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Civil Society Resilience During War

Organizing Jewish Life and Culture in
Ukraine After Russia's Full-Scale
Invasion

Noomi Weinryb · Zhanna Kravchenko
Jaakko Turunen · Sofiya Voytiv's

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Noomi Weinryb • Zhanna Kravchenko
Jaakko Turunen • Sofiya Voytiv

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Organizing Jewish Life and Culture in Ukraine
After Russia's Full-Scale Invasion

With Contributions by Yair Lipshitz and Avital Shein

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PREFACE

This book is the product of personal and professional engagement that led to an empirical and theoretical exploration. As Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began in February 2022, we, like many others, experienced a deep will to help those affected by the horrors of the war, and at the same time we struggled with uncertainty as to what to do beyond contributing to various aid collections for those in need. In our earlier professional lives, we had all been engaged in different ways with civil society organizing in Ukraine and/or the organization of European Jewish life and culture. Through personal contacts, we discovered that Paideia, The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden, was looking for a way to support their Ukrainian alumni in the immediate crisis, both those who were sheltering in place and those on the move as refugees.

In collaboration with Paideia, we designed a research project that aimed to collect contemporaneous witness statements from the field, chronicling the events that unfolded during those first precarious months of the invasion. Ten former students answered Paideia's call for participation, indicating that even in such a pressured life situation they could overcome their sense of powerlessness by engaging in a small but meaningful research task. During the months of April through August, 2022, guided by their everyday experiences, these ten research assistants recorded a range of witness statements and on-the-ground observations of the organization of Jewish life and culture with a special focus on contemporaneous crisis work in Ukraine and abroad. These data constituted a substantial empirical basis for this book; it was, when needed, complemented with data collection of our own, zooming in on specific organizational cases.

Generous funding from Annika and Gabriel Urwitz' Stiftelse made grants available to the alumni and enabled coordination between us, securing the quality of data and subsequent coding. Part of the work was funded by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies, Grant 2019-0026. Copyediting as well as Open Access to this book were also supported by the Publication Committee of Södertörn University and Religionsvetenskapliga sällskapet. We want to express our gratitude to these funders, as well as to Paideia, which made this research possible in the first place. We are also grateful to Amari Barash for copyediting this volume with invaluable attention to detail, lending her expertise in English and her insights about Jewish culture.

Most importantly, we recognize that this book would not exist without the efforts of the Paideia alumni. Inspired by your engagement, we have tried to make sense of the unraveling that Russia's full-scale invasion has caused and to document the resilience of the efforts of Jewish civil society and culture organizations in Ukraine. Thank you, Tamara Beregovska, Dmytro Halin, Sophia Korn, Anna Kupinska, Ninel Petrenko, Olena Sharafanenko, Kseniia Yerofeieva, Yuriy Zubov, and those participants who wished to remain anonymous! This book is for you and for all of the other everyday heroes of Ukraine who are giving everything to maintain human dignity in the face of brutal aggression.

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Zhanna Kravchenko
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Sofiya Voytiv

NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND TRANSLITERATION

When performed by us, transliterations of Hebrew script follow the Library of Congress (LOC) system without diacritical marks. However, where organizations' own transliterations—for example, in their names or in directly quoted communications—do not comply with the LOC, we have preserved their spellings. Where names of two organizations containing the same Hebrew word are transliterated differently by different organizations, we unify them for the sake of consistency and in compliance with LOC (e.g. “Hesed Shaare Tikva” has been respelled as “Hesed Shaarei Tikva” to match “Hesed Shaarei Tsion”).

With regard to place names, language politics in Ukraine are complex, and the spellings of some city names have changed since Ukrainian independence. We recognize the sensitivity of the topic and choose to follow the spellings accepted by the Ukrainian authorities when it comes to all geographical locations. However, when city names are integrated into romanized organization names, we reproduce the organizations' names as they are. For instance, while we refer to the city as “Odesa” throughout this text, we spell “Hillel Odessa” as it is documented in our raw empirical data.

In several cases, when referring to Jewish organizations in Ukraine, we translate their names into English and provide their original names, in Ukrainian without transliteration, in parentheses.

All translations from Hebrew, Russian, and Ukrainian are the authors' unless otherwise indicated.

Praise for *Civil Society Resilience During War*

“This excellent book captures the resilience that civil society exhibits in difficult circumstances, through the eyes of Jewish people in Ukraine mainly following the Russian invasion in 2022. Theoretically informed, resilience is explored in terms of place-making, fundraising and its legitimacy, sensemaking as to identity, and collaborations based on regional and religious affiliations. Local and international support is essential to Jewish organisations’ resilience in these extreme circumstances.

The wide range of empirical materials collected within Ukraine, online and through a team of researchers enables the use of quantitative social network analysis, MAXQDA and qualitative analysis. Combined, the authors weave their rich research to reflect on the institutional and structural fields within which resilient civil society organisations operate in a country at war, seeking to ‘bounce forward’ to a new normal despite the uncertain environment in which they operate. This is a worthy addition to our understanding of civil society resilience.”

—Carolyn Cordery, *Adjunct Professor of Accounting at Victoria University of Wellington; President, ISTR (International Society for Third-Sector Research)*

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CHAPTER 1

Exploring the Organizing of Civil Society Resilience

*Noomi Weinryb, Zhanna Kravchenko, Avital Shein,
Jaakko Turunen, and Sofiya Voytiv*

INTRODUCTION AND AIM

The result of the joint efforts presented in this volume is by no means an attempt to comprehensively cover the consequences of Russia's full-scale invasion across the entire field of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine, as such a task is beyond the ambition and ability of our work. What we strive to do, however, is to present some of the richness and resilience of the organization of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine by showcasing a range of different responses and ways to maintain it despite the state of disaster caused by Russia's full-scale invasion. As the field of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine is complex and multifaceted with a long and rich history, this book covers a variety of aspects of the organizing of Jewish life and culture during the first months of the war, ranging from Jewish traditions to humanitarian work, from single case studies to cross-organizational analysis of specific phenomena. In this endeavor, we relate to current organizational efforts to mitigate the effects of war, recognizing that this organizing is taking place against the backdrop not only of Jewish beliefs and traditions, but also of symbols and history that are specific to the Ukrainian Jewish experience.

The book includes both single case studies and analyses of multiorganizational networks, focusing both on symbolic and material aspects of resilience and civil society organizing. Despite the variety of empirical phenomena analyzed in the chapters, they all relate to a larger theoretical aim of the book: to learn more about change and resilience in civil society organizing in the extreme context of war by studying the organization of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine following Russia's full-scale invasion. Through various methodological approaches and empirical foci, the chapters coalesce into a larger story on this topic.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptually, we are interested in the development of civil society resilience during a state of war. This conceptual perspective can be broken down into three interrelated parts: civil society, organizing, and resilience. Firstly, by *civil society* we refer to that part of society that exists as part of neither the state (elected politicians and public administration) nor the business sphere, in which the overarching goal is to generate profit:

The words 'civil society' name the space of uncoerced human association as well as the set of relational networks—formed for the sake of family, faith, interest, and ideology—that fill this space. (Walzer, 1992, p. 1)

Civil society has associational elements that constitute its core, but it also signifies coordinated individual action to bring about a good life and a vibrant public sphere (Edwards, 2009). Under this large umbrella fits everything from small, new, local, and informal initiatives made up of groups of individuals to large, old, formal, and national (or even transnational) organizations. Civil society is sometimes also referred to as the third or nonprofit sector (Salamon & Anheier, 1997, 1998). We choose to use the term “civil society” here in order to emphasize the civic act of these organizational efforts, meaning that people and organizations engage in a variety of actions to create and uphold communities under threatening or even dire circumstances.

Civil society organizing of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine may be viewed as an organizational field, being both an institutionally recognized collective and a relational space (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). More specifically, this means that the Jewish organizations we examine here all had, in some way, a pre-invasion focus on maintaining and promoting Jewish life and culture in Ukraine or providing succor to vulnerable Jewish people. In network theory, such organizations

can be referred to as having a focus of activity, which in turn is structured by the social actors involved (Feld, 1981). Yet organizations also have relationships with others that do not share the same focus. This, in turn, provides connections that can be used to expand or redirect the original organizational focus, for example, in times of war.

Jewish organizations in Europe, and in Ukraine specifically, are of particular interest in this context as they are all operating to support minority cultural life. This means that their role is to a large extent defined by the perceived needs of Jewish communities in Europe, and Ukraine, to foster sustainability and growth as a minority. As a group of focused organizations, Jewish civil society thus has a purpose which is tied to either sustaining Jewish life or enacting a value (such as helping the needy) that is rooted in Jewish tradition or belief. However, Jewish organizations provide additional interest in that they often interact with one another (both internally in Ukraine and externally with other Jewish organizations in Europe, Israel, or the United States) and must also create supporting networks with other non-Jewish organizations. Thus, the study of Jewish civil society in Ukraine provides a particularly stimulating case that explores resilience in a vibrant and complex organizational field.

Secondly, by the act of *organizing* (Langley & Tsoukas, 2010), we refer to a process of coordinated actions with some specific purpose which includes formal goals as well as the more ad-hoc and vaguely articulated ideas that guide these actions. Such acts of organizing, that is, doing something together for some particular purpose, may be performed both by loosely connected individuals (Turunen & Weinryb, 2020) and within and between organizations. By “organizations”, we mean formal entities for coordinated action according to some pre-defined criteria (Blau & Scott, 1962; Selznick, 1948). It is important to point out that we do not assume that any type of coordinated action with an articulated purpose can be carried out in a precise, pre-planned way, but rather that the intention of the organizing act is somehow coordinated between individuals and/or organizations and follows some kind of mutually agreed-upon direction. Aspects of this type of organizing act are discussed to varying degrees, empirically and conceptually, throughout the chapters of this book. We thus engage with organization theory in a broad sense, looking at both material and symbolic aspects of organizing for resilience, combining institutional perspectives focusing on norms and meaning, and maintaining a contingency focus centered on resources and structures. More specifically, we employ a range of theoretical perspectives studying resilience through place-making, resource mobilization and dependence,

legitimacy, accountability, sensemaking, social networks, and organizational identity.

Thirdly, by using the concept of *resilience*, we wish to study the ability of civil society organizing to coordinate action attempting to create a state of meager stability and safety, or at least to manage uncertainty, for some of those who have been facing the catastrophe that the Russian full-scale invasion has entailed. The term “resilience” may appear to be a buzzword, but perhaps its ubiquity reflects its increased relevance for contemporary societies. Resilience refers to individuals, organizations, social systems, and ecosystems and is commonly defined as an ability to absorb shocks and undergo change while retaining core functions and identity (Walker et al., 2009). Organizational resilience can be seen as an answer to the challenges caused by the growing complexity and difficulty of predicting risks in contemporary societies; it describes the organization’s capacity to withstand and adapt to unknown risks emerging in its environment. The more complex and interconnected societies have become, the more organizations are exposed to unknown challenges. As a result, resilience is often used together with terms such as adaptability and transformability. In this context, resilience refers to the ability of a system to maintain its core characteristics amidst external shocks; adaptability refers to the ability of the units of the system to adjust their modes of operation while maintaining system-wide core characteristics and functions; and transformability refers to the capacity of an organization to change its course to better suit the requirements of a new system (Folke et al., 2010). Resilience as a system-level capacity naturally also involves the collaboration between civil society organizations and the state (Szabó et al., 2023). However, given our focus on Jewish civil society organizations in Ukraine that by and large have operated without much contact with the Ukrainian state, we omit this dimension in our analyses.

Resilience thinking presupposes that organizations are embedded in a system of other organizations and social structures and thus refers to the relationship the organization has with other organizations and social structures surrounding it (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Feld, 1981; Wooten & Hoffman, 2008). Generally, the idea of resilience thinking is that in order to maintain the system’s core functions and identity, the organizations making up the system must adapt to ever-changing conditions. Continuity is assured by the ability to change. This also implies that organizations not only passively react to shocks from the environment but, through their adaptability, contribute to maintaining or transforming the

system. In other words, resilience describes the changing relationship between an organization and its environment. One recent branch of organizational resilience research focuses precisely on organizations' ability to pick up and act on weak cues of coming changes in the environment (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015).

In a broad sense, two different kinds of organizational resilience can be identified (Folke et al., 2010; van der Merwe et al., 2020). *Specified* resilience refers to an organization's specific goals and ability to pursue them successfully in the face of a known risk. For instance, hospitals have generators in case of a blackout. *General* resilience refers to an organization's ability to absorb and bounce back from unknown risks. By "unknown risks", we refer to unpredictable events. To build resilience means to prepare for the things we neither perceive nor understand. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was to some extent an unknown unknown; it soon became a known unknown.

Research on extreme contexts has generated an interesting and timely line of inquiry into the complexity of organizing contingency under unstable and hostile conditions. In their review of the field thus far, Hällgren et al. (2018) provided an instructive categorization of extreme contexts as those entailing emergency or disruptive events, or those that are inherently risky. While insightful, this categorization suffers from a lack of a dynamic perspective as it presupposes that extreme contexts are inherently and consistently extreme in either one of these ways or the other. This is similar to the older contingency school idea that an environment is either stable or unstable and that organizational structure and operations are contingent on this categorization of the environment (Burns, 1963; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). We argue here that research on resilience in extreme contexts, and their contingent organizational consequences, may be further developed by exploring how organizations may oscillate not only between extremity and non-extremity but also between different states of extremity (cf. Hannah et al., 2009).

A state of war is of course both inherently risky and, often, disruptive. To explore this dynamic perspective within extreme contexts, our book explores resilience of civil society organizing as a process of perpetually facing threat and yet accommodating changes and sometimes even bouncing back to an original state after extreme, disruptive events (Williams et al., 2017). The starting point of this book is thus that even in such an extreme context as a war, levels and forms of extremity, and thus also of

organizing, vary (Hannah et al., 2009). We argue that such variation is interesting and important to explore, both empirically and theoretically.

Earlier research on war in Ukraine has highlighted that extreme conditions have challenged traditional approaches to civil society organizing and sometimes also galvanized it (Worschech, 2018). With respect to the 2022 Russian full-scale invasion, Cullen Dunn and Kaliszewska (2023) describe a significant discrepancy between international civil society organizations' slowness to deliver adequate assistance on the ground and small (often temporary) volunteer initiatives' quick and efficient responses to Ukrainians' (especially refugees') various dynamic needs. The authors relate this discrepancy to established patterns of accountability. More specifically, the latter initiatives were enabled by trust, born out of leaps of faith and personal referrals, allowing for sporadic ad-hoc documentation (Cullen Dunn & Kaliszewska, 2023). In many cases, resources were generated through small, often in-kind, donations, and donors/volunteers often had direct access to beneficiaries. Despite these important insights, we still lack information about resilience as it relates to the specific field of Jewish life and culture in this extreme context; additional efforts are also needed to more broadly theorize civil society resilience in the extreme context of war.

In sum, Russia's invasion of Ukraine changed the landscape for Jewish civil society organizing, bringing the ability to adapt to the fore. We hope that this book will contribute to the collective understanding of civil society and resilience with its studies of the organizing of Jewish life and culture during the early part of the Russian war in Ukraine. We also hope that the book will stimulate scholars interested in Jewish culture and life in Ukraine and Europe.

EMPIRICAL MATERIALS

The empirical materials for this book were collected during a two-stage process. Data collected by ten alumni of Paideia, The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden, during the first months of Russia's full-scale invasion (April–August 2022) became our entry point into the field. We expand on this special process below. The materials collected by the Paideia alumni were then supplemented with additional data collected by the authors of this volume's individual chapters. Data collection methods are thus more closely reported in each chapter.

While all participating alumni were previously students in Paideia's educational programs, the nature of their activity and work within Jewish civil society varied. Some of them were employees of Jewish organizations who were well positioned to gather data not only about their own organizations but also of other organizations in their networks. Other alumni were active in broader civil society and were therefore able to gather data on communications and information that flowed between organizations and people on the ground. Among the alumni were some who themselves fled the country following the full-scale invasion and could therefore contribute data specific to displacement and refugee information and services. While the alumni collecting data were given a wide range of possible types of materials to gather and a broad scope of phenomena on which to focus, we took special care to consider the geographical range of their locations, ensuring that the data reflected processes in the big cities as well as smaller locations and even neighboring countries. In each chapter, the final samples used in that particular text are presented and discussed in detail.

We want to emphasize that the data collection was thus to a large degree idiosyncratic, opening windows into the communities and stories that happened to be accessible to each of the alumni engaged in the project. These windows were subsequently expanded by empirical materials gathered by the authors of the different chapters. This means that the empirical materials of the volume are not representative of all civil society organizing of Jewish life and culture that took place during the first months following Russia's full-scale invasion. Rather, they provide a smorgasbord of experiences and perspectives, chronicling part of this important story.

All alumni were given specific instructions on how to collect data for the study, most importantly related to focusing on organizations and acts of organizing (rather than individual-level data), and were supervised. In addition, strict protocols were created for data gathering and storage. At the start and conclusion of data collection, entry and exit interviews were conducted with the alumni gathering the data. These interviews were not part of the data; they served as instructive guides for the subsequent analytical process for each subset of empirical materials after the conclusion of the project.

After reviewing the data and the interviews, we developed a shared code book to specify our thematic interests in the gathered materials in relation to the larger theme of the book. Following the code book, the data were subsequently coded by one of us, fluent in English, Ukrainian,

and Russian. When needed, data segments in Hebrew were translated by other team members fluent in the language. All in all, the data set consisted of 841 documents (screenshots from Facebook and Telegram groups, organizational webpages, and e-newsletters; and photographs).

It is important to note the significance of the data collecting as it was described by alumni participants. In their entry and exit interviews as well as in the various meetings in between, many alumni shared that their work was an emancipatory experience. This experience can be summarized in two ways. First, it provided a way to contextualize and give broader meaning to their experiences of war—not merely as individuals but, significantly, as individuals nestled in organizations responding to war. Secondly, alumni often said that they were eager for their stories to be told and found their contributions important for this reason. Again, they referred not to their stories as individuals but to those of their organizations and communities and how the war affected and redirected the work of organizations in the community. We hope that this interactive method of data collection can inspire others studying resilience in war-torn communities to engage with those suffering from these experiences not only as objects of study but also as subjects contributing to the chronicling of their own stories—and thereby contributing to research in a wider sense (cf. Morris, 2024).

INTRODUCING THE VOLUME

Based on a range of perspectives, three major empirically derived themes running through the chapters of this volume can be seen as its fundamental contributions. Firstly, a central finding of the book is that organizations repurpose activities to meet new societal needs in the face of war. This is particularly pronounced in the shift of many Jewish organizations and organizing efforts from serving primarily Jews to working for all Ukrainians in need. This relates to our second finding, which is the relevance of previous organizing in processes of mobilization in an extreme context. Such previous organizing was not simply and squarely altered in a specific manner to accommodate the new reality of the war; we see a variety of ways in which the new reality has been accommodated. There are, however, indications that previous work can condition some organizations' abilities to reorganize, adapt, and evolve. Thirdly, this resilience process is influenced by a variety of factors such as interorganizational and transnational

connections, the interplay of symbolic and material aspects of organizing, and the flexibility to mobilize different organizational elements to enable crisis responses. These elements play out differently in the different chapters, but all of them figure significantly throughout the book.

In the first empirical chapter, Noomi Weinryb and Yair Lipshitz examine the concept of place-making (Gieryn, 2000) as a part of civil society resilience; they consider the example of Anatevka, a Ukrainian refugee village providing food, housing, education, and medical support for refugees following the Russian invasions of 2014 and 2022. In this case, resilience is manifested in the way an organizational name and its constructed relationship to a particular place may be repurposed in the face of difficulties, also before 2022. The chapter explores how the symbolic meaning of Anatevka's name interacts with the needs and interests of organizational efforts, and how these efforts repurposed and at times subverted earlier connotations linked to Sholem Aleichem's fictional Anatevka. In turn, the chapter shows how this already-cultivated malleability, drawing on symbolic tropes of Jewish and Ukrainian tradition and history, may strengthen the ability to accommodate new activities and target groups at the critical juncture (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007) that the Russian full-scale invasion constitutes.

Zhanna Kravchenko and Noomi Weinryb, in their chapter on resource mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) and legitimacy (Suchman, 1995) as elements of civil society resilience, examine a broad range of Jewish organizations as they reorient their activities to address the social and economic consequences of war and adapt their fundraising strategies and instruments. This analysis shows how standardized forms of accountability can rarely be used in the extreme context of war and thus become supplanted by various alternative forms of legitimacy. More specifically, accounts draw legitimacy that enables their crisis relief work from past competencies and Jewish engagement, but also from the imperative to engage in new contexts and include additional beneficiaries in their work.

The focus of Jaakko Turunen's chapter is sensemaking (Weick, 1995; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015) and civil society resilience, looking at ways in which organizations interpret their environment and construct an understanding of what they should do. Sensemaking provides motivation or rationalization of actions that have already been committed to. The chapter examines two organizations: a Ukraine-wide charity that quickly went from catering for disabled Jewish children to offering general help for all

Ukrainians in need, and a community-based charity in occupied Kherson faced with the task of adapting to wartime disruptions but also having to take into consideration the safety of its own personnel. The analysis reveals that the forms of assistance provided by the organizations retained similarity: material and psychological support for individuals in dire need. Their sensemaking, however, had to be matched to the imminent external threats to their very existence.

In the subsequent chapter, Sofiya Voytiv investigates social networks (McPherson et al., 2001) and civil society resilience by looking at the patterns of collaborations between different Jewish organizations in the context of their larger organizational field. Previous studies of interorganizational networks show that collaborations between civil society organizations are usually based on reputation and on trust, which in turn comes from previous collaborations or the perceived expertise of a potential collaborative partner (Atouba & Shumate, 2015). By employing social network analysis, this chapter delves into specific collaboration practices of Jewish organizations during the first months of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The analysis demonstrates that patterns of collaborations during a large-scale crisis emerge as a result of interactions between domestic and international/transnational organizations, a complex set of factors generating splits and shifts in a diverse organizational landscape.

Next, in her chapter on organizational identity character (Glynn, 2017; King et al., 2011) and civil society resilience, Zhanna Kravchenko examines Hesed centers across Ukraine to understand how community-based voluntary social work organizations developed means to address the consequences of the war's social and economic devastation. Throughout the studied period, provision of social services and other assistance galvanized numerous volunteer efforts in Ukraine and stimulated cooperation between civil society organizations and public agencies (Romaniuk et al., 2024). Hesed centers—as organizations with well-established principles of welfare provision, community-building, and preservation of Jewish traditions—underwent a reconceptualization/reaffirmation of their identity in the process of resource mobilization (locally and transnationally) and preservation/expansion of their activities vis-à-vis the broader context of welfare provision (including public social services).

The book closes with a chapter discussing its main theoretical contributions to research on the organizing of civil society resilience in the extreme context of war. More specifically, we analyze the institutional and structural dimensions of this organizing, looking at adaptability to field-level

changes through a range of organizational elements discussed in the chapters. In doing this, we theorize that adaptability of the material and symbolic aspects of organizing is intertwined with civil society resilience.

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CHAPTER 2

The Case of Anatevka: Place-Making and Resilience at a Critical Juncture

Noomi Weinryb and Yair Lipshitz

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we explore civil society resilience in relation to place-making. This means that we try to understand how the symbolic and physical elements of what is conceived of as a place may matter and change over time, contributing to civil society resilience. In doing this, we also engage with the concept of critical juncture, which is a special point in time that enables altered development of a course of action, such as Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and may thus be of relevance for understanding civil society resilience.

Empirically, the chapter is about Anatevka—not primarily the fictional village made famous by Sholem Aleichem's stories and the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, but the actual Anatevka that was constructed in 2015 about ten kilometers from Kyiv. Anatevka was founded by a Hasidic rabbi associated with the Chabad movement in Ukraine; he conceived of it as a home for the approximately 10,000 Jews displaced by the war being waged by Russia in the Donbas area since 2014. More specifically, Anatevka is described on its homepage as a “solution” to the needs of those Jews. After the full-scale Russian invasion of 2022, Anatevka became a hub and facilitator of Exodus, an organized effort to help those who wanted to flee

Ukraine. From Anatevka, bus travel and car caravans were arranged to facilitate safe passage out of the country.

In the case of Anatevka, the resilient civil society organizing of 2022 can be attributed to organizational processes that began in the aftermath of the 2014 Russian invasion of eastern Ukraine. There are even reports that the founding rabbi had envisioned such a Jewish village prior to the 2014 war. Be that as it may, the creation of Anatevka in 2015 was a response to this earlier war and simultaneously very much related to the symbolic and cultural meanings of Anatevka in a Jewish Ukrainian context. Anatevka symbolizes not only a haven on the flight from the Donbas and, eventually, Ukraine; its creation also brought to life a cultural symbol of the long-lost historical Jewish *shtetl* (village) of Eastern Europe. Stemming from a series of stories about Tevye the Dairyman (published between 1894 and 1914 by Sholem Aleichem) and prominently portrayed in the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* (stage premiere: 1964; film adaptation: 1971), Anatevka is an iconic symbol of the history of Eastern European Jewry. This chapter explores various acts of Anatevka's place-making, both historical and fictional, with the aim to understand how such organizational processes may enable civil society resilience at critical junctures. We ask: Over time, how do the symbolic meanings of Anatevka interact with actual acts of organizing taking place in and around the physical space called Anatevka? The results demonstrate that the powerful use of symbols, but also their malleability, have contributed to resilient civil society organizing of Jewish social and cultural life in the face of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

PLACE-MAKING AND CRITICAL JUNCTURES

We attempt here to understand the *place-making* processes at work in the story of Anatevka over time. The notion of place-making is used to interpret the socio-spatial context in which an act of organizing occurs: in this case, the physical location of Anatevka and the meaning, history, and symbols attached to it. The main idea behind looking at socio-spatial dimensions in organization studies is that a physical space carries social and cultural meanings that are important to understand when analyzing acts of organizing (Clegg & Kornberger, 2006; Dale et al., 2018; Ford & Harding, 2004; Taylor & Spicer, 2007).

To this end, we need a few definitions. For an understanding of *place*, we draw on Gieryn (2000), who defines a place as having three dimensions: geographical location, material form, and investment with meaning

and value. He refers to *place-making* as acts of “identifying, designating, designing, building, using, interpreting, remembering” (p. 468). *Place-making* is “constituted by the socio-spatial relationships that link individuals together through a common place-frame” (Pierce et al., 2011, p. 54). This can also be an active organizational act through which organizations “advance or constitute a place identity as part of their articulating of reasons and goals for activism” (Martin, 2003, p. 733). In turn, place-making may be connected to framing symbols from an imagined past to encourage organizing for future goals (Feola et al., 2023). Building on the concept of place-making, we analyze Anatevka as an amalgamate shaped by the interplay of physical and symbolic elements of its organizing over time. In doing this, we explore how these aspects are relevant at the *critical juncture* (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007; Mahoney, 2000) of the war. By “critical juncture”, we mean occurrences which may be “characterized by a situation in which the structural (that is, economic, cultural, ideological, organizational) influences on political action are significantly relaxed for a relatively short period” (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007, p. 343)—a period during which institutional structures are temporarily suspended, in flux, thereby enabling the exploration of new paths which, in the context of a crisis, may yield an altered, albeit resilient, state of organizing (Walker & Cooper, 2011) (see also Introduction to this volume).

This chapter is based on different types of process-tracing empirical materials (Beach & Pedersen, 2013; Collier, 2011). One part of the materials consists of a real-life chronicle of the fleeing that took place in Ukraine in March 2022 following Russia’s full-scale invasion (233 files of mixed media), which is part of the greater data set on which this book is based (see also Chap. 1). Another part of the data follows Anatevka’s social media accounts, the web pages of Anatevka and of the Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine, and a range of other online documentation of its fundraising efforts. Finally, depictions of Anatevka since its inception—in international press reports, blogs, etc., which can be summarized as media data—are listed in Table 2.1. One of the authors also tried in various ways to contact Anatevka and the Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine with questions about issues that were not clear from the data we have. At the time of this publication, they had not replied, and the contacting author was merely added as a subscriber to the digital newsletter of the Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine.

We now turn our attention to the story of Anatevka, using the concept of place-making to understand both the organizational mechanisms

Table 2.1 Media data on the creation and development of Anatevka

<i>Year</i>	<i>Sources</i>	<i>N of files</i>
2014	Haaretz	3
2015	Forward, Haaretz, Jewish News of Northern California, Jpost, JTA, Times of Israel, Ynet	7
2016	Foreign Policy Review, Forward, GetReligion, JTA, Times of Israel	5
2017	jewishphilanthropyct.org	1
2018	Haaretz, Steinhardt Foundation	2
2019	5j5, Bloomberg, Buzzfeed, Chabad News, Chabadinfo, CNN, Forward, Hromadske, Jewish Insider, JTA, Kyiv Post, NY Post, Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, The Atlantic, The Hill, WNYC Studios	16
2020	Financial Times, Times of Israel	2
2021	Times of Israel	1
2022	Arutz 7, Forward, Haaretz, Israel Hayom, Jerusalem Post, Jewish Journal, LA Times, Le Figaro, New Voice of Ukraine, Newsweek, NPR, Qesher, Texas Jewish Post, Walla News, Washington Post, Ynet	22
2023	Aish blog, i24, Jewish Chronicle, Times of Israel, Ynet	7
<i>Total</i>		<i>66</i>

enabling flight to and onward from Anatevka and the symbolic components interacting with these structures.

SERIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LIGHT OF JEWISH HISTORY

Anatevka has been described in many media accounts as the brainchild of Moshe Azman, a charismatic activist rabbi originally of the Chabad Hasidic movement. Rabbi Azman holds the disputed title of Chief Rabbi of Ukraine and has been a serial entrepreneur in the Ukrainian Jewish space. The title of Chief Rabbi was conferred on him, and contested, in 2005; in interviews, Azman claims not to be particularly attached to it, although he does use the title in various contexts (more on this below). According to newspaper reports, Azman was originally a *refusenik* from Leningrad (today St. Petersburg). After arriving in Israel in 1987, he was educated as a Hasidic Chabad rabbi and served as a chaplain in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). In 1995, he was sent to Ukraine as a representative of the Chabad movement. Although Azman has formally left the Chabad movement since his move to Ukraine, his initiatives and organizations still echo much of Chabad’s legacy, creating opportunities for Jewish life and

engaging those with a Jewish background, in line with Chabad's well-known outreach-oriented work among non-Chabad Jews.

Since the late twentieth century, Chabad has been an increasingly prominent force in Jewish life in Europe and the former Soviet Union, mainly through a network of emissaries promoting religious, social, and cultural activities among Jews who are not Hasidic or even observant, and often filling a vacuum in Jewish leadership within communities (Heilman, 2016). This endeavor has proven controversial in many Jewish communities as it has been perceived by some as missionary and as an attempt to impose Chabad's particular interpretation of Orthodox Judaism on others.

In all accounts of his work, Azman appears as a serial entrepreneur and key organizer within, and in areas slightly outside of, the world of Ukrainian Jewish life. For example, before creating Anatevka, he was involved in transporting Ukrainians to Israel for advanced medical care during the 2014 war. He is also reported to have many contacts among political leaders in Ukraine, Israel, and the U.S. as well as across Europe. Perhaps Azman's biggest organizational achievement before creating Anatevka was the resuscitation of central Kyiv's Brodsky Synagogue, which re-opened in the year 2000. The historical building from 1897 had been stripped of its religious character by the Soviet regime in 1926 and eventually used as a puppet theater for many decades. Reclaiming a former synagogue being used as a theater and restoring its original function as a religious space can be seen as a prequel to the fluctuations between theatricality, religiosity, and community activism that would later mark Azman's Anatevka project.

The storyline of Anatevka, according to Azman and his co-organizers, is as follows. After Russia's invasion of the Donbass in 2014, many destitute Jews from the region flocked around the Brodsky Synagogue in Kyiv in search of support. Rather than engaging within existing aid infrastructures, Azman conceived of Anatevka as the solution to the dire straits in which these refugees found themselves. In this endeavor, his ideas differed sharply from those of other leaders in the Ukrainian Jewish community. For example, another leading local rabbi emphasized that Jews seeking support after having fled the Donbas could best be helped within existing infrastructures, taking a more traditional approach to social work to help fill their immediate needs. In contrast, Rabbi Azman articulated that the best way to help these Jewish refugees from the Donbas was to build a brand-new settlement.

The plot of land on which Anatevka was constructed is located ten kilometers from Kyiv and was purchased by Rabbi Azman in 2015. In this space, Rabbi Azman pictured not only resuscitating a historical place, as he had done at the Brodsky Synagogue, but also the place-making of a powerful historical symbol from the Jewish Ukrainian past, namely the shtetl. Rabbi Azman wanted to recreate a place for Jewish life as he envisioned it in its fullest, in the symbol of the shtetl, yet set in Ukraine. But what would this shtetl signify in 2015 in contemporary Ukraine?

PLACE-MAKING, HISTORY, AND FICTION

In Yiddish, shtetl simply means “town” or “hamlet”, but the word has come to refer more specifically to traditional Jewish communal life in Eastern Europe prior to World War II. As Shandler (2014) observes, the shtetl became charged with further meaning: the word “might simply serve as shorthand for ‘Jewish Eastern Europe,’ or *shtetl* might be employed as emblematic of a certain kind of Jewish place, community, or sensibility” (p. 4). Shandler continues to demonstrate in detail that the shtetl, while signifying actual physical locations, was also a subject of cultural discourse, an intellectual and literary artifact, a myth. It emerged through lived reality, but also through “community chronicles, memoirs, prose fiction, or satirical plays” that shaped its image and memory (p. 5). As Miron (1995) also reminds us, Sholem Aleichem and his contemporaries de-historicized the shtetl in their literature and presented it as almost purely Jewish in order for it to become a potent cultural image; “[o]nly then could it be satirized, exposed as benighted and reactionary, soporific, resistant to initiative and innovation, or, alternatively, portrayed nostalgically and romantically as the quintessence of spirituality and communal intimacy” (p. 4). As a cultural artifact, the shtetl was mostly remembered as disappearing—as a place of the past that was *displaced*, destroyed, left behind in the turbulence of twentieth-century Jewish history. However, Veidlinger (2016) recorded in detail how the memory of the pre-war shtetl in fact continued to reverberate and shape Jewish communal life and continuity in Ukraine, even under Soviet rule, and never entirely disappeared. Thus, the shtetl was available for the entrepreneurs of Anatevka as both local memory and globalized icon.

Arguably, no writer had more impact on the conjuring of the shtetl as cultural artifact than Sholem Aleichem. His Anatevka, while an entirely fictional place, is an embodiment of the Jewish shtetl in the Russian Pale

of Settlement (the area in which Jews were permitted to live in the Russian Empire). It may be portrayed in nostalgic and warm colors, yet it is also a focal point of social critique by a modern writer who exposes the traditional Jewish community's unabashedly provincial and regressive ways. Despite the original ambiguity and complexity of Sholem Aleichem's Tevye stories, their overwhelming popularity allowed nostalgia to dominate Anatevka's reception in modern Jewish culture, especially after the Holocaust, when it was projected onto the memory of actual places that had existed in Eastern Europe and not only in literature. Thus, for example, in a memory book dedicated to the communities destroyed during the Holocaust, one survivor refers to his own town as the "'Anatevka' of our youth and childhood dreams" (Solomon, 2014, p. 93).

Anatevka's mythical image was further solidified by the 1964 American musical *Fiddler on the Roof* (book by Joseph Stein; lyrics by Sheldon Harnick; music by Jerry Bock), which became a worldwide sensation. Anatevka is the location of all of the musical's dramatic events, which culminate in the expulsion of the Jews from Anatevka by decree of the Russian regime. The final song of *Fiddler on the Roof* is "Anatevka", a searing and haunting eulogy of the shtetl left behind, sung as the Jews of the village disperse and Tevye and his family begin their journey to America. When the Ukrainian town was founded in the early twenty-first century, the fictional Anatevka had long been emblematic of traditional shtetl life and of Jewish existence in Eastern Europe prior to the Holocaust—and these connotations were utilized as a symbolic resource for place-making in Azman's Anatevka project.

Nevertheless, as Rabbi Azman initiated the construction of Anatevka, he claimed in early articles chronicling the creation of the village that the name had not been chosen to symbolize Jewish existence in the fictional shtetl of Sholem Aleichem. Rather, according to Azman, it was mere coincidence that the actual Ukrainian village of Gnativka happened to be situated next to the plot of land where the new shtetl was to be built. In our data, it is also stated that "Gnativka" is to be pronounced as "Anatevka" in Ukrainian. In addition, in what seems like a great bonus, the tomb of Rabbi Mordechai Twersky (1770–1837), the second leader of the Chernobyl Hasidic dynasty and a prominent figure in Hasidic history, is located directly next to what was to become modern-day Anatevka. This lends the place-making of the town additional symbolic clout and legitimacy from local Ukrainian Jewish history. It is therefore possible to claim that Anatevka was not built specifically to play with the image of the shtetl

from fictional accounts, but rather to carry its original name, defined by its location as well as the significance of the proximity to the grave of the rabbi from Chernobyl.

However, from the project's inception, Sholem Aleichem's story as adapted in *Fiddler on the Roof* was also evoked in the efforts toward Anatevka's place-making. In its Facebook feed, Anatevka is symbolized by an archetypical silhouetted picture of a nineteenth-century Orthodox Jew playing the violin, closely resembling the image of the fiddler character from the musical. The promotional materials of Anatevka are replete with intertextual references to Sholem Aleichem and to *Fiddler on the Roof*, such as music from the soundtrack, verbal references to the protagonist Tevye and to Sholem Aleichem, and quotes from specific songs from the musical (such as "If I Were a Rich Man"). The fictional Anatevka has thus been used in symbolic accounts of the village from the outset.

PLACE-MAKING: BUILDING AND POPULATING A CONTEMPORARY SHTETL

As Anatevka was made into the place envisioned by Rabbi Azman, a contemporary shtetl, it needed to include physical institutions for Jewish life, including a synagogue, mikvahs (ritual communal baths), and a cheder (an Orthodox Jewish school for boys). All of these institutions are part of the traditional, religious Jewish community. At the same time, Anatevka was also graced by a modern-day addition, namely a girls' school called Mitzvah 613 (the number 613 referring to the number of *mitzvot*, or commandments, that according to tradition a Jewish person is required to obey). The place-making of Anatevka also included physical infrastructure of a nonreligious nature; refugees arriving from the Donbas in 2014 were offered lodging, as well as jobs for those who had had a hard time finding work elsewhere. This work included carpentry: the houses, as part of the place-making of the lost world of the shtetl, were to be made of wood, thus requiring woodworking skills. Work opportunities also included less anachronistic forms of construction, such as building a website for Anatevka. Thus, Anatevka integrated the traditional with the modern, the religious with the secular, and the image of the shtetl with the needs of contemporary life.

Scrolling on Facebook through the first years of Anatevka's existence, one encounters an active and promotional feed, and it is easy to follow the

construction of the houses from the sketching stage to the erection of the buildings piece by piece. Sites with prominent roles in the process of place-making are proudly lauded, such as the wooden portal stating the name of the village, the wooden synagogue (the first of its kind built in Ukraine in a long time), and contemporary constructs such as a playground and a recreational sports field. Anatevka also boasts a range of colorful buildings which are said to be of wood, although this cannot be confirmed by the untrained eye. In the press reports from the first years of the village, the wood and carpentry are mentioned multiple times. Anachronistically, the town was also to be heated using firewood. The return to wood seems central in the place-making of Anatevka as a shtetl.

By and by, Rabbi Azman and his crew (whose members are largely invisible on social media as Anatevka is consistently depicted as a one-man vision) thus begin to build Anatevka. In the reports, Anatevka is depicted as the realization of a vision to recreate the lost world of the shtetl and to give safe haven to the fleeing Jews. The pleasure they take in Jewish rituals and the warmth and joy of the village are depicted as extensions of a lost world in a very benevolent way, almost always relating to the fictional Anatevka.

There are additional similarities between the Anatevka of 2015 and that described by Sholem Aleichem. Perhaps most importantly, both Anatevkas are described as providing a home for Jews. In Rabbi Azman's vision, however, these Jews were not necessarily the Jews of the imagined shtetl, engaging in the practice of their religion and embracing tradition while going about their everyday lives. Though Sholem Aleichem's Anatevka is situated at the cusp of modernity, the residents for whom the modern shtetl Anatevka was created were primarily Jews with Soviet or post-Soviet backgrounds which did not steep them in religious practice and life. On the contrary, our sources indicate that many came from explicitly secular contexts, as had been encouraged or mandated during Soviet times. Indeed, as Gitelman (2012) shows in detail, the Soviet regime strengthened the ethnic component of Jewish identity as it weakened the religious one—and the effects can still be felt, even in post-communist Ukraine, where Jews are negotiating anew the links between Judaism as a religion and Jewishness as ethnicity or nationality (p. 327). Thus, if Sholem Aleichem's Anatevka embodies Jewish life just prior to the cataclysmic events of the twentieth century, present-day Anatevka is being populated by Jews who have lived through and after them.

Scrolling through the Facebook feed of the first years of Anatevka, one can see place-making not only in terms of the building of physical structures, but also in regard to the people populating the village. The first wedding is celebrated, prayers are conducted, bar mitzvah ceremonies take place, and blessings are documented as the first child is born in the village. Many Jewish symbols appear in the posted pictures, such as the traditional Jewish prayer shawls, phylacteries, and caps—*talitot*, *tefilin*, and *kippot*. The performance of Jewish life in these promotional scenes seems to be quite traditional, even if the population of the village is not necessarily so.

In the missionary tradition of the Chabad movement, Jewish practice by secular Jews is encouraged and facilitated, and its religious component is presented as integral and central. In the place-making of Anatevka, this return to religious practice is presented as part of a more general return to (and of) the traditional shtetl. Ironically, though, as we will see, the legacy of the fictional Anatevka in fact problematizes the very notion of the shtetl as a site of Jewish tradition.

FUNDRAISING AND COMPLICATIONS

In 2020, Anatevka was thus a place where a certain type of Jewish life could be led and experienced, as framed by Rabbi Azman's vision. Press reports state that about 200 individuals lived there and that more visited to afford themselves of the educational opportunities that the village offered. In addition, there was a hotel, communal kitchen, carpentry workshop, synagogue and mikvahs, and an orphanage; two museums were under construction, one to focus on Ukrainian Jewry and one to document Hasidism. The construction of these facilities, the physical side of place-making, had of course cost a great deal of money.

In 2017, supporters incorporated the Brooklyn-based organization American Friends of Anatevka. Its status, called 501(c)3, classifies American Friends of Anatevka as a form of nonprofit, which facilitates fundraising. Although only 1337 USD were raised in the first year after the organization's creation, the subsequent two years saw significantly higher yields (\$671,227 in 2018 and \$883,001 in 2019). Quite apart from the amounts donated, though, these fundraising efforts would soon become very important for Anatevka's depiction in the press and for its reception in the broader international context. In many ways, it is these fundraising efforts that began to severely limit the control that Rabbi Azman and his organizing team originally had over the place-making of Anatevka.

From our data sources, it is not clear exactly when Igor Fruman and Lev Parnas, two American businessmen with roots in the former Soviet Union, joined the board of American Friends of Anatevka. However, from newspaper articles, we can glean that they were both heavily engaged in Anatevka at least from 2017. Significantly, Fruman and Parnas were also entangled in the case leading to the first impeachment trial of then-President Donald Trump, which took place in the fall of 2019 and was related to Ukraine. At the center of that impeachment trial stood the allegations that Trump had attempted to pressure Ukraine to assist him in investigating his political opponent, future president Joe Biden. Parnas and Fruman were suspected, among other things, of aiding Trump by searching for damaging materials on Trump's political rivals in Ukraine (Helderman et al., 2019).

Anatevka was further embroiled in U.S. politics through Rabbi Azman's appointment of former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani as honorary mayor of Anatevka in the spring of 2019. Giuliani, as one of those engaged in unofficial dealings with Ukraine, also figured prominently in the first impeachment trial against Trump. Multiple newspaper reports state that the Ukraine trip planned (and later canceled) by Giuliani in 2019 had as its official goal a speech in Anatevka, organized by American Friends of Anatevka. On Anatevka's Facebook page, we can read about Azman's great friendship with Giuliani (as well as with Fruman and Parnas). From our data sources, it appears that in 2018 and 2019, the years in which Rabbi Azman was able to raise significant funds in the U.S., he also became a potential vehicle for contact-making between prominent political figures in the U.S. and Ukraine. For example, Anatevka's Facebook page documents Azman's close affiliation with former Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko and current president Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Press reports also state that Azman, who continued to be a staunch supporter of Trump after the latter lost the 2020 election, posted on social media that "Maidan has begun in the USA" as the U.S. Capitol was stormed. This claim did not represent the view of the Jews of Ukraine, as Azman's competing Chief Rabbi of Ukraine was quick to state publicly.

In 2020, the village of Anatevka was thus quite detached from the idealized place-making of a modern-day shtetl; rather, it had become mired in messy, real-life modern politics. Rabbi Azman called the negative media attention Anatevka received "the American scandal" (Chaffin & Olearchyk, 2020). Despite the radically changed symbolic meaning of Anatevka on the international stage, activities carried on as usual in the physical space

of Anatevka, at least as depicted in the village's Facebook feed. However, when a reporter wished to write about Anatevka during this period, she was at first barred from entering the village due to the amount of bad press to which it had been subjected (Weinglass, 2020). She was eventually shepherded around the village but forbidden to talk to anyone. The reporter was impressed by what she saw in terms of the place-making of the village and seemed keen to brush away the suspicions of corruption that had recently been associated with Anatevka. Yet as she was about to the exit the village, she saw a tree sculpture with metal plaques; they bore the names of well-known donors related to other corruption cases with which she was acquainted (Weinglass, 2020). When she asked about the donors, the journalist was encouraged to refrain from posing further questions.

Overall, very few donors are mentioned in Anatevka's Facebook feed. A picture of the abovementioned tree sculpture, with leaves displaying donors' names, is posted on its webpage, but the print is too fine to make out their names from the photo. At the same time, open fundraisers were posted on Anatevka's homepage and on other fundraising sites, such as *charidy.com*, during this period. On such sites, donors often volunteer their names next to their contributions. Fundraising for Anatevka is thus simultaneously visible and invisible, necessary for its physical place-making yet hard to control in terms of its symbolic implications.

What, then, is the relationship between global events and sponsors on one hand and local occurrences on the other? And how can old symbols play into current acts of organizing Jewish life and culture in Ukraine? As we can see from the complicated nature of the Anatevka story thus far, these questions are neither straightforward nor trivial. The composite symbolic resources employed in the place-making of Anatevka are part of the background of the 2022 events that culminated in *Exodus 2022*, named after an even greater master narrative in Jewish history, and at least initially taking place with Anatevka at its center.

EXODUS

When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the physical place of Anatevka had already begun to symbolize a range of cultural tropes. With the data available, we cannot determine the specific causalities between those tropes and Anatevka's role in helping with the evacuations from Ukraine, thus contributing to the resilience of Jewish life and culture. Our data do, however, permit us to assume that the place-making of Anatevka

in its first years, drawing on fictional symbols and blending them with contemporary religious flavors, most likely attracted the attention of Ukraine's Jewish community. In addition, we know that the village became known overseas through the American Friends of Anatevka and the crowning of its honorary mayor, although its subsequent international notoriety by association with the so-called "American scandal" was neither predicted nor appreciated by the organizers behind Anatevka. Nevertheless, at the critical juncture of February 2022, all of Anatevka's history of place-making seemingly came together—its physical and symbolic presence in Ukraine as well as its international name and overseas donors—to enable the project known as Exodus. The physical space created through place-making efforts, with its extant infrastructure, was able to function as a hub for evacuations. In addition, the fundraising necessary to sponsor evacuations was most likely facilitated by means of Anatevka's well-known name and previously created networks of supporters.

The work of Exodus was coordinated through social media, where individuals could sign up to be evacuated from major Ukrainian cities to the country's western border. Evacuations primarily took the form of caravans: buses carried people seeking refuge across the country, and individuals in private cars could follow. The caravans were coordinated through social media groups and offered pick-up times through a digital sign-up system. Anatevka was a secret stop along the way, providing refugees with shelter and rest before they continued on the route westwards.

The operation was vast, requiring approximately 10–20 buses each day. Complications involved everything from finding local buses (many were being used for military operations) to finding drivers. In addition, there were substantial costs involved. Several reports state that one bus cost as much as 20,000 USD due to the shortage of buses and that spending on these evacuations reached approximately 2 million USD during the two first months of the war.

The level of security during transport varied. The convoys represented potential targets for Russian attacks, and private drivers joining the caravans were encouraged to shave, if they were men, and put signs reading "Israel" in their car windows in order to avoid being mistaken for Russians by Ukrainian soldiers. From Kyiv, it was possible for the caravans to obtain police escorts to the border to ensure some measure of safety, while from cities under attack, such as Chernihiv and Mariupol, transport was more dangerous. Many buses had two levels, and the seating could be removed to refashion the lower level into an area for the care of wounded passengers.

As the convoys began to arrive in Anatevka, the village was well prepared to host the refugees, particularly given that it offered a hotel and a communal kitchen. However, Anatevka was not equipped for withstanding war; planning for such an eventuality had not been part of its place-making. Anatevka had no shelters, since at the time of its inception the war was far away in eastern Ukraine. Now, temporary housing was created with mattresses on the floors in the spaces that seemed safest. At times, shelling was very close. Reports tell of windows taped with cellophane to prevent shattering and of refugees who had left for the western border returning to Anatevka because onward travel had become too dangerous.

In some reports, thousands of people are said to have transited through Anatevka on their way to Ukraine's western border at the outset of the war. Refugees to Anatevka are described as coming primarily from Kyiv and Kyiv Oblast. There are also reports about a group from Chernihiv having barely escaped alive and staying in the Brodsky Synagogue while waiting to continue their evacuation to the western border. It is emphasized that this group contained both Jews and non-Jews; the broadened target group is also mentioned in other reports. The Exodus project as it was initially conceived thus began to expand beyond the Jewish village of Anatevka. Reports state that Azman's civil society organizing soon grew to help all Ukrainians, Jews and non-Jews, providing food and medication as well as bus transportation to the border. Anatevka thus began to change its symbolic role once again, this time from being a place for Jews to being a place for all Ukrainians in need—and from being a place of refuge *from* the Donbass to a place for transitions *to* safe havens in the West. Perhaps most importantly, as we will soon describe, it shifted from being a centerpiece in Azman's project to being only a part of a greater mission of humanitarian work.

MITZVAH FOR UKRAINE

Most people who had resided permanently in Anatevka before February 2022 fled soon after the war began. By August of 2022, the population of Anatevka is reported to have shrunk drastically: from 200 persons to 10. Following its de-population, Anatevka was described as a place for summer camps and educational activities for Jews who remained in Kyiv. Its depictions were once again in line with the fictional place-making of its early days, before the 2019 American scandal and the 2022 Exodus. In

late 2022, it was once again depicted as a place where Jewish holidays were celebrated and the nostalgic shtetl spirit of community was manifested.

Yet as Anatevka is once again subject to this strand of shtetl-nostalgia place-making, it also becomes a piece in the puzzle of humanitarian aid set up by Rabbi Azman and his largely invisible colleagues. Their organizing efforts are now centered around an organization called the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine” (again, a contested title) under the banner of *Mitzvah for Ukraine* (rather than for Anatevka). Most importantly, the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine” is focused on humanitarian help for all people suffering as a result of the war, not only for Jews in a Jewish village. For example, the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine” uses its organizational and fundraising network to support hospitals in Kyiv with air conditioners and hospital beds, as well as donating and delivering food for police crews patrolling the city. While Kherson was under Russian occupation, the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine” used Anatevka as a base to organize humanitarian aid. Among other things, the support included a truck full of medicines and portable batteries to enable phone charging. Even though the provisions were initially intended for Jews in Kherson, they were ultimately distributed among all people as the need was so dire. Upon request from people in the city, Azman subsequently also arranged to replace 100 computers that had been stolen by the invading Russian troops (Pope, 2022), as well as tools and needed materials to repair Kherson’s electric system. Rabbi Azman is also reported to have traveled to the war-torn cities of Bucha and Irpin to deliver help.

As 2022 evolved into 2023, Anatevka was thus only one of the subprojects mentioned on the home page of the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine”. According to the Internet Archive, the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine” website was first set up in 2022, and the web page of Anatevka itself dates back to its construction in 2015. The need for, and scope of, Rabbi Azman’s (and colleagues’) humanitarian ambitions thus grew as the war began, reducing Anatevka to a single albeit important piece in the puzzle, especially during the first months of the war. The center of place-making seems to have shifted back to the Brodsky Synagogue and the “Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine”, although it is somewhat opaque what this organization signifies. At approximately the same time, though it is difficult to say precisely when, the American branch of Rabbi Azman’s fundraising efforts (previously so deeply scarred by the American scandal) also adopted the name “Mitzvah for Ukraine”, replacing American Friends of Anatevka yet keeping the same registration number.

The original brainchild of Rabbi Azman combined alleviating the plight of the Donbas refugees with his vision for a Jewish shtetl. Anatevka was a “solution” for both. The village drew upon the cultural legacy of Sholem Aleichem’s Anatevka and *Fiddler on the Roof* even as it transformed it. Yet as the modern Anatevka grew and developed, in terms of geographical location, material form, meaning, and value, the American scandal erupted, threatening both its fundraising and place-making (in terms of the symbols attached to it). In response to these challenges, Anatevka was dressed in new clothes, broadening the scope of its activities while paradoxically also reducing its own role. Instead of relating to the idea of the Jewish shtetl, “Mitzvah for Ukraine” married a Jewish concept (“mitzvah”, which can mean a religious commandment, but also a “required good deed” more generally) with a national (non-Jewish) entity, and Anatevka gave way to Ukraine. This represented, once again, a new place-making effort and a deliberate movement away from Anatevka. A Jewish humanitarian group performing good deeds for both Jews and non-Jews was a different project than Anatevka, and yet Anatevka fit within it or, rather, was subsumed within it. The name change is, of course, only a small part of the vastly expanded organizational scope of Mitzvah for Ukraine (“Office of the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine”) and is as such an indication of resilience, a new path taken at a critical juncture to accommodate altered needs in a new reality.

TRAJECTORIES OF CIVIL SOCIETY RESILIENCE AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE

Playing on the cultural connotations of the shtetl in a broad sense, and of the village of Anatevka from Sholem Aleichem’s stories and *Fiddler on the Roof* in a more specific sense, Anatevka is a powerful symbol. The Anatevka story is indisputably murky and complicated: it blurs the lines between politics, money, and humanitarian efforts; between tradition and modernity; between religion and secularity; between Jews and non-Jews; and between myth, memory, and activism. It cannot be easily placed in clear-cut categories. Some might find the actions described here praiseworthy but the political figures connected to it reprehensible. Some might be inspired by its humanitarian aid but troubled by its religious, even missionary, content. Like the transformations of Anatevka itself, this story is not without contradictions. Some of these contradictions have to do with

the ways in which the place-making of Anatevka, and its subsequent role in civil society resilience in 2022, simultaneously evoked and reversed trajectories stemming from the myth of Anatevka.

Based on the events and analysis described above, we argue that the convoluted use of history and fiction in the initial place-making of Anatevka allowed the project to subvert three major trajectories that are implicit in *Fiddler on the Roof*. This, in turn, made Anatevka into an adaptable place, contributing to systemic resilience in 2022. The musical and the film based upon it were global hits with readily recognizable songs, and the iconic fictional town had come to carry a cluster of connotations and emotions that could be easily activated and capitalized upon—including by modern-day Anatevka. However, in many ways, this reliance on Anatevka's iconicity paradoxically subverted the role of the fictional Anatevka of *Fiddler on the Roof*. This entailed the reversal of the following trajectories fundamental to the symbol of Anatevka in light of the Jewish history of Ukraine:

The Ontological Trajectory The first reversal we identify is the turning of a fictional place into a real one. As mentioned above, by creating the fictional Anatevka and conjuring the mythical shtetl, Sholem Aleichem, like other writers, had selectively highlighted and exaggerated some elements of the historical shtetl while downplaying or entirely omitting others. The Anatevka project, on the other hand, wished to bring the fictional shtetl into historical reality. The realization of fictional places, such as Hogwarts or Hobbiton, is most often associated with leisure culture, tourism, and theme parks, which Baudrillard (1994) theorized as *simulacra*. The most famous example is probably Disneyland. However, Anatevka was not a *simulacrum* in the sense of an “empty” copy that has no original and is aimed mainly at consumption and entertainment. Anatevka was geared toward social, civic, and political efficacy. It was designed to offer a safe haven, to save lives and build communities. As such, it transformed, through the imitation and realization of the mythical shtetl as envisioned by Rabbi Azman, the fictional into an active site for civil society organizing—a site that was already in place at the critical juncture of 2022.

The Spatio-temporal Trajectory In Sholem Aleichem's Tevye stories, as well as in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Anatevka functions as the place that is left behind when the Jewish community is deported from the village. The

original stories about Tevye end with the protagonist and his family on the train, not knowing where to go. *Fiddler on the Roof*, on the other hand, presents a clear destination for Tevye: he is headed to America, as part of the musical's general tendency to adapt Sholem Aleichem's narrative in accordance with later Jewish-American experience (Wolitz, 1988). In both cases, however, it is clear that Anatevka belongs to the past. It is the place one flees when in danger and looking for safety. Indeed, the song "Anatevka", which immortalizes the shtetl and evokes so much emotion toward it, is a farewell ("What do we leave? Nothing much. / Only Anatevka"). The Anatevka project subverts this vector: Anatevka is not the place one flees from, but the safe haven one flees to. This was more pronounced in Anatevka's original function before 2022, when Jews from the Donbas region fled to the village. But even after the beginning of the 2022 full-scale Russian invasion, when it became a transition station to help people leave Ukraine, it has maintained its connotations of safety and hope. As opposed to the fictional Anatevka, it became connected with the future rather than the past. This is an important statement that revalidates the role and place of Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union in the contemporary Jewish landscape. While *Fiddler on the Roof* reaffirms the stability of America in modern Jewish life and confers a nostalgic role on the East European shtetl as a distant memory, the Anatevka project unsettled that narrative and pointed at the vitality of Eastern Europe as a site for the twenty-first-century organization of Jewish life and culture.

The Religious Trajectory The third trajectory that Anatevka subverted in relation to *Fiddler on the Roof* is the one between religion and secularity. The musical's famous opening number is the song "Tradition", a spectacular tour de force celebrating the traditional religious Jewish community. In this community, tradition is connected to strict patriarchal family roles, to religious observance that expresses devotion to God, and to a clear idea on the part of each person as to what God expects them to do. "Tradition" is an electrifyingly catchy opening sequence, yet the musical clearly presents religious tradition as a relic of the past that Tevye must leave behind as the plot progresses. In the play, Tevye struggles with his daughters' non-traditional choices of marriage partners. The first marries for love rather than through an arranged match with a wealthier, older man. The second falls in love with a socialist revolutionary. The third

converts to Christianity in order to marry her non-Jewish lover. Tevye learns to loosen his concept of tradition for the sake of his daughters' happiness (which he manages with the first two daughters, but hardly with the third). By the end of the musical, once most of the family leaves for liberal America, it is implied that while Tevye may remain traditionally religious, his descendants in America—like those watching the musical in the audience—will be less so. *Fiddler on the Roof* treats religious tradition with loving affection and nostalgia, but it also portrays it—like the fictional Anatevka—as a world clearly left behind. It traces a trajectory from the religious, traditional past toward a liberal, secular present and future. The Anatevka project, with its investment in religious education, ceremonies, and Jewish life, and with its embeddedness in Chabad practices, clearly moves in a different direction. The return to (and of) Anatevka also marked a return to (and of) religious tradition. As such, Anatevka can be seen as an activist project for the post-secular age (Habermas, 2008), in which religion returns to the public sphere, affects world and national politics, and in our case also becomes a resource for civic engagement. Religion here is not a remnant of the past; rather, it is an anchor in present-day activism and in work toward a better future. At the same time, the intertwining of religion with civic activism also raises questions about potential tensions between the two and their underlying (and at times conflicting) motivations. Such tensions are perhaps even more strongly embedded in the organization's later name, "Mitzvah for Ukraine". Be that as it may, the Anatevka project made clear that current discourse about civil society resilience must take into account the post-secular moment, its particular entanglements, and the myriad ways in which religion and tradition also serve as resources for activism.

It is important to note that the subversion of these trajectories did not begin with the Anatevka project in Ukraine. In a sense, it is central to the global reception of *Fiddler on the Roof*, in which the mythological Anatevka became an emblem of Jewish tradition and returned to shape reality in its image. As Solomon (2014) wryly remarks regarding the usage of Jerome Robbins' choreography of *Fiddler on the Roof* at contemporary American bar-mitzvah parties:

Robbins absorbed some elements of presumed folk culture from weddings he attended as research, and he remade them into an elaborate composition for a work of the theater. Several decades later, his artistic creation came out

of the show intact and returned to the realm of ritual celebration to bestow authenticity on the proceedings. (p. 342)

The Anatevka project in Ukraine builds upon such dynamics and takes them one (crucial) step forward: a theater piece not only ironically bestows authenticity on ritual celebrations but affects geopolitical reality through the aura of the traditional shtetl renewed.

CONCLUSION

What is, then, the story of Anatevka in relation to civil society organizing and resilience? What can we learn from this case? As introduced at the beginning of this book (see Chap. 1), resilience can be conceptualized as a systemic ability to absorb and accommodate external shocks. As Folke et al. (2010) describe it, this ability can relate both to adaptability and transformability, where the former allows for the maintenance of a more intact original core structure than the latter but both enable organizational survival under (sometimes even radically) changed conditions. The trajectory of Anatevka analyzed here shows a range of turns in its development, some of them radical; this testifies both to organizational adaptability, in the first stage of its existence up until early 2022, and transformability, beginning with the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The three trajectories discussed above (ontological, spatio-temporal, and religious) allow us to disentangle how specific uses of history and symbols become imperative in those processes. They demonstrate the flexibility of cultural symbols such as Anatevka alongside their fecundity and vitality. Anatevka as an icon, as an image of the shtetl, seems to fill a need at a particular historical juncture—not only on a practical level, but also in terms of communal emotions, myths, and memories. Yet in order to do so, paradoxically, its meaning needed to fundamentally change. Only then could it serve as a resource for resilience in a changing geopolitical and post-secular terrain.

While Anatevka can teach us a great deal about the organizing of Jewish life and culture, perhaps its most important lesson involves the malleability of place-making in the context of resilient civil society organizing. The organizational form can change, the mission may change, the meaning of a place may shift, and the frame that functions as its working perimeter may also expand. Sources, traditions, and cultural icons may intermingle in contradictory ways in the process. Yet the case of Anatevka indicates

that this malleability of place-making may enable resilience, both on the symbolic level and in the material and geographical context in which the organizing takes place. In sum, place-making that relies on both history and fiction, reality and myth, memory and current events, may matter for civil society resilience, especially as it can be used to mobilize acts of organizing at critical junctures such as the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.

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CHAPTER 3

Legitimizing Resilient Resource Mobilization: Exploring Fundraising Accounts During War

Zhanna Kravchenko and Noomi Weinryb

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we approach the topic of civil society resilience by looking at resources and legitimacy, manifested as accountability in the context of fundraising. Resources are a key aspect of any mobilization effort (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) and represent a critical means of managing perennial uncertainty concerns (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). For resilient civil society organizing, the provision of monetary and other forms of material support for relief efforts is crucial to enable a swift and forceful response to crisis and, as in the case of this book's focus, the onset of war. Such support may come from a variety of sources, both national and transnational. However, in order to attract these resources, fundraising efforts must be legitimate in the eyes of those who donate and those who receive the funds (Weinryb & Turunen, 2017; Weinryb, 2020). One way to demonstrate legitimacy, especially in complex polycentric contexts, is through accountability (Black, 2008). Giving and receiving accounts (Roberts & Scapens, 1985) for the planned and past use of raised funds is thus a central component of legitimacy (Suchman, 1995). However, though accountability is a paradigm for organizing in our time (Power, 1997; Mulgan, 2000), it remains unclear how such an elaborate and often

time-consuming practice is adhered to in the context of crisis in general, and war specifically, when swift resource mobilization is imperative.

In this chapter, our aim is to explore efforts to account for, and thus to legitimize, resource mobilization in a wartime context during the first year of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. More specifically, in accordance with the scope of this book, we study the accounts of Jewish fundraising efforts related to the invasion in order to understand the interplay of resources and legitimacy in civil society resilience. Through a combination of international and national collaborations, a range of organizations partnered in various ways to deliver different types of support to both Jewish and non-Jewish Ukrainians. This chapter provides an overview of the fundraising efforts found in those networks and uses this exploration to theorize civil society resilience in the context of resources and legitimacy in fundraising.

BACKGROUND

Earlier research suggests that the potential for the significant mobilization of volunteers and other resources across Ukraine at the start of the 2022 full-scale invasion was rooted in previous decades of collective organizing (most recently in 2013–2014, during the Euromaidan protests, cf. Channell-Justice, 2022). Generated through political contention, mass demonstrations, and civil unrest, these mobilizations developed into other forms of collective action. With the annexation of Crimea and the start of the war in the Donbas region in 2014, support for the Ukrainian armed forces, from in-kind provisions to political lobbying (Worschech, 2017), as well as welfare provision for internally displaced persons and the broader population (Channell-Justice, 2022), became the focus for many formal organizations and informal initiatives. While all of this work relied greatly on local resources (volunteer work and donations), numerous organizations and initiatives also received support from large international funders (Worschech, 2018).

Since 2022, the efforts of specifically Jewish organizations can be argued to have been part of an overall trend of civic mobilization in Ukraine, moving great volumes of money, medical supplies, and other emergency items into and across Ukraine. Moreover, the experience of Ukrainian mobilization at large may have affected the ways in which national and transnational Jewish organizations worked in Ukraine during the studied period. Many of these organizations have histories in Ukraine that span several decades. While most organizations maintained their

statutory activities in the face of the 2022 full-scale invasion, the resulting devastation led them to additionally engage in war relief efforts in one form or another. In order to contextualize these patterns, it is important to chart the history of Ukrainian Jewish organizations in recent decades before we embark on our analysis of resources and legitimacy in civil society resilience.

Already during the Soviet period, despite the proliferation of anti-Semitism and overall limitations on associational life and international contacts, Ukrainian Jewish organizations were deeply interwoven with a rich mosaic of Jewish organizations across Europe, North America, and Israel. At that time, cooperations focused on building local community infrastructure (Khanin, 1999) as well as facilitating emigration from the USSR, often to Israel (Friedman & Chernin, 1999). After the fall of communism, the recreation of Ukrainian Jewish life took place at the same time as massive out-migration (Shwed, 2021) and further increasing transnational involvement, which determined some of the key characteristics of this process.

Throughout the 1990s, Jewish organizations, establishments, and institutions proliferated in Ukraine, offering a broad range of activities. The explosion of organizing reflected a primary interest in Jewish community-building (Khanin, 1999) and a recognition of Jewish culture as a part of national heritage (Corsale & Vuytsyk, 2018). Many activities were locally organized but had a transnational dimension, be it related to the funding structure or to the organizational form and name (Privalko, 2014). The process of recreation of Jewish life included the establishment of organizations in the spheres of education (such as Organization for Rehabilitation through Training [ORT] schools and Hillel chapters), welfare provision, and women's rights (including Hesed centers and Project Keshet) as well as religious congregations and communities related to the three major streams of Judaism—Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. Among Orthodox initiatives, the Chabad movement occupied an especially active place (Androsova, 2008).

At the time of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many Ukrainian Jewish organizations were thus already well integrated in transnational organizational structures of Jewish life and culture. This fact enabled two important occurrences: firstly, it helped locally anchored organizations to quickly mobilize resources to support local communities coping with the new reality that the war entailed; secondly, it enabled those who wanted to donate to find local outlets for providing funding and aid. Both of these are important to keep in mind when analyzing

Jewish resource mobilization efforts related to the war. A large contingent of people needed help, but there were also those who desperately *wanted* to help. This study is guided by the question: How was this interplay of resource mobilization and resource usage accounted for and legitimized? To answer this question, we turn to theories of resource mobilization and dependence, accountability, and legitimacy, and explore the relationship between these concepts in a transnational context.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: RESOURCES, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND LEGITIMACY

Resource dependence theory suggests that the key to organizational survival is the ability to acquire and maintain resources in an uncertain world (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), while resource mobilization theory emphasizes the variability of types and sources of resources that can be mobilized to enable collective action (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Based on these approaches, our study has two points of departure. The first is that monetary resources are the most general, can be used in various organizational forms and activities, and are the easiest to convert to other types of resources, including in-kind (food, medicine, transport for evacuation), human (professionals), and institutional (influence, media attention) (Papakostas, 2022). As a means of exploring a range of resources related to the needs created by the war, we therefore focus here mainly on monetary fundraising efforts that can then be converted into other forms of aid. Our second point of departure is that scarcity or even a complete lack of resources is not the primary focus of this analysis (as in some resource studies); rather, we examine ways of employing resources to ensure as much security and adaptability as possible under extremely uncertain conditions. In this respect, the term “uncertainty” as used here does not relate to the provision of resources (which were ample at the start of the war as the will to help was overwhelming) but to their use in the most efficient way. From this perspective, the way the funds are accounted for and the legitimacy of this accounting become critical resources in and of themselves (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975), beyond the provision of money.

Organizations engage in the practice of accountability in many different contexts, and it can broadly be defined as “the giving and demanding of reasons for conduct” (Roberts & Scapens, 1985, p. 447). In civil society, accountability is a multidimensional interorganizational effort.

Accountability may be *external*, directed at donors and beneficiaries, as well as *internal*, directed, for example, to organizational employees and members (Kearns, 1994; Najam, 1996; Ebrahim, 2003). Both forms of accounts may be related to a *felt* accountability to adhere to the organization's stated vision, mission, and values (Ebrahim, 2009). In the context of the resource mobilization efforts analyzed here, we consider the external accounts given online by the fundraising organizations. This refers primarily to how they formulate their appeals for funds, as well as the use of the raised funds, but may also include the due diligence they attempt to demonstrate in their planned use of the money and their adherence to or divergence from their stated purpose. Such accounts thus become instruments of constructing legitimacy related to the funds raised for war relief efforts. In turn, legitimacy can be manifested in different ways, as we detail in the next section.

An organization's capacity to act depends not only on resource availability, but also on its environment's perception of whether those resources are acquired and used in a desirable, proper, and appropriate way in a given social context (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Suchman & Edelman, 1996). In fundraising efforts, the legitimacy of organizational accounts is imperative for both those donating funds and those for whom the funds are used (Ebrahim, 2003, 2009). When legitimacy is drawn from organizational accounts of their actions, organizations often try to demonstrate whom they involve and affect, how their work is experienced, what their procedures are, and to what degree these actions can be comprehended and taken for granted (Suchman, 1995). In addition, what organizations are (i.e., their character, structure, interests, aims) constitutes an important ground for the legitimacy of their accounts. There are thus numerous ways in which organizations may try to legitimize their fundraising accounts in pursuit of resource mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

Following this line of thought, it is possible to learn more about the legitimization of resource mobilization efforts by distinguishing between the different ways in which organizations legitimize their fundraising accounts. More specifically, as Suchman (1995) argued, organizations may pursue legitimacy on a (a) cognitive, (b) moral, and/or (c) pragmatic basis. Cognitive legitimacy relates to that which is perceived "as necessary or inevitable based on some taken-for-granted cultural account" (ibid., p. 582). Moral legitimacy can be understood as "a positive normative evaluation of the organization and its activities" (ibid., p. 579). In contrast, pragmatic legitimacy may be defined as "the self-interested calculations of

an organization's most immediate audiences" (ibid., p. 578). In the context of the fundraising studied here, these bases of legitimacy are analyzed through the standards of operation that organizations demonstrate: we identify what they consider necessary/possible/inevitable action (cognitive legitimacy), to which norms and ideals they appeal (moral legitimacy), and how they define and address their audiences and their beneficiaries' needs (pragmatic legitimacy).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data for this chapter build on written accounts chronicling fundraising efforts, primarily from 2022 but also from 2023. The empirical materials consist of a few different strands. The starting point of our analysis was in the data collected by alumni from Paideia, The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden, working in and outside of Ukraine, covering the organization of Jewish life and culture from an insider's perspective (see Chap. 1). These empirical materials demonstrate how local fundraising efforts were interwoven in transnational patterns of organizing. Yet as international fundraising was not the primary focus of the initially gathered data (although it has been instrumental in Jewish fundraising efforts during the war), an additional search for empirical materials was conducted. This was done by following links, identified in the initial sample, to larger campaigns and broader transnational organizational networks asking for support for Ukraine.

When starting to map the landscape of the fundraising efforts for/by Jewish organizations, we came across several lists of various campaigns to guide prospective donors; we used these as master guides to the transnational donor landscape. We found nine such documents in total, and although their listed organizations did not entirely overlap, they gave a good sense of the organizations that were considered important transnational actors in the spring of 2022. In addition, a central U.S.-based fundraising organization continuously analyzed its donations related to the war, which enabled us to see which organizations were part of its broader international network. Combining all of these sources allowed us to triangulate our data and to map the major actors in the Jewish fundraising effort during the first months after the 2022 invasion. In all, we constructed a comprehensive dataset of 124 webpages. The collected materials also include various types of social media posts from these organizations (primarily Facebook, but also Telegram channels). We chose to focus only on English-speaking

fundraising appeals in this study as we deemed these the most useful proxy for transnational appeals to the Jewish community at large (all quotes are thus in English in the original). It is important to keep in mind that we examined only public records of the accounting work related to the funds raised and cannot remark on any non-public communication between donors and grantees. The dataset is summarized in Table 3.1.

The sample includes four types of organizations: educational organizations, including schools and student organizations; community actors, including religious and social services; organizations with emergency expertise and/or related to migration to Israel; and Jewish communities in neighboring and nearby countries (for example, Austria, Hungary, Moldova, and Poland). The materials capture how the organizations described their planned and past actions (whether generally summarized and/or closely detailed), accompanied by first-hand testimonies of employees and beneficiaries as well as visual representations in the form of photos and videos. We did not perform specific visual analysis but treated all materials in their textual form.

Coding of the data was performed abductively and thematically using MAXQDA software for qualitative analysis. Following the principle of moving between empirically derived codes and theoretically grounded categories, we began by (1) reducing the data with the help of codes that captured fundraising purposes in detail, subsequently (2) organizing those codes into broader categories based on descriptions of the nature of organizational accounts, and concluding by (3) drawing conceptual links between emerging data-driven categories and Suchman's (1995) conceptualization of legitimacy. The results showed that the accounts (a) highlighted continuation and/or change in current activities, (b) reflected organizations' earlier experiences of working in Ukraine on issues unrelated to the war, or (c) demonstrated competence in work (with broader target groups or other types of crises) deemed important by Jewish donors during the war. In addition, across all records, (d) belonging to a specific religious denomination was emphasized by Jewish people living through the war in Ukraine as well as by Jewish organizations and their donors. These four elements manifested themselves in different, albeit patterned, ways in relation to the bases of legitimacy. The empirical analysis that follows here is structured in line with our analytical steps, starting with a description of the purpose of the fundraising, moving on to an outline of how accounts were provided, and concluding with an analysis of how those accounts employed different bases of legitimacy.

Table 3.1 Sample overview: organizations, in alphabetical order^a

Agudath Israel of America
Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial
Bnai Brith Ukraine Assistance Fund
Chabad
Chabad Moldova
COMMUNITY4U
EJA
Friends of Krakow JCC
Hadassah
Hatikva Kyiv
Hesed
HIAS
Hillel International Emergency Fund
IsraAID
JCC Kedem Moldova
JCC Warsaw
Jewish Agency for Israel
Jewish Community of Poland Fund
Jewish Federations of North America
Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)
Jewish Welfare Organization of Germany
JRoot
JUICE
LifeChanger
Magen David Adom
Masorti
Natan
ORT
Orthodox Union
Project Keshet
Shirat Hayam (part of World Union for Progressive Judaism)
Shma Israel
Survivor Mitzvah Project
Tikva Children's Home
UJA Keren Ha-Yesod
United Hatzalah of Israel
United Jewish Community of Ukraine
Volunteer Community
World Jewish Relief
World Union for Progressive Judaism

^a Not all organizational subchapters are specified in the list

FINDINGS

What Were Jewish Organizations Doing (and Fundraising for)?

From the start of the invasion, deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against Ukraine's civilian population and infrastructure directly affected Jewish organizations on the ground and forced all of them, as well as their transnational partners, to swiftly react to their changed environment. In our sample, *educational organizations* (most notably Hillel chapters in Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa) were forced to partially halt their usual activities and focus on the survival and safety of their students. The Hillel Kharkiv building, for instance, was destroyed early in the war; having relocated to Lviv, the organization directed its work toward supporting victims of the attack who had remained in Kharkiv. However, after evacuating, Hillel Kharkiv was able to resume its classes as well as holiday and Shabbat celebrations. *Community organizations* specializing in religious or social services also had to shift their work to war relief; their activities often dealt with socioeconomic challenges under occupation or attacks on civilian housing and infrastructure on unoccupied territories. Locally anchored organizations such as Hesed, Project Keshet, LifeChanger, and Volunteer Community had to substantially increase their welfare service provision. *Religious organizations*, especially Chabad and Masorti, with their various affiliated local organizations, all engaged in emergency work, provision of food and shelter, and organization of evacuation.

At the same time, a range of Jewish *emergency response organizations* came to the assistance of Ukrainian refugees, especially in neighboring/nearby countries. Their help included, for example, medical assistance, food, and shelter. These emergency experts came from other parts of Europe as well as Israel and the United States. Aid organizations such as IsraAID, Hadassah Medical, Natan, United Hatzalah, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), World Jewish Relief, and Magen David Adom were especially prominent. The organizations focusing on repatriation primarily assisted those who wanted to flee Ukraine and resettle in Israel, arranging both actual physical passage to Israel from countries bordering Ukraine and various support structures for a new life in Israel, but Israeli organizations also engaged in local emergency work. For example, the Jewish Agency for Israel and UJA Keren Ha-Yesod engaged in this dual focus of work. Some of the emergency experts also helped Israelis residing in Ukraine to return to Israel, while at the same time engaging in local

emergency relief. This was the case, for instance, with United Hatzalah. Finally, *Jewish communities in neighboring/nearby countries*—Moldova, Poland, Austria, and Hungary—made refugee reception their focus, often in cooperation with organizations and volunteers remaining in Ukraine as well as more extensive transnational networks (the Jewish community in Krakow and Chabad Moldova stand out in the sample with their especially significant efforts).

It is important to note that, while some organizations were working for Jewish community members specifically (sometimes defined as narrowly as Holocaust survivors), others had broader target groups. For instance, the Association of Jewish Organizations was collecting money for local Jewish organizations that were expected to deliver food, water, and hygiene products to those in need without regard to their ethnic or religious background. While some organizations focused on addressing the urgent needs of the moment, others turned to working toward the future rebuilding of the country, regardless of how limited the opportunities were under the ongoing invasion. Hillel Kharkiv is an interesting illustration here: upon resuming its educational activities, it focused on providing its youth with space and opportunities “to think about the future”, framing the hope for recovery through alleviating material deprivation and psychological suffering.

How Were the Efforts Accounted for?

As the Jewish organizations in our sample fundraised on a transnational scale, visual and narrative accounts focused on (1) establishing the adequacy of the fundraising level itself (by disclosing the amounts raised as related to ideal amounts) and (2) describing outputs and outcomes. In many cases, the amounts raised exceeded set targets (for example, United Hatzalah raised \$1,614,866, while its goal was \$1,500,000). Sometimes, targets proved to be too ambitious, but the amounts raised were still very substantial: for instance, the Mishpacha Orphanage run by Chabad in Odesa posted a goal of \$1,000,000 and raised \$693,839, while Vaad Hatzalah managed to raise close to \$34 million out of their targeted \$50 million. In addition, some organizations (for example, Vaad Hatzalah) were able to match the size of donations with their own funds, indicating that they were not merely mediators of aid but also powerful donors in their own right.

The website Charidy was especially popular for creating fundraising campaigns as it allowed donors to see not only the targeted/actual amount raised but also the number and size of individual donations. As many international aid agencies do, Charidy helped its users to translate different levels of donations into aid bundles. For example, in the spring of 2022, COMMUNITY4U launched the *Pesach for Ukrainian Jews* campaign, outlining several types of donations that varied from support for one individual (with \$80 estimated to be equivalent to 10 meals for Pesach) to support for one or multiple families, likewise with standardized bundles in terms of cost and number of meals. It is worth noting that such detailed calculations were possible because of direct contact with a local food business that had originally planned to sell Pesach meals commercially and had begun its preparations before the start of the invasion. Unlike international aid agencies, then, COMMUNITY4U was not expecting to store goods or “pre-position” them for later delivery but to utilize them immediately.

Our data reveal great variety in the accounting patterns of the used funds. Some organizations detail the use of the raised funds down to the number of meals served, emergency phone calls made, or persons evacuated. For instance, in March of 2023, JDC summarized its work in the war relief effort during the previous year as “40,000+ refugees provided vital necessities like food, medicine, and psychosocial aid” and “67,600+ calls fielded by emergency hotlines”. Similarly, Project Keshet described how their efforts “provided food and medicine for 30,000 people, distributed cash support in the amount of more than \$110,000, and facilitated over 8,000 evacuations”. Hatzalah without Borders detailed having set up a 40-meter-long, 15-meter-wide tent for 200 people and distributed winter clothes for children, including “blankets, gloves, shoes, socks, woolen caps”. Emergency assistance included not only distribution of material and financial resources but also the provision of psychological support, and the latter efforts also needed to be quantified. Thus, the JCC in Krakow stated that it had offered a “comprehensive psychological support program providing 60 hours a week of counseling” and “hired 40 new staff members: 31 full-time and 9 part-time, including 28 Ukrainian refugees”. In contrast, other types of assistance were accounted for more generally, measured for instance in weight/volume (e.g. “600+ kg” of medical supplies delivered by Project Keshet to hospitals across Ukraine). Reports also included lists of smaller local initiatives, connecting transnational networks to local Ukrainian recipients. The lists of these local organizations represented a retrospective breakdown of where funds were allocated rather than a fundraising pitch.

In many cases, numbers were combined with narratives, and individual stories formed the core of accounting efforts. These narratives brought to life the use of the funds, although without providing a detailed breakdown of donations. For example, the abovementioned Project Keshet, when fundraising to support women's health in Ukraine in cooperation with ob/gyn and family doctors, detailed one doctor's story of engagement that highlighted the need on the ground and emphasized commitment to everyone involved in the effort:

Dr Nataliya Lelyukh, Ukrainian OBGYN providing medical assistance in newly de-occupied territories, [...] has been providing medical care in Ukrainian small towns, where humanitarian aid and clinics are not available. PKU's charitable fund was able to purchase an ultrasound machine Dr Nataliya badly needed to continue providing services to women in need. Upon receiving the critical gift, she shared: 'PKU, thank you to heaven and back!'

In addition, (detailed) accounts of planned and past outputs were often unattainable for many organizations under the challenging conditions of ongoing invasion in Ukraine and the massive refugee flow into neighboring/nearby countries; as a result, such accounts could not always be drawn on to create a transparent relationship with donors. Instead, organizations used planned activities and/or indications of how donations would be spent as tools for accounting for their fundraising efforts. Interestingly, some organizations with broad and unspecific fundraising appeals were much more detailed when accounting for money already spent. This indicates a mitigating relationship between details given on how money was spent on one hand and how it was raised on the other hand. Specificity could be applied in either the fundraising or the accounting of the used funds. Yet sometimes there was no specificity at all, which made the attaining of legitimacy called upon in the fundraising accounts all the more critical. We discuss these legitimization efforts in the next section.

How Were the Fundraising Efforts Legitimized?

Legitimization through records of (continuation/change in) activities. As mentioned above, some organizations, like Hillel in Kharkiv, were fundraising to continue their regular activities and appealed to already-established audiences (although not necessarily their donor base) with

moral claims that conformed to ideals of Jewish tradition and solidarity (Suchman, 1995). They detailed ongoing suffering with much pathos, asking for help in preserving “everything great that we had”. The texts describing the campaign aimed to evoke emotion by emphasizing that a small contribution could have a significant (although very generally defined) positive impact: a minute of one’s time, the cost of a cup of coffee, or unused change in a pocket could be decisive in restoring the lost sense of normalcy that their continued work represented.

Claims of solidarity and Jewish unity were also used when fundraising aimed to enable changing the direction of activities (expanding their scope or target groups). The collection of emergency funds for Ukraine was initiated by various organizations (for example, Canadian Federations CJA, Masorti, Chabad, etc.) that used vivid narratives of suffering combined with community-specific symbols and rather general descriptions of how the generated funds might be used. For instance, Migdal, a Jewish community-focused organization anchored in Ukraine, wrote:

We are writing to you from here in tears!!! We are trying to survive and stay strong in the midst of a raging war!!! In the struggle with all the difficulty and chaos, we are making great efforts to help our Jewish community and our people who are in desperate need of food, water, clothing, shelter, medicine, emergency medical care and medical supplies, transportation, and other vital necessities. The costs are enormous and funds are desperately needed! Rescuing every person and family in the harsh conditions here is a fortune and very complex! No matter where you are, you can make a difference! Your donation will serve as Zechus for Klal Yisroel around the world, and for the Jews in Ukraine!

Some organizations could rely on descriptions of activities prior to the war as a means of legitimizing their efforts to alleviate the consequences of the invasion. For example, the Survivor Mitzvah Project has worked for many years to bring emergency aid to Holocaust survivors across several countries in Eastern Europe, including Ukraine and Russia. Recognizing the severity of the situation for the target group in Ukraine, the organization used its standard slogan: “Emergency aid needed in war-torn Ukraine now! Donate to Holocaust Survivors in Eastern Europe!” The resources the organization provided to Holocaust survivors across the continent were the same: food, medicine, heat, shelter, and caregiving for bedridden individuals. The established standard of provision and its recognized

quality sufficed to make a *cognitive* claim (Suchman, 1995) legitimizing its work with Ukrainian Holocaust survivors.

A *pragmatic* approach to legitimizing efforts (Suchman, 1995) could be employed by organizations that continued with activities they had launched before the invasion and whose demand increased after February 2022 or with activities that were easier to itemize and standardize in the current situation. For example, like Hillel, ORT schools were raising funds to continue with their routine work and not only used emotion-evoking appeals but also identified specific problem areas that would be prioritized to ensure that the schools could continue to operate: “energy crisis and infrastructure” and “supporting teachers and families” through counseling. The JDC, which has funded welfare organizations across the former Soviet Union since the 1990s, was able to specify that its funds would be directed at “delivering winter survival products, like blankets and radiators” (items they have provided for decades, but on a smaller scale). Project Keshet, having worked with gender equality and women’s empowerment for more than 30 years, described in detail how raised funds would be used for menstrual hygiene products, Vitamin D3, D with calcium, folic acid, and iron for pregnant women.

Furthermore, the ability to adapt to a changing environment was also used as a means of more *pragmatic* legitimacy claims when some organizations expressed that their current efforts were in line with demands on the ground. For instance, JRoots Journey emphasized that they could convert donations into (general) action for refugees because they had a local organization in Poland: “we are very nimble, practical and flexible”. Such openness and adaptability to uncertainty were also evoked in the World Union of Progressive Judaism’s assurance to its donors that the organization would be able to meet the challenges of uncertainty:

If the conflict escalates further, your money will become crucial and necessary help for many people. If the tension eases, the fund will be spent on the development of the progressive Jewish community in Ukraine.

Legitimation through previous work in Ukraine and/or with emergency relief. To convince their audiences to take their engagement with war relief efforts for granted, some organizations sought to describe not only what they were *doing*, but what they *were* as organizations. In such cases, they foregrounded local connections in Ukraine prior to the invasion and/or experience with emergency relief in other parts of the world and other crises.

Some fundraising organizations emphasized their own history and how it tied in with the history of Ukrainian Jewry in general and/or the organization they worked with specifically. For example, Project Keshet, mentioning its 30-year commitment to women's welfare in Ukraine, argued that it was able to recognize the very specific wartime needs of women and girls (combating gender-based violence, ensuring reproductive and mental health) and address them "using trusted methods and innovative technologies". Project Keshet utilized its history to claim legitimacy on the ground of *cognitive* "exteriority and objectivity" (Suchman, 1995, p. 583): the expertise it possessed on the topic and on local conditions prior to the war was necessary and sufficient to claim legitimacy for its ongoing fundraising.

Similarly, descriptions of long-term partnerships with local organizations (varying from one to multiple partners) may be viewed as a way to create a vicarious local history and thus build fundraising efforts on local know-how and the feasibility of engagement. HIAS, founded to assist Jews fleeing Eastern Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century, referred to its partnership with a Ukrainian organization called Right to Protection (R2P). R2P had a history of over 20 years as a HIAS representative in Ukraine (practically a subsidiary) and had been working primarily with internally displaced persons in Ukraine since 2014. Thus, HIAS fundraised for the support of vulnerable individuals and communities in Ukraine in a way that did not necessarily stem from the devastation of the war specifically, but responded to the general need to "support community mental health", "end gender-based violence", "provide legal support", and "promote economic inclusion".

Long-term engagement was also demonstrated in the interconnectedness of the transnational fundraising structures and the local partners. For example, on a very specific note, Masorti Olami and Midreshet Schechter, both part of the transnational Masorti [Conservative] movement, described how they had been supporting "Ukrainian Masorti/Conservative communities since 2012. We have been supporting, expanding and building our communities and Noam youth movement in Ukraine in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Chernivtsi and Dnipro". JDC also demonstrated its local connections through its "volunteers, staff, and network of Hesed social welfare centers". The example of JDC further reveals the interconnectedness of the fundraising networks, where funds raised traveled from the Jewish Federations (also themselves coordinating a range of independent federations raising funds across North American communities) through

the JDC to the local Hesed centers across Ukraine. These examples illustrate organizations' efforts to acquire/sustain permanent and structurally legitimate organizations (Suchman, 1995) as they presented themselves as deeply embedded in the fabric of society through a long history of engagement.

Legitimation through Jewish engagement and broadened target groups. Although most of the efforts and legitimacy claims were focused on provision of safety and care, some communities and organizations were emphasizing Jewish practices as a foundation of their efforts. Specifically, religious communities, service providers, and educational organizations framed their fundraising campaigns as a means of ensuring continuation of the Jewish tradition in Ukraine. Shabbat and holiday celebrations, Rosh Chodesh (the celebration of each new month of the Hebrew calendar) and Hebrew lessons were to continue to be available with the help of external support (Hillel, Project Keshet, HIAS, etc.). Such legitimation through the *cognitive* claim of preserving Jewish community in Ukraine was accompanied by evocation of the *moral* claim that the act of donation affirmed the givers' participation in the Jewish humanitarian tradition, considered inseparable from Judaism. For instance, the United Jewish Community of Ukraine carried out its fundraising under the slogan "Tzedakah [charity/righteousness] is the basis of world", a religious motivation used to encourage giving. In addition, some organizations' donors were encouraged to engage in other (religious) manifestations of solidarity with Ukraine, including relating a range of religious ceremonies, textual study, fasting, etc. to the plight of the Jews of Ukraine.

More commonly, very succinct messages across a broader range of Jewish organizations simply stated that the suffering taking place in Ukraine made it important to provide support, implicitly framing help efforts in terms of the organizations' religious mission. This occurred around Jewish holidays, like Purim, which took place only a few weeks after the launch of the invasion. For example, Hillel International encouraged people to take "action in three meaningful ways to support the people of Ukraine[:] fast, donate, or share in solidarity with Ukraine", following this appeal with a link to the campaign. In this case, both fasting and donating had religious connotations connected to Purim and the Fast of Esther. Passover messages in the spring of 2022 also resonated with references to the evacuations and attacks, both in terms of fundraising inspiration and concrete fundraising activities. Bnai Brith's CEO wrote:

This year, those of us living in freedom may cherish it a little more. Those living outwardly as Jews in places without fear of persecution may feel a bit more grateful than in other years.

Legitimation through appealing to common cultural codes as a means of *moral* legitimation can be seen in organizations' broad use of religious sayings, also directed to benefit the donors and make them feel Jewishly engaged as they were donating funds. A number of organizations invoked the notion of brotherhood, referencing the Talmudic maxim that all Jews are responsible for each other. For example, Hillel International Emergency Relief Fund emphasized: "In times like this we live the Jewish value of *Kol Yisrael Arevim Ze* [sic] *La Zeh*—that all Jews are responsible for one another. Make a gift". Likewise, Vaad Hatzalah stated that "We are brothers of our brothers, cousins of our cousins. We are friends of *yiddishe neshamos* [Jewish souls]. If a person is able to do it, he is obligated to do it". This exhortation was followed by a link to a rabbi's call for support of the organization's relief work.

In the context of *moral* and *cognitive* claims rooted in common traditions and symbols, it is especially important to recognize that many organizations expanded their target group from Jews to include all Ukrainians. Numerous organizations whose work outside the Jewish transnational community previously seemed limited now began to define their activities as aimed at Jews and non-Jews alike. This can be viewed as a shift in legitimacy base for these organizations; given the great and urgent needs created by the war, it was more *pragmatically* legitimate to fundraise for everyone in need. Humanitarian help for refugees seemed to simply take precedence in the aid operations. This was an interesting development, especially for those religious and community organizations that had previously been focused on Jews. In addition, while some organizations explicitly stated that they had now broadened their purpose, others indicated it implicitly. For the emergency expert organizations, this was less of a dramatic shift, as these organizations may have come out of a Jewish imperative to help but were from the outset organized to help those in need regardless of background. The main exceptions to the non-sectarian aid efforts were the Israel-focused organizations, where *aliyah* and *klitah*, migrating to Israel and integrating into Israeli society, were specifically intended for Jews. These Israel-focused efforts should be distinguished from Israel-based aid organizations, which were primarily working to help refugees in Europe (Jewish and non-Jewish) with evacuations, food, shelter, and medical aid.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This chapter has explored civil society resilience through a focus on resources and legitimacy, showing how resource mobilizations by Jewish fundraising organizations were legitimized, including their accountability, and what this tells us about organizational adaptability to uncertainty. The results indicate that the fundraising efforts varied substantially across a range of variables, but that they had one important factor in common: being well integrated into a transnational network of Jewish organizations anchored both in Ukraine and in other European countries, the U.S., and Israel. This network was able to mobilize a vast amount of funding in a short period of time, especially during the first months of the invasion. It is important to note that most funds were used for humanitarian war relief efforts, both in Ukraine and outside of the country, helping refugees as well as those who sheltered in place. A few themes can be gleaned from our analysis in terms of the three concepts of our theoretical framework: resource mobilization and dependence, accountability, and legitimacy.

In terms of resource mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) and resource dependence (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), we see that fundraising efforts were often quite general, directed at those who wanted to give in a time of crisis and great uncertainty. We suggest that, as the full-scale invasion broke out, the need to help in some instances seemed to supersede concrete plans for the usage of the raised funds, which created a special situation in terms of accountability and the legitimacy of the fundraising efforts. The imperative to give, and thus contribute, created a flurry of ways to legitimize (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975), ranging from detailed accounts to many general plans in broad strokes. This variation is a finding in and of itself because it demonstrates how the need to help in this transnational network was sometimes allowed to override standardized ideas of auditing and accountability (Ebrahim, 2003; Power, 1997), at least in the short term. In this sense, legitimacy based on history of engagement in Ukraine, in emergency work more generally, or simply the institutionalized status (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) of the fundraising organization itself was central in legitimizing many fundraising campaigns. Though we also saw a range of professionalized and detailed models (Hwang & Powell, 2009) for giving as well as plans for how funds would be spent, these were neither standardized nor similar across the network.

It is important to point out that the accountability analyzed here was primarily directed to donors rather than organizational members or beneficiaries. In part, this is the nature of the fundraising operation itself, but what is special in this instance is that, in some cases, the accounts to donors were also vague. If accounts to donors were not needed as the war erupted, would they be needed for fundraising efforts in the long run? To some extent, this does seem to be the case, as at the time of this writing, accounts are being provided by the larger, more professionalized organizations as the need arises to reflect on what has been done with the money raised. Still, this is not always the case, as some organizations have offered public accounts “up front”, detailing what they planned to do with the funds as they raised them rather than retroactively. This has interesting implications in terms of civil society accountability (Kearns, 1994; Najam, 1996), indicating its malleability and openness to combining several forms of accounts at different points in time. There seems to have been no need for a highly standardized approach across this transnational network. Rather, we see a combination of accounting when money is given and when it is spent, and in various ways, including the use of stories, visuals, and numbers. These variations in accounting approaches speak to the broader legitimacy claims of these organizational initiatives, combining different bases of legitimacy to enable resource acquisition.

Fundraising and resource mobilization may be a way to overcome some of the uncertainty (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) inherent in such an extreme situation as a war: by raising funds, at least some material needs will (or may possibly) be fulfilled. The legitimacy of those fundraising efforts does not, then, necessarily come from professionalized accounts (Maier et al., 2014). Rather, it stems from a combination of the legitimacy of the situation itself—the terrible reality of the war, which legitimizes fundraising—as well as from the historical legitimacy and institutionalized status of the fundraising organizations. This history relates to their records both in Ukraine and in emergency work, but also to their own histories as stable and trustworthy entities in an unstable world. The specifics of the way funds would be used may, then, have been more garnish than substance in terms of their appeal to potential donors. Funds were to be donated because of what the organizations stood for and what was happening in the world, not because of what they planned to do, other than doing good.

Overall, when using action as foundation for legitimacy, the civil society organizations in our sample presented themselves as *predictable* in the

consequences of their actions (survival ensured, normalcy restored) and/or *taken for granted* in terms of the procedures they established (to ensure that needs were satisfied and standards of delivery were upheld) (cf. Suchman, 1995). Two dimensions of legitimacy-seeking appeared: permanent, structurally legitimate (appealing to the Jewish tradition, doing things in the right way, upholding one's own good character), and inevitable, procedurally legitimate (based on broader humanitarian principles). These dimensions were related to the bases of legitimacy in various ways (see Table 3.2).

In the context of resilient fundraising, we saw that these bases were used in patterned ways throughout the sample, relating to the specific circumstances of both the war and the targeted funders and beneficiaries. In terms of *pragmatic legitimacy*, an emphasis was placed on adaptability and attunement to needs, relating to specific needs and priorities in certain organizations and communities as well as to the need to change and adapt as a basis for legitimacy in and of itself. This also includes the ability to serve the needs of a community broader than the previously mainly Jewish target group of many organizations (as can also be seen in other chapters in this book). With regard to *moral legitimacy*, we found that the accounts emphasized striving for normalcy amid the chaos of the war, but also that this endeavor was related to the imperative of survival as a continuous struggle. In addition, we found a special strand in the data that emphasized the Jewishness of the philanthropic act and the opportunity to practice Judaism by donating. Finally, we found a *cognitive legitimacy* basis that was manifested in a striving for high standards of provision coupled with a will to demonstrate know-how, expertise, and the use of trusted methods, as well as the relevance of wartime practices for broader emergency relief expertise. In addition, there was a specific Jewish component to the cognitive legitimacy basis related to the wish to adhere to standards of Jewish traditions and to enable Ukrainian Jews to continue to observe those traditions despite the uncertainty inherent in wartime conditions.

In sum, by combining all three bases of legitimacy in various constellations in their organizational accounts, many Jewish civil society organizations were able to expand the scope of their actions with the resources mobilized; for example, religious and community service work was redirected to war relief efforts, and work with Jewish groups was expanded to try to help all Ukrainians in need. In doing this, the intricate mix of accountability enabled resilient civil society organizing through

Table 3.2 Bases for legitimacy to mobilize resources

<i>Legitimacy base used in accounts</i>	<i>Manifestation in data</i>	<i>Dimensions of legitimacy-seeking</i>
Pragmatic, conforming to demands	• Ability to identify priorities, specify needs • Ability to adapt to changing needs as the situation changes • Ability to recognize broad(er) needs beyond the Jewish target group	• Procedural • Procedural • Procedural
Moral, conforming to ideals/symbols/emotions	• Ability to restore a sense of normalcy • Ability to ensure survival • Opportunity to practice Judaism through donations	• Structural • Structural • Structural
Cognitive, conforming to models/standards of operation	• Ability to ensure the same high standard of provision • Demonstration of know-how, trusted methods, connectedness to broader expertise/networks • Opportunities for beneficiaries to continue Jewish practices/traditions in Ukraine	• Procedural • Structural • Structural

legitimation of resource acquisition and mobilization. Our findings show a great variety of approaches to helping and being helped in times when great need is created by great disruption. They also testify to the value of malleability in combining different bases of legitimacy to allow for resilient and legitimate resource mobilization. All in all, this is a testament to systemic resilience in times of war.

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CHAPTER 4

Semiotics of Resilience: Two Kinds of Sensemaking for Organizational Adaptability

Jaakko Turunen

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I explore civil society resilience in relation to sensemaking in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This means that I try to understand how different sensemaking practices contribute to civil society resilience. In so doing, I employ two linguistic tropes, metonymy and metaphor, to illustrate how two civil society organizations' different ways of organizational sensemaking gave rise to two different kinds of civil society resilience.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which started on February 24, 2022, affected every Jewish organization in Ukraine. However, not all organizations reacted to the invasion in the same way. For a number of reasons, Jewish organizations in Ukraine have become particularly interesting cases for the study of the dynamics of sensemaking. First, having extensive transnational connections and being dependent on external funding, their sensemaking of the crisis is subject to interpretation by different local, national, and international actors. Second, being predominantly Russian-speaking organizations, they had to renegotiate how their language of communication relates to the ongoing Russian aggression, necessitating different degrees of political messaging as a part of their sensemaking efforts.

Following Karl Weick (1988, 1995), I refer to sensemaking as an organization's "sense" or "rationalization" of what it perceives as taking place around it, based on its actions in reaction to the evolving crisis. In a quickly developing crisis characterized by ambiguity, confusion, and disorientation, organizations make sense of events first by enacting and then by examining the effects of their actions on the unfolding crisis (Weick, 1988). For Weick, "people think by acting" (1988, p. 305), meaning that the action taken during a crisis "simultaneously generates the raw material that is used for sensemaking and affects the unfolding crisis itself" (*ibid.*). Sensemaking, or making sense, is an organizational procedure through which the organization first construes its environment that it later enacts upon. Briefly contrasting sensemaking with interpretation may be useful here. Consider interpretation as an attempt to decipher the meaning of a text, of analyzing cues and hints in the text, in order to arrive at a better understanding of its essence. To do so, interpretation may require contextualization of the text, consultation in order to determine the author's intentions, and linking the text with other relevant texts. Sensemaking, by contrast, starts with recognition of the absence of a delineated text. The starting point is a situation that first needs to be constructed into something to be made sense of. To borrow Schön's description, sensemaking starts with turning "a problematic situation [in]to a problem" (cited in Weick, 1995, p. 9). The questions that interpretation addresses are "what happened?", "what does it mean?"; it concerns establishing a record of something. Sensemaking asks a question more akin to "what came out of it?"; it raises the question of creating new possibilities or recognizing new problems to be solved in the organization's environment.

Charitable civil society organizations are reliant on volunteers, donors, clients, and coordinated action among them. This requires a degree of shared understanding of the crisis—and joint "construction" of how the crisis is unfolding and what problems the organization can tackle. This chapter is concerned with the ways in which two organizations navigated the quickly unfolding crisis in their public statements on Facebook, constructing concrete problems out of a problematic situation. My focus on their sensemaking does not imply that I think that one could put an end to the war through action or that the war is not real; it only implies that how the war unfolds in an organization's environment is partly influenced by the sense of it that the organization establishes, affecting the organization's possibilities to act in the context of the war.

The focus in this chapter is how two civil society organizations publicly communicated their sensemaking when coordinating their actions through their Facebook pages, which in both cases represented their primary channel for reaching out to their members, donors, and clients. Weick constates that “there is a delicate tradeoff between dangerous action which produces understanding and safe inaction which produces confusion” (Weick, 1988, p. 305). Accordingly, the concrete sense of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine for an organization could only be discerned by taking some action: “action during crisis is not just an issue of control, it is an epistemological issue” (1988, p. 306). Yet, from a semiotic point of view, the interactive relationship between the organization and the environment should be complemented by an account of how other actors perceive those actions. In other words, the enactment of sensemaking involves a triadic relationship between the organization, its environment, and other relevant organizations. That relationship can be particularly complicated for charitable civil society organizations. Their finances depend on donors, their activities depend on their clients’ real or postulated needs, and their work depends on being able to engage many volunteers. Few other types of organizations are as directly exposed to their environment. The ways in which charitable civil society organizations make sense of their environments thus acquire an extra layer of complication: their actions are necessary for their own sensemaking, but those actions also become part of the environment within which other actors—for instance, volunteers, donors, or occupiers—perceive the organizations.

Empirically, this chapter compares two cases, one of which has undergone substantial change in its organizational identity and operation and one of which has attempted to maintain its pre-invasion identity and mode of operation to the greatest extent possible. The Ukraine-wide charitable civil society organization LifeChanger, a member of a transnational network, changed its identity from that of an organization focusing primarily on Jewish families with children with special needs or illness to supporting vulnerable Ukrainian families. Hesed Shmuel in Kherson, by contrast, tried to maintain its identity by continuing to focus on elderly Jewish people in that city, drawing on young local volunteers and continuing as many of its planned activities as possible under the expanded invasion and occupation. Both organizations relied on Facebook for their communication and needed to balance their messages with the public nature of social media. Their communications reveal two different strategies of

organizational sensemaking manifesting two different ways of achieving organizational resilience.

Methodologically, I draw on the semiotic research tradition focusing on organizations as “complexes of meaning-making practices”, where meanings are “always socially contextualised” (Ravelli et al., 2023, p. 1). I am particularly interested in the semiotics of the relationship between what the organization enacts (and thus makes sense of) and how that enactment functions as an attempt to control the way it (that is, the enactment itself) can be understood by other actors relevant to the environment. The term “enactment” here refers to what the organization *does*—in this case, the act of writing something on its Facebook page. A published text is a material fact that is open for others to engage with; depending on the properties of the text, it can be related to in different ways. Enactment and its semiotics should not be confused with the possible intentions of a text’s author(s). Such intentions certainly exist, but whether they become reified in the published text depends on those who engage with that enactment. Sensemaking is just one thing organizations do, but differences in sensemaking are often considered to account for differences in organizations’ abilities to swiftly adapt to new crises and thus act resiliently.

SENSEMAKING, WAR, AND RESILIENCE

In much organization research, the nexus between the organization and its environment is viewed instrumentally and assessed in terms of efficiency; the semiotic interest in the organization–environment nexus focuses on understanding and explicating how the organization sustains its activities by means of an ongoing process of sensemaking. Max Weber’s (2019 [1921]) classic study on authority showed how society’s structures of meaning give rise to different kinds of legitimacy in organizations. In more (post)modern times, Karl Weick asked, first, how *any* collective action is *at all* possible and, then, why some collective action is *more resilient*, that is, able to adapt to a changing environment, than other collective action (Weick, 1995). My semiotically informed question builds on Weick’s approach, inquiring into the ways in which the culture and visuals of Facebook posts come to structure the semiotics of communication.

Weick (1979) approached sensemaking as involving three stages: enactment, selection, and retention. In *enactment*, the organization engages with the environment in some way, yielding information from the world that the organization must make sense of. Interaction with the

environment, Weick emphasizes, always changes the environment in some way. Through enactment with the environment, a problematic situation, which is difficult to grasp, begins to turn into a problem, but only partially capturing the complexity of the initial problematic situation. In the following stage of *selection*, the organization engages in a more systematic analysis of what it has gathered from the world during the initial enactment. Selection produces more organizationally sustainable and shared interpretations that can guide the organization's current operations but can also be retained to function as frames for interpreting future changes in the environment. The third stage, that of *retention*, is necessary for organizational efficiency but also represents a hindrance to adaptation as the frames may become rigid and force interpretations upon the environment that belong to the past. A resilient organization, for Weick, constantly renews retained interpretations.

Sensemaking is a process through which a group of people create collectively meaningful objects out of their environments; these objects then become targets of an organization's joint actions (Weick, 1995). In times of stability, organizations can rely on generic meanings to a much larger extent than in a crisis, when intersubjective meanings become prominent. Organizations can be described as sensemaking machines that enable individual meanings first to evolve into intersubjective meanings, i.e., meanings that can be communicated and understood by the members of the organization to then evolve into generic meanings, i.e., meanings that have acquired an organizational role and can be imposed on its members. Organizations enable the reduction of the multiplicity of individual meanings first to intersubjective meanings and then to organizationally implementable generic meanings. The reduction of ambiguity achieved by turning individual meanings into generic meanings enables collective action. According to Weick, the antonym of organization is thus not chaos but the inability to act. In a crisis, intersubjective meanings become more relevant for the adaptability of an organization.

Weick's later research focused on organizations that rarely fail in their operations, such as nuclear power plants or fighter carriers (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015). These "high reliability organizations" are characterized by a high circulation of meanings, resulting in a continuous renewal of generic meanings in such a way that retained meanings focus on the sustainability of operations rather than on their efficiency. In order to focus on the sustainability of their operations, high reliability organizations constantly track small failures or changes in the environment, refer to multiple

sources of expertise in analyzing cues from the environment, and avoid simplification, i.e., adopting the simplest or first plausible meaning that enactment produces in their selection. In other words, a high reliability organization tries to move away from the culturally plausible meanings on which most organizations rely for their sensemaking. The difference between sensemaking relying on plausibility and that exemplified by high reliability organizations is especially visible in the early stages of a crisis, when cues from the environment are still weak.

From the point of view of sensemaking, war designates a situation of extreme uncertainty (Kalkman, 2020). The challenges are to avoid paralysis and to act toward the desired goal. Both require active reinterpretation of events. Etymologically, the word “crisis” refers to a break in the predictable chronology of events (Koselleck, 2006), implying that drawing on earlier experiences in sensemaking becomes problematic. Similarly, from a cultural-semiotic point of view, a crisis can be seen as a sudden conflation of spatially distinctive parts of culture (Lotman, 2009), implying limits in relying on sensemaking that is typical or familiar to the organization. In other words, while much of the literature on crisis in organization theory emphasizes the temporal aberration, the overwhelming sense of “nowness” and subsequent urgency (Kornberger et al., 2019; Pursiainen, 2020), the semiotic view of sensemaking conceptualizes crisis as an abruptness of the natural course of cultural evolution and reshuffling of meanings previously considered central and appropriate. A crisis thus necessitates an intensification of sensemaking, sometimes leading to radical revision and re-evaluation of previously held meanings.

What does organizational resilience look like in the context of a war? Resilience, as defined above, is an organization’s ability to adapt to a changing environment, which, from a semiotic point of view, can necessitate an intensification of sensemaking and a radical re-evaluation of previously held generic meanings. Wildavsky, who introduced the concept of resilience to the broader social sciences, distinguished between *anticipatory* resilience, or resisting, and *reactionary* resilience, or “bouncing back” (cited in Darkow, 2019). In the former model, the organization resists changes emanating from its environment by identifying potential vulnerabilities in its own operations and networks before any crisis can occur. In the latter model, organizational resilience is manifested in the organization’s ability to contain a crisis after it has begun. That research draws on high reliability organizations, explicating certain organizational practices that allow them to avoid human error, swiftly pick up cues indicating

coming changes, and adapt. Neither model of resilience alone can account for organizational resilience in practice: the anticipatory idea relies on successful risk analysis, which has become moot in the current reality of growing uncertainty. The “bouncing back” kind of resilience implies that the organization, enduring a crisis, somehow returns to (or resumes) its original operations, but organizations change as they “bounce back”, and given the fact that the crisis changes the environment, organizations may benefit from changing their operations in some ways.

The research on high reliability organizations has elaborated on the ways in which organizations are able to adapt swiftly to the changes brought about by a crisis—partly based on their ability to perceive coming changes very early on, but also on their awareness of the conditions for and consequences of their own actions. In unpredictable ways, war affects an organization’s ability to influence its environment and may also force the organization to perform completely new tasks not captured by anticipatory or “bouncing back” kinds of resilience. Darkow (2019) questions the idea of “measuring” resilience based on some postulated outcome; he suggests instead considering the ways in which organizations evolve in response to both the internal and external uncertainties that arise in a crisis. Darkow’s approach opens up the question of the different practices that organizations employ to make sense of the crisis and adapt to their rapidly changing environment. This is also the approach I have adopted in studying the different practices of sensemaking in LifeChanger’s and Hesed Shmuel’s Facebook posts.

In summary, previous research has pointed out the relevance of organizational practices for sensemaking. Organizational resilience requires sensitivity to early, weak cues from the environment. The beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion was not a “weak cue” in the sense of being difficult to recognize, but understanding its consequences, its full meaning, was not easy; additionally, publicly spelling out its expected consequences could be risky, especially for organizations in areas that fell under Russian occupation such as Hesed Shmuel in Kherson. War requires intensified sensemaking, often necessitating more radical revisions of previously held generic meanings. Following Darkow (2019), I study resilience as different practices of adaptation. Below, I explore more concretely how such practices can be seen in the organizations’ Facebook posts and discuss in detail two practices—metaphor and metonymy—and their interaction.

SEMIOTICS OF SENSEMAKING IN WAR

It could be argued that Weick's account of sensemaking is problematic on two grounds. First, he considers crises "manageable" given the right sensemaking (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010). Second, the possibilities of sensemaking—given the avoidance of organizationally produced blind spots that hinder individuals' perception of new information or challenges in collective sensemaking—appear to be limited only by a lack of individual imagination. The semiotic analysis of sensemaking pursued here attempts to address these issues by acknowledging that Russia's full-scale invasion came as an imposed factor to be lived with rather than to be managed away. Sensemaking, especially when performed publicly on Facebook, is subject to others' interpretations, and care should thus also be taken to tailor one's enactments and explications thereof in a manner that does not threaten the organization's survival. This means that not everything could be stated explicitly, and what was stated had to be tailored so as to prevent malicious interpretations. Sensemaking is an interactive process that is embedded in culture.

As I was going through the Facebook posts of LifeChanger and Hesed Shmuel in Kherson, I became aware of the differences in the ways they related to the war. It took about a week for LifeChanger to post after the full-scale invasion, but once it did, the war was very much present in its posts, and its activities directly addressed the new needs that had been created by the war. Hesed Shmuel in Kherson posted on the day after of the beginning of the full-scale invasion, but the presence of the war in its communications was subtle. More intriguingly, the war appeared in different references and analogies, not as a direct object or subject of Hesed Shmuel's actions. It was only much later that the war was directly addressed in the organization's posts. As both LifeChanger and Hesed Shmuel were able to continue their operations, can we see two different practices of resilient sensemaking here?

Finding an analytical language to capture the differences was not easy. I first sought inspiration from Roman Jakobson's work on *metaphors* and *metonymies*, which he developed on the basis of his studies on aphasia in Sweden in the 1940s and further elaborated at Harvard University. Jakobson took the primarily stylistic devices of metaphor and metonymy and shifted them to a more cognitive domain in which metaphor refers to linkages in terms of *similarity* and metonymy to linkages in terms of *contiguity*¹ (Jakobson & Halle, 1956). Jakobson observed that the two

processes exist in parallel and that one may be dominant, paving the way for the later cognitive turn (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) that understands metaphor and metonymy as different ways of thinking and linking source and target domains rather than stylistic devices. A recent development in cognitive linguistics concerns the interaction of metaphor and metonymy captured in the neologism *metaphonymy* (Goossens, 1990) and in *conceptual blending* (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002); both focus on the emergence of meaning from the blending of the target and source domains.² It is this approach that I use to analyze LifeChanger's and Hesed Shmuel's sensemaking more concretely.

In cognitive linguistics, cognitive domains such as target and source domains refer to frames of reference, or contexts, that are commonly used to make sense of words or expressions where the source domain is the "known" and the target is the "new" domain to be understood by way of the source domain (Langacker, 1987). Fauconnier and Turner (2002) argue that, rather than a direct parallelism between the source and target domains, a unique blended space emerges, giving rise to new meanings but also effecting a reinterpretation of both source and target domains. An example illustrative of a blended space is the Internet meme "Saint Javelin", which was created by a Ukrainian–Canadian journalist and depicts an Eastern Orthodox icon of the Virgin Mary carrying, instead of the baby Jesus, an American advanced anti-tank weapon that was crucial in helping Ukraine to stop the advance of Russian tanks in the early phases of the full-scale invasion. The Virgin Mary's halo features the Ukrainian emblem on both sides, and her clothes are combat green. The blended space that the meme creates draws on Christian faith, depicting the savior of the people as the Ukrainian military relying on Western weapons. The Javelin anti-tank system and the Western military acquire the meaning of a new beginning, while the Christian faith is contrasted with the Russian invasion. It is impossible to open up all of the meanings to which this meme gives rise, but the point is that such blended spaces rely on prior knowledge of both the source and target domains while also triggering a reinterpretation of those sources and targets, thus engaging the reader in the process of generating meaning and sensemaking by establishing linkages along the lines of similarity and contiguity.

Following the cognitive linguistic tradition that regards metaphor and metonymy as ways of thinking, I use the terms as shorthand for making claims about similarity (primarily but not exclusively between different domains) and contiguity (primarily but not exclusively within the same

domain). Similarity and contiguity can appear not only at the level of content, but also along action patterns (schemas) and scripts (discourse patterns) (Goatly, 2022). These distinctions allow for the analysis of the combined effect of the content, the form of the post, and the action (i.e., enactment) performed by the post.

The semiotic perspective I have adopted further emphasizes that sensemaking is an interactive and culturally embedded process. Sensemaking in wartime requires an organization to take into account how its sensemaking and enactments are perceived by the warring parties, that is, by actors most likely viewing each other's cultural values in hostile terms, as well as by other actors in the environment such as volunteers, donors, and clients. This renders organizational sensemaking an interactive, publicly exposed, and precarious process.

There is one final element that makes semiotics relevant for organizational sensemaking in the contemporary world. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the organizations studied here have made their Facebook pages their primary channels of communication. A Facebook page is a public medium on Facebook; it is open to anyone to read.³ Social media like Facebook provides a written record of an organization's public communication, exposing its sensemaking.

A NOTE ON THE CASES, MATERIALS, AND METHOD

In the dataset collected by alumni from Paideia, The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden, the two organizations I am comparing here attracted my attention because of their initially very different responses on Facebook to the beginning of the full-scale invasion. They are also organizationally different, one nationwide and largely dependent on individual donations, the other locally anchored with established relations to international funders. They appeared to be fruitful cases for probing the effects of different forms of sensemaking on organizational resilience.

LifeChanger Ukraine is a nationwide charitable civil society organization that reaches out to Jewish children in difficult life situations. Often, this situation is the presence of a disability. LifeChanger UA (Ukraine) was opened in November 2015 in five cities: Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Kherson, Mariupol, and Chernihiv. It later expanded to many other cities, and in April 2022 it was active in 20 large cities and 34 satellite towns. Operations in two cities have ceased due to the war. LifeChanger UA is affiliated with the Federation of the Jewish Communities of the CIS (Commonwealth of

Independent States). LifeChanger receives funding from donations. Although LifeChanger UA identifies as a Jewish organization and focuses its activities on Jewish children, religion has not played a major role in its activities. Jewish holidays are recognized and taken into account, but they do not motivate the organization's actions. LifeChanger has relied substantially but not solely on individual donors. On its fundraising webpage, LifeChanger presents current projects, allowing individual donors to choose which projects to fund and in what amount.

Hesed Shmuel was established in Kherson in 2003 with the help of the United American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (hereafter "JDC"). The Hesed concept comes from a voluntary organization model developed in the early 1990s across the post-Soviet states (Kravchenko, 2022; see also Chap. 6), and Hesed Shmuel's activities are still very much in line with the original concept, aiming to mobilize the community to serve the community and develop its Jewish identity. Hesed Shmuel runs a number of projects financed by several global Jewish organizations. World Jewish Relief, another prominent Jewish donor organization, finances social projects at Hesed Shmuel attending to people who are elderly, lonely, or living in poverty, but also to those who aspire to establish a business and—in the words of Hesed Shmuel—"become successful". World Jewish Relief also finances culturally oriented projects enabling disadvantaged community members to deepen their Jewish identity. The JDC finances both social and cultural projects with a focus on disadvantaged people and raising Jewish cultural and historical awareness in Kherson, the only regional capital to fall under Russian occupation in 2022. Russian troops entered the city on March 2, 2022; throughout the month, many protests were mounted against the occupants. These protests were violently suppressed in April 2022. Kherson was liberated by the Ukrainian army on November 11, 2022.

The analysis below is based on a chronological reading of every post on the organizations' Facebook pages from the beginning of 2022 until late 2023. If printed on paper, the posts would fill more than 1000 pages. The language of the posts varies: before the February 2022 invasion, both organizations wrote predominantly in Russian. However, after the February invasion, LifeChanger began to publish all posts in three languages—Ukrainian, Russian, and English. It continued to post in three languages until summer 2022, when it eliminated Russian and English translations (which seem to have been generated by Facebook's own translation algorithm as they contained some minor but obvious

grammatical errors). Hesed Shmuel in Kherson continued to post in Russian, with occasional informational leaflets in Ukrainian, until October 2022; at this point, without any explicit commentary or connection to external events, Hesed Shmuel switched to Ukrainian.

I have used the English translations published on LifeChanger's Facebook page in their original format, including all grammatical inconsistencies. For Hesed Kherson, I have compared the original language version and Facebook's automatic translation and, when necessary, modified the translation to better match the original. Only minor modifications were required. The reason for these amendments is that the original posts were initially only in Russian, and later only in Ukrainian, but never in English. The focus of the analysis is the enactment performed by the organizations' publishing of their posts and the potential meanings therein. Although I pay attention to the linguistic character of the posts, this is a semiotic analysis of the enactment of the posts rather than a linguistic analysis of the texts.

LIFECHANGER: RESILIENCE THROUGH METONYMIC ADAPTATION

Prior to the war, a typical LifeChanger Facebook post consisted of three parts: the first describing the situation of a child in need, the second, at times with a picture, portraying the child receiving help or meeting with a therapist, and the third containing brief information about the organization itself: "LifeChanger—comprehensive help for Jewish children in a difficult life situation"—in Russian. The last post from LifeChanger before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine appeared on Wednesday, February 23, 2022, informing readers of recently organized sessions for children, including meetings with psychologists, speech therapists, and special education teachers. It also recounted some individual stories, such as that of Liza, who "actively took part in Jewish youth projects as well as travelled to Israel on NAALE programme" (February 23, 2022). The post ended with a short standard note on the organization itself: "LifeChanger—comprehensive help for Jewish children in a difficult life situation. To support the children, you can go to our website [URL]".

The next post came on Thursday, March 3, one week after the full-scale invasion had begun. It was written first in Ukrainian, then in Russian, and finally in English, making the message global. It read:

Millions of citizens of Ukraine found themselves on the verge of life and death. Among them are thousands of children, women, the elderly... Jewish project LifeChanger has launched an initiative to support people affected in Ukraine.

Directions of help:

Food and essentials

Temporary stay camp for those who left home

Psychological help

Information support in matters of border crossing

Information support in matters of repatriation

Contact us at through numbers below, or send our contacts and a link to fill out the questionnaire to those in need of help.

[...]

You can help by clicking on the link. All funds will be used to rescue the victims in Ukraine. (March 3, 2022, the original in English)

Telephone, WhatsApp, Viber, and Telegram numbers were shown; one was Ukrainian and the other Israeli. The pre-war toll-free number had disappeared.

Let us consider this post as the initial enactment, LifeChanger's first attempt to publicly make sense of the war. The first sense concerned the scope of the war. LifeChanger addressed "millions of citizens of Ukraine" in Ukrainian, then in Russian and in English. The complexity of the war was captured by the metonymic expression "on the verge of life and death". LifeChanger was addressing the Ukrainian citizenry as a collective body of individuals. Second, as a charitable civil society organization, LifeChanger was addressing the needs of individuals rather than those of political entities. It is citizens who were "on the verge of life and death". Only after that came a specification of different vulnerable groups such as children, women, and the elderly, here applying a literary metonymy. The framing of the new context ends with a short note about LifeChanger's own position: "Jewish project LifeChanger has launched an initiative to support people affected in Ukraine". This initial enactment framed the war as a humanitarian catastrophe affecting "citizens" of, or "people" in, Ukraine.

The middle part of the post reported what LifeChanger aimed to do, again iterating concrete aspects of help ranging from providing food and necessities to offering temporary shelter and emigration amidst the

complexity of the war. These iterations both linked the concrete action to the complex whole of the war and built a metonymic continuation from the “Jewish project LifeChanger” to the citizens of and others in the country. However, the Jewishness of the potential clients was not suppressed; rather, it appeared as less pronounced in the offered help concerning the distinction between “border crossing” and “repatriation”. This enactment also initiated a change in the organizational identity of LifeChanger: from catering to vulnerable Jewish children to catering to vulnerable people in Ukraine irrespective of ethnic or religious affiliation or age. The languages in which the post was written conveyed further sensemaking efforts. The fact that LifeChanger added Ukrainian and English indicated political allegiance to the Ukrainian state. However, continuing the message in Russian identified the traditional target group, the Jewish community in Ukraine, which has predominantly used Russian as a means of communication. Translating the post into English as well was an indication that LifeChanger understood the war to be of global concern and that the organization intended to reach out to new donors beyond the Russian-speaking world. The content of the post mainly stayed within one domain, that of war and emergency assistance, but the way in which LifeChanger’s own organizational identity as a Jewish organization was connected to the help offered to both Jewish individuals and the broader Ukrainian citizenry indicates an intention to bring two previously different domains together.

The structure of the entire post followed the pattern that LifeChanger had established before the full-scale invasion. The first part of the post described the “problem” or the situation that was the target of action. The next section explained what LifeChanger was doing about it, while the last part elucidated the effects of the action and encouraged readers to participate in further action. At the structural level, the post followed the basic notion of metonymic contiguity: from the problem to the action to the effects and further action.

The following post came one week later, on March 10. It concerned the situation of elderly Ukrainians:

There are lonely elderly people who continue to stay in their homes. Many of them do not have the strength to run for cover. They cannot go out for food and medicine. The food runs out and the dreaded questions arises: “What’s next?”

We try to help people who find themselves in a hopeless situation. If you need support, please contact us by phone or send contacts to those who need it. [telephone number for WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram]

Fill out the questionnaire [...] LifeChanger is a comprehensive support project for Jewish families in difficult life circumstances. (March 10, 2022, the original in English)

This post built on the enactment in the first post. What was selected and retained is the focus on vulnerable people irrespective of religious or ethnic affiliation. However, the self-identifying text at the end of the post again identified LifeChanger as supporting “Jewish families in difficult life circumstances”. This uncertainty surrounding the identity of the clients—all Ukrainians or Jewish families in Ukraine—was partially resolved in April 2022, when a new default description was adopted defining LifeChanger as a “project of comprehensive support for the population of Ukraine in difficult circumstances” (the original in English). This evolution from being a Jewish organization helping Jewish families to being “a project” for the population of Ukraine in difficult situations reflects the sensemaking process that increasingly constructed Ukraine as a singular population in difficult circumstances, a population within which no specific group should be treated differently from others. In other words, this was a trauma affecting all citizens, and they were experiencing it together. LifeChanger’s systematic use of the words “people”, “citizens”, and “population” also underscores its understanding of Ukraine as a political community comprised of people with various religious and ethnic identities. Consequently, LifeChanger also continued to reflect its Jewish identity by delivering goods with clear Jewish symbols and cultural cues, such as *matzah* for Passover, which took place just seven weeks after the war broke out.

The second dimension of the sensemaking process concerns LifeChanger’s enacted understanding of the war itself. At no point during the early months of the war were the reasons mentioned for which the “millions of citizens of Ukraine found themselves on the verge of life and death”. In a post from April 2022, conveying the story of Natella, who lost her workplace in Kherson, LifeChanger wrote:

[They] lived a peaceful, happy life, made plans, dreamed. But suddenly everything changed. Today they have to literally survive. LifeChanger is helping this little family by providing food packages. Now that Natella has lost her job, support is indispensable. This is one story of thousands that add

up to one common misfortune for all citizens of Ukraine. But together we will definitely make it. (April 20, 2022, the original in English)

The picture accompanying the text showed the shattered facade of a building. Without knowing that the devastation had been caused by war, one could also have suspected a fire.

As an organization focusing on helping children, primarily those with special needs, LifeChanger did not look for causes; it focused on the changes it could effect by helping. This way of sensemaking continued long into the war Russia had launched against Ukraine. Only in April 2022 did LifeChanger's Facebook page unambiguously attribute the causes of hardship to the war ("the horrors of war..." [April 13, 2022, the original in English]). Similarly, from May onward, houses were shattered *because* of missiles or rocket strikes. The perpetrator, though, was never identified concretely. This silence perhaps reflects the attempt to separate charitable work from the causes of evil. Throughout the summer of 2022, LifeChanger documented its activities on Facebook, attributing credit to its partners for information it had received from them. There were occasional stories of children and families needing to leave their homes and reaching safety in unspecified places, but most stories concerned vulnerable individuals receiving help from LifeChanger—food, medicine, and other necessities—in various cities and towns around Ukraine.

LifeChanger did not note the anniversary of the Russian invasion in any way: the posts on February 23, 2023, documented preparations for Purim, while the post on February 24 was about the warm blankets being sent to help "people feel cared for in cold winter days". On May 1, 2023, however, LifeChanger took the opportunity to reflect:

We believe that together we can overcome the challenge, and the citizens of Ukraine who receive help will soon be able to see the victory of good over evil. Let's unite and step up to help as many people as possible! (May 1, 2023)

The political "victory" that had become a central political theme in Ukraine was now the "victory of good" in LifeChanger's sensemaking. Gradually, during 2023 and after, LifeChanger's focus returned to children, and the mission of providing crisis relief and help by supplying necessities again acquired a sense of more continuous care work, highlighting the protraction of the war.

How can we understand LifeChanger's sensemaking efforts? During the studied period, LifeChanger's sensemaking primarily consisted of first translating the specific hardship of a Jewish family with a child with special needs to the general vulnerability of Jewish families in Ukraine and later to all people in Ukraine. LifeChanger focused on people's needs without probing into the causes of those needs. Second, because it is reliant on funding from individuals, LifeChanger needed to depict its actions as legitimate for potential funders. Before February 24, 2022, its posts on Facebook were in Russian, indicating that most donations came from individuals from the former Soviet Union. Since Russia's full-scale invasion, all posts have been first in Ukrainian, then in Russian, and lastly in English, indicating that at this point donations come (and are needed) from countries outside the former Soviet Union. Translations were not tailored to different target audiences but contained the same message in three different languages. By focusing on the effects of their actions, LifeChanger formulated its accountability to its various donors in terms of actions taken. By late June 2022, LifeChanger had begun to write in Ukrainian only, relying on Facebook's automatic translations into different languages. What used to be new and unpredictable, requiring heightened attention, has gradually become something more predictable, allowing for reliance on automatic translations.

For Weick, the cultural embeddedness of enactments is manifested in both the content and the form of those enactments. Enactments are experiments in different meanings, and they have a part in construing the environment upon which they enact. LifeChanger's sensemaking of the war followed the structure of its previous way of communicating about vulnerable individuals. From within the domain of providing help to vulnerable individuals, LifeChanger's early enactments reveal redefinitions of both its target population of vulnerable individuals and its own organizational identity. In both cases, we see a broadening of perspective. The vulnerable individual, often with a disability, gave way to vulnerable Ukrainians in general (elderly people, children, and so on).

Operating primarily within the same domain of providing help to vulnerable people, the association by contiguity reduces the complexity and messiness of the war to concrete actions that LifeChanger proposed to carry out and for which it required resources from donors. The contiguity is most clearly manifested in the structure of the posts following the pattern of a problem description, explication of proposed or taken action, and

iteration of the effects of the actions and the resources needed to carry them out. Although this structure reduces complexity to manageable actions, I argue that this is not the same kind of reduction of complexity that Weick criticized in many less resilient organizations. LifeChanger sliced reality into smaller parts that could be addressed with available resources. Its sensitivity to the complexity of reality is most explicit in that the organization's problem descriptions at the outset of the war were always partial and included requests for further details of actual problems and needs from the field.

There are also some aspects of LifeChanger's enactments, though, that retain semantic polysemy. Perhaps the clearest instance of polysemy is the initial absence of mention of the war's perpetrator. LifeChanger's descriptions of needs without reference to causes provided a pattern of singling out these needs as the problem, regardless of its origin. This is consistent with LifeChanger's identity as a charitable organization rather than a political organization. Yet as the war came to be understood as a political attempt to occupy the whole of Ukraine, LifeChanger was obliged to recognize that the needs it was fulfilling had a political origin. However, even here, LifeChanger described the cause as "evil", contrasted with the "good" it stood for. The war between Russia and Ukraine thus implied a fight between good and evil. As the war continued, "evil" acquired more concrete meanings: the "war", "rockets", "missiles", and "drones".

HESED SHMUEL IN KHERSON: RESILIENCE THROUGH METAPHORIC ADAPTATION⁴

Typical Facebook updates from Hesed Shmuel in Kherson prior to February 24, 2022, provided accounts of Hesed activities. The language was Russian, occasionally sprinkled with individual Hebrew words. Activities such as Torah study sessions already took place on Zoom at that time, and the Hesed Shmuel Facebook page commended "sound questions" and "lots of thoughts" from the participants. At the end, a moral note would summarize the meeting and elevate the mind: "Changing ourselves in small ways, we change the world in great ways". This structure, or schema, of opening with a short recap of the concrete activity, followed by participants' evaluations and leading to the conclusion with some advice relevant to participants' daily lives, is followed by the great majority

of Hesed Shmuel's Facebook postings. This continued to be the case following the onset of the full-scale invasion in February 2022.

The first post after the full-scale invasion, on February 27, followed the same schema. The account of the online meeting that had taken place two days earlier was simply preceded by the short phrase "despite the disturbing situation outside". The post recounted a discussion of the Torah portion including Exodus 32–35, starting with the story of the golden calf and the division of the people of Israel and ending with their being gathered together by Moses in a community building the Tabernacle. Exodus 35 asks Jews to give of themselves to serve a common goal benefitting the community. In other words, this is a story of how a community reunites to reach a common goal, but also of how the community acts in crisis and continues (or fails) to uphold its morals. The story of Exodus and community-building in crisis, in this enactment, represented elements of relating the Hesed community to the war outside. The post ended with wishing "peace and prosperity to you and your loved ones!" for the coming Shabbat.

On February 27, another post recounting activities related to the project "University Without Borders" told of an online lecture that had taken place just a day before the invasion, on February 23, 2022. The topic of the lecture was UNESCO International Mother Language Day. The post's contents recounted basic facts about the UN's official languages as well as the official status of Yiddish in Ukraine, but it ended with patriotic elation:

It is important for us to keep in our hearts such major and important words such as Motherland and glory, pride and honor, freedom and independence. Sofija Rotaru's song '...on one *kalyna*, one family, one country [sic!], because we have no other' became the apotheosis of the meeting.

This quote is rife with ambiguous meanings. The four patriotic values—Motherland, glory, pride, and honor—can easily be considered to refer to standard Soviet discourse (Yurchak, 2005), while freedom and independence are contemporary Ukrainian slogans emphasizing civic belonging (Kulyk, 2023). The text of Hesed Shmuel's post was written in Russian, apart from the quote from the song, which was in Ukrainian; Sofija Rotaru is a Ukrainian schlager-pop singer, and her song "Oдна kalyna",⁵ literally, "one guelder rose"—a symbol for the Ukrainian nation—is known for its patriotic message. The word "apotheosis" does

not match the popular culture genre Rotaru represents, and, Rotaru's lyrics are crucially misquoted in the post: Rotaru sings about Ukraine (Ukrayina/Україна), but in Hesed Shmuel's post, "Ukraine" has been changed to the word "country" (krayina/країна). Thus, the entire message reveals a constant contrast and clash between different cultural landscapes. What is the sense that this conflict between cultural landscapes provides? Let us analyze the basic schema Hesed Shmuel applies to its posts, according to which the first part gives an account of what was studied or viewed, followed by participant comments and ending with a more abstract statement about the meeting's meaning for the participants themselves in the present. Goatly (2022) defines metaphor as something described in terms of similarity; as such, the procession from International Mother Language Day as similar to the importance of one's mother tongue as, in turn, similar to patriotism can be subsumed under Rotaru's pop song. Calling the song the "apotheosis of the meeting" assumes just such a structure. Yet this metaphor is plagued by the ambiguity introduced by the mixing of two different languages (Russian and Ukrainian), the Soviet standard form, the content (of modern Ukrainian patriotism), the replacement (intentional or unintentional) of "Ukraine" with "country", and the mix of highbrow and lowbrow cultural signs. The metaphoric equation of vastly different things with the cultural ambiguity gives rise to a text that carries multiple meaning potentials spanning from Soviet patriotism to Ukrainian independence and presumably disputed minority rights. One result of such an enactment is that it appropriates the uncertainty of the environment and turns it back against the environment itself. Now it is the actors from the environment that must first enact in order to discover what the organization is doing.

On March 3, that is, one day after the city of Kherson fell under Russian occupation, Hesed Shmuel posted a short note conveying two pieces of information. The first concerned the volunteer project "Wings of Kindness" and its continuation under the "difficult conditions for our country, for our city, for all community members", conditions under which "the volunteers of our Centre do not give up". The second concerned the continuation of a lecture series—on the day the city fell under Russian occupation—on the landscape painter Arkhip Kuindzhi (Mariupol, 1841—St. Petersburg, 1910). A further post on the same day concerned physical training for the participants attending Hesed Shmuel's Zoom meetings; four days later, the focus was Bulat Okudzhava's song "Prayer

(aka *While the World is Still Turning*)” and other songs “dedicated to women, love and spring”.

On March 6, 2022, Hesed Shmuel casually opened the post telling about the day’s Torah therapy session, stating: “Life goes on and nobody cancelled Torah therapy”. The following day, the center celebrated the eve of International Women’s Day dedicating a post to “the loved ones!”, two days later, it informed readers about small group meetings with a psychologist. The topic was the importance of “multiplying joy” in one’s life before Purim. The “relevance of the topic was obvious” to all participants. The description concluded by explicating the similarity between the roots of the Hebrew words for “forgiveness” and “dance” and noting that “all the participants were ready to dance!”

The openings of the posts, downplaying the effects of the war, became a standard feature of the posts. This carries multiple meanings. On one hand, the posts can be seen as signs of resilience, that the community would not give up in the face of Russia’s mounting war. On the other hand, they can be understood as communicating that this war was not theirs and that they refused to be affected by it, that they could even ignore it to some extent. This, once again, places the organization in an ambiguous position vis-à-vis its environment. Yet a third potential meaning emerges in the post as well: wishing away the war, creating a virtual space for a moment in which one does not need to think about the war. This last interpretation finds further legitimacy in the nature of the events and the discussions of topics that bear no relevance at all to the war, for example, the landscape painter Kuindzhi or Bulat Okudzhava’s music. Hesed Shmuel is a community center for the elderly; the primary audience for its communications includes the organization’s members as well as the actors in the environment: the Russian occupiers, the Ukrainian state, and Hesed’s international donors. The topics bearing no connection to the war provided a space for peace of mind far from external events. Similarly, many of Hesed’s other activities, especially Torah therapy, had the explicit psychological aim of contributing to individuals’ mental well-being, of finding goodness amidst the calamity of the war and encouraging participants to do good wherever possible to promote a positive atmosphere.

On March 9, 2022, Hesed Shmuel held another meeting under the umbrella of the University without Borders program. This time, however, not everyone was able to join, because “not all participants can connect [...] Some people do not have Internet in these heavy times”. Moreover, “people are afraid to leave the house again. In street checks they can take

away telephones. Everyone is afraid of being left without connection, that last ray of light connecting with one another”. This post enacted the fear among Hesed Shmuel’s members. The topic of the day concerned the “long-suffering history of the Jewish people” in Canaan, shifting to the liberation of Kherson from German fascist invaders on March 13, 1944, and finishing with a song about Kherson by Ukrainian bass-baritone Viacheslav Berezniakov.

As the occupation continued and communication became more difficult, the descriptions of different events at Hesed Shmuel also acquired a new dimension. Torah therapy, for instance, in addition to providing an opportunity to apply lessons from religious texts to one’s daily life, became a moment to share information about the developing situation in the city of Kherson and its surroundings: the Chief Rabbi of Kherson and the region, Yossef Itzhak Wolff, was moving around the area delivering assistance and bringing news to the city. Throughout March 2022, there were occasional reposts from the JDC informing readers in Ukrainian about emergency evacuations or sharing artistic texts or poems condemning the Russian invasion. Yet the great majority of posts conveyed the message that Hesed Shmuel’s daily activities continued *despite* the changes in the environment; they functioned to emphasize that the community was standing together, building on giving and sharing.

A week into the occupation of Kherson, the mood of the posts became gloomier, more hardships and fear were stated explicitly, and some inter-textual messages on ongoing political events were visible. For instance, one post from March 11 wished a “peaceful sky to all of us!”, referring to a discussion as to whether NATO could impose a no-fly zone over Ukraine. On the same day, Hesed Shmuel also posted information about the Chief Rabbi of Kherson Region “risking his life” to personally deliver food and medicine to occupied Kherson. Posts also drew parallels to the Nazi occupation of Kherson as well as to the history of suffering of the Jewish people, indicating that different semiotic connections between the current occupation and Jewish tradition were being made. The explicit adoption of a political stance was, however, disguised by means of the use of universalist cultural texts. During the latter half of March, the posts became almost exclusively individualist, mentioning meetings with psychologists, the need to maintain personal mental health, and the importance of being a part of the Jewish community or “family” (March 20, 2022); at the same time, the occupation that until now had been named using various euphemisms was now explicitly called war (March 18, 2022).

In 2022, Purim, which celebrates the importance of survival, community, and sharing, fell in the second half of March. Hesed Shmuel's posts conveyed a growing distance between its online events—enabling the participants “to go beyond problems and become FREE” (March 27, 2022)—and “the current situation”. At the same time, the posts focused on the organization's regular activities, University Without Borders, Torah therapy, “A Caring Bond”, and volunteer community activities for Jewish children and center volunteers. The more time went by, the more the posts tried to shut out the outside world, often beginning with preludes such as “Life goes on and Torah therapy has not been cancelled” (April 10, 2022) and encouragement for people to participate in more online activities.

During the spring of 2022, while Hesed Shmuel's official Facebook posts largely refrained from referring explicitly to the occupation or political events, individuals occasionally posted texts conveying the presence of the Russian occupation as well as the importance of connecting to the outside world, seeking both material and psychological support. In May and June, Kherson experienced a lack of Internet connection, and all Hesed Shmuel activities were suspended until late June. During this period, the frequency of posts decreased dramatically, with one new post appearing every week or two.

Since October 10, 2022, apart from the occasional post in Russian, Hesed Shmuel's Facebook posts have appeared exclusively in Ukrainian; the organization also renamed its programs to appear in Ukrainian. The focus was on accounts of the activities within their programs. The liberation of Kherson on November 11, 2022, was noted: “Think of good and the good will come”. A comment also appeared stating that “the good news from our home city, Kherson, will inspire all to live” (November 11, 2022), but the anniversary of the invasion three months later was ignored; posts at that time celebrated birthdays, reminded readers of the importance of community and unity, and remarked on early preparations for the coming of Purim.

Hesed Shmuel's sensemaking relied on extensive use of metaphor as a way to structure the syntax of its posts. Comparisons with Jewish tradition and history, as in the case of the biblical Exodus from Egypt as well as Kherson's occupation by the Nazis and its 1944 liberation, placed the current war and occupation in a broader historical narrative of the Jewish people. Yet the metaphoric structure of that comparison—the biblical Jewish people being gathered as a community *is* the Jewish people under

Nazi occupation *is* the current Hesed community—opens up multiple potential meanings that could be assigned to the current war. The use of historical and religious analogies provided a long-term goal: that of building a community with a purpose. Similarly, the epithets downplaying the effects of the war rendered Hesed Shmuel's own position extremely ambiguous, as did its switching between Soviet and contemporary Ukrainian patriotic symbols.

According to Weick (1988, 1995; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2015), sudden changes in the environment increase uncertainty, which must be made sense of by means of enacting in response to the uncertainty. One effect of Hesed Shmuel's reliance on metaphoric syntax in its sensemaking rendered the organization's own position vis-à-vis its environment ambiguous, appearing more like a "problematic situation" to be made sense of rather than a "problem" with a definite view, borrowing Schön's point on sensemaking referred to early in this chapter. Rather than leading to inaction or loss of control, this created a space for Hesed Shmuel to continue its action—just as communicated in its Facebook posts—despite everything taking place in its environment. The organization has, to return to the terminology of resilience, indicated its ability to bounce back from crisis by carving out a space that the crisis cannot enter. An essential attribute of this adaptation, however, was the reconceptualization of Hesed Shmuel's standard schema and activities. Torah therapy, for instance, evolved from community well-being through caring for mental health with religious texts to a news channel on which the local rabbi could share regional news in the absence of other coverage; Soviet pop songs evolved from representing, perhaps, nostalgia for one's youth to offering a token of familiarity in a rapidly collapsing world, also providing a subtle political statement; local artists, mother tongue, and religious traditions evolved from community-building to providing a link to the global history of the Jewish people. All of these are metaphoric transformations of meaning.

As a coda to the story of Hesed Shmuel's resilience as metaphoric adaptation, let us consider a more recent post, from March 28, 2024, in which Hesed Shmuel informed its readers about the Caring Bond project's latest achievements in the city of Kherson and the surrounding region. Among other pieces of information, we learn that a sign commemorating Kherson as a "Hero City" has been erected in Odesa; that villages that were destroyed or damaged in bombings have been restored; and that a souvenir shop has been opened promoting the symbols of the city and donating

all proceeds “to support the Ukrainian Army”. Even if Hesed Shmuel’s sensemaking drew on the syntax of metaphor, leading more to adaptation as redefining some of its actions than to future-oriented adaptation to the changing environment, this is an indication that the organization never lost sight of the reality outside its community.

Hesed Shmuel’s enactments during the period studied drew liberally on different domains. Current affairs were compared to biblical events, different political regimes were placed in a sequence in the same sentence, different psychological realms were brought together, and religious and cultural education was conflated with news coverage. The blended spaces created through such metaphoric relations created ample polysemy and encouraged flexibility of interpretation. The analysis provided here emphasizes the centrality of the context for such metaphoric constructions, especially that of the Russian occupation of Kherson and of the need to be able to avoid politics as well as to create a psychological space for reflection and safety. From a semiotic point of view, such blended spaces do more than enable certain actions; in addition, the blend between, for instance, Torah therapy and news coverage feeds the two back to one another, infusing current affairs with a certain religious/cultural dimension and religious or cultural practices with certain contemporary political characteristics.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The analysis has shown that LifeChanger and Hesed Shmuel predominantly approached their enactments from two different angles. Both applied a tripartite structure maintained from the time before the full-scale invasion: in the first part of each post, the “problem” or the “object” of action was described. In the second part, the organization’s relationship to that object was laid out. The third part presented the effects that the organization claimed to achieve. Yet the *kinds* of relationships between these three parts of the enactments differed. LifeChanger relied heavily on metonymic relations, emphasizing in the first part a call for a certain type of action, proposed in the second part, which necessitated a certain kind of support from donors in the third part. Hesed Shmuel relied more on metaphoric relationships in which the similarities between the first, second, and third parts were emphasized. These differences contribute to two different kinds of enactments.

LifeChanger’s enactments built connections between new actors. The organization asked for input from its environment, and the channel

received information and furthered the possibility of offering and receiving assistance. By opening itself up for external input, LifeChanger could easily incorporate new problems or objects into its repertoire. Its first post after the full-scale invasion built on the metonymy that vulnerability in Ukraine had extended from disabled Jewish children to a broader group of Ukrainian victims of war. Similarly, LifeChanger's shift from posting in Russian to translating its messages from Ukrainian into Russian and English shows how the organization metonymically started to include new audiences in its posts. LifeChanger's openness to the environment also coincided with its finances as the organization constantly attracted donations from individuals. For this reason, too, the swift transition into writing in Ukrainian and translating posts into Russian and English was necessary. One could label LifeChanger's mode of resilience as constant adaptation to changing circumstances and cues emerging from the environment.

Hesed Shmuel's enactments, on the other hand, relied more on metaphoric connections. Treating Sofiya Rotaru's song as the apotheosis of the group's discussion on International Mother Language Day, for instance, claimed similarity between mother tongue, its celebration, and patriotic values. I argue, however, that the metaphoric relations here play a more salient role in reversing the uncertainty emanating from the environment. The conflation of Soviet patriotic clichés (Motherland, glory, pride, and honor) with contemporary Ukrainian patriotic values such as freedom and independence as a way of sensemaking creates a new kind of ambiguity concerning what exactly the source is and what the target of the claimed similarity. The effect of this blended space is uncertainty of meaning, which can be utilized as a way of carving out a space that is free from the war. This can partly explain Hesed Shmuel's regular phrases in its posts about the war ("despite the disturbing situation", "life goes on and nobody cancelled Torah therapy"). Further, the achievement of a space free from the organization's real environment of war enabled Hesed Shmuel to continue to make its activities meaningful for the community. The nature of those activities shifted only slightly from, for instance, offering daily activities for the elderly to offering activities for the elderly that contributed to better mental health amidst the distress caused by the war.

The continuity of Hesed Shmuel's operations despite the difficulties caused by the full-scale invasion can be seen as an example of resilience by means of carving out a space in which environmental effects were dealt with in two different ways: by diminishing their role in the organization's

actions and by adapting those actions to respond to the effects of the environment that were impossible to ignore. One good example of this was the gradual evolution of Torah therapy from applying (psychological) insights from the Bible to daily life to acquiring regional news during an information siege from a rabbi who was still allowed to move around (because of his role in carrying out humanitarian aid). However, the awareness of the true nature of the war in the environment of the organization did not disappear; this is evidenced by the gradual evolution of Hesed Shmuel to incorporate more and more practical dimensions of the war into its realm, for example, the opening of a souvenir shop to support the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Sensemaking is only one facet of resilience. The literature on resilience emphasizes the importance of decision-making structures that enable sensemaking to play its role. The absence of data on decision-making procedures in conjunction with different modes of sensemaking is an issue that should be addressed in future research.

NOTES

1. Contiguity can here be defined as any form of associative relations other than similarity.
2. Metaphonymy and conceptual blending breach the classical cognitive distinction between metaphor and metonymy that posited that metaphor operates between two different domains while metonymy operates within one domain, acknowledging the fuzziness of boundaries between different cognitive domains.
3. An organization could also have a Facebook group, which could be public or private. Neither LifeChanger nor Hesed Shmuel in Kherson has a delineated membership because both are charitable civil society organizations involving volunteers and therefore need to think about openness in their communications to the broader society.
4. I would like to thank Dr. Masha Semashyna for her comments and advice concerning the semiotics of Hesed Shmuel's posts and, especially, Rotaru's lyrics.
5. This song is not the same as another Ukrainian patriotic song called "Chervona Kalyna" ("A Red Guelder Rose"), which was officially banned during the occupation of Kherson by Russian occupants and has become something of a symbol of the Ukrainian fight for independence from Russian oppression.

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Resilience Through Networks: Jewish Civil Society Organizations' Collaboration Patterns During Wartime

Sofiya Voytiv

INTRODUCTION

How do civil society organizations partner and collaborate when a war erupts? Moreover, what happens when those organizations also share a certain identity, e.g., a religious one? This chapter engages with the role of social networks in the context of civil society resilience. More specifically, it looks at national and transnational collaboration patterns of Jewish civil society organizations. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 was a shock (albeit anticipated) for many people and organizations in Ukraine, though many of them had been active in humanitarian and war efforts since the eruption of the conflict in March 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and Russian-backed insurgency in the eastern Ukrainian regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. Other chapters in this book cover the main aspects of the organizational changes that have taken place in response to the war, using specific examples of different Jewish organizations. In this chapter, I focus on collaborations between Jewish organizations active in Ukraine during the first months of the full-scale invasion in order to learn more about civil society resilience. Specifically, I consider how the framework of cooperation—often

based on trust, experience, and reputation (Atouba & Shumate, 2015)—shifted with regard to organizational histories and agendas.

Much research on religious civil society organizing during periods of violence, crisis, and war has focused largely on civil society's resilience and role in peace-building (Ozcelik, 2022; Maigari, 2022). While religious organizations, both local and transnational, can foster peace-building, they also face a number of challenges when it comes to their work with the state, legacies of violence, and the representation of community needs (Ozcelik, 2022). Different religious civil society organizations, however, may confront these issues—as well as the presence of ongoing violence due to war—in different ways. At the same time, such organizations may share similar goals in their activities, such as humanitarian relief and support of their communities, as well as the need to address the practical issues around maintaining organizational work in unsettling times.

While many studies have analyzed religious civil society organizing in times of violence and crisis, they tend to focus either on the case of one particular organization or on a specific religious membership (Ashworth et al., 2014), or to tackle religious organizing in somewhat homogenous ways that limit understanding of the peculiarities of many individual organizations acting in the same organizational field (Ager et al., 2015). As demonstrated in this book, no organization is an island, and it is through relating to the larger organizational field as well as the needs of their respective communities that religious organizations build resilient practices of organizing (see Chap. 1 for examples). Therefore, understanding organizations' activities through their networks of collaborations can shed light on how organizations adapt, change, and relate to others in the field and in the general environment of a crisis.

Regardless of organizational identities, religious or otherwise, such networks of collaborations—often pre-existing the onset of the crisis or war—ensure the resilience of the entire organizational field and result from the processes of establishing trust and reliable sources of communication. In the next section of this chapter, I discuss some of my findings and conceptualizations of interorganizational collaborations with a specific focus on such collaborations during times of crisis. Thereafter, I apply a network perspective to analyze the network of collaborations of some of the Jewish civil society organizations active in Ukraine during the initial months of the eruption of the full-scale Russian–Ukrainian war. This network framework yields an in-depth analysis of resilience by showing how multiple organizations acting in the same organizational field relate to one another as well as to their overall wartime environment.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Rarely do civil society organizations work completely independently of other similar organizations: no organization exists in a vacuum without relating to the general social environment and to what other, similar organizations are doing. This is because organizations tend to want to adhere to the needs of the communities they serve and thus fill a certain niche with their activities. While relating to the larger society and to other organizations can be both active and passive as well as implicit, most organizations are connected to others to some degree, be it through their members' other affiliations or the often-needed exchange of resources and support with other (larger or smaller) organizations. This chapter looks at the network of Jewish civil society organizations in Ukraine during the first months of the full-scale Russian invasion, acknowledging a certain duality present in the organizational field.

While individual organizations have agency to decide which other organizations to work with or avoid, the organizational field itself dictates the availability of connections to other organizations. In this section, I first discuss previous research on the ways organizations can establish collaborations from the point of view of individual organizations—more specifically, the determining factors of partner selection for collaborations. Thereafter, I provide a structural network perspective on organizational collaborations. Taken together, these points of departure can provide a framework of analysis of collaborations without neglecting the agency of specific organizations (albeit with some possible structural constraints on the overall network).

In order to best achieve their aims, civil society organizations often depend on developing a network of collaboration that is shaped by trust and communication (Eisenberg, 1986). Studies have shown that civil society organizations that operate in isolation are much less effective than those with established collaboration practices (Atouba & Shumate, 2015). Building a network of collaboration is, however, not a straightforward task: trust is the aspect that correlates most with effectiveness of communication (*ibid.*), and achieving it can depend on many factors such as type of work, history of previous collaborations, and organizational size. Moreover, personal relationships between the individuals within an organization as well as among those in different organizations can further frame the communication and the building of trust.

Partner selection in interorganizational collaboration is thus an important determinant of future collaboration; choices of collaborations can also signify a certain level of trust. This is especially important during times of crisis such as pandemics, natural disasters, and wars. Ganesan and Hess (1997) describe two dimensions of trust: benevolence and competence. While the first of these relates to the partners' motivations and intentions, the second refers to the credibility and exhibited expertise of the potential collaborator. In times of war, focusing on these two dimensions of trust is especially useful for the analysis of collaboration practices among organizations. Here, the attitudes toward and conceptualizations of the reasons for the war's eruption, as well as ascertaining whether a potential partner has always been aligned with one's own organization's views, become crucial in choosing collaborators (Voytiv, 2019). Another potential aspect for consideration is shared identity—in our case, among Jewish organizations. The sharing of some common characteristics between organizations reduces the complexity of interactions and the time spent resolving issues that organizations might otherwise approach differently (Bierly & Gallagher, 2007).

The factor of prior experience working with a certain organization is another important one in choosing to collaborate (Atouba & Shumate, 2015) as it is one of the clearest predictors of the outcomes of future collaborations. When a crisis strikes, continuing to work with an organization that has proven to be a good partner is usually the easiest choice. At the same time, if prior experience has been negative, the chances of continuing a collaboration, especially under wartime conditions, are much slimmer.

Some organizations may also be seen as more attractive collaborators based on their reputations, which often correlate with size and previous experience (Bierly & Gallagher, 2007). Larger transnational organizations may be at an advantage in this regard due to their greater resources and plentiful connections; however, on the local level, large transnational organizations may be perceived as too slow and inflexible when it comes to making quick decisions under wartime conditions (Tallberg et al., 2014). Here, the aspect of resources is quite important: collaborating with another organization because it has access to more resources (funding, contacts, etc.) can be beneficial (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Conceptualizing interorganizational collaborations from a social network perspective is useful in this regard. From this perspective, all organizations constitute a network in which some are directly connected to each

other while others are connected through a common collaborator (Brass et al., 2004). Feld (1981), in his seminal study on the focused organization of social ties, developed a theoretical model that serves as a useful tool for my analysis in this chapter. According to Feld, a society contains a number of activity foci; the social actors that find certain of these foci attractive usually have several characteristics in common. Moreover, the more intense and controlled the focus of activity, the more similar the actors around it. In this sense, people with similar characteristics perform similar activities and attract similar new people (e.g., playing golf or tennis is also a marker of belonging to a certain social class).

For the purpose of analyzing collaborations among Jewish civil society organizations in this study, religion can be conceptualized as a focus of activity that attracts social actors (organizations) that tend to share characteristics. Feld's (1981) theory allows space for social actors to move between foci, especially if they are isolated from others organized around that focus. Hypothetically, in times of crisis, as previous research has demonstrated (Voytiv, 2019), organizations that have been organized around one focus (e.g., religion) might feel the need to address other issues such as social security, resistance, or the like; if they feel that these emerging issues are not being anticipated or addressed, they may create their own focus of activity or move to another, existing one. This is mainly accomplished through collaborations and connections with other organizations that they deem to fill current needs. Therefore, we could expect the organizations analyzed in this book to either keep their religious focus or move to another one, such as war relief organizing (some cases of this are described in Chaps. 3 and 4).

In sum, when it comes to collaborations between organizations in a network, especially during times of crisis and war, two necessary points of departure present themselves for further analysis. On one hand, individual organizations as actors in the organizational network have agency to establish trust based on previous experience of collaboration or the reputation of another organization. Such agency is important to consider as it directly affects the ways in which collaborations are structured in the organizational field. On the other hand, the structural characteristics of the network itself can shift and shape the ways in which individual organizations in the field relate to one another. Adopting a dual framework for examining a network of organizations allows for analysis of that network without diminishing the actors' or the structure's role in maintaining resilient modes of action in periods of acute violent conflict. In this chapter, I

present and analyze the network of collaborations of Jewish organizations in Ukraine and attempt to contextualize possible polarizations, solidarities, and clustering within their network during the initial months of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

DATA AND METHOD

Sample

As in other chapters of this book, the empirical materials included in the analysis were collected by ten former students from Paideia, The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden (see Chap. 1), and consisted of screenshots of organizational posts on public Facebook and other social media pages. They were subsequently used to explore the network of cooperations between organizations. Each time an organization's post mentioned any other organization, the two organizations were coded as having a connection. In total, 843 documents were analyzed and coded for such connections, covering 108 organizations. However, due to the limitations of software for qualitative analysis, which did not allow for network analysis based on coded PDF files (MAXQDA, 2022), the number of organizations included in the analysis is 77. Of these, only 31 named at least one connection to another organization; however, many more may have collaborated with other organizations in ways that are not reflected in the results due to the design of this study.

In addition, I gathered more general information about some of the largest organizations from the initial sample, mainly from online public sources such as organizations' websites and Wikipedia pages, in order to shed more light on the content of organizational activities as well as the histories of their creation and establishment in the organizational field. The analysis combines the two data sources and aims to map patterns of interaction in the organizational field. However, it is important to emphasize that the results presented below do not suggest causal links as they are based on a snapshot of interactions at a particular time during the beginning of the war. Furthermore, the results are not generalizable to all Jewish organizations in Ukraine or to other non-Jewish organizations. They reflect only the connections established by the organizations present in the dataset and used for the analysis. Nevertheless, these results do shed light on some aspects of organizing at the outset of the invasion.

Network Analysis

Social network analysis has a long history in the social sciences, particularly in sociology, in which field we can trace it as far back as Simmel (1950). The idea that individuals are connected to each other and form groups or networks with their own dynamics based on group size and the attributes of their member actors has been widely used in organizational studies (McPherson et al., 2001). Such studies either investigate the within-organizational dynamics of the network, including board memberships or similar, or focus on the contacts that organizations as units or actors create, maintain, and dissolve with other organizations (Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999). Both broad and specific definitions of organizations have been used in the social network analysis of organizational behaviors (McPherson et al., 2001). Technically, any social actor can be conceptualized as a node in a network, while the connections between such nodes or actors can range from weak to strong depending on the content of an interaction between the set of nodes (Bian, 1997).

Scholars have also measured the intensity of interactions in terms of frequency of contacts that could theoretically strengthen the connections between nodes (ibid.). One of the most common and basic ways to depict a network is by means of a network graph, which usually shows connections or their absence between nodes on a surface, combining mathematical measures with artistic techniques (Scott, 2017). A multi-dimensional scaling method (Scott, 2017) is then widely used to account for mathematical measures of distance between the nodes (either similarity or difference between nodes) while also presenting networks in a way that makes the data clear and appealing. This method plots data on proximity between two nodes as if they corresponded to Euclidean distances. Proximity can be measured either as similarity or dissimilarity between two nodes, which implies that nodes plotted in one cluster can be either very similar or very dissimilar; one must therefore be certain to carefully define proximity as used in a specific analysis. Similarity and dissimilarity are usually represented by 0 and 1, respectively.

As mentioned, the information about all organizations was assembled as a network of organizational collaborations, where a collaboration is understood as the mention of one organization by another organization in one or more online documents that were coded as part of the project. In the analysis, I calculated similarity between the nodes based on the occurrence of codes, each of which corresponds to the name of one

organization in the documents. A similarity matrix was constructed based on the proximity of documents, i.e., according to whether two nodes are present in the same document, which was then the basis for the calculation of distances between the organizations in the network. The plotting of the network and the definition of clusters within the network are based on the frequency of occurrence of two nodes (organizations) in the same document in the software. Such occurrence does not always signify collaboration or a positive attitude; in theory, organizations may name others in a negative context. But since no negative mentions were found in the sample, the network can be treated as a cooperation network.

Seeing the organizations' collaborative activities as part of a network allows for the analysis of the structure of these collaborations, including uncovering the paths that different organizations might take were they to collaborate with other organizations that are not necessarily directly connected to them (Brass et al., 2004). Here, descriptive social network analysis, information on the content of the posts, and descriptions of the organizations are used to make sense of the patterns of collaboration of Jewish organizations in Ukraine during the first months of Russia's full-scale invasion of the country. In addition, this chapter draws conclusions about possible explanations for and mechanisms of collaborations, especially with regard to working with organizations outside of Ukraine; this speaks to the transnational quality of organizational collaborations in times of crisis and, specifically, war.

Despite the availability of specific dates corresponding to all of the data, the network is presented here as a snapshot compilation of all of the organizations throughout the study period based on their frequency of proximity to each other in one or more documents. This is partly due to methodological limitations and partly intended to showcase the full network that had been created by the time the war had reshaped interorganizational collaboration and the new organizations created during the first few months of the war had established themselves. Seventy-seven organizations are excluded from this map as they did not have any co-occurrent collaborations in any document. In addition, some organizations were omitted because their documents were stored in PDF or .jpg formats, which are not supported by MAXQDA when calculating proximities. One notable example is the case of Chabad organizations, which constitute one of the largest Jewish groups of organizations in the world and in Ukraine specifically (also related to the events chronicled in Chaps. 2 and 3 in this volume).

the network analysis. I first present some general histories and general stated agendas of some of the largest organizations in the dataset; thereafter, I proceed to the analysis of the collaborations present in the dataset.

FINDINGS

Jewish Organizations in Ukraine

It is difficult to precisely establish the number of Jewish organizations and communities present in Ukraine. According to the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (2022), there are about 190,000 people in the country with at least one Jewish grandparent and about 40,000 people who self-identify as only Jewish in surveys. Ukraine's large Jewish population would imply that a great deal of organizing can take place within the group. While there are a number of large, often transnational Jewish organizations that operate in Ukraine, many communities are organized in a grass-roots fashion and are not always registered as organizations. As mentioned above, I identified 108 Jewish organizations (as well as three non-civil-society or non-Jewish organizations that collaborated with some of these 108) that operate locally or nationally in Ukraine only or that are transnational but send aid to Ukraine or help Jewish refugees from Ukraine.¹ Below, I briefly discuss the history of several of the most actively collaborating and largest organizations within the sampled organizational network. Some of these organizations are also mentioned elsewhere in this book, for example in Chaps. 2, 3, and 4.

The aim of this brief discussion is to familiarize the reader with the core organizations in the field and their breadth and levels of activity, e.g., transnational, national, or local, or in other countries in cases of aid and support for refugees. Figure 5.2 shows a frequency distribution of geographical locations of organizational work. While our dataset primarily considered organizations active in Ukraine, the reality of war followed some organizations and people out of the country. To a certain degree, then, this figure reflects general refugee migration, with Poland and Germany among those countries that received the majority of Ukrainian refugees overall. However, as we can see, organizations in other countries are also actively involved in Ukraine and may reflect specifically Jewish patterns of refugee migration. Finally, several organizations operate transnationally and refer to a collaborative network that is not bounded by national borders. These organizations are often large and act as umbrella organizations or organizational

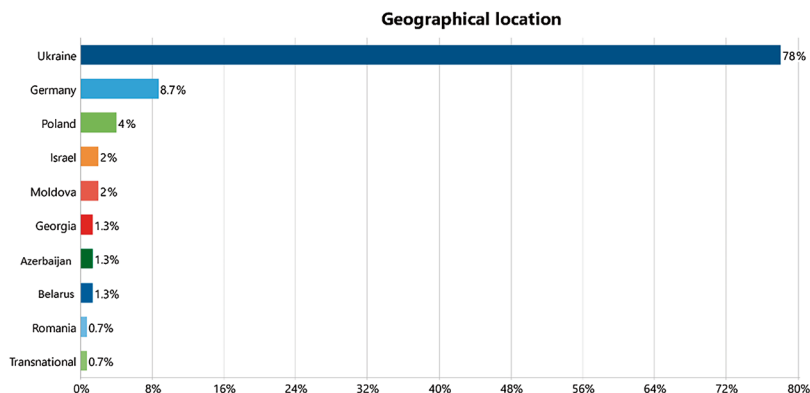


Fig. 5.2 Geographical locations of organizational activity present in the dataset

networks with chapters in Ukraine. When such organizations are mentioned, it is usually in a reporting of events or of aid capacity.

The complex multilevel structure of the organizational collaborations of Jewish organizations and communities implies that organizations can collaborate within the same level (e.g., local) or across levels (e.g., a transnational organization collaborating with a local organized community). In this sense, previous (before the full-scale invasion) collaboration is of utmost importance for same-level collaborations, as are prestige/reputation/assumed expertise for collaborations across levels (Ganesan & Hess, 1997). I now illustrate these complexities with the examples of several core organizations present in our dataset.

The case of Hillel is a very interesting one in this sense. Hillel is a Jewish student organization with more than 160,000 members at 850 higher education institutions around the world (Hillel International, 2024). The first Hillel organization on the territories of former Soviet countries was opened in Moscow in 1994, and at the time of this writing, there were 18 Hillels in the area. In Ukraine there were five Hillel centers functioning to a large degree, despite the horrific destruction of the Hillel Kharkiv building and heavy damage to the Hillel Odesa building due to Russian shelling. The Ukrainian Hillel network has organized and collaborated extensively since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, most notably with help provided to internally displaced people from eastern and northern Ukraine to go to Lviv, whose Hillel organization was the only one functioning during the first several weeks of the

full-scale invasion (according to data collected by Paideia alumni). The humanitarian and social aid that Hillel organizations provided to refugees was not limited by the borders of Ukraine; collaborations were also established with Hillel organizations elsewhere, e.g., in Chisinau, Moldova.

According to the director of the regional network Hillel in Central Asia and Southeastern Europe (Hillel CASE), the focus of organizational work has shifted from community celebrations and events to volunteer work entailing much more collaboration within the country as well as outside it and transnationally (*ibid.*). Having an established network of cooperation before the war (including the hosting of celebrations, student exchanges, and similar types of activities) might have contributed to the two dimensions of trust between member organizations both nationally and internationally (Ganesan & Hess, 1997). In addition, the sheer size of Hillel gives members a certain baseline level of trust since they are all part of the same organizational structure. However, since the focus of organizing has shifted since the eruption of the full-scale invasion, some other new types of collaborations might have been established with organizations outside the Hillel network, and these may not share identity characteristics with it. Thus, Hillel is an example of an organization that is part of a network seeming to rely on both local collaborations and connections with Hillel chapters in other countries.

The Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) is one of the oldest and largest organizations in our sample. Founded in the U.S. during World War I, it has been primarily concerned with humanitarian relief for Jewish populations around the world. In Ukraine specifically, since the full-scale invasion, the organization has provided aid to more than 52,900 vulnerable Jews in Ukraine as well as to those who have fled to Moldova and to Jewish communities across Europe. This type of activity renders JDC a transnational organization as per the discussion above. JDC was, however, also an initiator of the establishment of Hesed centers across former Soviet countries after 1989. While it is a large transnational organization, JDC has often relied on collaborations established by Hesed centers across Ukraine; these, in turn, have collaborated with both JDC and other Hesed centers in Ukraine and elsewhere, as discussed in Chaps. 4 and 6. With the more or less hierarchical structure of organizing implied here, it can be expected that Hesed centers would primarily choose other Hesed centers for collaborations as well as take the advice and resources provided by JDC. The first Hesed center was established in St. Petersburg

in 1993, and by 2003, Hesed encompassed 2800 Jewish communities around the states of the former Soviet Union. In Ukraine, Hesed joint activities since the full-scale invasion have catered to more than 37,000 clients, despite the fact that 18 Hesed offices have had to close due to the war.

The third example is an organization called LifeChanger that has been active in Ukraine since 2015. Its original primary aim was to aid Jewish children throughout Ukraine. In March of 2022, however, the organization started helping with provisions of food and medication as well as the evacuation of all (including non-Jewish) elderly people, children, and families in areas suffering violence or under occupation. LifeChanger claims to help approximately 7500 people weekly. Turunen (Chap. 4 in this volume) focuses specifically on this organization and shows in great detail how the abovementioned change has proceeded. For the purposes of the present chapter, it is interesting that this organization exists on a national level and mainly organizes aid to people through its own channels, rarely claiming collaborations in its reports.

The Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine (VAAD) is an example of a country-level umbrella organization. It consists of 265 Jewish organizations and communities in Ukraine. Since the outbreak of the full-scale invasion, the organization has focused on humanitarian aid and on consulting and organizing for evacuations.

Finally, our dataset includes several organizations that are mostly concerned with cultural and historical activities; these generally participate in collaborations outside of Ukraine. The organization Ukrainian Jewish Encounter (which also publishes a newspaper, *Hadashot*) is an initiative launched in 2008 for the collaboration of Ukrainians of Jewish and Christian heritage in Ukraine, Israel, and the diaspora. Mostly, this organization focuses on the development of a “shared historical narrative” with educational and scholarly initiatives. World Union for Progressive Judaism, which has a chapter in Kyiv, is a multinational network established in 1926 in London and present in more than 50 countries the world over. Focusing mainly on educational programs and religious discussions, the network also contributes to charities and humanitarian aid for Jewish populations, including in Ukraine. The Masorti/Conservative Movement states that its mission is to support and build “a Judaism that preserves observance and tradition while recognizing how modern life in Israel is lived” ([masorti.org](https://www.masorti.org)). Chabad is another prominent organization in our dataset (albeit not included in the network presented in Fig. 5.1). Founded

in 1775, it is one of the largest Jewish organizations in the world and is very prominent in its activities in Ukraine (a larger discussion is dedicated to this organization in Chap. 2).

As discussed above, collaboration practices and choices of partners have been shown to depend heavily on previous experiences of collaboration (trust) and the reputations of potential collaboration partners (Atouba & Shumate, 2015). Therefore, the larger, older organizations are more likely to become partners in collaborations during crises: they tend to possess high levels of prestige (they are well-known actors in the field) and usually have a well-documented track record of activities both before and during the war. They are therefore more prominent in the organizational field (Brass et al., 2004). However, larger organizations often lack flexibility. Therefore, some grassroots organizing might be done through smaller organizations; in addition, new organizations created as a direct response to the full-scale invasion might prefer collaborations based on personal experience with organizations that pre-dated the invasion. In the next section, I show that the collaboration patterns one would expect from the descriptions above might not always be the ones that are in fact established—both in general and in times of crisis.

Routes and Roots of Collaborations

The official aim of all of the organizations in our dataset was similar, if not the same, during the studied period. All of them were concerned with helping Jewish populations, organizing cultural or religious gatherings, or planning evacuations out of zones of intense fighting; however, not every organization limited itself to helping only Jewish people (while they did remain a priority), and some organizations had changed their focus with the years of ongoing war since the annexation of Crimea and the Russian-backed insurgency in eastern Ukraine in 2014. It is usually the history of previous collaborations that is the best predictor of collaborations between organizations during times of crisis (Ganesan & Hess, 1997). However, in moments of wartime uncertainty, when the optimal procedure or action is unknown, it is the attitudes and the perceptions of other organizations' attitudes towards the conflict that might define choices of collaboration (Voytiv, 2019). When it comes to organizations that can also employ religious factors in their decisions to collaborate, such covariates as frequency/intensity of religious practice or, on the contrary, secularism, might vary in importance in decisions to

collaborate. Our data show two distinct clusters of collaboration between organizations, indicating that organizations value certain features of organizational practices when initializing a collaboration. Evidently, these may exist on the organizational level and may also include interorganizational collaborations formed on the basis of personal acquaintances between organizations' members.

While several of the organizations mentioned here are also discussed in other chapters of this book, it is important to understand the international and national collaborations of the organizations involved based on their collaboration practices as well as their agendas. At its core a transnational student organization, Hillel and its centers in different parts of Ukraine seem to have taken quite divergent routes to collaboration with other (transnational) organizations. Interorganizational collaboration appears to have three clear clusters (calculated by proximity of connection). Looking at the types of organizations connected within a cluster, one could describe them as "mixed" collaborations between national/regional organizations and international/transnational organizations (with Odesa-based organizations being central in one and Lviv, Kyiv, and Kharkiv in another). While our data reflect transnational mobilization for aid and refugee migration, and both clusters also include large international/transnational organizations, this mobilization and connection to the transnational sphere seems to have taken two separate paths. More specifically, the brokering organizations through which most others within the "mixed" and "national" clusters can reach the transnational organizations are Hillel Kyiv and JDC, which itself is a transnational organization linked to the cluster through such brokers as Hillel Odesa and Odesa Progressive Jewish Community. It is worth reminding the reader here that, after 1989, JDC was also an initiator of the establishment of Hesed centers across countries of the former Soviet Union.

As we see from Fig. 5.1, Hillel Odesa is in a separate cluster with other non-Hillel-affiliated organizations, while Hillel Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Dnepr, Tbilisi, Minsk, and Kishinev are all grouped together. Previous experiences of collaboration, or even individual factors, may account for this: for example, the leader of a particular center may have better interpersonal relationships with certain other organizational leaders than with those who are part of the Hillel network. However, regardless of initial motivations, the structure of the network had been established in these clusters by August 2022, showing Odesa and its region to have a separate pattern of collaboration with national and international organizations. The case of

Hillel is very interesting; while it belongs to the same network and has a history of establishment similar to those in various regions of Ukraine, Hillel Odesa does not directly collaborate with other Hillel chapters. Such a split, while not possible to causally examine, indicates that Hillel Odesa's path to international collaborations does not directly depend on the resources possessed by the overall Hillel network.

The organizations directly brokering the connections to large international organizations are Hillel Kharkiv and Lviv connecting to Noam and Masoret in one cluster and, in the other, Odesa Progressive Jewish Community connecting to JDC and European and Israeli communities for Progressive Judaism (such as the European Union for Progressive Judaism and Israel Reform Movement). Hillel Kyiv bridges the two clusters and is the only organization with direct connection to the different international organizations, theoretically making other organizations in each cluster dependent on its collaboration resources. JDC is itself an international organization that seems to have the most established connections to the cluster with Odesa-based organizations. This might signal that JDC has established mostly regional connections in southern Ukraine. However, in comparison to the first cluster, more organizations here have a direct connection to the international cluster and vice versa. Both Hillel Odesa and Odesa Progressive Jewish Community are directly connected to other organizations in the cluster, while other organizations also tend to be connected to each other. This shows this cluster to be well connected and signals that collaborations between these organizations have been well established. By contrast, the cluster of other Hillel chapters seems to be centered around Hillel Lviv and Kharkiv, which might reflect evacuation patterns according to which displaced people first evacuated to Lviv and then, depending on their situation, stayed there or continued to other countries. The presence of Hillel Kishinev in this cluster further supports this conclusion.

The results also point to a pattern of closer collaboration between organizations that might be shaped by denominational affiliations within Judaism. Figure 5.1 demonstrates that one of the clusters includes many organizations (national and international) associated with Reform or Progressive Judaism. The other cluster includes organizations like Masoret and Noam, which both embrace more conservative communities. In addition, there seems to be a difference in closeness of collaboration based on regional connections within Ukraine. While the first cluster includes several Odesa organizations that are also cooperating with international and transnational organizations, the other cluster portrays more of a mix of

regions: Hillels in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, and other cities are represented here. In that sense, while both clusters have connections to larger international organizations, they have employed different routes to establish those connections.

Finally, four organizations form part of neither of the clusters and seem to be isolated. It is difficult to speculate about the reasons for this; it may be due to technical issues with MAXQDA or to those organizations' particular behaviors in the organizational field. However, one organization that attracts notice is Volunteer Community (see also Chap. 4 in this volume). In its communications, Volunteer Community rarely refers to its religious background; it has been focusing mostly on social and humanitarian aid, both before and since 2014. One can speculate that such avoidance of openly religious messages in this organization's communication is related to an avoidance of mentioning religious organizations, reflecting a focus on its own work and reporting only on its own activities.

In sum, the results point to different mechanisms of cooperation based on at least three factors: regional or national connections (often based on previous experiences of collaboration), religiosity/denomination, and connections to international/transnational organizations. It is of great interest to see the clustering of organizations according to these factors, especially because even a formal organizational network of smaller organizations (as in the case of Hillels) can split by means of the aforementioned three factors, positioning member organizations within two different clusters of collaboration.

As discussed above, however, there are some caveats attached to this analysis. First, as mentioned, technical issues present in the MAXQDA software led to many notable organizations (such as Chabad, which is one of the largest organizations in the dataset) being excluded from the analysis. In addition, since the data analyzed are presented in a cumulative way, some time-dependent developments in the network cannot be distinguished; this has a major impact on the possibility of making any statements about causality. Third, the connections analyzed in this chapter are all positive collaborations; the analysis does not include any negative references, which means that any clustering based on negative experiences cannot be explicitly shown and discussed.

CONCLUSIONS

How do organizations collaborate during the initial stages of a crisis such as a full-scale war? By engaging in social network analysis, this chapter has explored the complexity of Jewish civil society organizations' national and transnational collaborations, indicating the relevance of such patterns when seeking to understand civil society resilience. More specifically, I have shown that organizations do seem to prefer to establish connections to large international organizations; however, they can do so in different manners. The preference to connect to large international organizations may be related to such organizations' established prestige and character, building trust and providing certain resources that are attractive to smaller local organizations. Such connections can also provide support that contributes to the resilience of the entire network.

The analysis of collaborations presented above signals the existence of two types of collaborations between Jewish organizations in Ukraine; both types, necessarily, sought support and resources from large international organizations. It seems that some of the organizations in the network focused on nationwide evacuation procedures that would lead most displaced people to the city of Lviv, subsequently also assisting with further moves outside the country. Others focused on direct regional collaborations with international organizations that could provide financial and social support for affected populations. As I have shown in this chapter, collaborations do not always depend on pre-existing national networks; rather, networks of organizations may split into different clusters and initiate collaborations based on different sets of resources. Solidarity and collaboration between different organizations can thus depend on regional rather than national characteristics. However, regardless of the type of collaborations taking place between the organizations, large international organizations are the key resource upon which Jewish organizations in this dataset relied. Echoing research showing that trust, prestige, and perceived expertise of an organization form one of the main factors in a decision to initiate collaboration, my analysis shows a similar mechanism (Bierly & Gallagher, 2007). Interestingly, even formal, pre-existing connections, such as membership in the same formal network of organizations, do not guarantee close cooperation (or, perhaps, trust) in times of crisis.

While the clustering of the organizations in this analysis shows many similarities, such as establishing connections to organizations outside

Ukraine, there are several factors that seem to have contributed to split the field. First is the level of regional cooperation (either collected around one city, here Odesa, or across regions on the national level). Both types of organizing allow for international cooperation. The second factor is religiosity or denomination. The data suggest that the organizations and communities belonging to Progressive Judaism work together closely and cooperate with both European and global-level organizations outside Ukraine, while the Conservative/Masorti organizations and communities cooperate with global and Israeli-based organizations. This result also links to the research on homophilous connections between organizations (Atouba & Shumate, 2015), according to which organizations within a denomination are more likely to appear in the same cluster and those that do not explicitly state a religious denomination might be isolated from all religious organizations in the network. One can speculate that such non-explicitly religious organizations find connections outside of the religious civil society sphere. However, more research should be done on this issue before reaching any conclusions.

Previous research focused on civil society organizations' mobilization has highlighted such factors as trust, experience, and prestige of organizations as influencing the choice to collaborate during such times of unprecedented crisis as a full-scale invasion (Bierly & Gallagher, 2007). Less research has examined whether and how the focus and agenda of religious organizations can shift during such periods. This chapter suggests that religious denomination might be a factor in collaborations. In this case, the Progressive Jewish movement has had more varied access to transnational organizations at the European and global levels than the Masorti/more conservative communities. One might hypothesize that, per Feld's (1981) model, a very strong focus of activity attracts homogeneous actors that are then locked in, with fairly limited access to organizations outside of their cluster. However, the design of this study does not allow the author full certainty with regard to this observation. What can be noted is that the individual organizations' choices to collaborate with one another also seem to be guided by the structural constraints of the network overall, especially when it comes to religious denomination, where those within a denomination are more likely to collaborate (as per the homophily hypothesis of McPherson et al., 2001) and those without such explicit identity are isolated from the network.

Overall, the interplay of collaboration partners and organizational identities with the structural constraints of the network points to civil society

resilience through adaptation and evaluation of practices and partnerships. The presence of the isolated organizations in the network that are not explicitly religious is a case in point here, since they are in proximity to other nodes without sharing identity characteristics. Another aspect is the availability of connections to the large international organizations, which can yield financial opportunities and establish legitimacy for the smaller local organizations (see also Chap. 3 in this volume). It seems that the role of international organizations in the maintenance of the network is quite large since, regardless of the type of cluster that an organization belongs to, a connection to a larger international organization is present.

Due to the fact that the data represent only a snapshot of the organizational network once the full-scale invasion of Ukraine had begun, it is not possible to distinguish direct causal links. The network presented in this chapter does, however, provide nuance to enhance previous research (Maigari, 2022). Member organizations of umbrella and networked organizations seem to also be able to break out of their parent organizations and create collaborations with non-member organizations. The different clusters in which Hillel organizations appeared in the data provide a case in point. In sum, this chapter has shown that, despite having similar agendas and maintaining connections with larger international organizations, national organizations can achieve their goals and enable civil society resilience by creating collaborations in different ways depending on various combinations of the factors discussed.

APPENDIX 1. LIST OF ALL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DATASET ($N=108$)

Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine
 Aviv: The community of conservative Judaism in Chernivtsi
 Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center
 Beit Dan Jewish Cultural Center - Kharkiv
 Bila Tserkva Jewish Community
 Central Council of Jews in Germany
 Central Synagogue of Kyiv-Brodskogo
 Chabad Kherson
 Centre of Jewish Life in Chernivtsi
 Chabad Odesa
 Chabad of Uzhgorod

Christians for Israel, Ukraine
 Coordinating Humanitarian Center of Odesa Oblast
 Diye-Slovo
 Dnepr Volunteer Community
 Embassy of Israel
 EnerJew
 Euro-Asian Jewish Congress – EAJC
 European Union for Progressive Judaism
 Extinction Rebellion
 FJC Federation of Jewish Communities in the Former SU
 Genesis Philanthropy Group
 Hesed Arie Lviv
 Hesed Lutsk
 Hesed Shaarei Zion
 Hillel CASE
 Hillel Dnepr
 Hillel International
 Hillel Kharkiv
 Hillel Kishinev
 Hillel Kyiv
 Hillel Lviv
 Hillel Odesa
 Hillel Tbilisi
 Hillel Warszawa
 Institute of Civil Society Development Golda Meir
 IsraAID
 Israel Flying Aid
 Israel Reform Movement
 JCC Solomonika
 JDC Joint Distribution Committee
 Jewish City Library, Kyiv
 Jewish community of Potsdam
 Jewish community of the City of Kyiv
 Jewish community of Berdychiv
 Jewish community of Dnipro
 Jewish community of Khmelnytskyi
 Jewish community of Konotop
 Jewish community of Mykolaiv
 Jewish community of Vinnytsia

Jewish Cultural Center Beit Grand
Jewish Kropyvnytskyi, Kirovograd
Jewish Museum of Odesa
JFuture
JUICE
Julia Goldberg Foundation For You
JVP Kharkov Jewish Volunteer Platform
Keren Ha-Yesod
Keshet Project in Ukraine
Kremenchug Jewish Community
Krivoy Rog Volunteer Community
Kyiv religious community of Progressive Judaism “Nadezhda” (Atykva)
LifeChanger
Limmud Labs
Magen David Adom
Marlog
Masoret Jewish Community in Kyiv
Masorti Kharkiv
Masorti Ukraine
Melitopol Volunteer Community
Minsk Jewish Student Cultural Center “Hillel”
Monday.com
Mykolayiv Volunteer Noek
Neighbour support initiative/dobrosusidy/goodneighbours
Netzer Olami
Noam Israel
Noam Kyiv
Noam Olami
Noam Ukraine
Nova Ukraine (California)
Odesa Progressive Jewish Community
Odessa Volunteer Community
Potsdam University
Reform Movement in Israel
Schusterman Family Philanthropies
Sohnut
speakUP
Synagogue Cherkassy

Synagogue Jewish Centre Chernihiv
 Tafel
 Teiva Congregation, Lviv
 Tiferet
 Traditional Jewish Communities of Ukraine
 Ture Zagav - Progressive Jewish Community of Lviv
 UJA Federation of New York
 Ukraine without Antisemitism
 Ukrainian charity fund “For you”
 Ukrainian Library Association
 Ukrainian Volunteer Service
 Union of Progressive Jews in Germany
 Volunteer Association Zgraya (“Flock”)
 Volunteer Community
 Volunteer Community Migdal Odessa
 Volunteer Community Lutsk
 Volyn Religious Community of Progressive Judaism
 World Union for Progressive Judaism
 Zhyty khochu (“I want to live”)
 ZWST

NOTE

1. The complete list of organizations in the dataset can be found at the end of this chapter.

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Resilience and Organizational Identity: The Development of Hesed Community Centers in the Face of War

Zhanna Kravchenko

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I explore the topic of civil society resilience by looking at organizational identity. I do so through studying the transformation and variation in community-based voluntary social work that addressed the devastating consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine for the civilian population during the course of 2022. More specifically, this chapter considers the work of a cluster of civil society organizations called Hesed centers, established in the early 1990s to foster welfare infrastructure among local Jewish communities. Ukrainian Jewry has been affected by the brutality of the war since its start in 2014. By February 2022, with further invasion imminent, some Hesed centers tried to prepare, stockpiling supplies and even planning for possible evacuation. However, the scope of the challenges to come was difficult to foresee, and the circumstances soon changed drastically, regardless of whether Hesed employees, volunteers, and clients were far from the combat zone or found themselves sheltering from explosions and shooting.

The need for social, economic, and psychological support that Heseds aim to address was exacerbated by the 2022 full-scale invasion, primarily among the elderly, on whom the war's impact has been greatest. As the

World Jewish Relief reported, older people have largely remained in Ukraine, fearful of the perils of displacement or simply unable to move away, putting them and those who continue to assist them at high risk (Saffer, 2024). While some Hesed offices closed in 2022, their personnel and volunteers continued to reach their clients, providing food, medicine, and homecare and sometimes staying with them overnight (Surkes, 2022). To explore organizational identity in the context of civil society resilience, I ask: How did Hesed centers adapt to the challenges of the war?

I approach this question from a combination of organizational institutionalism and resource mobilization perspectives, examining how Hesed centers re-affirmed/re-conceptualized foundational principles of their work by maintaining and/or expanding their activities. The chapter is organized as follows: first, I briefly present background information about the organizational form and activities of Hesed centers to understand them as an illustrative case within a broader theoretical framework that explores organizational identity and organizational responses to external pressures. I then describe the materials used in this study and present the overall research design and analytical strategy. This is followed by a detailed analysis demonstrating how civil society resilience is enabled by the intertwining of organizational and communal identity in the process of welfare provision, how it is facilitated by transnational donors and local partners, and that this identity is rooted in both Jewish and Ukrainian history and culture.

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY IN COMMUNITY WORK

The “Hesed model” for welfare provision was introduced across the former Soviet Union by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)¹ in the early 1990s, when elderly Jews, struck by socioeconomic crisis, found themselves without reliable social support networks. Some Hesed centers were established as new organizations; others grew out of pre-existing community structures. Throughout the last 30 years, the organizations, self-identifying as a movement, have undergone a process of institutionalization of community-based social work in which various isomorphic pressures came from different directions, i.e., from funder(s), local conditions, or national regulations. This process is manifested in the adoption of a shared name, a similar (although not identical) arsenal of services, and close cooperation (sometimes coordinated across the field) with the same donors. The key feature that brings these elements of the model together is the overarching identity, based on the principles of *voluntarism*, *community* orientation, and *Yiddishkeit* or Jewish traditions (Avgar et al., 2003).

From the beginning, Hesed centers were conceived as a type of post-disaster intervention that recognized solidarity and collective identity as key to overcoming the socioeconomic hardships of the post-Soviet transformation (Mirsky et al., 2006). They aimed to create sustainable local infrastructures by building a sense of communal belonging and commitment through (re-)distributing resources, engaging in leisure and educational activities, and celebrating secular and religious holidays together. Institutionalized rules for membership and participation, organizational rituals, and interorganizational network associations constructed an identity that had a local locus but also stretched across geographical spaces and national borders (Kravchenko, 2022). I therefore approach the research question by considering how Hesed principles, forged in the crucible of the socioeconomic crisis of the 1990s, have manifested themselves during the war, and I use the theoretical perspective of organizational institutional identity construction to that purpose.

Earlier studies on community work have examined the role of organizational identity both as a prerequisite for (Franklin, 2014; Sjöberg & Kings, 2022) and an outcome of social mobilization and organizing (Billig & Lebovitz, 2014; Hoffman & Doody, 2015). The importance of community identity for community governance and resilience in the context of environmental changes and crises has also been explored (Morales-Villena et al., 2021; Thompson, 2019). Institutional theory of identity highlights identity's dynamic character (Glynn, 2017), interweaving the aspects that identify what an organization is (and is not) with what it does (and does not) and with its engagement vis-à-vis external actors (King et al., 2011; Navis & Glynn, 2010). The traditional institutional approach, however, does not account for *agency* in organizations' interactions with their environments: it presupposes that organizations are largely constrained by external pressures and must be responsive to those pressures in order to survive (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Christine Oliver (1991) posited a view of organizations as active and not necessarily conforming to institutional structures and norms, especially when these are (potentially) incompatible with an organization's mission or survival. Integrating institutional and resource mobilization perspectives, Oliver presented a varying repertoire of organizational action, including strategies of acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation. Building on her work, I explore how the organizational activities, structures, and resources upon which identity is constructed are being challenged in the crisis engendered by Russia's

invasion of Ukraine. I argue that organizations with a mission to alleviate the effects of the crisis for their beneficiaries and members may experience the pressures generated by the military invasion as stimuli for expansion and growth, combining various elements of all of Oliver's strategies: complying with the need to keep their employees and beneficiaries safe, balancing donors' expectations, adapting/changing goals with their work methods and target groups, and using their own expertise and experience to formulate new standards of operation (cf. Oliver, 1991, p. 152). I also follow Czarniawska and Wolff (1998) in that I focus first on actions—"conduct that can be meaningfully accounted for" (p. 35)—as the basic unit of analysis and then explore how those actions are constrained/enabled by resources, embedded in networks of personal and organizational connections and exchanges, and imbued with meaning (cf. Swidler, 1986).

DATA AND METHOD

Selecting Hesed centers as an empirical case of community work requires defining this phenomenon more conceptually for the purpose of subsequent operationalization. Community work as a form of welfare production and delivery is usually differentiated into three main ideal-typical strategies: *planning and policy practice*, *community capacity development*, and *social advocacy* (Rothman, 2001). These can be briefly defined as rationalized, bureaucratic top-down provision *for* the community; value-driven, bottom-up social work *by* the community; and contentious social action oriented toward wider societal change *beyond* the community. In the overarching policy and scholarly discourse in Ukraine, community work is framed as *social work in/for the community* (Semigina, 2020). For instance, Slozanska et al. (2020) examine community work primarily as an output of the local self-government reform, identifying "community" with a territorial entity that carries responsibility for social service delivery.

In this context, despite deep roots of communal philanthropy in the country (Kuts, 2002) and some growth in non-profit, non-state welfare provision in recent decades (Bridge, 2004), Hesed centers stand out as a multimodal intervention approach for *community capacity development* (Rothman, 2007). Although funded by foreign sources, they distinguish themselves by providing a variety of welfare services to a target group in a specific territory with local community members serving as volunteers in the areas of management and delivery. Furthermore, community-building

activities that attract and maintain the volunteer pool comprise an essential part of Hesed centers' work. While some of these efforts require in-person participation (residential care, in-kind deliveries), some initiatives (such as educational events) have successfully taken place online, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. In this study, I explore both recurring and one-time activities, off- and online; I focus on those that took place after the invasion began, tracing their origins to the period prior to February 2022 to identify patterns of continuity and change.

Like other chapters in this book, this study grew out of data collected by alumni of Paideia, The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden (see Chap. 1), who provided us with insight into some of the relevant processes that took place in Ukraine and abroad as Russian troops cut across the eastern part of the country and organizations mobilized to address the consequences. In that dataset, Hesed centers were mentioned only once: in a post by Volunteer Community Ukraine, an international volunteer network that cooperates closely with Heseds and other Jewish organizations in former Soviet countries. To create a more comprehensive empirical foundation for my study, I endeavored to compile a list of all Hesed centers in Ukraine and discovered that their number has fluctuated over the years. For instance, in her catalogue of welfare centers, Privalko (2014) names 23 organizations listed as part of the Hesed movement, including some that do not bear its name. The United Jewish Community of Ukraine's (UJCU, 2023) digital map project "Jews of Ukraine" lists 17 Hesed organizations.

When constructing my sample, I combined the list presented by Privalko (2014) and the UJCU map, cross-checking, where possible, the information provided in these sources with Heseds' own websites, social media accounts, etc. After this round of triangulation, the sample encompassed 20 organizations in total (Table 6.1) across the country, excluding territories occupied by Russia since 2014. It is important to note that this selection is not exhaustive; it aims only to capture the overall variation in the main types of services Hesed centers provided in 2022 and the core activities in which they engaged their various target groups. The information available does not allow measuring the *degree of variation* among the centers in terms of scope of provision, and comparison between centers or over time is beyond the reach of this chapter. With this in mind, I used the comprehensive sample as a starting point for the second round of selection. I also examined accounts of Hesed centers in Ukraine by their main

Table 6.1 Sample overview: the scope of Hessed welfare provision across Ukraine in 2022, in order of establishment

Name	Location	Year of est.	At home			Medical help		In-kind delivery			At the center		
			nursing services	other services	equipment rental	services*	physical training, rehabilitation	food	winter assistance**	emergency assistance***	holiday celebrations	leisure activities	club/library
Obschina	Luts'k	N/A											
Menakhem	Dnepr	1994											
Mikhael	Zaporozhye	1995											
Bnei Azriel	Kyiv	1996											
Ester	Chernihiv	1996 ¹											
Shlomo	Zhitomir	1996											
Kahim	Kremenchug	1996											
Dorot	Cherkassy	1997											
Hana	Kryvyi Rih	1997											
Arye	Lviv	1998											
Eruna	Vinnitsia	1998											
Nefesh	Poltava	1998											
Besht	Khmelnitsky	1999											
Shpira	Uzhgorod	1999											
Shushana	Chernovtsy	1999											
Osher	Rivne	2000											
Shaarei Tikva	Kharkiv	2001											
Shmuel	Kherson	2003											
Re'im	Nikolaev	2006											
Shaarei Tsion	Odesa	2006											

*including financial support

**including clothes and fuel

***including Shabbat services

¹derived from a mention on Hessed Bnei Azriel's website

funder, the JDC, to gain insight into the broader context of funding and management.

During the second round of sampling, I examined Heseds' online presence, selecting those that were active throughout 2022. This resulted in a more in-depth analysis focused on five Hesed centers: *Shaarei Tikva* in Kharkiv, *Hana* in Kryvyi Rih, *Shaarei Tsion* in Odesa, *Nefesh* in Poltava, and *Emuna* in Vinnytsia. In addition, I included Hesed *Chaim* in Sumy and Hesed *Re'im* in Mykolaiv. These do not appear in the larger sample as they did not feature in my original sources, but they have been mentioned either in publications about Hesed centers in Ukraine during the war (e.g., Saffer, 2024; Surkes, 2022) or in other Heseds' reports of collaboration. I did not include Heseds in occupied territories because accounting for the severity of their experience would have presented too great a challenge and the methodological implications would have been too complex. Heseds Chaim and Shaarei Tikva were, however, close to fighting zones; the sample thus includes organizations that were directly affected by the hostilities. While my analysis explores variation among the Hesed centers, it does not aim to determine whether observed similarities and differences depended on the specificity of the danger they experienced.

To collect accounts of Heseds' activities from January 2022 until January 2023, I first examined their web pages from that period, beginning with records on the internet archive Wayback Machine. As some of those accounts were relatively brief, I followed up by searching Heseds' open Facebook group pages from the same approximate period, sometimes going further back in time and thus complementing the initial records with information presented on social media. While unobtrusive, my data collection was not covert or deceptive; I did not (mis)represent myself to the organizations, disclose any details of the study, or request consent, thus eliminating the risk of rejection. At the same time, I did consider whether any of the information I collected was intended to be private, warranting de-identification or anonymization prior to storing and analysis. I chose to share organizations' identities but to remove any details that could reveal personal or sensitive information at the individual level. I also chose not to include information about the sources (Facebook or website) of direct quotations unless they came from reposts of other organizations' posts or specifically addressed the general public. Over the course of the examined period, the language of communication on websites and social media changed from a mix of Russian and Ukrainian to exclusively Ukrainian. To ensure consistency and to increase the reliability

of translation, as a native Russian speaker, I translated accounts in Ukrainian into both Russian and English, using either free online translation services or the automatic translation function built into Facebook.

I included three types of accounts: (1) descriptions of how organizations identify what makes them part of the Hesed movement, their rules for membership, and their criteria for provision (cf. Navis & Glynn, 2010); (2) descriptions of what they do and, if available, how their activities/provisions correspond to the principles of the Hesed model (community, volunteering, and Yiddishkeit), paying attention to whether and how those descriptions evolved over the course of the examined period (cf. King et al., 2011); and (3) mentions of external actors/audiences, whether local, national, or international, in connection to the first two types of accounts. In the analysis, after initial examination of all materials, I conducted open coding to reduce the content and thematically organize empirically derived categories, connecting these to the principles of the Hesed model and generating more abstract theoretical conclusions (Forman & Damschroder, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

FINDINGS

Setting out to investigate Heseds' emergency response and recovery efforts, assistance for those adapting to a new reality, and continuation of established practices, I begin the present analysis by presenting a broader overview of the landscape of the Hesed welfare model in Ukraine. Although limited by the scope of the sample, it gives an understanding of how the principles underlying Hesed identity were implemented before the start of the invasion and how the organizations exercise agency vis-à-vis their funders and other relevant actors in the Jewish community. I then proceed to demonstrate that the overarching response to the challenges presented by the invasion constituted an expansion of activities and an upholding of identity that (a) (re-)affirmed Heseds' status as local Jewish community centers, (b) (re-)identified their community as both Jewish and Ukrainian, and (c) endorsed engagement outside Hesed community boundaries.

*Identity Through Action: Transnational Model,
Local Implementation*

When referring to the Hesed model as a whole and the landscape of its implementation, we need to establish the degree of the organizations' autonomy from funders in order to understand the limits of variation in local Heseds' responses to the 2022 crisis. As mentioned above, Hesed centers emerge as newly established organizations or through the conversion of existing organizations. Adherence to the movement is signaled by adoption of the Hesed name with an added, distinctive Jewish name or expression (e.g., Hesed Ester in Chernihiv, Hesed Bnei Asriel in Kyiv, etc.). Heseds achieve some degree of standardization by managing their operations in more or less the same way and striving to play the same role in re-establishing Jewish life in Ukraine. This ensures compliance with the expectations of the JDC and secures sustainable financial support.

The dominance of the funder over local organizations, however, is presented ambiguously, even by the JDC itself. On one hand, in its *Global Strategy*, Heseds are referred to as “social welfare [...] centers where *we provide care*” (JDC, 2018, p. 10). Indeed, decisions about the establishment, consolidation, or closing down of Heseds rest with the principal donor (JDC, 2020). On the other hand, the role of the funder is sometimes presented in less extensive terms. For instance, in JDC's annual reports, Heseds are referred to as a “network of social welfare centers that *we helped establish*” (JDC, 2013–2014, p. 2) and as “social welfare centers that *we support*” (JDC, 2015–2016, p. 2). This variation in the JDC's characterization of Heseds—as an extension of JDC or as seemingly autonomous entities—is representative of the ambiguity surrounding the relationship. A practical way of ascertaining the degree to which the funder prescribes the management of various social programs, though, is to examine the usage of the monies it provides.

The differences in how Heseds operate suggests that there is some space for decision-making by the individual organizations and that the model itself is flexible enough to accommodate local variation. As Table 6.1 demonstrates, Hesed activities generally involve the provision of social and medical care, including (1) at-home care (nursing) and other assistance (such as repairs in the home or running errands) to elderly people living alone; (2) rental of medical equipment (such as wheelchairs, beds for immobile/disabled people, etc.) and physical rehabilitation; and (3) financial support to cover the costs of services at medical institutions. Services such as the

delivery of in-kind aid, e.g., fuel and clothing during the winter season, emergency assistance (in-kind and financial), and food distribution echo the disaster relief efforts that constituted the core of the post-Soviet Hesed model during the most difficult years of the 1990s (Tighe et al., 2012). These types of assistance are aimed at the neediest members of the community. At the same time, they are employed as a means of identification and mobilization of a broader pool of volunteers (among clients themselves as well as their family members and social networks) for the centers' other operations (Avgar et al., 2003) and the integration of Jewish traditions. For instance, enhanced food deliveries are made around Jewish holidays, and the assortment of delivered goods sometimes often includes traditional foods, such as challah for Shabbat, matzah for Passover, etc.

Activities intended for all community members are usually carried out at Hesed premises or online, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic: holiday/Shabbat celebrations, meetings with religious leaders, leisure activities, and trips for adults and children. As mentioned above, volunteers are usually recruited from within the community, although recruitment is not explicitly exclusive. Volunteers are engaged in day-to-day operations; they may be called upon as specialists for medical or legal consultations or to deliver care services, distribute food packages, or organize events and training. The level of Ukrainian Heseds' embeddedness in the broader local/national Jewish community varies across the country, and connectedness between Hesed centers also varies (see Chap. 5 by Sofiya Voytiv), but they are all part of broader organizational networks, including the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities of Ukraine (Va'ad), and they are at times more visible than any other organization (Privalko, 2014).

Volunteering has a long tradition in Ukraine and has contributed greatly to the development of civil society as a whole, especially since the beginning of the war with Russia in 2014 (Boichak & McKernan, 2022; Oleinik, 2018; Worschech, 2017). Welfare provision, however, is still dominated by the state-driven, public sector-oriented approach (cf. Slozanska et al., 2020), rendering Hesed activities a unique type of community-based social work. The enactment of the 2020 law "On social services" limited opportunities for private actors to act as sub-contractors of social service provision, entrenching Heseds' work in their local Jewish communities. Over the course of three decades—shaped by the broader processes of institutionalization of welfare provision, civil society, and Jewish life in Ukraine—Heseds have emerged as ethno-religious

organizations. It is the uniqueness of their methods of engagement that positions them in the local/national/international Jewish community and vis-à-vis society at large. To this end, what happened when Ukraine experienced the devastation of the 2022 invasion? How did the model's unique characteristics in the context of a national disaster lend itself to meeting the new needs of Hesed communities and the country as a whole?

Inward-Oriented Intensification and Boundary Preservation

The first element in Heseds' strategic response to the changes in their environment entailed an intensification of their activities within their local communities; this served to accommodate the new needs of their statutory target groups and to preserve the boundaries of the community. During the first days of the invasion, most of Heseds' online presence was devoted to acknowledging fears and expressing concern for the safety of their community members, reassuring them by confirming contact information and support services (Hesed's own as well as public). One Facebook administrator shared a very personal account of first experiences of shelling, in which a Shabbat celebration was interrupted by the need to flee to a bomb shelter and the Book of Psalms, Tehillim, became a vital source of comfort in the endless flow of horrible news. Others, like Hesed Shaarei Tikva in Kharkiv, reposted addresses by public authorities such as the mayor's textual and video appeal to citizens to remain sheltered. While Heseds did not subsequently become transmitters of public announcements and news, the data show that providing emotional support—through sharing experiences, psychological counseling, and guidance in everyday religious practice—became one of the key dimensions of the organizations' intensification of activities.

As a means of preserving normalcy in the face of anxiety and fear, most Ukrainian Heseds continued with their regular activities while making adjustments to reflect the new reality around them. Indirect evidence of increased activities directed at traditional target groups, such as elderly people, across organizations can be gleaned from a post by Hesed Besht in Khmelnytsky about online activities for various groups of clients: "Before martial law [was declared], our clubs had streams three times a week. Today, we try to come out three times a day" (March 17, 2022). Some activities clearly existed prior to the invasion, for instance, regular Zoom meetings for the elderly. These were sometimes dedicated to themes related to religion, traditions, or specific events in Jewish history, and

sometimes they simply provided a space for social contact for people bound to their homes due to illness, advanced age, or concern about health risks (e.g., COVID-19). In some Heseds, such meetings were organized as a special project—University without Borders (*Університет без меж*)—comprising expert lectures on a broad range of topics from the history of the Yiddish language to the history of Soviet cinema; most of the presenters were Jewish, often from outside the local community, and sometimes from other Heseds.

A project that several centers have been running since the start of the invasion, Let's Get Connected (*Дбайливий зв'язок*), often focuses on everyday aspects of elderly life, such as staying physically active, preventing memory loss, adopting/maintaining a healthy and/or kosher diet, using modern technology, etc. In reminders about these upcoming events or in follow-up reports, organizations asserted the importance of cultivating social contacts and everyday routines for mental well-being in general and coping with the consequences of the war specifically. Heseds' Facebook/website administrators wrote about warmth and kindness in times of sorrow and panic; their clients and volunteers shared that warmth and kindness through lectures on geographical wonders of the world, discussions about local history, physical exercises, and baking and cooking workshops.

In addition to intensification, there is evidence of some expansion of activities targeting new groups of population. An example of Heseds offering new opportunities for community engagement can be seen in the opening of services for Jewish youth, children, and families with children. This is especially relevant in the context of the overwhelming increase in overall needs and decrease in public welfare resources (Romaniuk et al., 2024), but it could also be a response to a lack of organizations specifically for youth (e.g., Hillel)—whether that lack predated the invasion or resulted from evacuations. Young people also appear more often than before the war in reports on food deliveries or the organization of events such as knitting club meetings, many of which stem from the Volunteer Community network (i.e., external partners). Thus, offering existing target groups new services and spaces for interaction, as well as adding new target groups and attracting new volunteers, signaled Heseds' expansion within local communities.

There was, however, an element of boundary preservation in the expansion, especially in the first months of the full-scale invasion. With few exceptions (for example, when clients and volunteers joined to celebrate Shabbat online together with other Hesed centers²), Hesed activities

remained focused within their individual local Jewish communities—although technology, similarities in content between Heseds in various locations across the country, and digital modes of delivery would allow for more inclusion of local non-Jewish populations and Jewish populations across Ukraine. However, as I demonstrate further on in my analysis, a trend toward broader inclusion appeared as the war progressed, at least in some Heseds. With time, a development in the understanding of what that “community” stands for took place, not only enriching the identity of Hesed as an organization *for* and *by* the community but also laying the foundation for operations outside of the community. I examine this development in the following sections.

(Re-)identifying the Community

The process of re-identifying what community is, and in which community Heseds were embedded, included both Jewish and Ukrainian meanings, narratives of engagement through perpetuating traditions, and reflections upon those traditions through the lived present. Firstly, connections to Jewish culture, rooted in the history of Israel or that of the Jewish people as a whole, continued to be seen in a series of projects represented on Heseds’ web pages and social media. Early in the spring of 2022, many activities centered around preparation for and celebration of Purim; in fact, for some organizations (e.g. Hesed Hefesh in Poltava), Purim activities were the focus of their first public announcements since the start of the invasion. The stark contrast between the cheerful holiday and the present experience of displacement and fear resonated in a repost of a short JDC report in Hesed Chaim’s Facebook group:

[Our] prayers, our words, our songs were only about one thing, about peace! We are scattered in Ukraine, but our strong connection gives us the strength to stand, and the story of Purim gives us faith! (March 17, 2022)

Communal Shabbat and holiday celebrations continued to be “model” events, organized online before their actual commencement,³ and as such they were often built around presentations of and discussions about traditions; these, too, were inevitably placed in the current context. For instance, a model Passover celebration in late April at Hesed Shaarei Tikva in Kharkiv included a lecture about the meaning of the Exodus and the currently limited possibilities to follow the dietary restrictions and rituals

associated with the holiday. The latter were framed partly as a result of the invasion, which had already deprived many of those present of their homes and their anchor in a community. One participant in a Zoom call recounted the difficulties of living abroad with hosts who did not keep kosher and the joy of unexpectedly receiving a package of kosher-for-Passover food from a Jewish community in another city.

In some activities, on the contrary, the challenges of the war were nearly dismissed, portrayed as unable to get in the way of Jewish traditions: “With all due respect to the war, nobody has cancelled hamantaschen⁴ [...]. Not even incessant sirens could distract us from baking”, read the note under a short video post on the Facebook page of Hesed Shaarei Tsion in Odesa. The range of activities was broad—from religiously oriented “Torah therapy” in some centers to secular themes such as “Jewish songs of the 1960–1990s” or “Klezmer music in Ukraine” in others. Local volunteers sang their own (Jewish) songs and read their own poetry, offered theater productions and dance lessons, organized quizzes about Israeli geography, and commemorated famous local and international Jewish figures. All in all, whether Heseds deliver matzah for Passover or gather to celebrate the birthdays of local activists and clients who survived the Holocaust, these activities highlight transnational connections and the historical roots of the community, introducing new symbols into traditional practices and making Hesed an anchor in space and time that not simply transmits *Yiddishkeit* but contributes to its development:

The war brings new troubles. There has been no water in the city for a few days now. It is possible to use natural sources but safer to deliver [drinking water] directly [to people]. NOEK [another Jewish community center] bought bottled drinking water and Hesed is distributing it together with matzah. In this way, the Passover tradition has expanded in Mykolaiv during the war. (Hesed Re'im, Mykolaiv, April 15, 2022)

A (re-)identification of the Jewish community with Ukrainian culture also took place during the period studied. On the surface, it was signaled by a gradual shift from Russian to Ukrainian language in all Hesed public announcements and events, although it is not evident whether and how this was coordinated. Most likely, it reflected a shift across the whole of Ukrainian society and public communication (Kulyk, 2024). The use of symbols of Ukrainian statehood (the national flag or the coat of arms) is relatively rare in Hesed communications, whereas they sometimes overlap

with Israeli symbols. However, sometimes the colors of the Ukrainian flag were used in other images: a yellow hand across a blue heart as an emoji symbolizing solidarity in comments, yellow and blue fonts for event announcements. One volunteer wore a traditional Ukrainian embroidered shirt, *vyshyvanka*, when leading a Lag b'Omer celebration online. Moreover, Ukrainian music, dance, literature, and history came into focus in online content in a scope not seen there before the invasion.

While the audience for Heseds' online events and celebrations usually found themselves all over the world, the speakers and performers usually remained in Ukraine, which imbued their events with more importance. For instance, a Hesed Shaarei Tikva volunteer in Kharkiv offered a presentation about Ukrainian composers of contemporary and classic, folk and popular music. Opening the event, the volunteer framed this effort as an attempt to provide entertainment, in a way making light of the circumstances:

I am happy to greet you all, happy that it is calm today, outside I mean [no shelling] [...] it's like a concert, you see, so you may forget that we are in this situation, for a short while.

But as Kharkovites sheltered in the subway overnight, another volunteer's contribution was perceived as much greater, framing social support provided to the community as a form of national defense against the aggression (not "just entertainment"):

We, all of Ukraine today, are a united front. You have stood your watch [just now]. Our enemy, it is their way to destroy and separate, and you today were a creator and unifier. (May 2, 2022)

The interweaving of Jewish and Ukrainian symbols was also evidenced in an online discussion during a Hesed Passover celebration in Kharkiv. Participants honored their dual identity by drawing parallels between the symbols of the ancient holiday and the liberation of some Ukrainian regions taking place at that moment. In this case, whether Jews were among those liberated in Kyiv, Kharkiv, or Sumy was not mentioned; likening all Ukrainians of today to the Jews of the past, the speakers focused on the solidarity and mercy shown by both Ukrainian soldiers and civilians. The degree to which such discourse appeared in Heseds' records varied across the country and seemed to depend on the ability of specific

local communities to articulate their Ukrainian sense of belonging alongside their Jewish identity. Considering Heseds to be *Ukrainian-Jewish* organizations can be seen as one of the factors that encouraged the gradual expansion of Hesed activities outside its community boundaries. We turn to this aspect of Heseds' strategic responses in the following section.

Expanding Beyond Community Borders

Overall, activities that were funded by the JDC and other international Jewish organizations and that specifically targeted Jewish community members did not open up to include non-Jewish populations. However, Heseds recognized elderly non-Jewish individuals, especially elderly internally displaced persons (IDPs), as a group in need and a potential target of other (new) charitable endeavors. Sometimes, activities mirrored those provided at Heseds but took place at other facilities. By mid-May 2022, Hesed Hana in Kryvyi Rih, for instance, started a cooperation with one of the local municipalities to accommodate IDPs. First, as a form of emergency relief typical of the Hesed model, food packages were collected and distributed; these were similar to the Purim gift baskets (*mishloach manot*) that had been delivered to local Hesed clients just a few weeks earlier. Subsequently, elderly IDPs were invited to join a knitting club. In fact, Hesed took the club to them. At the same time, it emphasized its distance from the authorities who were ultimately responsible for citizens' well-being:

The [delivery] registers are compiled by [the local authorities]. They decide whom to help and call us. We do not register, do not supply contact information. We do not know how they decide. (August 25, 2022)

Later, in the fall, IDPs were also invited to become Hesed Hana volunteers (October 12, 2022).

It is possible to suggest that the opportunity to engage non-Jewish populations might have depended on Hesed Hana's funding from organizations other than the JDC—more specifically, World Jewish Relief. For example, World Jewish Relief was named as the sponsor of “Grandma's treats” (*Babusin smakolik*), energy bars prepared by clients and volunteers and intended for “children who are fleeing their homes” and for soldiers at the front. Together with the local chapter of Volunteer Community and a local professional college, Hesed Hana organized a training program,

School for Volunteers, open to everyone interested. Similarly, Poltava's Hesed Hefesh, in cooperation with an agency for professional training (*Ukrainskii profesiynyi rozvytok*), initiated employment projects for IDPs that were also funded by World Jewish Relief.

As most Hesed volunteers and clients are elderly, direct involvement with the local division of Ukraine's military reserve, Territorial Defense Forces, was not common, but some centers spread information about opportunities to donate food, supplies, and clothes. Hesed Hana, again, stands out with its more active engagement and direct fundraising for the armed forces. With support from a partner organization, *Kulturna interventsia*, it organized several fundraisers in the form of jazz concerts. Members of the Jewish community were offered a discount on tickets, but the event was open to everyone, and all proceeds were donated to the armed forces. Although there were not many reports of Hesed centers regularly helping their clients to repair the damage caused by shelling, it was evident that whenever such measures were taken, they were a result of a resource pool beyond the local Jewish community and were offered to everyone affected, regardless of religious affiliation. It should also be mentioned here that, while elderly Jewish people are likely attended to by public social service providers, no cooperation between Heseds and those organizations was mentioned in the data.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This chapter started with an interest in the locality-based community work of Ukrainian Hesed centers responding to the challenges of the war, explored here as a case of organizational identity and civil society resilience. My analysis has shown how the organizational identity of Hesed has enabled resilient adaptation in several stages. Starting from an inward-oriented intensification and boundary preservation, Hesed was subsequently able to re-identify its community, expanding it beyond traditionally perceived community borders. This testifies to the relevance of studying both continuity and change in organizational identity when trying to understand civil society resilience.

From the start of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, mobilization for humanitarian assistance became one of the remarkable aspects of the country's responses to the devastation caused by the hostilities and displacement (Moallin et al., 2023). Such efforts built on the experiences of social mobilization following the occupation of parts of

Ukraine in 2014 and, to some degree, expanded on the trend toward decentralization and community engagement that had developed during the previous decade. With few exceptions (e.g., Romaniuk et al., 2024), there is a notable lack of research exploring current community work practices in Ukraine, especially in the context of the invasion.⁵ This study also contributes to the research by focusing on what community-oriented, ethno-religious welfare organizations have been able to do, how they identified their mission, whom they chose as their target groups, and what meaning they attributed to their activities.

I began the analysis with a general overview of Hesed welfare practices, which, quite like general approaches to community work (Sjöberg & Turunen, 2018; Stenbom & Turunen, 2018), range from residential care and medical assistance to legal representation and offerings of artistic and leisure activities. The core approach of the Hesed model—engaging community members in voluntary welfare delivery within the paradigm of Jewish tradition—is manifested in these activities. The Hesed approach was also fundamental for the processes of adaptation and transformation that took place as the invasion progressed. Based on earlier research (Boichak & McKernan, 2022; Kismödi & Pitchforth, 2022; Levy & Leaning, 2022; Stepanova, 2022), I expected that the exogenous shock of the war would challenge Heseds’ institutional consolidation by disrupting established patterns of resource accumulation, interfering with structures of solidarity within and beyond the Jewish community, and creating new needs and norms. As the needs for food, medicine, clothing, psychological support, and sometimes shelter became more acute and persistent, Heseds did not seem to experience difficulties acquiring resources; as it turned out, with the continued support of the JDC and other donors, funding remained stable. Given Heseds’ facility in acquiring resources, this analysis has centered on their strategic responses to institutional pressures and considered how Heseds’ experience of working in the region with transnational support enabled them to navigate a new situation by means of malleable organizational identities. Heseds’ ability to adapt in this way, despite the shock of the war, confirms the role of organizational identity in civil society resilience.

As the empirical findings demonstrate, the intensification and expansion of Hesed activities—from the increased frequency of Zoom meetings for the elderly as an arena for socialization and support to the introduction of childcare services into the Hesed arsenal—not only relied on (re-)affirming Hesed’s place within the local Jewish community and the importance of

upholding Jewish traditions, but also emphasized its contribution to developing that community and sharing those traditions. This was accomplished by drawing parallels between the community's current experiences and the symbolic meaning found in the historical memory of the Jewish people as a whole. Furthermore, the Hesed model expanded to encompass those beyond the Jewish community, first connecting ethno-religious identity to national identity and then bringing activities to non-Jewish Ukrainians. Considering the growing socioeconomic hardships (Stepanova, 2022) and the tremendous burden on the public welfare system in addressing the consequences of the war on civilian infrastructure (including social policy), the importance of Heseds' role as private, nonprofit providers in Ukraine is clear. Many Hesed efforts were driven by a traditional approach to welfare provision, based on the idea of achieving common good through the redistribution of resources; however, as was the case decades ago, when Heseds were first established in the area, those efforts also manifested characteristics of more "radical" social work (Semigina & Gusak, 2015) with their emphasis on social inclusion and community empowerment.

With respect to the impact of the war on organizational identity (Glynn, 2017) as expressed in Hesed activities (King et al., 2011; Navis & Glynn, 2010), the analysis found a persistent salience of local Jewish community identity in the process of inward-oriented intensification. This contrasts with Kulyk's (2023) finding that national identity in Ukraine has solidified since 2014, taking precedence over all other territorially based identities in response to Russian aggression. Here, Heseds' identification with local communities does not compete with national identity: as ethno-cultural/ethno-religious meaning is important for the organization and is attached to the Jewish people, attachment to Ukraine is marked not only by Ukrainian cultural symbols, but also by drawing parallels between the peoples and recognizing the experiences shared by local Jewish communities and the rest of the country. While collective identity also requires identification of and distancing from the opposing entity (Femenia, 1996), for instance linguistically (Kulyk, 2024), Heseds very rarely relate to Russia, and while Ukrainian has become the main language of public communication, Russian is still used in more informal settings (Zoom calls, comments on posts, etc.) in some centers.⁶

In sum, complex layers of organizational and communal history and experiences enable our understanding of civil society resilience and organizational identity. Hesed centers' reactions to the challenges of war also

demonstrate that strategic responses, as a manifestation of resilience, may vary depending on the specifics of the challenges faced—for example, how close a center is to military action. Jewish communities scattered from occupied or regularly shelled territories were concerned with evacuation and emergency assistance, while those in the parts of Ukraine not under direct attack were engaged with receiving (Jewish) IDPs and/or arranging their further passage. At the same time, despite variation, it appears that the Hesed model's instruments and institutional norms, intended to enable communities to handle one crisis (the poverty and demographic decline of the 1990s), became actualized and strengthened in a new one.

NOTES

1. Although the organization's full name is abbreviated as AJJDC, JDC is more conventional and is used by the organization in all of its public communications.
2. Another notable exception occurred when Hesed Re'im in Mykolaiv received supplies for Hesed in Kherson, which at the time was still occupied. It is unclear whether/how they were delivered to the destination.
3. For instance, model Shabbat celebrations usually took place on Friday afternoons rather than at sunset.
4. Traditional cookies or pastries associated with Purim.
5. Romaniuk et al. (2024) focus on a small Polish community accommodating Ukrainian refugees in 2022.
6. For a more systematic discussion on variation in the use of the Russian and Ukrainian languages, see Kulyk (2023).

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CHAPTER 7

Theorizing the Organizing of Civil Society Resilience

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CHRONICLES OF CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

As we reach the end of this book, we are left to ponder two critical questions: What have we learned about civil society organizing for Jewish life and culture during the first year of Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine? And what are the implications of these organizing efforts for our understanding of civil society resilience in extreme contexts? The book has chronicled a range of empirical phenomena and theoretical perspectives, offering various answers to these questions. In this chapter, we not only summarize those findings but also attempt to synthesize them into a more comprehensive framework on civil society organizing and resilience in the shadow of war.

A survey of the preceding chapters for their common underlying themes reveals that they all, in one way or another, are chronicles of *change* and *resilience*. The invasion significantly impacted the types and scope of action of the studied civil society organizations, requiring them to engage in new activities, accumulate new resources in new ways, engage with new audiences, and, despite many acute challenges, manage to find new ways of pursuing their work. This ability to adapt and find continuity amidst chaos

is a testament to their resilience. Such resilience, defined as the capacity of a system to accommodate and adapt to crises (Folke et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2009), is crucial at the organizational level, but as we zoom out and think about resilience across a population of civil society organizations, we may also ponder its implications in terms of systemic resilience. More specifically, our empirical chapters chart several significant ways in which organizations—and, potentially, societies—may adapt when faced with the uncertainties inherent in extreme contexts.

It is important to point out that change can never be studied only cross-sectionally at one point in time; rather, it must be observed over time. To this end, some of the chapters in this book chart the development of civil society organizing before February 2022 and trace its dynamics over the following year. Others examine how organizations referred to their actions before the invasion, contrasting their new reality with what was left behind or destroyed. At the same time, given the limited scope of the book, we are not able to fully delve into the rich history of Ukrainian civil society engagement at large, which informs the developments studied here. Similarly, we have not delved into the topic of civil society and state relations. While our endeavor in this sense is limited, we recognize that the swift and extensive civil society engagement studied here, addressing the devastation of Russia's full-scale invasion, is in keeping with Ukrainian civil society's long history of playing a pivotal role at the country's critical historical junctures.

Although some studies have identified challenges in organizational capacity and ability to mobilize large masses of people (Howard, 2002; Oleinikova, 2017; Onuch, 2014; Shapovalova & Burlyuk, 2018), it has also been acknowledged that the history of civic engagement in Ukraine is long and vibrant. Starting from the anti-Soviet student demonstrations of 1990, the "Ukraine without Kuchma" rallies of 2001, the Orange Revolution of 2004, and the Revolution of Dignity of 2013–2014, spontaneous civil mobilization, often beginning on a small scale but generating mass popular uprisings, demonstrated systematic resistance to authoritarianism (Ambrosio, 2017; Way, 2014). When given the opportunity, civic groups and organizations have taken part in political processes (Diuk, 2014; Shapovalova, 2017) and played a critical role in managing the comprehensive socioeconomic and political consequences of Russian aggression over the past decade (Worschech, 2017). It is in this history of organizing and resistance that scholars today find the roots of Ukrainian resilience in the face of the full-scale invasion of 2022 (Kudlenko, 2023; Zarembo & Martin, 2023).

As mentioned in Chap. 1, this volume's contributions illustrate three aspects of civil society resilience in an extreme context: (1) the ability to repurpose activities to meet new societal needs, (2) the relevance of previous organizing in processes of mobilization, and (3) the importance of interorganizational and transnational collaborations as well as material and symbolic aspects of organizing. Taking note of Hällgren and colleagues' (2018) and Hannah and colleagues' (2009) plea for more synthesis in the fragmented research field of organizing in extreme contexts, we here attempt to draw conclusions stretching over multiple cases and subcontexts based on the five empirical chapters of this book. Although the overall context is that of war, the chapters stretch across territories under occupation, those on the front lines, and those further away from daily military hostilities; they cover organizations that view the whole of Ukraine as their terrain as well as those tied to a single municipality, giving rise to varied organizational and contextual connections to the war.

In the sections below, we discuss different levels and theoretical perspectives of these empirical findings. Firstly, we chart important patterns that we see on the organizational field level, including both institutional and structural dimensions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Secondly, we look at how civil society's organizing efforts seem to adjust to but also to constitute these field-level changes (Walker et al., 2009), specifically teasing out the influence of what we call *institutionally embedded factors*. Thirdly, we pin down some organizational elements that are adapted and to some extent transformed in light of these factors (Folke et al., 2010). To further elucidate our theorizing across the three levels, we chart the identified patterns in a model of civil society resilience (Fig. 7.1). The model outlines the institutional and structural field levels as it oscillates between different states during the war, the organizational elements affecting and affected by these changes, and the institutionally embedded factors influencing the organizing efforts.

FIELD-LEVEL CHANGES

With the term “field”, we refer to civil society organizations sharing a set of institutional norms and practices that renders them a recognized and delineated area of social life (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In many ways, such fields exhibit isomorphic tendencies, as legitimate actions on the field level are to a large extent institutionally prescribed (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The field at the center of this book is constituted by civil society organizing engaged in different ways with Jewish life and culture in Ukraine. When we talk about institutional change (Dacin et al., 2002) on

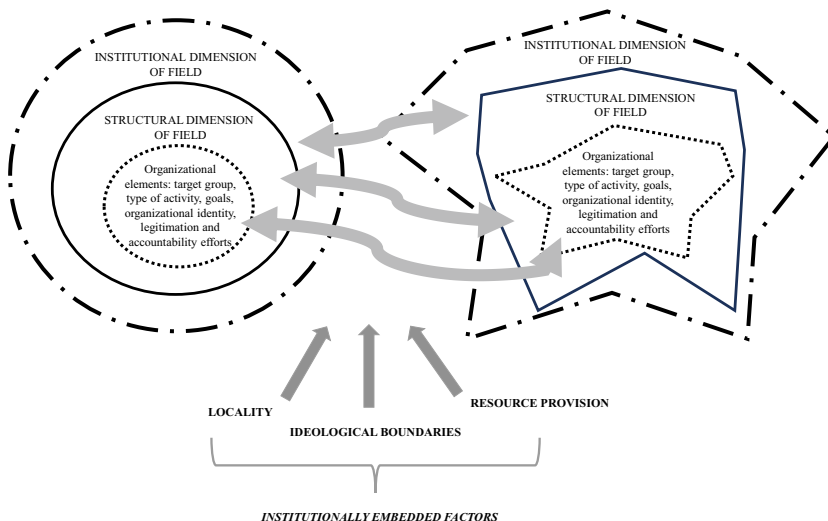


Fig. 7.1 Ongoing adaptation to the changing nature of extreme contexts

the field level, we are thus interested in how the norms for what constitutes this Jewish engagement changed during the war. At the same time, the book is a story of structural changes in organizational relations. Much of the existing research on organizational fields emphasizes their institutional dimension (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). The cases collected here, however, show a strong tendency toward structural changes triggered by the exogenous shock of war, leading the way to institutional change. This is an important observation for conceptualizing resilience as a bottom-up process during which both material and symbolic dimensions of action become central to society's capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, eventually also bringing about change in the institutional dimension.

Structural Dimensions of Field Changes

The structural dimensions of field-level change are prevalent throughout all of our cases. Structural change can be seen inside organizations, but it is also manifested in interorganizational relations within Ukraine as well as in transnational networks. We discuss intraorganizational changes later in this chapter and begin here by outlining our findings as regards structural,

field-level changes in relationships between organizations. In Fig. 7.1, these changes are illustrated by means of a solid-line circle in the pre-war state that changes into a solid-line, unevenly shaped form as a resilient development following Russia's full-scale invasion. Arrows between the pre-war circle and the unevenly shaped figure characterizing the organizational field after the full-scale invasion should be interpreted as indicating how organizations' pre-war structural field affects the changes not only once but continuously as the full-scale invasion continues.

In most cases, we see that interorganizational relationships within Ukraine have been profoundly affected. Civil society organizations may expand their networks of partners, solidify existing alliances, or change collaborators altogether. Such alterations in interorganizational relationships are often a direct response to the challenges posed by the changing nature of the extreme context, encompassing such developments as advances in a war or economic upheaval. For instance, community-based welfare centers, Heseds, although locally anchored, gradually came to expand their cooperations with other local organizations in distributing volunteer aid, or even publicly provided assistance, even when their own role was quite limited (Chap. 6). While the development of collaboration manifested for Heseds as an expansion of organizational identity combining Jewish and Ukrainian belonging, the social network analysis of Chap. 5 demonstrates that sometimes expansion was a result of organizations following their members to other locations and countries. In other cases, organizations became local anchors for those who were internally displaced or left the country, as in the case of Hillel networks across Ukraine as well as the regional network Hillel in Central Asia and Southeastern Europe (Hillel CASE). Trust among organizational members in their local Hillel organizations prior to the full-scale invasion was thus extended to other organizations in the Hillel network and even to partners outside it.

Furthermore, the transnational component is a significant aspect of the civil society organizations' operations. Transnational relationships enabled these organizations to access resources, support, and expertise from a wider network, enhancing their capacity to respond to the war. This was especially evident in our examination of fundraising efforts in Chap. 3. Long before the war, Ukrainian Jewish civil society organizations were integrated into transnational networks of other Jewish organizations in other countries, especially with respect to the revival of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union. Following the 2022 invasion, those networks were efficiently mobilized through online

campaigns for monetary and in-kind donations despite significant difficulties in providing standardized measures of accountability to legitimate their actions. Structural changes emerged in response to a pressing need to change established ways of doing things in the face of a new challenge, or as new opportunities brought about by the presence of new actors and actions in the field.

Institutional Dimensions of Field Changes

In almost all of our studied examples of civil society organizing, we observed a broadening of the target audience beyond the Jewish community, indicating a range of changes in the institutional boundaries of the studied field. While many organizations initially catered to the Jewish community at large and were broadly defined by Jewish culture and values, the meaning and scope of such organizational elements as target groups, types of activities, goals, identities, and legitimation and accountability efforts changed over time. In Fig. 7.1, these changes are illustrated by a dashed-line circle before the war, becoming a dashed, unevenly shaped form in the new resilient state. Overall, most organizations fluctuated to some degree between catering only to Jewish groups and responding to the needs of the wider Ukrainian population. This fluctuation varied from organization to organization, as well as within organizations at different stages of the war. For instance, some Hesed centers first intensified their work with their original target groups before expanding to encompass the non-Jewish population while still focusing on elderly internally displaced persons (Chap. 6). Hesed Shmuel in Kherson focused on elderly Jewish individuals in the city while integrating Ukrainian imagery and cultural references into its own activities, negotiating the boundaries of the community anew (Chap. 4). In the same chapter, we see that LifeChanger quickly adjusted to respond to the needs of the wider Ukrainian population and continued to utilize Jewish symbols and practices in its work. The development of organizing efforts in Anatevka, initially alluding to images of the shtetl and Jewish heritage, into “Mitzvah for Ukraine” (Chap. 2), is in many ways emblematic of a new hybridization of Jewish religious symbols and Ukrainian national identity, indicating institutional change in the field as a whole.

The (at least partial) conflation of Jewish and Ukrainian identities is made clearest in the linkage of Jewish holidays to the narrative of the war. The fact that the early months of the full-scale invasion happened to

coincide with Purim and Passover turned these two holidays into prominent loci of new meanings. Crucially, both Purim and Passover are holidays centered around commemorating events in Jewish history and relating them to the present. Purim's main theme is the threat of annihilation and the joy brought by an unexpected reversal of fate. Passover celebrates the Exodus from Egypt and embraces themes of liberation and freedom. In 2022, both of these holidays resonated strongly within both the discourse and the practice of the civil society organizations we survey in the book: Hillel International called for fasting in the spirit of the Fast of Esther (Chap. 3) and for donations (akin to *matanot la'evyonim*, the commandment to give to the poor at Purim). The Passover celebrations of Hesed Shaarei Tikva in Kharkiv drew parallels between the story of the Exodus and the liberation of Ukrainian cities from the invading Russian army, "likening all Ukrainians of today to the Jews of the past" (Chap. 6). The biblical Exodus was also evoked as a counterpart to the evacuations passing through Anatevka (Chap. 2).

INSTITUTIONALLY EMBEDDED FACTORS INFLUENCING ADAPTATION

The institutional and structural field changes charted above offer valuable insights into how civil society organizations adapt and operate in extreme contexts. Especially by examining the shifting focus on Jewish culture and values and the development of new structural connections, the chapters illustrate the resilience and adaptability of civil society organizing. Taken together, these field-level changes indicate that in the extreme context of war, changes across an organizational field may occur due to what we call institutionally embedded factors. By this we refer to an understanding of organizational (and field-level) changes being significantly influenced by concrete, often material, factors, rather than more abstract institutional norms and cognitive patterns. In many ways, this relates to an older school of organizational theory that preceded new organizational institutionalism. However, our case studies show that the ways in which the environment comes to the fore are nevertheless mediated by the institutional dimension (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). We see this in the persistent relevance and interplay of the institutional field of Jewish engagement throughout the chapters.

Despite the strong element of structurally induced change, our cases show how the organizations' involvement in Jewish culture and life in

Ukraine continued to inform their actions. In an effort to elucidate and theorize this observation, we interpret such structurally determined but institutionally shaped, resilient organizing as being affected by factors informed by certain institutional norms, in this case Jewish culture and life. Combining resource dependence and institutional theoretical perspectives (Oliver, 1991; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983), we identify three factors of the environment that have been seminal for civil society's resilience—locality, ideological boundaries, and resource provision—with each playing a crucial role in shaping the resilience and adaptability of the studied civil society organizations. These three institutionally embedded factors are found at the bottom of Fig. 7.1, all influencing the adaptations to war made by civil society organizing during the course of our study.

Locality

Some organizations were tied to a distinct locality, and this spatial dimension (Gieryn, 2000) was relevant to understanding resilience as an interplay between symbolic and material elements of organizing. The case of Anatevka (Chap. 2) is of particular interest as it not only was tied to a distinct locality but in fact created one. While the chosen location for Anatevka involved some pre-existing elements that rendered it attractive (such as the grave of Rabbi Mordechai Twersky of Chernobyl), Anatevka's main draw was the evocation and realization of a fictional place and, through it, the myth of the shtetl and East European Jewish memory. Here, the place was enacted as myth, conferring meaning both for residents and for fundraising. While transnational fundraising was essential for significant humanitarian efforts following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the importance of mobilizing globally relevant symbolic resources must not be underestimated. Thus, the materiality of place-making that created an important infrastructure for Jews seeking refuge from war (already in 2014) was enabled not only by international financial support or the missionary tradition of the Chabad movement, but also by the universally recognized symbolism of the shtetl.

Similarly, for community-based and thus locality-bound Hesed centers (Chap. 6), their geographical focus became an anchor of organizational identity—captured from the start in the very name of each center, yet also intertwined with transnationally shared symbols of *voluntarism* and *Yiddishkeit* (Avgar et al., 2003). In another case, Hesed Shmuel Kherson (Chap. 4) was able to qualitatively transform its *Torah therapy*, whose

original purpose was to provide insights into daily life from the Torah, into sessions on current affairs with a rabbi who, as a registered charity worker, was still allowed to travel in the occupied territories. In sum, both the character of the extreme situation (the war) and the structural and institutional aspects of organizing Jewish life and culture in Ukraine allowed overcoming or reconstituting possible limitations of locality.

Ideological Boundaries

Ideological boundaries (Brunsson, 1982), which we here relate to various institutional elements of Jewishness, played a significant role in shaping the responses of civil society organizing to the war's onset. For example, some organizations were ideologically bound by their historical activities as well as by their religious denominations. This may have been of significance in their attempts to legitimize their activities in the face of war. As noted earlier, in many of the activities that we surveyed, there was a distinct broadening of community boundaries by the civil society organizations as they moved from focusing on the Jewish community (or a subset of it) to the broader aim of aiding the Ukrainian population at large. While Jewish-oriented activities (such as Shabbat celebrations or Torah lessons) could be more easily justified by the organizations as continuing to carry out their missions and as contributing to the survival of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine, the broader scope of activity required a new kind of discourse. This discourse was not always explicit, and it was often complex and multifaceted.

In some cases, civil society organizations did not need to justify their actions given the severity of the situation following Russia's full-scale invasion; as Chap. 3 demonstrates, humanitarian aid to refugees simply had to be prioritized even when the chances of being able to provide transparent accounting were slim. In other cases, however, such actions were grounded in Jewish terms, such as *tzedakah* (righteousness), *hesed* (benevolence), or *mitzvot* (good deeds). Jewish traditions of communal solidarity, taking care of the poor and of those in need, were evoked in response to the plight of the wider Ukrainian population (see also Chaps. 4 and 6). Yet to apply this solidarity to such a wide population of Jews and non-Jews alike, the ideological boundaries of the community had to be reimagined, as described in Chap. 6. Throughout Jewish history, the commandment to be charitable, assisting strangers and weaker members of society, was often performed within the Jewish community. Here, however, the community

was in some cases redefined according to national parameters (Ukrainians) rather than religious ones (Jews). One way of achieving that redefinition was through the aforementioned conflation of Jewish history and the Ukrainian present, particularly through the narratives and practices of Purim and Passover.

More recent history, such as the Nazi occupation of Kherson (Chap. 4), was also utilized to draw the stories of the two communities closer. This was an important strategy, even if it was subtle and not necessarily fully conscious, since the Jewish historical memory often stresses elements of persecution and survival—as in the narratives of Purim and Passover. Turning these symbols into a bedrock of solidarity with the current Ukrainian experience enabled a reimagining of community boundaries. In a sense, it also continued the biblical calls of Exodus 23:9 and Deuteronomy 10:19 to remember one's own marginal, outsider status and thus act compassionately when confronted with the peril of others. While the various organizations studied did not explicitly evoke these verses, their actions represent a sensibility that is no less a part of Jewish tradition than the inclination toward particularism and rigid community boundaries.

Resource Provision

Finally, the civil society organizing we observed was influenced to a large extent by resource provision (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The abovementioned development of networks facilitated access to larger pools of funds, primarily through transnational collaborations (Chaps. 3 and 5). For Jewish civil society organizations, funding from such organizations as the JDC or World Jewish Relief has been a source of organizational capacity and field infrastructure for decades (Chap. 6). During the early part of the war, not only did pre-existing connections to such organizations prove to be instrumental, but organizations' sharing of access to funders through collaborative networks also appeared to shape patterns of activities (for instance, evacuation paths and the redistribution of in-kind aid) (Chap. 5). The interplay of symbols and resource provision can also be clearly seen in the case of Anatevka (Chap. 2). Here, symbolic meaning became a resource enabling the 2014 re-creation of a mythical shtetl in twenty-first-century Ukraine, expanding resources further by weaving in a historically rooted account of the 2022 full-scale invasion through the narrative of Exodus.

Our findings also demonstrate efficient use of the resources provided for the benefit of the primary Jewish target group as well as the broader Ukrainian population. Such efforts can be considered a testament to organizational adaptability. This was the case for Hesed centers that were forced to introduce activities in which they had never before engaged, such as evacuation and repair work after Russian shelling as well as child care and volunteer training (Chap. 6). At the same time, resources proved never to be sufficient. When limited in scope or difficult to attain, resources dictated civil society organizations' definition of and approach to everyday organizational tasks in incremental measures; for instance, LifeChanger had to do this by only partially describing the problems they tackled to match available resources (Chap. 4). For Hesed Shmuel in Kherson, personal connections with a local rabbi became an invaluable resource not only for necessary supplies whose availability was very limited under the occupation, but also for information from outside, which was important for navigating a perilous environment.

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS OF CHANGE

In addition to structural and institutional changes on a field level, influenced by institutionally embedded factors, we identify intra-organizational elements, i.e., within-civil society organizations and organizing, that seem to shift throughout our chapters. In turn, many of these changing organizational elements may be interpreted in light of the institutionally embedded factors and may cause field-level changes, both structural and institutional. More specifically, we identify target group and type of activity, goals, and organizational identity, as well as legitimation and accountability efforts, as important elements of organizational change. In Fig. 7.1, the organizational elements are illustrated as small dotted circles and small dotted uneven shapes inside shapes representing the structural and institutional field dimensions before and during the war.

Embedded in the structural and institutional processes discussed above, these elements illuminate the combination of a community-centered orientation with efforts to build solidarity across Ukrainian society at large. The initial shock of the Russian full-scale invasion effectively stimulated identity-based bonds, e.g., when Hesed centers intensified their work within the community (Chap. 6) and traditional Jewish symbols and practices were activated to emphasize the resilience of the Jewish people across time and space. As the war progressed, new identity bonds were also

forged to buttress solidarity with the rest of the country through language, civic Ukrainian identity, and a common framing of the enemy. As integrating identities as Jews and Ukrainians was being successfully negotiated (Chap. 4), organizational goals expanded to deal with a variety of needs with a variety of methods, going far beyond the scope of their founding goals.

Change and resilience in the extreme context of war proved challenging not only due to the often limited availability of resources or the expanding needs of a growing number of target groups, but also because it was often impossible to negotiate prevalent legitimacy claims and accountability practices. As we demonstrate in Chap. 3, the traditional dimensions of legitimacy claims—such as presenting organizational work as corresponding to needs on the ground, following established procedures, and acting on the right motivations—were in some cases articulated mainly in post-hoc accounts. Securing, legitimating, and accounting for external funding for much civil society organizing therefore depended partly on descriptions of the work that had been done elsewhere and under different circumstances; this previous work was not always related to the current, specific realities of wartime needs. With the situation being unpredictable and, in many ways, very new to everyone involved—funders, organizations, and their beneficiaries—organizations' efforts to appear legitimate could also rely in part on the reputations of competent partners. In addition, claims to not only ensure survival but to bring back a sense of normalcy showed organizations' aim to resonate with their audiences at home and abroad, outweighing any inability to provide detailed accounting.

PATTERNS OF CIVIL SOCIETY RESILIENCE

Resilience focuses on the ability to adapt to unpredictable and unknown changes in the environment rather than predicting the effects of specific actions based on anticipated future conditions (Folke et al., 2010; Walker et al., 2009). In this concluding chapter, we have identified three types of patterns of civil society resilience in the context of war by studying the organizing of Jewish life and culture in Ukraine. These patterns are detailed in Fig. 7.1. Firstly, we find field-level changes in both the structural and institutional dimensions. Secondly, we attribute these changes to three institutionally embedded factors: locality, ideological boundaries, and resource provision. Thirdly, we identify a range of organizational elements that changed in response to the war: target groups and activities,

goals and organizational identity, and legitimization and accountability efforts.

Critical readers may recognize that many of the patterns identified here, on all levels, are classical dimensions that may be used to analyze any organization or field and are applicable in various contexts and times. Of substance in this study, we argue, are the structural and institutional field-level changes observed across the civil society organizations in such a short time span. These changes appear to be largely synchronized across the data set(s) in the five empirical chapters. Our findings indicate that in extreme contexts such as war, changes across a field may occur more as a result of shifting and disrupting circumstances than of primarily institutional pressures or agentic actions. Institutionally embedded factors may be very significant in such extreme contexts, shaping changes on an organizational level. In turn, organizational elements feed into, and accumulate as, structural and institutional field-level changes while also being influenced by the institutionally embedded factors, forming an interactive and complex cycle of resilient organizing.

Organizational adaptation in these cases often involves striving not to return to a previous state but to reach a new normalcy while still buffering against uncertainty. This balance of stability in organizing and embracing adaptability through the interplay of structural and institutional dimensions reinforces but also contributes to previous research on the need to manage uncertainty in organizational efforts, even in extreme contexts (Hällgren et al., 2018; Hannah et al., 2009). Our study elucidates the complex interaction of institutional and structural elements that enable malleability and organizing resilience, even when the extreme context itself continues to change.

We hope that this book will inspire new research and questions in the fields of resilience studies and civil society research.

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