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Jews and Germans: an outdated binary? Jews, love, and relationships in contemporary Germany

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the seemingly outdated binary Jews and Germans on the level of power relations and lived experiences. By analyzing an in-depth interview, it shows how the violent past of National Socialism and the Shoah reaches into the present and into love relationships. The case study illustrates that the categories 'Jews' and 'German' are needed as analytical tools to understand these aftermaths. In conclusion, the contribution argues that while the categories can be appropriated and lived in an agentic way, the binary is useful to capture and analyze positionalities and power relations.

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1. Introduction: this other issue

> 'But as time ticks on, moving beyond looks a lot like getting over'[1]

In a radio program about 'marriages of different religions in Germany',[2] aired by *Deutschlandfunk*, the female partners of four interreligious marriages are interviewed about the experiences, commonalities as well differences and conflicts they share with their partners. Jewish author and literary scholar Eva Lezzi recounts how her husband, who grew up as a Catholic in Germany, is 'still very much influenced by Christian motifs' even though he renounced his church membership. However, religion is not what their differences are about.[3] Reflecting on their different family biographies in relation to the Shoah[4] – her grandfather survived Auschwitz – she concludes:

> I think our problems were much more pronounced in [the] Jewish-German. … but that is another issue again. These are really questions concerning how one deals with the family past, how strongly and why one comes to terms with it, how strongly and why the family background continues to have an effect on the present. These remain our conflicts much more than religious differences.[5]

This contribution sets out to investigate this other 'issue', which is related, as Lezzi put it rather vaguely, to 'the Jewish-German… '. She stops her sentence short and thereby leaves it open how to call it — a context, a relation, a binary, a conundrum? Debates about Jewish-German relations, a Jewish-German synthesis or symbiosis are hardly new.[6] The

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historian Gideon Reuveni asserts that contemporary scholars of Jewish-German history apply 'a carefully nuanced and refined approach to the interplay between Jews and other Germans.' [7] This chapter will not contribute to the field of German-Jewish history but will provide a sociological analysis of the uses of the categories 'Jews' and 'Germans', sometimes defined as binary and sometimes not. What is it that Lezzi describes and how can we analytically grasp it? As Lezzi explains, her use of the juxtaposition relates disparate family histories that are differently connected to the past and particularly the Nazi past and the Shoah, to if and how the partners – the Jewish one and the German one – deal with their respective historical baggage and to how it comes to bear on their experience of the present. In other words, it relates to a politics of location, a place in history that informs the present.[8] Yet, talking about religious differences seems more palatable than talking about different family histories. Even though Lezzi does not describe these differences in religious terms, the program writer insists on framing them as 'Christian-Jewish tensions'.[9] That her husband grew up Catholic and therefore was socialized with Christian values, traditions and holidays is certainly relevant, yet it is his positionality as German aka German non-Jews that is significant here. Similarly, author Max Czollek argues that he consciously writes of 'Jews' and 'Germans' to describe subject positions within dominant culture in Germany, even though he admits that they are inadequate to describe lived experiences.[10] As sociologist Howard Winant poignantly reminds us:

> Nobody really belongs into these boxes; they are patently absurd reductions of human variation.[11]

Is it thus an outdated binary? Political theorist Hannah Peaceman notes that thinking in terms of a 'German-Jewish synthesis' or 'negative German-Jewish symbiosis' is no longer of central and exclusive concern due to the heterogeneity of the Jewish population in post-migrant German society.[12] Anthropologist Dani Kranz in 2021 raised the question if the categories 'Jews' and 'German' are 'good to think with' and needed in empirical research about young Jews and their love relationships in contemporary Germany.[13] This was before the massacre of 7 October 2023 and everything unfolding since then. Now, the question is not if, but how they are significant, and it has become more pressing, and potentially more difficult to answer.[14] Czollek finds the use of the categories 'Jews' and 'Germans' necessary to critically reflect on them: the unmarked and invisible position that lays claim to 'being German' on the one side that assigns minority positions such as 'Jew' to fulfill a certain role and perform ideological labor in post-Shoah Germany (for example, being a living proof of democratization) on the other side.[15] In other words, sometimes it is necessary to draw a line to make a point (for example, point to the ongoing and disparate effects of National Socialism on relationships and families and how these condition positionalities in dominant discourses within German society).

The formulation 'Jews and Germans' certainly evokes Gershom Scholem's 1966 lecture at the World Jewish Congress. One of its most famous quotes might be:

> By and large, then, the love affair of the Jews and the Germans remained one-sided and unreciprocated [. . .].[16]

Less well remembered is his anti-essentialist remark at the beginning of his speech. In fact, historian Scott Spector contends that not only his recipients forgot his remark, so would Scholem himself throughout the rest of his lecture.[17] Scholem asserts that any

generalizations entail 'dangerous pitfalls', and so does saying 'the Germans' and 'the Jews'.[18] He goes on to assure that 'not all "Germans" are Germans and not all "Jews" are Jews', as well as that the relationships between them 'are too various and unique to be covered by any blanket assertion'. Yet, the functionaries and followers of the Nazi regime did not care about any such careful and nuanced observations and decided to attempt to murder everyone they defined, however arbitrarily, as a Jew. In the shadow of this history, those who survived find it difficult 'to make the proper distinctions' – in other words, they resort to drawing a line between 'Jews' and 'Germans'. In the more contemporary words of sociologist and cultural theorist Stuart Hall, '[t]his is quite different from assuming that "us" and "them" are eternal essences, but it does recognize the necessity of saying that just now, conjunctionally, this line matters. The drawing of the line is never final, never absolute. [. . .] Nevertheless [. . .] the line sometimes has to be drawn.'[19] While Spector thinks that Scholem's claim is understandable, yet not 'intellectually persuasive', I think that Scholem might embody the conundrum one finds oneself in within this context: To uncritically use the categories 'Jews' and 'Germans' means reproducing the distinctions National Socialism established and propagated.[20] Yet, discarding, circumventing, or neutralizing them as religious differences risks forgetting how they point towards the aftereffects of the Shoah and National Socialism that reach into the present, shaping power relationships between Jews and German non-Jews in contemporary Germany. And those effects must be analyzed and named. This does not stop at intimate relationships, how they are lived today and how they are experienced against the background of the Nazi past, as Lezzi's example shows. We need to understand the current situation against the backdrop of what might have been possible lives and loves in a world in which the Shoah did not happen.[21] Analyzing love offers a microcosm through which to understand relations between Jews and their significant others, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, and how the past continues to influence the present.[22]

This contribution will thus grapple with finding an analytical heuristic that can account for the effects of National Socialism, the Shoah, past and present antisemitism that result in the necessity to make a distinction between 'Jews' and 'Germans' in certain instances. I will show by way of an empirical example how my interview partner Elisabeth resorts to this distinction to make sense of experiences with her non-Jewish German ex-partner and his family. Yet, what her example also illustrates is that these two positionalities mean different things in different situations, and moreover can be appropriated, combined, and played with, within certain limits, and that they always fail to grasp the complexity of lived experience. In the first part of the article, I will propose an analytical heuristic to make sense of the binary 'Jews and Germans' when studying the experiences of Jews in contemporary Germany. I will bring up the idea of applying race/racialization as an analytical lens and outline the limitations of such an endeavor. This analytical perspective had been largely abandoned when writing about Jews after 1945.[23] Indeed, talking about the analytical category put facts on the ground which German post-war society tried to avoid. I will then present the findings of empirical studies that look at love relationships of Jews in post-1945 Germany and show how the boundary between 'Jews' and 'Germans' was drawn by respondents of different generations of Jews in Germany. In the second, empirical part, I will look at my interview with Elisabeth, whom I asked to tell her life story with a focus on experiences in love relationships, focusing on the question how she makes use and sense of the categories 'Jews' and 'Germans.'[24]

2. The aftermath of a racialized binary

During National Socialism, 'Jews' and 'Germans' were propagated as racialized — and racist — categories, for example by the implementation of the so-called 1935 'Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour' which prohibited marriages and extra-marital relations between 'Jews' and 'citizens of German or related blood'. Interreligious marriages had only been legalized in 1875, merely 60 years before the passing of the law. This aimed to create a 'radical ethnic rupture' between 'Jews' and 'Germans' on the kinship level, to make impossible and destroy social ties and so-called mixed relationships that blurred the divide.[25] The 'space for being simultaneously both a German and a Jew' became more and more constricted through political and social antisemitism.[26] Even though scientific antisemitism and racial theories about Jews and 'Aryans' are no longer institutionalized, this does not mean that the effects of them could be abolished merely by no longer talking about them. Social constructions have manifest material effects that do not stop at the so-called Zero hour (*Stunde Null*). Nazi ideology and legislation, which claimed the existence of distinct races – 'Jews' and 'Germans' (amongst others) –, while certainly false, produced socioeconomic facts and positionalities.[27] In post-Nazi Germany's public discourse, the term 'Rasse' 'virtually disappeared [. . .] despite the persistence of social ideologies and behaviors that look an awful lot like racism'[28] and antisemitism. It is not used because Nazi ideology, along with its central terms, is believed to be overcome (or, at least no one wants to be reminded of it). Instead, it has been replaced by supposedly neutral terms such as religion or culture. This can obscure an analysis of continuities of racial ideology, racism, and antisemitism, as well as of the ongoing construction of 'German' as dominant norm against which 'difference' is measured and minoritized positions are produced. As sociologist and philosopher Theodor W. Adorno put it: 'The noble word culture replaces the frowned upon expression of race, but remains a mere cover image for the brutal claim to power.'[29] That does not mean that one should reproduce Nazi ideology or continue to use the term 'Rasse' without challenging it. It means that in order to understand how racial definitions of the NS past continue to have an impact, we need an analytical lens that can grasp the racialization processes and power relations that result in the social construction of 'Germans' and 'others', in this case 'Jews.'

The need for an analytical perspective than can grasp these dynamics is connected to but must also be differentiated from how Jews, individually and collectively, understand themselves – in the past and in the present. Historian Doron Avraham shows that some segments of Jews in Nazi Germany dealt with their outward racialization through self-racialization to construct a new and dignified identity for themselves in the face of exclusion and persecution.[30] This can be interpreted as expression of agency by investing the group one is assigned to with value against an outside that seeks to annihilate it. Outside categorization can make an identification with the group one is assigned to necessary. This was spelled out by essayist and survivor Jean Améry who observed that while he did not grow up with any Jewish traditions or heritage, he became a Jew when he studied the Nuremberg Laws in a newspaper in Vienna in 1935:

> Society, concretized in the National Socialist German state, which the world recognized absolutely as the legitimate representative of the German people, had just made me formally and beyond any question a Jew, or rather it had given a new dimension to what I had already known earlier, but which at the time was of no great consequence to me, namely, that I was a Jew.[31]

Today, in scholarly debates, Jews are often understood as constituting an ethnicity.[32] Ethnicity connotes a sense of shared origin, customs, traditions, and sometimes religion — exactly what Améry did not experience in his childhood and why he describes being a Jew not only as necessity, but also impossibility. Stuart Hall defines ethnicity as 'a perfectly good word for cultural differences between groups.' [33] Ethnicity can be applied as a term to recognize 'that people are placed in a history, in a culture, in a space, that they come from somewhere'.[34] Ethnicity can be a self-ascribed and embraced, it can be 'a powerful means of self-identification'.[35] I have found this is my research as well, even if respondents did not use the term ethnicity. Elisabeth, for example, feels she belongs to 'a community of fate' (*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*), a community of people she feels 'comfortable with', while she is not religious and does not identify with Judaism as religion.[36] However, the analytical perspective of ethnicity, while important to understand individual experiences, self-identifications, and agency, cannot fully account for the aftermaths of racial constructions of Jews that are the opposite of voluntary, fluid, or slippery.

In the US context, under the wide bracket of Critical Race Theory (CRT) (which originated amongst a group of legal scholars), race is used as an analytical heuristic to study the effects of transatlantic slavery, colonialism and historical and contemporary racism. Race, aka racial categories such as white and Black,[37] are not understood as categories that describe something that exists objectively, but employed to name and redress (for example, in affirmative action policies) the effects of racialization. Racialization is the process in which somebody comes to be seen to have a race. Race is the effect of this process, not its origin.[38] Even though race as intrinsic property of bodies does not exist, it does not mean it has no effects to be seen as having a racial identity. Or, as playwright Lorraine Hansberry lets it express a character in her play *Les Blancs*: '[I]t is pointless to pretend it doesn't exist merely because it is a lie.'[39] That race is a social construct is widely recognized by scholars in the field.[40] Law scholar Robert S. Chang describes the statement 'race is a social construct' as a mantra in CRT.[41] He argues that this mantra can be explained by what CRT is writing against, namely the tendency of turning 'a blind eye to the way these racial disparities were consciously (intentionally) and unconsciously (negligently, recklessly) constructed by individuals and institutions'.[42] Critical Whiteness Studies emerged in this context in the US in the 1980s to shift the focus of attention to those who are typically not regarded as having a race. Film scholar Richard Dyer writes how whiteness is perceived as normal – studying whiteness is thus important because 'white people need to learn to see themselves as white, to see their own particularity.' [43] Critical Whiteness Studies take as their starting point the fact that racialization processes not only affect Black people but are also fundamental to the self-perception and social positioning of white people. They point to the way whiteness is not spoken about, it is unobserved, yet omnipresent. In German-speaking countries Critical Whiteness started to be discussed widely only in the later 2000s.[44]

To come back to the context of my research, the experiences of Jews in a postgenocidal context — contemporary Germany — the question arises: Does it make sense to use the heuristic of race to understand how the racial categorization of 'Jews' and 'Germans' under Nazi rule continues to reverberate and is actualized in the present? Is it useful, in German language scholarship, to use the English term race (instead

of 'Rasse') to show that one does not reproduce a category of Nazi ideology, but employs the analytical lens of CRT to understand processes of racialization (that lay outside of what can be grasped by ethnicity) that concern Jews in Germany?

If the category race is used by German speaking academics, it is often a part of an intersectional or intersectionally framed analysis. The category of race, together with class and gender, is a central category of intersectionality. Legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality to refer to the double, intersecting discrimination of racism and sexism experienced by Black women in the US.[45] Intersectionality emerged from the ideas debated by the legal scholars who started CRT, of which Crenshaw is part. A relatively obscure legal concept in the beginning, it was quickly adapted in other disciplines such as sociology, travelling to different contexts and countries.[46] Today, it is a similarly popular as contentious concept, and defined, used, and applied in many ways. Sociologist Kathy Davis describes intersectionality as 'buzz word'.[47] As has been mentioned before, due to its history of NS scientific racism, using the category is avoided in Germany. This is part of the reason why the 'import' of intersectionality's triad into the German scholarly landscape has been fraught.[48] Often, the term ethnicity is preferred. Where the category is used, it is in the English form. What complicates matters is the fact that Jewishness is regularly conflated with whiteness and oppression of Jews is left out of intersectional analysis, both in the US and Germany.[49] The debates about Jews and whiteness, which changed over time, and which moved from Jews being — potential — whites to Jews as maybe not quite white and postcolonial debates of Jews of Color, have certainly reached German shores, yet intersectional analyses of race/racialization in the German context are *still* often unable to account for the experiences of Jews, and more often than not contain an anti-Zionist bias.[50] To use a term of intersectionality itself: The Jewish case seems to be one of intersectional invisibility. Jews are positioned to be invisible in mainstream intersectional debates.[51] This is painfully illustrated by writer and activist Debora Antmann, who describes the positionality of Jews in Germany as 'falling between two stools' (Zwischen den Stühlen): they do not fit into the white vs. Black dichotomy. She writes:

> I call myself a white Jewish woman out of solidarity. So as not to make my Jewish siblings of Color and my Black Jewish siblings invisible. To situate myself socially and to make visible the experiences I don't have. But my 'white' can never stand alone, it can only stand in front of Jewish. I am not white, like wc-Germans, like Klaus and Mareike. Especially not in Germany. [. . .] The whiteness of Jews, in contrast to that of wc-Germans, is fragile and context-dependent. For wc-Germans, we are not German, foreign, we are racialized, our bodies, our presence, our existence is categorized as not from here, not from us, not like us, foreign, evil, dangerous, threatening, from somewhere else, not German. For wc-Germans, a Jewish body is not part of the German national body [*Volkskörper*].[52]

She uses the term 'wc-German' to mark the positionality of the white and (socially) Christian majority in Germany — the 'Germans'. She notes that Jews are not invisible, but actively overlooked by dominant society, leaving them no room of their own — not with the majority, but also not with People of Color. While I cannot fully address the dynamics behind this, one contributing factor is that the German non-Jewish majority shies away from recognizing that Jews have particularistic identities, and fear that voicing this recognition would border antisemitism: the vocabulary to speak about this particularism lacks, which, paradoxically contributes

to the continuation of the binary 'Jews' vs. 'Germans.'[53] Furthermore, it must be noted that racism and antisemitism function differently, therefore, racialization processes also play out differently for Jews. Jews are not only constructed as inferior race, but also imagined to be 'distinctively empowered compared to humanity in general', a dynamic that sociologist Zygmunt Baumann refers to with the concept of allosemitism.[54] Jews of Color and post-Soviet Jews, Jews with migration biography might experience antisemitism, racism, and antislavism as the experience of Elisabeth later in this contribution illustrates. At this point at the latest, we can see that the race heuristic at its current state is inadequate to address the experiences of Jews.[55] However, what I do find useful about thinking of race in the context of my research is the fact that the concept is used to show that violent histories extend into the present, yet that categories of distinction are socially constructed, not essential characteristics.

As we have seen in the case of Lezzi, Czollek and Antmann, it does make sense to use the binary 'Jews' and 'Germans' in some instances. The positionalities 'German' and 'Jew' are effects of racialization within the German, post-National Socialist, postgenocidal context. We might need other terms than race/racialization to analyze the particular situation of Jews, yet I use them in lack of another terminology. These processes of racialization did not stop at 1945. They were not abolished together with the Nuremberg Laws. In other words, to say that Jews are 'just humans' (which of course they are, just like 'us') without wanting to remember or refer to the fact that they have been and are racialized and/or oppressed is not humanist, it is turning a blind eye to history and a continuation of a lopsided power relationship. In the same vain, it is problematic if people want to rid themselves of their 'German' positionality by thinking that they are 'only individuals', even though the everyday understanding of Germanness is that being German means being white and non-Jewish.[56] In a project of third generation Germans and Israelis sociologist Phil Langer observed the unease of non-Jewish Germans to describe themselves as 'German.'[57] They preferred to discuss individual, fragmented identities and to distance themselves from 'any notion of a national identity that inescapably creates personal links to the Nazi past'. The more the Germans tried to distance themselves, the more the Israelis insisted to look at family histories and stories and 'demanded disclosure of us who we were in this very position as Germans'.[58] Therefore, the 'Germans' found themselves being thrown back to their positionality as Germans. Another troublesome phenomenon is Germans who invent for themselves Jewish biographies and speak from the positionality of 'Jews'.[59] Even by way of formal religious conversion, the transition from non-Jewish German aka 'German' to 'Jew' remains a fraught terrain in post-Shoah Germany. Jewish studies scholar Barbara Steiner found that one motivation for conversion for German non-Jews can be the wish to come to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*), because 'Jews' have what 'Germans' long for: 'a historically untainted origin'.[60] She asserts that Jewish identity in Germany is still connected to the experience of the Shoah, exclusion and annihilation. She concludes about the responsibility of German converts:

> In the Jewish and non-Jewish society, those who can relate a Jewish family biography that was shaped by the Shoah are considered 'real Jews'. The historical experience of persecution

> represents a boundary that German converts need to respect if they do not want to appropriate [Jewishness; IMS].[61]

This brings me to the point that in post-Shoah Germany (and elsewhere) we are in dire need for Critical Non-Jewishness Studies. Educator Michal Schwartze developed the concept of Critical Nonjewishness to conceptualize a critical practice of self-reflection of non-Jews (with and without migration biography) in post-Shoah Germany.[62] Critical Nonjewishness is not merely a tool for critical self-reflection of wc-Germans, but also works to decenter the dominant notion of Germaness in itself. The memory of the Shoah and its effects on the present are not the material for a newly self-assured German identity that refigures the Shoah 'as cathartic and seminal event in the nation's history' and instrumentalizes it as its own field of expertise.[63] While some of Schwartze's interventions are geared to descendants of wc-German families of bystanders, perpetrators, and beneficiaries in their relation to Jewish families and individuals, other questions concern the relation to other racialized, minoritized groups and other persecuted groups. The important groundbreaking works of Jewish writers and activists like Antmann, Schwartze and literary scholar Judith Coffey and author Vivien Laumann who propose the concept 'Gojnormativity' need to be applied in academic debates and outputs.[64]

As the experience of Améry illustrates, neither ethnicity nor race, nor religion, even if thought together, quite fit the bill when it comes to analyzing the experience of Jews. In fact, social anthropologist Jonathan Webber identifies a 'lack of fit between standard categories of description and the Jewish case'.[65] An analysis of empirical data, in this case interviews with self-identified Jews, needs to bear that in mind. With the concept of ethnicity, we might be able to understand self-identifications, agency, and differentiation from other groups. When thinking in terms of race, we are reminded of the effects of the Nazi past that go beyond the realm of individual agency. This is evident in the interview with Elisabeth. The categories 'Jews' and 'German' can have various meanings for her, and be appropriated and lived in an agentic way. However, there are instances — again, as in Lezzi's case when it concerns the relation to a haunting past — in which those categories are hardening and clearly distinguished. This brings us back to Scholem: We cannot avoid the binary 'Jews' and 'Germans', sometimes we even explicitly need it. But we must never forget that it is a social construction.

3. Jews and Germans across the generations

We will now look at empirical findings of how Jews in post-Shoah Germany deal with the categories 'Jews' and 'Germans' in their intimate relationships and how and where lines are drawn across different generations, as well as in one case study from my own research. As we will see, there is no sustained break on the kinship level between 'Jews' and non-Jews and 'Germans', as about two-thirds of Jews in Germany are intermarried/in inter-relationships (see Kranz in this volume). However, this does not mean that the categorial distinctions related to different family pasts and positionalities have lost their significance. This has its bearing on emotions and intimate relationships. It is through emotions that the past continues to stay alive in the present, even if it is not consciously remembered. While love had long been marginalized as a serious object of study and regarded as[66]

a purely private matter, feminist scholars and activists have stressed its political dimension. Love happens within and is embedded in power relations.[67]

The few qualitative empirical studies that have been conducted in the 1980s and 1990s with members of the Second Generation of Jews in post-Shoah Germany about their love relationships suggest a heavy influence of the past on emotions and relationships. Many of the parents (the First Generation) were survivors and Jewish Displaced Persons (DPs) from Eastern Europe. Not many German Jews who could flee Nazi Germany returned, remigration 'was a small-scale phenomenon'.[68] Within Germany, most German Jews survived through the precarious protection of their marriage to 'Aryan' Germans aka 'Germans'.[69] In general, many Jews of the First Generation were married to non-Jews as they had married their non-Jewish spouses before (German Jews) or after the Shoah (DPs) as potential Jewish spouses lacked.[70] Historian Kauders found that many wives of functionaries of revived Jewish communities after 1945 were non-Jewish women.

Sociologist Lynn Rapaport describes how the parents of her Second-Generation interview partners[71] from Frankfurt am Main demanded that their children will not become romantically involved with 'Germans'. To marry a German was worse than marrying a non-Jew, clarifying that German was a special category of non-Jews. Rapaport observed a pronounced ethnicized boundary between Jews vis-à-vis Germans. German was used as shorthand for non-Jewish German. This boundary, the lines drawn between themselves and Germans, worked to protect and solidify a sense of community, based on the collective experience, and memory of the Shoah.[72] Furthermore, being German was described in terms of 'polluting categories' or as synonym for Nazi.[73] If Jews got involved with Germans, they tended to define their significant other as an exception, as 'non-typical German'.[74] Rapaport interpreted this as the shifting of these Germans into a different category, away from Germans, to regular non-Jews. Nonetheless, many of Rapaport's interview partners had 'German lovers', yet the crossing of the lines always caused conflicts and emotional turmoil in their lives.[75] Each handled the breaking of the rule 'Thou shall not become romantically involved with Germans' differently, from hiding it to living together but not being married to marriages that were at first or thoroughly rejected by their family.[76] Women had to deal with the situation differently than men, as the rule was gendered: it was more acceptable for men than for women to break it, which Psychoanalyst Kurt can be statistically evidenced.[77]

Grünberg in his study about the love relationships of the Second Generation writes of 'special difficulties' concerning relationships with non-Jews and specifically with German partners.[78] He reflects that the use of the juxtaposition 'Germans and Jews' is indicative of a 'deep-seated conflict': Is one to understand that Jews in Germany are not Germans? Is it even possible to be both German and a Jew 'in view of the rift formed between them by the graves of six million murdered Jews'?[79] In Germany, love relationships with German non-Jews are 'probably the most intimate contact' between the descendants of survivors and persecutors, a contact that takes place in a very concrete and embodied way, not as theoretical abstraction.[80] As an example, Grünberg mentions how the Nazi past of the parents of the German partner burdens the love relationship. He observed parental pressure to choose Jewish partners and difficulties concerning having children with non-Jews (in the respective case, a Jewish woman feels unable to have a child with a non-Jewish German man). In Rapaport's and Grünberg's studies, one can clearly see how the aftermaths of the Shoah and the racialized binary 'Jews and Germans' (both as a Nazi

categorization as well as a consequence of the experiences of persecution) influence emotions and relationships.

A lot has changed since these studies have been conducted. In fact, these studies illustrate how much and how fast the situation has changed since then 1980s and 1990s. Particularly through the Jewish migration from post-Soviet countries in the 1990s to 2000s and from Israel since the 2000s, the Jewish population in Germany today is different in composition and increased in numbers. There is no longer a majority of survivors and their immediate descendants, i.e., the Second Generation, but a highly diverse following generation, which anthropologist Dani Kranz calls 'the third generation writ small.'[81] She proposes the term third generation in lower case (in contrast to Third Generation, the grandchildren of survivors and DPs) to indicate that it is not a generation in the sense of shared experiences, but an age cohort. The third generation displays a high diversity of love, intimate and erotic choices, bearing more similarities to the non-Jewish majority society than previous generation. The empirical studies that have been conducted suggest that love relationships and questions of identity and belonging – in this case, different ways to be Jewish, halachically recognized or not, eligible for community membership or not, passing on Jewishness to future children, conversion, the relationship to non-Jews and the historical baggage of the Nazi past – are closely connected. While Rapaport asserted that the Shoah was the defining element of Jewish identity in Germany, this is certainly no longer the case for the third generation: there is not one Jewish identity to be observed, but many 'Jewishnesses.'[82]

Ethnologist Alina Gromova and cultural studies scholar Ekaterina Supyan, as well as sociologist Karen Körber, find that there is a certain in-group affinity amongst Russian-speaking Jews.[83] Supyan found that it is particularly important for secular men to find a halachically Jewish wife as they want their future children to be officially recognized as Jews and are afraid of 'underlying differences' which might cause problems in a relationship with a non-Jewish woman.[84] Gromova finds that for young Russian-speaking Jews in Berlin, searching for a Jewish partner in order to raise a Jewish family gains importance even though she observes a 'frequent non-identification with the Jewish official institutions.'[85] Many of her interview partners were children of secular Jewish parents in interreligious marriages and one reason for their children to wish for a Jewish partner was 'intensive dealing with problems their own parents were confronted with as a result of their inter-religious marriage'.[86] As the quantitative data collected by sociologist Judith Kessler in 2002 in the Jewish community in Berlin suggests, Russian-speaking Jews of former FSU countries were not more likely to be intermarried than other Jews in Germany, and that a higher proportion of them expressed the wish that their children form relationships with fellow Jews.[87] Russian-speaking Jews with post-Soviet background thus searched not only for a Jewish partner, but one that would share their language and background. Kranz interprets this as an important shift in relation to the Second Generation, in which a specific brand of taken for granted (Russian-speaking) Jewishness becomes a desirable trait of a potential partner (see Kranz in this issue). Yet, given the relatively small size of the Jewish population in Germany, the search for a Jewish partner is not easy.

In fact, a high percentage of Jews in Germany are in relationships with non-Jews.[88] Religious studies scholar Brigitta Scherhans researches Jewish-Christian couples and asserts that those couples are an 'equally tabooed and widespread phenomenon.'[89] She

found that children for the most part are raised Jewish. Nevertheless, many fears exist that interrelationships might pose a threat to Jewish identity and continuity. This fear, however, is less publicly debated in Germany than, for example, the US.[90] There are no interreligious marriage ceremonies performed by rabbis in Germany as of now, and most communities find the dealing with non-Jewish partners and halachically non-Jewish children difficult – as it stands, the children of non-Jewish mothers and Jewish father are not eligible for membership.[91] Kauders believes that the treatment of so-called mixed marriages will be decisive for the future of Jewish communities in Germany.[92] The orthodox interpretation of Halacha and the subsequent politics of belonging make for controversy in many Jewish communities worldwide, and the tightening of the Jewish/non-Jewish boundary is aftermath of the Shoah, which, in situ, is particularly pronounced. Without going into too many details it is important to bear in mind that most Jewish communities are organized as unified communities (*Einheitsgemeinden*), which follow an orthodox rite because religious matters after the Shoah rested mostly in the hands of survivors from Eastern Europe, who constituted the majority of the re-established communities upon the foundation of the *Einheitsgemeinde* in 1950. Prior to this point German Jews, and DPs had established separate structures.[93] It only owed to practical reasons that the *Einheitsgemeinde* was founded: difference in belonging, opinion, religious praxes – sojourning vs. living in Germany, intermarriage and the relationship to Israel were hotly debated from day one. The foundation of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany in 1997 does not only owe to difference in religious practice, it intersects with the aforementioned topics. That it was founded in the 1990s is also no coincidence: owing to the post-Soviet migration the memberships of the unified community increased from 27,711 in 1989 to 67,471 in 1997.[94] Interestingly, as Kranz underlines, the number of members who fall within the bracket Frist, Second, and Third Generation, i.e., no Soviet or post-Soviet background decreased from 28,081 in 1990 to 17,902 in 2000: the community that Grünberg, Kauders and Rapaport had researched was dwindling away. The tiny numbers underline once more just how difficult it was to find a Jewish partner and they indicate why JDate, a dating service geared at Jews, never took off in Germany (see Kranz in this issue).

While the analysis of biographies and relationships, and particularly the consideration of children of interrelationships who question clear-cut categories, show that the meanings of the term 'Jew/ish' and 'German' shift situationally, the impact of the Shoah on intergroup relations cannot be denied. This has its bearings on love relationships and emotions of the third generation as well. Sociologist Larissa Remennick observes in her fieldwork amongst Israelis in Berlin that many of the younger ones had experienced intimate relationships with 'Germans' (meaning German non-Jews) and that 'many Israelis were attracted to Germans (and vice versa) out of curiosity and precisely because of the dark historical legacies'.[95] Likewise, Dani Kranz and political scientist Hadas Cohen find that 'the specific baggage from the German/Jewish/Israeli shared history' impacts the lives of Israelis in Berlin, while in other aspects they might not be different from other migrants.[96] We can see here that, in the third generation, the binary 'Jews' and 'Germans' still plays a role, yet it is less pronounced than in the Second Generation. To flesh out the details, I will look more closely on one case from my own research. The findings of generational differences are provisional as additional research is needed to spell the differences out in a systematic way (see Kranz in this issue). In my research, I seek to

explore the (post)modern love experiences of my Jewish interview partners. It is the first project in Germany to focus on love experiences of Jews of third generation as a whole, underlining both the lacunae of research on the Jewish present and in particular empirical research, and the lack of research on romantic, intimate love of and between members of groups in a postgenocidal nexus. One aspect in my analysis is how the mentioned aftermaths/legacies/baggage of the Nazi past bears on relationships and emotions in the present. I place an emphasis on my respondents' agency and their (biographical) strategies to work through this baggage and to go beyond it.[97] I will now present excerpts from the interview with Elisabeth, focusing on the sometimes solid, sometimes shifting meanings of 'Jews' and 'Germans' in her narration. Her narration is very long and complex, and it should be noted that while I zoom in on the instances when she talks about 'Jews' and 'Germans', this is only one aspect of her narration amongst many others.

4. "At first glance, the combination of Jewish and German may be difficult"[98]

I interviewed Elisabeth in 2018 at her kitchen table in a city in Western Germany. She was born the early 1990s in a post-Soviet country and immigrated as a child with her parents to Germany under the quota refugee legislation.[99] She went to a Jewish primary school and learnt about many aspects of Judaism as religion and culture that her parents were not brought up with. She explains her parent's lack of knowledge of traditions and heritage by referring to her family history and the experience of persecution. Her maternal grand-grandmother was born in Germany and migrated to Elisabeth's country of birth at the end of the 19th century. She was a 'quite religious' person. During the Second World War, she had to flee with her children, amongst them Elisabeth's grandmother, further into the Soviet Union and later returned. As a consequence of her experience, she did not pass on Jewish religion or knowledge to her children:

> Because it was always connected with annihilation, with problems, with exclusion, that's why she didn't — definitely she no longer lived it religiously but rather culturally so you could still feel it most strongly in that she sang a lot of songs in Yiddish, she sewed a lot and sang while sewing.

Her parents nevertheless moved in Jewish circles. Sociologist Darja Klingenberg describes the self-conception of urban middle-class Jews as 'situative, pragmatic [Jewish] belonging, closely amalgamated with Soviet and Russian culture.'[100] Jewishness was listed as their nationality in their passports. Upon the arrival in Germany, it became Elisabeth's task to 'bring Judaism back home.' In the beginning, however, she was labeled by the other children in school as a 'Russian' in contrast to a 'Jew'. She did not understand what happened, but sensed that it made her parents sad. Her experience illustrates the interplay of different racial, ethnic, and national categorizations and how one can fall between all of them:

> Because they also noticed in everyday life the (pause) ((takes a breath)) feeling of not being welcome anywhere. That was simply present for a while (pause) Because in the former Soviet Union they were the Jews although they didn't have anything Jewish about them, they didn't know that from home. ((takes a breath)) Nevertheless, according to their passports, they were Jews and they felt it again and again in a negative way and when they arrived in Germany,

> they were the Russians. So, in the end, what were they? You didn't really feel like you belonged anywhere and I felt that too. ((takes a breath)) But that changed quickly.

Here, and elsewhere in her narration, she mentions difficult experiences, but immediately downplays them or puts an emphasis on her agency and how she got through it. She frequently contrasts her experience with that of others (other Jewish migrants from the former SU and other Jews in Germany) who had it worse. She recounts how she enjoyed learning about the holidays, singing songs, and learning Hebrew (alongside German). She is not religious and understands Jewishness as something cultural and emotional and as being part of a 'community of fate' *(Schicksalsgemeinschaft)*. In contrast to her parents, Jewishness is an 'unburdened' identity for her. She concedes that this has to do with the fact that she is not visibly recognizable as a Jew, i.e., she does not carry religious symbols, and this makes her less vulnerable to antisemitism. After primary school, she decided to go to a 'German' secondary school, because she wanted 'not only to see this Jewish world.' It seemed 'unnatural' to her to 'live in Germany and not have German friends.' In this school, she met her first boyfriend with whom she was together for some years: 'His name was Max, he was German, both of his parents were Germans.' Implicitly, this is the first reference to a binary of 'Jews' and 'Germans', in the following related to different family histories and particularly to a failure to come to terms with the material and psychological legacies of National Socialism.

They shared many formative first experiences and had a very close and supportive relationship. However — Elisabeth took a deep breath here which indicates that a complex topic follows — they had repeated conflicts because he regularly visited his grandparents. She recounted:

> Elisabeth: At the beginning, I was very excited and totally looking forward to meeting his grandparents. (pause) Can I be totally honest?
>
> Ina: Yes! Definitely.
>
> E.: I actually thought they would like me very much. I didn't want to stage myself as the perfect daughter-in-law, but I was quite confident that they would like me because I was always very friendly, I brought something home-baked, I knew that education was everything for them and I was a good student, and I didn't assume that they would give me the feeling that I wasn't really welcome. But unfortunately, it was like that. (pause) For God's sake I don't want to accuse them of — I don't think it was antisemitism, that would be way too much. But it was definitely something foreign for them. When it was about me and my past, especially this Russian background. (pause) I think they just didn't like to hear that. I could tell. I just felt this atmosphere. There was silence and no questions were asked and I found that very rude."

She positions them as 'rude', not as antisemitic; she herself is 'Russian' or 'foreign' and not 'a Jew'. This can be interpreted as biographical strategy to process hurtful experiences, and at the same time avoid to assume the vulnerable position of 'angry or critical Jew'.[101] Her (emphatic) avoidance to frame it as antisemitism, and/or racism and/or antislavism, might point to the fact that they are taken for granted 'background noise' of her lifeworld (*Lebenswelt)* as well as the prevalence of dethematisation in public and academic discourses.[102] We are left to wonder what the message is that she sends them – just by being in their midst – that they 'didn't like to hear'. Max's family also lacked empathy and displayed pronounced coldness and indifference to her feelings. One morning, while setting the breakfast table at his grandparent's place, she found dishes with

Hakenkreuze in the cupboard. She confronted Max who asked his grandparents who just shrugged it off. She recounts what they said:

> Oh well, it's a good cup. You can still use it as a cup and it's actually- Well, it's part of history. It's like a relic. Why should we throw it away now? It's just somehow part of our history, a black, a bad part, but you can still use it as a cup.

What hurt her most was that Max accepted their behavior and remained silent. Not only that, but he asked her to stop coming to family gatherings because it made him uncomfortable. One is reminded here of Hannah Arendt's observations about 'Germans' in 1950:

> This general lack of emotion, at any rate this apparent heartlessness, sometimes covered over with cheap sentimentality, is only the most conspicuous outward symptom of a deep-rooted, stubborn, and at times vicious refusal to face and come to terms with what really happened.[103]

In contrast, Max is welcomed by her family despite some language barriers. They never put any pressure on her or told her 'it would be nicer if you would have a Jewish boyfriend.' She tells me that her happiness is the most important thing for her parents: 'So if he is German, let him be German!' Her larger family was surprised sometimes because:

> Of course, at first glance, the combination of Jewish and German may be difficult due to history, but thanks God we don't live in that time and one can deal with these topics in a reflective way. It really is a matter above all of sensitivity I think, which unfortunately his [Max's] family did not have in my eyes.

Sometimes, relatives of hers teased her and commented on Max's blond hair and blue eyes. Those features evoked the association of the racist invention of 'Aryans' as opposed to Jews:

> She [a relative] said: Ah, he is not only German but also a (pause) prototype of a perfect- I don't think she used the word Aryan I'm just saying that because at that moment it [the word] was probably like an elephant in the room but she just found it funny.

She reacted to this kind of teasing by saying that he is an 'intelligent, handsome young man', and goes on to recount her reaction:

> Latin American, African, Chinese, it doesn't matter as long as you are a good person!

By this, she puts him in the category of a non-Jew, rather than German, disassociating him from the image of the 'Aryan' and his — personal — familial links to the National Socialist past. This allows her to understand their differences as 'cultural differences', rather than a confrontation with a hostile 'German' family,

Increasingly, Max and Elisabeth developed different visions of their future. While he wanted to 'do whatever he wants' and work in many different places abroad, she wanted the certainty and reliability that they would eventually settle down and have children. In the end, he breaks up with her. Retrospectively, she interprets their conflicts as arising from 'cultural differences' between them which coincided with making new friends who 'were not only Jews, but shared my interest in education and had similar family backgrounds'. It becomes clear that with 'cultural

difference' she does not mean a difference between a 'Jewish' and 'German' culture, but the exposure to dis/similar experiences, family histories, and living situations, in her case the experiences of descendants of post-Soviet quota refugees in Germany (as opposed to the experiences of a German with a non-migration background):

> Because you often speak a certain language so to speak, it's a nice feeling of- You know what I know. Foods, songs, jokes and so on or your parents had the same problems, too.

She felt that this shared background makes things easier in relationships and consequently, she changed her dating preferences. Whereas before, it did not matter to her if her boyfriend would be Jewish or non-Jewish (she sticks with her transformation of Max from a 'German' to a 'non-Jew'), now it became 'a plus, but not a must'. Here, we can see what Kranz describes as 'specific brand of Jewishness' of Russian-speaking Jews of the third generation, which is valued and sought in a partner (see Kranz in this volume). It also becomes clear that 'cultural differences' as an interpretation of what went wrong between them emerges at the point in her life when she started identifying herself more strongly with a specific Jewish in-group. However, I want to contend that the troubles in their love relationship are not related to cultural differences per se, but that 'cultural differences' becomes a code for different family histories and how one deals or does not deal with them.

She met Ben, another Russian-speaking Jew, who also had troubles with his girlfriend, Lena, who was 'also German'. In Elisabeth's view, the problems resulted, just like in her relationship with Max, from 'cultural differences', especially the question if one wants to have children or not. Lena, just like Max, was not sure. A Russian-speaking Jewish partner comes to embody here a more reliable, family-oriented partner. Ben and Lena also break up and after some time, he and Elisabeth start a relationship. At the time of the interview, they have been a couple for almost four years. Being descendants of quota-refugees makes their daily life easier. Despite conflicts regarding who does the laundry,[104] they are on the same page about the big things: they eventually want to have children and own real estate. When she went to secondary school, being German was something to aspire to: be successful, belong to the upper educated middle class, live in an aesthetic *Altbauwohnung*, and have a carefree approach to money.[105] Many of her 'German friends' parents' were educators, lawyers, or doctors, many of their grandparents owned real estate. This stood in contrast with her family's reality because they lived under crowded circumstances when they arrived in Germany and her parent's university degrees were not recognized. Here, we can see that 'German' stands for prosperity and economic safety, something which paradoxically she can only envision together with her new partner, whom she does not describe as 'German'. This must be contextualized with what Klingenberg describes as 'an open or latent unease of the German majority society towards status- and self-confident migrants', and might be interpreted as a strategy to 'repair' the status loss of her parents.[106]

When I asked her if she describes herself as a German, she started to talk about citizenship, and how important it is for her that she got a German passport as a sign of belonging. She grew up in Germany and knows nothing about her country of birth. She elaborates:

> It is always an interesting question this thing — Jewish, German, German Jew or Jewish German — (claps) I honestly don't see such a huge difference. I simply have both inside me. [. . .] And in some aspects I am almost completely Russian I would say [. . .] And what stands in the foreground depends on the situation. There are situations in which I have to be more German, I have to play according to certain rules. And I like to do that! [. . .] But what does it mean exactly to behave more German, that is so difficult to describe. [. . .] It is often dependent on the situation and it's also okay to play with it, I would say.

She hints at the fact that this can become a burden but does not elaborate. In the light of the long-standing sociological idiom of the management of stigmatized identities that goes back to Erving Goffman, it is fascinating how Elisabeth experiences the code switching as part of her agency.[107] However, she recounted the limits of these multiple layers and how she is reduced to being a Jew by her surroundings. Finally, increasingly open antisemitism in Germany and her intensified, work-related, engagement with the Shoah unsettle her. While she was not interested in Israel when she was younger, today it gives her a feeling of safety in case 'the worst comes to the worst.' This worst took shape after 7 October 2023, in Israel, and with immediate effect on German streets, challenging the complex relations of Jews and non-Jews in the country, and leading to retraumatizations to Jews across all subgroups in Germany.[108]

5. Conclusion: a melancholy enterprise

In Elisabeth's narration, we can see that the categories 'Jews' and 'Germans' take on several meanings. She uses them to describe different family pasts and experiences, particularly related to the Shoah and its aftermath, to describe cultural differences, differences in dating practices and class differences. However, she also perceives both aspects, Germanness and Jewishness, to be part of her identity, and she can 'play' with it within certain limits. Depending on the situation, different aspects stand in the foreground of her kaleidoscopic identity.[109] What she describes as her self-identification as a Jew (emotional belonging to a group she shares a culture and feel comfortable with) can be analyzed by applying the heuristic of ethnicity as proposed by Hall. It can also be applied to describe intra-group differences, in this case of Russian-speaking Jews as specific ingroup. Likewise, German can become a part of her identity by relating it to class-related meanings such as striving for ownership of real estate, the mastery of the intricacies of German grammar and bureaucracy, and citizenship. Her narration also shows the intersectionality of her identity and experience — being Jewish is no paramount parameter for her experiences, other aspects are just as relevant such as being 'Russian' (it is an open question how this might have changed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine), her class/socioeconomic status and her gender. Therefore, we can see that the categories 'Jews' and 'German' work on two levels: on an individual level, where they can be appropriated and 'played' with, and on the level of power relations that existed in the past and continue to exist in the present. The heuristic of race of CRT can be used to analyze the aftermaths of a violent past. We still lack a term that could, in one word, capture the aftermaths of National Socialism, and the Shoah, as manifested for example in Elisabeth' encounter with the grandparents of her ex-boyfriend. In their encounters, Elisabeth is reduced to being a 'Jew and/or 'Russian' and the psychological as well as

material baggage of the Nazi time of her 'German' ex-partner and his family, normally swept under the rug, becomes apparent. In this context, it is important to name the positionality of 'Germans', often not named, but perceived as the norm, that benefit in numerous ways from the Nazi past and enjoy the privilege of the dominant majority position: Antmann uses 'wc-German', Elisabeth mentions 'Kartoffel', others propose 'people with Nazi background' (its important though to note that these are not and should not be appropriated as affirmative or apologetic self-descriptions).[110] In this sense, the binary 'Jew and Germans' is not outdated as it is found in narrations/interview data and has its impact on emotions and relationships, even though it is at the same time clear that it is a social construction because people do not live in these boxes, and because, to come back to Scholem's formulation not all 'Jews' are Jew, not all 'Germans' are German.[111] Yet, looking for the reverberations of the binary construction 'Jews' vs. 'Germans' in interview data is an important step of a sociological analysis of the Jewish present in Germany. This is, in Scholem's words, a 'melancholy enterprise [. . .] a dispassionate consideration or analysis of the matter seems almost impossible'.[112] It is part of navigating a still fraught politics of location in post-Shoah Germany and to deal with the aftermaths of history – as Elisabeth puts it – with sensitivity.

The interview with Elisabeth was conducted in 2018. The fleeting character, the ability to be both, Jewish and German, to connect to both has been seriously challenged after 7 October 2023, and might have also changed Elisabeth's experiences. Friendships and relationships are burdened by this, or have broken down. As one respondent related:

> Even if a non-Jewish partner is supportive, it is extremely difficult to deal with a partner who is experiencing trauma that you yourself can hardly follow.

Antisemitism broke loose immediately and at levels not known since 1945, underlining that it was dormant, and certainly not an effect of Israeli military action in Gaza. Categorical boundaries, between Jews, and Germans, and between Jews and non-Jews, hardened, and became essentialized, shifting back to ethnicized boundaries which Rapaport had observed for the Second Generation.[113] The question is if, indeed, Jews, Germans, and other non-Jews have learned something from their violently racialized past, and if this knowledge enables them to be empathetic. If this is not the case, it stands to reason that Jewish German, and Jewish non-Jewish relations will shift back to the status quo of Rapaport's and Grünberg's early research, and that some, individual, special Germans/non-Jews will be exonerated into a special category by the individual Jews who love them as their significant others.

Notes

1. Sharon P. Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 17.
2. Stefanie Oswalt, "Papa Ist Moslem. Mama Ist Jüdin. Punkt,": Religionsverschiedene Ehen in Deutschland (2017), https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/interreligioese-beziehungen-papa-ist-moslem-mama-ist-juedin.1278.de.html?dram:article_id=423446 (accessed April 2, 2019), 14.
3. Unless otherwise noted, translations from German to English are mine.
4. I use the term Shoah and not Holocaust to more directly address in this contribution the experiences of Jews.

5. Oswalt, "Papa ist Moslem", 14.
6. E.g. Martin Buber, "Das Ende der deutsch-jüdischen Symbiose," in *Schriften zur politischen Philosophie und Sozialphilosophie* Band 11, ed. Franceso Ferrari, Stefano Franchini, Massimiliano de Villa, 707–709 (Güthersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2019 [1939]); Dan Diner, 'Negative Symbiose: Deutsche und Juden nach Auschwitz,' *Babylon. Beiträge zur jüdischen Gegenwart*, no. 1 (1986), 9–20.
7. Gideon Reuveni, "The Future of the German-Jewish Past Starts Here." In *The Future of the German-Jewish Past: Memory and the Question of Antisemitism*, ed. Gideon Reuveni, Diana Franklin, xiv – xxiv (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2021), xvi.
8. Adrianne Rich, "Notes Towards a Politics of Location," in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose 1979–1985*, ed. Adrianne Rich, (London: Virago, 1986), 210–31.
9. Oswalt, 'Papa ist Moslem', 14.
10. Max Czollek, *Desintegriert Euch!* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2018), 10.
11. Howard Winant, "The Theoretical Status of the Concept of Race," in *Theories of Race and Racism*, ed. Les Back, John Solomos, 181–190 (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), 185.
12. Hannah Peaceman. 'Wer sind "Wir"? Jüdische Kollektivität in Deutschland: Heterogenität als Potential für Gemeinschaftsbildung,' In *Neues Judentum – altes Erinnern? Zeiträume des Gedenkens*, ed. Dmitrij Belkin, Lara Hensch, Eva Lezzi, 117–130. (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2017), 124–127.
13. Dani Kranz: "Living and Loving Jews in the German Present: Jewish Life Beyond the Past, and Beyond Antisemitism. Review Essay," *FQS* 22, no.1 (2021), n.p.
14. Personal correspondence with Dani Kranz.
15. Czollek, *Desintegriert Euch!*, 10. See also, Y.M. Bodemann, "The State in the Construction of Ethnicity and Ideological Labor: The Case of German Jewry," *Critical Sociology* 17, no. 3 (1990), 35–46.
16. Gershom Scholem, "Jews and Germans," in *On Jews and Judaism in Crisis*, ed. Werner J. Dannhauser, 71–93 (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2012), 86.
17. Scott Spector, "Forget Assimilation: Introducing Subjectivity to German–Jewish History," *Jewish History* 20, no. 3–4 (2006): 349–361.
18. This and the following two quotes are all from Scholem, "Jews and Germans", 72.
19. Stuart Hall, "Fantasy, Identity, Politics," in *Cultural Remix. Theories of the Politics and the* Popular, ed. Erica Carter, James Donald, Judith Squires, 63–69 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1995), 66.
20. Spector, "Forget Assimilation," 350.
21. I was provoked to think about this point in the context of my research when I read a book by legal scholar Rachel M. Moran. She writes about the US context that we need to weight 'the bonds of love in the racially divided world that we know against bonds that might have been in a world free of discrimination'. See Rachel M. Moran, *Interracial Intimacy. The Regulation of Race and Romance* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003), 15.
22. About how the past reaches into the present see also: Micha Brumlik et al. (ed.), *Gegenwartsbewältigung. Jalta. Positionen zur jüdischen Gegenwart No. 4* (Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2018).
23. Rita Chin et al. (ed.), *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009).
24. The name is a pseudonym my interview partner chose for herself; places and other identifiable information have been anonymized.
25. Y. M. Bodemann, ed., *Gedächtnistheater: Die jüdische Gemeinschaft und ihre deutsche Erfindung* (Hamburg: Rotbuch-Verlag, 1996), 19.
26. Spector, "Forget Assimilation," 357.
27. Cf. Helma Lutz, "Intersektionelle Biographieforschung," in *Handbuch Biographieforschung*, ed. Helma Lutz, Martina Schiebel, Elisabeth Tuider, 139–150 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017), 141.
28. Chin et al., *After the Nazi Racial State*, 3.

29. Adorno, Theodor W., *Gesammelte Schriften: Vol. 9.2*. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003 [1954]), 276.
30. Doron Avraham "The 'Racialization' of Jewish Self-Identity: The Response to Exclusion in Nazi Germany, 1933–1938", in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 19, no. 3 (2013), 354–374.
31. Jean Améry, "On the Necessity and Impossibility of Being a Jew," in New German Critique, 2, no. 20 (1980), 17.
32. Chin et al., *After the Nazi Racial State,* 3; Lederhendler, Eli (ed.) *Ethnicity and Beyond: Theories and Dilemmas of Jewish Group Demarcation*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
33. Hall, Stuart Hall, *The Fateful Triangle: Race, Ethnicity, Nation*, ed. Kobena Mercer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017), 79
34. *Fantasy*, 67.
35. Marietta van der Tol and Elisabeth Becker: 'What's ethnicity got to do with it? Religious and Racial Politics in Europe,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, (2024), 1–20.
36. Quotes from my interview with Elisabeth, translations from German to English are mine.
37. Those categories refer to ascribed socio-historical positions and ideological construction of skin color. Black (capitalized) as well as People of Color refers to an affirmative identity and selfdescription. See: Susanne Arndt, "Mythen des weißen Subjekts: Verleugnung undHierarchisierung von Rassismus," in Mythen, Masken und Subjekte. KritischeWeißseinsforschung in Deutschland, ed. Maureen Eggers et al., 340–362 (Münster: Unrast, 2005).
38. Sara Ahmed, 'Racialized Bodies,' in *Real Bodies*. *A Sociological Introduction*, ed. Mary Evans, Ellie Lee, 46–63 (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 47.
39. In bell hooks, "Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance," in *Media and Cultural Studies: Key Works*, ed. Meenakshi G. Durham and Douglas M. Keller, 366–380 (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 371.
40. Winant, "Theoretical Status," 181.
41. Robert S. Chang, "Critiquing 'Race' and Its Uses: Critical Race Theorie's Uncompleted Argument," in *Crossroads, Directions, and a New Critical Race Theory*, ed. Francisco Valdes, Angela Harris, Jerome McCristal Culp, 87–96 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 87.
42. Ibid., 88.
43. Richard Dyer, "The Matter of Whiteness," in *White Privilege: Essential Readings of the Other Side of Racism*, ed. Paula S. Rothenberg, 9–14 (New York: Worth Publishers, 2005), 12.
44. Martina Tißberger, *Critical Whiteness* (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2017).
45. Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum: Vol. 1989* no. 1, 139–167.
46. See Helma Lutz and Kathy Davis (ed.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Intersectionality Studies* (New York/London: Routledge, 2023).
47. Davis, Kathy (2008): "Intersectionality as Buzzword. A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful," *Feminist Theory*, no. 9, 67–85.
48. Helma Lutz, María Teresa Herrera Vivar, Linda Supik (ed.), *Fokus Intersektionalität* (Wiesbaden: Springer Verlag, 2013), 20–23.
49. Karin Stögner, "Intersectionality and Anti-Zionism – New Challenges in Feminism," in *Anti-Zionism, Antisemitism, and the Dynamics of Delegitimation*, ed. Alvin Rosenfeld, 84–111 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019); Schraub, David, "White Jews. An Intersectional Approach," *Jewish Studies Review* 43, no. 2 (2019), 379–407.
50. See, for example, Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks & What That Says About Race in* America (New Brunswick: Rudgers University Press, 1998); Jane Lazarre, *Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness. Memoir of a White Mother of Black Sons* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016); Ella Shohat, "The Shaping of Mizrahi Studies: A Relational Approach," *Israel Studies Forum*, Vol. 17, no. 2 (2002): 86–93; Julia Yael Alfandaria and Gil Shohat, "Sind Juden'Jüdinnen weiß?," Meron Mendel, Saba-Nur Cheema (ed.), *Frenemies. Antisemitismus, Rassismus und ihre Kritiker*innen*. (Berlin: Verbrecher Verlag, 2022), 137–142. Judith Coffey and Vivien

Laumann, *Gojnormativität: Warum wir anders über Antisemitismus sprechen müssen* (Berlin: Verbrecher Verlag, 2021).

51. Sociologist Karin Stögner reminds us that intersectional thinking in the German-speaking countries was specifically taken up by critical feminists in the 1980s to criticize and deconstruct the monolithic narrative of victimhood of women under National Socialism. They raised the question of what non-Jewish, German women did during National Socialism, how they became complicit in crimes and became perpetrators. What we need for the German context is more intersectional thinking that does not exclude Jews. See Stögner, *Intersectionality*.
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60. Ibid.,149–199.
61. Ibid., 262.
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67. Ina Schaum, "Love Will Bring us Together (Again)? Nachwirkungen der Shoah in Liebesbeziehungen," in *Die Shoah in Bildung und Erziehung heute. Weitergaben und Wirkungen in Gegenwartsverhältnissen*, ed. Marina Chernivsky, Friederike Lorenz-Sinai, 159–173 (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2022).
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Panagiotidis, "A Policy for the Future: German-Jewish Remigrants, Their Children, and the Politics of Israeli Nation-Building," *The Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 60, no. 1 (2015), 191–206.

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91. However, changes are to be observed, for example the offer of facilitated conversion for patrilinear Jews by liberal Jewish communities. *Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich Studienwerk* (a scholarship foundation geared at gifted Jewish students) as well as *Jüdische Studierendenunion* (Jewish Students' Union) welcome patrilinear Jews, so do the many initiatives and student organizations that have been emerging in the last years. See Anastassia Pletoukhina, *Doing Judaism. Neue Formatierungsprozesse der jüdischen Gemeinschaft in Deutschland*. (Leipzig: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2023).
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97. Ina Schaum, "Love Will Bring us Together (Again)? Nachwirkungen Der Shoah in Liebesbeziehungen," in *Die Shoah in Bildung und Erziehung heute: Weitergaben und Wirkungen in Gegenwartsverhältnissen*, ed. Marina Chernivsky, Friederike Lorenz-Sinai, 159–73 (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2022); Ina Schaum, *Being Jewish (and) in Love: Two and a Half Stories About Jews, Germans and Love* (Leipzig: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2020)
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101. Ibid., 129.
102. Ibid., 125.
103. Hannah Arendt, "The Aftermath of Nazi Rule. Report from Germany," *Commentary* no.10 (1950), 342–353, here p. 342.
104. Cf. Jean-Claude Kaufmann, Dirty Linen: Couples and Their Laundry (London: Middlesex University Press, 1998). [Please add reference]
105. *Altbau* refers to any building of the pre-Second World period. Due to the destruction of buildings in the Second World war, these buildings are rare, and often refurbished turning them into coveted properties of the middle and upper classes.
106. Klingenberg, "Komische Leute," 116.
107. Ervin Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (New York: Touchstone, 1963).
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111. Scholem, "*Jews and Germans", 72.*

112. Ibid., 71.
113. Rapaport, *Jews in Germany*.

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