountering the Past in Contemporary Poland', *Cultural Anthropology,* 10, pp. 279-301.

Kugelmass, J. (1996) 'Missions to the Past: Poland in contemporary Jewish Thought and Deed' in Antze, P. & Lambek, M. (eds.) *Tense past : cultural essays in trauma and memory.* New York: Routledge, pp. 199-214.

Kugelmass, J. (2012) ''I'm a Gentile!' Border Dramas and Jewish Continuity' in Goldberg, H. E., Cohen, S. M. & Kopelowitz, E. (eds.) *Dynamic belonging : contemporary Jewish collective identities.* New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 223-236.

Kurz, I. 2012. 'Harun Farocki. Ostrość widzenia' in *Dwutygodnik, 86* [Online]. Available at: http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/3760-harun-farocki-ostroscwidzenia. html [Accessed 3 January 2013].

Kymlicka, W. (2005) 'National Minorities in Post-Communist Europe: The Role of International Norms and European Integration' in Barany, Z. D. & Moser, R. G. (eds.) *Ethnic politics after communism.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 191-217.

Langer, R. 2007. 'Liturgy' in SKOLNIK, F. & BERENBAUM, M. (Eds.) *Encyclopaedia Judaica, vol. 13.* 2nd ed. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House.

Lazar, M. & Konovic, I. (2005) *ISRAEL…Heart, Mind and Soul. Educational and Activity Source Book for Madrichim.* Hungary: Lauder – Joint International Jewish Youth Summer Camp in Szarvas.

Le Goff, J. (2004) *Un long moyen âge,* Paris: Tallandier.

Lehrer, E. (2003) 'Repopulating Jewish Poland - In Wood', *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry,* 16, pp. 335-355.

Lehrer, E. (2007) 'Bearing false witness? Vicarious Jewish identity and the politics of affinity' in Glowacka, D. & Zylinska, J. (eds.) *Imaginary neighbors : mediating Polish-Jewish relations after the Holocaust.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, pp. 84-109

Les maîtres fous. 1955. Film. Directed by Jean Rouch. Paris: Films de la Pleiade.

Levine, C. J. (2013) *Interview: Chaim Amsalem* [Online]. Available at: http://www.hadassahmagazine.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=twI6LmN7 IzF&b=6725377&ct=10859245&notoc=1 (Accessed 23 January 2013).

Lev Ari, L. & Mittelberg, D. (2008) ,Between Authenticity and Ethnicity: Heritage Tourism and Re-ethnification Among Diaspora Jewish Youth', *Journal of Heritage Tourism,* 3, pp. 79 - 103.

Levy, D. & Weiss, Y. (2002) *Challenging ethnic citizenship : German and Israeli perspectives on immigration.* New York; Oxford: Berghahn.

Lewalski, K. (2002) *Kościoły chrześcijańskie w Królestwie Polskim wobec Żydów w w latach 1855-1915.* Wrocław: Fundacja na Rzecz Nauki Polskiej.

Limmud. (2012) *Conference - Limmud* [Online]. Available at: http://www.limmud.org/conference/ (Accessed 18 September 2012).

Limmud International. (2008) *Abridged History of Limmud 1980-2008* [Online]. Available at: http://www.limmudinternational.org/images/stories/Articles/abri dged_history_of_limmud_1980-2008.pdf (Accessed 18 September 2012).

Limud Keszet Polska (2009) *Conference programme 2009.* Warsaw: Limud Keszet Polska.

Linkedin (2013) *Mark Lazar - Israel.* Available at: http://il.linkedin.com/pub/mark-lazar/38/248/843 (Accessed 13 August 2013).

Long, N. J. & Moore, H. L. (2013) 'Introduction: sociality's new directions' in Long, N. J. & Moore, H. L. (eds.) *Sociality: new directions.* New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Lopate, P. (1992) In Search of the Centaur: The Essay-Film. *The Threepenny Review*, 48, 19-22.

Lorenz, J. (2011) 'Życie w miejscu śmierci. Muzeum/Obóz Stutthof w świetle doświadczenia i percepcji jego współczesnych mieszkańców' in *Sztutowo czy Stutthof? Oswajanie krajobrazu kulturowego.* Sztutowo: Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, pp. 173-187.

Lyon, D. (1997) 'Cyberspace sociality. Controversies over computer-mediated relationships' in Loader, B. D. (ed.) *The governance of cyberspace : politics, technology and global restructuring.* London: Routledge, pp. 21-34.

Łagiewski, M. (2010) *Wrocławscy Żydzi 1850-1944.* Wrocław: Muzeum Miejskie Wrocławia.

Macdonald, S. (1997) *Reimagining culture: histories, identities, and the Gaelic renaissance.* Oxford; New York: Berg.

Macdonald, S. (2008) *Difficult heritage : negotiating the Nazi past in Nuremberg and beyond,* Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge.

Macdonald, S. (2013) *Memorylands : heritage and identity in Europe today.* London: Routledge.

Macdougall, D. (1998) *Transcultural cinema.* Princeton, N.J.; Chichester: Princeton University Press.

Macdougall, D. (2006) *The corporeal image : film, ethnography, and the senses.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mach, Z. (2007) 'Identities in a Post-Communist Society' in Bryceson, D. F., Okely, J., Webber, J. & Ardener, S. (eds.) *Identity and networks : fashioning gender and ethnicity across cultures.* New York: Berghahn, pp. 54-72.

Maffesoli, M. (1989) 'Sociology of Everyday Life', *Current Sociology,* 37, pp. 1-16.

Magen, C. (2010) 'Bridging Academia and the Field: The Davidson School and Camp Ramah' in Cohen, M. & Kress, J. S. (eds.) *Ramah at 60: Impact and Innovation,* New York: National Ramah Commission, Inc. and The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, pp. 266-274.

Mandel, R. E. (2008) *Cosmopolitan anxieties : Turkish challenges to citizenship and belonging in Germany,* Durham, NC; Chesham: Duke University Press.

Maoz, D. & Bekerman, Z. (2009) 'Chabad Tracks the Trekkers: Jewish Education in India', *Journal of Jewish Education,* 75, pp. 173-193.

Mannheim, K. (1952) 'The Problem of Generations' In KECSKEMETI, P. (ed.) *Essays on the sociology of knowledge.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Marcus, G. E. (1995a) 'Ethnography in/of the World System: the Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography', *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 24, pp. 95-117.

Marcus, G. E. (1995b) 'The Modernist Sensibility in Recent Ethnographic Writing and the Cinematic Metaphor of Montage' in Devereaux, L. & Hillman, R. (eds.) *Fields of vision : essays in film studies, visual anthropology, and photography.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, pp. 35-55.

Maryon, M., Cohen, A. P., Frankenberg, R. J., Grillo, R. D., Román, T. S., Shokeid, M. & Weingrod, A. (1986) 'Celtic Ethnic Kinship and the Problem of Being English [and Comments and Replies]', *Current Anthropology,* 27, pp. 333-347.

Massey, D. B. (1994) *Space, place and gender.* Cambridge: Polity.

Massey, D. B. (2005) *For space.* London: Sage.

May, J. & Thrift, N. J. (2001) *Timespace : geographies of temporality.* London: Routledge.

May, T. (2003) 'When is a Deleuzian becoming ?', *Continental Philosophy Review,* 36, pp. 139-153.

Mccomb, K. & Semple, S. (2005) 'Coevolution of vocal communication and sociality in primates', *Biology Letters,* 1, pp. 381-385.

Mcmanus, C., Ska, C., Miller, I. L., Markowski, R., Aw & Wasilewski, J. (2003) 'Understanding Dual Identities in Poland', *Political Studies,* 51, pp. 121-143.

Mead, M. (1975) 'Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words' in Hockings, P. (ed.) *Principles of visual anthropology.* The Hague: Mouton, pp. 3-10.

Meijer, R. (2009) *Global Salafism: Islam's new religious movement.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Melchior, M. (1990) *Społeczna tożsamość jednostki : (w świetle wywiadów z Polakami pochodzenia żydowskiego urodzonymi w latach 1944-1955).* Warszawa: Uniwersytet Warszawski.

Melchior, M. (2004) *Zagłada a tożsamość : polscy Żydzi ocaleni "na aryjskich papierach": analiza doświadczenia biograficznego.* Warszawa: Wyd. IFiS PAN.

Michlic, J. B. (2006) *Poland's threatening other : the image of the Jew from 1880 to the present.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Mikulska, A. (2010) *Racism in Poland. Report on Research Among Victims of Violence with Reference to National, Racial, or Ethnic Origin.* Warsaw: Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka.

Mitry, J. (1997) *The aesthetics and psychology of the cinema.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Mittelberg, D. & Ari, L. L. (1995) 'Jewish Identity, Jewish Education and Experience of the Kibbutz in Israel', *Journal of Moral Education,* 24, pp. 327-344.

Mudde, C. (2005) 'Racist Extremism in Central and Eastern Europe' *East European Politics & Societies,* 19, pp. 161-184.

Muller-Paisner, V. (2002) 'Poland: Crises in Christian-Jewish Identity', *Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies,* 4, pp. 13-30.

Muller-Paisner, V. (2005) *Broken chain : Catholics uncover the Holocaust's hidden legacy and discover their Jewish roots.* Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone.

Myerhoff, B. G. (1994) *Number our days : culture and community among elderly Jews in an American ghetto.* New York: Meridian.

Mykoff, N. (2013) *Summer Camping in the United States | Jewish Women's Archive.* Available at: http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/ar ticle/summer-camping-in-united-states (Accessed 27 July 2013).

N!ai, the Story of a K!ung Woman. (1980) Film. Directed by John Marshall. Watertown, MA: Documentary Educational Resources.

Narayan, K. (1993) 'How Native Is a "Native" Anthropologist?', *American Anthropologist,* 95, pp. 671-686.

Nardi, B. A. (2010) *My life as a night elf priest: an anthropological account of World of Warcraft.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Navaro-Yashin, Y. (2012) *The make-believe space : affective geography in a postwar polity.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Nora, P. (1989) 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26, pp. 7-24.

Novick, P. (1999) *The Holocaust in American life.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Nowakowska, A. & Szwarcman-Czarnota, B. (1997) 'Bilans otwarcia', *Midrasz,* 0, pp. 4-13.

Obirek, S. (2008) 'Jesuits in Poland and eastern Europe' in Worcester, T. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 136-160.

Ochs, E. & Solomon, O. (2010) 'Autistic Sociality', *Ethos,* 38, pp. 69-92.

Offe, C. (1997) *Varieties of transition: the East European and East German experience.* Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press.

Ong, A. (2008) 'Scales of exception: Experiments with knowledge and sheer life in tropical Southeast Asia', *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography,* 29 , pp. 117-129.

Ong, A. & Collier, S. J. (2005) *Global assemblages: technology, politics, and ethics as anthropological problems.* Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell.

Opalski, M. & Bartal, Y. (1992) *Poles and Jews : a failed brotherhood.* Hanover, NH; London: Brandeis University Press.

Orenstein, M. A., Bloom, S. R. & Lindstrom, N. (2008) *Transnational actors in Central and East European transitions.* Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Orla-Bukowska, A. (2004) 'Maintaining Borders, Crossing Borders: Social Relationships in the Shtetl' in Polonsky, A. (ed.) *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 22: The Shtetl: Myth and Reality*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, pp. 171-196

Ostor, A. (1989) 'Is That What Forest of Bliss is All About?: A Response', *Visual Anthropology Review,* 5, pp. 4-8.

Overing, J. & Passes, A. (2002) *The anthropology of love and anger: the aesthetics of conviviality in native Amazonia.* London: Routledge.

Peirano, M. G. S. (1998) 'WHEN ANTHROPOLOGY IS AT HOME: The Different Contexts of a Single Discipline', *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 27, pp. 105-128.

Perez, G. (1998) *The material ghost : films and their medium.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Phillips, K. R. & Reyes, G. M. (2011) 'Introduction. Surveying Global Memoryscapes: The Shifting Terrain of Public Memory Studes' in Phillips, K. R. & Reyes, G. M. (eds.) *Global memoryscapes : contesting remembrance in a transnational age.* Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, pp. 1-26.

Pilcher, J. (1994) 'Mannheim's Sociology of Generations: An Undervalued Legacy', *The British Journal of Sociology,* 45, pp. 481-495.

Pinchuk, B. (2001) 'Jewish discourse and the Shtetl', *Jewish History,* 15, pp. 169-179.

Pink, S. (1997) *Women and bullfighting : gender, sex and the consumption of tradition.* Oxford: Berg.

Polonsky, A. (Ed.) (2004) *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 17: The Shtetl: Myth and Reality*. Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization.

Polonsky, A. (2005) 'Why did they hate Tuwim and Boy so much? Jews and "Artificial Jews" in the Literary Polemics of the Second Polish Republic' in Blobaum, R. (ed.) *Antisemitism and its opponents in modern Poland.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; Bristol: University Presses Marketing, pp. 189-209.

Polskapartianarodowa.org (2013) *Polska Partia Narodowa - Ile osób narodowości żydowskiej mieszka w Polsce?* Available at: http://www.polskapartianaro dowa.org/index.php?option=com_poll&task=results&id=18&Itemid=105 (Accessed 4 Aug 2013).

Porter, B. (2011) *Faith and fatherland : Catholicism, modernity, and Poland.* New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pransky, T. (2012) *Boundaries of Belonging: Conversion in Israel's Law Of Return.* MA Thesis, New York; Budapest: Central European University.

Pratt, M. L. (1991) Arts of the Contact Zone. *Profession*, pp. 33-40.

Pratt, M. L. (2003) *Imperial eyes : travel writing and transculturation,* London: Routledge.

Prell, R.-E. (2002) 'Summer Camp, Postwar American Jewish Youth, and the Redemption of Judaism' in Zuckerman, B. & Schoenberg, J. (eds.) *The Jewish role in American life. Annual Review. Vol. 5.* West Lafayette, IN: USC Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role in American Life, Purdue University Press, pp. 77-108.

Prell, R.-E. (2006) *Jewish summer camping and civil rights : how summer camps launched a transformation in American Jewish culture.* Ann Arbor, MI: Jean and Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, The University of Michigan.

Prell, R.-E. (2011) '"How do you know that I am a Jew?" Authority, Cultural Identity, and the Shaping of Postwar American Judaism' in Boustan, R. B. S., Kosansky, O. & Rustow, M. (eds.) *Jewish studies at the crossroads of*

anthropology and history : authority, diaspora, tradition. 1st ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 31-57.

Probyn, E. (1996) *Outside belongings.* New York: Routledge.

Rancière, J. (2009) *The future of the image.* London; New York: Verso.

Rascaroli, L. (2008) 'The Essay Film: Problems, Definitions, Textual Commitments', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media,* 49, pp. 24-47.

Rawidowicz, S. (1998) 'Israel. The Ever-Dying People' in Rawidowicz, S. & Ravid, B. C. I. (eds.) *State of Israel, diaspora, and Jewish continuity: essays on the "ever-dying people".* Hanover, NH; London: University Press of New England, pp. 53-63.

Ray, L. J. (2007) *Globalization and everyday life.* London: Routledge.

Ray, L. (2010) 'Migration and Remembrance: Sounds and Spaces of Klezmer "Revivals"', *Cultural Sociology*, 4(3), pp. 357-378.

Reszke, K. (2007) *Narrating Identity: Young Jewish adults in contemporary Poland.* PhD Thesis, Jerusalem: Hebrew University.

Ribiat, R. D. (1999) *The 39 Melochos.* New York: Feldheim Publishers.

Robbins, J. (2004) *Becoming sinners: Christianity and moral torment in a Papua New Guinea society.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Robertson, R. (1992) *Globalization : Social Theory and Global Culture*. New York: Sage Publications.

Rope (1948) Film. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Los Angeles: Warner Bros.; Transatlantic Pictures.

Rosenberg, J. (2000) *The follies of globalisation theory: polemical essays.* London: Verso.

Rosenbloom, J. R. (1978) *Conversion to Judaism : from the Biblical period to the present.* Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press.

Rosengard, N. (2009) *We Want Moshiach Now! : Understanding the Messianic Message in the Jewish Chabad-Lubavitch Movement.* PhD Thesis, Vaasa: Abo Akademi University.

Rosenson, C. (1996) 'Jewish Identity Construction in Contemporary Poland: Dialogue Between Generations', *East European Jewish Affairs,* 26(2), pp. 67-78.

Rosenson, C. (2003) 'Polish Jewish Institutions in Transition: Personalities over Process' in Gitelman, Z. Y., Kosmin, B. A. & Kovács, A. (eds.) *New Jewish identities: contemporary Europe and beyond.* Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, pp. 263-289.

Røssaak, E. (2011) *Between stillness and motion : film, photography, algorithms.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.Rubenstein, J. (1992) 'Purim, Liminality, and Communitas', *AJS Review,* 17, pp. 247-277.

Ruby, J. (1975) 'Is an Ethnographic Film a Filmic Ethnography?', *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication*, 2(2), pp. 104-110.

Rusiniak, M. (2008) *Obóz zagłady Treblinka II w pamięci społecznej (1943-1989).* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton.

Russian Ark (2002) Film. Directed by Alexander Sokurov. Sankt Petersburg: Hermitage Bridge Studio.

Safran, W. (2005) 'The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical Perspective', *Israel Studies*, 10, pp. 36-60.

Sales, A. L. & Saxe, L. (2004) *'How goodly are thy tents': summer camps as Jewish socializing experiences.* Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press; London: Eurospan.

Sans Soleil (1983) Film. Directed by Chris Marker. Paris: Argos Films.

Santos-Granero, F. (2007) 'Of fear and friendship: Amazonian sociality beyond kinship and affinity', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 13, pp.1-18.

Sarna, J. D. (2006) 'The Crucial Decade in Jewish Camping' in Lorge, M. M. & Zola, G. P. (eds.) *A place of our own: the rise of Reform Jewish camping: essays honoring the fiftieth anniversary of Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute, Union for Reform Judaism, in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.* Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press; London: Eurospan, pp. 28-51.

Sassen, S. (2008) *Territory, authority, rights : from medieval to global assemblages.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Saxe, L.,Phillips, B.,Sasson, T.,Hecht, S.,Shain, M.,Wright, G. & Kadushin, C. (2009) *Generation Birthright Israel: The Impact of an Israel Experience on Jewish Identity and Choices.* Waltham, MA: Brandeis University. Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

Saxonberg, S. And Waligórska, M. (2006) 'Klezmer in Kraków: Kitsch or Catharsis for Poles?', *Ethnomusicology*, 50(3), pp. 433–51.

Schatz, J. (1991) *The generation : the rise and fall of the Jewish communists of Poland.* Berkeley,CA: University of California Press.

Segal, A. & Dunne, F. J. (2009) *A Spiritual and Ethical Compendium to the Torah and Talmud.* Charleston, CA: Booksurge Publishing.

Shain, Y. & Bristman, B. (2002) 'Diaspora, kinship and loyalty: the renewal of Jewish national security', *International Affairs,* 78, pp. 69-96.

Shandler, J. 2001. 'The Man in the Glass Box: Watching the Eichmann Trial on American Television' in Zelizer, B. (ed.) *Visual culture and the Holocaust.* London: Athlone, pp. 91-110.

Shandler, J. (2006) *Adventures in Yiddishland : postvernacular language & culture.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California.

Shavei Israel (2013a) *About Shavei Israel.* Available at: http://www.shavei.org/ (Accessed 12 January 2013).

Shavei Israel. (2013b) *Press*. Available at: http://www.shavei.org/ (Accessed 17 July 2013).

Sheffer, G. (2005) 'Is the Jewish Diaspora Unique? Reflections on the Diaspora's Current Situation', *Israel Studies,* 10, pp. 1-35.

Shepherd, J. & Butt, R. (2009) *Jewish school loses appeal* [Online]. Available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/dec/16/jewish-school-loses-appeal (Accessed 20 January 2012).

Shilhav, Y. (1984) 'Spatial strategies of the 'haredi' population in Jerusalem', *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences,* 18, pp. 411-418.

Smith, M. W. (2007) *The total work of art : from Bayreuth to cyberspace.* New York; London: Routledge.

Smolík, J. (2004) 'Football hooliganism from the standpoint of extremism', *Central European Political Studies Review.*[Online]. Available at: http://www.cepsr.com/clanek.php?ID=212 (Accessed 5 April 2013).Solis-Cohen Jr., E. (ed.) (2001) *Hanukkah. The Feast Of Lights.* Skokie, IL: Varda Books.

Sontag, S. (1977) *On photography.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Steinlauf, M. C. (1997) *Bondage to the dead : Poland and the memory of the Holocaust.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Stewart, K. (2007) *Ordinary affects.* Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press.

Stricker, S. (2009) *Wedding refugees*. Available at: http://www.ynetnews.com /articles/0,7340,L-3807730,00.html (Accessed: 3 Aug 2012).

Stoller, P. (1992) 'Artaud, Rouch, and The Cinema of Cruelty', *Visual Anthropology Review,* 8, pp. 50-57.

Stow, K. R. (2006) *Jewish dogs: an image and its interpreters: continuity in the Catholic-Jewish encounter.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Strathern, M. (1987) 'The limits of auto-anthropology' in Jackson, A. (ed.) *Anthropology at home.* London: Tavistick, pp. 16-37.

Strom, Y. (1990) *A tree still stands: Jewish youth in Eastern Europe today*. New York: Philomel Books.

Suhr, C. & Willerslev, R. (2012) 'Can Film Show the Invisible? The Work of Montage in Ethnographic Filmmaking' *Current Anthropology,* 53, pp. 282-301.

Sussman, R. W., Garber, P. A. & Cheverud, J. M. (2005) 'Importance of cooperation and affiliation in the evolution of primate sociality', *American Journal of Physical Anthropology,* 128, pp. 84-97.

Sweetgrass (2009) Film. Directed by Lucien Castaing-Taylor. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Sensory Ethnography Lab.

Symons, L. (2010) *Israeli Rabbinate: we can annul conversions.* [Online]. Available at: http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/26051/israeli-rabbinate-we-can-annul-conversions (Accessed 20 January 2013).

Tarsi, B. (2002) 'Observations on Practices of "Nusach" in America', *Asian Music,* 33, pp. 175-219.

Taylor, L. (1996) 'Iconophobia', *Transition*, 69, pp. 64-88.

Teter, M. (2006) *Jews and heretics in Catholic Poland : a beleaguered church in the post-Reformation era.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Jewish Agency For Israel (n.d.) *Machon.* Available at: http://www.jafi.org.il/JewishAgency/English/Jewish%20Education/About_us /News/Machon.htm (Accessed 13 Aug 2013).

The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation (2013) *Mission Statement - The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation.* Available at: http://lauderfoundation.com/mission (Accessed 21 July 2013).

Thrift, N. J. (2008) *Non-representational theory : space, politics, affect.* Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

Tismaneanu, V. (1998) *Fantasies of salvation : democracy, nationalism, and myth in post-communist Europe.* Princeton,NJ; Chichester: Princeton University Press.

Tokarska-Bakir, J. (2008) *Legendy o krwi : antropologia przesądu.* Warszawa: Wyd. WAB.

Tokarska-Bakir, J. (2012) 'Żyd z pieniążkiem podbija Polskę', Gazeta Wyborcza, 18 February [Online]. Available at: http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,11172689,Zyd_z_pieniazkiem_podbija_Polsk e.html (Accessed 1 March 2012).

Tomlinson, J. (1991) *Cultural imperialism: a critical introduction.* London: Pinter.

Torresan, A. (2011) 'Round Trip: Filming a Return Home', *Visual Anthropology Review,* 27, pp. 119-130.

Trouillot, M.-R. (2001) 'The Anthropology of the State in the Age of Globalization: Close Encounters of the Deceptive Kind', *Current Anthropology*, 42, pp. 125-138.

Trouillot, M.-R. (2003) *Global transformations : anthropology and the modern world.* New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Tsing, A. L. (2005) *Friction: an ethnography of global connection.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Tuan, Y.-F. (1977) *Space and place : the perspective of experience.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Turner, V. W. (1969) *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure.* London: Routledge & K. Paul.

Turner, T. (1995) 'Social body and embodied subject: bodiliness, subjectivity, and sociality among the Kayapo', *Cultural Anthropology*, 10, pp. 143-170.

Van Gennep, A. (1960) *The Rites of Passage.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Vasquez, M. A. & Marquardt, M. F. (2003) *Globalizing the sacred : religion across the Americas.* Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press; London: Eurospan.

Vaughan, D. (1992) 'The Aesthetics of Ambiguity' in Crawford, P. I. & Turton, D. (eds.) *Film as ethnography.* Manchester: Manchester University Press in association with the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, pp. 99-115.

Wacquant, L. 2009. 'Habitus as Topic and Tool: Reflections on Becoming a Prizefighter' in Puddephatt, A. J., Shaffir, W. & Kleinknecht, S. W. (eds.) *Ethnographies revisited : constructing theory in the field.* London: Routledge, pp. 137-151.

Wahlberg, M. (2004) 'Inscription and re-framing: at the editing table of Harun Farocki', *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, 73(1), pp. 15-26.

Wahlberg, M. (2008) *Documentary time: film and phenomenology,* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Waligórska, M. (2005) 'A goy fiddler on the roof - How the non-Jewish participants of the klezmer revival in Krakow negotiate their Polish identity in a confrontation with Jewishness', *Polish Sociological Review*, 152, pp. 367-382.

Washofsky, M. (2010) *Jewish living : a guide to contemporary Reform practice.* New York: URJ Press.

Waszkiewicz, E. (2007) 'Powstanie, rozwój i zanik skupiska Żydow na Dolnym Ślasku' in Waszkiewicz, E. (ed.) *Współcześni Żydzi – Polska i diaspora.* Wrocław: Wyd. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, pp. 13-30.

Webber, J. (1997) 'Jews and Judaism in contemporary Europe: Religion or ethnic group?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 20, pp. 257-279.

Weiner, A. (2003) *Renewal : reconnecting Soviet Jewry to the Jewish people : a decade of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC) activities in the former Soviet Union, 1988-1998.* Lanham, MD; Oxford: University Press of America.

Weinryb, B. D. (1976) *The Jews of Poland : a social and economic history of the Jewish Community in Poland from 1100 to 1800.* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America.

Wells, L. W. (1995) *Shattered faith : a Holocaust legacy.* Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky.

Williams, R. (1977) *Marxism and literature.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wiszniewicz, J. (2004) 'Dzieci i młodzież pochodzenia żydowskiego w szkołach śródmiejskich Warszawy lat sześćdziesiątych' *Res Publica Nowa* 1/2004,

[Online]. Available at: http://www.polish-jewish-heritage.org/pol/Jan_04 _Dzieci_mlodziez_ pochodzenia_ zydowskiego.htm (Accesed 22 April 2013).

Witz, A. (2000) 'Whose Body Matters? Feminist Sociology and the Corporeal Turn in Sociology and Feminism', *Body & Society,* 6, pp. 1-24.

Wolak, A. J. (2004) *Forced out : the fate of Polish Jewry in Communist Poland.* Tucson, AZ: Fenestra Books.

Wolf, E. R. (1982) *Europe and the people without history.* Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press.

Yonah, Y. (2007) 'Reclaiming Diaspora: The Israeli State, Migration, and Ethnonationalism in the Global Era', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies,* 16, pp. 190-228.

Zarchin, T. (2012) 'Spurning rabbinate, 20,000 Israelis marry abroad annually', *Haaretz,* 3 August [Online]. Available at: http://www.haaretz.com/news/na tional/spurning-rabbinate-20-000-israelis-marry-abroad-annually-1.455653 [Accessed: 3 Aug 2012].

Ẓaddik, J. B. J. I. & Haberman, J. (2003) *The microcosm of Joseph ibn Saddiq.* Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Presses.

Zawadzka, A. (2009) 'Żydokomuna : szkic do socjologicznej analizy źródeł historycznych', *Societas Communitas*, 2(8), pp. 199-244.

ZGWŻ w RP (2006). *Prawo Wewnętrzne. Warsaw: Związek Gmin Wyznaniowych Żydowskich w RP.* Warszawa: Związek Gmin Wyznaniowych w RP.

Zipperstein, S. J. (1999) *Imagining Russian Jewry : memory, history, identity.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Žižek, S. (2001) *Enjoy your symptom! : Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and out.* New York; London: Routledge.

Žižek, S. (2008) *The sublime object of ideology.* London: Verso.

Zola, G. P. (2006) 'Jewish Camping and the Organized Camping Movement' in Lorge, M. M. & Zola, G. P. (eds.) *A place of our own : the rise of Reform Jewish camping : essays honoring the fiftieth anniversary of Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute, Union for Reform Judaism, in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.* Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press; London : Eurospan, pp. 1-26.

Zubrzycki, G. (2006) *The crosses of Auschwitz : nationalism and religion in post-communist Poland.* Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.

Zubrzycki, G. (2011) 'History and the National Sensorium: Making Sense of Polish Mythology', *Qualitative Sociology,* 34, pp. 21-57.